

THE READING AGENCY

65 brilliant books for children and young people by black authors and illustrators

TACKLING LIFE'S BIG CHALLENGES THROUGH THE PROVEN POWER OF READING

The Reading Agency is a national charity that tackles life's big challenges through the proven power of reading. We work closely with partners to develop and deliver programmes for people of all ages and backgrounds. The Reading Agency is funded by Arts Council England.

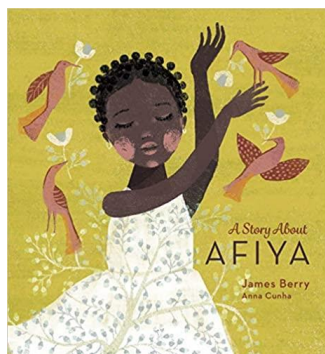
<https://readingagency.org.uk/>

October is Black History Month so is the perfect time to celebrate some brilliant books for children and young people created by black authors and illustrators. Our list of 65 titles includes fiction, non-fiction, poetry and graphic novels for all children, young people and adults to enjoy reading. Find out more about Black History Month here: <https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/>.

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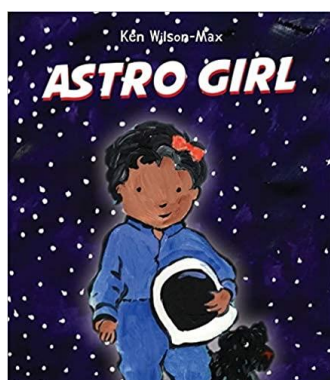
Picture books



A Story About Afiya by James Berry and Anna Cunha

978-1911373339, Lantana Publishing

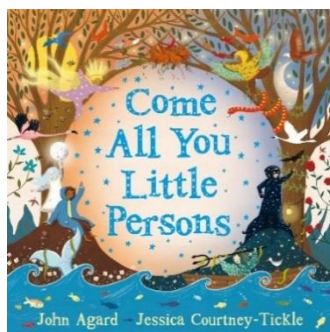
Some people have dresses for every occasion but Afiya needs only one. Her dress records the memories of her childhood, from roses in bloom to pigeons in flight, from tigers at the zoo to October leaves falling. A joyful celebration of a young girl's childhood, written by the late Coretta Scott King Book Award-winning Jamaican poet James Berry.



Astro Girl by Ken Wilson-Max

978-1910959213, Otter-Barry Books

Astrid has always loved the stars and space. "I want to be an astronaut!" she says. While Mama is away, Papa and Astrid have fun acting out the challenges an astronaut faces on a space mission - eating food from a tube, doing science experiments, living and sleeping in near-zero gravity. Astrid can do it all! Then it's time to meet Mama at the airbase. But where has Mama been?



Come All You Little Persons by John Agard and Jessica Courtney-Tickle

978-0571324163, Faber Children's

Come little bird person, come little bee person, come little tree person - little persons from all over the world join together to celebrate the dance of life and love in this stunning poem from John Agard. Stunningly illustrated by Jessica Courtney-Tickle, this is a book that both little persons and big persons will treasure and pore over for a lifetime and is a true poem of our time.



Coming to England by Floella Benjamin

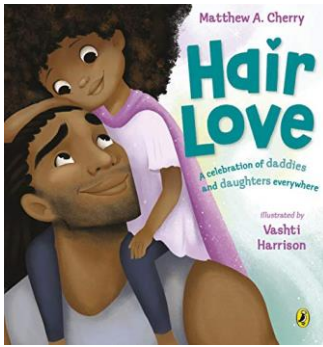
978-1529009415, Macmillan Children's Books

A picture book edition of *Coming to England*, the inspiring true story of Baroness Floella Benjamin: from Trinidad, to London as part of the Windrush generation, to the House of Lords.

Follow ten-year-old Floella as she and her family set sail from the Caribbean to a new life in London. Alone on a huge ship for two weeks, then tumbled into a cold and unfriendly London, coming to

England wasn't at all what Floella had expected . . . What will her new school be like? Will she meet the Queen?

Brilliant books for children and young people by black authors and illustrators



Hair Love by Matthew Cherry and Vashti Harrison

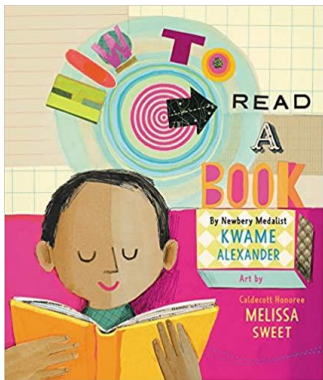
978-0241406427, Puffin

It's up to Daddy to give his daughter an extra-special hair style in this story of self-confidence and the love between fathers and daughters.

Zuri knows her hair is beautiful, but it has a mind of its own!

It kinks, coils, and curls every which way. Mum always does Zuri's hair just the way she likes it - so when Daddy steps in to style it for an extra special occasion, he has a lot to learn.

But he LOVES his Zuri, and he'll do anything to make her - and her hair - happy.



How to Read a Book Hardcover by Kwame Alexander and Melissa Sweet

978-0062307811, HarperCollins Children's

Find a tree—a

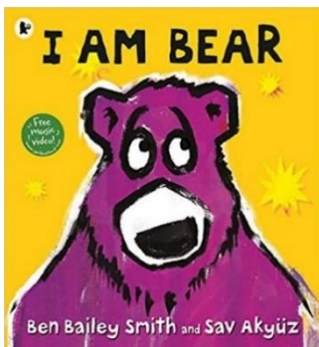
black tupelo or

dawn redwood will do—and

plant yourself.

(It's okay if you prefer a stoop, like Langston Hughes.)

With these words, an adventure begins. Kwame Alexander's evocative poetry and Melissa Sweet's lush artwork come together to take readers on a sensory journey between the pages of a book.

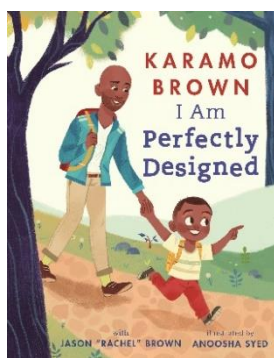


I Am Bear by Ben Bailey Smith and Sav Akyuz

978-1406373059, Walker Books

If there's trouble, one thing is certain: Bear was there. In (and out) of his outrageous purple outfit, Bear can do anything – steal honey from the bees, do magic tricks, steal doughnuts from a police officer, and annoy a certain pesky squirrel. This hilarious picture book debut of actor Ben Bailey Smith (aka rapper Doc Brown) and artist Sav Akyuz will keep young mischief-makers in stitches.

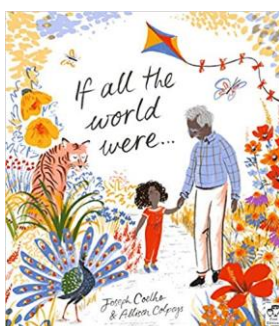
Brilliant books for children and young people by black authors and illustrators



I Am Perfectly Designed by Karamo Brown, Jason “Rachel” Brown and Anoosha Syed, 978-1529036145, Macmillan Children’s Books

I Am Perfectly Designed is an empowering story about loving who you are, exactly as you are – and a celebration of the love between parent and child. From Karamo Brown, star of the hit Netflix series *Queer Eye*.

Written by Karamo and his son Jason, this touching, funny story follows a boy and his father, as they spend the day together. Walking through the city, they chat about all the ways in which they are perfectly designed for each other.

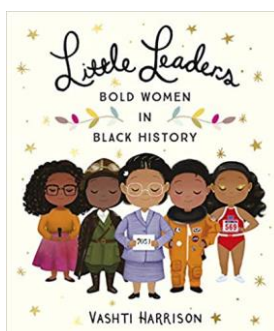


If All the World Were... by Joseph Coelho and Allison Colpoys 978-1786036513, Lincoln Children’s Books

A moving, lyrical picture book about a young girl's love for her granddad and how she copes when he's gone, written by poet and playwright Joseph Coelho.

This beautifully illustrated, powerful and ultimately uplifting text is the ideal way to introduce children to the concept of death and dying, particularly children who have lost a grandparent.

With Allison Colpoys' gorgeous artwork spilling from each page, accompany a girl and her grandad over spring, summer and autumn. See how he teaches her to imagine, to create, and to enjoy the small things in life, and how, when winter comes, he lives on in her heart.

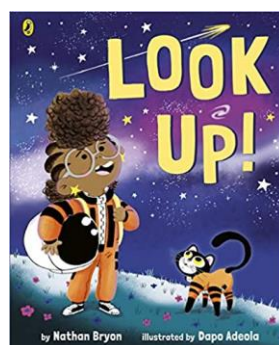


Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History by Vashti Harrison 978-0241346846, Puffin

Did you know the treatment for leprosy was developed by a young scientist called Alice Ball?

And Josephine Baker- world famous cabaret singer and dancer- was also a spy for the French résistance?

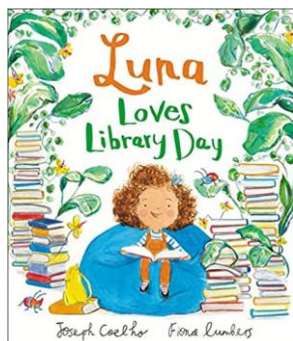
Featuring 40 trailblazing black women in the world's history, this book educates and inspires as it relates true stories of women who broke boundaries and exceeded all expectations.



Look Up! by Nathan Bryon and Dapo Adeola 978-0241345849, Puffin

Meet hilarious, science-mad chatterbox, Rocket - she's going to be the greatest astronaut, star-catcher, space-traveller that has ever lived!

But... can she convince her big brother to stop looking down at his phone and start LOOKING UP at the stars? Bursting with energy and passion about science and space, this heart-warming, inspirational picture book will have readers turning off their screens and switching on to the outside world.

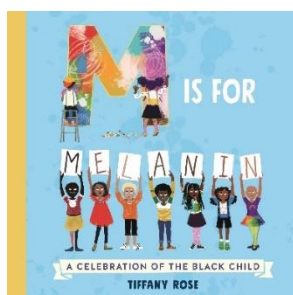


Luna Loves Library Day by Joseph Coelho & Fiona Lumbers

978-1783445950, Andersen Press

Every week Luna looks forward to one special day: the day when she discovers magic among the library shelves; the day she gets to spend with her dad. Exploring the books, Luna and her dad find magic, mystery and even start to mend their own history.

An inspiring story from one of the UK's greatest up-and-coming award-winning poets for children, perfectly captured in all its flights of fancy by newcomer Fiona Lumbers.



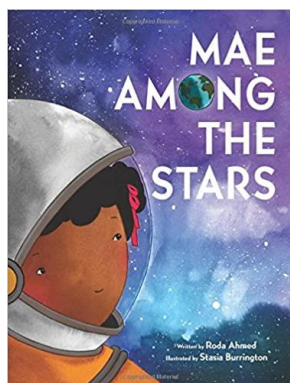
M is for Melanin: A Celebration of the Black Child by Tiffany Rose

978-1529062502, Macmillan Children's Books

Be bold. Be fearless. BE YOU.

M is for Melanin is an empowering alphabet book that teaches kids their ABC and celebrates black children. Each letter of the alphabet contains affirming, black-positive messages, from E is for Empowerment, to L is for Lead to W is for Worthy. This joyful book, written and illustrated by Tiffany Rose, teaches children their ABC and encourages all kids to love

the skin they're in.



Mae Among the Stars by Roda Ahmed

978-0062651730, HarperCollins Children's

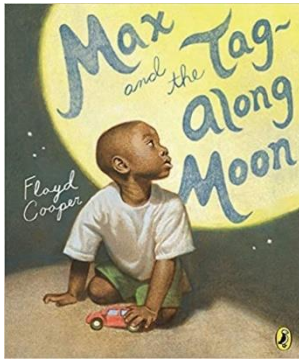
A great classroom and bedtime read-aloud, *Mae Among the Stars* is the perfect book for young readers who have big dreams and even bigger hearts.

When Little Mae was a child, she dreamed of dancing in space. She imagined herself surrounded by billions of stars, floating, gliding, and discovering.

She wanted to be an astronaut.

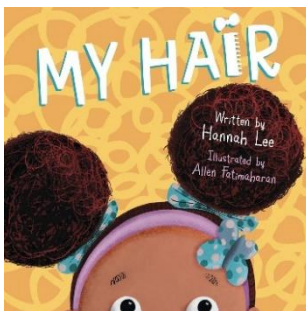
Her mom told her, If you believe it, and work hard for it, anything is possible."

Little Mae's curiosity, intelligence, and determination, matched with her parents' encouraging words, paved the way for her incredible success at NASA as the first African American woman to travel in space.



Max and the Tag-Along Moon by Floyd Cooper
978-0147515469, Puffin

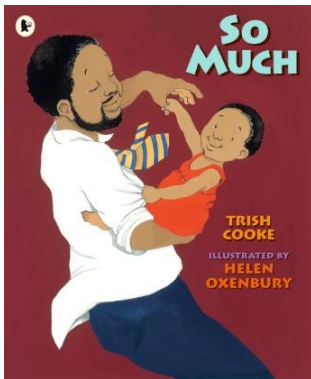
Max loves his grandpa. When they must say good-bye after a visit, Grandpa promises Max that the moon at Grandpa's house is the same moon that will follow him all the way home. On that swervy-curvy car ride back to his house, Max watches as the moon tags along. But when the sky darkens and the moon disappears behind clouds, he worries that it didn't follow him home after all. Where did the moon go--and what about Grandpa's promise?



My Hair by Hannah Lee and Allen Fatimaharan
978-0571346875, Faber Children's

*My birthday's coming up so soon,
I'll need new clothes to wear.
But most of all, I need to know,
How shall I style my hair?*

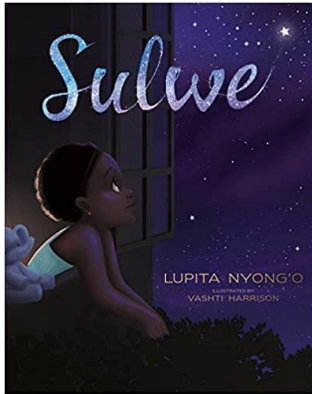
Will it be dreads or a twist out? Braids or a high-top fade? Joyous and vibrant, this captures perfectly the excitement of getting ready for a celebration, as well as showcasing a dazzling array of intricate hairstyles.



So Much by Trish Cooke and Helen Oxenbury, 978-1406390728
Walker Books

Mum and baby are home alone when – DING DONG! – Auntie and then Uncle and Nannie and Gran-Gran and the cousins come to visit. And they all want to hug and kiss and squeeze and eat the baby right up ... because everybody loves the baby SO MUCH!

A special 25th anniversary edition of a multiple award-winning story, *So Much* is a celebration of family life. Helen Oxenbury's characteristically warm, funny illustrations, paired with Trish Cooke's rhythmic, cumulative story capture the joy of being a baby in a large extended family – a baby who knows that he is absolutely, utterly adored.



Sulwe by Lupita Nyong'o and Vashti Harrison
978-0241394328, Puffin

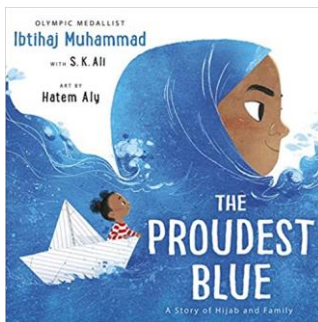
From Academy Award-winning actress Lupita Nyong'o comes a powerful, moving picture book about colourism, self-esteem and learning that true beauty comes from within.

Sulwe's skin is the colour of midnight. She's darker than everyone in her family, and everyone at school.

All she wants is to be beautiful and bright, like her mother and sister.

Then a magical journey through the night sky opens her eyes and

changes everything.

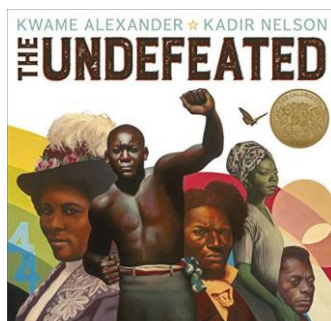


The Proudest Blue by Ibtihaj Muhammad by S. K. Ali and Hatem Aly
978-1783449729, Andersen Press

Asiya's hijab is like the ocean and the sky, no line between them, saying hello with a loud wave.

It's Faizah's first day of school, and her older sister Asiya's first day of wearing hijab – made of a beautiful blue fabric. But not everyone sees hijab as beautiful. In the face of hurtful, confusing words, will Faizah find new ways to be strong?

This is an uplifting, universal story of new experiences, the unbreakable bond shared by siblings and of being proud of who you are, from Olympic medallist Ibtihaj Muhammad.



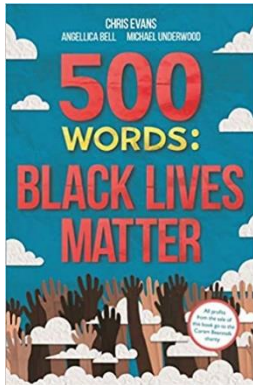
The Undeclared by Kwame Alexander, Kadir Nelson
978-1783449293, Andersen Press

This is for the unforgettable. The unafraid. The undefeated.

From *New York Times* bestselling-author Kwame Alexander comes this powerful and important ode to black history: the strength and bravery of everyday people and the grit, passion, and perseverance of some of the world's greatest artists, athletes, and activists.

With references to lyrics and lines originally shared by our most celebrated heroes, this poem digs into the not-so-distant past to underline the endurance and spirit of those surviving and thriving in the present.

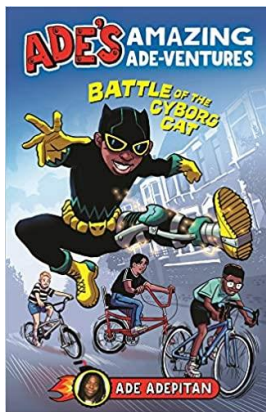
Middle grade books



500 Words: A collection of short stories that reflect on the Black Lives Matter movement, written by various and edited by Chris Evans, Angellica Bell and Michael Underwood

978-1787419605, Studio Press

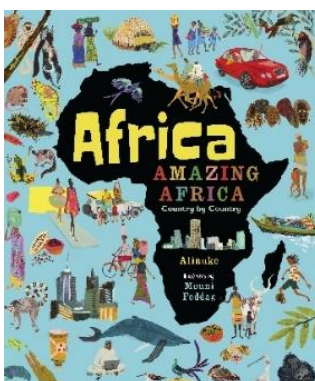
A collection of 100 inspiring, moving and poignant short stories, submitted to the 500 Words: Black Lives Matter competition which ran on Virgin Radio in July 2020. 500 Words: Black Lives Matter features a foreword from Chris Evans, analysis of the writing from Oxford University Press and writing tips from judges Malorie Blackman, Charlie Higson, Francesca Simon and Frank Cottrell-Boyce.



Ade's Amazing Ade-ventures: Battle of the Cyborg Cat by Ade Adepitan

978-1787413252, Piccadilly Press

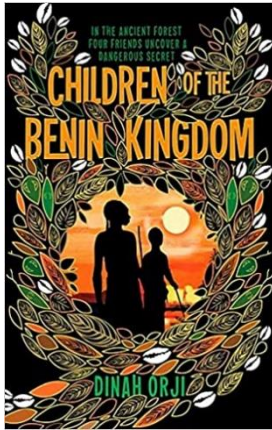
When Ade moves to London from Nigeria, he knows things will be different, but nothing can prepare him for the ups and downs of his Parson's Road adventures. Ade doesn't always feel welcome in his new community; fitting in is hard, especially as he looks different to everyone else. But Ade is brave and takes on the school bullies, surprising himself and the kids on his new street. His heroic acts and super football skills quickly help him make new friends who will always be there for him.



Africa, Amazing Africa: Country by Country by Atinuke and Mouni Feddag, 978-1406376586, Walker Books

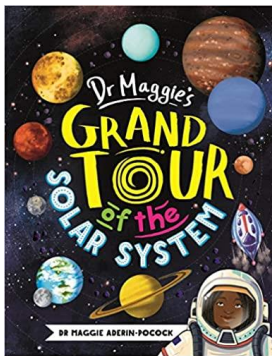
This book is British-Nigerian storyteller Atinuke's love letter to Africa: a carefully curated sample of the continent's 55 countries, in all their amazing diversity. Her beautifully-written, lively text reflects Africa's unique mix of the modern and the traditional, as she explores its geography, its peoples, its animals and its fascinating history.

The book divides Africa into five sections: South, East, West, Central and North, each with its own introduction. This is followed by a page per country, containing a delightful mix of friendly, informative text and colourful illustrations. With just a couple of facts per page, the book is perfectly geared toward seven year old readers, and imagined as a diving-off point: to inspire children to find out more about each and every country...



Children of the Benin by Dinah Orji
978-1999336332, Dinosaur Book Ltd

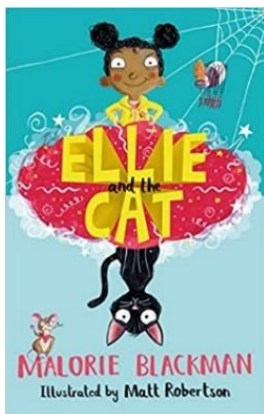
Children of the Benin is a middle grade Black history story. It is set in the 13th century Kingdom of Benin in West Africa which was just one of many incredible civilisations in the region between the 400's and the 1500's. So it is perfect for Black History Month! The Kingdom of Benin was located in modern-day Nigeria and our story takes place prior to the transatlantic slave trade and colonisation. It's the direct history of many Black UK school children, whether or not their ancestors were enslaved and taken across the Atlantic to the Caribbean. Although the story is celebratory of this incredible civilisation and of West African culture, it is also carefully researched and historically accurate.



Dr Maggie's Grand Tour of the Solar System by Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock and Chelen Ecija, 978-1780555751, Buster Books

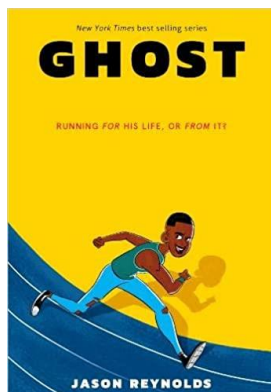
This mind-blowing book invites readers to join BBC presenter and renowned space scientist Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock (MBE) on an epic journey through the Solar System - visiting planets, moons, asteroids and satellites, and travelling to places where no human has been before.

Along the way, kids can discover how we could live on Mars, learn about the hunt for a mysterious super-Earth, have a snowball fight on Mercury, climb the tallest mountain in the Solar System and much, much more. From spotting solar flares on the Sun to exploring objects at the edge of the icy Oort Cloud, this fun, action-packed title leaves no question unanswered and no meteorite unturned.



Ellie and the Cat by Malorie Blackman and Matt Robertson
978-1781128244, Barrington Stoke

Ellie is the rudest, most spoilt child her grandma has ever met and it's time that she learnt a lesson! So with a little bit of magic and some help from Jolly the cat, Grandma's going to make sure that Ellie changes her ways. Can Ellie work hard to prove that she can be good? Or is she destined to spend the rest of her days trapped in the body of a mean old cat? Particularly suitable for struggling, reluctant or dyslexic readers aged 8+.

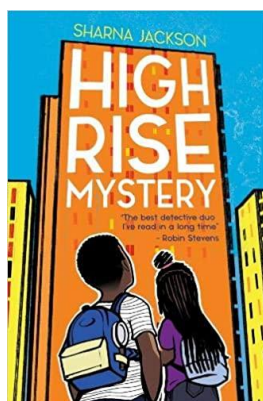


Ghost by Jason Reynolds and Selom Sunu

978-1999642525, Knights Of

Running. That's all Ghost (real name Castle Cranshaw) has ever known. But Ghost has been running for the wrong reasons -until he meets Coach, an ex-Olympic Medallist who sees something in Ghost: crazy natural talent. If Ghost can stay on track, literally and figuratively, he could be the best sprinter in the city. Can Ghost harness his raw talent for speed, or will his past finally catch up to him? Read the Run Series: Ghost. Lu. Patina. Sunny. Four kids from wildly different backgrounds with personalities that are explosive when they clash. But they are also four kids chosen for an elite middle school running team-a team that could qualify them for the Junior

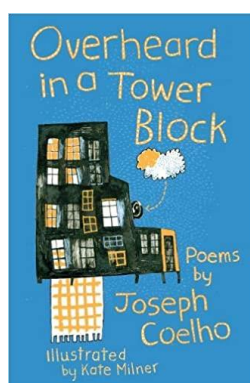
Olympics if they can get their acts together. They all have a lot to lose and a lot to prove. Not only to each other, but to themselves.



High-Rise Mystery by Sharna Jackson

978-1999642518, Knights Of

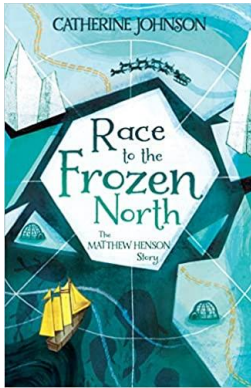
The detective duo everyone is dying to meet! Summer in London is hot, the hottest on record, and there's been a murder in THE TRI: the high-rise home to resident know-it-alls, Nik and Norva. Who better to solve the case? Armed with curiosity, home-turf knowledge and unlimited time - until the end of the summer holidays anyway. The first whodunnit in a new mystery series by Sharna Jackson.



Overheard in a Tower Block: Poems by Joseph Coelho and Kate Milner

978-1910959589, Otter-Barry Books

Gazing at the stars from five storeys up, smelling the bins from five storeys below. Overheard arguments, overheard laughter. A disappearing father and a Mermaid-Queen mother; statues that sing for flesh and blood; bullies who kick you under the table; perfect red trainers - and the things that lurk in the library...Award-winning poet Joseph Coelho's astonishing new collection is a powerful and moving poetic narrative about growing up in the city.



Race to the Frozen North: The Matthew Henson Story by Catherine Johnson
978-1781128404, Barrington Stoke

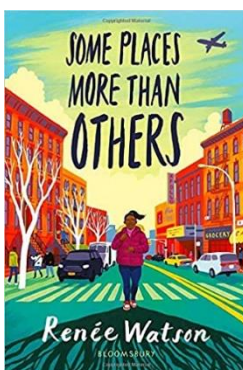
Matthew Henson was simply an ordinary man. That was, until Commander Robert E. Peary entered his life, and offered him a chance at true adventure. Henson would become navigator, craftsman, translator, and right-hand man on a treacherous journey to the North Pole. Defying the odds and the many prejudices that faced him to become a true pioneer. This is his incredible and often untold story. Particularly suitable for struggling, reluctant or dyslexic readers aged 8+.



Shuri by Nic Stone
978-0702301834, Scholastic

An original, upper-middle-grade series starring the break-out character from the Black Panther comics and films: T'Challa's younger sister, Shuri! Crafted by New York Times bestselling author Nic Stone. Shuri is a skilled martial artist, a genius and a master of science and technology. But, she's also a teenager. And a princess. This story follows Shuri as she sets out on a quest to save her homeland of Wakanda.

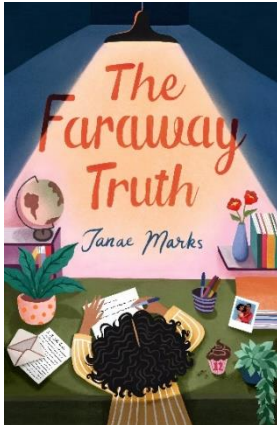
For centuries, the Chieftain of Wakanda (the Black Panther) has gained his powers through the juices of the Heart-Shaped Herb. Much like Vibranium, the Heart-Shaped Herb is essential to the survival and prosperity of Wakanda. But something is wrong. The plants are dying. No matter what the people of Wakanda do, they can't save them. And their supply is running short.



Some Places More Than Others by Renée Watson
978-1526613684, Bloomsbury Children's

'Some of the places I am still getting to know, some of these places I have known all my life. All of these places made me, are making me.'

All Amara wants for her birthday is to visit her father's family in New York City - Harlem. She can't wait to finally meet her Grandpa Earl and cousins in person, and to stay in the brownstone where her father grew up. Maybe this will help her understand her family - and herself - in a new way. But New York City is not exactly what Amara thought it would be. It's noisy, crowded, confusing, and her cousins can be mean. Plus her father is too busy working to spend time with her and too angry to fix his relationship with Grandpa Earl. Amara can't help wondering, even if she does discover more about where she came from, will it help her know where she belongs?



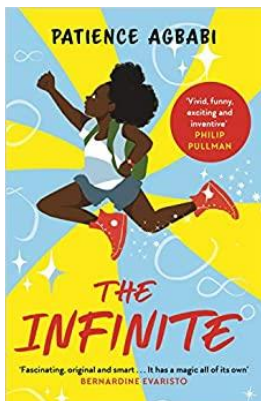
The Faraway Truth by Janae Marks

978-1912626380, Chicken House Books

From debut author Janae Marks comes a warm, wise and captivating mystery full of heart, as one girl searches for the truth in the face of great opposition.

Zoe Washington never met her father, who was sent to prison right before she was born. When she receives a letter from him on her twelfth birthday, it's a huge surprise. Zoe's mom always told her that Marcus was a liar, a monster, but he sounds... nice. Zoe starts to investigate the crime - and the deeper she digs, the more she doubts the conviction. Is her father innocent?

Or is he a liar? Zoe is determined to find out.



The Infinite by Patience Agbabi

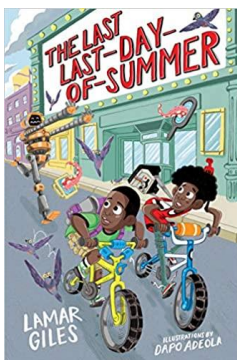
978-1786899651, Canongate books

FIGHT CRIME, ACROSS TIME!

Leaplings, children born on the 29th of February, are very rare. Rarer still are Leaplings with The Gift - the ability to leap through time. Elle Bíbi-Imbelé Ifiè has The Gift, but she's never used it. Until now.

On her twelfth birthday, Elle and her best friend Big Ben travel to the Time Squad Centre in 2048. Elle has received a mysterious warning from the future. Other Leaplings are disappearing in time - and not everyone at the centre can be trusted.

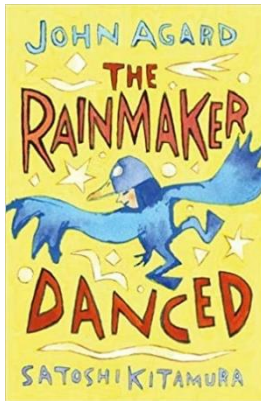
Soon Elle's adventure becomes more than a race through time. It's a race against time. She must fight to save the world as she knows it - before it ceases to exist...



The Last Last-Day-Of-Summer by Lamar Giles and Dapo Adeola

978-1328460837, Versify

Otto and Sheed are the local sleuths in their zany Virginia town, masters of unraveling mischief using their unmatched powers of deduction. And as the summer winds down and the first day of school looms, the boys are craving just a little bit more time for fun, even as they bicker over what kind of fun they want to have. That is, until a mysterious man appears with a camera that literally freezes time. Now, with the help of some very strange people and even stranger creatures, Otto and Sheed will have to put aside their differences to save their town--and each other--before time stops for good.

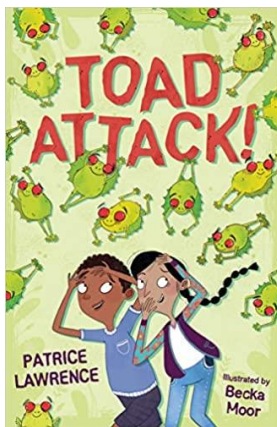


The Rainmaker Danced by John Agard and Satoshi Kitamura
978-1444932607, Hodder Children's

*Do triangles
ever get into a tangle
when their sides meet their angles?*

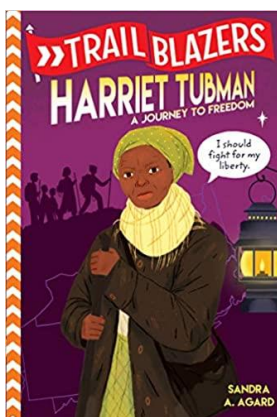
A wonderful new children's poetry collection, from a celebrated, award-winning poet.

From nature and science to identity, prepare to be transported on a journey through past and present. This collection from John Agard, winner of the Queens Medal and the Eleanor Farjeon Award, explores the wonders of the world - inviting your child to ponder life's questions with lots of fun along the way!



Toad Attack! by Patrice Lawrence and Becka Moor
978-1781128442, Barrington Stoke

After a toad lands on his head as he leaves his house one morning, Leo is determined to find out where it has come from and why. Together with his friend Rosa, he needs to come up with some answers before the angry residents of Upper Dab take matters into their own hands and the toads become toast! A brilliantly quirky comedy caper with a diverse and inclusive cast of characters. Particularly suitable for struggling, reluctant or dyslexic readers aged 8+



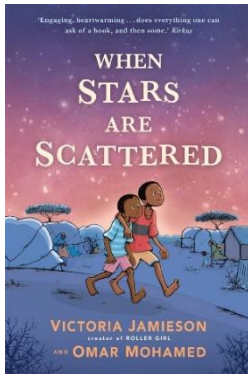
Trailblazers: Harriet Tubman: A Journey to Freedom by Sandra A. Agard
978-1788952224, Stripes Publishing

Be inspired by the lives of trailblazers past and present in this fun and factual biography series!

How did Harriet Tubman help hundreds of enslaved people reach freedom? Born into slavery on a Maryland plantation, Harriet's life was full of hardship. In 1849, she made the brave decision to run away, journeying north on the Underground Railroad. Despite the dangers, she returned to the South again and again, leading many others to safety. Discover the story of this amazing abolitionist and find out how she overcame every obstacle in the fight for freedom.

You can watch a video of Sandra reading the book here:

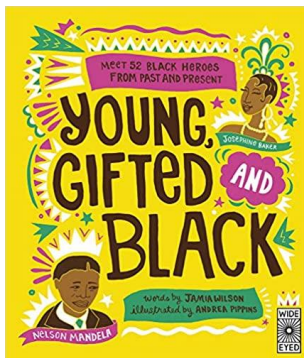
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8QcHI1RLYk&t=3s>



When Stars are Scattered by Omar Mohamed and Victoria Jamieson 978-0571363858, Faber Children's

A heart-wrenching true story about life in a Kenyan refugee camp that will restore your faith in real-life happy endings.

Omar and his brother Hassan, two Somali boys, have spent a long time in the Dadaab refugee camp. Separated from their mother, they are looked after by a friendly stranger. Life in the camp isn't always easy. The hunger is constant... but there's football to look forward to, and now there's a chance Omar will get to go to school...

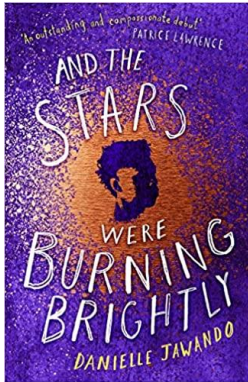


Young, Gifted and Black by Jamia Wilson and Andrea Pippins 978-1786030887, Wide Eye Editions

Meet 52 icons of colour from the past and present in this celebration of inspirational achievement—a collection of stories about changemakers to encourage, inspire and empower the next generation of changemakers. Jamia Wilson has carefully curated this range of black icons and the book is stylishly brought together by Andrea Pippins' colourful and celebratory illustrations. Written in the spirit of Nina Simone's song "To Be Young, Gifted, and Black," this vibrant book is a perfect introduction to both historic and present-day icons and heroes.

Meet figureheads, leaders and pioneers such as Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela and Rosa Parks, as well as cultural trailblazers and athletes like Stevie Wonder, Oprah Winfrey and Serena Williams. All children deserve to see themselves represented positively in the books they read. Highlighting the talent and contributions of black leaders and changemakers from around the world, readers of all backgrounds will be empowered to discover what they too can achieve. Strong, courageous, talented and diverse, these extraordinary men and women's achievements will inspire a new generation to chase their dream... whatever it may be.

Young Adult



And the Stars Were Burning Brightly by Danielle Jawando

978-1471178771, Simon and Schuster Children's

When fifteen-year-old Nathan discovers that his older brother Al, has taken his own life, his whole world is torn apart.

Al was special.

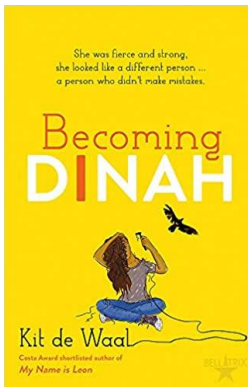
Al was talented.

Al had so many dreams ... so why did he do it?

Convinced that his brother was in trouble, Nathan decides to retrace Al's footsteps. As he does, he meets Megan, Al's former classmate, who is as determined as Nathan to keep Al's memory alive.

Together they start seeking answers, but will either of them be able to handle the truth about Al's death when they eventually discover what happened?

Warning - this novel contains themes that some readers may find upsetting, including suicide and intense bullying.



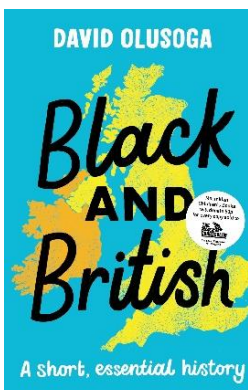
Becoming Dinah by Kit de Waal

978-1510105706, Orion Children's

Seventeen-year-old Dinah needs to leave her home, the weird commune where she grew up. She needs a whole new identity, starting with how she looks, starting with shaving off her hair, her 'crowning glory'. She has to do it quickly, because she has to go now.

Dinah was going to go alone and hitch a ride down south. Except, she ends up being persuaded to illegally drive a VW campervan for hundreds of miles, accompanied by a grumpy man with one leg. This wasn't the plan.

But while she's driving, Dinah will be forced to confront everything that led her here, everything that will finally show her which direction to turn...



Black and British: A short essential history by David Olusoga

9781529063394, Macmillan Children's Books

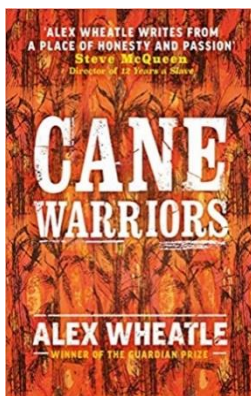
A short, essential introduction to Black British history

When did Africans first come to Britain?

Who are the well-dressed black children in Georgian paintings?

Why did the American Civil War disrupt the Industrial Revolution?

These and many other questions are answered in this essential introduction to 1800 years of the Black British history: from the Roman Africans who guarded Hadrian's Wall right up to the present day.



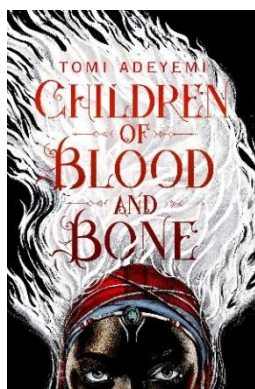
Cane Warriors by Alex Wheatle, 9781783449873

Andersen Press

Nobody free till everybody free.

Moa is fourteen. The only life he has ever known is toiling on the Frontier sugar cane plantation for endless hot days, fearing the vicious whips of the overseers. Then one night he learns of an uprising, led by the charismatic Tacky. Moa is to be a cane warrior, and fight for the freedom of all the enslaved people in the nearby plantations. But before they can escape, Moa and his friend Keverton must face their first great task: to kill their overseer, Misser Donaldson. Time is ticking, and the day of the uprising approaches...

A deeply compelling story of courage, brotherhood and hope, Cane Warriors follows the true-life slave rebellion known as Tacky's War in 18th century Jamaica through the eyes of one boy.



Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adeyemi

9781509871353, Macmillan Children's Books

Zélie remembers when the soil of Orisha hummed with magic. When different clans ruled – Burners igniting flames, Tiders beckoning waves, and Zélie's Reaper mother summoning forth souls. But everything changed the night magic disappeared. Under the orders of a ruthless king, anyone with powers was targeted and killed, leaving Zélie without a mother and her people without hope. Only a few people remain with the power to use magic, and they must remain hidden.

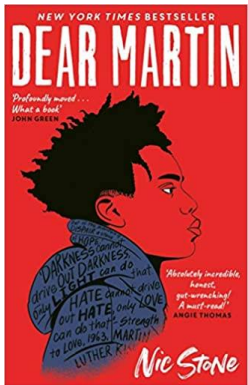
Zélie is one such person. Now she has a chance to bring back magic to her people and strike against the monarchy. With the help of a rogue princess, Zélie must learn to harness her powers and outrun the crown prince, who is hell-bent on eradicating magic for good. Danger lurks in Orisha, where strange creatures prowl, and vengeful spirits wait in the waters. Yet the greatest danger may be Zélie herself as she struggles to come to terms with the strength of her magic – and her growing feelings for an enemy.



Clap When You Land by Elizabeth Acevedo
978-1471409127, Hot Key Books

Camino Rios lives for the summers when her father visits her in the Dominican Republic. But this time, on the day when his plane is supposed to land, Camino arrives at the airport to see crowds of crying people...

In New York City, Yahaira Rios is called to the principal's office, where her mother is waiting to tell her that her father, her hero, has died in a plane crash. Separated by distance - and Papi's secrets - the two girls are forced to face a new reality in which their father is dead and their lives are forever altered. And then, when it seems like they've lost everything of their father, they learn of each other. In a dual narrative novel in verse that brims with both grief and love, award-winning and bestselling author Elizabeth Acevedo writes about the devastation of loss, the difficulty of forgiveness, and the bittersweet bonds that shape our lives.

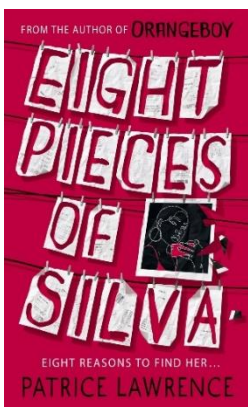


Dear Martin by Nic Stone, 978-1471175565
Simon and Schuster Children's

Justyce McAllister is top of his class and set for the Ivy League – but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs. And despite leaving his rough neighbourhood behind, he can't escape the scorn of his former peers or the ridicule of his new classmates.

Justyce looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for answers. But do they hold up anymore? He starts a journal to Dr. King to find out.

Then comes the day Justyce goes driving with his best friend, Manny, windows rolled down, music turned up – way up, sparking the fury of a white off-duty police officer beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. Justyce and Manny are caught in the crosshairs. In the media fallout, it's Justyce who is under attack.

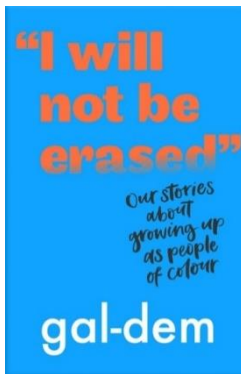


Eight Pieces of Silva by Patrice Lawrence
9781444954746, Hodder Children's Books

Becks is into girls but didn't come out because she was never in. She lives with her mum, stepdad and eighteen-year-old Silva, her stepdad's daughter. Becks and Silva are opposites, but bond over their mutual obsession with K-pop.

When Becks' mum and stepdad go on honeymoon to Japan, Becks and Silva are left alone. Except, Silva disappears. Becks ventures into the forbidden territory of Silva's room and finds the first of eight clues that help her discover her sister's secret life.

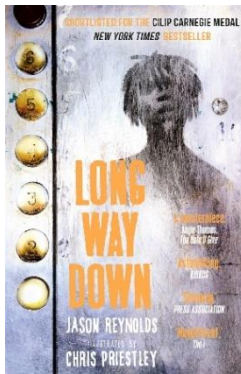
Meanwhile, Silva is on a journey. A journey to make someone love her. He says he doesn't, but he's just joking. All she has to do is persuade him otherwise...



"I Will Not Be Erased": Our stories about growing up as people of colour by gal-dem, 978-1406386370, Walker Books

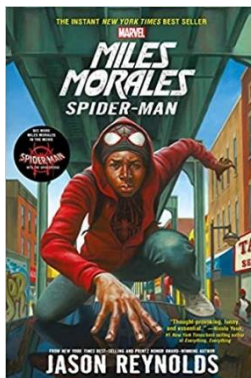
gal-dem, the award-winning online and print magazine, is created by women and non-binary people of colour. In this life-affirming, moving and joyous collection of fourteen essays, gal-dem's talented writers use raw material from their teenage years - diaries, poems and chat histories - to give advice to their younger selves and those growing up today.

gal-dem have been praised by the Guardian for being "the agents of change we need" and these essays tackle important subjects including race, gender, mental health and activism, making this essential reading.



Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds and Chris Priestley, 9780571335121 Faber Children's

After Will's brother is shot in a gang crime, he knows the next steps. Don't cry. Don't snitch. Get revenge. So he gets in the lift with Shawn's gun, determined to follow The Rules. Only when the lift door opens, Buck walks in, Will's friend who died years ago. And Dani, who was shot years before that. As more people from his past arrive, Will has to ask himself if he really knows what he's doing.



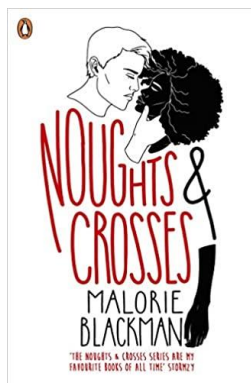
Miles Morales: Spider-Man by Jason Reynolds 978-1484788509, Marvel Press

Miles Morales is just your average teenager. Dinner every Sunday with his parents, chilling out playing old-school video games with his best friend, Ganke, crushing on brainy, beautiful poet Alicia. He's even got a scholarship spot at the prestigious Brooklyn Visions Academy. Oh yeah, and he's Spider Man.

But lately, Miles's spidey-sense has been on the fritz. When a misunderstanding leads to his suspension from school, Miles begins to question his abilities. After all, his dad and uncle were Brooklyn jack-boys with criminal records. Maybe kids like Miles aren't meant to be superheroes. Maybe Miles should take his dad's advice and focus on saving himself.

As Miles tries to get his school life back on track, he can't shake the vivid nightmares that continue to haunt him. Nor can he avoid the relentless buzz of his spidey-sense every day in history class, amidst his teacher's lectures on the historical benefits of slavery and the modern-day prison system. But after his scholarship is threatened, Miles uncovers a chilling plot, one that puts his friends, his neighborhood, and himself at risk.

It's time for Miles to suit up.



Noughts & Crosses by Malorie Blackman

978-0141378640, Penguin

'Stop it! You're all behaving like animals! Worse than animals - like blankers!'

Sephy is a Cross: she lives a life of privilege and power. But she's lonely, and burns with injustice at the world she sees around her.

Callum is a nought: he's considered to be less than nothing - a blanker, there to serve Crosses - but he dreams of a better life.

They've been friends since they were children, and they both know that's as far as it can ever go. Noughts and Crosses are fated to be bitter enemies -

love is out of the question.

Then - in spite of a world that is fiercely against them - these star-crossed lovers choose each other.

But this is love story that will lead both of them into terrible danger . . . and which will have shocking repercussions for generations to come.



Oh My Gods by Alexandra Sheppard

978-1407188737, Scholastic

She's just moved in with her dorky dad and self-absorbed older siblings - who happen to be the ancient Greek gods, living incognito in London!

Between keeping her family's true identities secret, trying to impress her new friends, and meeting an *actually* cute boy, Helen's stress levels are higher than Mount Olympus.

She needs to rein in her chaotic family before they blow their cover AND her chances at a half-normal social life.



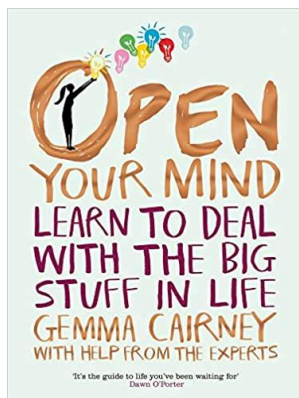
On the Come Up Paperback by Angie Thomas, 978-1406372168

Walker Books

The award-winning author of *The Hate U Give* returns with a powerful story about hip hop, freedom of speech – and fighting for your dreams, even as the odds are stacked against you.

Bri wants to be one of the greatest rappers of all time. As the daughter of an underground hip hop legend who died right before he hit big, Bri's got massive shoes to fill. But when her first song goes viral for all the wrong reasons, Bri finds herself at the centre of controversy and portrayed by the media as more menace than MC. And with an eviction notice staring her

family down, Bri no longer just wants to make it – she has to. Even if it means becoming the very thing the public has made her out to be.



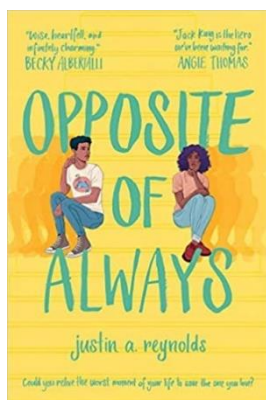
Open Your Mind: Your World and Your Future by Gemma Cairney
978-1509877003, Macmillan Children's Books

Full of honest and practical advice from Gemma Cairney and a whole host of trained professionals and real people, *Open Your Mind* is the best friend of a book everyone needs. From stress, trauma and anxiety, to your place in the world and everything in between.

Includes chapters on:

Anxiety
Depression
Addiction
Politics
Our Natural World
Feminism
Money
And so much more!

Gemma Cairney is an important advocate for young people. Her personal insight and time as Radio 1's resident agony aunt on *The Surgery* makes her perfectly placed to offer advice to young people questioning what life's all about. Discover even more with *Open Your Heart: Learn to Love Your Life and Love Yourself*.



Opposite of Always by Justin Reynolds

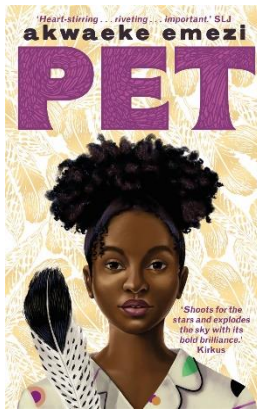
978-1509870042, Macmillan Children's Books

When Jack and Kate meet at a party, he knows he's falling – hard. Soon she's meeting his best friends and Kate wins them over as easily as she did Jack.

But then Kate dies. And their story should end there.

Yet Kate's death sends Jack back to the beginning, the moment they first meet, and Kate's there again. Healthy, happy, and charming as ever. Jack isn't sure if he's losing his mind.

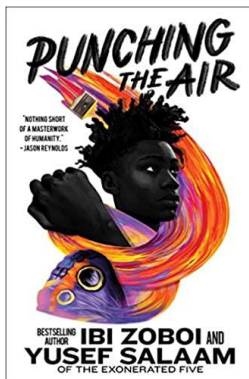
Still, if he has a chance to prevent Kate's death, he'll take it. Even if that means believing in time travel. However, Jack will learn that his actions are not without consequences. And when one choice turns deadly for someone else close to him, he has to figure out what he's willing to do to save the people he loves.



**Pet by Akwaeke Emezi, 9780571355112
Faber Children's**

There are no more monsters anymore, or so the children in the city of Lucille are taught. With doting parents and a best friend named Redemption, Jam has grown up with this lesson all her life. But when she meets Pet, a creature made of horns and colours and claws, who emerges from one of her mother's paintings and a drop of Jam's blood, she must reconsider what she's been told. Pet has come to hunt a monster, and the shadow of something grim lurks in Redemption's house. Jam must fight not only to protect her best friend, but also to uncover the truth.

In their riveting and timely young adult debut, acclaimed novelist Akwaeke Emezi asks difficult questions about what choices a young person can make when the adults around them are in denial.

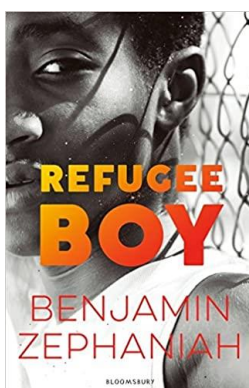


**Punching the Air by Ibi Zoboi and Yusef Salaam
978-0008422141, HarperCollins Children's**

With threats coming from both inside and outside the game, Kiera must fight to save the safe space she's created. But can she protect SLAY without losing herself?

One fateful night, an altercation in a gentrifying neighbourhood escalates into tragedy. 'Boys just being boys' turns out to be true only when those boys are white.

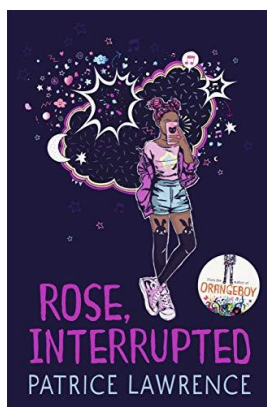
Suddenly, at just sixteen years old, Amal Shahid's bright future is upended: he is convicted of a crime he didn't commit and sent to prison. Despair and rage almost sink him until he turns to the refuge of his words, his art. This never should have been his story. But can he change it?



**Refugee Boy by Benjamin Zephaniah
978-1408894996, Bloomsbury Children's**

Acclaimed performance poet and novelist Benjamin Zephaniah's honest, wry and poignant story of a young refugee left in London is of even more power and pertinence today than when it was first published.

Life is not safe for Alem. His father is Ethiopian, his mother Eritrean. Their countries are at war, and Alem is welcome in neither place. So Alem is excited to spend a holiday in London with his father - until he wakes up to find him gone. What seems like a betrayal is in fact an act of love, but now Alem is alone in a strange country, and he must forge his own path ...



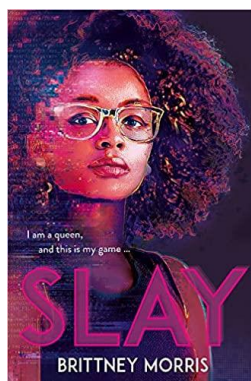
Rose, Interrupted by Patrice Lawrence
Hodder Children's Books, 978-1444940657

Being a teenager is hard enough, but it's even harder in a world you've never known ...

Eighteen months ago, 17-year-old Rose and 13-year-old Rudder escaped a strict religious sect with their mum. They are still trying to make sense of the world outside - no more rules about clothes and books, films and music, no more technology bans. But also no more friendship with the people they've known all their lives, no community and no certainty. It doesn't help that their mum has to work all hours to pay rent on their cramped, smelly, one-bed flat above a kebab shop in Hackney.

While Rudder gorges on once-taboo Harry Potters and dances to Simon and Garfunkel and show tunes, Rose swaps the ankle skirts and uncut hair of the Woodford Pilgrims for Japanese-cute fairy dress and her new boyfriend, Kye. Kye, who she wants with all her being. But there's loads of scary stuff about their new life that Rose and Rudder have no idea how to handle - it's normal for girls to let their boyfriends take naked pictures of them, right?

When Rudder accidentally sets a devastating chain of events into action, Rose must decide whether to sacrifice everything and go back to the life she hates, in order to save the people she loves.



SLAY by Brittney Morris, 9781444951721

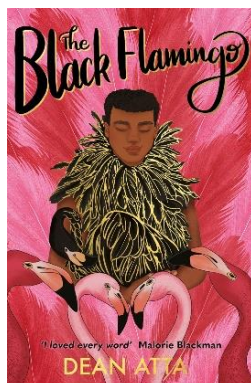
Hodder Children's Books

'We are different ages, genders and traditions ... but tonight we all SLAY'

Black Panther meets Ready Player One. A fierce teen game developer battles a real-life troll intent on ruining the Black Panther-inspired video game she created and the safe community it represents for black gamers.

By day, seventeen-year-old Kiera Johnson is a college student, and one of the only black kids at Jefferson Academy. By night, she joins hundreds of thousands of black gamers who duel worldwide in the secret online role-playing card game, SLAY. No one knows Kiera is the game developer - not

even her boyfriend, Malcolm. But when a teen in Kansas City is murdered over a dispute in the SLAY world, the media labels it an exclusionist, racist hub for thugs.



The Black Flamingo by Dean Atta and Anshika Khullar

9781444948608, Hodder Children's Books

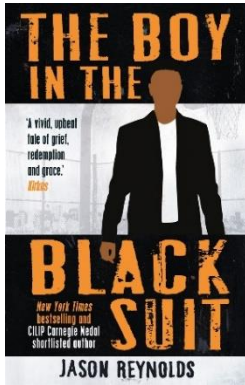
This is not about being ready, it's not even about being fierce, or fearless, IT'S ABOUT BEING FREE.

Michael waits in the stage wings, wearing a pink wig, pink fluffy coat and black heels.

One more step will see him illuminated by spotlight.

He has been on a journey of bravery to get here, and he is almost ready to show himself to the world in bold colours ...

Can he emerge as The Black Flamingo?

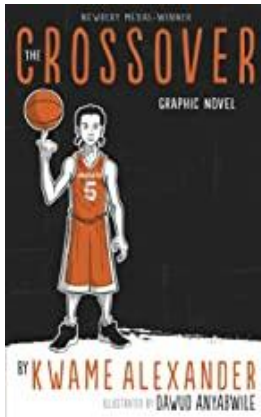


The Boy in the Black Suit by Jason Reynolds, 9780571356126

Faber Children's

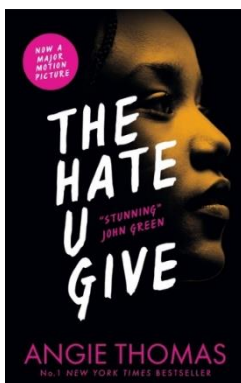
Matt wears a black suit every day. No, not because his mom died – although she did, and it sucks. But he wears the suit for his gig at the local funeral home, which pays way better than the Cluck Bucket, and he needs the income since his dad can't handle the bills (or anything, really) on his own. So while Dad's snagging bottles of whiskey, Matt's snagging fifteen bucks an hour. Not bad. But everything else? Not good. Then Matt meets Lovey. Crazy name, and she's been through more crazy stuff than he can imagine. Yet Lovey never cries. She's tough. Really tough. Tough in the way Matt wishes he could be. Which is maybe why he's drawn to her, and definitely why he can't seem to

shake her. Because there's nothing more hopeful than finding a person who understands your loneliness – and who can maybe even help take it away.



The Crossover: Graphic Novel by Kwame Alexander & Dawud Anyabwile 9781783449590, Andersen Press

'With a bolt of lightning on my kicks . . . The court is SIZZLING. My sweat is DRIZZLING. Stop all that quivering. 'Cuz tonight I'm delivering,' raps twelve-year-old Josh Bell. Thanks to their dad, he and his twin brother, Jordan, are kings on the court. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood – he's got mad beats, too, which help him find his rhythm when it's all on the line. Kwame Alexander's *New York Times* bestseller and Newbery Medal-winning *The Crossover* is vividly brought to life as a graphic novel with stunning illustrations by star talent Dawud Anyabwile.



The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas, 978-1406372151

Walker Books

Sixteen-year-old Starr lives in two worlds: the poor neighbourhood where she was born and raised and her posh high school in the suburbs. The uneasy balance between them is shattered when Starr is the only witness to the fatal shooting of her unarmed best friend, Khalil, by a police officer. Now what Starr says could destroy her community. It could also get her killed.

Inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement, this is a powerful and gripping YA novel about one girl's struggle for justice.

Finding your next read

- Black Lives Matter Booklists ages 0-16 by National Literacy Trust - <https://literacytrust.org.uk/resources/black-lives-matter-book-lists-ages-0-16/>
- Breaking New Ground: Celebrating British Writers and Illustrators of Colour brochure - <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/globalassets/resources/represents/breaking-ground-brochure.pdf>
- Diverse Voices, 80 Children's Books that Celebrate Difference - <https://www.lovereadings4kids.co.uk/blog/collections/diverse-voices-childrens-books-that-celebrate-difference-6090>
- Teachers' Reading Challenge, Find a Read page - <https://teachersreadingchallenge.org.uk/find-a-read>
- Chatterbooks resources page - <https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/?q=booklist&programme=chat>

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Brilliant books for children and young people by black authors and illustrators

Overview of booklist

Title and author/illustrator		Publisher
Picture books		
A Story About Afiya by James Berry and Anna Cunha	978-1911373339	Lantana Publishing
Astro Girl by Ken Wilson-Max	978-1910959213	Otter-Barry Books
Come All You Little Persons by John Agard and Jessica Courtney-Tickle	978-0571324163	Faber Children's
Coming to England by Floella Benjamin	978-1529009415	Macmillan Children's Books
Hair Love by Matthew Cherry and Vashti Harrison	978-0241406427	Puffin
How to Read a Book Hardcover by Kwame Alexander and Melissa Sweet	978-0062307811	HarperCollins Children's
I Am Bear by Ben Bailey Smith and Sav Akyuz	978-1406373059	Walker Books
I Am Perfectly Designed by Karamo Brown, Jason "Rachel" Brown and Anoosha Syed	978-1529036145	Macmillan Children's Books
If All the World Were... by Joseph Coelho and Allison Colpoys	978-1786036513	Lincoln Children's Books
Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History by Vashti Harrison	978-0241346846	Puffin
Look Up! by Nathan Bryon and Dapo Adeola	978-0241345849	Puffin
Luna Loves Library Day by Joseph Coelho and Fiona Lumbers	978-1783445950	Andersen Press
M is for Melanin: A Celebration of the Black Child by Tiffany Rose	978-1529062502	Macmillan Children's Books
Mae Among the Stars by Roda Ahmed	978-0062651730	HarperCollins Children's
Max and the Tag-Along Moon by Floyd Cooper	978-0147515469	Puffin
My Hair by Hannah Lee and Allen Fatimaharan	978-0571346875	Faber Children's
So Much by Trish Cooke and Helen Oxenbury	978-1406390728	Walker Books
Sulwe by Lupita Nyong'o and Vashti Harrison	978-0241394328	Puffin
The Proudest Blue by Ibtihaj Muhammad by S. K. Ali and Hatem Aly	978-1783449729	Andersen Press
The Undefeated by Kwame Alexander, Kadir Nelson	978-1783449293	Andersen Press

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Middle grade books		
500 Words: A collection of short stories that reflect on the Black Lives Matter movement, written by various and edited by Chris Evans, Angellica Bell and Michael Underwood	9781787419605	Studio Press
Ade's Amazing Ade-ventures: Battle of the Cyborg Cat by Ade Adepitan	978-1787413252	Piccadilly Press
Africa, Amazing Africa: Country by Country by Atinuke and Mouni Feddag	978-1406376586	Walker Books
Children of the Benin by Dinah Orji	978-1999336332	Dinosaur Book Ltd
Dr Maggie's Grand Tour of the Solar System by Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock and Chelen Ecija	978-1780555751	Buster Books
Ellie and the Cat by Malorie Blackman and Matt Robertson	978-1781128244	Barrington Stoke
Ghost by Jason Reynolds and Selom Sunu	978-1999642525	Knights Of
High-Rise Mystery by Sharna Jackson	978-1999642518	Knights Of
Overheard in a Tower Block: Poems by Joseph Coelho and Kate Milner	978-1910959589	Otter-Barry Books
Race to the Frozen North: The Matthew Henson Story by Catherine Johnson	978-1781128404	Barrington Stoke
Shuri by Nic Stone	978-0702301834	Scholastic
Some Places More Than Others by Renée Watson	978-1526613684	Bloomsbury Children's
The Faraway Truth by Janae Marks	978-1912626380	Chicken House Books
The Infinite by Patience Agbabi	978-1786899651	Canongate books
The Last Last-Day-Of-Summer by Lamar Giles and Dapo Adeola	978-1328460837	Versify
The Rainmaker Danced by John Agard and Satoshi Kitamura	978-1444932607	Hodder Children's
Toad Attack! by Patrice Lawrence and Becka Moor	978-1781128442	Barrington Stoke
Trailblazers: Harriet Tubman: A Journey to Freedom by Sandra A. Agard	978-1788952224	Stripes Publishing
When Stars are Scattered by Omar Mohamed and Victoria Jamieson	978-0571363858	Faber Children's
Young, Gifted and Black by Jamia Wilson and Andrea Pippins	978-1786030887	Wide Eye Editions

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YA books		
And the Stars Were Burning Brightly by Danielle Jawando	978-1510105706	Orion Children's
Becoming Dinah by Kit de Waal	978-1529063394	Macmillan Children's Books
Black and British: A short essential history by David Olusoga	978-1783449873	Andersen Press
Cane Warriors by Alex Wheatle	978-1509871353	Macmillan Children's Books
Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adeyemi	978-1471409127	Hot Key Books
Clap When You Land by Elizabeth Acevedo	978-1471175565	Simon and Schuster Children's
Dear Martin by Nic Stone	978-1444954746	Hodder Children's Books
Eight Pieces of Silva by Patrice Lawrence	978-1406386370	Walker Books
I Will Not Be Erased: Our stories about growing up as people of colour by gal-dem	978-0571335121	Faber Children's
Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds and Chris Priestley	978-1484788509	Marvel Press
Miles Morales: Spider-Man by Jason Reynolds	978-0141378640	Penguin
Noughts & Crosses by Malorie Blackman	978-1407188737	Scholastic
Oh My Gods by Alexandra Sheppard	978-1406372168	Walker Books
On the Come Up Paperback by Angie Thomas	978-1509877003	Macmillan Children's Books
Open Your Mind: Your World and Your Future by Gemma Cairney	978-1509870042	Macmillan Children's Books
Opposite of Always by Justin Reynolds	978-0571355112	Faber Children's
Pet by Akwaeke Emezi	978-0008422141	HarperCollins Children's
Punching the Air by Ibi Zoboi and Yusef Salaam	978-1408894996	Bloomsbury Children's
Refugee Boy by Benjamin Zephaniah	978-1444940657	Hodder Children's Books
Rose, Interrupted by Patrice Lawrence	978-1444951721	Hodder Children's Books
SLAY by Brittney Morris	978-1444948608	Hodder Children's Books
The Black Flamingo by Dean Atta and and Anshika Khullar	978-0571356126	Faber Children's
The Boy in the Black Suit by Jason Reynolds	978-1783449590	Andersen Press

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The Crossover: Graphic Novel by Kwame Alexander & Dawud Anyabwile	978-1406372151	Walker Books
The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas	978-1406372151	Walker Books