

## A selection of books especially selected for children in Year 9 (13 - 14 year olds) of average reading ability for the 2021/22 academic year.

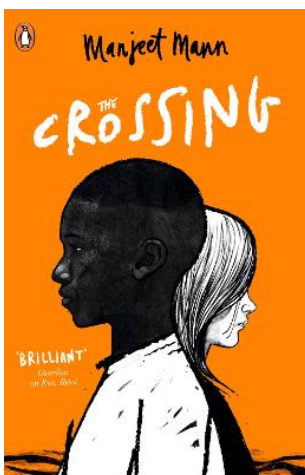
If your child is a competent reader or has read all these titles then try the books from the Year 10 list. Alternatively if these books are a little challenging try books from the Year 8 list. Our overall mission is to promote reading for pleasure with quality texts that are perfectly pitched for the age group and the curriculum. We have particularly avoided blockbusters, classic or set texts, known to everyone, so that we can include poetry, stunning information texts and inspirational books in which all children and young people can find themselves reflected.



### First Day of My Life

**Author:** Lisa Williamson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/07/2021 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 4

Voiced by three unforgettable characters - Frankie, Jojo, and Ram, Frankie's ex boyfriend - whose lives are inextricably bound by unexpected, life-changing circumstances, this impactful novel sparkles with heart, hope and a riveting storyline. Jojo and Frankie have been best friends since forever. Both promising actresses, their lives are on the brink of new horizons, so when Jojo doesn't turn up to collect her GCSE results, Frankie is frantic with worry. Then, when she eventually hears from Jojo, and also hears a baby crying in the background, Frankie puts two and two together to get six. Could Jojo be responsible for the stolen baby that's being reported on the local news? Fearing the worst, Frankie does what she must for her dear friend. She tracks her down and discovers an unimaginable truth that truly tests their relationship. Radiant with uplifting portrayals of friendship, and demonstrating that it's possible to find a way through even the most seemingly impossible situations, this poignant page-turner packs a whole lot of punch in the author's inimitably empathetic style. Of particular note is the way the novel shows that adults don't always have the right answer, that life can be confusing no matter what your age, which demonstrates Williamson's singular respect for her YA readers - she never talks down, and always writes in a spirit of openness.

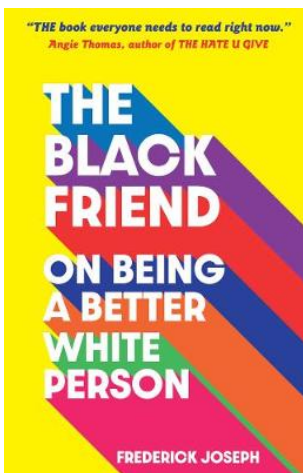


### The Crossing

**Author:** Manjeet Mann **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/06/2021 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

The premise of this fascinating book is two teenagers from opposite sides of the world who form a connection through odd circumstances. Natalie has just lost her Mum to cancer and struggles to find a calm place in the world, whilst her brother reacts by rebelling and joining a hate filled far right anti-refugee protest and action group. Sammy has had to leave his home in Eritrea on the chance of a new life in Europe - running from conscription into the army - which is a form of slavery in his home country. Both characters have huge issues to face. Sammy's seem more obviously dangerous and overwhelming, though Natalie's are equally as difficult - without the imminent danger. Told through a narrative poem using both voices to alternately express their

fears, dilemmas and friendships this is a book you really can't put down. You have to know if Sammy and Natalie do get to meet. As the plot carries you along you also want to know more about the plight of refugees and the horrific characters that exploit them in many many ways. Natalie's decision to swim the channel to raise funds for the refugee charities creates a counterpoint in the narrative. The detail of her struggles and training plan seem an unlikely text for poetry - but it works! The author says "I wanted to make sense of what I was seeing, I wanted to do something that would help build empathy and understanding." She has most emphatically succeeded in this aim. This is such a profound story of hope, grief, and strength - I do recommend it to all. Be aware you will weep, too.



## The Black Friend: On Being a Better White Person

**Author:** Frederick Joseph **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/04/2021 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

**Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2022 Information Books 3-14** Speaking directly to the reader, Frederick Joseph offers powerful reflections on his own experiences with racism. As a former token Black kid, he now presents himself as the friend many readers need, touching on topics including cultural appropriation, reverse racism and white privilege. Featuring interviews with figures such as writer Angie Thomas, content creator Toni Tone, and April Reign, founder of the #OscarsSoWhite movement, this book serves as conversation starter and tool kit, creating a timely and essential read for committed anti-racists and newcomers to the cause of racial justice alike.

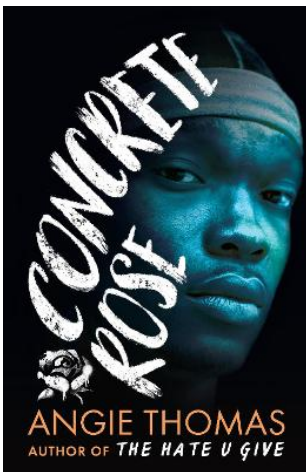


## What We're Scared Of

**Author:** Keren David **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 21/01/2021 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

**Selected for The Book Box by LoveReading4Kids** Published just before Holocaust Memorial Day this book could not be more important or timely. Author Keren David has talked about her own challenges bringing up Jewish children and about Jewishness only being reflected in Holocaust literature. She wanted to write a story in which young Jewish people could see themselves as well as hopefully giving all young people something to think about. She has done a remarkable job with this immensely readable and authentic story. The short, dark and curvy extrovert, Evie, could not be more different from the tall, blonde, willowy, anxious Lottie. They go to different schools and have very different interests. Their Jewish mother has never discussed their heritage or family history and they follow no religious or cultural customs. But Lottie makes friends with Hannah and not only has her eyes opened to the casual bitchy racism of her classmates but relishes

and enjoys the Jewish life Hannah shows her. Of course, the reader is learning alongside Lottie and Hannah is so refreshingly modern, for example challenging gender roles in her faith, that this is a vibrant and positive view of the community. Meanwhile the twin's mother meets an old friend and her son Noah who have fled racist attacks in Paris. In her new role on radio she decides to announce her Jewish status and denounce racism. The ensuing Twitter storm of abuse and trolling opens Evie's eyes too, as does Noah's contacts with young Jews trying to take action to confront racists. Both girls are faced with very real danger and in the aftermath, they attend a talk by Mala Tribich- a very real Holocaust survivor. David very cleverly uses her actual testimony to ensure that readers can distinguish that this is the actual truth and not fictionalised. Mala's inspiration is just what they need to renew their enthusiasm - for Evie in activism and for Lottie in religion and for their family to finally feel a real part of their heritage and history. While dealing with some intense modern issues, this is a real page-turner populated by some very convincing and engaging young characters that will have absolutely no difficulty in finding enthusiastic readers. Highly recommended.



---

## Concrete Rose

**Author:** Angie Thomas **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 12/01/2021  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 4

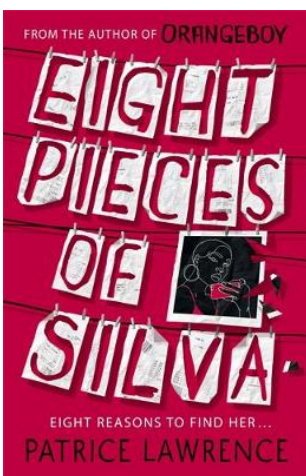
This book is set 17 years before the action in Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give* - showing how Star's father in *THUG* became the man he is. Maverick is an average teenage boy in the Garden Heights area - selling drugs to help the budget at home as his father is in prison. His Mum works two and sometimes three jobs to try to make ends meet - and Maverick knows he needs to graduate High School to stand any chance of becoming the man he wants to be. That is, until he discovers he is a father, and the baby's mother can't cope and hands baby Seven (named after Maverick's lucky number) to Maverick to care for. The difficulties of being a single parent, and the strong community who try to rally to Maverick's aid are wonderfully depicted in this powerful exploration of what it is to be a teen parent. But, it is never so simple as the community pulling together, Maverick also has to turn away from his gang life, standalone - but then his cousin Dre, who was more like a brother, is killed in a gangland shooting and dies in Maverick's arms. This is such a powerful book - totally honest in its appreciation of the difficulties of life, but so filled with humanity you cannot help but root for Maverick, even when you are scared what he might choose to do. This is one of those books that stay with you - that will change people's thinking, highlighting as it does some of the social injustices of growing up young and black in today's world. Read it, then read *The Hate u Give* - if you haven't already read it!



## The Silent Stars Go By

**Author:** Sally Nicholls **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 05/11/2020  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

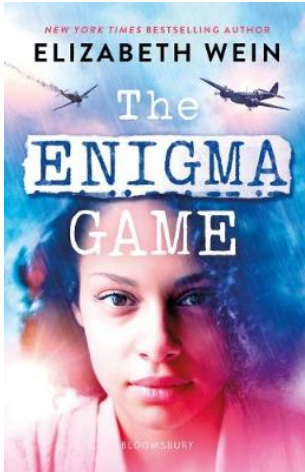
**November 2020 Book of the Month** The Silent Stars Go By is a riveting read-in-one-sitting experience driven by compelling characters who leap off the page, not least the young woman at its heart, an unmarried secretarial student who's forced to give up her baby during WWI. The novel is also underpinned by a superb sense of social history, with evocative details of post-war village life nestling within the bigger story, and - as might be expected of the author of Things a Bright Girl Can Do - it's threaded with feminist themes. It's 1919, Christmas is on the horizon and two years have passed since nineteen-year-old Margot was forced to give up her baby for her parents to raise as their own. She was only fifteen when she and Harry fell madly in love ahead of him being called up. The magic of their time together is evoked in all its tingling passion, contrasting with Margot's present-day torments. It hurts when little James calls her mother "Mummy", and she doesn't know how she can continue to keep James a secret from Harry, who's returned to the village after recuperating on the Isle of Wight. The flashbacks to Margot's time on the maternity ward are particularly poignant and, of course, the reason she has to endure this unbearable situation is due to the fact that she lives in a world in which "the girl is the one whose honour is defiled or whatever rot they spout" whereas "the boy is just being a boy". Coupled with that wider context, Margot's vicar father is a man who "forgave drunks and tramps and fallen women and the men who tried to steal the lead from the church roof. But he couldn't forgive her." Realising that "things couldn't go on like this," Margot decides to confront her fears amidst the rare glamour of a ball on New Year's Eve. You can find more wintry & festive stories in our Best Books for Kids this Christmas collection.



## Eight Pieces of Silva

**Author:** Patrice Lawrence **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 06/08/2020  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 4

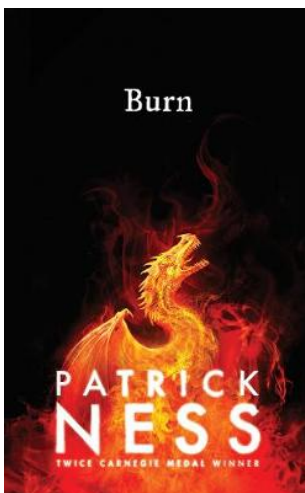
**Shortlisted for the YA Book Prize 2021** From the multi-award-winning author of Orangeboy, an addictive mystery that refuses to let you go long after you turn the final page. Can Becks piece the jigsaw together and find her sister before Silva loses herself? Find out more about the YA Book Prize including all the shortlisted titles.



## The Enigma Game

**Author:** Elizabeth Wein **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 14/05/2020 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

**Shortlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2021 | June 2020 Book of the Month** Teeming with drama and compelling code-cracking action, this WWII thriller is driven by the lives of three young people determined to make their mark on the war effort, and by the life-affirming relationship between fifteen-year-old Louisa and the elderly woman she's employed to look after. Aspiring pilot Louisa is alone in the world. Her white English mother was killed in a London bomb blast, and her black Jamaican dad died on a ship that was torpedoed only three days after her mother died. Through her grief brave Louisa "burns to fight back" and takes a job looking after Jane, an elderly German woman who's been imprisoned in an alien detention camp. While travelling to stay with Jane's niece in her Scottish pub, they form a beautiful bond, finding common ground in their love of music and the fact that they're both outsiders in Britain - Jane because she's German, and Louisa because she's mixed race and subjected to racism. In Scotland they meet fellow outsider, Ellen, a driver for the local RAF airfield who tries to hide her traveller heritage. Ellen's active role makes Louisa more determined to do something herself, so she takes her chance when a German defector lands at the airfield and leaves a codebreaking Enigma machine. It's not long before Louisa, Ellen and young flight lieutenant Jamie step-up their war efforts, as their story builds to an impeccably conducted, pulse-quickening crescendo. Alongside being a gripping thriller, this is a truly moving, inspirational novel. Louisa's passion for music and learning, her wit and ambition, are exhilaratingly infectious. I'd love to know what she does next.

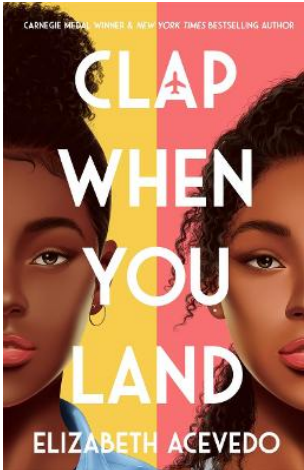


## Burn

**Author:** Patrick Ness **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 07/05/2020 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

**Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2021** Double Carnegie winning Patrick Ness proves yet again how effortlessly he can weave a tale that juggles apocalyptic themes and astonishing action with the truly personal sphere of beliefs and actions while dealing with issues as powerful as racism, homophobia and the morality of war and underlaying it all with deeply tender stories of love. Sarah Dewhurst, finds herself at the centre of an age-old prophecy about humans and dragons, as revealed to her by Kazimir the sardonic Russian Blue dragon hired by her father in a last-ditch attempt to save their farm from bankruptcy. She also learns that an assassin is heading her way, sent by Believers who want the world emptied of human obstacles to the dragons' dominance. Malcolm, the putative assassin, was raised from childhood in the cult and his evangelical determination to carry out his mission is matched only by his internal regrets for the life that he might have had. The plot twists and turns and grips the reader in a vice and

the multiple perspectives, including the FBI agents on Malcolm's trail, create an intense and captivating reading experience. Every character is given nuance and depth, even the extremely unpleasant Deputy Kelby has a recognisable psychology. There are no long pages of exposition, the writing is as spare and beautifully crafted as we have come to expect and yet the world building is entirely credible as well as fascinating. While the book stands satisfactorily concluded there is a tempting suggestion of more to come and I am sure all readers would anticipate this as avidly as I do. Highly recommended.

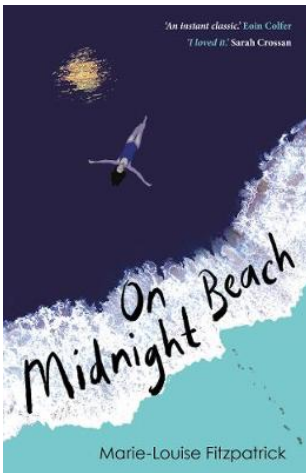


## Clap When You Land

**Author:** Elizabeth Acevedo **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/05/2020 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 4

**Shortlisted for CILIP Carnegie Medal 2021 - Shortlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2021** From the multi-award-winning author of *The Poet X* and *With the Fire on High* comes Elizabeth Acevedo's exceptional dual-voiced novel about loss, love and sisterhood across the sea, a story partly sparked by the fatal crash of a flight from NYC to Santo Domingo in 2001. Camino Rios has always lived in the Dominican Republic with her aunt Tia, "a woman who speaks to the dead, who negotiates with spirits", a woman who's like a mother to her: "Even when Mama was alive, Tia was the other mother of my heart." Life's not easy for them on the island, but they have it better than their neighbours as a result of Camino's beloved Papi working in the US for most of year. To Camino, Papi is a "A king who built an empire so I'd have a throne to inherit", and she lives for the summer months when he comes home to them. But all life is thrown into terrible disarray when she goes to meet Papi at the airport and learns that his plane has fallen from the sky, and then: "I am swallowed by this shark-toothed truth." This story is blessed with such divinely piercing language throughout. At the same time, across the Atlantic, Yahaira Rios learns that her hero Papi has died in a plane crash. She already knew he had a wife on the island (but not of his secret daughter), and has always longed to reconcile her Dominican heritage with her American life: "Can you be from a place you have never been? You can find the island stamped all over me, but what would the island find if I was there? Can you claim a home that does not know you, much less claim you as its own?" When it emerges that Papi wishes to be buried back in DR, Yahaira's Mami insists that she will never let her "touch foot on the sands of that tierra." But Yahaira has other plans, not least when she's contacted by a girl named Camino Rios who bears an undeniable resemblance to Papi, and to her too. As well as being exceptionally affecting on grief, forgiveness and family secrets, *Clap When You Land* is also devastatingly sharp on the exploitative tendencies of tourism. In Camino's words: "I am from a playground place...Our land, lush and green, is bought and sold to foreign powers so they can build luxury hotels...Even the women, girls like me, our mothers and tias, our bodies are branded jungle gyms...Who reaps? Who eats? Not us. Not me." Overflowing with truths of the heart, and truths about inequalities that need to be broken, while also addressing the complexities of what it means to be of a place, I

can't praise this highly enough.



## On Midnight Beach

**Author:** Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/04/2020 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 4

**Shortlisted for CILIP Carnegie Medal 2021 | Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2021** When a dolphin takes up residence in Ross Bay, Emer and her best friend, Fee, feel like they have an instant connection with it. Then Dog Cullen and his sidekick, Kit, turn up, and the four friends begin to sneak out at midnight to go down to the beach, daring each other to swim closer and closer to the creature...Who cares if a neighbouring gang is raging about the fortune 'dolphin fever' brings to Emer's small village? Emer has never felt so alive. The summer days get longer and hotter. Something wild and dangerous simmers in the air. Love feels fierce, old hatreds fester, and suddenly everything feels worth fighting for.

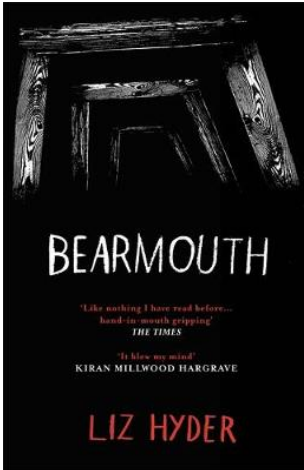


## And the Stars Were Burning Brightly

**Author:** Danielle Jawando **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/03/2020 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 4

**Shortlisted for the YA Book Prize 2021 | Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2021 | March 2020 Debut of the Month** The author has revealed just how much of this searing novel is based upon her own experiences at school which lends credibility and authenticity to the situations described, but she has also created utterly believable and relatable characters with truly authentic teen voices and dialogue. Within a few pages we are thrust into the raw pain of grief and utter disbelief in the aftermath of a teen suicide. The narration alternates between 15-year-old Nathan, the younger brother who discovered Al's body and Megan the school friend who shared Al's passion for art, but each chapter is cleverly introduced by the voice of Al himself. Both Nathan and Megan are wracked with guilt, blaming themselves for letting Al down. Nathan, by not picking up the call from Al on that fateful afternoon and Megan by sticking with the 'cool' kids and not acknowledging Al as a friend. Nathan wants to understand why Al was driven to suicide and Megan wants to prove to the world how special he was. Gradually we develop a deep and nuanced understanding of their growing relationship and of all the characters involved: be they friends, family or even 'villains'. There are no cardboard cyphers here. The thought provoking, intelligent writing also reveals the overwhelming influence of social media on the lives of young people. Megan can use Instagram and Facebook to positively celebrate Al's artwork, but together they discover the extremes of cyberbullying he had been exposed to and which ultimately pushed Al over the edge, helped by the casual spite which colours so much daily interaction on social media. This devastating, truthful and important novel is an essential school

purchase, and will no doubt provoke valuable discussion both in classrooms and between peers. Find out more about the YA Book Prize including all the shortlisted titles.



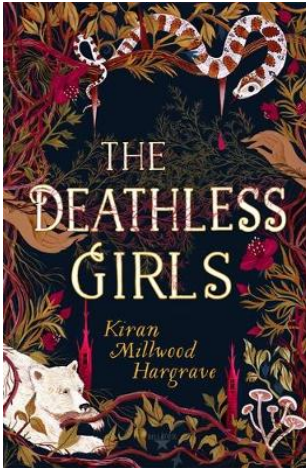
## Bearmouth

**Author:** Liz Hyder **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 06/02/2020  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 4

**Shortlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2021 | Winner of the Branford Boase Award 2020 | March 2020 Debut of the Month | Winner of the Older Readers' category of the Waterstones Children's Book Prize 2020**

Told in narrator Newt's distinctive phonetic English, this dark debut dazzles with originality and delivers a potent case for combatting inequality. Bearmouth is home to a grim mining business, where men and children labour under inhumane conditions to make their Master wealthy. They work under the earth, under the omniscient Mayker who - so workers are told - "sen us down into the dark Earf/To atone for the sins o our forefarvers an muvvers". Naïve Newt hasn't seen daylight in years, but takes pride in being taught to read and write by fatherly Thomas, blithely accepting this lot until the arrival of new boy Devlin. Devlin's talk of "revolushun" makes Newt feel that things are "unravellin slowly slowly lyke a bootlayce comin all undun." Life in Bearmouth is beyond bleak, but the sparks of Devlin's revolutionary spirit catch light and drive Thomas to ask the Master for "more coinage" for the workers, to question why they must pay for essential clothes, to demand to know when the promised safety lamps are coming. Then when tragedy strikes, Newt too realises that things "ent bloody well ryte" and takes on Devlin's insurgent tendencies, with explosive effects. Emotionally engaging, this searingly original novel about standing up to abuses of power and fighting for freedom is radiant with story-telling excellence. The Branford Boase judges said : 'Astounding!'; 'I loved every single second'; 'plot, story and voice are superb'; 'I was totally invested in the characters'; 'interesting, challenging and original'.

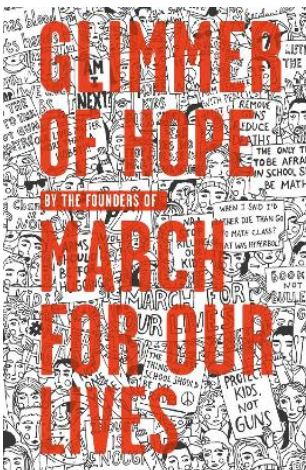




## The Deathless Girls

**Author:** Kiran Millwood Hargrave **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 19/09/2019 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

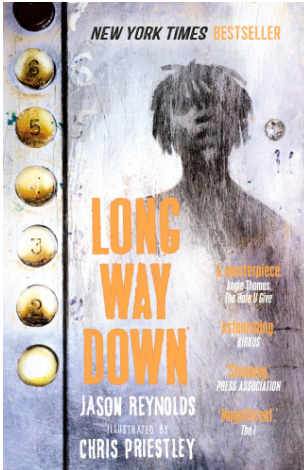
Born under a blood moon, twin sister travellers, Kizzy - a brave, voluptuous bear dancer - and Lil - slight in frame and blessed with a beautiful voice - are captured after their camp is ransacked on the eve of their divining, the coming-of-age rite that would have seen them learn their fates. With many kinsfolk slain, the twins are enslaved by Boyar Valcar and set to work in the castle kitchens, where rumours about the notorious Dragon loom large over all the female slaves. Separated when Kizzy is snatched away, Lil escapes to search for her sister with Mira, a fellow slave. As they race against time to save Kizzy, encountering the terrifying strigoi (undead) along the way, powerful desires are awakened, which adds extra conflict as the story winds to its transfixing climax. Driven by the sisters' passion and revenge, loyalty and love, and powerful on the persecution of travellers, this is a dazzling female-focused reimagining of vampire legends, with the writing infused with a lyrical earthiness throughout.



## Glimmer of Hope How Tragedy Sparked a Movement

**Author:** Various **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 16/10/2018 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

Thought provoking collection of essays from the teens who sparked the anti-gun movement in the US.

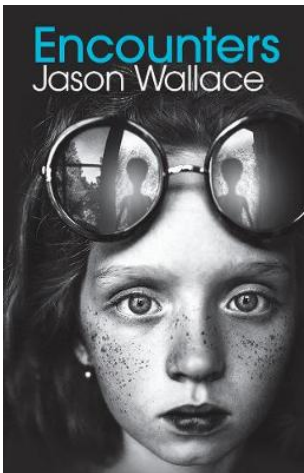


## Long Way Down

**Author:** Jason Reynolds **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/08/2018 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 4

**Winner of UKLA Shortlist Book Awards 2019 | Shortlisted for the CILIP Carnegie Medal 2019** Will is only fifteen but he's experienced more violence and loss than most people might in an entire lifetime. His big brother Shawn was recently shot dead, right in front of him, but as "everybody knows", "gunshots make everybody/deaf and blind especially/when they make somebody/dead". While his mom mourns, "sobbing into her palms", Will knows what he has to do. He must follow the three rules: No crying. No snitching. Revenge. Armed with Shawn's gun, Will heads down six floors in an elevator on his revenge mission, thinking he knows exactly who he's going after. When the "spooky ass" elevator stops at each floor and ghosts from the past step into the "vertical coffin", doubts set in as Will is presented with more facts and finally comes face to face with some big choices (do some rules need to be broken? Does he want out of the cycle?), and more besides. The writing is crisp, clever and dazzlingly compact, with a whole family history and personally-charged societal issues conveyed with powerful precision. The line and page breaks are perfectly constructed, words and phrases frequently have multiple meanings, and Chris Priestley's raw and resonant illustrations are hauntingly powerful.

---

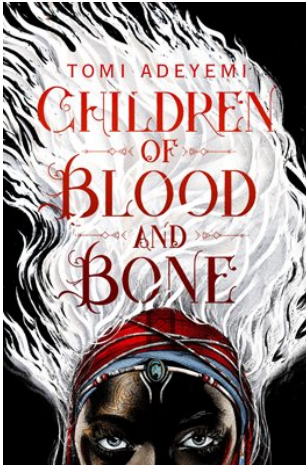


## Encounters

**Author:** Jason Wallace **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/04/2018 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

**Shortlisted for the UKLA 2018 Book Award | April 2018 Book of the Month** | An utterly absorbing novel based on the real-life phenomenon of a group of Zimbabwean schoolchildren claiming to have experienced an extra-terrestrial encounter. With over fifty children asserting that they saw the same spaceship, and the same evil-eyed aliens, American psychiatrists have come to investigate. It could be a form of mass hysteria, but why are all the accounts and depictions so completely identical? How could so many kids tell the exact same lie for so long, and why would they lie? Alongside being gripped by the uniquely mysterious event at the heart of the novel, I was bowled over by the author's mastery of multiple narratives. The intertwined lives of six young people affected by the encounter are explored in all their brutal complexities, and the novel's real-life origins will surely draw in more reluctant readers. Magnetic, haunting, and richly rewarding.

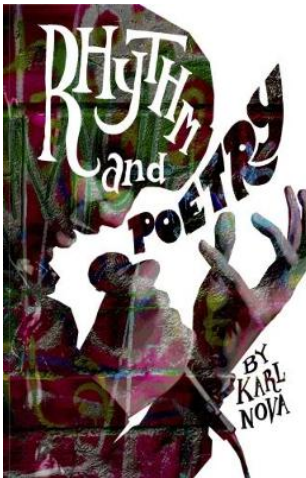
---



## Children of Blood and Bone

**Author:** Tomi Adeyemi **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 08/03/2018 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

**March 2018 Debut of the Month** | An exceptional fantastical debut that weaves dark magic, powerful female protagonists and West African folklore into a richly rewarding novel, the first in what promises to be a truly epic trilogy if this opening installment is anything to go by. There was a time when Orisha was alive with magic but, under the command of a new king, those with magical gifts are now targets, and the fabulously rebellious, outspoken Zélie has been orphaned. Her heritage is of the Reaper Clan. Her mother was able to summon souls, and now Zélie, who has retained her magic, seeks justice for her mother's death. Fuelled by thoughts of "the way her corpse hung from that tree" and "the king who took her away", she's determined to rise, and nothing will stop her. And so Zélie must seize control of her powers and venture forth to fight the crown prince. Throughout, the world-building and evocation of clan magic is astoundingly detailed, conjured with a vibrant visual sensibility, and Zélie is a one-of-a-kind young woman whose journey exhilarates, astounds and inspires.



## Rhythm and Poetry

**Author:** Karl Nova **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 27/07/2017 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

**Winner of the Centre for Literacy in Primary Poetry Award 2018**  
The first published collection from Hip Hop poet Karl Nova has a refreshing directness, honesty and authenticity. Many of the poems are drawn from the workshops he does with children and young people as well as from his performances. Notes accompanying the poems give insights into his process and encourage children to believe that they are poets too. The poems capture the rap beat and tone, demonstrating the currency and significance of rap as a form, especially for young people. A book that opens doors.



## Railhead

**Author:** Philip Reeve **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/08/2016  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

**Shortlisted for the CILIP Carnegie Medal 2017 | Shortlisted for the UKLA 2017 Book Award | August 2016 Book of the Month**

Set in a shining future world, where trains rumble not just through towns and countryside but across whole galaxies, Philip Reeve's new novel drenches its readers with extraordinary scenes, images and ideas. Zen Starling is a petty thief; offered the chance of a brand new life in return for carrying out one small job of course he accepts, and is immediately caught up in a war that could destroy his entire world. Beautifully written, brilliantly inventive, this gripping adventure, a combination of sci-fi utopia, conspiracy thriller and romance, will set hearts racing. Thoughtful readers prepared to take their time will find echoes of many other great works of fiction, all of which add to Railhead's richness. And who could resist the trains - 'the old, wise trains of the Network, barracuda-beautiful, dreaming their dreams of speed and distance as they raced from world to world'? It will turn us all into railheads.

---

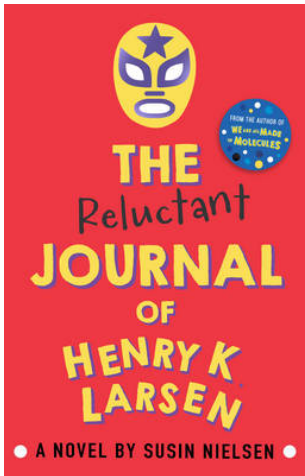


## Concentr8

**Author:** William Sutcliffe **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 30/06/2016  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

**Longlisted for the UKLA 2017 Book Award** Set in a near-future version of London, where a drug called Concentr8 has been extensively prescribed to young people diagnosed with ADHD, this is the brilliantly provocative second young adult novel from the bestselling author of *Are You Experienced?* and *New Boy*. Against a backdrop of rioting in the capital, a group of socially disaffected friends, led by angry, charismatic Blaze, pull a knife on a man as he leaves work at the Mayor's office. While the friends wonder why they've taken someone hostage, an ambitious journalist investigates whether the withdrawal of Concentr8 might have triggered the rioting. A political scandal unfolds when it emerges that not everyone was medically assessed before being put on the pacifying drug, suggesting that something far more sinister is going on. Told through several authentic first person narratives, and interspersed with revealing excerpts from medical reports, sociological texts and tweets, this gripping, politically-charged novel explores the big issue of how young people get lost and failed by society, and why they might turn to criminal and anti-social behaviour. A fast-paced, thought-provoking rollercoaster of a read.

---



## The Reluctant Journal of Henry K. Larsen

**Author:** Susin Nielsen **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/02/2016  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

**Winner of the UKLA 2017 Book Award** From the author of Lovereading4kids favourite *We Are All Made of Molecules*, this is another book that grips from the first chapter, a heart-breaking story that will nonetheless make readers laugh and leave them feeling better about the world. Henry's life is changed for ever by 'IT', a terrible event that we learn about through the journal his psychologist encourages him to keep, and which describes, gradually and in surprising ways, how through new friendships and the Global Wrestling Foundation, he finds ways to cope. Nielsen writes about the heaviest subjects with the lightest of touches: here it's suicide, bullying, breakdown but so subtly described, the balance between tragedy and humour so carefully managed, that this is a truly uplifting, even happy read.

---

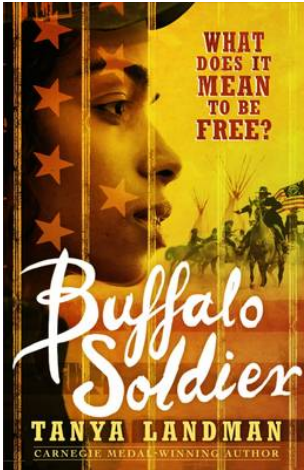


## Fire Colour One

**Author:** Jenny Valentine **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/07/2015  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

**Shortlisted for the UKLA 2017 Book Award and Shortlisted for the CILIP Carnegie Medal 2016.** Julia Eccleshare's Pick of the Year 2015 Guardian Prize winning author Jenny Valentine's long-awaited new novel is clever, beautifully written, full of ideas. It tells the story of sixteen-year-old Iris: lonely and desperately unhappy, she finds self-expression and release through starting fires. Her vain, shallow mother, one of the least sympathetic fictional characters ever, has always told Iris that her father abandoned them when she was a little girl. This is a lie and he has in fact been searching for his daughter all her life. They are reunited, but only because her father is dying. The weeks they have together are spent learning about each other - they share a love of art for example, something that Iris's father has been able to indulge. Just as the beauty and truth of her father's paintings outweigh any monetary value, so Iris's love and growing understanding transcends their short time together. Daring to examine what is really important, this original novel is full of insight and intelligence.

---



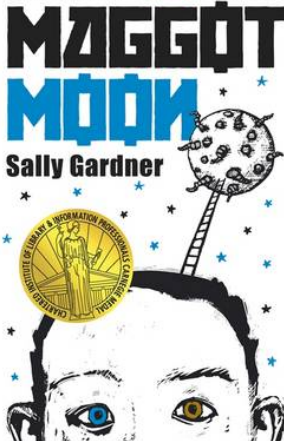
## Buffalo Soldier

**Author:** Tanya Landman **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/04/2014 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

**Winner of the 2015 CILIP Carnegie Medal** What does freedom really mean? Tanya Landman pushes back against all kinds of prejudice in this action-packed, emotionally rich and vividly told story about one girl's struggle to find out. When Charley is freed from slavery at the end of the Civil War between the Yankees and the Confederates she imagines a new world of unlimited opportunities. Instead, she finds a life that is more dangerous than ever before. Her only way to survive is to disguise herself as a boy and join the army. But the army, like everywhere else, is riddled with prejudice and danger. It is only when Charley is sent to fight against the Apache Indians, another much discriminated against group, that she begins to learn what it could mean to be free. For more books on this theme head over to our sister site, LoveReading4Schools topic list - The Slave Trade

---

CARNEGIE Medal and COSTA Award Winner



## Maggot Moon

**Author:** Sally Gardner **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/01/2013 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

**One of our Books of the Year 2013. Winner of the two most prestigious children's book awards - the CILIP Carnegie Medal 2013 and the Children's Costa Award 2012. And Longlisted for the 2013 Guardian Children's Fiction Prize** Winner of the two most prestigious children's book awards - the CILIP Carnegie Medal 2013 and the Children's Costa Award 2012. Sally Gardner tells a story that is rich in drama and ideas as Standish Treadwell, an unlikely hero, takes on the vicious forces of the repressive motherland in a novel set in a bleak world that is redeemed only by the very human qualities of some of the survivors. Standish and his remarkable grandfather keep going, eking out a living after the disappearance of Standish's parents. Standish struggles at school and is the victim of relentless bullying. But then he finds a friend in the newly arrived Hector. When Hector is taken, the only hope lies in Standish... Luckily, Standish has just the qualities that are needed. September 2012 Book of the Month.

---