Curriculum and Change

Texts to support a racially inclusive curriculum in Primary schools

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Contents

Page

2 Campaigns and Research

Books to Support an Inclusive Curriculum

3-7 BAME main characters from UK/non-specific settings aged 10+

8-14 BAME main characters from UK/non-specific settings aged 8-10

15-18 BAME main characters from UK/non-specific settings aged 5-7

19-29 BAME main characters based in African countries (Uganda, Algeria, Somalia, Ghana, South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya)

30-33 BAME main characters based in Caribbean countries

34-39 BAME main characters based in South Asian countries

40-41 Main characters from Gypsy, Roma, Traveller communities

42-45 Characters from Refugee/Asylum seeking communities

46-50 Black history

51-57 Famous people from BAME communities

58-59 Anti-racism

60-62 Traditional tales from other cultures

63-66 Geography

67-69 Poetry

70-72 Teacher subject knowledge

"'To be able to see yourself in someone else's story can be life-changing. To know a goal is achievable can be empowering.' This is at the heart of why it's so important for children to see role models that look like themselves in the stories they read. This kind of representation, in the books they've been assigned to read in school or the ones that they curl up with at night, offers children a reminder that they matter, and that there's a place for them in this world. It shows them that they too can be the heroes, go on adventures and save the world. It's an affirmation that they exist, that their concerns are valid, and it's okay to be yourself. Once they realise possibilities not only just exist but are open to them - who knows what wonders they might unleash!" Vashti Harrison

Campaigns and Research

CLPE Reflecting Realities Report

https://clpe.org.uk/publications-and-bookpacks/reflecting-realities

Book Trust

https://www.booktrust.org.uk/what-we-do/programmes-and-campaigns/booktrust-represents/

Barefoot Books discussion guide

https://www.barefootbooks.com/uk/media/CMS/landing-pages/diversity-and-inclusion-confirmation-page/DiscussionGuide_DiverseInclusiveBooks_031020_300dpi.pdf

Barefoot Books how to raise anti-racist children

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbfw6Ta9ZQA&feature=youtu.be

Historic England on Black British History

https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/features/black-british-history/

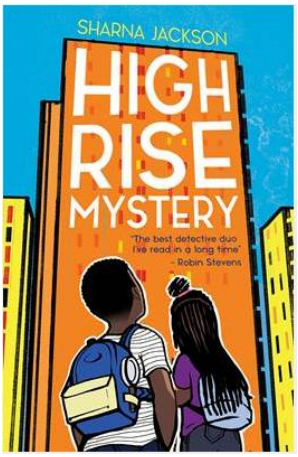
Books to support an inclusive curriculum

Books with main characters from BAME communities

BAME characters UK based/non-specific setting

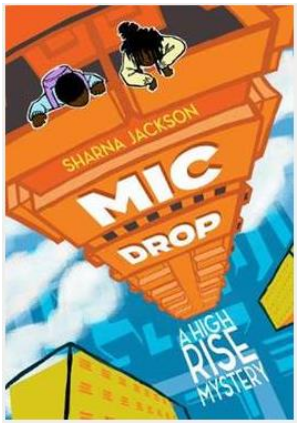
10+

High Rise Mystery by Sharna Jackson



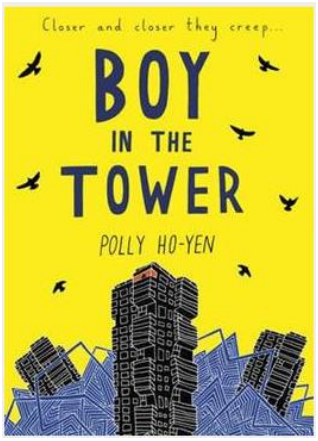
After finding their community art teacher murdered on their tower block estate ('The Tri'), sisters Nik and Norva are determined to solve this terrible crime. Swinging into action even before the police have arrived, the whip-smart detective duo develop a list of suspects and a plan to identify motives and methods. But over the following days, the evidence starts to point in a confusing direction, one that they really don't want to contemplate…
This fantastic, urban-set mystery is fast-paced, funny and exciting. Nik and Norva are two brilliant new detectives with great senses of humour, and readers will be rooting for them from page one. There's also a great supporting cast of characters, from quirky neighbours to new police officer and the girls' former babysitter Katie, and it's ultra-refreshing to have characters of colour in a contemporary, ordinary life setting that many readers will relate to.
High-Rise Mystery is the perfect 'whodunnit'. As the two girls sift through red herrings and reveal a series of tower block secrets, short snappy sentences and sparkling dialogue will keep readers turning the pages. A mystery as hot as the summer heatwave in which it's set!

Mic Drop by Sharna Jackson



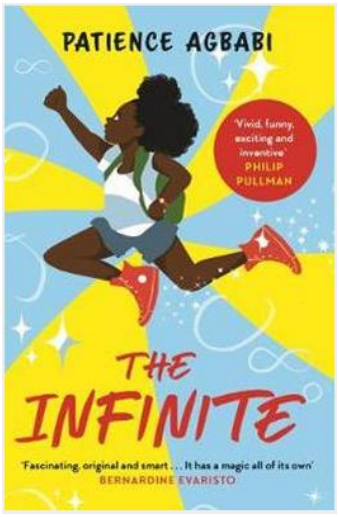
Up and coming popstar Trojkat – Katarzyna Clarke to everyone that lives in the Tri, a triple tower block in South London – is recording her latest video at the tower block she grew up in. Sisters Nik and Norva (especially Norva, who is a huge fan of Trojkat, and mortified that apparently she threw up in Katarzyna's hair when she was a baby) are as excited as everyone else about the filming, and delighted when Katazyna ropes them in to be part of the shoot. Yet when tragedy strikes, Nik and Norva are there to investigate. Was it really an accident, or did someone have a grudge against Kat?
The second in Sharna Jackson's *High Rise Mystery* books sees Nik and Norva return with another crime to solve on their home turf. As before, it's great to see an inner-city crime mystery for kids, as well as two black girl sleuths, and Jackson gives us a twisty, witty novel full of red herrings, sass and adventure. The feel is contemporary and modern, and Nik and Norva are an excellent pairing: Norva is outspoken and Nik more thoughtful, and, together with their best friend George, make a fearsome detection crew.

The Boy in the Tower by Polly Ho-Yen



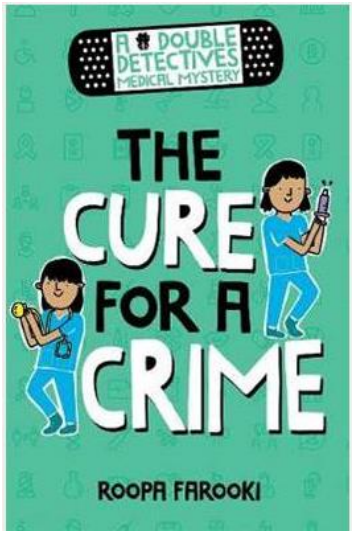
From the seventeenth floor of the tower block where he lives with his mother, Ade watches as the buildings fall around him. The Bluchers - a strange and terrible kind of plant - are taking over the city, and everyone is being forced to evacuate, but his mother is refusing to leave her room. And so Ade watches alone as the city slowly empties, and the Bluchers creep ever closer.
This book sounds like a straightforward science-fiction tale, in which *Day of the Triffids* style plants consume buildings and cast out deadly spores. In fact, it reads more like a fable about friendship, loyalty and bravery, beautifully told in the voice of a lonely young boy struggling to make sense of all that is going on around him - from the extraordinary events he sees from his window, to his mother's illness. Taking place in a believable urban, multicultural environment that will be familiar to many young readers, Polly Ho-Yen's debut is an impressively moving and thought-provoking story that will touch children and adults alike.

The Infinite by Patience Agbari



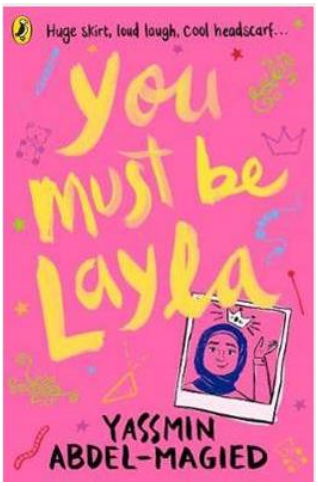
Elle Bibi-Imbelé Ifiè loves her name, running, white food and her Nigerian heritage. She dislikes eye contact, being stared at, too much noise, bullies and anything that makes her head too full. But perhaps the most exceptional thing about Elle is her birth date: born on the 29th February, Elle is one of the very rare Leaplings who have 'The Gift': the ability to leap backwards and forwards through time.
When she receives an SOS message from the future, Elle has to fight down her panic and take advantage of a school trip to 2048 to solve the mystery of disappearing Leaplings and save the potential of the future from the mistakes of the present.
The Infinite is the first book of The Leap Cycle series, a science fiction adventure across time that is fresh, exciting, bold and witty. With a diverse cast of unique individuals and a fascinating and complex narrator, the plot is character-driven and thought-provoking with ethical undertones.
The sparky friendship between Elle and her best friend Big Ben is touching, entertaining and inspiring and their inevitable band of fans will be itching with anticipation for further books in the series.

The Cure for a Crime by Roopa Farooki



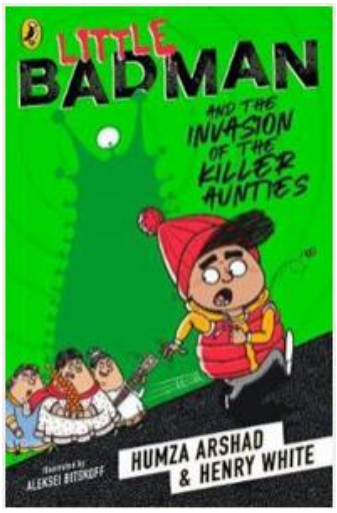
Twins Ali and Tulip's mum has been strangely sleepy and unlike herself lately. In fact, ever since her more-than-slightly suspicious new boyfriend moved in, things have just been getting stranger and stranger. With the help of their Nan-Nan (a force of nature with a very unusual career history) and the twins' best friends Zac and Jay, Double Detectives Ali and Tulip must solve the case.
This is a fabulous medical mystery, full of twists, turns, puns and with the added bonus of a medical blog at the end written by Tulip which gives an introduction to what to do if someone collapses, what your poo can say about you and how to scrub up if you're a doctor.
This fast-paced book and its message to not let anyone stop you from achieving what you want in life is perfect for ambitious children with big dreams, though a less confident child might find themselves picking up some of Ali and Tulip's self-belief and determination by the end. An inspiring and funny read for any budding medics, *The Cure for A Crime* is well-suited to fans of Robin Stevens and Sharna L Jackson.

You must be Layla by Yassmin Abdel-Magied



13 year-old Layla is clever, ambitious and funny. She's left her comfortable Islamic school in Brisbane, Australia and is starting a scholarship at a private school where she is the first (and only) child to wear a Muslim headscarf. The first week is hardly welcoming, but Layla's determined to make this work - even though she ends up being suspended for fighting back against a prejudiced bully. Layla decides the only way to really prove herself is to win a big regional robotics competition with her very ambitious invention, but can she do it - especially when the boy who bullied her is on the other team?
This is a laugh out loud story about making friends, carving your way in the world and having the confidence to do things your way. Layla is a fabulous, plucky protagonist, and her inventive attitude to surmounting hurdles is inspiring. The book is also an introduction to thinking about some of the barriers people of colour can face, illustrated by Layla's older brother Ozzie who has been applying for jobs and not even getting interviews. It offers an insight into normal Muslim family life (the Australian setting will be effortlessly accessible to UK kids) together with a brilliant glossary of terms. This story is fresh and funny and is an empowering read - especially for girls and people of colour. A really great secondary school-age novel that everyone should read!

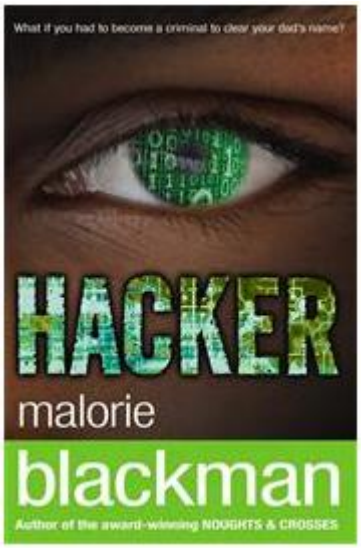
Little Badman and the Invasion of the Killer Aunties by Humza Arshad and Henry White



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

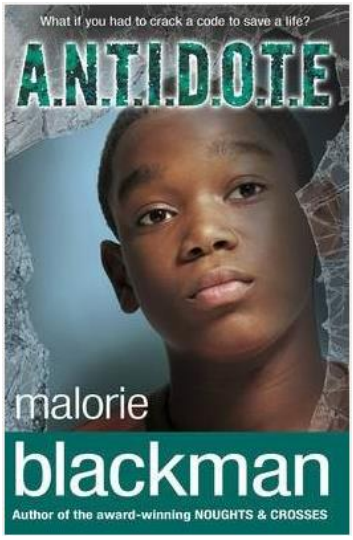
Malorie Blackman books-Please note that all Malorie Blackman books have main characters of BAME origin. The following are suitable for primary age children:-

Hacker by Malorie Blackman



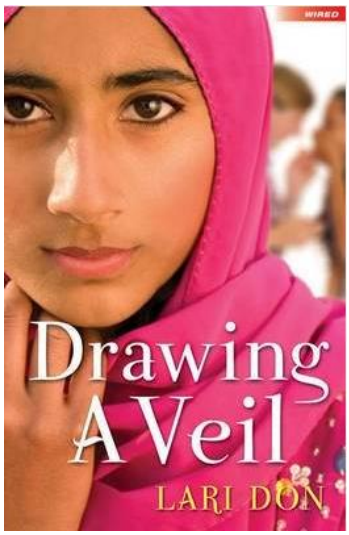
A thriller for computer buffs. Vicky's father is arrested for the theft of millions from the bank where he works. She is determined to prove his innocence but all the evidence is in the computer files. Winner of the 1994 Mind Boggling Book Award.

Antidote by Malorie Blackman



Elliot wishes his Mum was more interesting: everyone else's parents do exciting things like work for the BBC, but his is only a secretary. But is she? One night she goes out late with his uncle, and the next morning her face is all over the news with CCTV footage showing her breaking into the animal testing laboratories of the multinational company Shelby Pardela. His uncle has been arrested, his Mum is on the run, and suddenly things have got much more exciting (and much more dangerous) for Elliot. Can he get to the bottom of what's happened and clear her name?
This is a tightly-plotted thriller, taking in industrial espionage, computer hacking and environmental activism. With plenty of twists and a gutsy teenage protagonist up against some sinister forces with only his wits and wise-guy best friend to help him, A.N.T.I.D.O.T.E makes for a gripping and suspenseful read.

Drawing a Veil by Lari Don



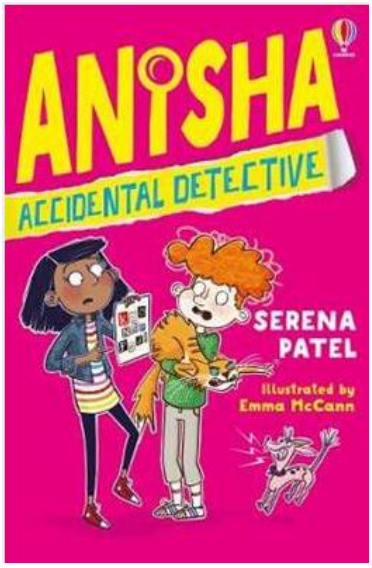
When her best friend suddenly turns up at school wearing a black headscarf, Ellie isn't sure what to think. Apparently Amina has even chosen to wear it – to show support for her Muslim sisters and to denote modesty. Ellie is unhappy - Amina didn't even warn her best friend that she was going to start wearing a hijab and to make matters worse, it is starting to attract the attention of the school bullies. Ellie's loyalty starts to feel the strain.
This is a highly readable and thought-provoking story about the realities and challenges of friendship and religion. From A&C Black's Wired series.

8-10

Agent Zaiba Investigates by Annabelle Sami

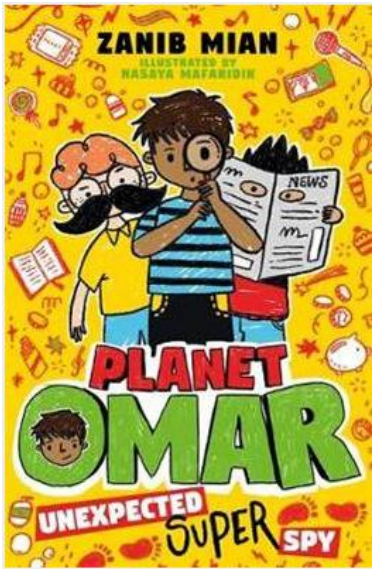
Zaiba is thrilled to be at her cousin's henna party at the stately Royal Star Hotel. With its secret passages and hidden doors, it's the perfect place for her to practice being a proper detective. Things get even more exciting when a mystery celebrity guest arrives, and both a dog and some diamonds go missing. Will Zaiba be able to solve the mystery and prove to everyone that she is just as good a detective as her Aunty Fouzia?
This is an energetic, fun-to-read adventure, set against the background of a traditional Pakistani pre-wedding ceremony. Many British-Asian children will be excited to see a familiar part of their lives reflected here. In Zaiba, they will also find a determined, brave and imaginative leader they can identify with. Zaiba's relationship with her Aunty Fouzia, a professional detective, is touching.
The book reflects a happy and confident multi-cultural society, with English friends and family-by-marriage included in the cast. Full page black-and-white illustrations break up the text for less confident readers. At the back of the book are detective-themed activities for children to do themselves.

Anisha Accidental Detective by Serena Patel



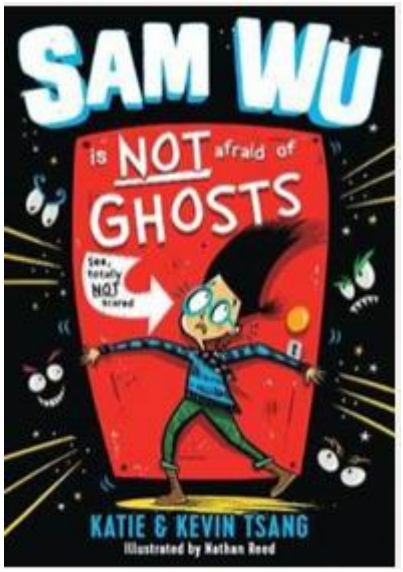
10 year-old Anisha's ultra-dramatic Aunty Bindi is getting married tomorrow so tensions are already running high before the 'wedding of the year' - and things only get worse when Anisha gets a note saying Bindi's groom Uncle Tony has been kidnapped, and won't be released until the wedding is cancelled! It's up to Anisha to find Uncle Tony with the help of her best friend Milo, and she has a hunch the culprit is somebody close to the family. She needs to use her scientific skills of logic and deduction to track down Uncle Tony in time for his wedding.
This is a highly amusing, fast-paced debut in a very promising new detective series. The humour is deft, the dialogue great and Anisha's multi-generational British Indian family is an inclusive and wonderful world to escape into. This book is delightfully illustrated by Emma McCann in an expressive and amusing way – and the graphic elements of the text make this book accessible and a fun read. Great for children who like to laugh while they're reading and perfect for fans of Pamela Butchart. We can't wait to read the next book in the series, especially after reading the taster chapter at the end of the book!

Planet Omar by Zanib Mian



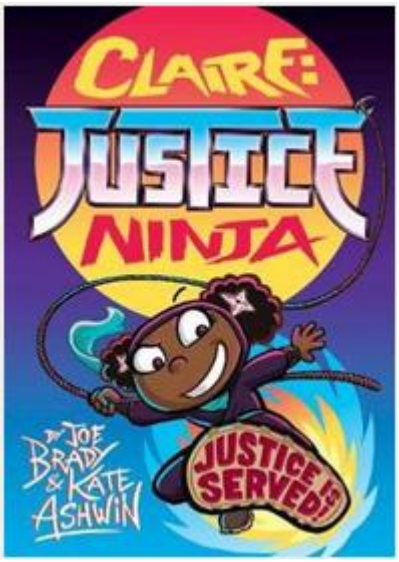
Omar is a 9 year old boy who lives with his annoying older sister Maryam and little brother Esa, dreaming about how he can get enough money to buy a NERF Laser Blaster - or, even better - a Ferrari. But when his mosque is in danger of being closed down, Omar switches his mission to raising the £30,000 that's needed for the emergency building repairs. Yet when Omar organises a school talent show to raise the money, the funds go missing. Juggling many potential suspects, Omar and his friends need to become super spies to find the culprit and get the money back.
This is a really hilariously funny, warm hearted, easy-to-read tale, with a gentle moral of how if people work together they can achieve wonderful things. Zanib Mian's wit and great ability to create believable characters makes this a must read. The illustrations by Nasaya Mafaridik create the perfect mood and this new series will very much suit fans of Tom Gates.
This is book two in the *Planet Omar* series, and readers will also enjoy Zanib Mian's *Accidental Trouble Magnet* (previously published as *The Muslims*) but it's not necessary to read this first.

Sam Wu is Not Afraid of Ghosts by Katie and Kevin Tsang



Sam Wu is scared of many things but is determined not to let anyone find out. However, after an unfortunate incident in a space simulator on a school trip, he becomes a target for class bully Ralph, who nicknames him Scaredy-Cat Sam. He decides the best way to stop Ralph's teasing is to develop a reputation as the bravest person in school, so Sam acquires a fearsome sidekick: a snake called Fang. This may not be the best choice, as Sam is terrified of snakes, but he's hopeful that he'll overcome this minor glitch.
Sam's best friends, Zoe and Bernard, visit his house to meet Fang. When a fuse blows, plunging them into darkness, they hear eerie noises and then realise Fang has gone missing. Sam concludes that the snake has been kidnapped by the Ghost King, a terrifying character from Sam's favourite TV space show. Can the three friends banish the ghost, rescue Fang and live to tell the tale?
This funny, fast-paced chapter book is the first in a series of Sam Wu adventures. Full of humour, black-and-white illustrations and a wacky plot, it is ideal for any readers who enjoy shorter, illustrated books.

Claire: Justice Ninja by Joe Brady and Kate Ashwin

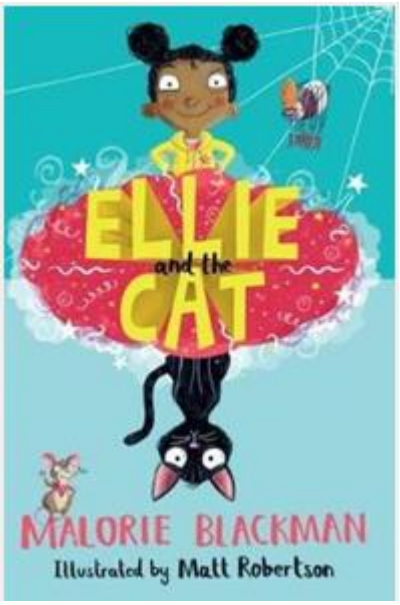


Claire: Justice Ninja intends to right the world of wrongs. Fed up with people spitting their gum out on the street? The corrupt politician paving over the playground? Your mum eating all the pepperoni off the top of the pizza? Not to worry: Claire is on the case.
This fun graphic novel has 12 short stories for young readers to enjoy, featuring a young hero who doesn't take no – or injustice – for an answer. Her superpowers are tenacity, determination and a belief in equality, and no crime is too big or too small for a Justice Ninja like Claire and her trusty apprentice Nigel.
The community setting is highly relatable, and many of the injustices are just the sort of thing readers may encounter themselves, such as littering or defacement of property.
Claire likes to think outside the box, too: her plans don't always work out the way she intends and her version of justice is sometimes skewed a little more towards "a taste of their own medicine" than you might see in a court of law. However, most importantly, she believes wholeheartedly in righting wrongs and making the world a little more even for everybody.
Perfect for young activists and anyone looking for a short and satisfying read.

My Family and Other Ghosts by Lou Kuenzler

Twins Ivy and Ash find themselves the proprietors of a haunted hotel, Grave Grange, their ancestral home. But the hotel is less than successful: Grandpa Digby is missing, their dad is serving "experimental" meals like eyeballs, and Grave Grange has no paying guests.
Ash is unsettled in their new home too, fearful of the poltergeist and the Headless Huntsman. The first guests, Mr and Mrs Jones, are so disgusted with the hotel that they leave a minus five-star review on stay-well-away.com.
With Grave Grange's future at risk, Ivy banishes the ghosts to attract more guests. However, when the new guests reveal they wanted a haunted holiday, Ash and Ivy must search high and low in Darkmoor to urge the ghosts to return.
With nail-biting excitement as well as laugh-out-loud moments, children will be queuing up to check in to Grave Grange. This spooky story is lots of fun, but is ultimately about family and friends and overcoming fears: children will race through it, enjoying the adventure all the way.

Ellie and the Cat by Malorie Blackman

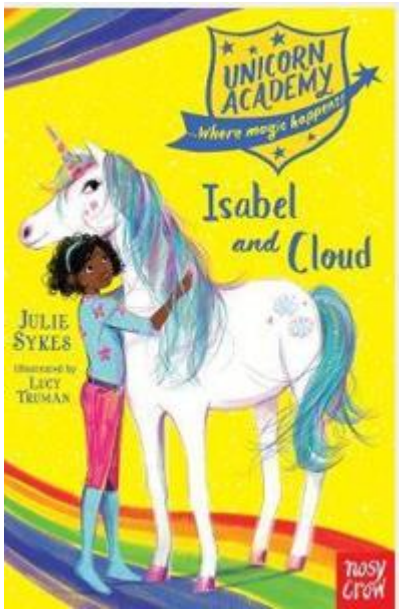


Ellie is being sent off to stay with yet another relative while her dad is away for business. She's sick of being moved around from person to person whenever he goes away. Now it's her grandmother's turn and Ellie is determined to be as rude and unhappy about the situation as a person can possibly be. But Ellie's grandma has a few tricks of her own up her sleeve – and magically swaps Ellie into the body of her pet cat, Jolly.
In order to become human again, Ellie must complete a special task before sunset the next day – or stay as a cat forever. But how exactly is she going to manage it? Meanwhile, Jolly, who rather likes being a human child, will do anything to stop her from succeeding…
In a dyslexia-friendly format, this is a magical and gently comic tale of friendship and thinking of others. When she's turned into a cat, we get to see Ellie for who she really is behind the sadness of missing her dad, while she's given the chance to make some unusual new friends and ultimately find a place to belong.

Grandpa Bert and the Ghost Snatchers by Malorie Blackman

Grandma Gertie is the most unusual person that Anna and Kasper have ever met. She wears huge, square spectacles, carries a real parrot on her head and says the most peculiar things. When she visits them from Barbados, she is accompanied by an extraordinary travelling companion: squeezed into her handbag is the ghost of Grandpa Bert!
Grandma Gertie is convinced that she is being followed, and when her handbag is stolen, her fears are confirmed. Luckily, Grandpa Bert has moved into Anna's cap, but when the robbers make another appearance, it becomes clear that they are no ordinary thieves. They are ghost snatchers, determined to capture Grandpa Bert.
Fast-paced and funny, featuring a BAME (Black, Asian, and minority ethnic) family, this fantastic addition to the superb Little Gems series is designed to appeal to reluctant and dyslexic readers. Special editing minimises barriers to comprehension, a clear font helps avoid confusing letter shapes, and thick paper ensures words and pictures don't show through the pages and confuse the eye.
The lively, colourful illustrations are a perfect accompaniment to the text, which is written by former Children's Laureate, Malorie Blackman. Look out for the activities and jokes, which are hidden under the cover flaps.

Isabel and Cloud by Julie Sykes



Isabel's patience with Cloud is running low. Her special unicorn seems unexciting compared to Scarlett's, whose magic has already been revealed. When her competitive streak gets the better of her, things go from bad to worse for Isabel as she upsets her friends. Then, when a prank she plays on Mrs Nettle's niece backfires, Isabel is threatened with expulsion and the realisation she may not graduate from Unicorn Academy sinks in.
Dark clouds loom over Unicorn Academy too as an evil spell threatens the academy. Luckily Isabel chances upon a possible solution to save the school and along with it, her friendships and her reputation. She takes a big risk and sets off to find a special stone which holds the key to saving Unicorn Island.
Magic and sparkle is sprinkled throughout this book, but it's essentially about what many primary school children struggle with: jealousy, bullying and friendships. Each girl in this book has her own unique personality, and they're all from different backgrounds so young readers will want to read the whole series to find their favourite! This bite-sized chapter book is ideal for those who want to squeeze in a quick read or those still getting the hang of chapter books.

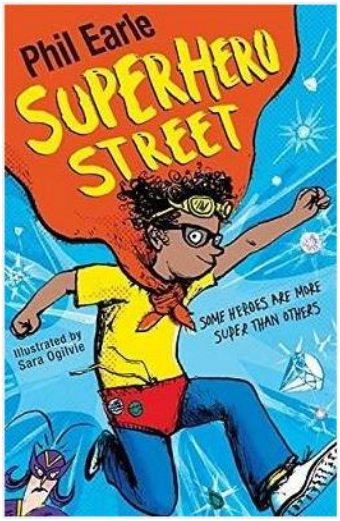
The Uncracked Code by Tamara MacFarlane

Coco and Zac are faced with a challenge that would puzzle any superhero. The Cosmic Comic Shop and Café is threatened with closure by property developers and all that can save them is the priceless first edition of Komodo Jones, a famous comic book. But then the comic goes missing. Who is the thief and can Coco and Zac recover the comic in time?
The Uncracked Code, with its depictions of a multicultural London and its very current theme of property development and gentrification threatening communities, is an interesting addition to children's bookshelves. The inclusion of comic-book style pages adds another dimension to engage young readers.

The Young Magicians and the Thieves Almanac by Nick Mohammed

The Young Magicians, Alex, Zack, Sophie and Johnny, have all worked extremely hard to earn their way into the famed Magician's Circle. The four kids meet during their induction, but all is not well within the Circle. Will they be able to put aside their differences and use their differing 'magical' abilities to unravel the mystery?
Comedian and real-life magician Nick Mohammed weaves together an action-packed and laugh-filled adventure, while at the same writing a heart-felt love letter to a childhood obsession with magic.

Superhero Street by Phil Earle

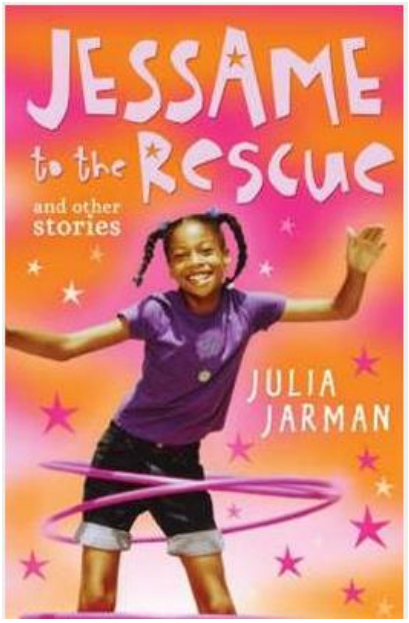


Michael J Mouse doesn't get a lot of attention, what with his five baby and toddler brothers (one set of twins; one set of triplets) reducing mum and dad to exhausted, drooling zombies by the time he comes home from school.

But Mouse is also Mouse the Mighty, possibly the greatest superhero of all time. When a daring jewel heist goes wrong, he and his superhero mum Lady Lollipop (along with a group of very unusual superhero vigilantes) step up and prove that it's not just costumes that make people special.

The second in Phil Earle's Storey Street series, *Superhero Street* is the heart warming and laugh-out-loud sequel to *Demolition Dad*, celebrating mums as the everyday superheroes they are. Sara Ogilvie's illustrations (including Top Trumps-style superhero illustrations at the end of the book) add an even warmer, hilarious background to Earle's realistic family.

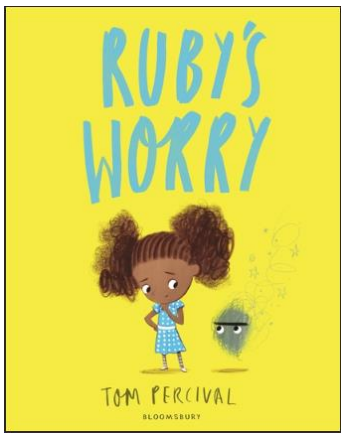
Jessame to the Rescue by Julia Jarman



A further six stories about Jessame, who lives in Bethnal Green.
Jessame's experiences unite many different cultural traditions, from her own West African and Caribbean background to the multicultural nature of her neighbourhood and friends.
She has the enthusiasms and fears familiar to her Key Stage 1 audience, from reluctance to jump into the swimming pool, to a delight in elaborating truth into fantasy to impress her friends!
Young readers will empathise with this lively character and her delight in discovering the exciting stories, activities and family celebrations her family and friends have brought from their varied backgrounds.
Jarman knows her readers well, and gaining much from Duncan Smith's lively illustrations, this is an excellent, entertaining and empowering story collection.

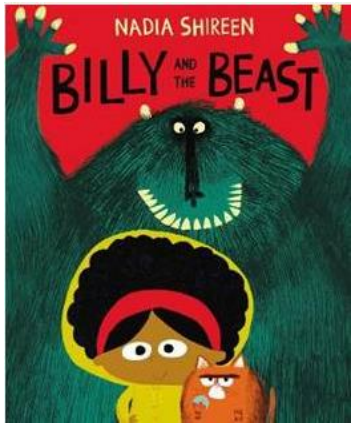
5-7

Ruby's Worry-Tom Percival



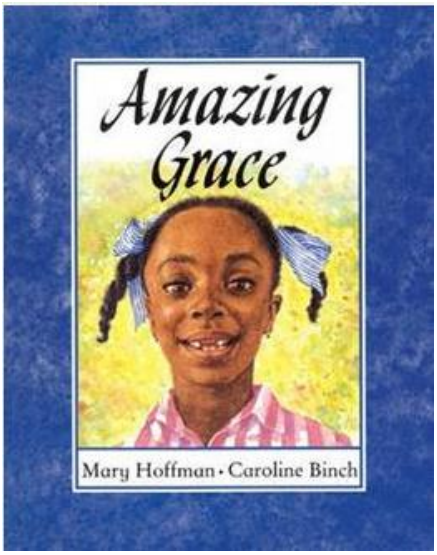
Ruby is perfectly happy, until she discovers a worry. The worry is hardly noticeable at first, but starts to grow and soon it's with her all the time, stopping her from doing the things she loves. As Ruby worries about her worry it gets bigger still. The problem is solved when Ruby finds someone else with a worry; as they talk about them, something amazing happens – their worries disappear. Readers will recognise Ruby's problems and see their own lives reflected in hers. Sensitive and very reassuring this clever book raises lots of opportunities for children to talk about their anxieties.

Billy and the Beast by Nadia Shireen



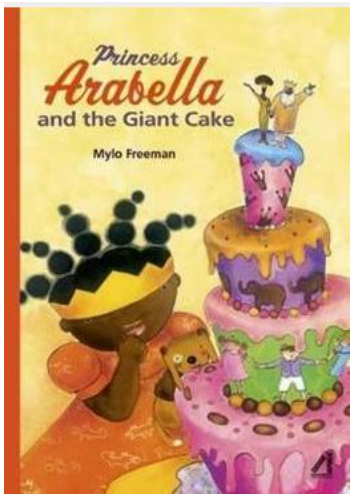
Billy (whose big curly hair contains a multitude of useful things like doughnuts and crayons) and her mono-browed friend Fatcat are enjoying a delightful walk in the woods when they notice that the bunnies and mice have gone missing.
When Billy and Fatcat are also kidnapped, it transpires that a hungry Beast is collecting ingredients for a terrible soup, and Fatcat will be on the menu unless Billy can persuade the Beast that his choice of forest creatures aren't as delicious as he thinks. Using the tools hidden in her hair, Billy manages to save her friends from the Beast's cruel culinary agenda – and, it turns out, perhaps the bunnies aren't as gentle as they seem…
Nadia Shireen's empowering story of Billy's quick thinking and resourcefulness is a gentle reminder for children that we all have the power to change our environment and stand up for our loved ones. Billy's power resides, at least partly, in her curly black hair, and it's delightful to see a picture book feature a brown-skinned girl protagonist outwitting the rather stupid Beast. As ever, the expressions on Shireen's animals are full of humour and humanity, and the permanently frowning Fatcat will fast become a new favourite with little ones.

Amazing Grace by Mary Hoffman



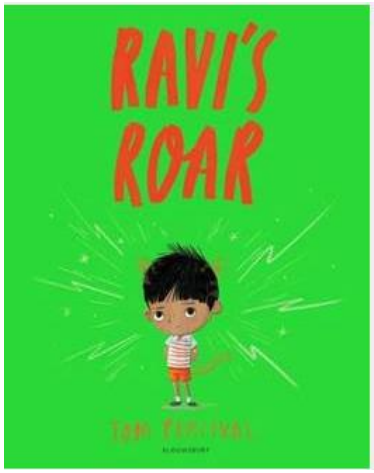
Grace loves to act out stories. Sometimes she plays the leading part, sometimes she is 'a cast of thousands.' When her school decides to perform Peter Pan, Grace is longing to play Peter, but her classmates say that Peter was a boy, and besides, he wasn't black... But Grace's Ma and Nana tell her she can be anything she wants if she puts her mind to it...
This classic story clearly communicates an inspiring message that anything is possible. A warm-hearted tale about following your dreams.

Princess Arabella and the Giant Cake by Mylo Freeman



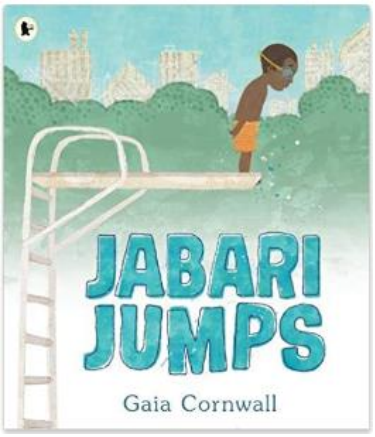
Princess Arabella loved her recent birthday party so much that she wishes she could have another one. Thankfully, Grandma's birthday is just days away. Arabella and her friends want to give Grandma a special gift, so each child sets to work on making the biggest, yummiest cake ever.
With a little help from his mum, Prince Mimoun proudly bakes his masterpiece, while Princess Sophie has a secret taste of her strawberry-flavoured mixture, and Princess Ling creates a delicious Chinese cherry cake. Grandma is thrilled with her spectacular birthday treats, and cannot wait to try a slice of each – but Princess Arabella's offering contains an unexpected surprise!
A joyful, multi-ethnic tale in the Princess Arabella series, with vibrant illustrations.

Ravi's Roar-Tom Percival



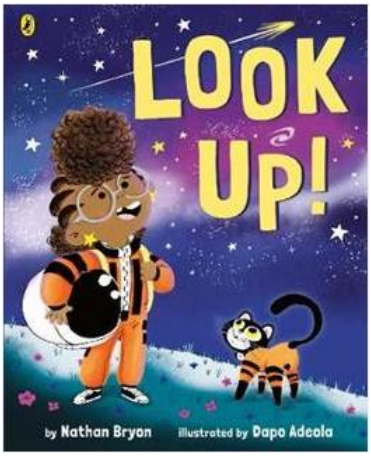
Youngest children have a trying time of it. Sometimes it's fun to be the family baby, but not when you're too small for all the most exciting playground rides, when you come last in all the races and when your older brothers and sisters buy up all the ice-cream before you get to the van.
When Ravi has just about had enough of being last in line and too small for everything, he roars – and turns into a tiger! It's great fun getting his own way, at least for a little while.
Eventually, Ravi finds out that being the top predator is not as much fun as he thought, but sometimes he still needs to stand up for himself by giving a little roar.
Tantrums can be an overwhelming experience for the child having them, and the vivid illustrations in this enjoyable book are a great way to portray that. Ravi ends the book able to call on his inner tiger when he really needs to, but he also learns that being savage and violent can't solve all his problems.
There is a valuable message about the balance between standing up for yourself while also being a good playmate.

Jabari Jumps by Gaia Cornwall



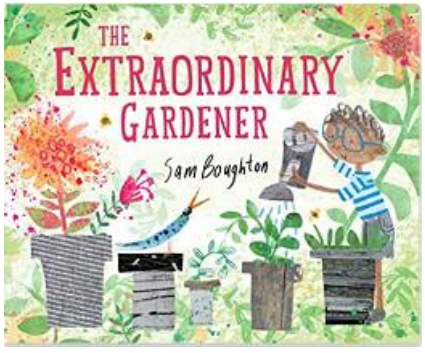
Working up the courage to take a big, important leap is hard, but Jabari is almost absolutely ready to make a giant splash. Jabari is definitely ready to jump off the diving board. He's finished his swimming lessons and passed his swimming test, and he's a great jumper, so he's not scared at all. Looks easy, says Jabari, watching the other kids take their turns. But when his dad squeezes his hand, Jabari squeezes back. He needs to figure out what kind of special jump to do anyway, and he should probably do some stretches before climbing up onto the diving board...
In a sweet tale of overcoming your fears, debut author-illustrator Gaia Cornwall captures a moment at the swimming pool between a patient and encouraging father and a determined little boy you can't help but root for.

Look up by Nathan Bryon



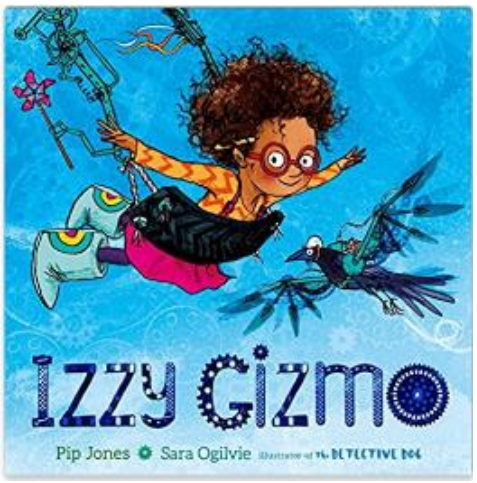
Rocket wants to be the greatest astronaut, star-catcher and space-traveller who has ever lived, just like Mae Jemison, the first African-American woman in space.
She's so excited about seeing a meteor shower that she makes an announcement over the supermarket loudspeaker when the cashier isn't looking, and hands out flyers to her fellow shoppers, much to her older brother Jamal's disdain – after all, Jamal prefers to be looking down at his phone most of the time and not up at the stars. And when Jamal gets too into his gaming to take Rocket to the park to watch the meteor shower, what will she do? Fortunately a knock at the door provides a joyous solution…
Nathan Bryon and Dapo Adeola's charming picture book gifts us with a gorgeous character in Rocket, a girl whose passion for all things space is as inspiring to the reader as her heroine Mae Jemison is to her. Adeola has a real talent for portraying expression, from teen Jamal's sulks to Rocket's jubilation at watching the stars.
Sprinkled with facts about meteors and space, this charming picture book is also a lovely representation of family, sibling relationships and one girl's infectious enthusiasm.

The Extraordinary Gardener by Sam Boughton



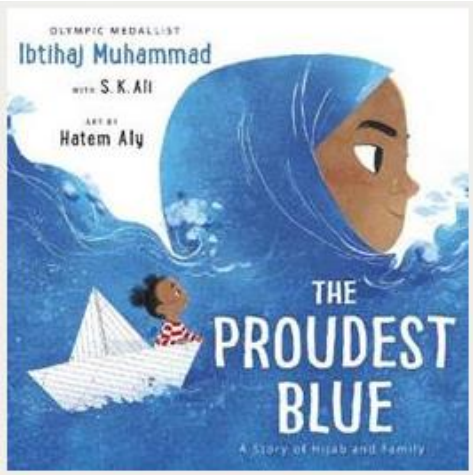
A charming story about the importance **of nature, teaching us that if we work hard enough our dreams really can come true!**
Joe's huge adventure starts with something very small, an apple pip. Though it takes a while, it grows – and grows. Inspired, Joe fills his balcony with plants and flowers grown from seeds, and thrilled with the effect it has on neighbours, decides to share them with people throughout his city. In an explosion of colour, a spectacular fold-out page reveals the extraordinary transformation he effects. A story of imagination and creativity that will brighten anyone's world, this is a delight to read and share. Sam Boughton mixes watercolour with wax crayon, mono-print and photo collage to create scenes bursting with life and joy. Extraordinary indeed!

Izzy Gizmo by Pip Jones



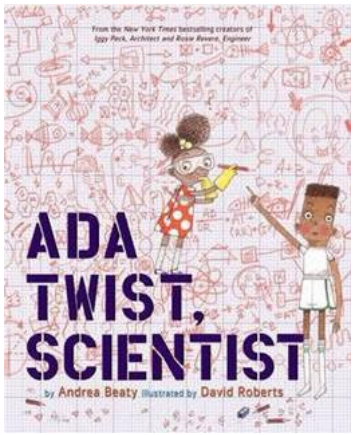
Izzy Gizmo is a girl that loves inventing things: the Swirly Spagsonic, the Tea-Mendous and the Beardtastic, for instance. But unfortunately, something always goes wrong: Grandpa gets more than he bargained for in the foamy grasp of the Beardtastic's clippers, and the Swirly-Spagsonic has an unfortunate effect on the wallpaper.
One day, Izzy finds a wounded crow and decides to build it some new wings, but it's so difficult! Will Izzy keep her cool, and keep going to succeed?
Izzy and her grandpa's relationship is really lovely, with Grandpa being the one that helps Izzy to keep trying with her inventions and not get cross when they don't work straight away. Sara Ogilvie's depiction of Izzy's frustrated expressions are absolutely wonderful, and it's great to see a picture book represent a black girl so delightfully enmeshed in her technological inventions.

The Proudest Blue by Ibtihaj Muhammad and S.K. Ali



It's Faizah's first day of school and she's got a brand-new backpack and light-up shoes. For her older sister, Asiya, it's her first day of wearing a hijab at school. Faizah sees her sister as a princess wearing her beautiful blue hijab, but not everyone at school sees it this way. Instead, they are confused and say hurtful things to Asiya. But with wise words from their mother and understanding from their friends, Faizah and Asiya find new ways to be strong.
Inspired by the experiences of Olympic medallist Ibtihaj Muhammad, this is a beautiful and powerful story about the bond shared between siblings and being proud of yourself and your beliefs.
The playful illustrations capture the imagination of the younger sister and complement the poetic text. There is a message at the end from the authors about the background of the story, which will promote questions and discussion with young readers about living in a multicultural world.

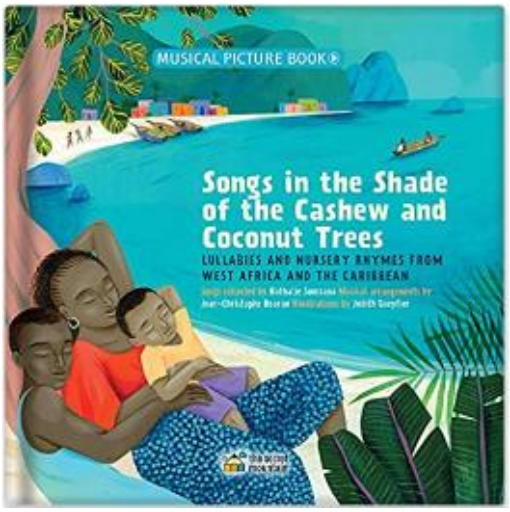
Ada Twist, Scientist by Andrea Beaty



Ada Marie is a curious child. Saying nothing until the age of three, she suddenly starts asking her parents, 'Why?' 'What?' 'How?' and 'When?' at every available opportunity.
As Ada grows up, her curiosity wreaks havoc at school, but she has all the traits of a great scientist. One day, there is a terrible stink, and Ada must form and test a hypothesis about what might be causing it - which leads to a stint in the Thinking Chair…
A brilliant and beautiful rhyming book about supporting your child's curiosity, *Ada Twist* also responds magnificently to the call for greater representation of girls - and girls of colour - in STEM subjects and industries (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).
Taking her inspiration from Ada Lovelace, the pioneer mathematician and programmer, Andrea Beaty has created an inspirational and entertaining book.

BAME main characters based in African Countries

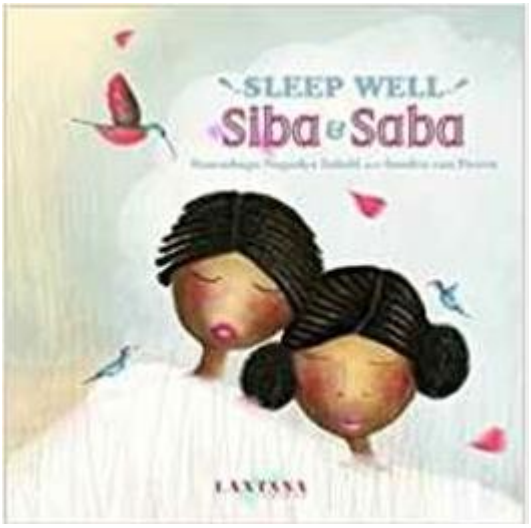
Songs in the Shade of the Cashew and Coconut Trees: Lullabies and Nursery Rhymes from West Africa and the Caribbean by Nathalie Soussana



Songs about children playing in the schoolyard, sisters braiding each other's hair at the beach, and parents dancing late into the night mesh together thanks to the music. A wide array of styles--nursery rhymes from Gabon, lullabies from Cape Verde, and rumbas from the Congo--are performed in more than a dozen languages. Luminous artwork and home grown instruments round off this wonderful celebration of history, language, and culture. Lyrics appear in their original language and in English, along with notes on culture, a world map, and a code for song downloads and print-outs.

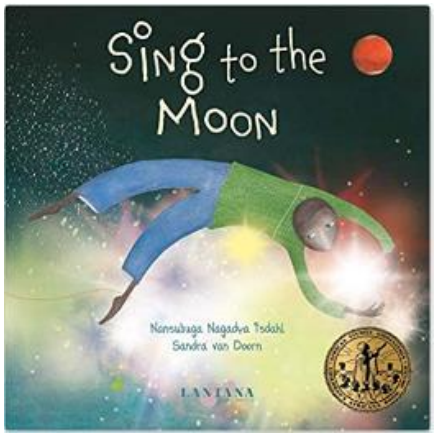
Uganda

Sleep Well Siba & Saba by Nansubuga Nagadya Isdahl



Sisters Siba and Saba are always forgetting where they have left things. They leave sweaters on buses and sandals at the beach. At night, they have magical dreams of the things they have lost. Yet when they awake it becomes clear that their visions are more than just dreams.
Both story and illustrations are full of references to Ugandan folklore, and combine to create a wonderful bedtime book.

Sing to the Moon by Nansubuga Nagadya Isdahl

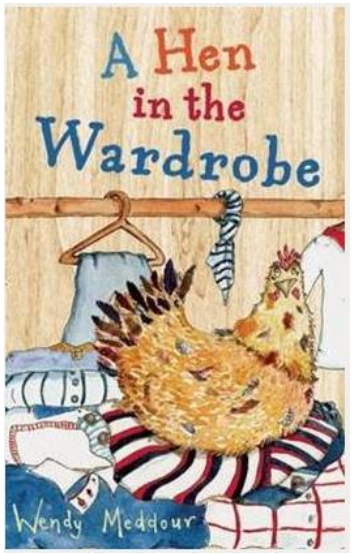


For one little Ugandan boy, no wish is too big. First he dreams of reaching the stars and then of riding a supernova straight to Mars. But on a rainy day at his grandfather's house, he is brought down to earth with a bump. Do adventures only happen in galaxies far away or can he find magic a little closer to home?

A touching story of a grandfather's love for his grandson and the quiet pleasures of a rainy day.

Algeria

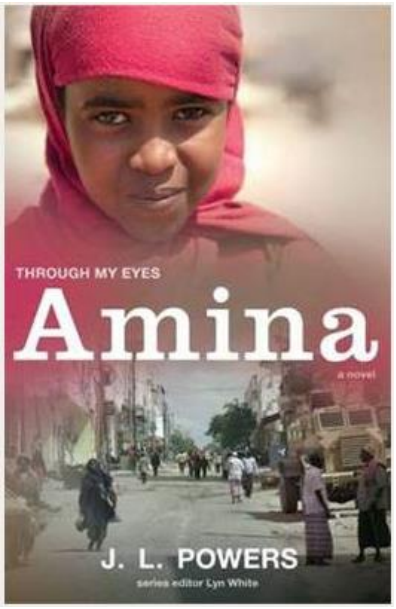
A Hen in the Wardrobe by Wendy Meddour



Ramzi's dad is acting very strangely: he climbs trees in the middle of the night, searches for a leopard in the back garden, and even goes into Ramzi's wardrobe looking for a hen. He's sleepwalking because he is homesick for his native Algeria, so Ramzi, Dad and Mum decide to go back to his Berber village. Here, Ramzi has the chance to meet his Berber grandmother and cousins - and has some exciting and scary experiences. But can Ramzi help his dad - and what will happen when they go back home again? This warm-hearted, cross-cultural story from debut author Wendy Meddour makes a fun, easy and lively read. The characters are brilliantly drawn, there is plenty of humour, and Meddour paints a vivid picture of traditional Berber culture. A touching and funny family story that will captivate younger readers.

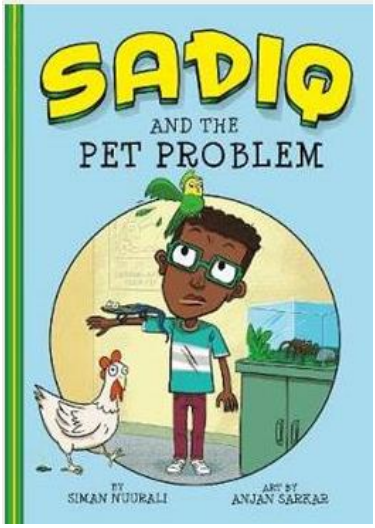
Somalia

Through My Eyes: Amina by J.L. Powers



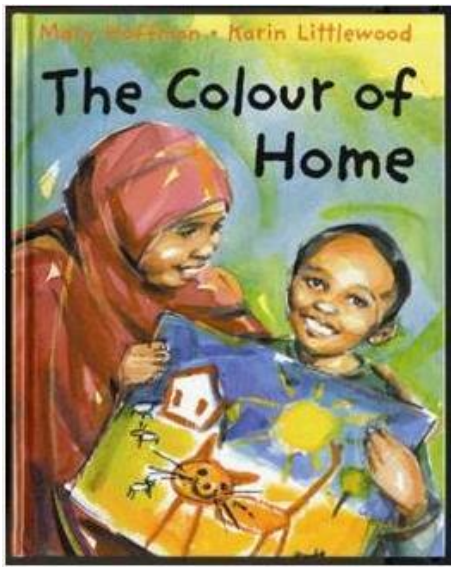
Amina is a young girl who is living in a war zone. Her parents believe that they should not leave Somalia to live abroad even though their lives are in constant danger. JL Powers depicts the realities of life in Mogadishu at the end of the civil war. Food is scarce due to the recent drought, the lives of the citizens of the town are governed by strict rules including a ban on football (even people talking about football could be arrested). The art and poetry Amina creates is also drawing attention and could get her in trouble. Amina's world is shattered when her father is arrested and her brother abducted. She becomes the person her family relies upon to find them food and maintain contact with the outside world. This moving story transports the reader to Somalia and allows them to experience the challenges faced by the Somalian families who chose to stay in their war torn country. This book is perfect for those who enjoyed the realism of Beverley Naidoo's *The Other Side of Truth*.

Sadiq and the Pet Problem by Siman Nurali



Sadiq is excited when his teacher says his class can get a pet. But which one should they choose? Hamsters, bearded dragons and rabbits all have their drawbacks. The class set out to find the pet which is best for them.
Sadiq is a relatable little boy who has everyday experiences that children will identify with. He is from Somalia, and the book includes two pages of information about his home country, including a list of Somali words. Somali children will see themselves reflected as welcome, normal members of society, and other children will learn interesting facts. It is refreshing to see a book for young readers where ethnic diversity is included without it being the main topic of the story.
The illustrations are bright and appealing and designed to help with comprehension. The format is small and manageable for children's hands while the font is large and well-spaced enough to make reading easy. There are also discussion, comprehension and writing activities at the back of the book to help tease out the themes further.
This book is the first in a series and would be a great choice for a classroom library in Years 1 to 3.

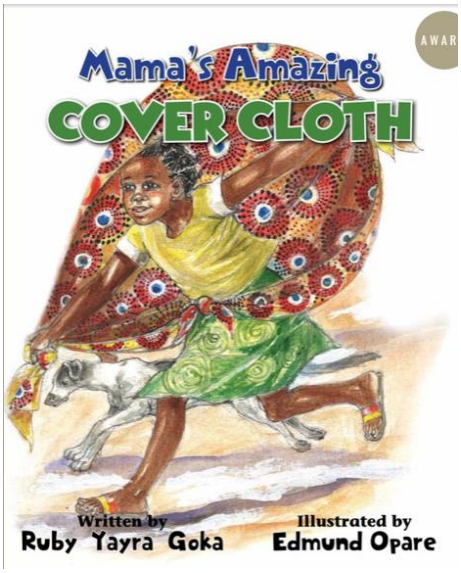
The Colour of Home by Mary Hoffman



On Hassan's first day at school he paints a colourful picture of his home and family in Somalia, but then adds soldiers, flames and bullets. A Somali translator helps him to explain that the painting shows his feelings about the death of his uncle, and his family's flight from Mogadishu to dreary England.
But Hassan's next painting is full of colour, reflecting the hope and interest he begins to see in his new life in Britain. This is an affecting yet ultimately optimistic tale, brought to life by expressive watercolour illustrations.

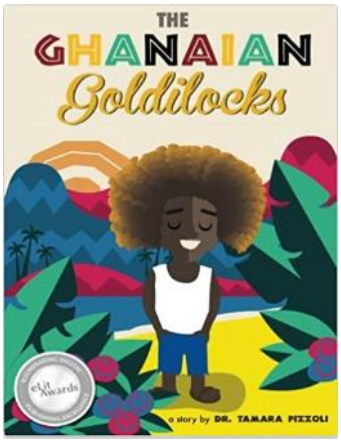
Ghana

Mama's Amazing Cover Cloth by Ruby Yayra Gaka



Do you know that the African woman's cover cloth has many uses? In this delightful book that young children will enjoy, a little girl shares the many uses of her mother's amazing cover cloth.

The Ghanaian Goldilocks by Dr Tamara Pizzoli

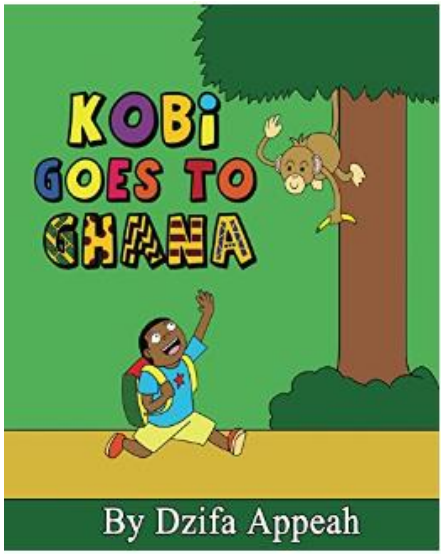


Set in Accra, Ghana, The Ghanaian Goldilocks is a modern twist on the classic Goldilocks fairy tale. Like traditional kente cloth, West African culture and themes are woven seamlessly into the story of a boy with sun lightened hair named Kofi, better known to his friends and family as Goldilocks. Like the Goldilocks in the traditional tale, Kofi has been known to get into some trouble here and there, but it's an unexpected visit to a neighbour's house that teaches him a valuable lesson of a lifetime.

The Leopard's Drum by Jessica Souhami

Osebo the leopard has a fine drum, a huge drum, a "magnificent" drum. All the animals covet Osebo's drum, but he won't let anyone else have it, not even Nyame, the Sky-God. So, Nyame offers a big reward to the animal that brings him the drum. All try - the monkey, the elephant, even the python - and all fail. Can a very small tortoise succeed in outwitting the boastful leopard? Jessica Souhami's vibrant collage illustrations, full of movement and humour, add additional appeal to this delightful story. The short, rhythmic text is perfect for reading aloud.

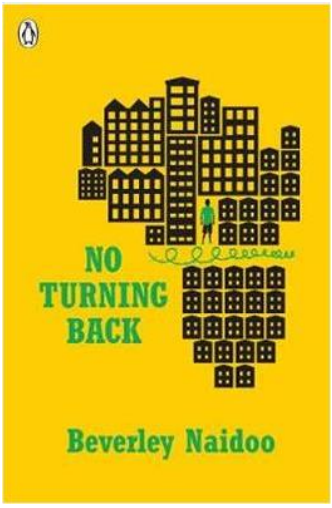
Kobi goes to Ghana by Dzifa Appeah



Kobi makes a big fuss when he finds out he is going on holiday to Ghana. He thinks he will be sleeping in a mud hut and will see wild animals in the streets. But when Kobi gets to Ghana, he is pleasantly surprised... This modern picture book is perfect for reading aloud, or for small children to read to themselves time and again.

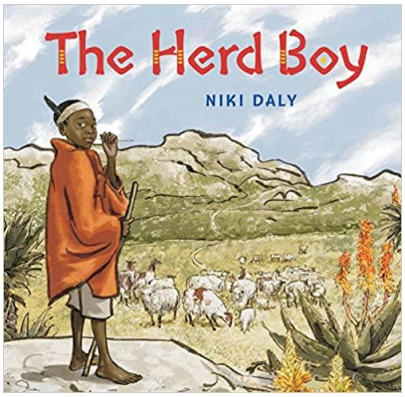
South Africa

No Turning Back by Beverley Naidoo



Sipho is a runaway, one of many living on the streets of Johannesburg. Like others, he has run from violence at home and in the hope of making a living for himself. But while he finds real friendship, and a kind of freedom, he also finds children drugging themselves to sleep with *iglue*, more violence, and a simmering racial prejudice that makes even a gesture of kindness turn sour. This powerful, moving book conveys complex shades of good and evil in a confidently described South Africa. The characters, with all their flaws, ring true, and will excite passionate discussion about the rights and wrongs of each decision.
This would be a brilliant book to read as a class to stimulate conversation and debate about injustice around the world. The ambiguous ending, in keeping with the rest of the book, is faithful to a situation that has no simple solution.

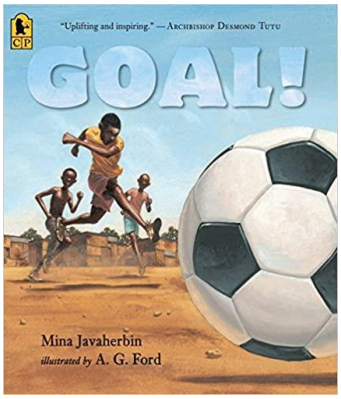
The Herd Boy by Niki Daly



The story describes a day in the life of an African herd boy from the Transkei region of South Africa. He watches over his flock all day, watches out for birds of prey and helps to save the life of a lamb attacked by baboons. On the way home a big shiny car passes the boy and his flock and the person inside winds down the window. It is Nelson Mandela. When he asks the boy what his dream is, the boy replies… to be President. And the book ends with the boy's big dream of a future very far from the sheep and the village. Nelson Mandela came from the Transkei region and was also a herd boy during his childhood.

With an endnote about the link with Nelson Mandela and a glossary of African words.

Goal! By Mina Jahaverbin

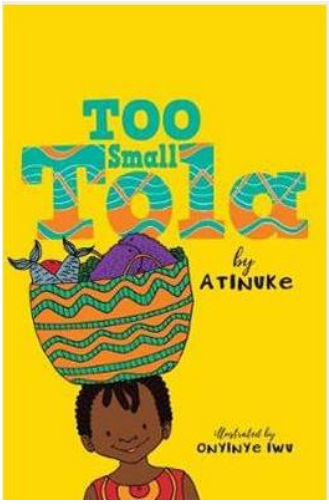


"Uplifting and inspiring, this beautifully written and illustrated book reminds us of the joys and saving grace of friendship and sport." -- Archbishop Desmond Tutu

In a dusty township in South Africa, Ajani and his friends have earned a brand-new, federation size soccer ball. They kick. They dribble. They run. They score. These clever boys are football champions! But when a crew of bullies tries to steal their ball, will Ajani and his friends be able to beat them at their own game?

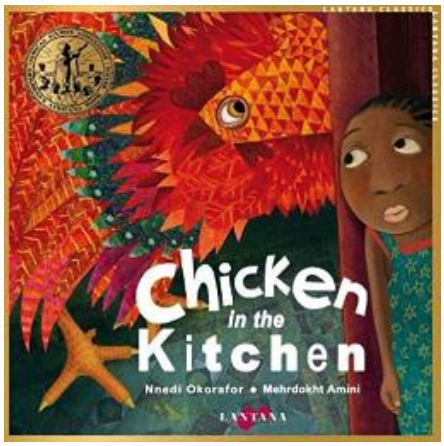
Nigeria

Too Small Tola by Atinuke



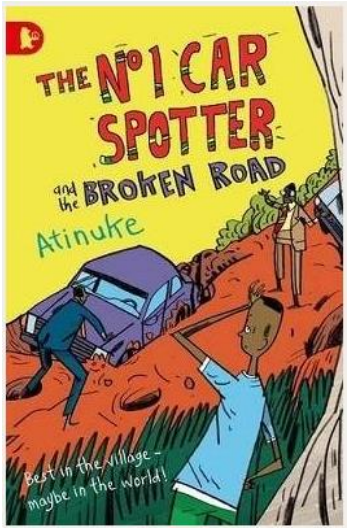
This marvellous collection of three short stories introduces Tola, a young Nigerian girl who lives with her grandmother and two elder siblings in a one-room apartment, situated in a crumbling block of flats in the bustling city of Lagos.
Tired of the nickname 'Too Small Tola', she proves that, despite her small stature, she has a mighty personality and a big heart. In the first story, she helps Grandmummy carry the shopping back from market, balancing a large, heavy basket on her head. The second tale demonstrates her courage when she confronts a bully while queueing to collect water from the outside pump. Finally, Tola saves the day when she helps a neighbour who has broken his leg and is unable to work.
Tola's determination, compassion and generosity are celebrated in this positive portrayal of a contemporary Nigerian family. Through the young girl's experiences, children will learn about life in Lagos, from the bumper-to-bumper traffic on hot, dusty roads to the stark contrast between rich and poor. Readers will also identify with Tola's universal concerns, such as sibling tensions and facing up to bullies. Splendid black-and-white drawings feature throughout, bringing the characters and location to life with warmth and humour.

Chicken in the Kitchen Nnedi Okorafor and Mehrdokht Amini



What would you do if you woke up one night to find the shadow of a giant chicken passing your bedroom door? Go and investigate of course! When Anyaugo follows a giant chicken into her kitchen one warm night in Nigeria, she embarks on a hilarious adventure where nothing is quite as it seems. Is the nature spirit that lives in the wooden walls of her house a help or a hindrance? Is the mischievous giant chicken a friend or a foe? Most importantly, will Anyaugo be able to save the food her aunties have cooked for the New Yam Festival the next day?
World Fantasy Award-winning author Nnedi Okorafor provides us with a hugely entertaining look at the fascinating masquerade culture of West Africa, told from the perspective of a plucky young Nigerian girl who finds the courage to protect the traditions she loves.

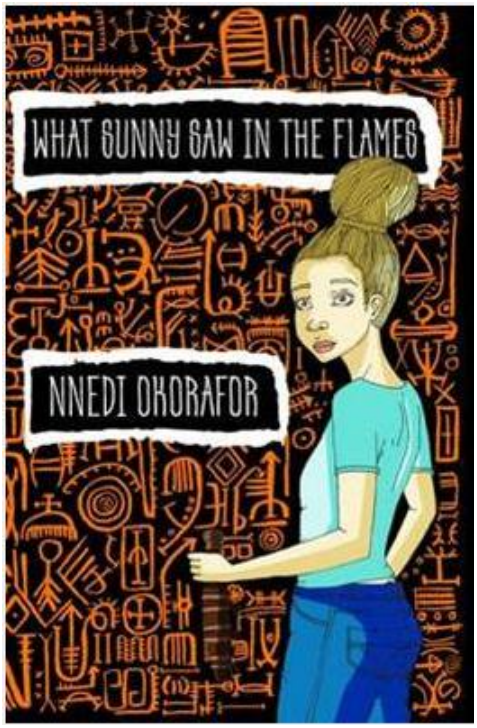
The No.1 Car Spotter and the Broken Road by Atinuke



Car spotting is the only hobby in Oluwalase's small African village, and he is No. 1 at it in the village – probably in the world. No. 1 can spot them before he sees them from the sound of their engine. No. 1's Grandmother and Mama think car spotting distracts him from his share of the work, but No. 1 can spot cars whilst he carries the yams from the field and collects firewood.

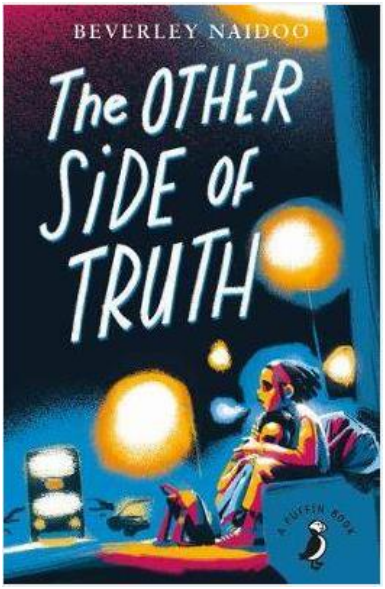
The No. 1 Car Spotter is set in Africa but there's much in this book for boys and girls in the UK to relate to, such as having to help with chores, negotiate tricky family situations and problem solve. No. 1 comes to the rescue each and every time his family or the village are in trouble!

What Sunny Saw in the Flames by Nnedi Okorafor



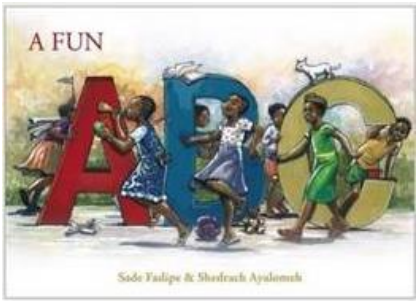
Sunny has always been different. With her milky skin and yellow hair, she doesn't look as though she belongs in her Nigerian family. When she sees a vision of an apocalyptic future in a candle flame, Sunny begins to wonder if she is going mad.
Then she is introduced to the Leopard People and becomes part of a secret world of magic, monsters, spells and shape-shifting. But the pleasure she finds in her new environment is tempered by the fact that she has to hide it from her family and then put herself in great danger to try and stop a ruthless child-killer.
Set in contemporary Nigeria, this is a magical fantasy story with a difference. Drawing on traditional belief systems and juju, Sunny's story explores some dark aspects of West African culture and uses them to develop a wildly imaginative supernatural world.

The Other Side of Truth by Beverley Naidoo



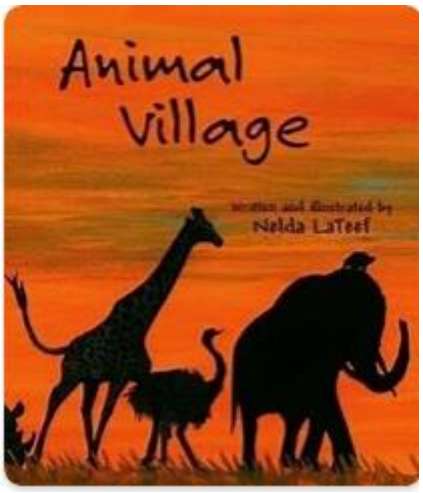
Femi and Sade's father is a journalist, a truth-teller, and someone who gets on the wrong side of the Nigerian authorities. When their mother is shot dead in front of them, the bullet was meant for him.
Sade and her brother are ripped from their comfortable, happy life and sent to England for their safety – illegally and against their will.
This novel wholly deserves its classic status. *The Other Side of Truth* won the Carnegie Medal in 2000 but the trauma and murder endured by Sade and her family, and their experience of fleeing the familiar to become refugees in an alien country, is still relevant and poignant.
Seen through the eyes of two brave, but frightened, children, this is a story of terror, loss, love and humanity. Naidoo never falls into the trap of making this a narrative of white saviours, or painting England as a rescuing paradise: Femi and Sade are traumatised, and they want to go home. Their struggle is theirs, their bravery comes from their identity and although they find friends in England, their longing for Nigeria, the past and home is unquenchable and the author never shies away from exploring their complex emotions.

A Fun ABC by Sade Fadipe



This lively alphabet book starts with 'A is for Adanah': a young girl who takes the reader on an exciting A to Z African adventure. When Adanah goes to stay with her grandfather during the school holidays, 'H is for hugs' when she enthusiastically greets him. As she settles down to sleep, 'M is for mosquito net' around her bed, and 'P is for pump' when she fills Grandad's keg with water in the village square.
As the sun sets on another day, 'S is for stories' told by Aunty Sumbo to a group of children gathered at her feet. And, finally, Z is for Zainab, Adanah's little sister, who eagerly awaits her return home.
Simple rhyming text accompanies the full-page watercolour illustrations, and children will enjoy searching for an assortment of objects beginning with each featured letter. A fun, positive portrayal of everyday life in a Nigerian village, which effectively introduces the alphabet to young children.

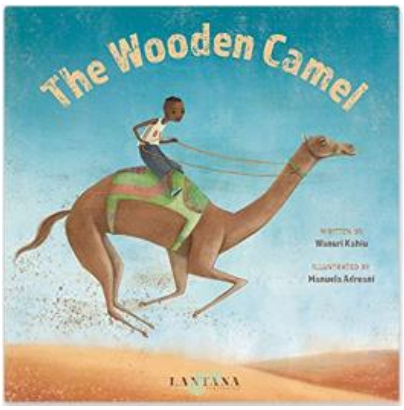
Animal Village by Nelda Lateef



Animal Village is an award-winning authentic folk tale from the Zarma culture of West Africa about a tortoise who saves her village from the ravages of drought with wisdom passed down from an "old story." Nelda LaTeef's colourful and strikingly brilliant montage of illustrations, in acrylic and collage, captures the richness and vibrancy of the sub-Saharan culture from which the story springs.
The story is especially relevant to sub-Saharan Africa as it focuses on the devastation of drought and the importance of received knowledge. With its dual themes of wisdom and grit, the book happily entertains while it teaches the importance of hard work and persistence as keys to success.

Kenya

The Wooden Camel by Wanuri Kahiu



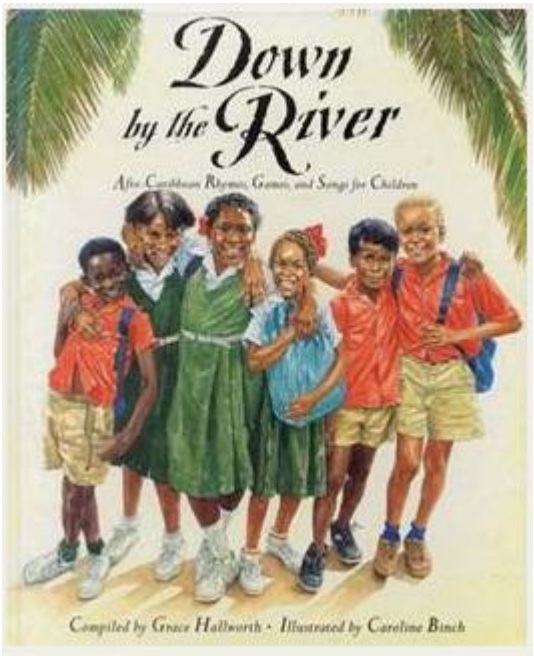
Etabo dreams of being a camel racer. One day he might even beat his older brother when they race. But with the price of water rising, Etabo's father must sell the camels, and his siblings must find work. What will Etabo do now? From acclaimed Kenyan filmmaker Wanuri Kahiu and Italian illustrator Manuela Adreani, this story of love and hope centres on the inspiring Turkana people of north-west Kenya. Told with gentleness and humour, it is a universal story about keeping one's dreams alive.

Sulwe by Lupita Nyong'o

Sulwe does not look anything like her family. They all have light-toned black skin, like the sunny day, whereas she has skin as dark as the night.
Anxious and aware of her difference, Sulwe is teased at school, and tries all kinds of things to make her skin lighter. But one night she has a visit from a star, who tells her how the world learned to appreciate the value and beauty of Night.
This gorgeous book is an essential addition to every library. Not only does it reassure children that they are beautiful just the way they are, but the illustrations make quietly clear that colourism is a prejudice that exists between people of colour, too.
Whereas too often authors treat blackness as homogenous, contrasted with white as if on a chessboard, this book demonstrates, through the pictures, the gloriously diverse spectrum of colour within "blackness". The "day" is a beautiful black woman, just like the "night" – refreshingly, every character in this book is black.
Children will be entranced by the illustrations, which have a wonderful, velvety depth of colour that really bring the characters to life.

BAME characters Caribbean based

Down by the River by Grace Hallworth

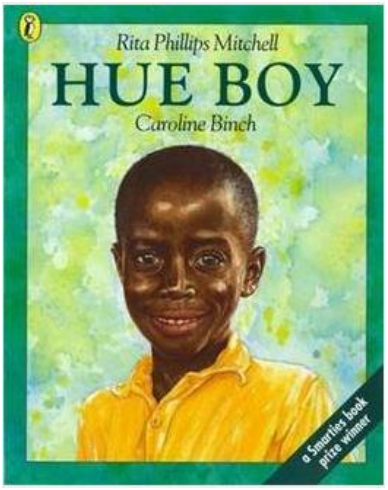


Originally published in 1996, and shortlisted for the Kate Greenaway Medal the following year, this is a welcome reappearance of a picture book brimming with Caribbean sunshine and culture. The rhymes, games and songs remembered by Hallworth from her own Trinidadian childhood, reflect the similarities and differences between British and Afro-Caribbean children's experience, and she points out in her introduction that many have their roots in European originals, adapted to Caribbean life.
Binch's characteristic illustrations echo the atmosphere, soak up the sunshine and greatly enhance the attraction of the book.
Traditional children's rhymes are repetitive, rhythmical and frequently nonsensical, funny, sometimes frightening and always memorable. This is a book in which some readers will revisit favourites and others discover new.

Drummer Boy of John by Mark Greenwood

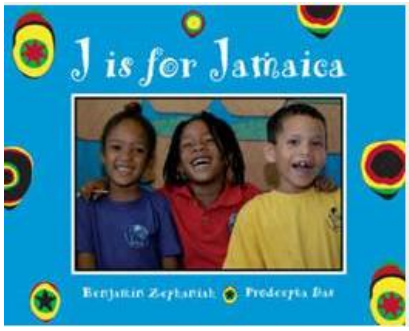
Excitement is mounting on the island of John; carnival time is approaching and everyone is excited. The Roti King has promised best band in the parade some of his famous rotis - folded pancakes filled with chicken and a mouth-watering blend of herbs and spices - and bands are enthusiastically practising.
Only Winston is downhearted; he *loves* roti, but he isn't in a band. But then he makes an amazing discovery in the junkyard: all the pots, pans and tins make different noises. Soon he can play a tune, and the junkyard steel band is born. But can they beat the other bands - and win the delicious rotis?
The vibrant colours and swinging sounds of Trinidad resound through this story of musical invention and enjoyment

Hue Boy by Rita Phillips Mitchell



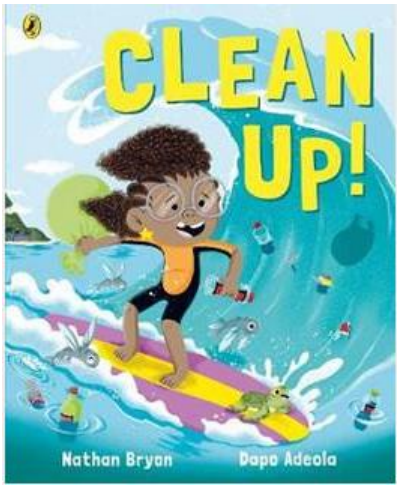
Hue Boy is smaller than his friends and, no matter what he eats, he doesn't seem to grow. Everyone has advice from stretching exercises to herbal baths but it makes no difference. His mother even takes him to the wise man of the village and to the doctor. Then Hue Boy's dad returns home - and before he realises it Hue Boy begins to grow.
Many children will identify with Hue Boy in this heart-warming story set in a Caribbean village. The beautiful pictures evoking sunshine and nature are the perfect accompaniment to this familiar story.

J is for Jamaica by Benjamin Zephaniah



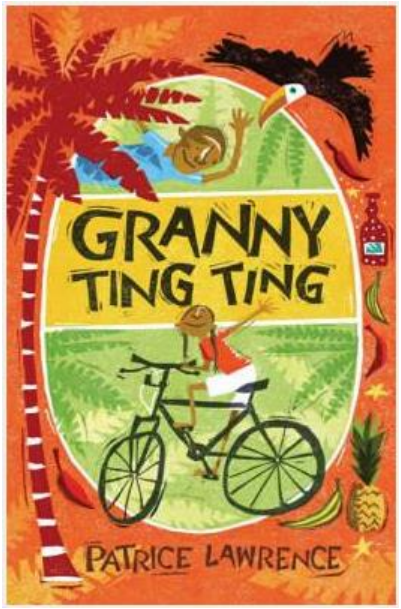
Welcome to this whistle-stop tour of Jamaica - from A for Ackee to Z for Zinc. You'll discover what people eat, what they do, the games they play, the places they live, and see some of the plants and animals.
For each letter there's a vibrant photograph providing a window into a different aspect of Jamaican life, as well as a poem. It's an ABC, a poetry book and geography lesson rolled into one!
A welcome addition to a successful series, this is an excellent introduction to Jamaica. Its colours, sights, smells, tastes and bustle are captured by the jewel-sharp colours of Das's photographs and Zephaniah's characteristically jaunty verses that beg to be read aloud. And it's got a proper X - for Xamayca!

Clean Up! by Nathan Bryon



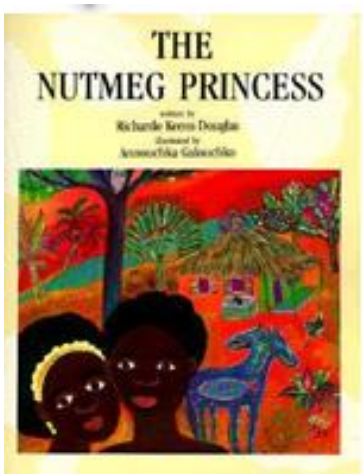
Rocket is SO EXCITED because her, her mum and her brother Jamal are going to visit her Grammy and Grampy in Jamaica. Even more excitingly, Rocket's grandparents run whale watching tours and have an animal sanctuary at the back of their house. It's brilliant finally seeing Grammy and Grampy - Grammy is a pretty impressive surfer, and Rocket and mum love building sandcastles - but when a baby turtle washes up, tangled in plastic, Grampy explains that plastic is ruining the island, and no whales have been sighted here for a long time.
Rocket decides that something must be done, so she enlists everyone on the beach into her Clean Up Crew. Finally, the beach is clean and Rocket knows she's made a huge difference. Hooray!
The inclusion of simple facts – this time about marine pollution – alongside adorable heroine Rocket's lovely family and her dedication and courage to do better for her community makes for a meaningful, relatable read. *Clean Up* also reminds us that there are always things we can do to make the world better, and that environmental issues aren't separate from our everyday lives: plastic pollution is affecting Grammy and Grampy's business as well as hurting turtles and ruining the beach for visitors.
Adeola and Bryon's representation of an authentic, well-drawn black family is welcome in picture books, and especially so in a book about environmental issues, where people of colour have so frequently been in the vanguard of activism.

Granny Ting Ting by Patrice Lawrence



Shayla waits for her cousin Michael to arrive in Trinidad, visiting from London. She's looking forward to seeing Michael at her granny's house, but when he arrives, he seems keen to impress on Shayla how much bigger and better things are back where he lives in London. Will the cousins manage to sort out their differences? The two children battle it out with tree climbing, hot pepper sauce-eating and bike riding contests: luckily, with Granny Ting Ting's help, the story comes to a very satisfactory conclusion.
Granny Ting is a delightfully funny story that is perfect for early readers and children making the transition from picture books. It's a book that young readers will want to race through, and perfect for reading aloud to less confident readers.

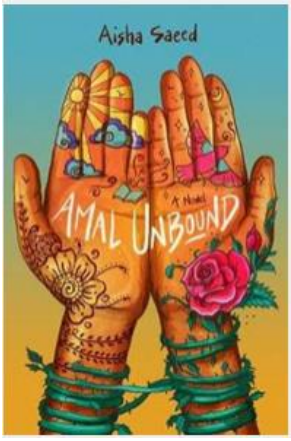
The Nutmeg Princess by Richardo Keens-Douglas



In this joyous, modern fable, only those with goodness of heart can see the elusive vision. On the Caribbean island called the "Isle of Spice," there was a lake with a nutmeg grove nearby. On the lake, some said, live the Nutmeg Princess -- but she would only appear when the nutmeg was ready for picking, and the sweet smell of the spice filled the air. If you were lucky, you might see her, but to do so you had to rise at 4 a.m. and sit just so by the edge of the lake. Two children are determined to do just that, and the townspeople follow along. Only the two children are gifted with a vision of her and her wisdom "Go now, follow your dreams, and if you believe in yourselves, all things are possible." And then she was gone, never to reappear.

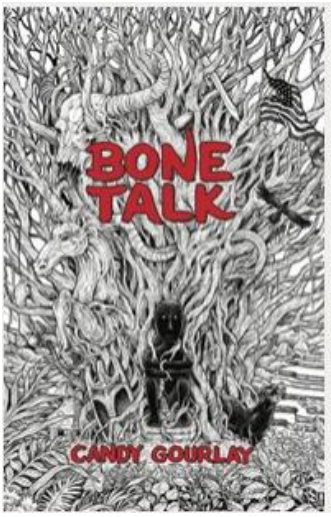
BAME characters South Asian based

Amal Unbound by Aisha Saeed



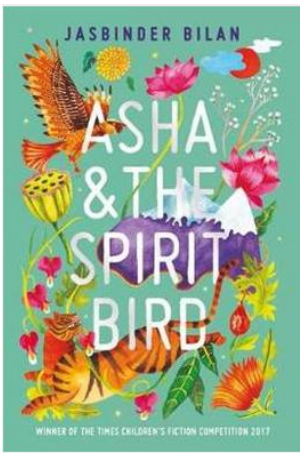
Amal lives happily in a small Pakistani village with her parents and three younger sisters, where she attends the local school and dreams of one day becoming a teacher.
When her mother gives birth to a fifth daughter, Amal has to stay home to help. Feeling frustrated at missing so many lessons, she loses her temper on a trip to the market and refuses to defer to the cruel and influential landowner, Jawad Sahib, when he demands the pomegranate she has bought for her mother.
The repercussions of this small act of defiance are shocking, and as Amal's family are unable to pay the debt Jawad Sahib says they owe, he takes Amal to work in his house as a servant.
Unsure when she will see her family again, Amal makes the best of her situation, learning the ropes and befriending the other servants. As she discovers more about Jawad Sahib's methods of control, she desperately wishes she could stand up against the injustice and corruption she witnesses.
Inspired by Malala Yousafzai, who advocates for women's rights in Pakistan, this is a compelling tale of one girl's determination to make the world a fairer place.

Bone Talk by Candy Gourlay



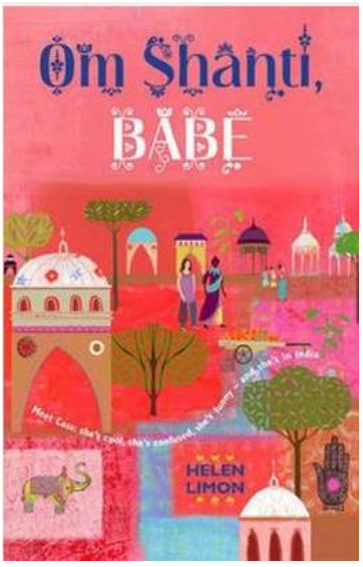
Samkad is a boy from a remote Filipino "headhunter" tribe called Bontok in the highlands of the Philippines, back in around 1899.
When the story starts, Samkad is most worried about receiving the Cut (something similar to circumcision that happens to boys in their tenth year on the cusp of manhood) and his slightly complicated friendship with a girl called Luki. He has never met anyone from the world outside of his tribe.
But then the American invaders provide a much greater threat to everything he knows and loves.
Candy Gourlay tells this brilliant adventure story from the point of view of a young Filipino boy from a time and place that most readers will know nothing about – and certainly from a previously unheard voice (most of what is written about the time is by Americans writing as tourists, anthropologists and conquerors).
Samkad's story is told so sensitively, so lightly and so truthfully that you are completely transported (heart in mouth) to another time and world – until Samkad's concerns are your concerns and you're with him every step of the way.
An exciting, fascinating and beautifully written book.

Asha and the Spirit Bird by Jasbinder Bilan



Asha's life on her parents' farm in the foothills of the Himalayas would be perfect – if only her father could be there with them. He works in a factory in a far-off city, sending money home, because the farm doesn't pay enough for them to live on. But then one day, the money stops. Inspired by the spirit of her grandmother in the form of a lamagaia bird, Asha decides to set off on a dangerous journey, to find her father and bring him home before money-lenders make them penniless.
Throughout this warm, comforting story, religious faith and spiritual beliefs provide an anchor for Asha. Animals protect her, and seem to be filled with the spirits of her beloved dead. Although the story explores some dark and terrible truths about the vulnerability of the poor in India, it manages to do so with a constantly reassuring tone. Asha and her friends face slave labour and exploitation, but magical help, human kindness and faith get them through all dangers, and the final ending is as perfect as any fairy tale. Despite some dark subject matter, this book would therefore be suitable for most young readers.

Om Shanti Babe by Helen Limon

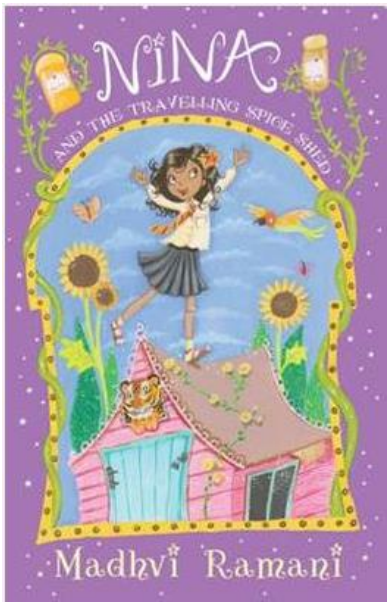


Cassia's excited to be flying to Kerala in India with her Mum on a buying trip for her shop, leaving behind best-friend trouble in London and dreaming of Bollywood glamour, new friends and pop idol Johnny Gold. But when she arrives in India, nothing is quite as she imagined it: Mum is getting overly friendly with Mr Chaudury, and Cass herself ends up falling out with beautiful, fashion-conscious Priyanka. Discovering that her Mum's business is in financial trouble - and then finding out that Johnny Gold is financing a new hotel that could destroy a beautiful coastline - precipitate Cass to take positive action.
There's an energy and vigour to Cassia's fresh, funny, unflinchingly honest voice as she narrates this story about gaining confidence and finding a place to be herself. Helen Limon won the 2011 Frances Lincoln Diverse Voices Award for this, her debut novel, which was inspired by a visit to Kerala in 2009 which made her aware of the social and environmental themes woven into this funny and entertaining tale of friendship and self-discovery.

Running on the Roof of the World by Jess Butterworth

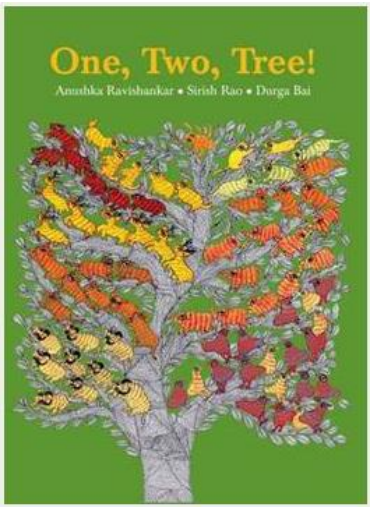
Tash and her best friend Sam have grown up used to following the rules in occupied Tibet. But when a man sets himself on fire as an act of protest, Tash barely escapes after her house is raided and her parents are arrested. She, Sam and their two yaks set out on a dangerous journey across the Himalayas to reach India and the Dalai Lama, who she hopes will be able to save her parents.
This beautifully designed book is a richly atmospheric story of friendship, courage and survival. It provides a rare insight into Tibetan culture and raises timely questions about the nature of freedom, without being overtly political. Although there are some distressing moments, these are sensitively handled and the overriding message is one of hope and compassion.

Nina and the Travelling Spice Shed by Madhvi Ramani



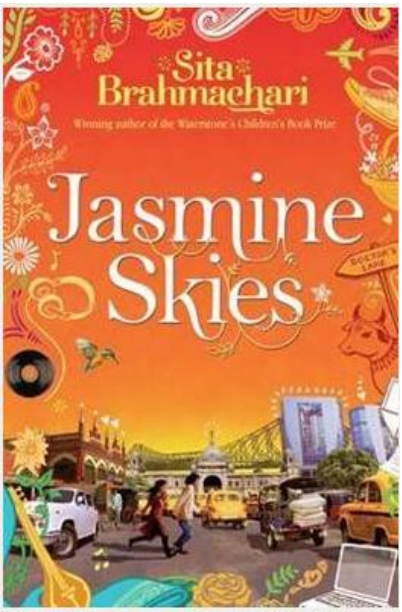
When Nina goes in search of some turmeric, in eccentric Aunt Nishi's spice shed, she doesn't expect the shed to take off for India! There, she meets a mind-reading Mystic Sadhu; befriends Raj, a street boy who wants to star in Bollywood films; is cast in dazzling Maya Mistry's new movie; and narrowly escapes from a Bengal tiger. She discovers that turmeric is taken from the thick orange roots of a plant with beautiful white flowers and is able to bring some back to Aunt Nishi. Nina's magical travels make her school presentation on India a lot more exciting!
This warm, entertaining adventure about a British schoolgirl finding out about her parents' homeland is an easy read offering plenty of excitement.

One, Two, Tree! by Anushka Ravishankar and Sirish Rao



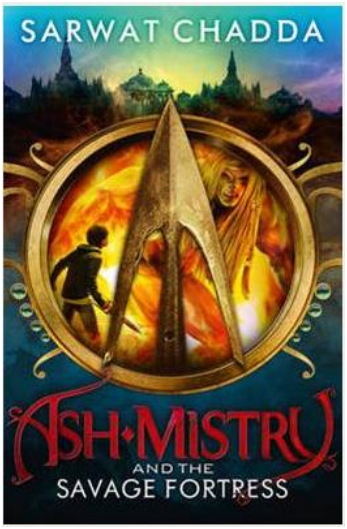
This is an unusual and creative counting book. A visually stunning read-aloud book that invites young children to count the improbable number of animals that clamber up an ever-expanding tree. Illustrated with art from the Gond tribal tradition of central India, 'One, Two, Tree!' is a number book, a picture book, a nursery rhyme and a fable about living together.
From the state of Madhya Pradesh in central India, the Gonds are a community of highly visual people.

Jasmine Skies by Sita Brahmachari



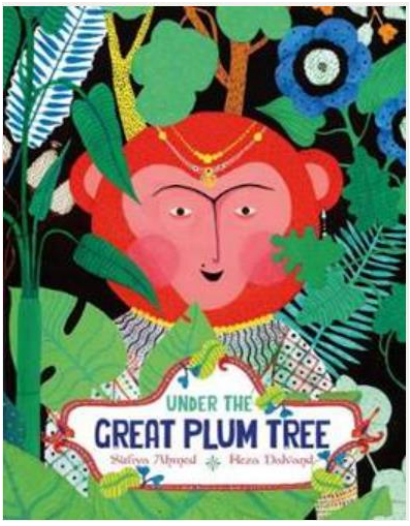
Mira Levenson is thrilled about travelling to India to meet her grandfather's family for the first time. But when she lands in Kolkata, Mira finds herself thrown into a strange and confusing new world of sweltering heat, beauty and chaos. What's more, although she feels immediately at home with her aunt Anjali and cousin Priya, she quickly becomes aware of the presence of deeply buried secrets beneath the warm welcome her Indian family give her. Mira sets out to discover why her mother and Anjali haven't spoken for so many years - and what could have happened to drive them apart.
The answers seem to lie in a stolen letter album, and the old tumbledown family home on Doctors Lane that she is forbidden to visit. But as well as trying to unravel the truth about her family, Mira must work out how to deal with her powerful attraction to her new friend and fellow artist Janu.
Following from Brahmachari's debut novel, *Artichoke Hearts,* this a thoughtful, tender and uplifting novel, which continues the story of Mira, now two years older, as she negotiates challenging new experiences, the complexities of family and friendship, and the uncertainty of teenage love.

Ash Mistry and the Savage Fortress by Sarwat Chadda



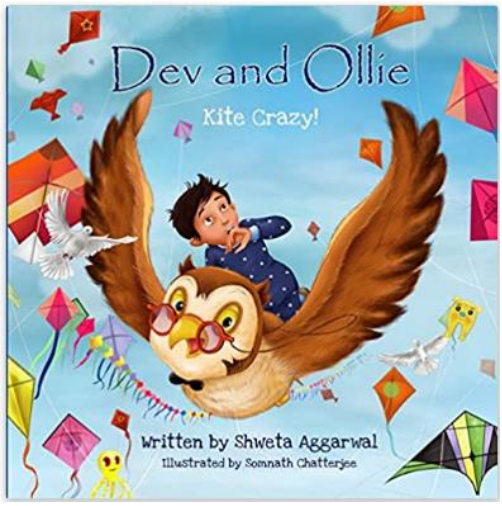
Geeky boy Ash Mistry and his sister Lucky are on holiday with their aunt and uncle in Varanasi, where the sweltering heat and corpse-burning smells are a far cry from home in England. But when wealthy Lord Savage seeks Uncle Vik's help translating an ancient manuscript, things take a very strange turn.
Why has Savage surrounded himself with *rahkshasa*, shape-shifting demons, that act as his servants? Ash stumbles across an ancient spearhead on one of Savage's archaeological digs, and realises something very odd is happening to him when he dreams he's taking part in battles straight from the Ramayana – as if he were actually there.
When Uncle and Aunty are murdered by Savage's rahkshasa because they refused to keep working for Savage, Ash and Lucy have to stay hidden in the heart of Varanasi. But what will happen when they are forced out of hiding? What is Ash's extraordinary destiny?
Ash Mistry and the Savage Fortress is book that anyone aged 9+ will race through. Covering themes of reincarnation, destiny, family, friendship, loyalty and a host of characters from Hindu belief and mythology, this is a page-turner that most children will find totally gripping.

Under the Great Plum Tree by Sufiya Ahmed



Set in the jungles of India, this is a marvellous retelling of a traditional tale from the Panchatantra, an ancient collection of Indian animal fables, which date from 300 BCE.
Miss Bandari is a monkey who is known throughout the land for her heart of gold. When Mr Magarmach, a frail, elderly crocodile, seeks shelter under her plum tree, Miss Bandari can see that he is hungry and generously shares her fruit with him. He returns each day and a touching companionship develops between the two creatures.
To repay her kindness, the crocodile tells her exciting stories of his younger days, when he battled with human hunters, pythons and lions. Their friendship is tested, however, when Mr Magarmach invites Miss Bandari to lunch and inadvertently puts her in grave danger.
Striking, vibrant artwork, inspired by traditional Gujarati patterns, beautifully complements this moving tale, which has courage, friendship and forgiveness at its core. This is a splendid addition to the *One Story, Many Voices* series, which explores traditional narratives from different cultural perspectives.

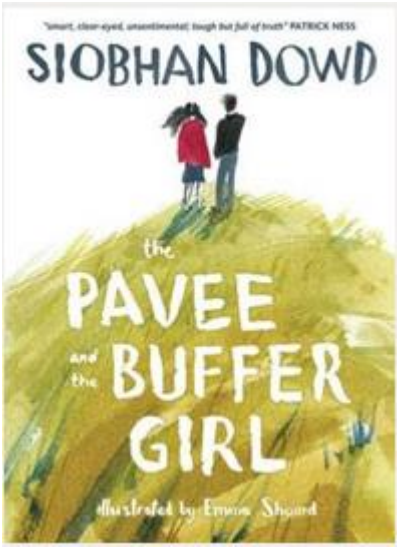
Dev and Ollie by Shweta Aggarval



Dev has just received his favourite birthday present - a cool new kite! But the problem is he doesn't know how to fly it.
Ollie, Dev's magical bedtime owl, comes to rescue. Together, they set off on an action packed journey to one of the largest kite festivals in the world...in INDIA!
Modern, informative and funny, Dev and Ollie series of books take children on magical adventures to unique, less known festivals in India and around the world!

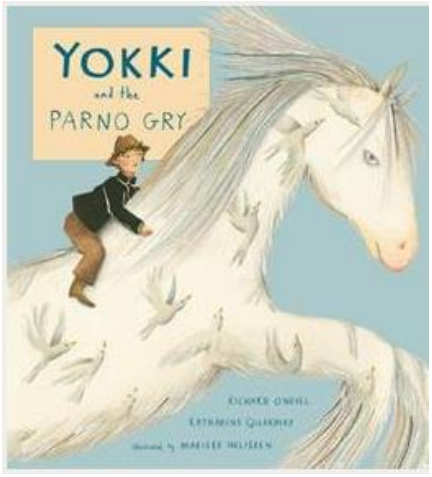
BAME characters Traveller/Roma/Gypsy community

The Pavee and the Buffer Girl by Siobhan Dowd



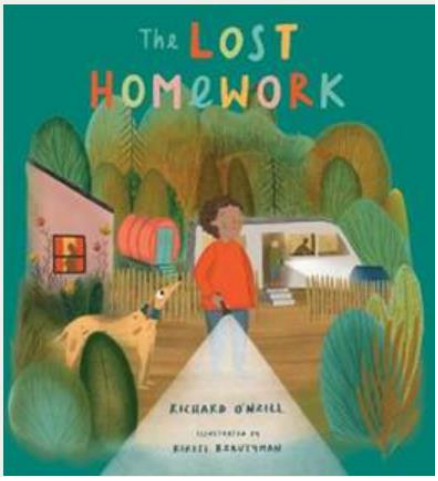
Jim's from a traveller family and has never been to secondary school, but one day his dad says he has to go - so it's into Uncle Mirt's van with the other kids down to Dundray. School is horrible - Jim can't read, so lessons are boring and everyone either calls him names or ignores him. Everyone apart from Kit - who becomes his friend and, away from the pressures of school, teaches him to read.
But even though Jim's life might have a new brightness in it, things are getting darker for all of the Pavees. When bullies take things too far, their violence threatens to uproot Jim's life and that of his whole community.
Stunningly illustrated by Emma Shoard, this short story by the late Siobhan Dowd is full of sensitivity and subtle, deft storytelling, and reminds readers of the need for compassion and understanding.

Yokki and the Parno Gry by Richard O'Neill and Katharine Quarmby



Yokki and his family are travellers, moving with the seasons to find work and sell their wares. After a particularly poor harvest, work is scarce and nobody has the money to buy their traditional crafts.
Yokki is a gifted storyteller and shares inspiring tales of a brighter future with his community. He speaks of a Parno Gry: a magnificent white horse who flies through the sky in search of more fruitful lands. His uplifting stories raise the spirits of his friends and family, helping them to forget their hunger and anxiety. Grandfather Elijah is angered by Yokki's frivolous tales, until he is gently reminded that in times of despair, dreams of a better future are even more important.
This traditional Romani tale gives an insight into the history and culture of a minority group that is often misunderstood. With colourful illustrations, this is an optimistic story of hope and imagination.

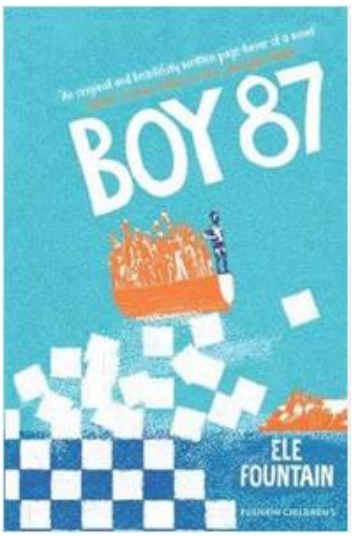
The Lost Homework by Richard O'Neill



Sonny lives on a Traveller community site with his family and he's super excited because this weekend they're going to a family wedding. There's so much to prepare: the horse needs to be shoed, everyone has to get their outfits ready and the cart has to be cleaned because the bride and groom will ride in it!
Sonny is kept so busy by the preparations and the wedding itself that he doesn't realise until too late that he's lost his homework book. Disaster! Yet when he goes to school and tells everyone about the weekend, his kind teacher points out that he's done plenty of learning in the course of his weekend: planning the route and calculating the journey time, performing on stage, sewing and painting and all manner of other things.
This smart, charming book is written by an author of Traveller heritage and it's a delight to see this community represented in a children's book, including authentic Traveller language and customs.
As well, there's a lovely message here (which will also be of great interest to home schoolers) that as well as formal learning, we are always surrounded by informal learning opportunities. A wonderful read.

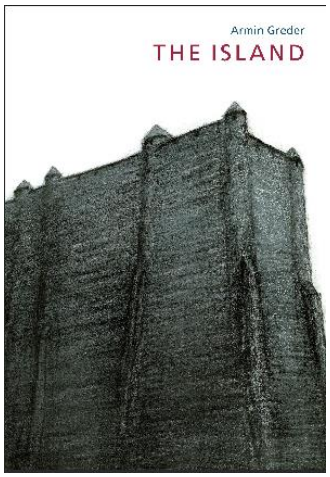
Refugee and Asylum seekers

Boy 87 by Ele Fountain



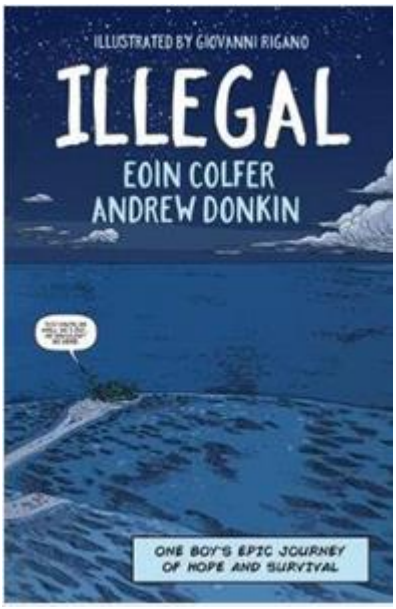
Fourteen-year-old Shif and his best friend Bini are ordinary boys with big ambitions, but their world implodes when they attract the attention of the military "giffa". Wrenched from their families, they're sent to a remote desert prison, where their cellmates are barely clinging to live.
However, the boys' arrival sparks hope in the imprisoned men, and they give everything to ensure their escape. Reaching the nearest town, Shif has only just begun the perilous journey which he hopes will end in safety and freedom.
Set in an unnamed country, this is a timely and important book which illuminates the realities of life as a refugee. The first-person narration simply but powerfully conveys Shif's terror at the violence and cruelty he encounters, as well as his sense of loss. The horrors he is escaping are all too real, but this is ultimately a story about the power of kindness and the strength of the human spirit.

The Island by



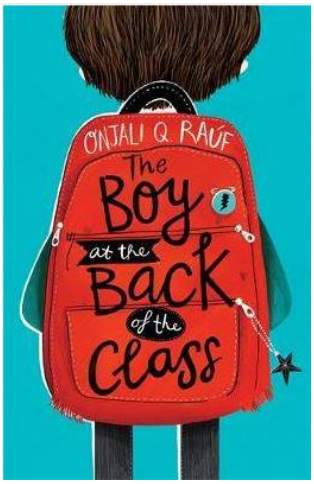
The Island is an astonishing and powerful picture book about refugees, xenophobia, multiculturalism, social politics and human rights. It tackles big themes in subtle ways with a fable-like text and stunning artwork that will provoke discussion for upper primary and secondary school levels about issues that remain so much a part of our national discourse

Illegal by Eoin Colfer and Andrew Donkin



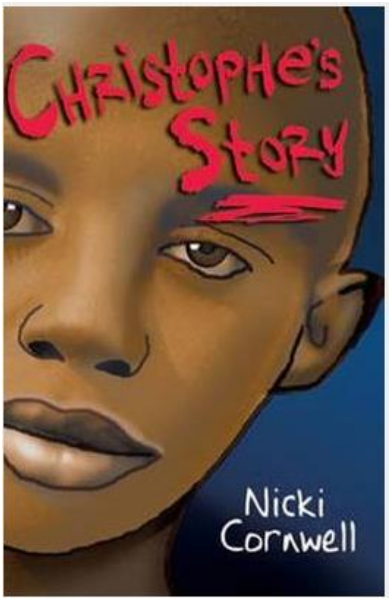
Illegal tells the story of Ebo, a 12-year-old boy who flees grinding poverty, zero opportunities and a drunken uncle in his small village in Africa. His brother Kwame and sister Sisi have already left in the hope of a better life in Europe and he's determined to find them en route.
Before he even can hope to find a boat to get him to Europe, Ebo has to make the perilous journey across Sahara desert. And then the boat he manages to find passage on (for a small fortune) is a small six-person rubber dinghy, now carrying 14 passengers…
The story is heart-stoppingly powerful and many readers will devour it one sitting. The images are of course absolutely integral and beautifully drawn by Giovanni Rigano. Ebo is a wonderful hero: so resourceful, hardworking, clever, brave and funny.
Although Ebo's story is fictional, every element of it has been inspired by facts, based on extensive interviews and research. At the back of the book, these stories are acknowledged, including the moving story of "Helen", adapted in comic form.
An absolute must-read, this graphic novel is thought-provoking, profound, sensitive and totally gripping.

The Boy at the Back of the Class by Onjali Q Raúf



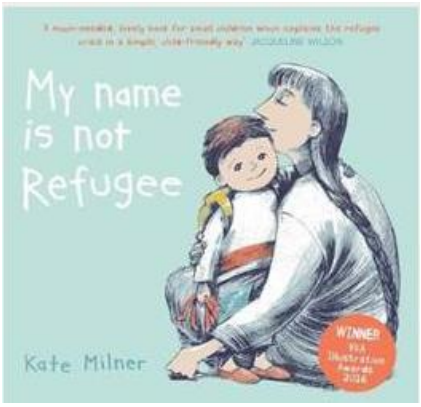
This is the story about how one ordinary nine-year-old child and three classmates are full of empathy for Ahmet, a boy that comes to their school as a refugee from Syria (he is the boy at the back of the class).
Through their sensitivity, curiosity, ingenuity, bravery and innocent niceness, they make a massive impact on Ahmet's life, friends, class, school, community and wider world. There's a lovely lack of stereotyping on gender and backstory for the narrator, which adds to the message of not judging people before you know them.
An inspiring and sweet tale that will help children think about what it is to be a good person whatever your circumstances (the narrator is from a poor background with a single parent mum who struggles to make ends meet), and challenge prejudice and push for fairness, whenever possible.
This is a beautiful, open-hearted debut from Onjali Q Raúf that should help children be the best they can be and realise the power of kindness.

Christophe's Story by Nicki Cornwell



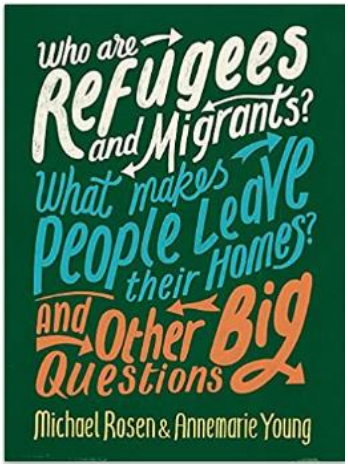
Christophe arrives as a Rwandan refugee in an English primary school, and initially suffers bullying. When the children hear his story of escape they appreciate what a special person he is.
In 74 brief pages Cornwell creates a sympathetic portrait of a boy who has faced persecution, the loss of his culture, the death of a sibling, and a totally different way of life.
The novel revolves around two different literary traditions: Christophe's cultural tradition of storytelling and that of written stories, which his school read and write. Like Christophe, readers will gradually appreciate the different benefits of both genres.

My Name is not Refugee by Kate Milner



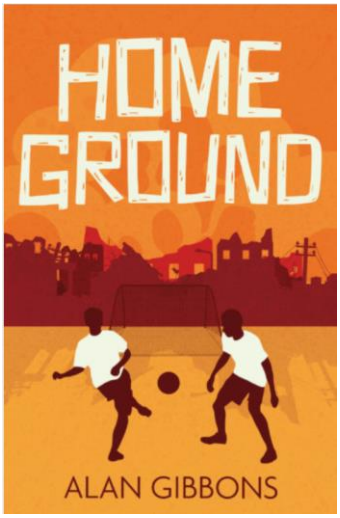
One day, a mother tells her young son that they must say goodbye to their old friends and leave home. Their taps run dry, there is rubbish everywhere, and it's just not safe. They will have to walk a very long way.
On their journey, the little boy sees interesting new things and hears different languages. He sleeps in peculiar places and eats strange food. Sometimes it is exciting, but also scary and often very boring. When they reach a safe place to make a new home, the boy must remember that although children may call him Refugee, that is not his real name.
Clear, moving illustrations complement this simple, touching book that explains the refugee crisis in an accessible way. Young readers are asked direct questions at each stage of the boy's journey to help them think about the challenges faced by a displaced child.
Winner of the Klaus Flugge Prize in 2018.

Who are Refugees and Migrants? by Michael Rosen and AnneMarie Young



What does it mean for people to have to leave their homes, and what happens when they seek entry to another country?
This book explores the history of refugees and migration around the world and the effects on people of never-ending war and conflict. It compares the effects on society of diversity and interculturalism with historical attempts to create a racially 'pure' culture. It takes an international perspective, and offers a range of views from people who have personal experience of migration, including the campaigners Meltem Avcil and Muzoon Almellehan, the comedian and actor Omid Djalili and the poet Benjamin Zephaniah. Aimed at young people aged 10 and upwards, the book encourages readers to think for themselves about the issues involved. There is also a role-play activity asking readers to imagine themselves in the situation of having to decide whether to leave their homes and seek refuge in a new country.

Home Ground by Alan Gibbons



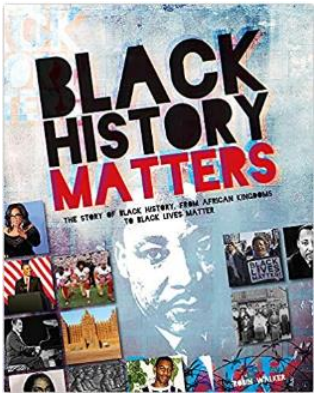
Sam's football team are struggling this season. They keep losing matches and captain Jordan's bad attitude isn't helping anyone. When Sam spots Hasan playing for the refugee team on the next pitch, he can see that Hasan's got talent and invites him along to practice. Hasan and his friend Faisal are skilled players – exactly what the team needs – but Jordan's not ready to accept them so easily. With the last game of the season fast approaching, can Sam help the boys pull together in time?
Home Ground includes facts about refugees and the role football can play in welcoming new members of the community.

Black History

Freedom 1783 by Catherine Johnson

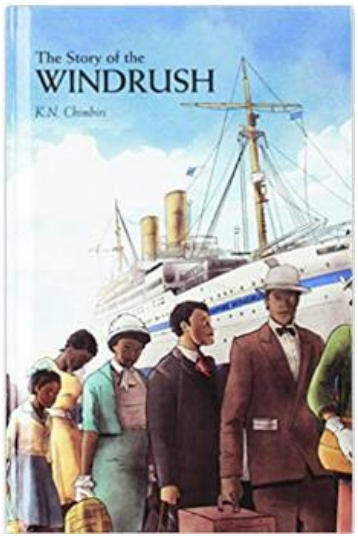
Catherine Johnson brings the horrific history of slavery to life in this important piece of historical fiction for a middle grade audience.
Nat is a 12-year-old boy born into slavery on a Jamaican sugar cane plantation owned by the brutal English family, the Barratts. The story opens with his mum and baby sister being taken away to work on another plantation, leaving him to face his hardships alone. But when Nat is sent to England to look after some exotic pineapple plants, he starts to dream of freedom. When he gets there he discovers it's not true there is no slavery in England, but in the hustle and bustle of crazy London, life is a bit freer. When Nat meets the amazing Shadrack Furman, his life is changed forever.
This is a brilliant adventure story that manages to give young readers a really important insight into slavery without being so upsetting that it's impossible to read. A very fine balance, masterfully achieved.
While the main character Nat is fictional, this story is based on historical events and contains many people who really existed in real life, from former slave-turned-author-and-abolitionist Olaudah Equiano to white abolitionist Granville Sharp, to former soldier Shadrack Furman, the first black pensioner. There's a very informative historical note at the end of the book, giving a fantastic summary of slavery for young (and old) readers.

Black History Matters by Robin Walker



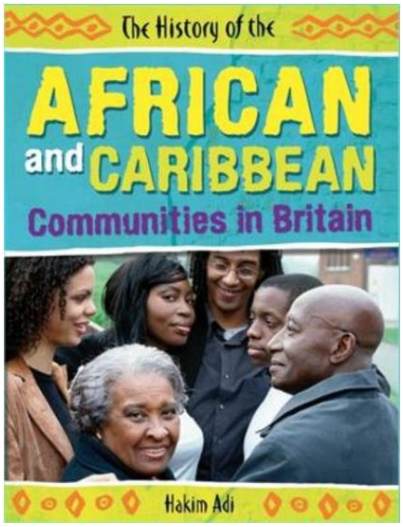
An important and hard-hitting chronicle of black history, written by a celebrated black historian
Black history is an integral part of world history. From the injustices of the past and present, we can learn and be inspired to make the world we live in more equal and just.
Black History Matters chronicles thousands of years of black history, from African kingdoms, to slavery, apartheid, the battle for civil rights and much more. Important and inspiring black personalities, from Olaudah Equiano to Oprah Winfrey, are highlighted throughout, while achievements and progress are balanced alongside a look at the issues that continue to plague black communities.
#Blacklivesmatter is a powerful international movement, designed to raise awareness of and end ongoing injustice towards black people. This book is designed to connect with that movement and offer an important resource for all young readers during Black History Month and beyond.

The Story of The Windrush by K.N. Chimbiri



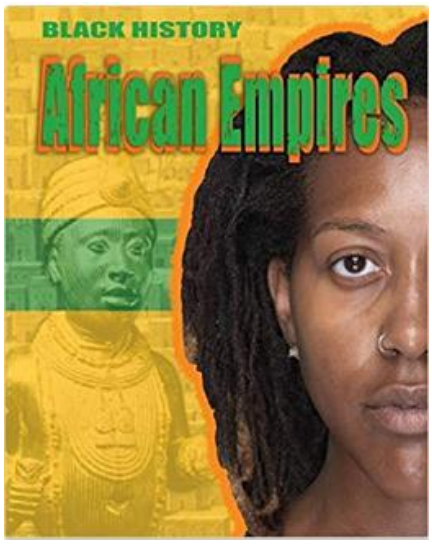
A book to celebrate the inspiring legacy of the Windrush pioneers.
In June 1948, hundreds of Caribbean men, women and children arrived in London on a ship called the HMT *Empire Windrush*. Although there were already Black people living in Britain at the time, this event marks the beginning of modern Black Britain. Combining historical fact with voices from the Windrush Generation, this book sensitively tells the inspiring story of the Windrush Generation pioneers for younger readers.

The History of the African and Caribbean Communities in Britain by Hakim Adi



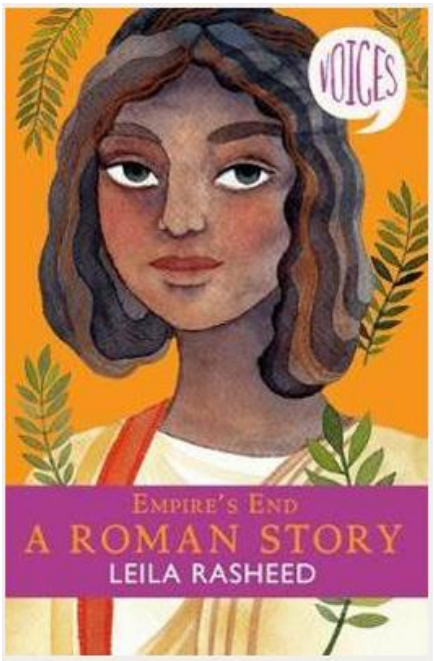
Many people think that Britain's Black population has only developed in modern times, especially since the end of the Second World War in 1945. In fact there have been distinct African communities in cities such as London, Bristol, Edinburgh and Cardiff for over 300 years. The first Africans may even have come to Britain thousands of years ago. This book reveals the little-known history of the African and Caribbean communities in Britain. It looks at why people came to Britain, the problems they faced, and the contribution they have made to British society. There are case studies of particular individuals, and some rarely published photographs.

African Empires (Black History) by Dan Lyndon-Cohen



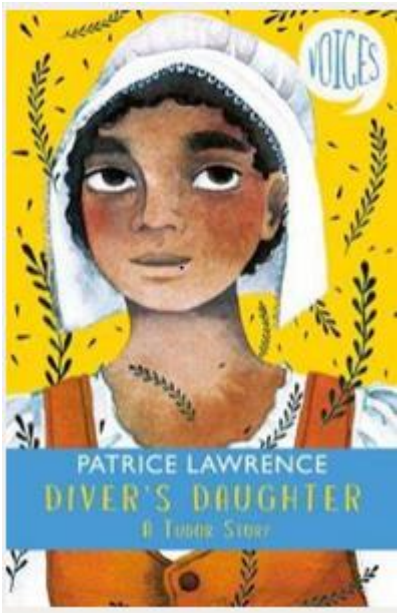
The history of the African continent covers thousands of years, thousands of kilometres and millions of peoples speaking hundreds of languages.
There are countless stories, dances, poems and songs. They tell the history of the great ancient civilisations, such as the Egyptians; the powerful kingdoms in West Africa of Mali and Songhai; the trading cities of Timbuktu and Gao; and enormous structures, such as the pyramids and Great Zimbabwe.
This book looks at the great civilisations of the African continent and the people within these complex societies.
The *Black History* series brings together a wide range of events and experiences from the past to promote knowledge and understanding of black culture today.

Empire's End: A Roman Story by Leila Rasheed



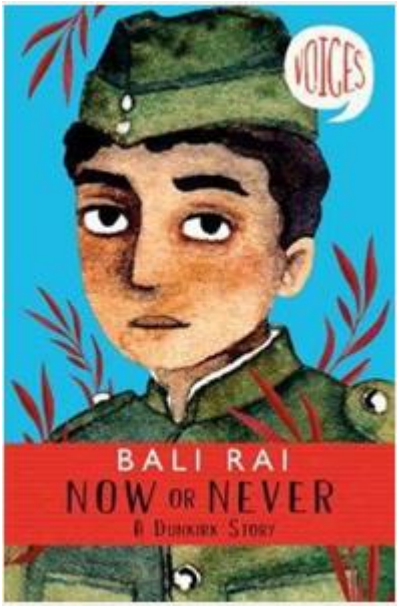
Camilla has lived happily with her parents in Leptis Magna, on the North coast of Africa, but, when her father is recalled to Rome, she cannot hide her excitement. After all, Rome is the centre of the world!
Her excitement is short-lived as the Emperor demands that the family accompany him to the furthest corner of the Empire, Britannica. After a traumatic journey, Camilla finds herself navigating life in a cold and dangerous land at the mercy of a capricious Empress whose status thrives on brutality and subjugation.
Camilla's story is presented as part of Scholastic's exciting *Voices* series, which explores the lives of the myriad, multicultural contributors to British history who can often be overlooked. Roman Britain in 207 AD was a cultural 'melting pot' with a mix of ethnicities and religions and it is refreshing to see that a girl of North African origin is not depicted as a slave but as the daughter of a valued member of the Emperor's entourage.
The inclusion of real characters, places and events make *Empire's End* all the more tense and thrilling and it is easy to believe that a historical equivalent of Camilla could really have lived through her experiences.

Diver's Daughter: A Tudor Story by Patrice Lawrence



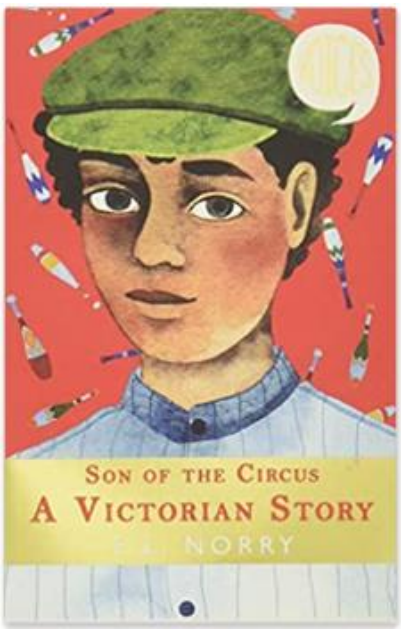
Eve Cartright is a young black girl growing up with her mother in London in the late 16th century. Life is tough, Eve is almost always hungry, and they always seem to be just one step away from gruesome poverty, despite her hard-working mum's best efforts.
When Eve nearly drowns and her mum's expert diving to save her is noted by George Symons, a man with links to the sunken ship the Mary Rose, could they be on a pathway to riches? George sends them on a mission to persuade African diver Jacque Francis to guide them to the treasure. But the road is full of danger and betrayal.
This is a thrilling tale, with the expertly described Tudor world brought to hideous, harsh life with the same verve as Patrice Lawrence's award winning teen books *Indigo Donut* and *Orangeboy*. Although the story of Eve and her mother is fictional, there really was an African diver Jacque Francis in Tudor times, along with very many other people of colour living in Elizabethan times, despite the "white-washing" of history.
Voices is a thought-provoking series of stories based aiming to highlight the valuable and often overlooked contribution made by immigrants to Britain throughout history. Written by a range of highly regarded children's authors, these tales bring different historical periods to life for a young audience.

Now or Never: A Dunkirk Story by Bali Rai



Narrated by Private Fazal Khan, a young Muslim soldier in Company 32 of the Royal Indian Army Service Corps, this is a moving and insightful account of a key event in the Second World War. Fifteen-year-old Fazal runs away from his family in northern India and lies about his age to join up and serve the British Empire, just as his grandfather did during World War I. His role is to look after the mules used to carry supplies to the front line, which he performs with diligence and pride.
Fazal's romantic views of duty, loyalty and honour are challenged when he arrives in France during the freezing winter of 1939 and experiences the harsh realities of war. Despite the sacrifices made by members of Company 32, not everyone treats them as equals, which becomes shockingly apparent as they await evacuation at Dunkirk.
Voices is a thought-provoking series of stories based on true events, aiming to highlight the valuable and often overlooked contribution made by immigrants to Britain throughout history. Written by a range of highly regarded children's authors, these tales bring different historical periods to life for a young audience.

Son of the Circus - A Victorian Story by E. L. Norry

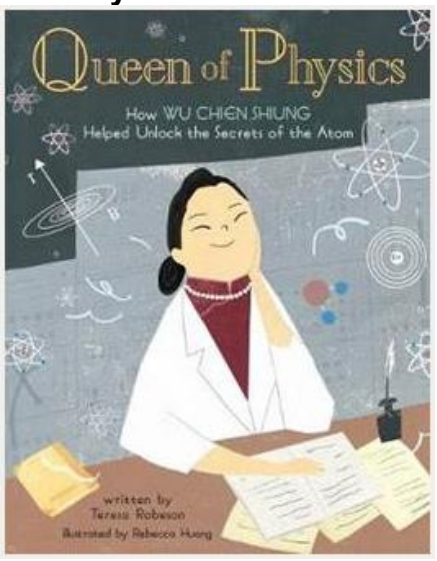


Voices: Son of the Circus - A Victorian Story explores the life of a young mixed-race boy, Ted, living with his mother and poorly older brother in Victorian Bradfield.
When a stranger, a man the boys don't remember ever seeing before, appears in their kitchen, Ted is hit with a shocking revelation. This man is his father - the first black circus owner in Victorian Britain, Pablo Fanque.
Before Ted can recover from his shock, he is sent away with Pablo to learn the tricks of the circus trade. Pablo is determined for Ted to follow in his footsteps. But can Ted adapt to this terrifying new life amongst strangers? And will he ever see his beloved mother and brother again? Fresh new voice, E. L. Norry, continues this exciting new series that explores authentic and moving accounts of the life of British immigrants throughout history. Norry shows us a fascinating and rarely seen world that's sure to hook young readers.

Books about famous people from BAME backgrounds

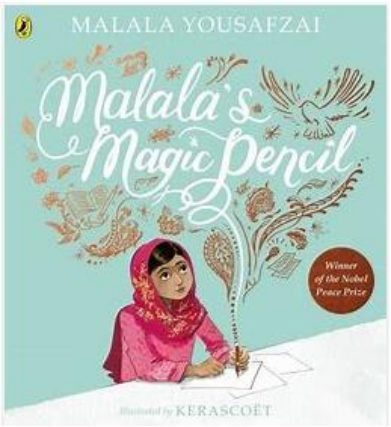
https://www.penguin.co.uk/articles/children/2019/oct/influential-black-men-and-women-who-shaped-britain.html

Queen of Physics: How Wu Chien Shiung Helped Unlock the Secrets of the Atom by Teresa Robeson



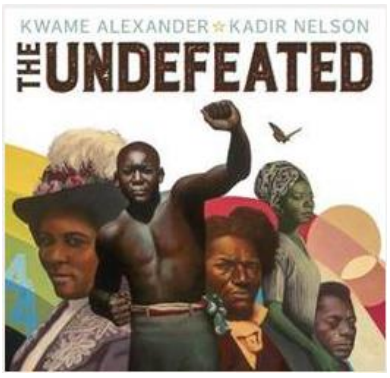
This fascinating non-fiction picture book explores the life of an inspirational woman who overcame race and gender barriers to become an internationally acclaimed scientist. Wu Chien Shiung – meaning Courageous Hero – was born in China in 1912, at a time when many girls did not attend school. With the support of her forward-thinking parents, she received an education and eventually moved to the USA in 1936 to study the physics of atoms.
In addition to highlighting some of Wu Chien Shiung's incredible scientific achievements, the book also explores aspects of her personal life: the sadness she felt when leaving her family to pursue her studies; her determination to learn, despite the resistance she encountered; and her willingness to stand up to injustice, leading student protests against the oppressive Chinese government. Scientific concepts are explained in a straightforward manner and at the end of the book is a summary of Chien Shiung's life, a comprehensive glossary and suggestions for further reading. Written in an accessible style with distinctive illustrations, it is ideal for use at home or in the classroom to promote discussions on a range of subjects, including science, biography, race, gender, human rights and politics.

Malala's Magic Pencil by Malala Yousafzai



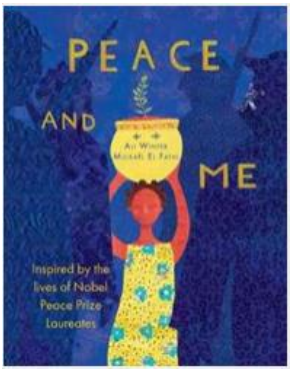
Nobel Peace Prize winner and New York Times bestselling author Malala Yousafzai's first picture book, inspired by her own childhood.
Malala's first picture book will inspire young readers everywhere to find the magic all around them.
As a child in Pakistan, Malala made a wish for a magic pencil. She would use it to make everyone happy, to erase the smell of garbage from her city, to sleep an extra hour in the morning. But as she grew older, Malala saw that there were more important things to wish for. She saw a world that needed fixing. And even if she never found a magic pencil, Malala realized that she could still work hard every day to make her wishes come true.
This beautifully illustrated volume tells Malala's story for a younger audience and shows them the worldview that allowed Malala to hold on to hope even in the most difficult of times.

The Undefeated by Kwame Alexander



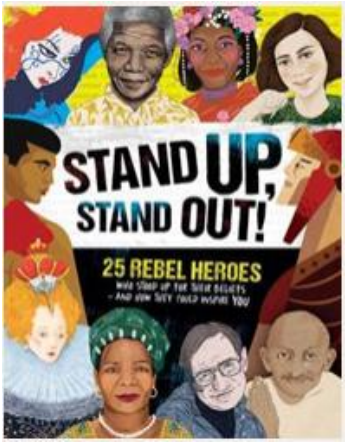
An illustrated poem, written to commemorate the birth of Alexander's daughter and the inauguration of Barack Obama in 2008, *The Undefeated* remembers unforgettable, unafraid and unbowed, famous and overlooked figures from black history: from Jesse Owens, whose Olympic victories helped shatter the myth of white supremacy in the 1930s and first billionaire in NBA history Michael Jordan, to Addie Mae Collins, Cynthia Wesley, Carole Robertson and Carole Denise McNair, killed in a racially motivated bombing in 1963 - and to the hundreds of thousands of black soldiers that fought in the American Civil War.
Kadir Nelson's painted portraits of all the undefeated people in this book (and it is a book focused on black American culture rather than UK or elsewhere) - families, protestors linking arms, famous faces - stare out at the reader, demanding our attention, our love and our respect. Three double page spreads in particular, where Nelson depicts "the unspeakable" make the reader stop and take a jagged breath or two: the imagery and the rhythm of those pages really convey the grief and anger at the terrible injustices that have been visited on black lives.
The book finishes on a hopeful note, so, while this is a book that would be best read with an adult who can give context to a young reader, and talk through the history and continuing presence of racism, it is ultimately a book about survival and remembrance. There's also a very informative series of biographical information at the back of the book for kids who want to research more, and for adults who can use it to help explain in a bit more detail.

Peace and Me by Ali Winter



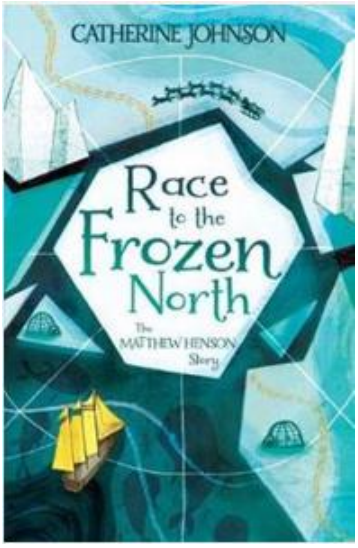
Following in the footsteps of *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls*, this book tells you all about the recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize. *Peace and Me* includes a brief synopsis of why these inspirational figures were chosen for this iconic award, alongside a sentence which sums up what peace means for them.
From Martin Luther King to Malala, this book is full of people who have strived to improve the lives of others and have consequently left a legacy years after their death.
This is a brilliant book for anyone who loves discovering more about important figures in history. There are so many interesting facts to learn from this book. There's even a map at the back, so that you can see exactly where in the world the Nobel Peace Prize Laureates come from.
Raising awareness for the charity Amnesty International too, this is a book that should sit proudly on the shelves of libraries and classrooms.

Stand Up, Stand Out! by Kay Woodward



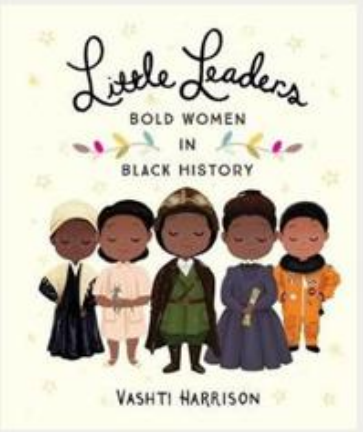
Who is your rebel hero? *Stand Up, Stand Out* highlights the lives and achievements of 25 amazing people who decided to stand up to injustice and speak out about what they believed in. Most of the heroes included in this book are famous now, but many of them were everyday people before they decided that enough was enough and it was time for change. Meet the slave who escaped from the gladiators, the nurse who refused to take 'no' for an answer, a young woman who championed human rights, and the scientist who saved his city from deadly radiation. From Boudicca to Maya Angelou, and Galileo to Muhammad Ali, each short biography describes who they were, what they achieved and its significance. Simple text and large, colourful portraits (by a collection of fantastic artists) make this book accessible and great to either dip in and out of or read cover to cover. It includes 'what can you do?' sections where the author suggests how each hero might tackle some of the tricky problems young readers may face today.
A wonderful introduction to some of history's greatest rebels.

Race to the Frozen North: The Matthew Henson Story by Catherine Johnson



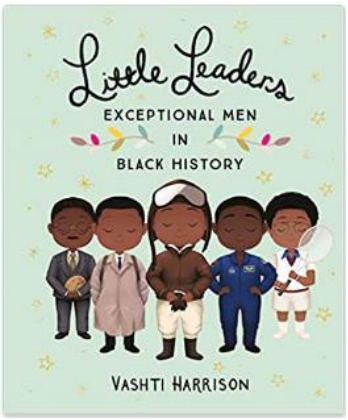
Penniless and shoeless, 11-year-old Matt leaves home and walks to Washington DC in search of a new life. Taken in by the kindly Janey, he helps in her café. But, entranced by a customer's tales of adventure on the high seas, Matt starts to dream of sailing the world. As he sets off to find work on a ship, little does he know of the deep challenges he'll face and the incredible things he'll achieve.
Because of the colour of his skin, Matt has to work harder than everyone else to get half as far. But by the time he's twenty, he's travelled the world, is a master carpenter and speaks several languages. On land, though, nobody cares. Then he meets Officer Peary, a man with a great ambition: to find the North Pole. Matt's skills and abilities will prove essential to Peary's endeavours – but will he get the recognition he deserves?
Based on the story of real-life 19th-century explorer Matthew Henson, Catherine Johnson's light touch makes this remarkable story an exciting read and sheds important light on the way prejudice has white-washed the way we learn about the past. A super-readable book and printed in a dyslexia-friendly format.

Little Leaders Bold Women in Black History by Vashti Harrison



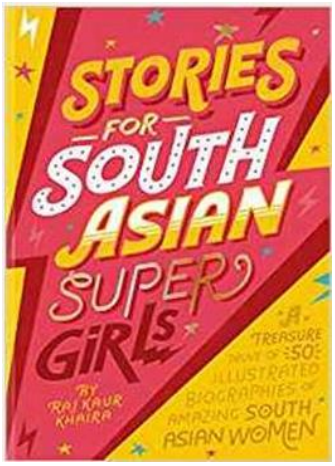
One Black History Month, Vashti Harrison illustrated one African American woman from history every day and posted the portraits online along with a small biography. It resulted in this beautiful and profound book, which chronicles the struggles and achievements of historic and contemporary black women. Though it's a noticeably US-focused selection, there are British women featured among the 50 too, such as Diane Abbot, Tessa Sanderson and Shirley Bassey, which is nice to see.
It's excellent that children can get an introduction to lesser-known African American women such as abolitionist Mary Prince and sculptor Augusta Savage, alongside the better-known Rosa Parks and Sojourner Truth. A collection of 50 great black women is also very welcome for any school library or shelf at home.
Not just for girls, this is an inspiring book for any child as it shows how a determined nature, ambition and hard work can make important change in the world.

Little Leaders Exceptional Men in Black History by Vashti Harrison



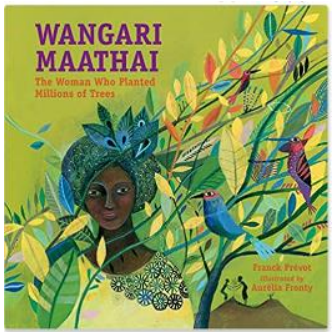
Meet the little leaders. They're brave. They're exceptional. They changed the world.
Did you know that the father of African cinema was originally a bricklayer? Or that Vogue's editor-at-large read his first Vogue magazine in his local library?
Learn all about the exceptional black men who broke barriers and fought injustice to realise their dreams and make the world a better place.
With Vashti Harrison's beautiful illustrations and illuminating writing, discover the stories of black men from all walks of life, including: Doctor Harold Moody, diplomat Kofi Annan, activist Paul Stephenson, architect Sir David Adjaye, comic book author Dwayne McDuffie and musician Prince.
Your own little leaders will be inspired to take on the world after learning about these incredible men.

Stories for South Asian Super Girls by Raj Kaur Kaira



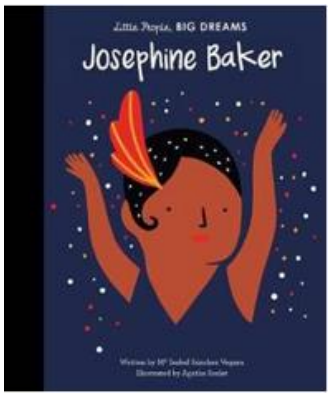
Aanchal Malhotra collects people's memories of Partition (the division of India and Pakistan in 1947) so that they won't be lost. Actress Jameela Jamil, dismayed at the entertainment industry's custom of airbrushing photos of women, founded the inspirational *I Weigh* movement, setting a positive example about body image. In 1976, Jayaben Desai led other women in a huge protest over unfair working practices at the factory she worked at in London, and then visited over 1000 other workplaces in the UK, encouraging others to fight with her to improve their working conditions.
This beautifully illustrated collection of 50 biographies showcases a huge range of historical and modern day South Asian women's stories and achievements. It's always fascinating to learn about the pioneers we might not have come across before, and Khaira cites her inspiration for making the book as her frustration at knowing only a handful of stories about women she could look up to as a child.
Heartwarmingly full of the power, resilience and ingenuity of South Asian women, this book also profiles its 10 talented illustrators in their own special section, showing the importance of art in illustrated books and inspiring all children to know that this is a career open to them too.

Wangari Maathai: The Woman who Planted Millions of Trees by Franck Prevot



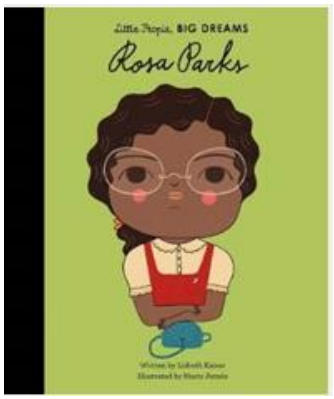
Wangari Maathai received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 for her efforts to lead women in a nonviolent struggle to bring peace and democracy to Africa through its reforestation. Her organization planted over thirty million trees in thirty years. This beautiful picture book tells the story of an amazing woman and an inspiring idea. The book is a testament to what determination, resilience and passion for a cause can do. It is a story with the lesson that giving up is not an option.
Illustrator Aurélia Fronty's expansive illustrations are deeply abstract but thought provoking. Beautifully crafted, each allows the reader to go beyond the few written sentences on each page.

Little People, Big Dreams Josephine Baker by Isabel Sanchez Vigara



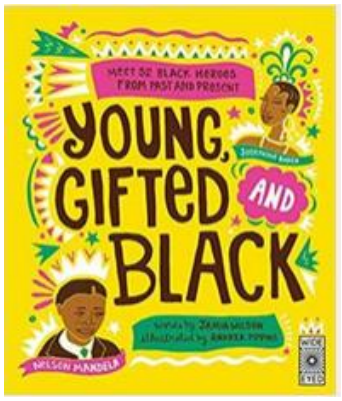
The Little People, Big Dreams series continues to educate and inspire with its beautifully illustrated guides to outstanding women from history. From Frida Kahlo to Rosa Parks, the list includes a wide range of icons, from designers and artists to scientists and activists.
This book looks at the life of Josephine Baker. It tells the story of a woman who was born for the stage, with a dazzling smile and 'elastic fantastic' legs! The rich, warm and retro colours also give a sense of this bubbly and exuberant personality, who was always going to find the limelight.
However, as with the other books in the series, *Josephine Baker* shows you another side to this public figure, away from the jazz and razzmatazz. Did you know that Josephine Baker grew up in a racially segregated city, and ran away to Paris? Did you know she adopted children from all over the world? Did you know she was a spy in World War Two?
By the end, you're left with a much better sense of this celebrity's true worth. It's sure to grab a child's imagination and let their daydreams soar...

Little People, Big Dreams Rosa Parks by Lisbeth Kaiser

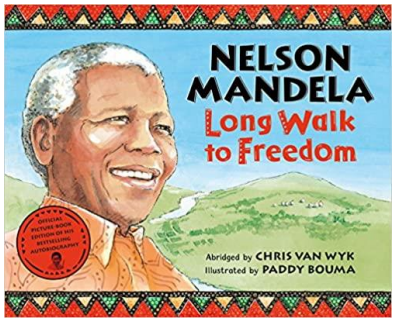


The Little People, Big Dreams series does it again: this book about Rosa Parks is yet another astounding and eye-welling read that will make you cheer on an historical icon.
Like the others in the series, this one includes a big chunk about Rosa Parks' childhood, to make it easier for younger readers to identify with her. It's all illustrated in a vibrant, graphic style that effortlessly evokes the era in which it is mostly set (1950s-60s). Both the words and drawing truly capture the personality of this wonderful woman who stood up to prejudice in the most simple but powerful of ways – by saying 'no'. It's a small action that had huge consequences, and something that should really resonate with children just beginning to think about what's wrong and right. It all ends with a photographic timeline that ties everything together, and could well prompt some lively discussion of the themes.

Young, Gifted and Black by Jamia Wilson



Esperanza Spalding taught herself to play violin at age five, performed with the Chamber Music Society of Oregon until she was 15, then won a scholarship to Northwest Academy to study oboe and clarinet. In 2011, she won the Best New Artist Grammy.
Simone Biles, born in 1997, has earned more Olympic and World Championship medals than any other American gymnast.
British film director Steve McQueen, a gifted artist as a child, struggled to find support for his talent at school. He went on to direct 12 Years a Slave, a historic memoir about a free man who was sold into slavery.
This beautiful and eye-catching hardback celebrates a selection of black icons from history and the present day to inspire all children to discover what they can achieve. Many of the accounts detail great hardship and prejudice, and in the wake of the #Blacklivesmatter movement, this collection's focus is very timely and necessary – and an ideal book to share with children who have questions about what's happening in the world today.
It's important that all children see themselves in books, and also recognise the struggles that have been – and continue to be a part of – daily life for many.

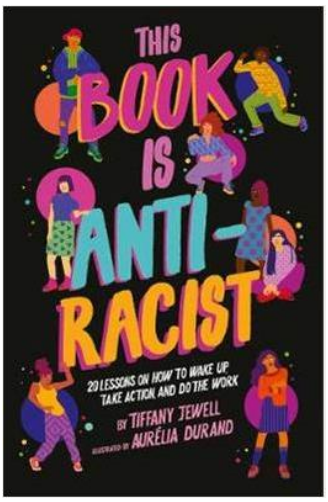


Nelson Mandela (1918-2013) is a true hero of our times, loved and admired across the globe. This children's book tells the story of his life, from his carefree days as an ordinary village boy to his unflinching leadership of the ANC, the long years in prison under the apartheid regime and his eventual freedom, ending with his extraordinary elevation to President of South Africa in 1994. The book is full of facts and information, which children aged 7 to 12 will find interesting.

Abridged by acclaimed author Chris van Wyk and illustrated by Paddy Bouma, the children's version of *Long Walk to Freedom* will inspire and fascinate, is great for the primary school classroom and will help children understand apartheid. Created with the kind support and assistance of the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

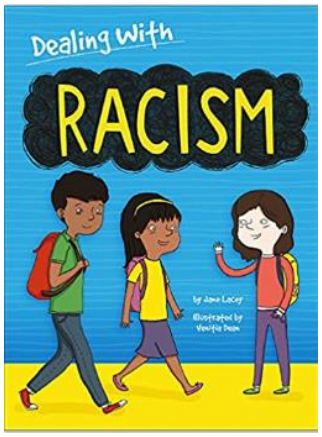
Books about anti-racism

This Book is Anti-Racist by Tiffany Jewell



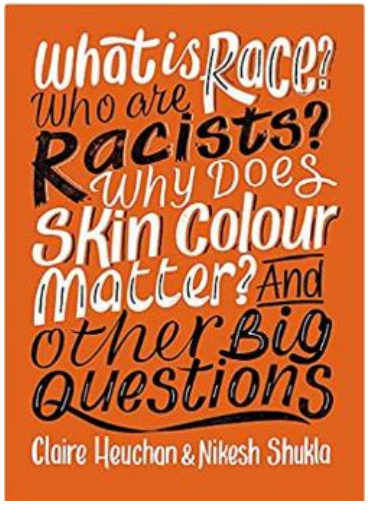
This attractively designed, engaging book is a fabulous primer probably for kids aged 10+ around understanding what racism is, both on a personal and structural level. Jewell guides the young reader through an understanding of the different elements of identity we all possess (including considerations of gender and sexuality), and the different ways that the parts of our personal identities intersect with each other, before outlining issues of race inequality in the world at large, what race is, and how history has shaped how we perceive it, and how race inequality is perpetuated, looking at issues such as housing, justice, education and government.
Split into four clearly explained sections - Waking up: Understanding and growing into my identities, Opening the window: Making sense of the world, Choosing my path: Taking action and responding to racism, and Holding the door open: Working in solidarity against racism, Jewell also sets the reader frequent reflective journaling tasks, ensuring that kids will take on board the importance of understanding their own relationship with race, thereby be empowered to make a positive difference in the world as an individual and as part of the collective.
Often using personal anecdotes about her own schooling, family and experiences as a young mixed race girl, Jewell's fascinating, friendly and hugely relatable guide is essential reading for kids with questions about racism, politics and history as well as the current #blacklivesmatter movement.

Dealing with Racism by Jane Lacey



This book helps young children find out about and understand racism. It features seven case studies from children who have a range of problems from a girl who is being left out because she is Muslim to the new boy in school from another country who is struggling to fit in. Readers are taught to stand up for what is right in a safe way and become comfortable discussing this serious issue with others. Practical advice is provided in a way that readers of all ages can understand and put into practice. The end of the book features a short playscript to act out and discuss. The book has engaging illustrations throughout.
In this series case studies combine with sensible, practical advice to help children find out what to do in difficult situations. Titles include Bullying, My Parent's Divorce, My Stepfamily, When People Die and Our New Baby.

What is Race? Who are Racists? Why does Skin Colour matter? And other big questions by Claire Heuchon and Nikesh Shukla

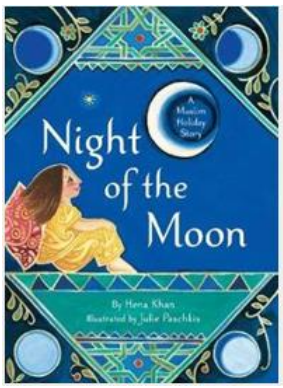


An important and timely book on race and racism, encouraging children to think for themselves about the issues involved.
Talk about race is often discouraged, but this book aims to bring everyone into the conversation. It explores the history of race and society, giving context to how racist attitudes come into being. It looks at belonging and identity, the damaging effects of stereotyping and the benefits of positive representation. The authors talk sensitively about how to identify and challenge racism, and how to protect against and stop racist behaviour.

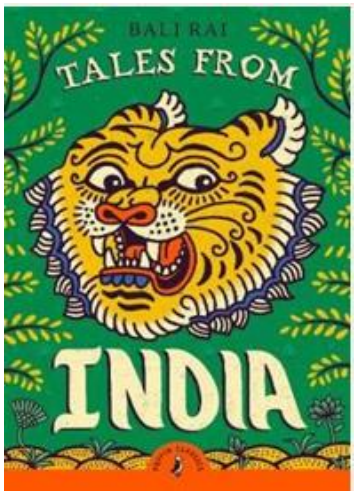
Aimed at young people aged 10 and upwards.

Traditional Tales from other cultures

Night of the Moon by Hena Khan

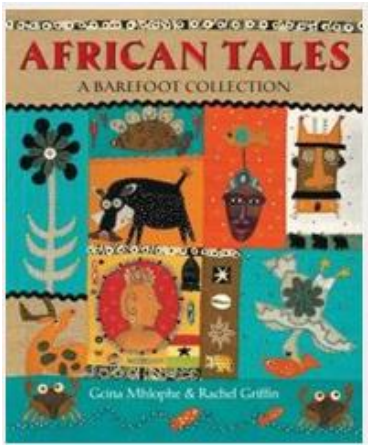


This tale about the Muslim holy month of Ramadan is told through the eyes of Yasmeen, a seven-year-old Pakistani-American girl. The Islamic calendar is based on lunar cycles, and one bedtime, Yasmeen's mother points out the moon's first crescent in the night sky, marking the start of Ramadan. Through Yasmeen's conversations with her family, readers discover more about this Muslim celebration. Parties are held throughout the month, where people come together to share food, gifts and prayers. Each night, Yasmeen watches the moon as it transforms from the tiniest sliver of a crescent to a bright full circle, then reduces in size until it disappears altogether. The Night of the Moon, when the first crescent appears again, signifies the end of Ramadan and is followed by the festival of Eid. Yasmeen prays in the mosque, has her hands decorated with henna, eats wonderful food, and receives a very special gift.
Beautiful, rich illustrations enhance this joyful and informative picture book. A useful glossary of terms and a note from the author at the end of the book provides further information.
Perfect for children who are interested in different cultures, and ideal for use in schools when studying festivals or world religions.



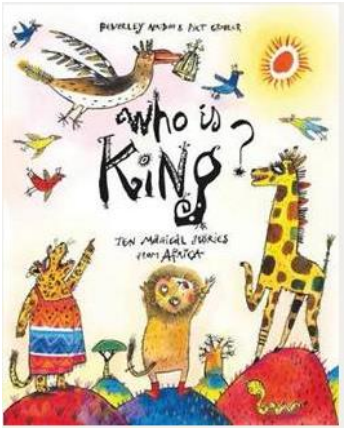
Discover India's rich folk-tale heritage and ancient cultures, with this captivating collection of both popular and lesser known, mostly secular Indian folk tales – reworked for a modern audience.
Follow the tales of friendship between Akbar the Emperor and his wise advisor Birbal, who finds creative and mischievous ways to teach enduring lessons. Watch a mean and boastful lion king get his comeuppance, and root for the intelligent princess Balna, imprisoned by an evil sorcerer with mysterious powers.
This book is full of magic, talking animals, adventure and trickery. There are morals to be learnt, like in Aesop's fables, and the tales could make an excellent series of bedtime stories, or otherwise be devoured in one sitting.

African Tales: A Barefoot Collection by Gcina Mhlophe



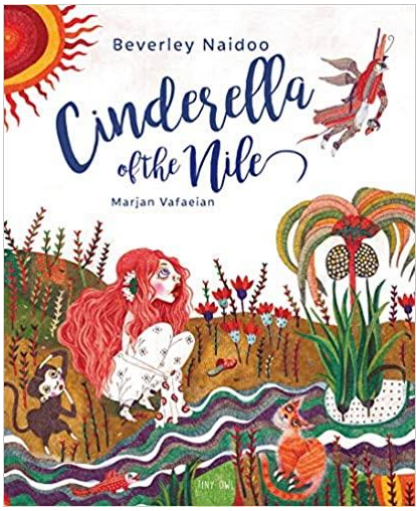
Eight inspirational stories plucked from the storytelling traditions of eight different countries, bring the fascinatingly diverse culture of the African continent alive.
Read about Nolwandle: a beloved baby, stolen by the waves, who returns to her Namibian family years later as an astonishing healer. Marvel at Makshosi: an enterprising herd boy in Malawi, who saves his family from starvation, thanks to his bravery and a pair of magic horns. And wonder at the selfless love between Senegalese village girl Aminata and Frish, the magical Sea Wind.
Vibrant illustrations in jewel colours, based on hand-sewn collage artwork, complement these rich, varied stories, which will open children's eyes to the diversity of Africa, in landscape, wildlife, culture and history.

Who is King? by Beverley Naidoo and Piet Grobler



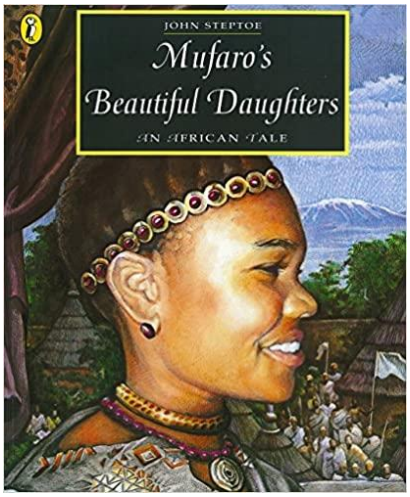
Subtitled *Ten Magical Stories from Africa*, Beverley Naidoo's collection comes from the rich folklore of Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania, Malawi, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and South Africa. In her introduction she celebrates the wealth of material in Africa, and elsewhere she lists some of the protagonists as a Trickster Tortoise, a mighty Elephant, a lazy Ox, a mischievous Monkey, a boastful Cockerel, a hapless Hippo, the woman who had a mouse-child - and two brave, clever girls. Naidoo is unrivalled at encapsulating both story and style within her retellings, and we are often reminded of other fables told by Kipling and Aesop. Like Naidoo's earlier Aesop retelling, these stories are illustrated by Piet Grobler, whose distinctive, humorous images enliven and enrich every tale.

Cinderella of the Nile by Beverley Naidoo



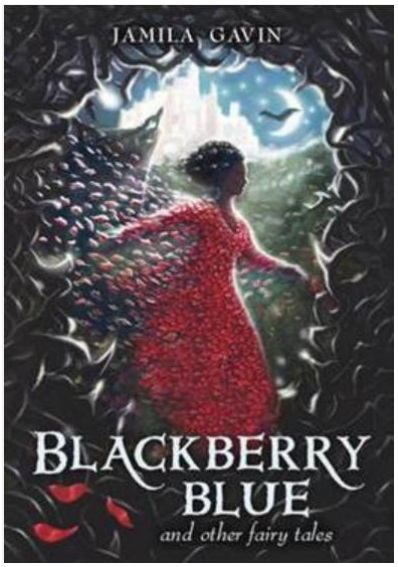
Beautifully retold by the award-winning author Beverley Naidoo, this earliest-known version of Cinderella is brought to life for the modern-day reader. Rhodopis is a Greek girl who is sold into slavery by bandits and taken to Egypt. Along the way she becomes friends with the storyteller Aesop and a host of playful animals. Her master gives her a pair of beautiful rose-red slippers, making three other servants jealous. But when Horus, the falcon, sweeps in to steal her slipper, Rhodopis has little idea that this act will lead her to the King of Egypt.

Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters by John Steptoe



A Caldecott Honour book, this memorable retelling of Cinderella is perfect for introducing children to the fairy tale as well as the history, culture, and geography of the African nation of Zimbabwe.
Inspired by a traditional African folktale, this is the story of Mufaro, who is proud of his two beautiful daughters. Nyasha is kind and considerate, but everyone—except Mufaro—knows that Manyara is selfish and bad-tempered.
When the Great King decides to take a wife and invites the most worthy and beautiful daughters in the land to appear before him, Mufaro brings both of his daughters—but only one can be queen. Who will the king choose?
Award-winning artist John Steptoe's rich cultural imagery of Africa earned him the Coretta Scott King Award for *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*. The book also went on to win the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award. This stunning story is a timeless treasure that readers will enjoy for generations.

Blackberry Blue by Jamila Gavin



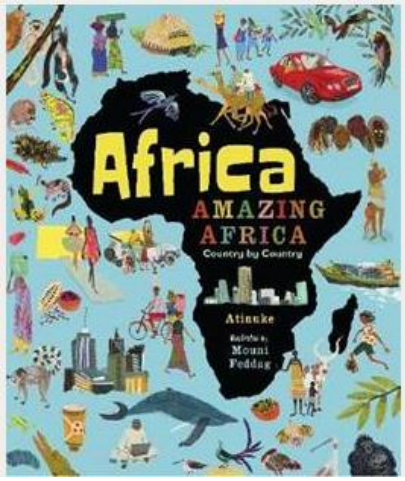
These six new stories from Jamila Gavin are at once exotic and fresh, and traditionally heartening. The common tropes of fairy tales provide a solid structure Gavin can decorate with colourful details and rich images: sorcerers and their evil curses banish princesses and kings to dangerous forests and shape-shifting animals seek pure hearts in brave quests. Of course, love, justice and kindness must triumph over cruel spirits and malevolent natures but the twists and turns of each story provide delicious surprises.

The title story offers a Cinderella-esque tale of a beautiful girl, protected by a thorny forest against a cruel Quee: the descriptions of her delicate ball-gowns created from the forest flowers are particularly enchanting. The terrible mission in 'The Purple Lady' does not shy away from the dark capabilities of a fairy tale world – bones and bodies must be re-assembled to break the spell. 'The Golden Carp' has a beautiful eastern sensibility: precious jade is the undoing of a greedy man and his bitter son, while a magical maiden with long sleeves captivates our hero. Labyrinthine forests separate a righteous king from his people in 'Emeka the Pathfinder' and a magical violin drives a jealous musician into a macabre dance in 'Oddboy'. The final story, 'The Night Princess' tells the story of the Moon and the angry Sun, who imprisons the Princess to a life time of darkness only for her to fall in love with an earth-bound farmer.

A stunning collection of mystical fairy tales, *Blackberry Blue* is packed with picturesque moments that will bewitch readers who love the colourful and otherworldly nature of fairy tales and Arabian Nights stories. Gavin’s preface acknowledges the heritage of traditional European fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen, but it is its extended cultural flavouring that gives this collection its vibrant lift.

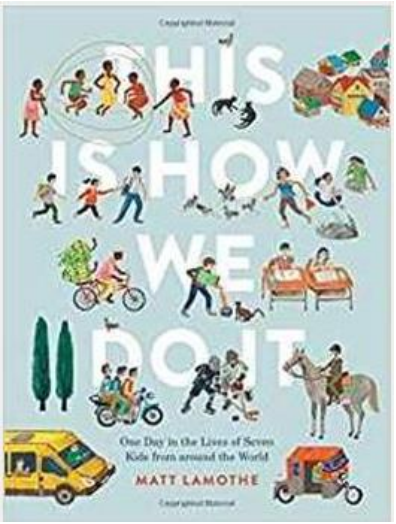
Geography

Africa, Amazing Africa: Country by Country by Atinuke



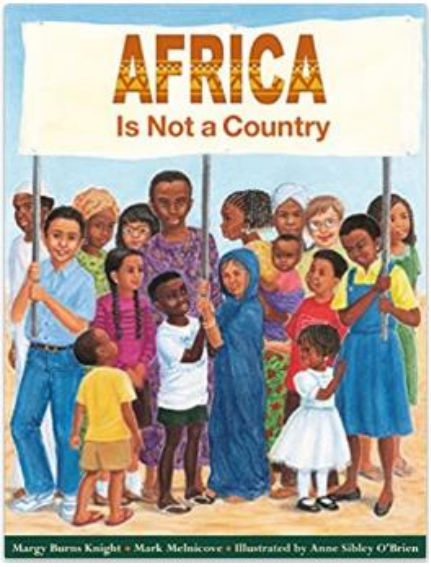
This beautifully produced atlas of Africa is a fantastic book for any classroom or home library. The text is kept young, accessible and inviting, with the author telling us what an adventure it's been to create this delightful volume.
Stunning maps show the layout and placement African countries, highlighting an interesting variety of animals, buildings or natural features. The overview text gives a brief outline of Africa as a whole, naming the countries and showcasing some of the languages. Each section of the book then zooms in on the countries individually, adding rich, interesting details to inspire interest, rather than overwhelm with information. From Ghana's giant markets to the skyscrapers of Sierra Leone, the boy drummers of Burundi and the oases of Mauritania, flicking through this happy book is like working through a box of delicious sweets.
The author's note also points out that this book can only give an idea of what Africa is like right now, since new countries are being created and old traditions are being swallowed up, which is an interesting concept for younger readers; modern global politics means that shifting country boundaries are not just something for history. Each African country is unique and Atinuke's infectious enthusiasm really shines through her writing.
A perfect book for young children interested in their cultural heritage or for those with a passion for travel and geography, this would also make a gorgeous gift for anyone interested in Africa.

This is how we do it by Matt Lamothe



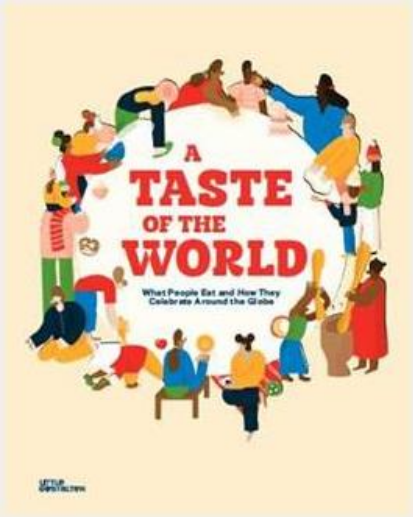
Following the daily lives of seven kids from around the world, the book explores the similarities and differences in childhoods in Italy, Japan, Iran, India, Peru, Uganda, and Russia. The book is divided into sections such as "This is who I live with" to "This is how I go to school" and "This is how I spell my name", with each child's experiences being shown.
This a brilliant and engaging non-fiction book: an easily accessible introduction to the genre for young readers. Lamothe's gentle yet detailed illustrations combine with the text, and successfully show that - despite differences in culture and experience - there is a common theme of unity in our lives.

Africa is not a country by Margy Burns Knight and Mark Melnicove



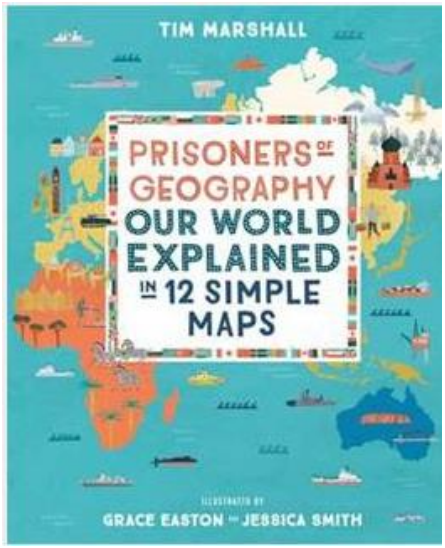
AFRICA IS NOT A COUNTRY is perhaps the first picture book about the African continent to respectfully present the diversity of people living in its 53 countries. This book explicitly describes and illustrates the multi-dimensions of the continent. The cover illustration is an indication of the contents. It shows children from various countries dressed in assorted apparel in an apparent declaration that they are not one nationality, race, or religion. The inside cover affirms this declaration as children from the 53 countries with their flags march into the book led by the Somalis. The title page shows a rural setting where many families live. A physical map with current country and capital names and a description of the continent follows. The authors and illustrator subsequently have chosen 25 countries from all the regions of the continent to depict its diversity; they feature often forgotten children from Cape Verde, Lesotho, Mauritania, and Madagascar. Moreover, it focuses on children's activities and not those of adults. The appendix provides basic information for each African country to enable children to compare data. Finally, the book ends with the children marching into the text but with their country names over their flags.

A Taste of the World: What People Eat and How They Celebrate Around the Globe by Beth Walrond



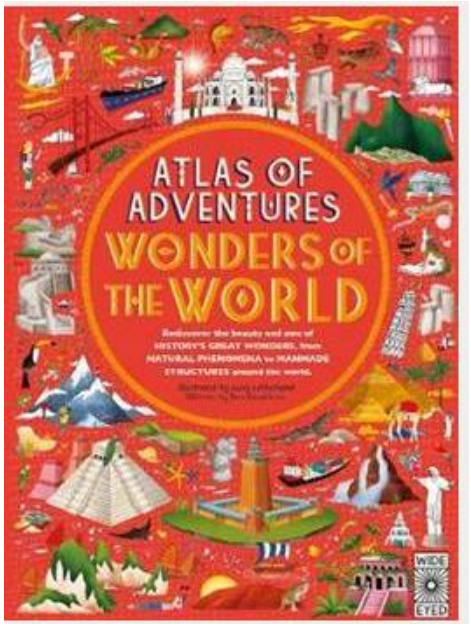
From everyday meals to celebratory feasts, this fascinating non-fiction picture book looks at the diverse range of food eaten by people from around the world.
Each chapter focuses on a different geographical area (Asia and the Middle East; Africa; Europe; North and South America; Australasia and Oceania) and a selection of countries from each region are then discussed in greater depth.
Readers will learn that rice plays a fundamental role in the cuisine of Asia and the Middle East, while European diets often contain a variety of grains, such as wheat, barley and oats. There are many fascinating food facts, such as why the Margherita pizza got its name, how chocolate is made, and details on a paste from sticky rice flour that was used in the construction of the Great Wall of China.
The striking illustrations, created using bold blocks of colour, provide a vibrant accompaniment to the informative text. With a contents page, illustrated glossary and world map, this fabulous book is ideal to read in schools, and will be particularly enjoyed by children who are inquisitive about the way in which other people live.

Prisoners of Geography: Our World Explained in 12 Simple Maps by Tim Marshall



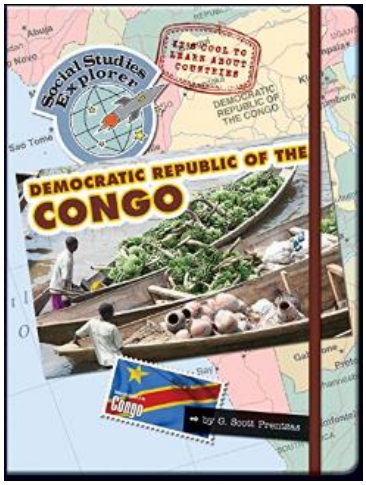
Russia has long worried about attack from the west, where its flat land has left it open to incursion from Poland, Sweden, France and Germany. Historically Russia has considered attack to be the best form of defence, creating more secure borders by expanding into other neighbouring countries.
Meanwhile the balanced climate of north-west Europe means the region is able to grow successful crops all year round, feed its population and provide the natural resources which supported the Industrial Revolution, creating great wealth in those nations.
Geopolitics – the study of how physical landscapes affect international relations – may not seem an obvious subject for a children's book, but this new children's version of an adult Sunday Times bestseller is an absolutely fascinating read, pitched perfectly for eight to eleven-year-olds.
Younger readers will look at maps in a whole new way as they begin making the connections between geography, power and politics.

Atlas of Adventures: Wonders of the World by Ben Handicott



From the Eiffel Tower to Angkor Wat, Death Valley to Easter Island and the Great Pyramid of Giza, this edition of the beautiful and information-packed Atlas of Adventures series explores 30 wonders of the world, featuring a mix of human structures and natural phenomena.
Organised by continent, each wonder of the world is beautifully illustrated on a double-page spread, with a summary of information and small facts about its creation, history and/or present cultural significance arranged artfully on the page. There's a useful map on each feature page, showing where in its country the wonder is located, and a large double page map of the relevant continent at the beginning of each section.
This is a lovely resource for any primary school and a brilliant book for any child to pore over at home, learning about far-flung palaces, natural wonders and no doubt inspiring a love of travel and geography. The book also encourages an interest in design and architecture (looking at the Taj Mahal, described as the most beautiful building on earth), mythology and culture (Uluru and Easter Island), archaeology (Petra) and a variety of other areas.

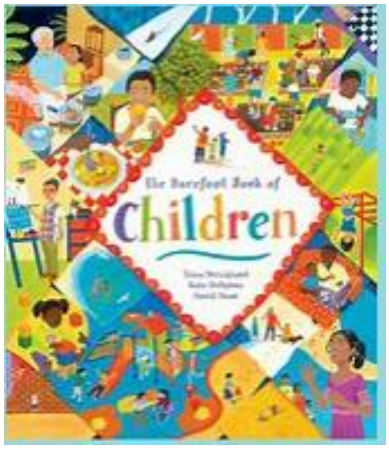
It's Cool to Learn About Countries: Democratic Republic of Congo by Prentzas



An introduction to the geography, history, economy, culture, and people of Democratic Republic of The Congo. Bright, colourful designs and hands on activities will keep children engaged as they learn about Bangladesh and its people.

This is part of a series. Other countries include: Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Thailand, Turkey, USA, and Vietnam

Barefoot Books: Children of the World by Kate DePalma



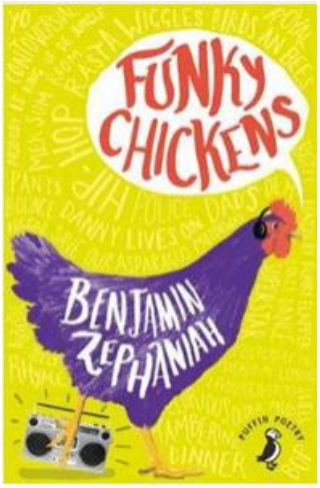
Barefoot Books Children of the World depicts kids of a wide range of shapes, sizes, races, abilities and lifestyles from countries and cultures all over the world. From enjoying special days to trying on silly hats, this ground-breaking picture book celebrates the big ideas and everyday moments that all children share.

A simple narrative with stunning hand-painted illustrations by award-winning *Barefoot Books World Atlas* artist David Dean invites both small children and independent readers to think about their own experiences while providing a window into the experiences of others. A full 15 pages of educational endnotes explain the detailed illustrations, encouraging meaningful conversations about diversity and inclusion. Older children will be empowered to explore these important issues on their own.

Poetry

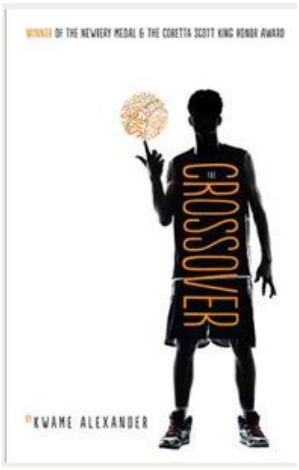
http://www.cityleicester.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/BLM-Poem-Anthology.pdf

Funky Chickens by Benjamin Zephaniah



Rap poet, musician and writer Benjamin Zephaniah's second poetry collection for older children, *Funky Chickens*, was first published in 1996.
Rooted in the real world, these funny, touching, thought-provoking poems cover a diverse range of topics. In "Serious Love", a schoolboy falls desperately in love with the girl who sits beside him. But the next day, he wants to marry her friend! "All You Sea" campaigns to clear up the sewage in the oceans, while "Good Hope" suggests there is enough good in the world for everyone to live without prejudice, starvation and war. Zephaniah tackles difficult subjects such as animal cruelty in "Danny the Cat" and racism in "Walking Black Home", where no taxi stops for him because of his colour.
Running through every lip-smacking poem is the poet's joy at the richness of language and the fun that a little imagination and a fat pencil can create, all summed up in the exuberant last poem "Funky Chicken".

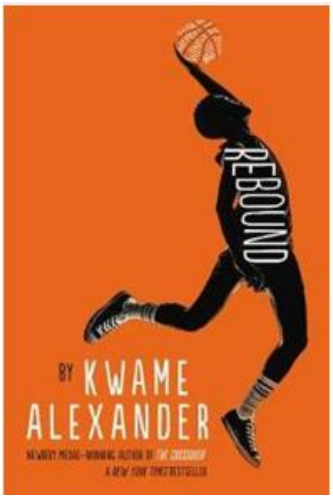
The Crossover by Kwame Alexander



Josh and JB are basketball legends at their school. They also happen to be identical twins, but it's easy to tell them apart if you know how to look.
As the boys build up to one of the most important matches of their lives, tensions grow between them and things at home and at school also add to the pressure. The only time they feel truly themselves is on the court. But is basketball enough to help them navigate the tricky transition to young adulthood when they have a major falling-out and it seems that Dad is hiding something?

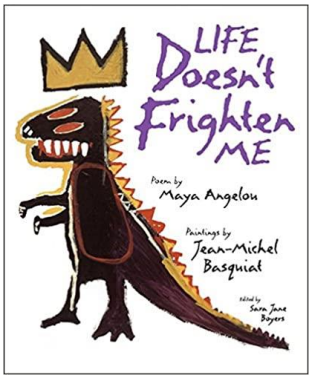
With impressive attention to detail, the powerful, dynamic illustrations fizz with energy and do so much more than just follow the series of events. Using shades of orange, grey and black, the graphics bring out the soul of the characters allowing readers to feel their joy, pain, frustration and anger.
Although it reads like a novel, the twins' story is told through poetry in many different forms from rap to haiku and free verse. If any book is likely to turn sports fans into book fans or convince readers that poetry is cool, this is it.

Rebound by Kwame Alexander



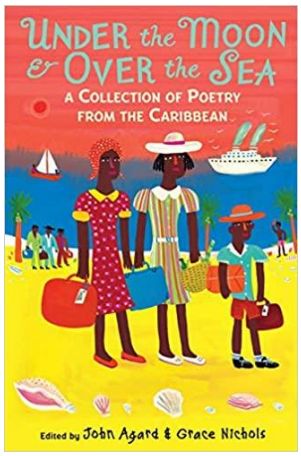
It's 1988 and Charlie Bell (later to become Chuck 'Da Man' Bell) is 12 years old and going through the hardest time in his life after his dad dies from a stroke. It seems like nothing can make him feel any joy in life now and that nothing ever will – not even his lovely best friends CJ (Crystal) and Skinny.
After he gets into a spot of trouble, his mum decides to send him to spend the summer with his paternal grandparents a few hours' drive away. Here, his cousin Roxie introduces him to basketball, his grandad introduces him to hard work and jazz, and things begin to change.
This is the prequel to Kwame Alexander's masterful and Newbery prize-winning basketball verse novel *The Crossover* (and it's fine to read the two in either order).
Also written in verse, *Rebound* is funny, moving and full of great ideas on how to live your life – and almost impossible not to read in one sitting. The poetry grabs you and won't let you go; the raw emotion and powerful storytelling pours out of the pages. When you finish it, you just want to read it again.
Rebound is perfect for anyone you know who thinks they don't like reading (particularly any 12-year-old boys), and also everyone who does.

Life Doesn't Frighten Me by Maya Angelou



Maya Angelou's brave, defiant poem celebrates the courage within each of us, young and old. From the scary thought of panthers in the park to the unsettling scene of a new classroom, fearsome images are summoned and dispelled by the power of faith in ourselves. Angelou's strong words are matched by the daring vision of artist Jean-Michel Basquiat, whose childlike style reveals the powerful emotions and fanciful imaginings of childhood. Together, Angelou's words and Basquiat's paintings create a place where every child, indeed every person, may experience his or her own fearlessness. In this brilliant introduction to poetry and contemporary art, brief biographies of Angelou and Basquiat accompany the text and artwork, focusing on the strengths they took from their lives and brought to their work. A selected bibliography of Angelou's books and a selected museum listing of Basquiat's works open the door to further inspiration through the fine arts.

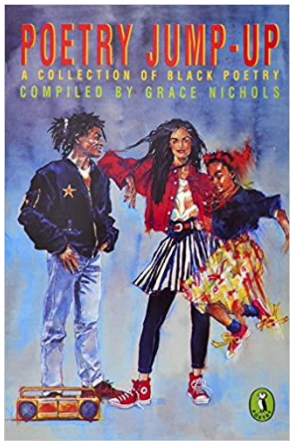
Under the Moon and Over the Sea edited by Grace Nichols and John Agard



An award-winning collection of poetry vividly evoking the experience of living in the Caribbean – and of leaving for other lands.

This prestigious anthology, which won the 2003 CLPE Poetry Award, conjures up the sights and sounds, tastes and tales of the Caribbean; the experience of living there – and of leaving for other lands. A companion to the acclaimed *A Caribbean Dozen*, this book contains more than fifty poems by over thirty poets, including John Agard, Grace Nichols, James Berry, Valerie Bloom and Benjamin Zephaniah.

Poetry Jump-up compiled by Grace Nichols



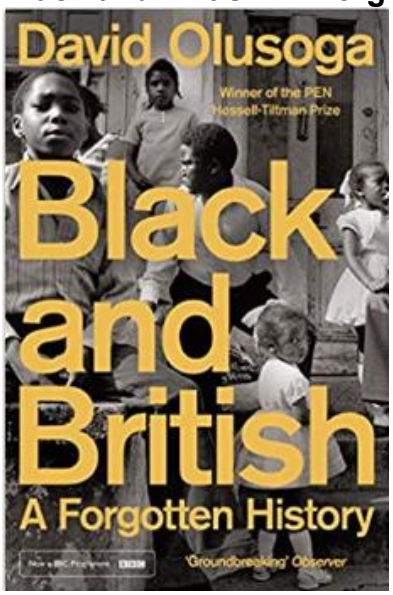
Dynamic, diverse, lively poetry for children that brings together the voices of black writers from Britain, Africa, America, Asia and the Caribbean, this book presents children's poetry filled with life, music and rhythm. Including work from Benjamin Zephaniah, Maya Angelou and Zinziswa Mandela, this anthology is compiled by black British writers.

Over the Hills and Far Away collected by Elizabeth Hammill

There are 150 rhymes in this collection, from countries all over the English-speaking world, including Great Britain, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Ghana, South Africa and the Caribbean. This comprehensive collection contains all the best-loved nursery rhymes, but also some new discoveries, and vibrant rhymes from Native American, First Nation, Inuit and Maori cultures.
Each double-page spread is illustrated by a different artist, who has donated his or her work to the Collection or Archive at Seven Stories, Britain's National Centre for Children's Books. With 76 featured artists, this is a star-studded roll call of international award-winners and world-class bestselling illustrators as well as emerging talent.

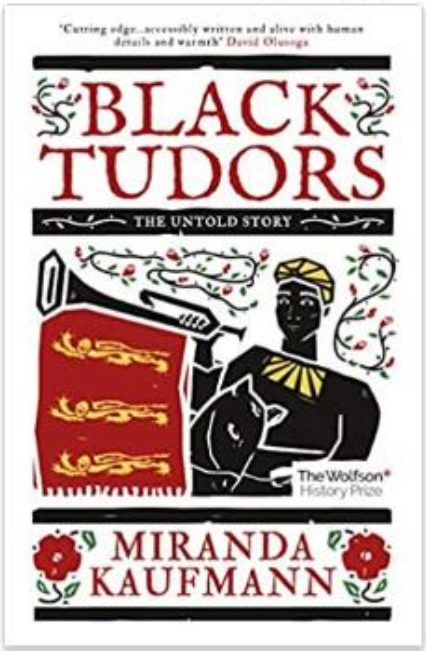
Teacher Subject Knowledge

Black and British: A Forgotten History by David Olusoga



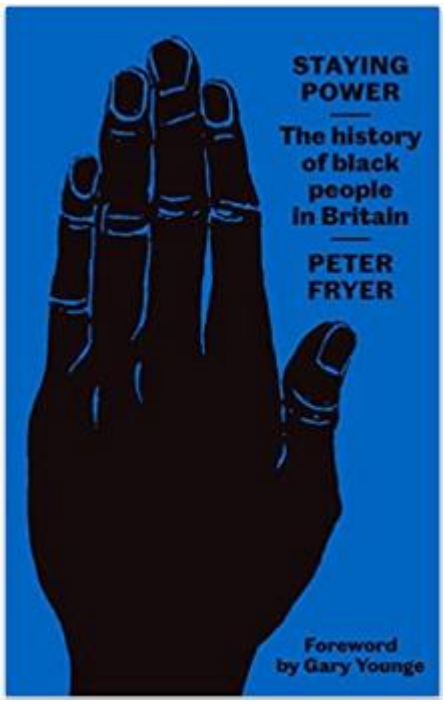
In this vital re-examination of a shared history, historian and broadcaster David Olusoga tells the rich and revealing story of the long relationship between the British Isles and the people of Africa and the Caribbean. Drawing on new genealogical research, original records, and expert testimony, *Black and British* reaches back to Roman Britain, the medieval imagination, Elizabethan 'blackamoors' and the global slave-trading empire. It shows that the great industrial boom of the nineteenth century was built on American slavery, and that black Britons fought at Trafalgar and in the trenches of both World Wars. Black British history is woven into the cultural and economic histories of the nation. It is not a singular history, but one that belongs to us all. Unflinching, confronting taboos and revealing hitherto unknown scandals, Olusoga describes how the lives of black and white Britons have been entwined for centuries.

Black Tudors: The Untold Story by Miranda Kaufmann



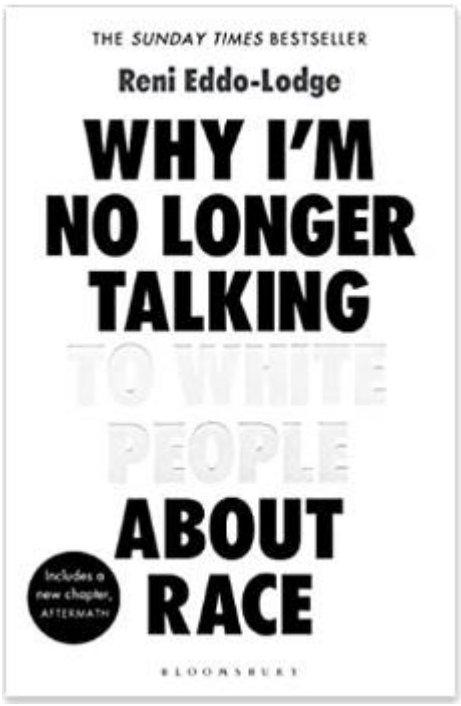
Shortlisted for the Wolfson History Prize 2018
A Book of the Year for the *Evening Standard* and the *Observer*
A black porter publicly whips a white Englishman in the hall of a Gloucestershire manor house. A Moroccan woman is baptised in a London church. Henry VIII dispatches a Mauritanian diver to salvage lost treasures from the *Mary Rose*. From long-forgotten records emerge the remarkable stories of Africans who lived free in Tudor England…
They were present at some of the defining moments of the age. They were christened, married and buried by the Church. They were paid wages like any other Tudors. The untold stories of the Black Tudors, dazzlingly brought to life by Kaufmann, will transform how we see this most intriguing period of history.

Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain by Peter Fryer



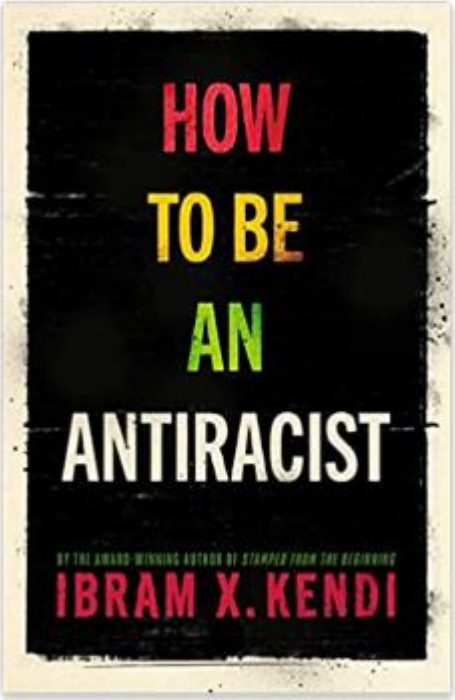
Staying Power is a panoramic history of black Britons. Stretching back to the Roman conquest, encompassing the court of Henry VIII, and following a host of characters from Mary Seacole to the abolitionist Olaudah Equiano, Peter Fryer paints a picture of two thousand years of Black presence in Britain. First published in the 80s, amidst race riots and police brutality, Fryer's history performed a deeply political act; revealing how Africans, Asians and their descendants had long been erased from British history. By rewriting black Britons into the British story, showing where they influenced political traditions, social institutions and cultural life, was - and is - a deeply effective counter to a racist and nationalist agenda. This new edition includes the classic introduction by Paul Gilroy, author of There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack, in addition to a brand-new foreword by Guardian journalist Gary Younge, which examines the book's continued significance today as we face Brexit and a revival of right wing nationalism.

Why I Am No Longer Talking to White People About Race by Reni Eddo-Lodge



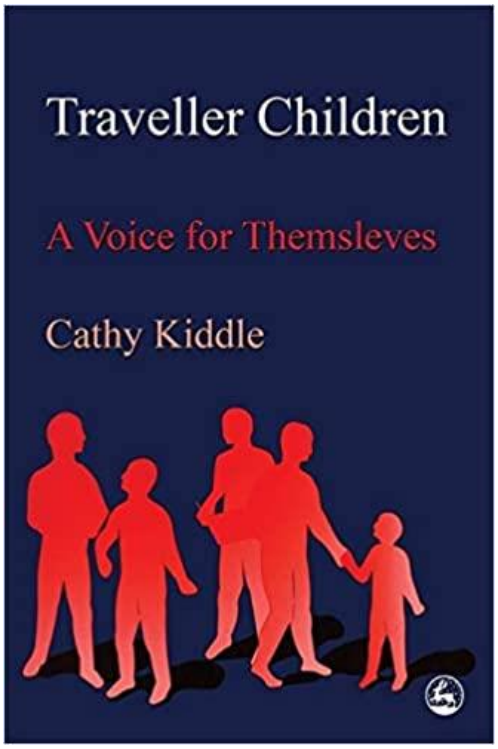
Exploring issues from eradicated black history to the political purpose of white dominance, whitewashed feminism to the inextricable link between class and race, Reni Eddo-Lodge offers a timely and essential new framework for how to see, acknowledge and counter racism. It is a searing, illuminating, absolutely necessary exploration of what it is to be a person of colour in Britain today.

How to be An AntiRacist by Ibram X. Kendi



In this rousing and deeply empathetic book, Ibram X. Kendi, founding director of the Antiracism Research and Policy Centre, shows that when it comes to racism, neutrality is not an option: until we become part of the solution, we can only be part of the problem. Using his extraordinary gifts as a teacher and story-teller, Kendi helps us recognise that everyone is, at times, complicit in racism whether they realise it or not, and by describing with moving humility his own journey from racism to antiracism, he shows us how instead to be a force for good. Along the way, Kendi punctures all the myths and taboos that so often cloud our understanding, from arguments about what race is and whether racial differences exist to the complications that arise when race intersects with ethnicity, class, gender and sexuality.
In the process he demolishes the myth of the post-racial society and builds from the ground up a vital new understanding of racism - what it is, where it is hidden, how to identify it and what to do about it.

Traveller Children-A Voice for Themselves by Cathy Kiddle



Over the last twenty-five years there has been an unprecedented expansion of opportunity for Traveller and Gypsy children to attend school. Educational outreach services have developed in parallel with an increased willingness on the part of parents to put their children into school. Cathy Kiddle has studied the effects of this expansion on the lives of the children. Having worked with Travellers and schools for over twenty years, she is well placed to consider the interactions between children, parents and schools. She examines particularly the parent/teacher relationship and the effect this has on the education of the children. The book looks at education in the context of several distinct travelling groups including Circus, Fairground and New Travellers. While recognising the importance of literacy for their children, many Gypsy Travellers fear that schooling will contribute to the disintegration of their culture, strongly based as it is on family education and supportive kinship networks. Teachers, on the other hand, may have stereotyped ideas of who Gypsies are, and may have their own expectations and demands of children in school. Cathy Kiddle examines the ways in which minority groups are forced to adapt to the changing society around them. She argues that education is important for Traveller children in that it enables them to develop into independent learners and, through this, independent people, able to speak for themselves, make considered choices and act as agents in their own lives. Essentially, her study is optimistic: if parents and teachers are prepared to understand and co-operate with each other, education will help to destroy the marginalisation of Traveller cultures, not the cultures themselves. The children will be able to give their communities a voice for themselves.