

PICK OF THE YEAR FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

FOOD FIGHT

Written and illustrated by Alex Latimer
Published by Oxford University Press
ISBN: 9780192780362

This very clever book follows the efforts of best friends grape and mushroom to stop the war between the fruit and vegetables. They scale the heights of the top shelf of the fridge and with the help of The Wise Old Cheese finally achieve "Peas on Earth".

FRANK AND BERT: THE ONE WHERE BERT LEARNS TO RIDE A BIKE

Written and illustrated by Chris Naylor-Ballesteros
Published by Nosy Crow
ISBN 9781839948503

Frank tries to help his friend, Bert, who is struggling to ride a bike. In the end, it takes an emergency for Bert to succeed. A great story of friends who help each other, with lots of amusing details to spot in the illustrations.

GEOFFREY GETS THE JITTERS

Written and illustrated by Nadia Shireen
Published by Puffin
ISBN 9780241623688

Everyone gets the jitters sometimes but Geoffrey decides to face them head on when they begin to talk to him. A story full of humour as he battles his feelings and finds ways of coping with them. Will he get them under control?

OH ARMADILLO! THIS PARTY'S ALL WRONG!

Written by Ellie Irving and illustrated by Robert Starling
Published by Happy Yak
ISBN 9780711276949

A humorous story about an armadillo trying to impress with his party planning skills. Children will love the alternative games and party food including a sponge cake made of sponges. You don't have to be conventional to throw a good party.

RAY

Written and illustrated by Alex Latimer
Published by Oxford University Press
ISBN 9780192783868

Lots of opportunities to guess what happens next in this charming, cleverly illustrated tale of a mouse, who has to find his way home in the dark. Joined by other animals and led by Ray the encouraging firefly, will they overcome surprises and get there safely?

SNUG AS A BUG?

Written by Karl Newson and illustrated by Alex Willmore
Published by Happy Yak
ISBN 9780711274846

An action-packed tale with a repetitive rhyme to encourage everyone to join in. Poor old bug is chased by animals in the forest who want to eat him up. Can he manage to escape and stay as snug as a bug in a rug?

SPYCERATOPS

Written and illustrated by Alex Willmore
Published by Farshore
ISBN 9780008505479

Spyceratops has all the gadgets needed to help her solve the mystery surrounding her grandad but will she succeed? Lots of fun and games along the way for this brave secret agent.

THE BEAR WHO HAD NOTHING TO WEAR

Written by Jeanne Willis and illustrated by Brian Fitzgerald
Published by Scallywag
ISBN 9781915252036

Is Albie a him or a her? Most bears let their owners decide, but Albie does not. Humour, rhyme and rhythm and expressive illustrations are used to convey the idea that we can all be who we want to be.

THE BOWER BIRD

Written by Julia Donaldson and illustrated by Catherine Rayner
Published by Macmillan Children's Books
ISBN 9781529092240

A beautifully illustrated rhyming tale about Bert the Bower Bird and his efforts to attract a mate. After many trials, tribulations and betrayals our hero finally succeeds in attracting the girl of his dreams with the help of a simple flower.

THE KING'S PANTS

Written and illustrated by Nicholas Allan
Published by Andersen Press
ISBN 9781839133626

Disaster strikes when there is a mix up and the King's pants go missing. New pants are created for every royal occasion and now there are too many to choose from. Luckily, Cedric, who is in charge of the pants, has a solution.

VICTOR THE WOLF WITH WORRIES

Written and illustrated by Catherine Rayner
Published by Macmillan Children's Books
ISBN 9781529051285

A wolf should be brave, big and fierce but Victor is none of these. He tries pretending but this just makes him worry even more. Victor learns from his friend Pablo that sharing his worries and doing something to take his mind off them can make everything seem better.

WALTER THE WONDER SNAIL

Written and illustrated by Neil Clark
Published by Happy Yak
ISBN 9780711276819

Walter is bored with eating leaves and goes off to explore the wider world. With the help of some new friends, he travels far and finds he has the power to do whatever he puts his mind to.

WHEN COOKIE CRUMBLED

Written by Michelle Robinson and illustrated by Tom Knight
Published by Scholastic
ISBN 9780702324857

In this lively, rhyming story, Michael the cookie likes to wear sprinkles and sweets to stand out from the rest of the batch. He is rejected for being different and begins to crumble in despair. Can he survive but remain true to himself?

WHO LIVES HERE?

Written by Julia Donaldson and illustrated by Rebecca Cobb
Published by Macmillan Children's Books
ISBN 9781509893966

When he's invited round to play, a little boy finds himself in a street of unusual homes inhabited by a variety of imaginative characters. Will he find his friend's house? A winning combination of rhyming text and lively illustrations, including lots of flaps.

PICK OF THE YEAR FOR YOUNGER READERS

A TRICKY KIND OF MAGIC

Written and illustrated by Nigel Baines
Published by Hodder Children's Books
ISBN 9781444960266

An engaging graphic novel following Cooper's journey to find his dead father in a land where magic goes wrong. Guided by a talking rabbit and a clever assistant, Cooper comes to terms with his loss and learns a lot about himself too.

ARKSPIRE

Written and illustrated by Jamie Littler
Published by Puffin
ISBN 9780241586143

Street-wise Juniper Bell lives in Arkspire, a city obsessed by magic and protected by a group of powerful magicians who are hiding a dark secret. When a mysterious creature bonds with Juni, she finds herself embarking on a dangerous quest.

BOB VS THE SELFIE ZOMBIES

Written by Andy Jones and illustrated by Robin Boyden
Published by Piccadilly Press
ISBN 9781800783485

Bob time travels and meets his future self trying to survive in a world where an evil genius has created a camera that turns people into zombies. In this laugh out loud story, can Bob work out how to change the present to fix the future?

FINDING BEAR

Written by Hannah Gold and illustrated by Levi Pinfold
Published by HarperCollins Children's Books
ISBN 9780008582012

In this sequel to *The Last Bear*, April returns to the Arctic when she hears a polar bear has been shot and injured. In this blend of adventure, environmental themes and emotional warmth, April is reunited with Bear and battles to save him and his cub.



FINDING MY VOICE

Written and illustrated by Aoife Dooley
Published by Scholastic
ISBN 9780702307386

A graphic novel featuring Frankie, who is starting secondary school and meeting the challenge of making new friends, avoiding the bully and trying to hide her autism. Joining a rock band and entering "Battle of The Bands" helps her find her voice and celebrate who she is.

GREENWILD: THE WORLD BEHIND THE DOOR

Written by Pari Thompson and illustrated by Elisa Paganelli
Published by Macmillan Children's Books
ISBN 9781035015733

When her mum goes missing, Daisy runs away from school to find her. In Kew Gardens, Daisy finds a secret door into Greenwild, a land of green magic, which she is sure holds the key to her mum's disappearance. Can she solve the mystery and save both worlds from destruction?

LEEVA AT LAST

Written by Sara Pennypacker and illustrated by Matthew Cordell
Published by HarperCollins Children's Books
ISBN 9780008606190

Leeva does everything for her parents while they are only interested in fame and money. She is desperate to know "what are people really for?" When she takes a risk she discovers some surprising things and who her real friends are. Hilarious and heartwarming.

THERE'S A BEAST IN THE BASEMENT

Written by Pamela Butchart and illustrated by Thomas Flintham
Published by Nosy Crow
ISBN 9781839940514

When Izzy and her school friends overhear their head teacher talking about "missing treasure" they go in search of it and discover something big, shiny and very dangerous in the basement. Mayhem ensues in this latest adventure in the Baby Aliens series.

MR WOLF'S CLASS

Written and illustrated by Aron Nels Steinke
Published by Scholastic
ISBN 9781338047684

It's Mr Wolf's first day teaching in this funny graphic novel about the everyday experiences of a new primary class. He wants everything to go well, but he's got his hands full with his pupils who all have their own challenges.

OH MAYA GODS!

Written by Maz Evans
Published by Chicken House
ISBN 9781913696870

Vesper, who lives for football, is catapulted with her friend Aster into a pacey Maya (not Mayan, we learn) quest packed with action where bullies come off much, much worse. Entertaining, fast-moving and fun.

THE DETENTION DETECTIVES

Written by Lis Jardine and illustrated by Glenn Thomas
Published by Puffin
ISBN 9780241523384

When new boy Jonno and classmate Daniel discover a body they are convinced the wrong person is accused of the murder and start investigating together with budding journalist Lydia. Featuring an entertaining cast of characters, the plot is full of intriguing twists and turns.

THE MAGICIAN'S DAUGHTER

Written by Caryl Lewis and illustrated by George Ermos
Published by Macmillan Children's Books
ISBN 9781529078169

After one disastrous magic show too many, Abby's dad decides it's time to give up. Then Abby finds an old book of spells among her mum's things and she and her dad plan some new performances. An uplifting story about the magic of being part of a community.

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PICK OF THE YEAR FOR OLDER READERS

DREADWOOD: FLOCK HORROR

Written by Jennifer Killick
Published by Farshore
ISBN 9780008538545

Mounting dread and escalating fear engulf five Y7 school mates (aka Club Loser) as they find themselves targeted for the third time by the monstrous Latchitts and their latest deadly creation - giant vampire birds! Scary, hilarious comedy-horror.

IMPOSSIBLE CREATURES

Written by Katherine Rundell
Published by Bloomsbury
ISBN 9781408897416

Christopher discovers the Archipelago, magical islands where mythical creatures still live. There he meets Mal, a girl from the islands. Together they embark on an urgent quest to save both the islands and the world beyond them from a rising evil before it's too late.

LET'S PLAY MURDER

Written by Kesia Lupo
Published by Bloomsbury
ISBN 9781526635464

Veronica wakes up trapped with four strangers in a manor house in a snow storm with a dead body. Although it feels real it isn't. This is Virtual Reality and this is The Game. And there's no escaping until the Game is won.

SPELLSTONE

Written by Ross Montgomery
Published by Walker Books
ISBN 9781529501933

When Evie is recruited into The Order of the Stone, she is told she must keep the Spellstone safe from Vale, an evil wizard who is hunting for it to unleash its powers. Can Evie and the Order of the Stone defeat Vale?



STATELESS

Written by Elizabeth Wein
Published by Bloomsbury
ISBN 9781526601681

Stella is the only girl in Europe's first ever youth air race in 1937, but when she witnesses the death of a fellow pilot, she begins to investigate a dangerous murder mystery. Full of twists, turns and surprises.

THE RESCUE OF RAVENWOOD

Written by Natasha Farrant
Published by Faber & Faber
ISBN 9780571348787

Ravenwood is a magical place so when its future is threatened Bea and Raffy must fight for the home they love. The narrative is told from multiple perspectives, exploring the themes of belonging, and the need for a safe home.

THE STORIES GRANDMA FORGOT (AND HOW I FOUND THEM)

Written by Nadine Aisha Jassat
Published by Orion
ISBN 9781510111578

Nyla believes her grandmother, who says she has seen Nyla's father, but she has been told that he died in an accident. Has grandma been 'time-travelling' again? Written in verse this is a page-turner on the themes of memory and family history.

UNTIL THE ROAD ENDS

Written by Phil Earle
Published by Andersen Press
ISBN 9781839133169

A moving story set in World War II; the third by this author on the theme of animals in wartime. Beau the dog, Bomber the pigeon and Mabel the cat seek their human friend Peggy after tragedy strikes in London.

THE AGENCY FOR SCANDAL

Written by Laura Wood
Published by Scholastic
ISBN 9780702303241

In this high-spirited romp set at the end of the 19th Century we meet the independent minded female members of The Aviary, a secretive detective agency. Themes of murder, betrayal and romance are explored in this entertaining page turner.

AND FOR MORE MATURE READERS

BOY LIKE ME

Written by Simon James Green
Published by Scholastic
ISBN 9780702313653

A love story against the background of a school library, with a very empathetic school librarian. Set in the 1990s, when promoting same sex relationships is prohibited. Will Jamie and Rob find true love amongst the bookshelves despite the obstacles?

GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER

Written by Kathryn Foxfield
Published by Scholastic
ISBN 9780702312847

Nine online gamers find themselves playing the deadly game of Sole Survivor for real in a new high-tech escape room complex. How many will survive? Expect strong language, violence and death from this dark, fast-paced thriller.

HAPPY HEAD

Written by Josh Silver
Published by Rock the Boat
ISBN 9780861545537

At a retreat designed to solve teenage unhappiness, Seb is drawn to the enigmatic Finn, and starts to question the true nature of the challenges they must undergo. The deeper into the programme they get, the more disturbing the assessments become, until it's clear there may be no escape.

NEVER TRUST A GEMINI

Written by Freja Nicole Woolf
Published by Walker
ISBN 9781529509991

Fourteen-year-old Cat has a crush on Alison, who is a perfect zodiac match but isn't interested. Then she meets Morgan, who's a Gemini, which is definitely not a good match. An energetic romp full of comedic misunderstandings and sparkling language.



Children's Book Award

Owned and Coordinated by the Federation of Children's Book Groups
Registered Charity No. 268289



The Federation of Children's Book Groups

Registered Charity No. 268289



OVERALL WINNER

WINNERS

2024

PICK OF THE YEAR



Children's Book Award

The Federation of Children's Book Groups
Registered Charity 268289

THE CHILDREN'S CHOICE

The Children's Book Award is the only national book prize given in the UK that is decided by the readers from start to finish – the children themselves. The award is given annually to the most popular work of children's fiction, almost 700 books have been read and voted for by young readers and young adults.

During the 2023 voting period over 47,000 votes were cast for the books submitted by publishers in the process to create the Top 50 Pick of the Year, all by young members of nine Testing Groups from the FCBG.

A further 30,000 votes were cast by children all over the country to pick their favourite books from the shortlist to pick out the winners in:

- BOOKS FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN
- BOOKS FOR YOUNGER READERS
- BOOKS FOR OLDER READERS

Visit the award page on the Federation of Children's Book Group <https://fcbg.org.uk/cba-home/> to read more about the Pick of the Year and the award in general. You will also find more information and activities for each book, and posters and bookmarks to download.

All the books in the Pick of the Year were read, tested and voted for by children

and are their favourite books from all those published in 2023. From picture books to books for sharing, from books for early readers to the more confident, and for longer novels for teenagers and young adults, the Pick of the Year gives ideas for libraries, for gifts and for sharing with your own children. You will find some great suggestions for new authors as well as firm favourites!

If you, your school or your family would like to take part in the only national award where only the children's vote counts and only their vote matters, contact childrensbookaward@fcbg.org.uk. Be part of an award that is recognised for picking the stars of the future.

The Children's Book Award is owned and coordinated by the Federation of Children's Book Groups, a voluntary organisation that coordinates national activity for local children's book groups around the UK. Visit www.fcbg.org.uk to learn more about the charity and how you can get involved. Volunteers run the Award working with local schools, libraries, families and children's organisations and children from nine Testing Groups place their votes throughout the year, resulting in the Top Ten shortlist and the Pick of the Year.

The reviews for the Pick of the Year titles were written by members of the Federation of Children's Book Groups and are listed in alphabetical order of title in each age range.

You can follow the Award on X (Twitter) @FCBGNews using #FCBGCA24, and through the FCBG Facebook and Instagram pages

SHORTLISTED BOOKS FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN



CATEGORY WINNER

GIGANTIC

Written and illustrated by Rob Biddulph
Published by HarperCollins ISBN 9780008413439

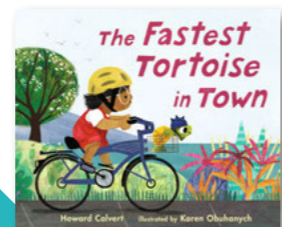
This is the beautifully illustrated rhyming tale of Gigantic, the smallest blue whale in his pod. When his big brother, Titus, teases him about his size, Gigantic makes friends with Myrtle the turtle and together they play together. Titus is determined to show that anything Gigantic can do, he can do better, ignoring advice that the water is too shallow for such a big whale. When disaster strikes it is up to Gigantic and his little friends to save the day.



THE BIG DREAMING

Written by Michael Rosen and illustrated by Daniel Egneus
Published by Bloomsbury ISBN 9781408883297

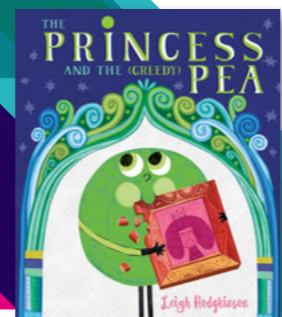
A heartwarming story about a bear and its cub getting ready for their long, winter sleep. Little Bear is worried that he might run out of dreams so he sets off on a sumptuously illustrated adventure to ask the other forest animals if they have any to spare. Each answer delights and encourages him to return home and find Big Bear as the snow begins to fall. Will their dreams sustain them through to the spring? Join in with the lovely rhyming chorus.



THE FASTEST TORTOISE IN TOWN

Written by Howard Calvert and illustrated by Karen Obuhanych
Published by Walker Books ISBN 9781529514278

A modern take on the traditional tale of The Hare and the Tortoise. Colourful illustrations tell the charming story of Lorraine and her leopard tortoise Barbara Hendricks as they train to join in the race with the other animals. Their journey introduces humorous characters who don't instill Barbara with a lot of confidence as a runner. Will Lorraine be able to encourage her to overcome her fears and win? A tender story to help engender self belief and resilience.



THE PRINCESS AND THE (GREEDY) PEA

Written and illustrated by Leigh Hodgkinson
Published by Walker Books ISBN 9781529503005

A gorgeously illustrated mixed up story combining two classics: 'I know an old lady who swallowed a fly' and 'The Princess and the Pea'. There is something absurd about a pea swallowing a sprout. A great read aloud story with a funny rhyming sequence and improbable list of items eaten by our pea (ever come across a pea swallowing a table?) The detail in the illustrations is stunning. Turn the book round to see the Princess in the bed sequence.

SHORTLISTED BOOKS FOR YOUNGER READERS



WINNER OF CATEGORY AND OVERALL WINNER

PRESS START! GAME ON, SUPER RABBIT BOY!

Written and illustrated by Thomas Flintham
Published by Nosy Crow
ISBN 9781839949180

Sunny's favourite game is Super Rabbit Boy, set in Animal Town where everyone just likes to have fun. But King Viking hates fun and decides to kidnap Singing Dog so that there will be no more songs to dance to. Only Super Rabbit Boy can save the day. Join him as he tries to battle through six levels of the game to find Singing Dog and bring him back home. An exciting younger graphic adventure story with a difference. Ideal for lovers of video games!



ADVENTURE MICE: OTTER CHAOS

Written by Philip Reeve and illustrated by Sarah McIntyre
Published by David Fickling Books
ISBN 9781788452670

Pedro, a young mouse, sets off to find adventure in "The Mouse Islands". He is soon being rescued from drowning by Fledermaus and becomes the latest recruit of The Adventure Mice. After many escapades and a close encounter with a hungry otter, Pedro becomes a fully qualified Adventure Mouse. Full of Reeve and McIntyre magic, colour illustrations, maps and even a drawing lesson, this is a wonderful introduction to independent reading, which should lead to many more literary adventures.



MARV AND THE KILLER PLANTS

Written by Alex Falase-Koya and illustrated by Paula Bowles
Published by OUP
ISBN 9780192780508

When Marvin's school holds a competition to design a new garden he is determined to win, but his friend Eva comes up with the same design and wins. Marvin's alter ego, Marv, soon has to use his superpowers against super-villain Violet Vine when she uses special potions to make the plants grow out of control and take over the school. Perfect for children who are just moving on to chapter books. A funny, fast paced adventure with important messages about friendship, jealousy and forgiveness.

SHORTLISTED BOOKS FOR OLDER READERS



CATEGORY WINNER

THE FINAL YEAR

Written by Matt Goodfellow and illustrated by Joe Todd-Stanton
Published by Otter-Barry Books
ISBN 9781915659040

A moving verse novel about Nate, who is navigating family and friendship issues in a tough final year of primary school. Highly accessible, lyrical and life affirming, the reader shares Nate's innermost thoughts and can really connect with the pain, anger and love that he feels. In a beautiful demonstration of the power of reading, Nate's teacher introduces him to David Almond's Skellig, where the similar themes of grief and families in crisis help him process what he is going through.



CODE NAME KINGFISHER

Written by Liz Kessler
Published by Simon & Schuster
ISBN 9781398512498

A beautifully told exploration of change and loss which shuttles between the present day and the rise of Nazi power in wartime Holland. In the present, Liv, struggling with friendships, finds a connection with her grandmother. This is interwoven with the dramatic story of a Jewish family under Nazi occupation and the work of the Dutch resistance. The book doesn't shy away from the realities of war but multiple narrators and short chapters make it an accessible read for ages 11 and up.



DEADLOCK

Written by Simon Fox
Published by Nosy Crow
ISBN 9781839944420

Picking locks and breaking into safes just seems like harmless fun when Archie's policeman dad shows him how, but then a diamond necklace goes missing and his dad is arrested. Archie decides that he can use his talent to prove his dad's innocence. Soon he's embroiled in a criminal underworld and a web of deceit with no idea of who he can trust. This hard-hitting thriller will keep you on the edge of your seat as Archie looks for a way to clear his dad.