



Happy New Year!

We hope you and your child enjoyed the break and that 2026 has started well for you.

As we look ahead to this year, it is a great time to discuss with young people what they'd like to get from the months ahead: what are their goals, what would they like to achieve, what do they want to explore and learn about? Reading is a great source of inspiration, knowledge and new perspectives. In this newsletter, we have collated a selection of books to help get you and your child started with this discussion. From non-fiction about mental resilience and daring to be different, through to fiction novels of adventures and more – there is hopefully something that may capture the interests of everyone.

However, there are so many books out there and this is by no means an exhaustive list of suggestions! If nothing captures your child's eye in these pages, do encourage them to speak to a local/school librarian, book seller, teacher or to browse suggestions on book websites.

As we start a new year, this is also a useful check point to ascertain whether your child is struggling with any aspects of their studies and, if reading is a challenge, to communicate with the school about this and what support may be needed. To get started, you may find some of the shorter-length dyslexia-friendly texts from Barrington Stoke publishers that we've featured in this newsletter a useful starting point.

Whatever you and your child choose to explore though, we wish you the very best for 2026!

Please note that unless otherwise stated, these texts are marketed by publishers as suitable from Year 7 and up, but please do research or read the books before selecting them to ensure that they are appropriate for your child.



SHORTER-LENGTH READS:

In this section, we have collated a selection of shorter-length texts which may capture your child's interest. As well as being short, they are also published in a dyslexia-friendly font to help make them accessible to all. If your child doesn't have dyslexia, they can of course still read these wonderful books!

**The Fear**

TOM PALMER

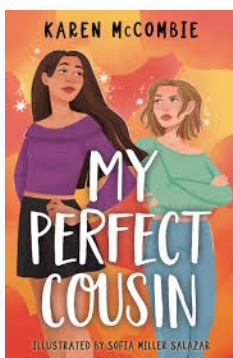
Kian's best mate Azeem is desperate for them both to join the local football team; he can't understand why Kian's reluctant as he's one of the best players on their estate. But a bad experience with a former coach has robbed Kian of all his confidence. He wants to support his friend, but he doesn't think he can face the pressure of being part of a team again. Can Kian overcome the Fear?

My Perfect Cousin

KAREN MCCOMBIE

12+

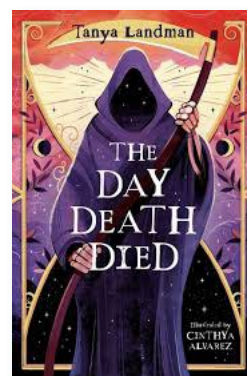
Ruby can't stand her 'perfect' cousin Yasmin. Yasmin is pretty, popular and has a gorgeous boyfriend Max. She's set to get excellent grades in her GCSEs and her parents won't stop going on about how brilliant she is. Ruby always feels small and hopeless around Yasmin, and whenever she gets any attention, Yasmin tries to make sure the spotlight turns back to her. That's how Ruby feels anyway, but is there another side to the story?

**The Day Death Died**

TANYA LANDMAN

12+

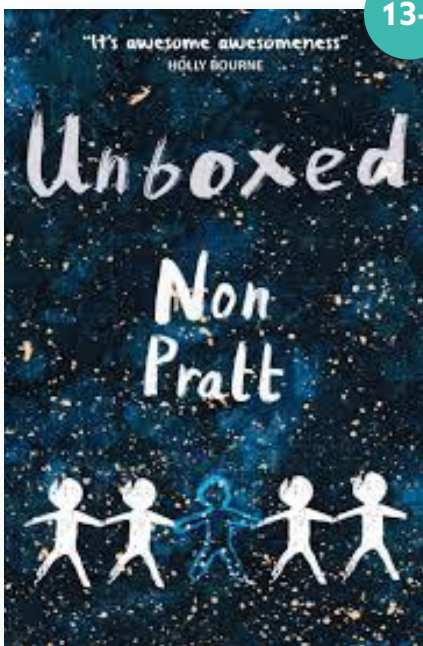
Jack's mum is ill and Jack is devastated when Death arrives to take her away. Jack doesn't want to let her go, so he fights back and drives Death away. But what consequences will there be when Death is banished from the world?



Kerb-stain Boys

ALEX WHEATLE

Life on the Crongton estate can be rough for Briggy. Dad's lost his job, Mum's working so hard to make ends meet, and big brother Kingsley just wants out. With all the shouting and arguing it's difficult not to get lost in the mix. So when his best mate Terror and coolest kid in the year Caldonia cook up a plan to make a quick buck, Briggy hopes this time it might be his chance to shine. Robbing the Post Office ... what could go wrong?



Unboxed

NON PRATT

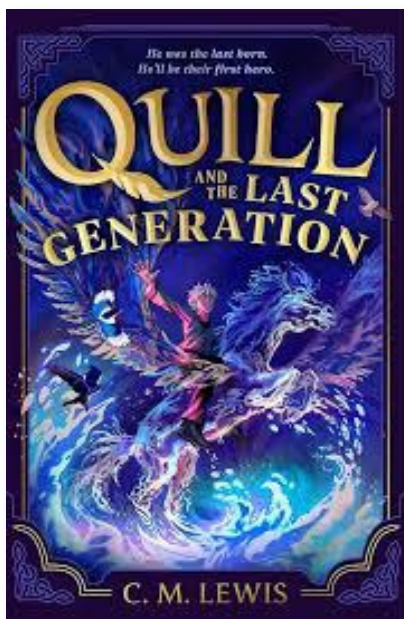
Four friends meet up at their old school to open the memory box they stowed there years ago - with five letters inside for four of them, because their friend Millie has died. When they open the box, they find a new letter from Millie and discover that she has left them special instructions: permission to open her letter only if they all read aloud the letters they wrote to their older selves, revealing their deepest secrets.

LONGER READS:

Fia and the Last Snow Deer

EILISH FISHER

Fia and her snow deer Solas have always had a powerful and unbreakable connection. But as Fia’s village face a seemingly eternal winter, they turn their sights to Solas and an ancient prophecy that promises the return of sunlight and life, if the ultimate sacrifice is made. Refusing to allow the worst to happen, Fia and her cousin Mish run from the village with Solas, seeking out the Deer Mother - the mythical being who wakes the sun at the winter solstice and who might be their only hope...



Quill and the Last Generation

C. M. LEWIS **(PRE-ORDER FOR 29TH JANUARY!)**

Quill, a shy, ordinary, 12-year-old boy, doesn't know the first thing about being a hero. But that changes the moment a mysterious young shapeshifter, in the form of a raven, opens his eyes to a world bursting with urgent magic and breathtaking danger. Everyone believes Quill is the last generation's only hope. But to save everyone, he must be ready to face the King of Darkness in battle and claim the Light of the World before time runs out. First, he needs to find the courage to fight.

The Night I Borrowed Time

IQBAL HUSSAIN

11-year-old Zubair is a seventh son. This means a LOT of big brothers. But when Zubair's granny arrives from Pakistan and gives him a mysterious amulet, he discovers it means something else, too: he has inherited a gift. The seventh sons in his family have the ability to time-travel. With his dad a shadow of his former self since his car accident, and his mum always tired and angry, Zubair has a genius idea: he'll use time-travel to fix things between them. But each trip comes at a cost. If he changes something small in the past, it can have a huge effect on his future. And if he gets it wrong, the results could be devastating.



Witchlight

DOMINIQUE VALENTE

Miss Hegotty's Secret Society of Witches has a lot of work to do. The Department of Isle-Spark Regulation is up to no good. For Princess Victoria at the palace, this means possibly losing her powers forever. And for Eglantine Bury, her magical home can't stop sneezing, causing total chaos with each "ACHOO!". As if that wasn't enough to worry about, Eglantine's house isn't the only magical being falling mysteriously ill. With dragons and gargoyles getting sicker and sicker, the witches will have to use time travel, disguise spells and genie wishes to uncover the truth...before it's too late.

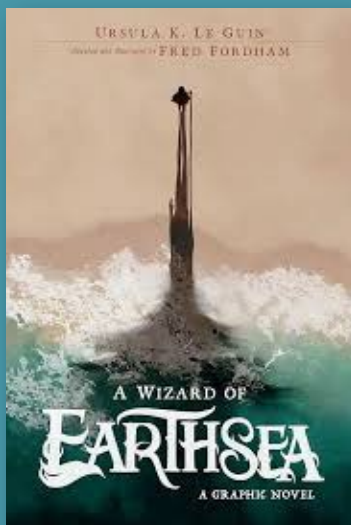
LOOKING FOR GRAPHIC NOVELS?

A Wizard of Earthsea - a graphic novel

URSULA K. LE GUIN

A graphic novel edition of the classic fantasy adventure.

A Wizard of Earthsea follows the story of Ged, a poor smith's son, who discovers a magical talent and is sent away from home to a wizard school. During a duel with a fellow student, he summons a terrible shadow creature which he tries to banish, but it continues to haunt him long after he finishes his magical training. Finally, he seeks advice from his old master Ogion, who tells him to confront the creature rather than flee it - that fears and shadows are to be faced, and that darkness is as much a part of us as the light.

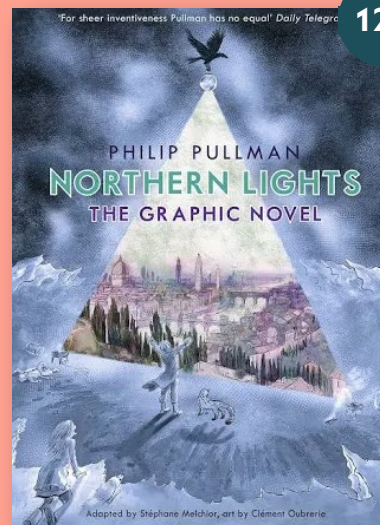


Northern Lights: The Graphic Novel - Volume 1

PHILIP PULLMAN

The first book in a stunning three-volume graphic novel adaptation of Northern Lights.

Lyra Belacqua lives half-wild and carefree among the scholars of Jordan College, with her daemon familiar always by her side. But the arrival of her fearsome uncle, Lord Asriel, draws her to the heart of a terrible struggle - a struggle born of Gobblers and stolen children, witch clans and armoured bears. As she hurtles towards danger in the cold far North, Lyra never suspects the shocking truth: she alone is destined to win, or to lose, the biggest battle imaginable.

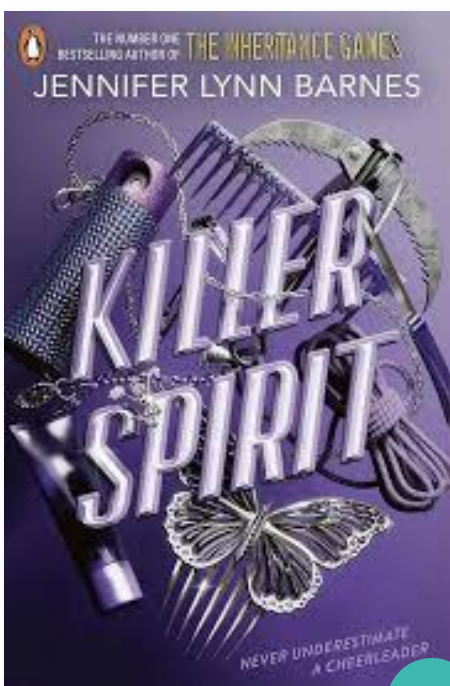


The Court of the Dead

RICK RIORDAN AND MARK OSHIRO

A brand-new adventure from the world of Percy Jackson and The Olympians!

It's been three months since demigods Nico di Angelo and Will Solace returned from Tartarus, and there hasn't been a single quest for them. So, when Nico's half-sister Hazel asks them to help with an 'issue', Nico shadow-jumps at the chance. What Hazel didn't tell the boys is that she's providing a haven for monsters who've escaped the Underworld! Apparently, during Nico and Will's trip to the Underworld, they showed the monsters they don't have to be evil – that they have options. But then the monsters start disappearing from the camp and it's clear a dark force is at work...



Killer Spirit – The Squad

JENNIFER LYNN BARNES

The second instalment in the fun, page-turning high school mystery duology from the author of The Inheritance Games. Meet the Squad: these cheerleaders are actually spies!

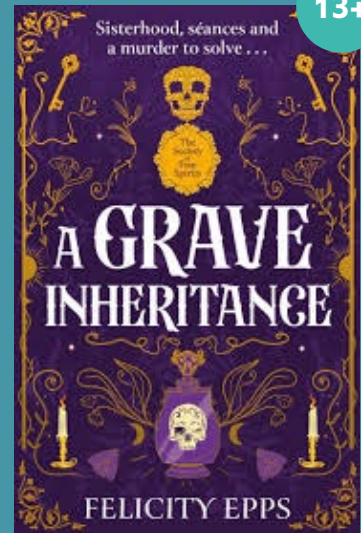
Saying Toby Klein is an unlikely cheerleader is the understatement of the year...but the squad at Bayport High aren't your average cheerleaders. They're elite undercover government operatives. And word on the street is that something's about to go down in Bayport. But if the spy business doesn't kill Toby, it's starting to look like Brooke, the team captain, might. The nominations are in for homecoming court, and rumour has it that Toby is the front-runner for queen. Tensions are high!

A Grave Inheritance

FELICITY EPPS

After her father and older sister both die suddenly, Dolores is left with the family's inheritance, and a large house she's sure is haunted. Teaming up with her occult-obsessed neighbour, Ada, and the mysterious spiritual medium, Violet, the three girls plan to dispel the bad spirits from Dolores' home. But when Dolores uncovers a clue that suggests her sister Edith's death wasn't due to natural causes, what starts as an investigation into ghostly apparitions develops into the unravelling of something far more sinister...

Ghosts. Murder. The patriarchy. One should never underestimate what a trio of free-spirited young women can handle.



Make Me a Monster

KALYNN BAYRON

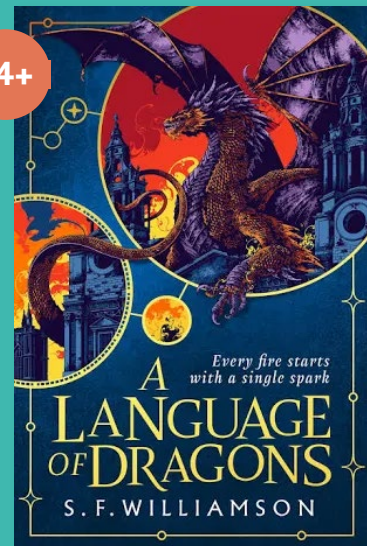
As a mortician's assistant at her parents' funeral home, Meka's days are not for the squeamish. Luckily, her boyfriend Noah doesn't mind. But tragedy strikes and Meka's world is torn apart. Nothing makes sense, especially when weird things start to happen: Strangers follow her. Mysterious items are left at her door. And worst of all...the dead don't seem to be *staying* dead. Meka thought she understood death better than anyone, but it turns out the family business is more complicated than it seemed.

A Language of Dragons

S. F. WILLIAMSON

Welcome to Bletchley Park... with dragons. London, 1923. Dragons soar through the skies and protests erupt on the streets, but Vivien Featherswallow isn't worried. She's going to follow the rules, get an internship studying dragon languages, and make sure her little sister never has to risk growing up Third Class. By midnight, Viv has started a civil war. With her parents arrested and her sister missing, all the safety Viv has worked for is collapsing around her. So, when a lifeline is offered in the form of a mysterious 'job', she grabs it. Arriving at Bletchley Park, Viv discovers that she has been recruited as a codebreaker helping the war effort – if she succeeds, she and her family can all go home again. If she doesn't, they'll all die.

14+



14+

The Reappearance of Rachel Price

HOLLY JACKSON

18-year-old Bel has lived her whole life in the shadow of her mom's mysterious disappearance. Sixteen years ago, Rachel Price vanished and young Bel was the only witness. Rachel is gone, presumed dead. The case is dragged up from the past when the Price family agree to a true crime documentary. Bel can't wait for filming to end, for life to go back to normal. But then Rachel Price reappears, and life will never be normal again...

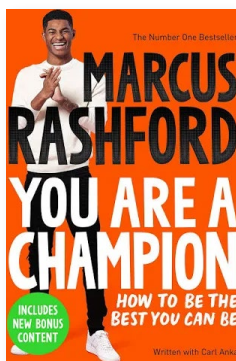
NON-FICTION:

Get the year off to a good start! We hope these books will help inspire you in 2026.

You Are A Champion

MARCUS RASHFORD AND CARL ANKA

Marcus Rashford is famous worldwide for his skills both on and off the pitch – but before he was an international footballer, and long before he started his inspiring campaign to end child food poverty, he was just an ordinary kid from Wythenshawe, South Manchester. Now Marcus wants to show YOU how to achieve your dreams, in this positive and inspiring guide for life.



You Have the Power: Find Your Strength and Believe You Can

LEAH WILLIAMSON

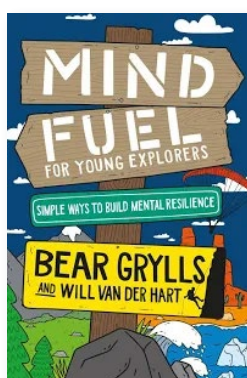
In the summers of 2022 and 2025, Leah led the Lionesses to victory in the European Championships – now she wants to show kids that they can achieve anything they put their mind to, both on and off the pitch, no matter what other people say. This positive guide for life will inspire you to lead like a pro and motivate you to do what you love.



Mind Fuel for Young Explorers: Simple Ways to Build Mental Resilience

BEAR GRYLLS AND WILL VAN DER HART

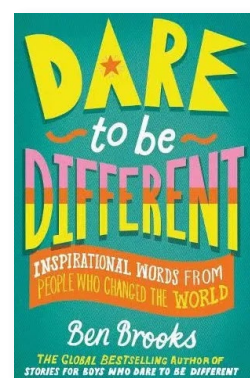
In this book, Bear Grylls draws on his survival experience to share the principles that have helped him overcome fear, develop a positive mindset and live life with confidence. This book offers you practical ways to help you to increase your resilience, combat stress and learn more about yourself.



Dare to be Different: Inspirational Words from People Who Changed the World

BEN BROOKS

Ben Brooks has brought together 100 people who have all in some way or another used words to do wonderful things. Some may have changed a single life, while others have changed the course of history for almost everyone on earth. But whether their effects were big or small, these individuals' speeches, letters, poems, songs, stories and advice prove one thing: words can make the world a better place. And they can make you feel better about yourself too.



Guinness World Records 2026

Guinness World Records 2026 opens the ultimate window on record-breaking: our experts have compiled the most remarkable records from around the world to take you on a journey through the best, biggest and brightest records in the world. From high-end hotels to deserted ghost towns and talented pets, this page-turner will have you screaming "wait, what!?" from cover to cover.

There are also editions for Gamers and Football that you may wish to dive into as well!



Kay's Anatomy: A complete (and completely disgusting) guide to the human body

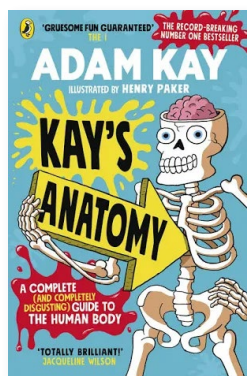
ADAM KAY

Do you ever think about your body and how it all works? Like really properly think about it?

The human body is extraordinary and fascinating and, well...pretty weird. This book is going to tell you what's actually going on in there, and answer the really important questions, like:

- Are bogeys safe to eat?
- How much of your life will you spend on the toilet?

So sit back, relax and let a doctor take you on a tour of your insides – welcome to Kay's Anatomy!

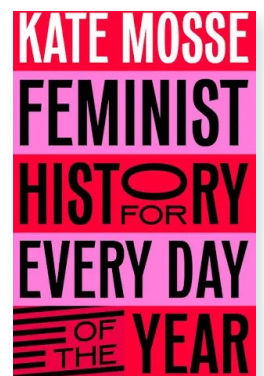


Feminist History for Every Day of the Year

KATE MOSSE

From Mary Anning to Simone Biles, Billie Eilish to Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Malala Yousafzai to Mary Wollstonecraft, discover the stories of 366 incredible women throughout history.

Within these pages you'll find well-known figures and unsung heroes, key cultural moments and forgotten stories, spanning across the world and through time, from ancient times to the modern day. With a piece of history for every day of the year, this is the perfect book to dip into time and time again.



IGNITING LEADERS CHANGING LIVES

PiXL Reading

SECONDARY NEWSLETTER



PiXL Reading

DISCLAIMER © The PiXL Club Ltd. 2026

This resource is strictly for the use of The PiXL Club Ltd member schools during the life of the membership only. It may NOT be copied, sold, or transferred or made available by whatever means to a third party non-member during or after membership. Until such time it may be freely used within the PiXL member school by their teachers and authorized staff and any other use or sale thereof is strictly prohibited.

All opinions and contributions are those of the authors. The contents of this resource are not connected with, or endorsed by, any other company, organisation or institution.

PiXL Club Ltd endeavour to trace and contact copyright owners. If there are any inadvertent omissions or errors in the acknowledgements or usage, this is unintended and PiXL will remedy these on written notification.