

# KS3 Book Recommendations

At The Skipton Academy we LOVE reading! We also love helping our students find new books to read, so below you will find a range of wonderful books for Key Stage 3 students.

Most of the books are available in our school library, but you can also get them from local bookshop retailers in Skipton, Amazon.co.uk (of course!) and other online booksellers.

Books can be enjoyed in a range of different ways; have you tried a Kindle eBook (Amazon.co.uk) or an audio book (Audible.co.uk)?

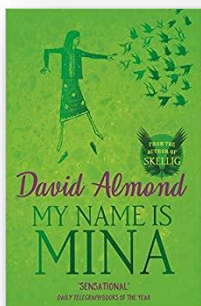
If you'd like to have a sneak-peak at the first chapter of the books below, head to [www.lovereading4kids.co.uk](http://www.lovereading4kids.co.uk) and type the book title into the "search" bar.

On the back page of this booklet, you will find some links to podcasts and online resources to help boost your English reading and writing skills. We hope you find something you like.

Spread the word – tell your friends, family & teachers what you're reading or listening to!

## General

Here's a list of reads that appeal to a wide range of KS3 students; they are organised alphabetically and not according to level of challenge.



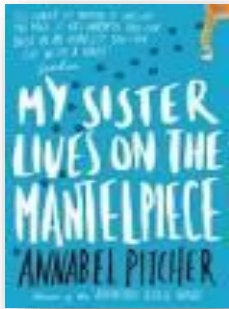
**My Name is Mina** by David Almond; mystery, fantasy

There's an empty notebook lying on the table in the moonlight. It's been there for an age. I keep on saying that I'll write a journal. So I'll start right here, right now. I open the book and write the very first words: My name is Mina and I love the night. Then what shall I write? I can't just write that this happened then this happened then this happened to boring infinitum. I'll let my journal grow just like the mind does, just like a tree or a beast does, just like life does. Why should a book tell a tale in a dull straight line?



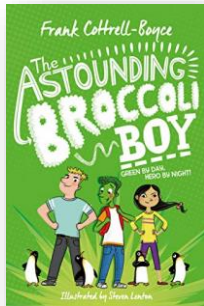
**Coram Boy** by Jamila Gavin; historical, human rights

Toby, an African, and Aaron, the illegitimate heir to a great estate, are linked by the Coram Man, a shady figure who supposedly delivers abandoned children to a safe new life at the Coram Hospital. The reality is much, much worse. Join Toby and Aaron on an epic journey through 1750s Britain, fraught with danger and excitement.



**My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece** by Annabel Pitcher; family issues, diversity

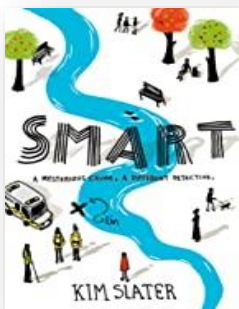
Told through the eyes of ten-year-old Jamie, *this novel* sensitively tackles issues around family breakdown after grief. It also explores terrorism, racism and bullying issues from a child's point of view.



**The Astounding Broccoli Boy** by Frank Correll-Boyce

Rory Rooney likes to be prepared for all eventualities. His favourite book is *Don't Be Scared, Be Prepared*, and he has memorized every page of it. He could even survive a hippo attack. He knows that just because something is unlikely doesn't mean it won't ever happen . . .

But Rory *isn't* prepared when he suddenly and inexplicably turns green. Stuck in an isolation ward in a hospital far from home with two other remarkably green children, Rory's as confused by his new condition as the medics seem to be.



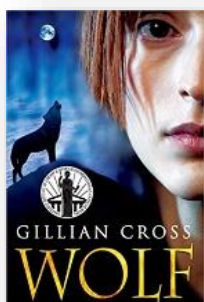
**Smart** by Kim Slater; detective thriller

A homeless man has been murdered and the police don't care; but Kieran does and he's going to solve the case. Being a detective is difficult when you're amazing at drawing but terrible at fitting in. And when there are dangerous secrets everywhere, not just outside, but under your own roof.



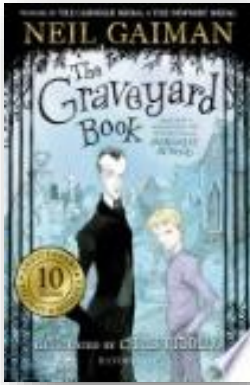
**The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time** by Mark Haddon; adventure, disability

A complex investigation begins with the discovery of a neighbour's dead dog and leads Christopher, who is autistic, to many unexpected discoveries, including about his own family. Hilarious and ingenious in equal measure.



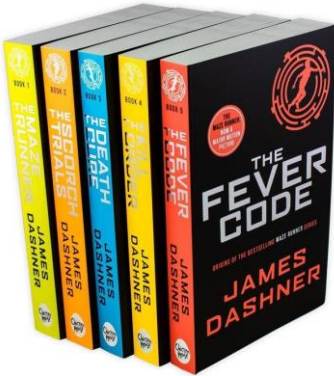
**Wolf** by Gillian Cross; family drama

Casey reunites with her beautiful but simple mother after years apart and tries to settle into her new life but there are many questions about her past. Does she really want to know the answers?



**The Graveyard Book** by Neil Gaiman; fantasy, ghost story

When Bod's parents are killed, he goes to live in the local graveyard where he is raised and protected by the ghosts who haunt the cemetery – but the murderer is still out there and they are searching for Bod. Step into the gothic – if you dare!



**The Maze Runner** (series) by James Dashner; fantasy, dystopia

In this gripping series, we encounter several unique characters which are trapped in a Maze with no prior memories or recollection of how they arrived. *The Glade* is a huge area which is caved in by massive walls of 4 miles high, and made in concrete. Inside the Maze is a massive puzzle, covered in ivy and inside are atrocious metal creatures called Grievers that are roaming the hallways hunting for people. Thomas is the character we follow in the story, he enters the called the Glade, he is shocked and clueless of why he is there. The only memory he can recall is his name...



**Thirteen** by Steve Cavanagh; fantasy

Joshua Kane has been preparing for this moment his whole life. He's done it before. But this is the big one. This is the murder trial of the century. And Kane has killed to get the best seat in the house. But there's someone on his tail, ex-conman turned trial attorney Eddie Flynn and he alone suspects that the killer isn't the man on trial.

For Kane, time is running out - all he needs is to get to the conviction without being discovered and for Eddie, it's a race against time to get to the killer before the wrong man takes the fall.



**Pig Heart Boy** by Malorie Blackman; personal and social issues

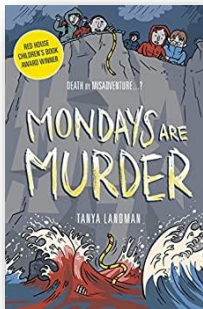
Cameron is seriously ill; a controversial transplant could save his life but that is only the beginning of his struggle. Powerful and thought provoking.

# Which Reader Are You?

We would always advise that, when reading for pleasure, you should try to read (or listen to!) a range of texts from different genres (e.g. fantasy, adventure, crime) and level of difficulty. Have a look at the different categories to see which one you may fit into.

## Developing Reader

Developing readers are perhaps not naturally inclined to pick up a novel for pleasure. The below are a few easy to access texts for more reluctant readers.



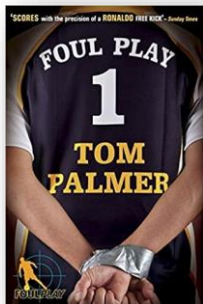
### **Mondays are Murder** by Tanya Landman

When Poppy Fields goes on an activity holiday to a remote Scottish island, she is looking forward to a week of climbing, hill-walking and horse riding. But things take a bad turn when their instructor has what appears to be a fatal abseiling accident. When Poppy discovers that his rope was cut, and more of the instructors start to have "accidents", she and best friend Graham suspect foul play and decide to investigate.



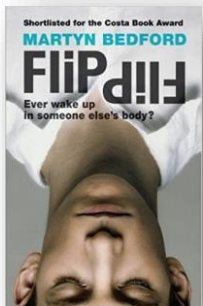
### **Monster Mission** by Eva Ibbotson

Three children are stolen and taken to a bizarre island, which is home to some extraordinary creatures – including mermaids, selkies and the legendary kraken. The island is the base for a very mysterious mission. But the magical adventure is cut short when the island is suddenly under siege. Can the children save themselves and their new friends?



### **Foul Play** (football series) by Tom Palmer

Danny is obsessed with two things: football - especially City Football Club - and investigating crimes. So when England and City footballing hero Sam Roberts is reported missing the day after Danny saw him being taken, blindfolded, into the bowels of the City FC stadium late at night, he's determined to get to the bottom of it. But is Danny getting into something he can't handle?



### **Flip!** By Martyn Bedford

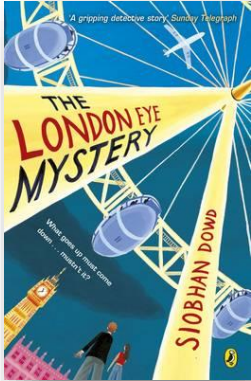
This story is based on Ilkley by an Ilkley author. We have lots of copies in school – you can find a copy in the school library!

Fourteen-year-old Alex Gray wakes up one morning to discover he's not in his own bedroom. More surprising is that he doesn't recognize his hands, or his legs... When he looks in the mirror he gets the shock of his life! How is it possible that Alex has become another boy – a boy who everyone calls Philip? And how have six whole months passed overnight?



# Competent Reader

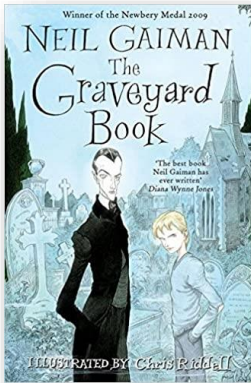
Competent readers are much more likely to choose to read for pleasure. The titles listed below remain easy to access in terms of content, however, they do provide a little more challenge for you.



## **The London Eye Mystery** by Siobhan Dowd

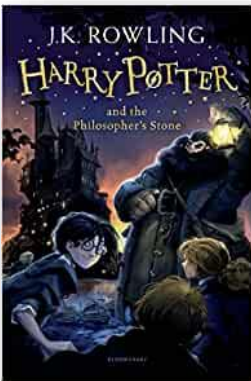
Ted likes the weather, he also likes statistics and routine but his life is thrown into disarray when his Aunt Gloria and cousin Salim arrive, like a hurricane, to stay in London en-route to a new life in New York.

Ted and his older sister Kat arrange to take Salim on the London Eye but although they watch him go up in a pod, he never comes down again. Salim is missing. Ted's analytical mind becomes an asset as he and Kat piece together the information surrounding their cousin's disappearance and begin to unravel the mystery.



## **The Graveyard Book** by Neil Gaiman

When a baby escapes a murderer intent on killing the entire family, who would have thought it would find safety and security in the local graveyard? Brought up by the resident ghosts, ghouls and spectres, Bod has an eccentric childhood learning about life from the dead. But for Bod there is also the danger of the murderer still looking for him - after all, he is the last remaining member of the family. A stunningly original novel deftly constructed over eight chapters, featuring every second year of Bod's life, from babyhood to adolescence. Will Bod survive to be a man?



## **Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone** (series) by J.K. Rowling

Escape to Hogwarts with the series that has sparked a lifelong reading journey for children all over the world. The magic starts here.

Harry Potter has never even heard of Hogwarts when the letters start dropping on the doormat at number four, Privet Drive. Addressed in green ink on yellowish parchment with a purple seal, they are swiftly confiscated by his grisly aunt and uncle. Then, on Harry's eleventh birthday, a great beetle-eyed giant of a man called Rubeus Hagrid bursts in with astonishing news: Harry Potter is a wizard, and he has a place at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The magic starts here!

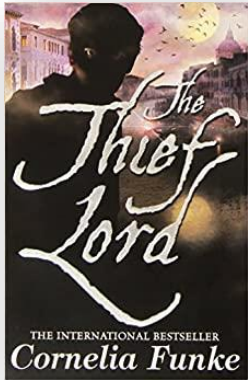


## **Alex Rider** (series) by Anthony Horowitz

In the number one bestselling series by Anthony Horowitz, fourteen-year-old Alex Rider is forcibly recruited into the deadly world of espionage and sent on his first mission. But the teenage spy soon finds himself in mortal danger, and in demand again by MI6. The ever-popular Alex Rider series has action, adrenaline and adventure at every turn.

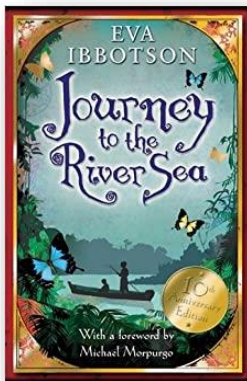
# Active Reader

Active readers are keen to read for pleasure but may stick to one genre or author. Below is a selection of titles from different genres to help you broaden your horizons.



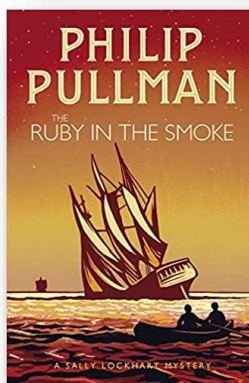
## **The Thief Lord** by Cornelia Funke

Winter has come early to Venice. Two orphaned children are on the run, hiding among the crumbling canals and misty alleyways of the city. Befriended by a gang of street children and their mysterious leader, the Thief Lord, they shelter in an old, disused cinema. On their trail is a bungling detective, obsessed with disguises and the health of his pet tortoises. But a greater threat to the boys' new-found freedom is something from a forgotten past - a beautiful magical treasure with the power to spin time itself ...



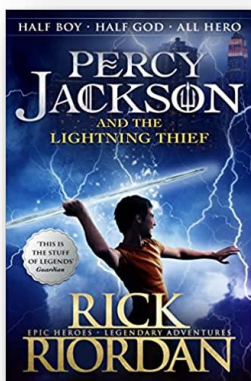
## **Journey to the River Sea** by Eva Ibbotson

An Amazon adventure set in the wilderness of Brazil, *Journey to the River Sea* is filled with mystery and memorable characters. It is 1910 and Maia, tragically orphaned at thirteen, has been sent from England to start a new life with distant relatives in Manaus, hundreds of miles up the Amazon. She is accompanied by an eccentric and mysterious governess who has secret reasons of her own for making the journey. Both soon discover an exotic world bursting with new experiences in *Journey to the River Sea*, Eva Ibbotson's highly colourful, joyous adventure.



## **The Ruby in the Smoke** by Phillip Pullman

If you've not yet met Sally Lockhart, prepare to be bowled over. The beautiful, smart 16-year-old can ride like a Cossack and shoot like a demon - and now she's braving terrible danger to hunt down her father's killer! Her journey will take her from the grimy streets of London to a Maharajah's Indian palace and the opium dens of China, unravelling a rich and colourful mystery at whose heart is a priceless jewel soaked in blood... From the glittering talent of Philip Pullman, a king of children's storytellers, this gripping yarn of courage and adventure will leave you bedazzled.



## **Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief** by Rick Riordan

I was just a normal kid, going to school, playing basketball, skateboarding. The usual. Until I accidentally vaporized my maths teacher. Now I spend my time battling monsters and generally trying to stay alive.

This is the one where Zeus, God of the Sky, thinks I've stolen his lightning bolt - and making Zeus angry is a very bad idea.

# Reflective Reader

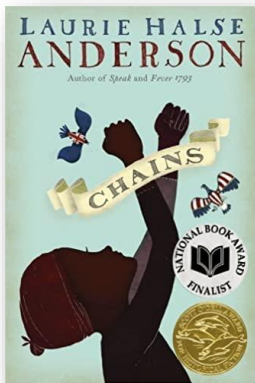
Reflective readers are willing to challenge themselves; they think very carefully about what they have read. The below are some thought provoking choices to challenge your emotional intelligence.



## **I Capture the Castle** by Dodie Smith

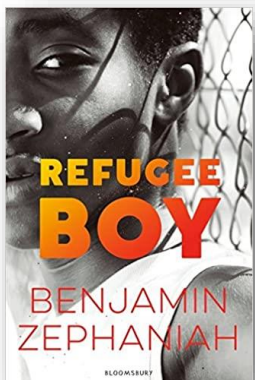
'I write this sitting in the kitchen sink' is the first line of this timeless, witty and enchanting novel about growing up.

Cassandra Mortmain lives with her bohemian and impoverished family in a crumbling castle in the middle of nowhere. Her journal records her life with her beautiful, bored sister, Rose, her fading glamorous stepmother, Topaz, her little brother Thomas and her eccentric novelist father who suffers from a financially crippling writer's block. However, all their lives are turned upside down when the American heirs to the castle arrive and Cassandra finds herself falling in love for the first time.



## **Chains** (trilogy) by Laurie Halse Anderson

Isabel and her sister, Ruth, are slaves. Sold from one owner to the next, they arrive in New York as the Americans are fighting for their independence, and the English are struggling to maintain control. Soon Isabel is struggling too. Struggling to keep herself and her sister safe in a world in which they have no control. With a rare and compelling voice, this haunting novel tells not only the story of a remarkable girl and her incredible strength, but also of a time and place in which slavery was the order of the day and lives were valued like weights of meat or bundles of vegetables.

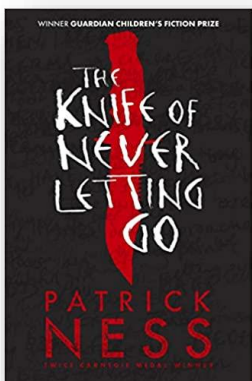


## **Refugee Boy** by Benjamin Zephaniah

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 ...



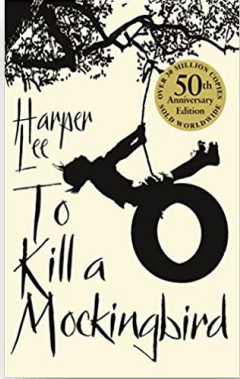
## **The Knife of Never Letting Go** (series) by Patrick Ness

Prentisstown isn't like other towns. Everyone can hear everyone else's thoughts in a constant, overwhelming Noise. There is no privacy. There are no secrets. Then Todd Hewitt unexpectedly stumbles on a spot of complete silence. Which is impossible. And now he's going to have to run... This new edition marks the 10th anniversary of the award-winning modern classic, soon to be a major motion picture starring Tom Holland and Daisy Ridley.



# Versatile Reader

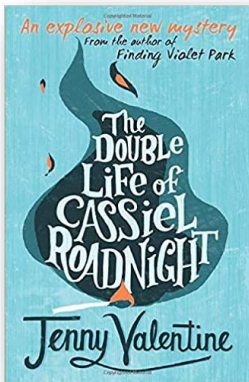
Versatile readers are well read and always looking for the next challenge. Below are some challenging choices to stretch and challenge the most able readers at KS3 (and beyond!)



## **To Kill a Mockingbird** by Harper Lee

'Shoot all the Bluejays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a Mockingbird.'

A lawyer's advice to his children as he defends the real mockingbird of Harper Lee's classic novel - a black man charged with the rape of a white girl. Through the young eyes of Scout and Jem Finch, Harper Lee explores with exuberant humour the irrationality of adult attitudes to race and class in the Deep South of the thirties. The conscience of a town steeped in prejudice, violence and hypocrisy is pricked by the stamina of one man's struggle for justice. But the weight of history will only tolerate so much.



## **The Double Life of Cassiel Roadnight** by Jenny Valentine

Two boys. One identity. He can change his life if he says yes...

An explosive new mystery from the award-winning author Jenny Valentine, *The Double Life of Cassiel Roadnight* is the story of a boy who assumes the identity of a missing teenager and in-so-doing unearths a series of shattering family secrets – and the truth about who he really is.



## **The Hunger Games** (series) by Suzanne Collins

When sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen steps forward to take her younger sister's place in the games, she sees it as a death sentence.

But Katniss has been close to death before. For her, survival is second nature.



## **Bog Child** by Siobhan Dowd

Digging for peat in the mountain with his Uncle Tally, Fergus finds the body of a child, and it looks like she's been murdered. As Fergus tries to make sense of the mad world around him - his brother on hunger-strike in prison, his growing feelings for Cora, his parents arguing over the Troubles, and him in it up to the neck, blackmailed into acting as courier to God knows what, a little voice comes to him in his dreams, and the mystery of the bog child unfurls.



# Online Resources

**Stay Safe  
Online**

- Make sure your parents know what you are looking at.
- Don't share personal information with anyone you don't know.

We haven't been able to check every word or watch every podcast/video, so we can't promise they are suitable for everyone. If you're not sure, ask an adult at home.

## Reading

### CBBC Book Club



For younger students, the CBBC Book Club has lots of book recommendations and suggestions.

Click here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/shows/cbbc-book-club>

### LoveReading4Kids



You loved your last book, but what are you going to read next? Let this website help you decide. Download Free Opening Extracts, Read online book reviews, get Expert reviews and recommendations!

Here's the link: <https://www.lovereadings4kids.co.uk/>

### Toppsta



Discover the very best children's books recommended by readers. Toppsta.com has more than 60000 children's book reviews written by children, parents & teachers!

See what's going on here:  
<https://www.lovereadings4kids.co.uk/>

# Writing

Show off what you've learnt from all the books you've read by doing some of your own writing! Check out the links below for writing prompts, activities and competitions.

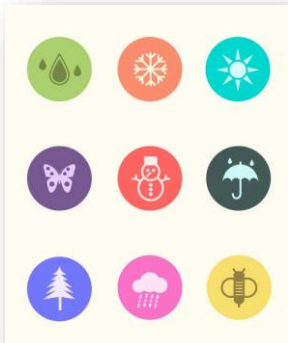


## Writing Competitions

This link takes you to a list of writing competitions suitable for all ages.

Find out more here:

<https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/competitions-for-children/childrens-writing-competitions/>



## Creative Writing Prompts

Try these websites for some ideas to help you get started on a piece of writing – you can write as much or as little as you want!

<https://thinkwritten.com/writing-prompts-for-kids/>  
<http://www.wrightingwords.com/writing-starters/writing-prompts-for-pre-teens/>



## A picture paints a thousand words...

These photographs and pictures could provide inspiration for writing a story or poem.

<https://www.onceuponapicture.co.uk/>  
<https://www.literacyshed.com/the-images-shed.html>  
<https://thejohnfox.com/2016/05/picture-writing-prompts/>



## "If music be the food of love, play on!"

Ever thought of using music to inspire your writing? Check out this link to help you find your next story.

<https://www.writingforward.com/writing-prompts/creative-writing-prompts/creative-writing-prompts-for-music-lovers-2>

# Listening



Podcasts are a brilliant way of expanding your mind with minimal effort! You could listen to a podcast in a variety of different places: from washing the dishes in the kitchen to chilling out in your bedroom!

Podcasts can be listened to on a range of different online platforms, for example Spotify, Apple or Stitcher.



## Book Club for Kids

The place where young readers meet to talk about books. The show includes a celebrity reader and an interview with the author. The host is award winning public radio journalist Kitty Felde.

Find out more here:

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/book-club-for-kids/id1016037208?mt=2>



## Buttons and Figs

Buttons & Figs is a podcast for kids about playing with words.

Find out more here:

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/buttons-figs/id1150715877?mt=2>



## A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens

Get to grips with this Dickens classic by listening to all 9 episodes, each just 15 minutes long. You could download a PDF version of the novel to read alongside the recording.

Podcast: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/english-ks2-a-christmas-carol-index/zbp9bdm>

PDF version:

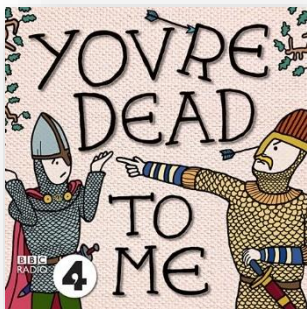
[https://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Dickens/Carol/Dickens\\_Carol.pdf](https://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Dickens/Carol/Dickens_Carol.pdf)



### **“The Week” Junior Show**

The Week Junior Show takes you behind the scenes of the award-winning magazine for 8 to 14-year-olds. Each week, Bex from Fun Kids is joined by members of The Week Junior team to discuss their favourite stories, debate the week’s hot topic and discover whether the ‘Real or Rubbish?’ report is fake news or the real deal.

Find out more about The Week Junior at [theweekjunior.co.uk](http://theweekjunior.co.uk)



### **You’re Dead to Me**

The past is a trove of intrigue and storytelling potential – as proved by this podcast hosted by historian Greg Jenner. There are jokes aplenty as Jenner goes about the serious business of unravelling the past

Episodes can be downloaded here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p07mdbhg/episodes/downloads>



### **But Why?**

But Why is a show led by you, kids! You ask the questions and we find the answers. It's a big interesting world out there. On But Why, we tackle topics large and small, about nature, words, even the end of the world. Have a question? Send it to us! Episodes can be downloaded here:

<https://www.npr.org/podcasts/474377890/but-why-a-podcast-for-curious-kids/?t=1591174849815>



### **Radiolab and Radiolab for Kids**

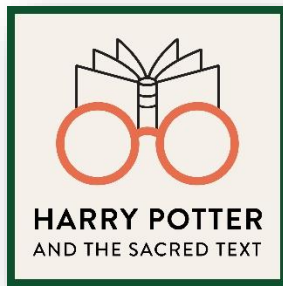
Radiolab is an award-winning podcast that delivers a mix of science, history, popular culture and more in a creative, innovative way. The episodes are fun to listen to and are sure to teach your teens something educational. Previous episodes have investigated why we laugh, explored the line between music and language, and discussed the history of football.

Radiolab: <https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/radiolab>

Radiolab for Kids:

<https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/radiolab-kids>





### **Harry Potter and the Sacred Text**

What if the Harry Potter series was considered a holy book? While this can feel true to many Potter fans, this thoughtful, spiritual podcast actually puts it into practice. Each episode takes a chapter of a Harry Potter book and looks at it through the lens of a universal theme like love, hope, or destiny. You don't need to be religious to enjoy this delightful series, but it's not always spoiler-free, so make sure you've read the books ahead of time.

Find it here: <https://www.harrypottersacredtext.com/>



### **Bedtime Stories for Rebel Girls**

An offshoot of the hugely successful bestselling book of the same name, this podcast is all about championing clever and tenacious women from across all sectors including the arts, civil rights and sport. Each of these episodes are about 20 minutes long and focus on one extraordinary woman – read by another extraordinary woman. Greta Thunberg's story read by Jameela Jamil is one recent stand out episode, while the sublime Pamela Adlon reading Frida Kahlo is nothing short of a treat. And don't let the gendered title put you off – these stories are for everyone.

Click here: <https://www.rebelgirls.com/pages/podcast>



### **Bedtime FM**

This gentle podcast is perfect for children who struggle to wind down or who might need a little help turning off at the end of a busy day. These short stories all promote mindfulness and seek to instil some inner calm into the often-fraught minds of little ones. All will help with relaxation and include breathing exercises. Chanel Tsang who presents the podcast has a very soothing, soft voice, backed up by the kind of music you might listen to during a deep tissue massage. Even without the content, the sound itself is so restful.

Click here for more info: <https://bedtime.fm/peaceout>

# Watching

YouTube is useful for more than just cat videos! There's a whole host of dedicated book-loving YouTubers and literary-based YouTube channels around the world. YouTube is a treasure trove if you know where to look for gems! Check out these suggestions below:

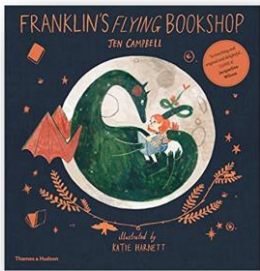


## **Epic Reads**

Epic Reads is your video destination for all things YA and teen books. We post new Book Nerd Problem episodes every Monday, Book Hauls with Tea Time's Margot once a month and more! You'll also find original digital episodes, interviews with YA authors, exclusive event access, and more cool stuff.

Check it out here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSRwwQb-oMNAWWAnw0bh27w>



## **Jen Campbell**

Jen is an award-winning poet & short story writer. Her first children's book is called 'Franklin's Flying Bookshop.' She runs writing workshops, gives talks at universities & book festivals. Click here for more:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwME97IPvhAXAV\\_bbgAvOtw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwME97IPvhAXAV_bbgAvOtw)

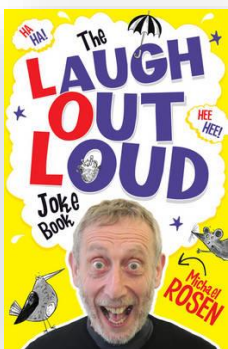


## **Books and Quills**

Sanne from "Books and Quills" encourages her subscribers to read outside their comfort zone and has a range of book reviews and other videos to help you choose your next book.

Visit the channel here:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/booksandquills>



## **Michael Rosen**

One of Britain's best-loved children's poets, Michael Rosen's YouTube channel is packed-full of songs and poems that will make you laugh out loud!

Visit the channel here:

<https://www.youtube.com/MichaelRosenOfficial>