

READING FOR PLEASURE



Welcome back to a new academic year of reading adventures! As we embark on a fresh academic year, filled with endless opportunities for growth and discovery, we're thrilled to reconnect with you and your young readers. We hope you've enjoyed a restorative summer and are as excited as we are to dive into the wonderful world of books. Reading is more than a skill; it's a gateway to imagination, empathy and understanding. We are committed to fostering a love for reading that lasts a lifetime and to kickstart this year's reading journey, we've gathered some top tips to encourage reading at home, suitable for all primary ages, from EYFS to Year 6:

1. Create a cosy reading nook:

designate a special spot filled with comfy pillows and good lighting where your child can curl up with a book.

2. Explore a variety of genres:

from picture books to poetry, let your child discover different types of reading materials that ignite their interest.

3. Set a reading routine:

whether it's bedtime stories or weekend reading time, a consistent routine helps make reading a beloved habit.

4. Join in the fun:

read together as a family and take turns reading aloud to make the experience engaging and interactive.

5. Visit your local library:

regular library visits can turn the search for a new book into an exciting treasure hunt.

6. Celebrate special reading events:

this term, we'll be featuring exciting events such as World Gratitude Day, National Poetry Day and Non-fiction November. Stay tuned for special activities and ways to participate!

Together, we can make reading an enriching and joyful part of your child's daily life. We're looking forward to a year filled with literary exploration, creativity and connection.

KEY EVENTS THIS TERM:

NATIONAL POETRY DAY

National Poetry Day, celebrated annually in the UK, is a delightful opportunity to explore the world of poetry with your children. Falling on the first Thursday of October, this day celebrates poetry's unique ability to capture emotions, tell stories, and inspire imaginations. Here are ways you can engage with your children on National Poetry Day:

1. **Read poetry together:** select a few child-friendly poems and read them with your children. Discuss the themes, imagery, and emotions they convey.
2. **Write your own poems:** encourage your children to pen their own poems. They could write about their favourite things, memories, or even create a poem together as a family.
3. **Visit a library or bookshop:** many libraries and bookshops host special events for national poetry day. Attending a poetry reading can be an exciting way to experience poetry with others.
4. **Explore poems online:** many websites offer interactive poetry experiences tailored for children. They can watch videos, listen to readings, and even create digital poems.
5. **Create poetry art:** combine poetry with art by having your children illustrate a favourite poem. This can bring the words to life and create a unique connection to the poem.
6. **Share favourite poems at dinner:** make dinner a special occasion by encouraging everyone in the family to share a favourite poem or quote. Discussing why the chosen pieces resonate can spark meaningful conversation.
7. **Explore different forms of poetry:** introduce your children to different forms of poetry such as haikus, limericks, or sonnets. Experiment with writing in these forms to understand their unique rhythm and structure.



National Poetry Day isn't just for poets or literature enthusiasts; it's a celebration of creativity, expression, and the joy of words. By engaging with poetry in these fun and interactive ways, you can foster a love for poetry in your children and create memorable experiences that highlight the beauty and power of language.

RECOMMENDED READING

Poems Out Loud VARIOUS AUTHORS

Illustrated by Laurie Stansfield

From rockets to mermaids and everything in between, there's something for everyone in this diverse and contemporary collection. Perfect for young children aged 4+ who are approaching poetry for the very first time, these poems can be performed out loud, shared with others or simply read in your head.

Featuring award-winning poets, brand new voices, hip-hop artists and spoken-word performers, this is a wonderfully fresh, diverse and relevant new anthology that will get children laughing, thinking, sharing and performing!

4+



Being Me

LIZ BROWNLEE, MATT GOODFELLOW, LAURA MUCHA

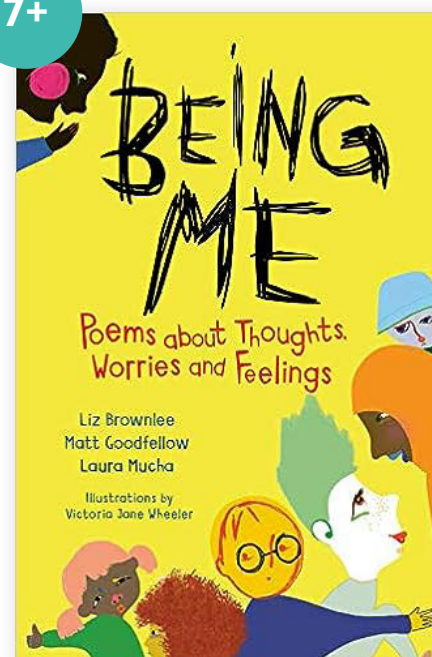
Illustrated by Victoria Jane Wheeler

Read about the Land of Blue, where it's OK to feel sad, find ideas for what to do with worries or how to slow down when your head is full of hurry. Give yourself time to chill out, find quiet voices in noisy places and discover kindness in yourself and others.

Then maybe your own special thought machine will tell you, 'This is going well. You're doing great. You've got this!' And you have!

This important and unique anthology of 45 poems by three leading poets, well known for their empathy and perception, speaks to the heart of what children think and care about, offering understanding, support and encouragement. With an endnote by leading clinical psychologist Karen Goodall.

7+



Zombierella: Fairy Tales Gone Bad

JOSEPH COELHO

Illustrated by Freya Hartas

The first in a funny, deliciously dark, three-part series of twisted classics, written in verse by award-winning poet Joseph Coelho and illustrated by Freya Hartas. A yellow moon hangs in a satin sky the night Cinderella, barefoot and in hand-me-downs, slips at the top of the stairs... and dies. But not for long. The Shadow of Death arrives to breathe life back into her bones and, for three nights only, Cinderella goes forth as ZOMBIERELLA. With her skin as cold as ice and her faithful horse Lumpkin back by her side, can she seek revenge on her three cruel, fake sisters, once and for all?

Crawl out of the grave and step into your mushroom carriage for this haunting and humorous adventure of the undead girl searching for her happily ever after.

9+



BONFIRE NIGHT

As autumn leaves fill the air and nights draw in, we're all looking forward to the bright sparks of Bonfire Night on 5th November. But have you ever wondered about the history behind this glowing celebration? Bonfire Night, also known as Guy Fawkes Night, marks the failed Gunpowder Plot of 1605, where Guy Fawkes and his fellow conspirators attempted to blow up the English Parliament and King James I.

Their plot was foiled, and ever since, we've lit bonfires and fireworks to commemorate the event. It's not just a night for ooohs and aaahs at the sky; it's also a wonderful learning opportunity for our children. Schools often provide historical context and safety tips around this time, but there's so much more you can do at home. Whether it's creating crafts, cooking up a storm with traditional Bonfire Night treats like toffee apples, or simply sharing the story behind Guy Fawkes, it's a perfect occasion for family bonding.

Safety, of course, is always our top priority. Please make sure to follow the Firework Code and supervise your children closely. This ensures that the evening remains a joyful experience for everyone involved. So as you wrap up warm and step out to enjoy the firework displays and bonfires, take a moment to reflect on the history behind the celebration. It's a wonderful way to make the night not just entertaining but also educational for the whole family.



RECOMMENDED READING

The Night Box LOUISE GREIG

Illustrated by **Ashling Lindsay**

Whilst this book might not actually be about bonfire night or fireworks, it does celebrate the light that shines through the dark.

Nominated for the CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal and shortlisted for the Waterstones Children's Book Prize, the Teach Primary Book Awards and the Klaus Flugge Prize.

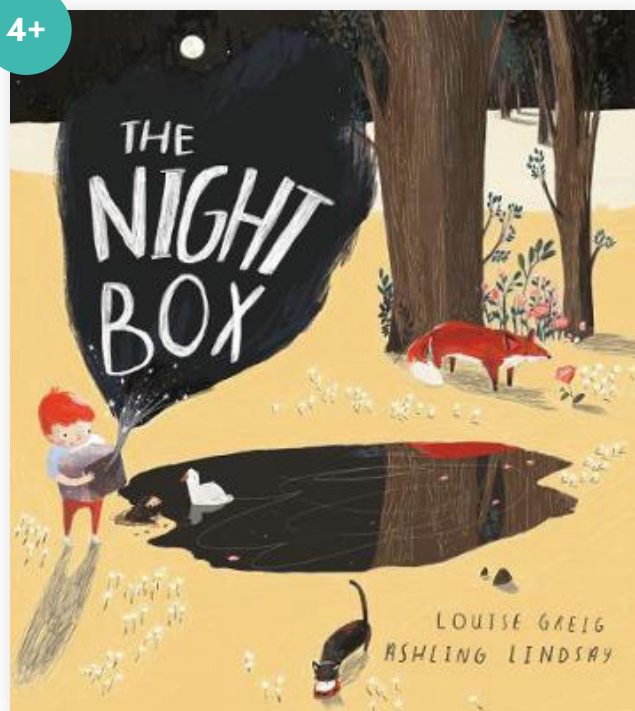
An enchanting bedtime story about a small boy who is the custodian of night, from talented new picture book author and poet, Louise Greig, with beautifully atmospheric illustrations by Ashling Lindsay.

*Max has a key and a box of midnight blue.
When he turns the key in the lock – WHOOSH!*

*Day slips inside as Night sweeps out.
Darkness tumbles into the air. It dances and
whirls around the room. It goes under the bed,
under the chair – everywhere!*

Louise Greig's lyrical voice and Ashling Lindsay's warm, endearing illustrations hold a candle up to the magical nature of night-time in this soothing picture book. Perfect for cosying up to read and share before bedtime, *The Night Box* is an original bedtime tale that sits perfectly alongside classics such as *The Owl who was Afraid of the Dark* – great for reassuring little ones who have a fear of the dark and calming down lively children before bedtime!"

4+





Spy Dog: The Gunpowder Plot Volume 12 ANDY COPE

The FINAL adventure for Lara the Spy Dog! Mr Big is on the loose. He's planning a final crime that will make him the most famous criminal alive: blowing up every prison in the country!

Lara and her spy team have their noses to the ground and know something evil is coming. Lara follows the clues to London and Big Ben's clock tower, where the explosives are set. With help from the spy pups and spy cat, can she stop Mr Big once and for all... before the clock strikes midnight?

Black Powder ALLY SHERRICK

A rip-roaring historical adventure set at the time of the Guy Fawkes' Gunpowder Plot – winner of the Historical Association Young Quills Award!

England, 1605: 12-year-old Tom must save his father from hanging. He falls in with a mysterious stranger – the Falcon – who promises to help him in exchange for his service. But on the long journey to London, Tom discovers the Falcon's true mission – and a plot to blow up Parliament with barrels of black powder. Tom faces a terrible decision: secure his father's release, or stop the assassination of the king...

A rip-roaring, action-packed life-and-death quest, packed with history and adventure. Set at the time of the Gunpowder Plot and featuring Guy Fawkes – perfect for Bonfire Night and beyond.



NON FICTION NOVEMBER

November is just around the corner, and we're not just talking about Bonfire Night! Did you know that November is also celebrated as Non-Fiction November? It's a month dedicated to diving into books that teach us about the real world. From fascinating histories and biographies to captivating science and nature books, non-fiction offers a treasure trove of knowledge for us and our children. Why is this important, you ask? Well, non-fiction books can spark your child's curiosity and even passion for subjects they might not encounter in their everyday curriculum. Whether your child is a budding scientist, an aspiring artist, or just endlessly curious, there's a non-fiction book out there to answer their questions—and likely raise some new ones! Schools, libraries, and bookshops often host special events for Non-Fiction November, featuring a range of exciting and informative books tailored for young readers. This makes for a great family outing and provides an opportunity for your children to explore topics they're curious about. Plus, it's a wonderful way for you to engage in meaningful conversations with your children about what they're learning.

So this November, why not set aside some time to explore the non-fiction section of your local library or bookstore with your children? It's a fantastic way for the whole family to learn something new and spend quality time together.



RECOMMENDED READING

Small, Speckled Egg MARY AULD*Illustrated by Anna Terreros-Martin*

Small, Speckled Egg takes young readers from the small and familiar to new areas of knowledge where they really have to think big!

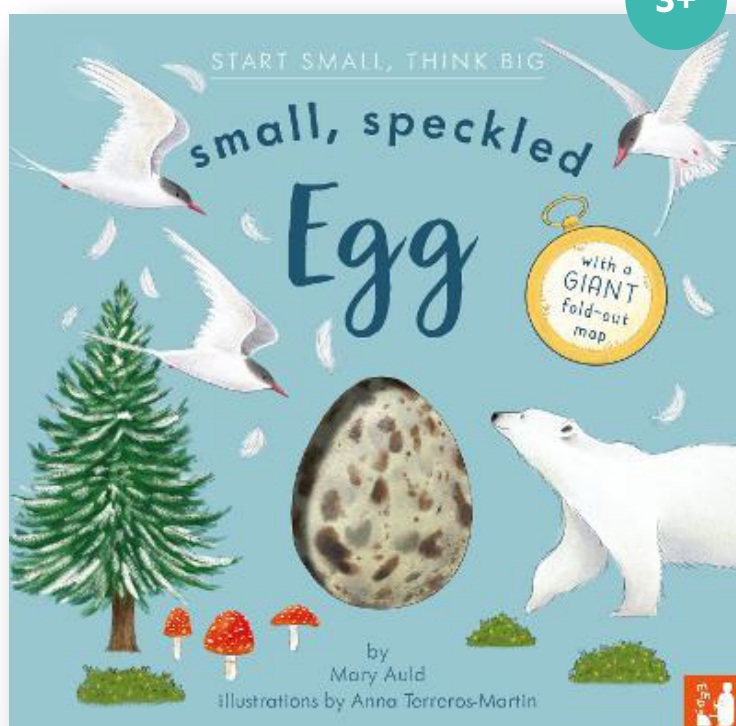
It starts with an egg that hatches into one of the most impressive birds on the planet – an Arctic tern. Watch her grow, learn to fly, and start her long migration from the Arctic to Antarctica and back again. A journey she does every year of her life.

Her lifecycle is turned into this easy-to-read story and the beautiful illustrations transport you to chilly polar landscapes. Additional captions are packed with information for able readers to expand on new areas of knowledge. The book touches on KS1 primary science topics: the lifecycle of a bird, food chains, migration, seasons and polar regions.

At the back of the book there is a giant fold-out map that includes a fun I-Spy game to take children back into the book to find the polar animals.

A brilliant addition to any home or school library with lots of detail that will be returned to again and again.

Look out for more science-based picture books in the *Start Small, Think Big* series including *Little, Brown Nut*.



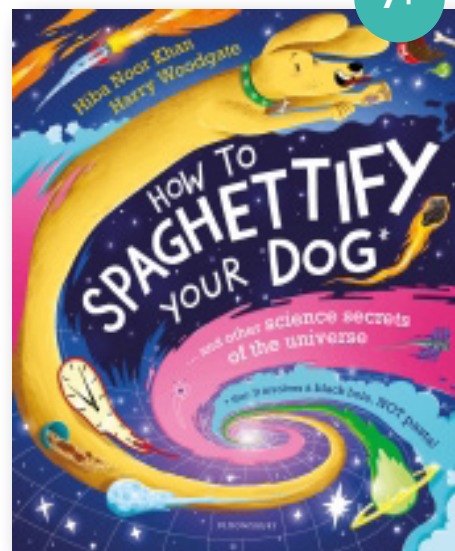
How to Spaghetlify Your Dog and other Science Secrets of the Universe

HIBA NOOR KHAN

Illustrated by Harry Woodgate

Have you ever wondered how to slow down time? Or what would happen if the Earth stopped spinning? Or whether you'd be OK if you fell into a black hole? Well, wonder no more. This book, by former physics teacher and UKLA longlisted author Hiba Noor Khan, is bursting with fascinating physics facts that will explain everything you want to know, and more, about the curiosities of our cosmos.

Become acquainted with the phenomenal laws of physics - from the tiniest building blocks of our body to the enormous stars that burn in our skies, light years away. The book breaks down complex science topics into fun, digestible chunks. Featuring easy-to-follow experiments, eye-catching illustrations by Waterstones Book Prize winner Harry Woodgate and plenty of laugh-out-loud moments, this hands-on book will demystify physics and bring science to life. Each spread covers a different physics law in a fun, accessible way. Facts supported throughout by real examples and experiment ideas that will amaze children and change the way they see the world around them.



Art is Everywhere

JOE HADDOW

Illustrated by Ellie Hawes

What do you think art is? Is it pictures on the walls of a gallery? And what about an artist? Someone holding a paintbrush, standing in front of an easel? Yes, to both, but art and artists are so much more than that and in his new book, Joe Hadow explores this and much more!

Art is everywhere around us, we just need to know how to look for it... Joe is on a mission to show everyone how art can be found in so many different places, and created by so many different people. So, whether you sing, draw, write, dance, paint, act, play an instrument or tell jokes, or if you are just want to discover what kind of artist you can be - this book is for you!

Art is Everywhere is an inspiring, friendly guide to art and why it matters. From Matthew Bourne and Dr Who's Ncuti Gatwa to Joseph Coelho and Tim Minchin, meet the incredible people making art of all kinds and follow the tips to make your own!

WORLD KINDNESS DAY

World Kindness Day, celebrated on November 13th, is more than just a date on the calendar; it's a global movement to encourage acts of kindness, big or small. On this special day, families have a unique opportunity to come together and teach children the importance of kindness, empathy, and compassion. Here's how you can make World Kindness Day meaningful for your family:

1. **Discuss the meaning of kindness:** start by having a conversation about what kindness means to each member of your family. share examples and stories that highlight kindness in action.
2. **Perform random acts of kindness:** encourage each family member to perform random acts of kindness throughout the day. it could be helping a neighbour, writing a thank-you note, or simply smiling at a stranger.
3. **Create kindness cards:** spend time crafting kindness cards with uplifting messages. your children can distribute them to friends, teachers, or even leave them in public places for others to find.
4. **Read books about kindness:** choose books that focus on kindness and read them together. discuss the characters, their actions, and the impact of kindness in the stories.
5. **Bake for others:** spend time baking cookies or other treats and then deliver them to neighbours, local firefighters, or others in your community. it's a tasty way to show appreciation!
6. **Make a kindness jar:** have family members write down kind deeds they've witnessed or done on slips of paper. place them in a jar and read them throughout the coming weeks to keep the spirit of kindness alive.
7. **Volunteer as a family:** choose a local charity or organisation and spend the day volunteering. this shared experience can foster a sense of community and compassion.
8. **Reflect on kindness at dinner:** share your experiences from the day over dinner. reflect on how it felt to give and receive kindness, and how you can incorporate these actions into everyday life.
9. **Create a kindness pledge:** together, write a family kindness pledge, outlining how you will continue to practice kindness throughout the year. display it as a reminder of your commitment to one another and the world around you.

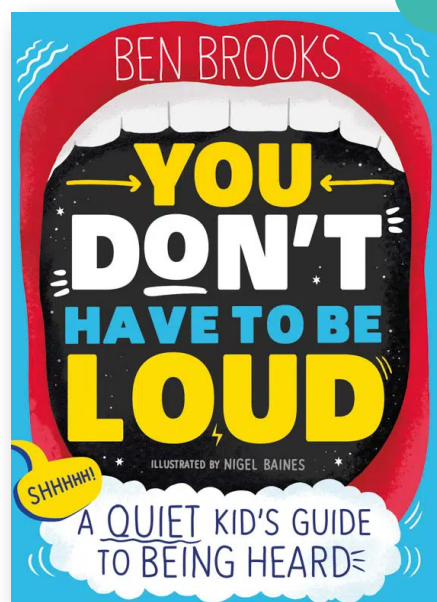


The Kindest Red: A Story of Hijab and Friendship

IBTIHAJ MUHAMMAD

The highly-anticipated sequel to *The Proudest Blue*; a NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER which explores sisterhood, and kindness, from trailblazer and Olympic medallist Ibtihaj Muhammad.

I want a kind world. A world where kindness passes from one to another. When Faizah's teacher asks her class to imagine what kind of world they want to live in Faizah imagines a world where everyone is kind to one another, and tries to create that world in the school playground. But what Faizah wants most is to be like her big sister, Asiya. Will Faizah's classmates repay her kindness and find a way for her to match Asiya in time for school photo day? An important and uplifting story about celebrating each other's differences and similarities.



You Don't Have to be Loud BEN BROOKS

Illustrated by Nigel Baines

A shy kid's guide to thriving in their own (quiet) way. Do you sometimes feel afraid of talking in front of people, making a mistake or saying the wrong thing? While everywhere else you look there are loud, confident people? You're not alone. Ben Brooks also grew up as a shy child (so much so that he'd rather have cut his own hair or spend a week at a Silent Retreat than have to speak to other people). But he soon realised that being quiet doesn't make you strange or wrong or boring. In fact, being shy can give you great skills such as listening, kindness and compassion. It's something to embrace and be proud of. In this book, Ben introduces readers to some of the most famous, talented and brilliant shy people – including Charles Darwin, David Bowie, Greta Thunberg, Rosa Parks, Beyonce and Emma Watson – who used their special quietness to achieve awesome things, and he shares his tips for growing up shy in a world that can sometimes feel, well, LOUD. Because you don't have to be loud to be liked, and you definitely don't have to be loud to make an impact.

A Glasshouse of Stars

SHIRLEY MARR

Meixing Lim and her family have arrived in the New Land to begin a New Life. Everything is scary and different. Their ever-changing house is confusing and she finds it hard to understand the other children at school.

Yet in her magical glasshouse, with a strange black-and-white cat, Meixing finds a place to dream. But then Meixing's life comes crashing down in unimaginable ways. Only her two new and unexpected friends can help. By being brave together, they will learn how to make the stars shine brighter.

A Glasshouse of Stars is based on the author's childhood and beautifully illustrates the importance of friendship, kindness and love.



WINTER WONDERS

As the days grow shorter and temperatures drop, there's nothing quite like snuggling up with a good book to make winter feel a bit warmer. There's something magical about getting lost in a story while the wind howls and the snow falls outside, isn't there? And the best part is, it's a joy that can be shared with our children. Reading together as a family can be a memorable part of the colder months. Whether it's revisiting classics like "The Snowman" for younger children or diving into enchanting worlds like Narnia for the older ones, books have a way of bringing families together. Plus, they offer a fantastic alternative to screen time, providing mental stimulation and fuelling imagination even as the outdoor activities are limited.

If you're not sure where to start, many libraries and bookshops curate special, "cosy reads" and we have included some wonderful recommendations to get you started. It's a great opportunity to introduce your children to new genres or authors. We also encourage parents to let their children choose books that pique their interest, as it makes the reading experience even more engaging for them. So why not make a cup of hot cocoa, grab some blankets and settle down with a good book? It's not just a way to pass the time; it's a way to travel to new worlds and go on adventures—all from the comfort of your living room.

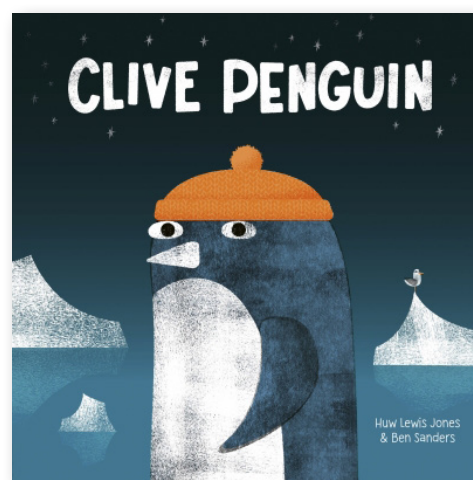


RECOMMENDED READING

Clive Penguin HUW LEWIS JONES*Illustrated by Ben Sanders*

Who's ever heard of a penguin that doesn't like the cold? Surrounded by the same old snow, day in day out and always bloomin' freezing, Clive Penguin wishes he was somewhere else. SOMEONE else. But, with an epic discovery just around the corner, the solution might be easier than he thinks.

From real life polar-exploring adventurer Huw Lewis Jones and award-winning illustrator Ben Sanders comes a quirky story about getting what you need, rather than what you want. Readers will hoot with laughter at the hilariously deadpan Clive Penguin - a unique voice that's perfect for fans of Jon Klassen, Oliver Jeffers and Morag Hood. Featuring edgy illustrations complete with orange neon ink. Oh, and penguins.

**A Thing Called Snow** YUZAL ZOMMER

A gorgeous Christmas picture book that's destined to become a festive classic. Fox and Hare were born in spring, grew up in summer, and were best friends by autumn. When winter comes, they can't wait to jump, leap and, bounce in this thing called snow. But what exactly is snow?

Join fox and hare on an Arctic journey as they ask all their friends to help them find out. This is a charming and classic-feeling Christmas picture book with a heartfelt message about seeing the wonder of the natural world. Families will love sharing the story and talking about kindness, community, and the true meaning of Christmas. Award-winning author of books such as *The Big Book of Bugs* and *The Big Book of Beasts*, Yuval Zommer puts the living world at the heart of his powerful storytelling.



Tyger S.F. SAID

Illustrated by **Dave McKean**

Winner of the British Book Award for Children's Fiction Book of the Year 2023!

Adam has found something incredible in a rubbish dump in London. A mysterious, mythical, magical animal. A TYGER. And the tyger is in danger. Adam and his friend Zadie are determined to help, but it isn't just the tyger's life at stake. Their whole world is on the verge of destruction. Can they learn to use their powers before it's too late?

