

PiXL Reading

READING FOR PLEASURE



As the academic year draws to a close, let's celebrate the joy of reading. Reading not only relaxes and rejuvenates, but it's a delight for all ages.

This newsletter brings you tips, resources, and book suggestions to promote enjoyable reading. We aim to make it a part of your family's daily life and nurture a lifelong love of reading.

Thank you for your steadfast support this year, and for nurturing young readers. This summer, let's relish our favourite stories, journey into other worlds, and foster a lifelong love of reading.

Reading offers many benefits for children, including:

- Language development: Reading aloud to children exposes them to new words and helps them develop their language skills.
- Cognitive development: Reading helps children develop their critical thinking skills and stimulates their imagination and creativity.
- Development of empathy and understanding: Reading about different cultures, experiences, and perspectives helps children develop empathy and understanding towards others.
- Stress relief: Reading can be a relaxing and calming activity, which is especially important for children during times of stress or anxiety.
- Parent-child bonding: Reading together creates a special bond between parents and children, promoting positive relationships and a love for learning.



Please note that the following texts are suitable from the age group stated, but please do research the books before selecting them to ensure that they are appropriate for your child.

WHY READ?

Don't just take our word on why reading is so important. Dr Ranj shares why reading is so important in his life and what it looks like to him in his world of work. Why not sit and view this short video with your child to explore reading?



If you have a little longer, why not settle down, make yourselves comfortable and watch Cressida Cowell, Waterstone's Children's Laureate and author of *How to Train your Dragon* books. Cressida talks about her life with books and how she was inspired to write. Included in this video is a wonderful reading of her new book series, *Which Way to Anywhere*.



EMPATHY DAY: JUNE 8TH 2023

Celebrate Empathy Day and join EmpathyLab's mission to raise an empathy-educated generation through the powerful tool of reading. The Day's theme is Mission Empathy.

'Empathy isn't important. It's everything.' **Phil Earle**

What is empathy?

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings and perspectives of others.

Research shows that it is:

- learnable
- a vital social/emotional competence
- an essential ingredient in education: it builds the relationships pupils need to learn/feel safe
- a key factor in moral behaviour.

Empathy is made up of three elements:

- **feeling:** where we resonate with other people's feelings
- **thinking:** where we use reason and imagination to work out how someone else feels
- **acting:** where we are inspired to help others, having experienced what they are feeling.

What is Empathy Day?

Empathy Day aims to help everyone understand and experience the transformational power of empathy through stories. **The day focuses on using books to step into someone else's shoes.**

Scientists say that we can train our brains with stories – the more you empathise with characters, the more you understand other people's feelings. Each Empathy Day, EmpathyLab run online events and fun home-based activities to help children read, connect and act using empathy. Authors, illustrators, schools, libraries and families across the UK take part, supported by their downloadable community toolkits and [family activity pack](#).

To help you celebrate and develop empathy in your home, EmpathyLab, along with an expert panel, has chosen forty wonderful books for children aged 3–11. Each one does a specific empathy-building job, like helping children develop new perspectives or naming and sharing emotions. They celebrate the way empathy underpins the relationships that help us feel seen and safe. Find this year's collection [here](#).



KEY EVENTS THIS HALF TERM:**WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY: 5TH JUNE**

Every year on June 5th, we come together to observe World Environment Day. Since its inception in 1973, this significant day has been coordinated by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to serve as a worldwide platform for inspiring action to safeguard and rejuvenate our planet.

The theme for World Environment Day 2023 is #BeatPlasticPollution, emphasising the urgent need to combat the detrimental impact of plastic on our environment. This theme encourages individuals and communities around the globe to take proactive steps towards reducing plastic pollution and promoting sustainable practices for a healthier planet.

- Find recordings of authors [Vashti Hardy](#), [Gill Lewis](#) and [Hannah Gold](#) talking about their environmentally-themed books in the [ReadingZone Bookclub](#) archive.
- Books for Topics have an [Awesome Planet Earth](#) booklist as well as recommendations to cover [environmental sustainability](#) and [plastic pollution](#).
- Find a selection of author videos, recommended booklists and activities themed around the environment from [Scottish Book Trust](#).

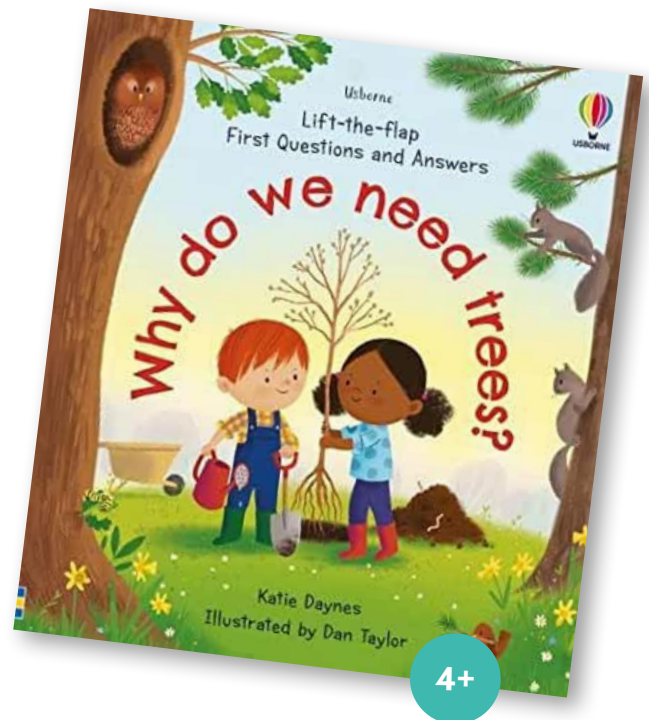


RECOMMENDED READS

FIRST QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: WHY DO WE NEED TREES?

KATIE DAYNES

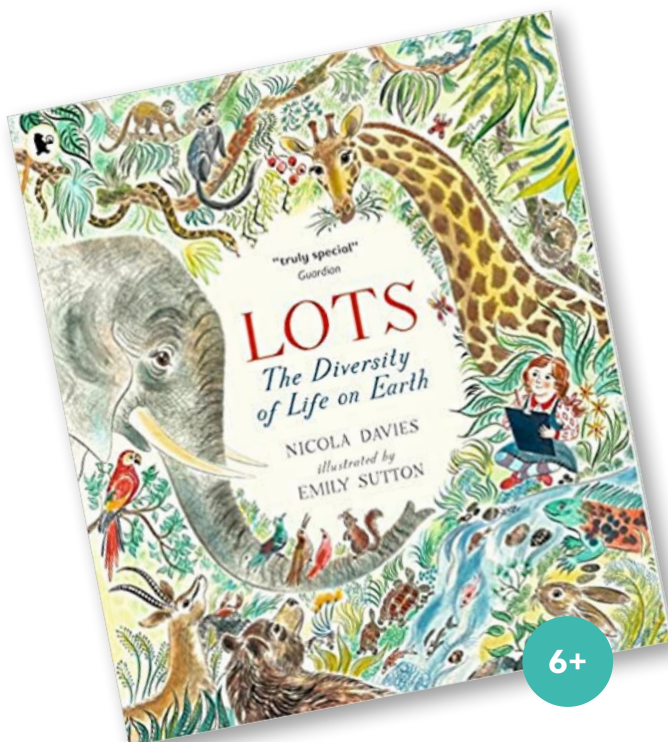
Clamber up branches and peek through leaves to discover the wonderful jobs trees do, from cleaning our air and keeping us cool to protecting our planet and providing homes for all kinds of wildlife.



LOTS: THE DIVERSITY OF LIFE ON EARTH

NICOLA DAVIES

There are living things everywhere: the more we look, the more we find. There are creatures on the tops of the tallest jungle trees, at the bottom of the coldest oceans, even under the feathers of birds and in boiling volcanic pools. So how many different kinds are there? One, two, three ... lots! From the award-winning team behind *Tiny: The Invisible World of Microbes* comes *Lots*, a beautifully illustrated introduction to the concept of biodiversity for younger readers. With words from Nicola Davies and exquisite artwork by Emily Sutton, this ground-breaking book is certain to enchant and inspire children.



THE INCREDIBLE ECOSYSTEMS OF PLANET EARTH

RACHEL IGNOTOFSKY

An illustrated tour of our planet’s ecosystems both large and small, from reefs, deserts and rainforests to a single drop of water - from the bestselling author of *Women in Science*. Through exquisite illustrations, maps and infographics, bestselling author Rachel Ignotofsky explains how our planet works, from its incredible ecosystems and the plants and animals that live there to the importance of biodiversity, weather cycles and more. Including information on the dangers of climate change and ideas for how to protect Planet Earth, this utterly charming guide is the perfect gift for all nature-loving readers on the planet we call home.



POEMS FROM A GREEN AND BLUE PLANET

SABRINA MAHFOUZ

This stunning collection of new and classic poems from around the world celebrates the diversity of life on our green and blue planet, to be shared with all the family. With new poems from Raymond Antrobus, Mona Arshi, Kate Tempest, Hollie McNish, Dean Atta, Sabrina Mahfouz and more. Dive into this book and be swept away on a journey around our green and blue planet, from the peak of the snowiest mountaintop to the bottom of the deepest, bluest ocean. Meet the birds circling its skies, the beasts prowling its plains, and the people toiling in its fields and forests and cities... Explore all the worlds that make up our world, and hear the voices, past and present, that sing out from it. From haikus to sonnets, from rap to the Romantics, this joyous collection celebrates life in all corners of our beautiful planet.



WINDRUSH DAY: 22ND JUNE

Windrush Day is celebrated every year on June 22nd, which marks the arrival of the HMT Empire Windrush at Tilbury Docks in 1948. This special day is dedicated to recognising and honouring the tremendous contributions made by Caribbean migrants who came to the UK after World War II, playing a vital role in rebuilding the nation.

- The [Whose Stories?](#) podcasts explore issues of diversity and representation in children's books with award-winning writers, illustrators and changemakers from the world of children's literature.
- Beyond the Secret Garden is a series of articles in online magazine [Books for Keeps](#) that looks at the representation of black, Asian and minority ethnic voices in British children's literature.
- You can read interviews with Patrice Lawrence and Benjamin Zephaniah talking about their books [Granny Came Here on the Empire Windrush](#) and [Windrush Child](#) on the Book Trust website.



RECOMMENDED READS

GRANNY CAME HERE ON THE EMPIRE WINDRUSH

PATRICE LAWRENCE AND CAMILLA SUCRE

One day, Ava is asked to dress as an inspirational figure for assembly at school, but who should she choose? Granny suggests famous familiar figures such as Winifred Atwell, Mary Seacole and Rosa Parks, and tells Ava all about their fascinating histories, but Ava's classmates have got there first – and she must choose someone else. But who?

And then Ava finds a mysterious old suitcase – Granny's "grip" – and Granny begins to share her own history, and how she came to England on the Empire Windrush many years ago.

She tells her story through the precious items that accompanied her on the original voyage, each one evoking a memory of home, and as Ava listens to how Granny built a life for herself in England, determined to stay against the odds and despite overwhelming homesickness, she realises that there is a hero very close to home that she wants to celebrate more than anyone – her very own brave and beloved granny.



WE SANG ACROSS THE SEA: THE EMPIRE WINDRUSH AND ME

BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH (AUTHOR),
ONYINYE IWU (ILLUSTRATOR)

The hopes, dreams and bravery of the Windrush generation are expressed in this vivid story through the real-life experiences of Trinidadian musician, Mona Baptiste.

Written as a brand-new poem by Benjamin Zephaniah, the book is beautifully illustrated by the extraordinary artist, Onyinye Iwu.

**COMING TO ENGLAND: AN INSPIRING TRUE STORY
CELEBRATING THE WINDRUSH GENERATION**
BARONESS FLOELLA BENJAMIN

The 25th anniversary edition of Baroness Floella Benjamin's classic memoir, *Coming to England*. With a foreword by the author and some additional historical information, this is the incredible story of Floella's journey from Trinidad to London, as part of the Windrush generation, to the House of Lords.

Floella Benjamin was just a young girl when she, her sister and two brothers arrived in England in 1960 to join their parents, whom they had not seen for fifteen months. They had left their island home of Trinidad to make a new life in London – part of a whole generation of West Indians who were encouraged to move to Britain and help rebuild the country after the Second World War.

Reunited with her mother, Floella was too overwhelmed at first to care about the cold weather and the noise and dirt from the traffic. But, as her new life began, she was shocked and distressed by the rejection she experienced. She soon realised that the only way to survive was to work twice as hard and be twice as good as anyone else.

This inspirational story is a powerful reminder of how courage and determination can overcome adversity.



SUMMER READING CHALLENGE:

The Summer Reading Challenge, organised annually by The Reading Agency, is a program aimed at children aged 4-11, encouraging them to enjoy reading during the summer break to prevent a decline in reading skills.

In 2023, the Summer Reading Challenge has collaborated with the Youth Sport Trust to introduce "Ready, Set, Read," a sports-themed challenge that aims to keep children mentally and physically active throughout the summer months.

Children can participate in the challenge through their local public library or by accessing the dedicated Summer Reading Challenge website. They can set their own reading goals, explore recommended books, unlock digital rewards, engage in games, and even enter competitions.

The Summer Reading Challenge will be launched in libraries in Scotland on June 24th, and on July 8th for libraries in England and Wales. The completion dates will vary, so it is advisable to check with the local library service for specific details.

- The Summer Reading Challenge [School Zone](#) has a free Information Pack, Assembly Presentations and other resources to help schools promote the Summer Reading Challenge to pupils and parents.
- Explore the titles in the new [Ready, Set, Read book collection](#) chosen by an expert group of readers or use the [Book Sorter](#) to find recommendations from other children.
- Get involved with the School Library Association's [#ReadforRefugees Challenge](#). This sponsored read is designed to promote reading and provide a way for children to do something positive in the face of tragedy. Supporting resources are available and all proceeds will be donated to UK for UNHCR. The challenge runs until the end of September.
- Books for Topics has created a [Summer Recommended Reads](#) list alongside a [Summer Reading Bingo Challenge](#) with an emphasis on having fun while reading. Bingo boards and certificates are available to download for free from the website.
- LoveReading4Kids has pulled together a [Summer Reading booklist](#) with more than 80 books for all ages, from pre-school to YA. There are also links to their [Kids Zone](#), full of book-related activities and videos, and ideas on How to [Get Creative](#) with writer and publishing professional Joanne Owen.
- The [World Book Day](#) website has a range of resources that children and parents can access over the summer holidays, including the [World Book Day Book Club](#), [free audio books](#) and the [Share a Story Corner](#) for younger children and their parents.

- *The Story Corner* is a free 28pp online children's magazine featuring stories, writing activities and games from reading volunteer charity [Bookmark](#). A useful resource for children aged 5-9 who may find it difficult to access books during the holidays, there are now six editions of the magazine available on their website.
- Charity Read for Good has launched [Track My Read](#), a free web-based tool that allows teachers or parents to set class or family reading challenges and encourages children to log and share their reading achievements.
- Co-designed with teenagers, the [Bookzilla](#) app has a range of features to get upper primary and early secondary pupils reading, including tailored recommendations, reading challenges and more.
- For children who find accessing print difficult, [Calibre Audio](#) is a charity that provides free access to a wide range of audio books for all ages.

To support your summer reading, why not check out these new and noteworthy texts:

MYSTERIES AT SEA: PERIL ON THE ATLANTIC

A.M. HOWELL

July, 1936. As the Queen Mary sets sail across the Atlantic, Alice can't wait for the summer of adventure that lies ahead. She's excited to explore the huge ship, with its shops, animals and even celebrities on board.

But while Alice's sailor father focuses on winning a prestigious race, she witnesses a shocking attack. Alice and her new friend Sonny start to uncover a dark sabotage plot, and as they investigate gold bars, anonymous notes and lost silk gloves, secrets in their own lives come to the surface.

When fog threatens the boat's journey, and dangerous enemies show themselves, Alice and Sonny are in their own race to solve all the mysteries unfolding. But what they discover might change both their lives forever...

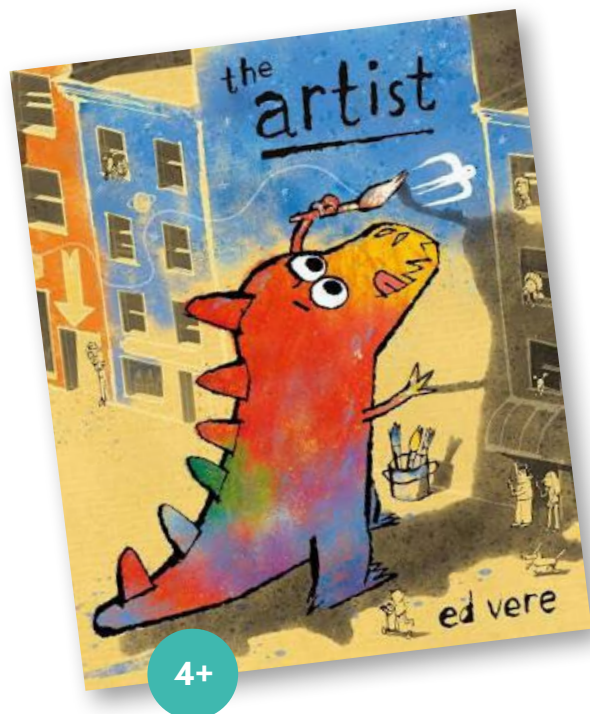


NEW: NON-FICTION

RORY'S ROOM OF RECTANGLES IAN EAGLETON

Rory loves his dad, but he also really likes his step-dad, Tony. He has weekends with Dad in the park and makes imaginary dens with Tony, so when Father's Day comes, who should he make his card for at school?

Spotting his frustration, Tony spends his "rainy-day pennies" to take Rory somewhere new - an art gallery, full of wonders. As they pause to reflect in a huge room of rectangles, Rory sees his conflicting feelings glistening back at him in many powerful colours. Afterwards, a "chance" encounter with Dad, under a red sky, helps Rory realise that he doesn't have to feel torn at all.



THE ARTIST ED VERE

From the award-winning Ed Vere comes a joyful and inspirational celebration of beauty, mistakes and the artist in all of us.

One brave little artist goes on one epic adventure to share her art, and in doing so learns that it doesn't matter if you colour outside the lines, that art is full of heart... and that maybe you are an artist too!