

**Scottish  
Book Trust**

inspiring readers and writers

**Issue #4  
May 2022**



# 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 writers and illustrators

P1-3



### The Spectacular Suit by Kat Patrick and Hayley Wells

SCRIBE PUBLICATIONS

Frankie's birthday party is just around the corner . . . but what is she going to wear? Her family come together to make her the spectacular suit of her dreams!

Bright digital illustrations bring Frankie's dazzling suit to life in this uplifting picture book, which celebrates being who you want to be.

P3-5



### Tiger Warrior: Rise of the Lion Beast by Maisie Chan

ORCHARD BOOKS

A thrilling read that follows Jack as he battles his worst fear, the Nian lion beast, at Lunar New Year. Can he defeat it and save the Jade Kingdom?

Look out for other titles in the superb *Tiger Warrior* series, ideal for readers on a quest for action-packed fantasy.

P5-S3



### Talking History: 150 Years of Speakers and Speeches

by Joan Haig, Joan  
Lennon and André Ducci

TEMPLAR PUBLISHING

From Abraham Lincoln to Nelson Mandela and Greta Thunberg, *Talking History* charts important days in history when words made a difference, covering subjects including war, civil rights and the environment.

Beautiful, graphic illustrations help readers experience the power of speeches in this inspiring and immersive book.

# First Minister's Reading Challenge Celebration Festival

To celebrate the schools, libraries and community groups that have taken part in the First Minister's Reading Challenge this year, we've planned a very exciting week-long online celebration festival, beginning on Monday 6 June! There will be three brilliant events to watch, featuring the authors and illustrators on these pages, and they'll be available to watch on demand all summer too.

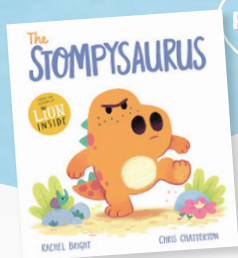


P1-3

**Oh No, George!**  
by Chris Haughton  
WALKER BOOKS

Celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, *Oh No, George!* is a bold and funny picture book about George the dog, who is trying very hard to be good while his owner is out for the day. However, things don't go to plan when George is faced with the temptations of a chocolate cake and a cat to chase!

A beautiful book sure to make you laugh out loud and be charmed by George.



P1-3

**The Stompysaurus**  
by Rachel Bright and  
Chris Chatterton  
ORCHARD BOOKS

A bad-tempered Stompysaurus learns to take control of his anger and frustration in the latest edition to the DinoFeelings series.

This picture book will help children to face their feelings of anger and annoyance when nothing seems to be going right, and find a new way to look at things.



P4-7

**So You Think You've Got it Bad? A Kid's Life in Ancient Greece**  
by Chae Strathie and  
Marisa Morea  
NOSY CROW

So you think *you've* got it bad? Imagine living on a diet of blood soup whilst wearing nothing but a cloak, or having to learn a poem that was over 15,000 lines long!

A kid's life in ancient Greece might sound fun, but you'd be wrong. Full of funny facts and beautifully illustrated, this book will tease out your inner historian and bring Ancient Greece to life.



P4-7

**Loki: A Bad God's Guide to Being Good**  
by Louie Stowell  
WALKER BOOKS

You've probably heard of the trickster god Loki, but have you seen him navigate life on Earth without his powers, in the body of an eleven year-old boy?

After one trick too many, Loki is banished on Earth to live as a 'normal' school boy and must show moral improvement to return to his true form.

This is a very funny diary-style story full of doodles and comic strips – perfect for *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* fans!



S1-4

**The Climbers**  
by Keith Gray  
BARRINGTON STOKES

When Sully, the best tree-climber in his village meets his rival, a contest ensues that leads to a turning point in both their lives. Both boys must race to climb the last unnamed tree and whoever makes it to the top will become a legend.

This compelling and moving story of teenage rivalries, friendship and identity will pull you in and captivate you until its final pages.



S3+

**The Crossing**  
by Manjeet Mann  
ANDERSEN PRESS

When two teenagers find themselves brought together through a twist of fate in a broken world, they both feel hope for the new lives they yearn for.

An essential and sadly all too relevant story, *The Crossing* is a powerful verse-novel of hope, grief and the very real tragedies faced by refugees. The book beautifully explores the experience of simply being human, and the lottery of where we are born.



# Scottish Book Trust staff picks

## Picked by Liam McCallum

P4-7



**Malamander**  
by Thomas Taylor

WALKER BOOKS

This Scooby Doo-like mystery adventure has it all – colourful characters, creepy mythical creatures and a loveable, if a little incompetent, hero.

P4-7

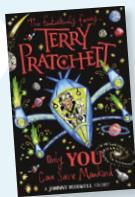


**Bad Guys**  
by Aaron Blabey

SCHOLASTIC

What happens when bad guys go good? This hilarious, highly illustrated series is an absolute, laugh-a-minute hoot!

S1+



**Only You Can Save Mankind**  
by Terry Pratchett

CORGI CHILDRENS

Gaming fans will love this 'What if it's actually real?' story of Johnny Maxwell and his quest to save mankind, sort of.

## Picked by Heather Collins

P3-7



**Grimwood**  
by Nadia Shireen

SIMON &  
SCHUSTER CHILDREN'S UK

A brilliantly bonkers, completely original and heartwarming story of sibling love and adventure. A very enjoyable read.

P1-4



**The River**  
by Tom Percival

SIMON & SCHUSTER  
CHILDREN'S UK

A moving story of how connecting with nature can help us overcome grief and channel our emotions. Gentle, moving, beautifully done.

P1-5



**Bumble and Snug and the Angry Pirates**  
by Mark Bradley

HODDER CHILDREN'S BOOKS

This comic is a perfect package of wacky adventure, drawing tips and thoughtful ways to discuss mental wellbeing with young children.

## Picked by Catherine Wilson Garry

P1-3



**We're All Works of Art**  
by Mark Sperring and Rose Blake

PAVILION CHILDREN'S

Told through different forms of artwork, this beautiful picture book introduces the idea that it's okay – great even! – that we all look and feel different in the bodies we're given.

S1+



**Wain**  
by Rachel Plummer and Helene Boppert

THE EMMA PRESS

LGBT+ reimaginings of Scottish folklore told through poems.

Find selkies and kelpies, but also the often overlooked cat sith, stoor worms and seven big women of Jura!

S5+



**Spinning**  
by Tillie Walden

SELFMADEHERO

A graphic novel about growing up and figuring out who you are – all told through Walden's experience as a competitive figure skater and how it shaped her life both on, and off, the ice-rink.

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 upper primary and lower secondary 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 local bookshops and libraries

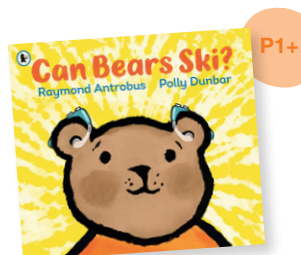
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# Books to promote empathy

There's always room for more empathy. These books will help children to understand experiences that might be outside of their own, and are a great starting point for conversations about empathy.

For more books like these, you could explore Empathy Lab's Read for Empathy collection, and join us on Twitter for an empathy-themed **#ChildrensBookChat** on **Wednesday 8 June 2022 at 8pm**.



**Can Bears Ski?**  
by Raymond Antrobus  
and Polly Dunbar  
WALKER BOOKS

*Can Bears Ski?* follows Bear as he begins to realise he can't hear like others, and his journey to receiving assistive technology. This book is ideal for sharing across the school, for starting discussions about hearing loss and disability, and how we can support others.



**Shu Lin's Grandpa**  
by Matt Goodfellow  
and Yu Rong  
OTTER-BARRY BOOKS

Shu Lin has started a new school, and finds it hard to be accepted. When her grandfather comes into class to show his beautiful paintings, things begin to change. This is a book about how we judge others, and the power of art to build connection and cultural understanding.



**Elisabeth and the Box of Colours**  
by Katherine Woodfine  
and Rebecca Cobb  
BARRINGTON STOKE

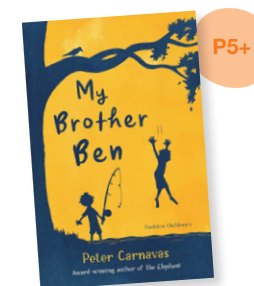
The latest in the Little Gem series, this historical fiction story explores grief and loss and is perfect for exploring how isolating and alone we can feel, even when surrounded by others. This is a heart-warming story of friendship, and discovering what brings you joy.



**The Light in Everything**  
by Katya Balen  
BLOOMSBURY CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Exploring the challenges of two families coming together, Tom and Zofia struggle with the change when their parents decide to move in together – Zofia is angry, and Tom finds it hard to trust.

Told in dual narrative, this is ideal for reading aloud and allows for discussion around emotional literacy and the importance of communication.



**My Brother Ben**  
by Peter Carnavas  
PUSHKIN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

*My Brother Ben* is perfect for sharing with pupils preparing to transition to a new class or new school.

Luke's brother has just moved to secondary school, and we follow the impact this has on their relationship and Luke's struggle with the change.

With gentle messages of resilience and mindfulness, this is ideal for sharing in school.



**Dragon Skin**  
by Karen Foxlee  
PUSHKIN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

A powerful story of living in a household with emotional abuse, this is an emotional but important read.

Pip never wants to be home and seeks refuge by nursing a baby dragon. This story poignantly mixes reality and fantasy, exploring family and manipulative relationships in a considered and sensitive way.

## Recommendations from Julie Sutherland, winner of the Learning Professional Award 2022

Julie Sutherland is the librarian at Forrester High School in Edinburgh and winner of the Scottish Book Trust Learning Professional Award 2022. Her impressive knowledge of the children's and YA literature market has inspired hundreds of pupils to become readers and writers, and her colleagues describe her as the beating heart of the school.



P4-7

**We Were Wolves**  
by Jason Cockcroft  
ANDERSEN PRESS

*We Were Wolves* has the most incredible illustrations, and a story that will make you sing, ponder and break your heart.

Boy avoids school, learning off the land with his dad who has PTSD. Boy is consumed by guilt when a decision to get help has terrible consequences.



P4+

**The Arrival**  
by Shaun Tan  
HODDER CHILDREN'S BOOKS

A wholly immersive wordless picture book of the immigrant experience. You arrive in a land that you don't recognise, with an alien language, strange food and rules you don't understand, experiencing this together with the protagonist.

The book can make you feel heart-broken, confused, frustrated, and helped.



S1+

**The 57 Bus**  
by Dashka Slater  
WREN & ROOK

A Black teen messes about with a lighter on a bus, egged on by his friends and setting alight the skirt of a white agender teen, who is horribly burnt.

This incredibly powerful true story recounts the event from before the incident, the trial and beyond, to forgiveness and redemption.

## 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.

### Books to read after Cressida Cowell

P4+



**Wings of Fire**  
by Tui T. Sutherland and Mike Holmes  
SCHOLASTIC

First in the exhilarating *The Dragonet Prophecy* series, follow the dragonets as they try to end the war between the dragon kingdom.

P4+



**The Land of Roar**  
by Jenny McLachlan and Ben Mantle  
EGMONT

A laugh-out-loud adventure filled with ninja-magicians, living scarecrows, mermaids and, of course, dragons. Perfect for fans of Hiccup's humour!

P4+



**Skandar and the Unicorn Thief**  
by A.F. Steadman  
SIMON & SCHUSTER CHILDREN'S

The first in a new series, perfect for those who loved Hiccup and Toothless' bond. Follow ferocious unicorns and their riders as they learn to control their powers.

### Books to support outdoor learning

P3-5



**Slow Down**  
by Rachel Williams and Freya Hartas  
MAGIC CAT

50 illustrated nature stories encouraging children to slow down and discover amazing facts about the world around them.

P4-7



**The Street Beneath My Feet**  
by Charlotte Guillain and Yuval Zommer  
WORDS AND PICTURES

This book gives children the opportunity to journey deep underground, discovering what might lie below both urban and rural landscapes.

P2-5



**Lottie Loves Nature series**  
by Jane Clarke  
FIVE QUILLS

A fiction series that will let younger readers discover tips and facts about nature on their doorstep while following Lottie's hilarious outdoor adventures.



## Find out more

Head to [scottishbooktrust.com/learning](https://scottishbooktrust.com/learning) to find out more about our schools programmes. 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.

To hear first about upcoming opportunities, sign up to receive our schools and libraries newsletter at:

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Find more book recommendations at:

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