



# Book Discovery Guide

Here at Scottish Book Trust, we know how important teachers and school staff are in helping pupils to develop a love of reading, which in turn helps to close the attainment gap and boost pupil wellbeing.

Using contemporary books in the classroom allows the children to see themselves on the page and read about a wide variety of experiences, and research from the Open University has shown how important teacher knowledge of contemporary books is to helping pupils enjoy reading.

This Book Discovery Guide is here to help you find new books for pupils of all ages and reading levels. We've given guidelines of which year groups might enjoy each book, but these are only guidelines and each reader will have their own reading level.

From staff picks and themed booklists to guest recommendations and responses to the book suggestions we are often asked for, we hope you find books in here that pique your learners' interest.



## New from Scottish publishers



### Anna by Laura Guthrie

CRANACHAN PUBLISHING

*Anna* is a heart-warming and uplifting adaption of the classic Pollyanna, transported to the Scottish countryside. Anna is a young person with Asperger's Syndrome (now known as Autistic Spectrum Disorder Level 1) grappling with bereavement and the move to a new place. Despite all these challenges, it is Anna's hope, optimism and zest for life that shines throughout this novel.



### Fin & Rye & Fireflies by Harry Cook

BLACK & WHITE PUBLISHING

After Fin is cruelly outed by his crush Jesse, his family decide it is time for a fresh start. But, a fresh start won't change the truth of who Fin is and Fin knows it, even if his family isn't so sure. Thrown into new a place, with new friendships and relationships to navigate, Fin is determined to remain true to himself no matter what. Endearing, occasionally outrageous and thought provoking, this is the perfect uplifting winter read.



### An Amazing Animal Atlas of Scotland illustrated by Anders Frang

FLORIS BOOKS

A beautiful non-fiction book that is perfect for primary school classrooms and libraries. Scotland's animals are brought to life by Anders Frang's expressive illustrations that give all of the animals their own character. The book is full of fun facts about all kinds of animals, from deep sea swimmers to birds of prey.



## Scottish Teenage Book Prize

Every year, we choose the best new books from Scottish authors and publishers for the Scottish Teenage Book Prize shortlist. Teenagers all over Scotland can read all three books on the shortlist and vote for their favourite, either through their class or book group or individually.



**The Gifted, the Talented and Me**  
by William Sutcliffe

BLOOMSBURY YA

15-year-old Sam is totally ordinary and proud of it. Unfortunately, his parents have sent him off to the North London Academy for the Gifted and Talented, where everyone's busy planning Hollywood domination or starting alt-metal psychedelica crossover bands. Sam knows he'll never belong, even if he wanted to. And that's before he ends up on stage wearing nothing but a fur onesie...



**White Eagles**  
by Elizabeth Wein  
BARRINGTON STOKES

Summer 1939. With Europe on the brink of war, 18-year-old Kristina Tomiak has been called up to join the White Eagles, Poland's valiant air force. When the Nazis reach her town, Kristina makes a daring escape, but she doesn't realise that she's carrying a stowaway in her plane. Will Kristina be able to navigate the most challenging flight of her life and reach safety amid the turmoil of war?



**Evernight**  
by Ross MacKenzie  
ANDERSEN PRESS

Thousands of years ago, the Evernight turned everything to darkness and chaos. The Evernight is about to return, and the only spell that might stop it is lost. Orphan Larabelle Fox stumbles across a mysterious wooden box while treasure-hunting in the sewers, a discovery which catapults her into an adventure where she faces wild magic and mortal danger.

## The Bookbug Picture Book Prize

The Bookbug Picture Book Prize celebrates Scottish picture books. The three shortlisted books are gifted in the Bookbug P1 Family Bag to all P1 pupils, and pupils of all ages can get involved in reading the stories and voting for their favourite.



**Brenda is a Sheep**  
by Morag Hood  
TWO HOOTS

All the sheep adore Brenda. With her sharp pointy teeth and cool grey fur, she's the snazziest sheep around. But Brenda is also very hungry, and doesn't much like the taste of grass... she soon begins plotting the most delicious feast of all. But will the sheep notice that Brenda isn't quite the same as them?



**This is a Dog**  
by Ross Collins  
NOSY CROW

Uh-oh! An excitable (but very loveable) dog has found his way into this First Animals book and he will NOT let any of the other animals take their turn. Dogs are far more important, after all! And when the other animals get angry, this dog comes up with a very cunning plan to outwit them...



**My First Book of Birds**  
illustrated by Zoë Ingram  
WALKER BOOKS

Illustrated in a bright, contemporary style, this guide to common garden birds is packed with information and fun facts – everything you need to know to help you learn about and identify birds. With key facts about size, habitat, diet and population, there are detailed descriptions of each bird and tips to help you spot them in the park or garden.

# Scottish Book Trust staff picks

## Picked by Anna Broomfield

S1+

### Loveless

by Alice Oseman  
HARPERCOLLINS  
CHILDREN'S BOOKS

A funny and emotional story about an asexual-aromantic character discovering her sexuality and how beautiful platonic relationships can be.



S3+

### Pet

by Akwaake Emezi  
FABER AND FABER

In a utopian future, this is a powerful story about a creature called Pet and Jam, a transgender, largely non-verbal protagonist in a plot which doesn't centre on her identity.



P4-S1

### Orion Lost

by Alastair Chisholm  
NOSY CROW

When a group of teenagers get stranded in space, 13-year-old Beth is suddenly in charge of a disobedient crew and has to fight her insecurities to get them home.



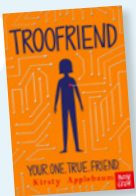
## Picked by Sarah Mallon

P5-S1

### Troofriend

by Kirsty Applebaum  
NOSY CROW

Can androids be our friends? This futuristic story follows Sarah and her android Ivy, raising questions about our relationship with technology and what makes a good friend.



P3-P7

### The Picture Atlas

by Simon Holland,  
illustrated by Jill Calder  
BLOOMSBURY CHILDREN'S BOOKS

This beautiful and colourful atlas takes you on a journey around the world, with interesting facts and features on themes like rainforests and food.



P4-P7

### The Dog That Saved Christmas

by Nicola Davies,  
illustrated by Mike Byrne  
BARRINGTON STOKE

Christmas isn't an easy time for Jake, who has autism, but a lost dog might help change that. This is a great story in a super readable format.



## Picked by Hannah Sycamore

S1-S4

### Wuthering Heights

a retelling  
by Tanya Landman  
BARRINGTON STOKE

A superb retelling, capturing the mood, atmosphere and emotion of the original book perfectly. This is a brilliant way to introduce this beloved classic to less confident readers.



P5-S2

### Once Upon an Eid

edited by S K Ali and Aisha Saeed  
AMULET BOOKS

A warm and joyous collection about experiences of celebrating Eid. With poetry, illustrations and prose, there is something in this book to suit every reader.



S1-S4

### The Girl Who Became a Tree: A Story Told in Poems

by Joseph Coelho,  
illustrated by Kate Milner  
OTTER-BARRY BOOKS

Perfect for reading aloud and told in poems, this book mixes fantasy, reality and myth to poignantly convey the despair and guilt after losing a loved one.



Whether a pupil always has their nose in a book or hasn't picked one up for a while, our **Bookzilla** app is here to help them find their next great read (without collecting any personal data).



Bookzilla helps pupils to:

- track their reading
- find personalised recommendations
- see what's been rated by their peers
- take on reading dares
- set themselves reading challenges

Find out more at [scottishbooktrust.com/bookzilla](https://scottishbooktrust.com/bookzilla), or search for Bookzilla on the App Store or Google Play



# Anti-Racism book recommendations

If you are looking to focus on an anti-racism project or want to introduce the topic for a class discussion through reading, the books below are a great place to start.



P1-P4

## Something Happened in Our Town

by Marianne Celano, Marietta Collins and Ann Hazzard, illustrated by Jennifer Zivoin  
MAGINATION PRESS

This book follows two families – one white, one Black – as they discuss a police shooting of a Black man in their community. A great aid in the classroom, this book will help you to answer pupils' questions about traumatic events they may have seen or heard on the news.



P1-P4

## A is for Activist

by Innosanto Nagara  
SEVEN STORIES PRESS

Laid out akin to many alphabet books, this picture book is perfect for sharing with young and older children alike. The book presents activism, environmental justice, civil rights and LGBTQ+ rights in rhyme and alliteration, and will start fruitful conversations when shared with children.



P3-P7

## Little Leaders series

by Vashti Harrison  
PUFFIN

These non-fiction books share the history and lives of inspirational Black men and women. The text is accessible, and the books would be a perfect starting point for a project on Black history.



S1+

## This Book Is Anti-Racist

by Tiffany Jewell, illustrated by Aurélia Durand  
FRANCES LINCOLN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

This book offers 20 chapters and activities that explore racism and racial injustice, and encourage the reader to learn more about themselves and their personal views and experiences.



S3+

## Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You

by Ibram X. Kendi and Jason Reynolds  
LITTLE, BROWN YOUNG READERS

*Stamped* reveals the history of racist ideas in America and inspires hope for an anti-racist future. Jason Reynolds' fast-paced narrative will grip readers and help young adults identify and address racism in their daily lives.



S3+

## Dear Martin

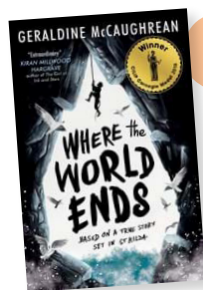
by Nic Stone  
SIMON & SCHUSTER CHILDREN'S UK

After Justyce experiences a racist incident with the police, he begins to write letters to Dr Martin Luther King Jr, asking questions about Kings' activism and teachings and their relevance today. This book is a perfect way to introduce Dr Martin Luther King Jr and the Civil Rights movement to young people.



## Recommendations from The Mainstreet Trading Company

Based in the beautiful Scottish Borders village of St Boswells, The Mainstreet Trading Company is a destination bookshop, café, deli & home shop. Co-owner, Rosamund de la Hey, was formerly children's marketing director at Bloomsbury Children's Books, so the bookshop is very much a family space that seeks to inspire the readers of the future.



P7+

**Where the World Ends**  
by Geraldine McCaughrean  
USBORNE

Based on the true story of when a group of men and boys were left on Warrior Stac, off the isle of St Kilda, to collect the annual Guga bird harvest in 1727. They know that their families wouldn't have abandoned them to this incredibly harsh environment, so what has happened? This story is packed with drama as the men and boys face the power of the natural world, held hostage on a vertical rock stack.



P4+

**Voyage of the Sparrowhawk**  
by Natasha Farrant  
FABER & FABER

Lottie and Ben could never have expected their unlikely friendship would lead to a night time escape by barge, heading for post-war France, chased by a policeman and an irate uncle, accompanied by a rapidly expanding brood of dogs. This is wonderful old fashioned storytelling in the tradition of Eva Ibbotson.



S1+

**When Life Gives You Mangoes**  
by Kereen Getten  
PUSHKIN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Clara lives in a small village on an island. Her life is slow and idyllic, spent playing with her best friend Gaynah. But her parents are on edge, and Clara can't remember what happened to cause their unease. When Rudy arrives from England and Gaynah starts behaving strangely, Clara's memories start to return...

## Frequently asked recommendations

We often get asked for recommendations from teachers, whether they're looking for a new class read or something for a particular pupil. Here are some brilliant suggestions to some of our frequently asked questions.

### Recommendations for reluctant readers

**Dungeon Fun**  
by Colin Bell and Neil Storrance  
BHP COMICS

The perfect graphic novel for fans of gaming or Dungeons and Dragons, this tongue-in-cheek book challenges stereotypes in a fun and engaging way.

**Lark**  
by Anthony McGowan  
BARRINGTON STOKES

Published in an accessible format, this short Carnegie Medal winner is action-packed, gripping, and sure to entice any reluctant reader.

**Wrecked**  
by Louisa Reid  
GUPPY BOOKS

Told in narrative verse, *Wrecked* is an eye-opening and moving thriller. The reader is both the judge and the jury to Joe, who is currently in court for a charge of dangerous driving.

### What to read after Harry Potter?

**Amulet**  
by Kazu Kibuishi  
SCHOLASTIC

Perfect for reluctant and keen readers alike, *Amulet* is great graphic novel series to get young people hooked on reading, in a world where all is not as it seems.

**Orphans of the Tide**  
by Struan Murray, illustrated by Manuel Šumberac  
PUFFIN

*Orphans of the Tide* is a dark and magical fantasy thriller. When a boy washes in with the tide, everyone assumes he is the enemy and must die. Can Ellie save him?

**Nevermoor**  
by Jessica Townsend  
ORION  
CHILDREN'S BOOKS

The first in a series, *Nevermoor* is an enchanting read. Cursed to die on her eleventh birthday, Morrigan is rescued by a mysterious stranger who takes her into a surprising and magical new world.



## Find out more

Head to [scottishbooktrust.com/learning](https://scottishbooktrust.com/learning) to find out more about our schools programmes, including the Scottish Teenage Book Prize and The Bookbug Picture Book Prize. You'll also find lots of brilliant free CfE-linked resources, upcoming CLPL sessions, Authors Live events to watch on demand, and opportunities to apply for author events and funding.

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