

action-packed adventures and its typically detailed Franco-Belgian style will delight fans of Ancient Egypt history.

THE ADVENTURES OF ASTERIX - René Goscinny & Albert Uderzo
(translated by Anthea Bell & Derek Hockridge)
Orion Children's Books

It is hard to believe that this series of French comics began over 50 years ago. 35 volumes later the tiny but fearless Gaulish warrior Asterix continues to give many readers a delightful and very funny first taste of Roman history.

THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN - Hergé
(translated by Leslie Lonsdale-Cooper & Michael Turner)
Egmont

A series of comic albums which were first read 75 years ago, these tales of adventure, treasure and exploration have stood the test of time. Tintin, a young reporter, and his faithful dog Snowy have travelled the world solving mysteries, aided and abetted by a string of highly memorable characters including Captain Haddock and Professor Calculus. A good dose of humour is mixed with satire and political/cultural commentary, ensuring there is something for readers of a very wide age range.

CALVIN AND HOBBS - Bill Watterson
Sphere

Fabulously funny and perceptive short comic strips about how a mischievous and curious six year old boy and his loyal sidekick, a tiger, navigate relationships with family and friends. As far as Calvin is concerned, Hobbes is a real-life, highly playful if somewhat sardonic and stripey best friend. All anyone else ever sees, however, is a stuffed cuddly toy tiger. There are multiple, sometimes overlapping collections of these strips, but they can be enjoyed in any order.

MOOMIN: COMPLETE COMIC STRIP: BOOK 1 - Tove Jansson
Drawn and Quarterly 9781894937801

These original comic strips, sometimes loosely based on Jansson's Moomin novels, but more often full of completely original stories were first published between 1954 and 1975, with later strips in the series being created by Tove Jansson's brother, Lars. They are full of whimsical, quietly funny and sometimes acerbic observations of everyday life in Moominland. A total of 10 anthologies of Moomin comic strips are now available.

COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS FOR TEENAGERS AND YOUNG ADULTS

This selection includes graphic novels which often explore more mature or darker themes, making them more suitable for older readers.

THE ARRIVAL - Shaun Tan
Hodder Children's Books 9780734415868

The Arrival is the touching story of a father fleeing the dangers of his country to seek a new more peaceful home in a faraway land for his family. Tan's use of fantastical creatures and unusual objects helps convey the feeling of alienation experienced by immigrants. It is a beautifully lyrical universal tale, made all the more powerful by its wordless format.

JANE, THE FOX AND ME - Fanny Britt & Isabelle Arsenault
(translated by Christelle Morelli & Susan Ouriou)
Walker Books 9781406353044

The story of Hélène, a young teen uncomfortable in her own skin who is

changed by the chance encounters she makes on a school camping trip, this is an incredibly moving story of overcoming bullying and loneliness, with exceptionally beautiful artwork ensuring this book will appeal to a readership well beyond fans of graphic novels.

LINE OF FIRE - Barroux (translated by Sarah Ardizzone)
Phoenix Yard Books 9781907912399

The diary of a French soldier in the first few months of the First World War, this graphic novel is an incredibly powerful tale with a rather extraordinary back story, as it originates from a real diary, found by chance by the author. With its rough sketches, muted colours and abrupt end, it conveys perfectly the desperation of those times, and speaks to all audiences.

THE COMPLETE RAINBOW ORCHID - Garen Ewing
Egmont 9781405263856

In this award-winning, fast paced exotic adventure along the lines of Indiana Jones, Julian Chancer, a dapper assistant to an ageing historical researcher, travels the 1920s world to find the mythical 'Rainbow Orchid'. Very stylish, packed with adrenalin and good manners and richly developed characters with an opulent historical setting, this is perfect for anyone who loves a thrilling detective story.

DARK SATANIC MILLS - Marcus Sedgwick, Julian Sedgwick, John Higgins & Marc Olivent
Walker Books 9781406329889

Christy has been framed for a murder she did not commit. On the run, she travels across a bleak British landscape, set in the near and very dark future. This is a terrifying tale of natural disaster, despair, the rise of religious intolerance, and the decline of independent thought. The brilliantly discordant and gloomy artwork is as haunting and unsettling as the text.

ANYA'S GHOST - Vera Broslog
First Second 9781596435520

Teenager Anya struggles to fit in at school and when she accidentally falls into a hole and comes across the seemingly friendly ghost of another teen, Emily, she welcomes this new friendship. But Emily, it turns out, has sinister plans. This clever graphic novel uses a ghost story to tackle themes of family, body image and feeling like an outsider with great success.

THIS ONE SUMMER - Jillian Tamaki & Mariko Tamaki
First Second 9781596437746

Every year Rose and her family spend the summer at a lake house where they meet up with old friends. But this year is different; Rose's parents are continuously arguing and Rose finds solace in a way which will undoubtedly bring trouble. This is a beautifully lyrical graphic novel, a wonderful coming of age story which deals with growing up and family tragedy both with subtlety and honesty.

MESSENGER: THE LEGEND OF JOAN OF ARC - Tony Lee, Sam Hart, Flavio Costa & Cadu Simões
Walker Books 9781406336153

An exciting and intense biography of Joan of Arc, from her life as a young girl on her family farm, through to her role as a leader of men and a freedom fighter, during the One Hundred Years War between France and England. Exploring faith, courage, loyalty, betrayal and gender roles, this meaty story is paired with dark, foreboding illustrations which make great use of colour and shadow. The same team are behind **Outlaw - The Legend of Robin Hood** and **Excalibur: The Legend of King Arthur**.

TYRANNY - Lesley Fairfield
Walker Books 9781406331134

Highly emotive and hard-hitting, this small format graphic novel is a completely immersive experience into a young girl's struggle with anorexia, from her slow emotional and physical deterioration, haunted by her skeletal alter-ego Tyranny, to her eventual regaining of power over her life. This is a potent tale full of powerful images, particularly in the way it portrays Anna's distorted image of herself. Includes explicit content.

CHARLEY'S WAR: 2 JUNE - 1 AUGUST 1916 - Pat Mills & Joe Colquhoun
Titan Books 9781840236279

The first of 10 volumes of what has been described as "the greatest British comic strip ever created", **Charley's War** tells the story of an underage British soldier in the trenches of the First World War. Meticulously researched, with detailed images showing the full horror of this conflict, Mills and Colquhoun's graphic novel is immensely moving, at times funny, and full of questions about the morality of war. The final volumes in the series (written by Scott Goodall) show the rise of Hitler and the early stages of the Second World War.

THE COMPLETE PERSEPOLIS - Marjane Satrapi
(translated by Mattias Ripa, Blake Ferris & Anjali Singh)
Random House 9780375714832

This is an engaging and funny exploration of childhood and adolescence during and after the Islamic Revolution in Iran, based on the author's own experiences. Her loving family provide stability during frightening political upheaval, but when she is sent to Austria as a teenager to avoid the worst of the oppression, Satrapi struggles with her identity. Sex and drugs alongside always feeling an outsider - whether abroad or in Iran - make for a heady mix.

ETHEL & ERNEST - Raymond Briggs
Jonathan Cape 9780224046626

This biographical tale of Briggs' parents is a stunning graphic novel, often moving, yet humorous and sometimes heartbreaking. It is simply the story of an ordinary couple in love, leading an ordinary life and yet offers a powerful piece of social history of twentieth-century Britain. See also **When the Wind Blows** by the same author, as well as all his comics for younger readers: **Fungus the Bogeyman, The Snowman, Father Christmas, Ug, and The Bear**.

THE COMPLETE MAUS - Art Spiegelman
Penguin 9780141014081

A multi award-winning graphic novel, **MAUS** depicts the author interviewing his father about his experience of Nazism as a Polish Jew and survivor of the Holocaust. The author uses anthropomorphised animals but the horrors of the Holocaust are not diminished in any way by this, resulting in an incredibly honest and realistic story of loyalty, loss and guilt, which is considered as a true masterpiece of the genre.

CREATING & UNDERSTANDING COMICS

If you would like to learn more about the technical aspects of comic creation or indeed want to have a go at creating your own, try these:

WRITE AND DRAW YOUR OWN COMICS - Louie Stowell & various
Usborne 9781409564256

This is a fully interactive activity book which includes very easy to follow step-by-step instructions, allowing young comic artists to imagine and create their own comic strips. With lots of fun activities and even stickers too, this is particularly great for young audiences.

HOW TO MAKE AWESOME COMICS - Neill Cameron
David Fickling Books 9781910200032

An appetising and funny book for young readers on all aspects of writing and drawing comics, packed with practical tips and opportunities to try out your own comics' skills. It covers everything from designing characters to plotting stories and printing your very own comics. You can either draw in the book, or download and print the activity sheets online. To see Cameron in action illustrating a story comic, take a look at **Pirates of Pangaea: Book 1** with text by Dan Hartwell.

UNDERSTANDING COMICS: THE INVISIBLE ART - Scott McCloud
William Morrow (HarperCollins) 9780060976255

An all-time classic in the history of comics, a comic book exploring how comics work, this is an essential read (teens and upwards) for anyone interested in learning more about comics or wanting to create their own.

MAGAZINES

Although several magazines for children and young people do include the odd cartoon or comic strip, dedicated weekly comics are thin on the ground. Two, however, deserve special mention:

THE PHOENIX
<http://www.thephoenixcomic.co.uk/>

A weekly, highly varied children's comics anthology including not only humorous strips but also adventure stories, non-fiction strips, puzzles and extracts from books. The inclusion of a wide range of illustrative styles and a mixture of standalone stories with ongoing serials means there is something to tempt just about every child (and many parents).

THE BEANO
<http://www.beano.com/>

First published in 1938, **The Beano**, featuring Dennis the Menace, Minnie the Minx and the Bash Street Kids, has delighted generations of young children with its combination of anarchic humour and naughtiness. This weekly comic is perfect for prank-loving, mischievous children who love to read about energetic and cheeky characters. See also the yearly **Beano Annual**.

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Special thanks to Neill Cameron for his support during the preparation of this booklist.

The Federation strives to bring children and books together for enjoyment and fun. For more information and copies of our other booklists, contact the Federation:

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INSIDE THE BOX
A SELECTION OF COMICS
AND GRAPHIC NOVELS
FOR ALL AGES

Compiled by
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Children's Book Groups

INSIDE THE BOX

A SELECTION OF COMICS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS FOR ALL AGES

RECENT YEARS HAVE SEEN A WELCOME GROWTH IN

interest, availability and types of comics and graphic novels created for children and young people in the UK. For many, nothing embodies childhood delight and pleasure in reading the way comics do.

The Federation's primary aim is to encourage reading for pleasure and we are sure the books and magazines on our list will do just that. Although comics and graphic novels are sometimes resisted by (adult) gatekeepers, we are great believers in this format and hope that this list shows comics are not just for boys or reluctant readers but for anyone who enjoys great storytelling.

The list is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather a varied selection of the best comics and graphic novels in print in the UK (as of 2015).

We recognise that the USA, in particular, has a strong comics/graphic novel tradition and have therefore included some US publishers you may wish to investigate. However, we have restricted the inclusion of US titles in this list as we felt it appropriate to focus on titles readily available in non-specialist UK bookshops and libraries, without resorting to ordering from overseas.

All the publishers mentioned in this list have strong comics/graphic novels lists and are worth checking out but in addition, look out for Toon Books, Self Made Hero, Dark Horse, Marvel and DC Comics.

Due to space limitations this list does not include web comics, self-published titles, Manga or Superhero comics, extensive sub-genres worthy of dedicated lists of their own.

PICTURE BOOKS AS A WAY IN

Picture books that make use of elements found in comics, such as panels and speech bubbles, can be a great way to introduce comic book conventions to young children before they can read independently.

KNUFFLE BUNNY - Mo Willems

Walker Books 9781844280599

This wonderful story of a little girl and her beloved toy rabbit is the first in a trilogy in which Willems superimposes drawings on sepia photographs and uses large panels and speech bubbles very effectively. See also Mo Willems' *Don't Let The Pigeon...* series.

SEND FOR A SUPERHERO! - Michael Rosen & Katharine McEwen

Walker Books 9781406355505

It's bedtime and Dad is reading a hilarious story about superheroes to his two children. What sort of superhero will it take to make for a happy bedtime where the kids willingly go to sleep when it's time to turn out the lights? Told partly in comic strip format, this is a highly inventive book that will invite many repeat readings.

FRED - Posy Simmonds

Andersen Press 9781783440290

When Sophie and Nick's beloved cat Fred passes away, they remember him as mostly sleeping. That is until they find out about his secret life as a singer, and the most famous cat in the world. A lovely, slightly wacky tale which uses a variety of panel sizes to great effect. Simmonds is renowned for her adult

comics but her children's offerings are just as wonderful. See also her *Lulu* books.

RED TED AND THE LOST THINGS - Michael Rosen & Joel Stewart

Walker Books 9781406310375

This is the story of a teddy bear who finds himself in lost property but thanks to the help of new friends he meets there he eventually finds his way back home. It is a wonderful graphic storybook which is a perfect introduction to panel storytelling. The soft colours and charming narrative make it a lovely bedtime read-aloud too.

COMIC ADVENTURES OF BOOTS - Satoshi Kitamura

Andersen Press 9781842709085

Boots, a mischievous cat who frequently appears in Kitamura's books, comes up with a plan to make sure none of the neighbourhood cats steal his favourite sleeping spot. Later he attempts to learn to swim with the help of a duck and has great fun playing cat charades. These three extended comic strips drawn with trademark Kitamura quirkiness are a great introduction to comics especially for those already familiar with Kitamura's picture books.

WELCOME TO YOUR AWESOME ROBOT - Viviane Schwarz

Flying Eye Books 9781909263000

A comic strip / craft instruction mash-up, this book is packed with detailed ideas for transforming a large cardboard box into the robot of your dreams. What makes it a head-and-shoulders-above-the-rest activity book is its totally unpatronizing approach to *kids* having control of what they make and how they make it. A great deal of inventiveness, delivered in a mixture of comic strips, full panels and pages to cut out and create with.

COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS FOR ALL AGES

This selection includes comics and graphic novels likely to be enjoyed by readers young and old alike. They may, however, be especially appealing to readers aged approximately 6-12.

VERN AND LETTUCE - Sarah McIntyre

David Fickling Books 9781849921749

A collection of short comic strips all featuring the adventures of best friends Lettuce (a rabbit) and Vern (a sheep). Off-beat and gentle humour, charming illustrations plus a whole host of friendly characters all add up to an ideal book for introducing comics to young readers.

ADVENTURE TIME VOL. 1 - Ryan North, Braden Lamb, Mike Holmes & Shelli Paroline

Titan Comics 9781782760009

Characters famous from the eponymous and highly popular animation series on the Cartoon Network now have their own adventures in print. Follow Finn the Human, Jake the Dog and Princess Bubblegum as they travel through the Land of Ooo battling their greatest enemy - The Lich. Four further volumes are currently in print.

FAIRY TALE COMICS - Chris Duffy (ed.)

First Second 9781596438231

Like a truly scrumptious buffet this anthology of 17 fairy tales is packed with delicious offerings. Each re-imagined tale is told by a different comics' artist (including several of the very best currently creating comics) and the variety of styles is both eye-opening and exciting. The selection of fairy tales is wide ranging, and includes some lesser known stories (e.g. The Small Tooth Dog), alongside old favourites.

GARFIELD - Jim Davis

Ravette Publishing

Available in over 20 collected volumes, *Garfield*, the world's most syndicated comic strip, is about an overweight, lazy cat who loves to eat anything he can get his paws on. The simple humour and illustrations in these short strips prove perennially popular with all ages.

THE TERRIBLE TALES OF THE TEENYTINYSAURS! - Gary Northfield

Walker Books 9781406333268

Prehistoric life doesn't get funnier than in this hilarious collection of tall tales about a loveable gang of dino kids and the mishaps that befall them as they get up to mischief together. Even the most reluctant of readers will be won over by this crowd of teenytinysaurs having fun, and all will delight in the deliciously detailed illustrations. See also *Derek the Sheep* and *Gary's Garden* by the same author.

ZITA THE SPACE GIRL - Ben Hatke

First Second 9781596434462

When Zita's best friend is abducted by aliens she doesn't think twice about attempting to rescue him even if this means learning to deal with monsters, robots and scary blobs on a bizarre planet far away from home. With highly imaginative, sometimes off-the-wall plot twists and engaging characters this romp through space (the first in a trilogy) is ideal for anyone who loves funny sci-fi/fantasy adventures.

REMEMBER THIS, BUDDY? (BILLY AND BUDDY 1) - Jean Roba (translated by Luke Spear)

Cinebook 9781905460915

Billy and Buddy, a seven year-old and his cocker spaniel, have delighted French and Belgian children for many generations. Together the two friends get up to plenty of mischief and are always ready to play pranks on others, leading to many a slapstick situation. Made up of short stories brimming with the innocence of childhood, this collection is perfect for young comic readers.

HILDA AND THE TROLL - Luke Pearson

Flying Eye Books 9781909263147

The first of four books in an award-winning series about the life and adventures of a curious, bright and brave blue-haired young girl called Hilda who has a warm-hearted appetite for life and exploration. Quirky humour and brief moments of terror (the delicious variety rather than truly menacing) give each of these stories great pace and rhythm. Not only are the stories special, full of intelligence and magic, the physical books are sumptuous.

LONG GONE DON: BOOK 1 - Lorenzo Etherington & Robin Etherington

David Fickling Books 9781910200049

High octane adventure in the afterlife awaits Don, following his death in a bowl of soup. Packed with humour and eccentricity, with detailed artwork and a style that might especially appeal to fans of Asterix, the Etherington brothers have created an on-going comic strip (originally published in *The Phoenix*) which is highly imaginative and engaging. See also *Monkey Nuts: The Diamond Egg of Wonders, Baggage* by the same duo and *Von Doogan and the Curse of the Golden Monkey* by Lorenzo Etherington which mixes comics with a huge variety of puzzles.

GUM GIRL: CATASTROPHE CALLING - Andi Watson

Walker Books 9781406329391

The first in a four-part series about a primary school girl, Grace Gibson, who isn't prepared to sit back and watch whilst disaster befalls her town (there's a reason it is called 'Catastrophe'). With an adventurous, thoughtful, positive,

can-do young female lead, these funny *Gum Girl* books re-mix traditional expectations about comics and superheroes for 21st century girls. Look out also for Andi Watson's other comic series *Glistler*, about a quirky little girl and her magical adventures.

CHARLIE AND BANDIT ADVENTURES: A ROMAN RESCUE - K.A. Gerrard & Emma Dodd

Templar Books 9781848771918

When Charlie and his dog Bandit fall in a sinkhole, they time-travel all the way back to Ancient Rome, at the time of Hadrian's rule. They soon find themselves caught up into a plot to assassinate a senator whose son they have just befriended. This graphic novel mixes adventure, humour and historical facts to great effect. The uncluttered panel style makes this title particularly good for young readers and those just being introduced to graphic novels. Also available: *An Egyptian Escape*.

BUNNY VS MONKEY - Jamie Smart

David Fickling Books 9781910200070

Another bundle of some of the excellent comic strips originally published in the weekly comic *The Phoenix*, Jamie Smart's ongoing exploration of good vs evil, science vs nature and yes indeed Bunny vs Monkey are now brought together in a brilliant 64 page edition - small enough to fit into a bag for reading anywhere anytime, but with storylines big enough to fire up mischievous imaginations and cause laughter-induced bellyache.

BIG NATE: WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG? - Lincoln Peirce

HarperCollins Children's Books 9780007478316

Jeff Kinney names Big Nate as the biggest inspiration for his Wimpy Kid and it is easy to see why. Middle school woes are portrayed with much humour and child appeal. Though mainly a series of hybrid novels, this particular collection is a compilation of over 300 comic strips originally published in newspapers and online.

AZZI IN BETWEEN - Sarah Garland

Frances Lincoln 9781847806512

An award-winning, profoundly moving, wonderfully optimistic and thought-provoking story about a young girl and her family forced to leave their war-torn homeland and settle, as refugees, in the West. A book which explores dignity, strength and humanity in an accessible and reassuring manner, with illustrations which are at turns poignant and comforting.

THE COMIC STRIP BIG FAT BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE - Tracey Turner & Sally Kindberg

Bloomsbury Children's Books 9781408808245

This volume brings together three books (also available individually) from the same series: *Comic Strip History of the World*, *Comic Strip History of Space*, *Comic Strip Greatest Greek Myths*. The comic strip format is an unusual way to present non-fiction but this series succeeds at doing this in a way that is entertaining, humorous and very accessible. Each book includes a contents page, allowing the reader to go straight to a specific section if they so wish, and making it easy to dip in and out of.

AKISSI - Marguerite Abouet & Mathieu Sapin (translated by Judith Taboy)

Flying Eye Books 9781909263017

A comic about the adventures of a spirited little girl and her long suffering brother in a small West African town, *Akissi* is full of humour and mischief, showing aspects of life not many UK readers will be familiar with. Each episode is dealt with great wit making it a very enjoyable read for all ages.

THE STONEKEEPER (AMULET BOOK 1) - Kazu Kibuishi

Scholastic 9780439846813

After the tragic death of their father, Emily, her brother and their mother seek a new start by moving to the strange house once owned by her great grandfather. The ominous house turns out to be a dangerous place and both children are lured into an underground world full of mysterious creatures, where they begin the quest to save their mother who has been spirited away by something sinister. This bestselling series (so far with 6 volumes) is great for fans of adventure and fantasy.

SMILE - Raina Telgemeier

Scholastic 9780545132060

When a young Raina trips and breaks her front teeth, her life becomes an unpleasant mix of dentist appointments, surgery and gigantic braces. On top of that there are also earthquakes, family and friendship woes as well as boy problems to contend with. Telgemeier's honest and often very funny memoir is all about the ups and downs of growing up and will ring true with many pre-teens, boys and girls alike. See also the follow up *Sisters*, as well as *Drama* by the same author.

EL DEAFO - Cece Bell

Amulet Books 9781419712173

Cece is left with a severe hearing impairment after suffering from meningitis at a young age and must learn to navigate school, friendships and life in general whilst wearing a huge hearing aid, known as the Sonic Ear. An incredibly moving autobiographical comic about how it feels to be "different", its sometimes brutal honesty is mixed with real moments of mirth. A powerful read.

STAR CAT: BOOK 1 - James Turner

David Fickling Books 9781910200063

Imagine a spaceship which is actually a giant cat. Then try to picture it being crewed by space explorers who have a knack for making mistakes, being clumsy and not quite being able to solve the problems that arise as they travel across the universe. *Star Cat* is sci-fi with a good dose of silliness packed with stellar comedy in every sense. See also *Super Animal Adventure Squad* by the same author.

HEREVILLE: HOW MIRKA GOT HER SWORD - Barry Deutsch

Amulet Books 9781419706196

Mirka is a wilful eleven year-old girl who lives in the Orthodox Jewish community of Hereville. She has little interest in learning to be a good wife, but dreams of fighting dragons, so when the opportunity arises thanks to a witch, she jumps at the chance. Full of magic and fantasy and a great heroine, it also introduces, in a particularly successful way, a culture rarely portrayed in this format.

CORPSE TALK - Adam Murphy

David Fickling Books 9781910200018

From Cleopatra to Marie Curie, Einstein to Amelia Earhart, Adam Murphy raises the famous dead out of their coffins to interview them about their interesting and unusual lives. A perfect blend of fact and imagination, ghoulish humour and bite-sized biographies, this is ideal for anyone who's enjoyed Horrible Histories.

THE RAMESES' REVENGE (PAPYRUS 1) - De Gieter (translated by Luke Spear)

Cinebook 9781905460359

Papyrus is a peasant boy in Egyptian times, who, gifted with a magic sword, ends up as protector of Princess Theti-Cheri. This is the first of their many