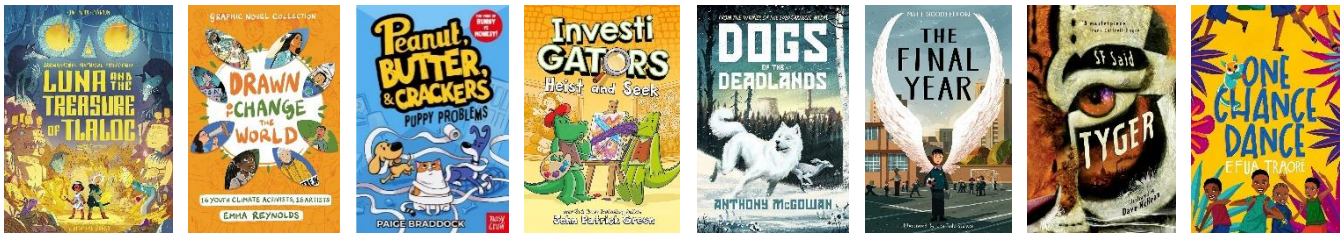
Reading Newsletter

Summer 2024

Spark! School Book Awards

This year we had two different sets of judges. Having read the four books in their category, they joined virtual meetings with the authors to hear about what inspired them to create these books and had the opportunity to ask them lots of questions.



Panel Members

Graphic Novels (guest category)

Year 3: Ben, Liana, Mohammad

Year 4: Amelia, Atousa, Muaad, Rushai, Tino

Year 5: Muscab, Nia, Theresa

Our choice: Peanut, Butter & Crackers

National winner: Investigators Heist and Seek

9+ Fiction

Year 6: Ana, Charlotte F, David M, Grace, Felix, Hannah, Holly, JoJo, Kaha, Mark, Najma, Nusaybah, Shadlin

Our choice and national winner: The Final Year

Special congratulations to Nusaybah who took part in their pupil competition and submitted a creative piece of writing as a response to her favourite novel, Tyger by SF Said. Described by the judges as an incredible almost full-length novel, she was awarded a prize for her story which was written as a sequel and set four years later.

We will be taking part again next year when the guest category will be non-fiction. If you are interested in being one of the judges, make sure you let your teacher or Mrs Jones know.

What We Are Reading #TextsOfToday

Each class created a carpet of their current reads. It was fantastic to see such a variety of fiction, non-fiction and graphic novels. Which class do you think made the best choice?

6R

3DR

5S

Otter

5M

River

3S

4T

4H

6H

4M

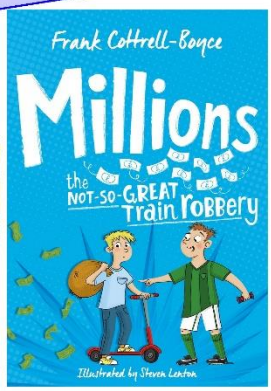
5H

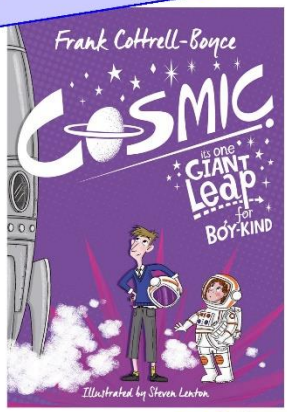
3I

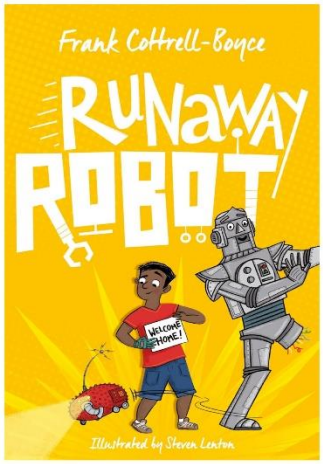
6K

Author of the Term

Frank Cottrell-Boyce





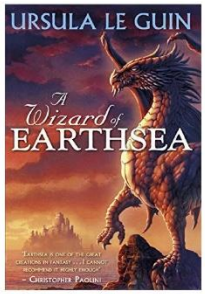


Why bother to read?

Because a good book is the key that lets you out of the cage of yourself so that for a wee while you can fly.

What was your favourite childhood book?

Any big atlas, and A Wizard of Earthsea by Ursula K Le Guin because it made the magic seem real. Also, it had great maps.

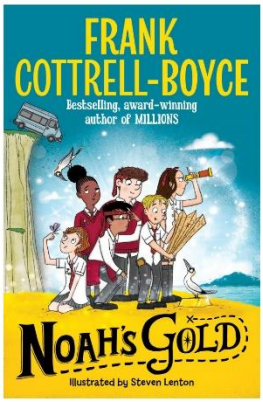


Frank Cottrell-Boyce has just been named Waterstones Children's Laureate for 2024-26. He is the author of many books including Runaway Robot, Millions, Cosmic, Noah's Gold and The Wonder Brothers. Frank's first book, Millions, won the CILIP Carnegie Medal in 2004 and he later won the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize for The Unforgettable Coat.

Frank is also a highly successful British screenwriter whose credits include The Railway Man, Millions, Goodbye Christopher Robin and the 2012 opening ceremony for the London Olympics. He is also a judge for the BBC Radio 2 500 Words competition and a mentor on the 'As You Write It' playwriting competition on BBC's One Show. He resides in Merseyside with his family.

Which of your own books is your favourite?

Noah's Gold because ... maps!!



#SpiritedScholarlySupportive

When it came to considering those who show a complete lack of these valuable traits, there were fortunately few nominations. Draco Malfoy might be good enough for Slytherin House but would not be welcome at Strand and the same could be said of Barry Hunter from Nitshill Road School. We would also avoid President Snow, the cruel dictator who oversaw the Hunger Games. Mr Mean, Horrid Henry and Alvin the Treacherous from the How to Train the Dragon series certainly suit their names so would also not be on the invitation list.

However, after many discussions across the school, we have decided there are plenty who would fit the #SpiritedScholarlySupportive bill.

The first two names that come to mind are famously #scholarly characters but Matilda and Hermione Granger also show a great deal of spirit. Less obvious suggestions are Barb the Brave and Michael from Kensuke's Kingdom but both display a huge amount of bravery while discovering their true powers.

Roz from The Wild Robot was a popular #supportive nomination in Year 3 for her ability to learn how to live in a new environment and the way she cared for Brightbill the gosling. They also thought Rumaysa was very spirited realising she had the power to decide her own future. Tom and Jamie from Dinosaur Cove were considered #scholarly because they are very knowledgeable about dinosaurs although some preferred Paddington because he finds out so much on his travels and he can speak so he must be a good learner!

River Class had a couple of #spirited nominations. Black Beauty definitely deserved to be considered because he endured so many difficult times in his life before finally finding happiness. During her time at Malory Towers, Darrell Rivers is occasionally hot-headed but fiercely loyal to her friends and determined to be kind.

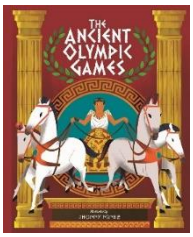
Dog Man and Einstein the Penguin were both #supportive suggestions from a number of children but we decided they could also be considered #spirited. Similarly, Charlie Bucket was chosen for the way he won his chocolate factory as were the Rats of N.I.M.H who were so helpful to Mrs Frisby and Skandar Smith with his strong sense of what is right and his determination to protect his friends and family.

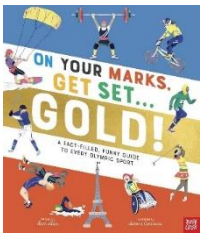
It was nice to see redemption for so many characters who didn't start off well but were definitely candidates to be Strandites by the end. Butter and Crackers got over their annoyance and were eventually very supportive of Peanut the puppy. George from the Famous Five is not at all welcoming initially but very quickly becomes 'a good egg'. Podkin One-Ear realises he needs to stop being so lazy and steps up to the plate to save everything he cares about. Even the Iron Man abandons his destructive nature and promises not to cause any more trouble.

There were so many more nominations (Sedric, Tsunami, Squirrelflight, Bella Broomstick, everyone in Drawn to Change the World etc.) but it seems appropriate to finish with Mr Joshua from The Final Year who was recommended by Year 6 for being the teacher who is so #supportive and sees the spark inside Nate that is lit by his love of reading.

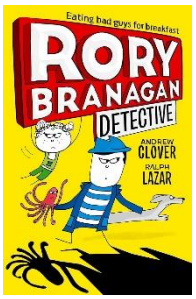
If Reading Were a Sport

We have some recommendations (loosely) linked the the Olympics!



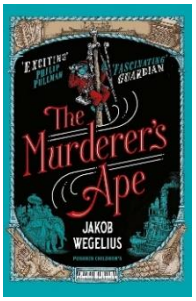


100m
A quick read



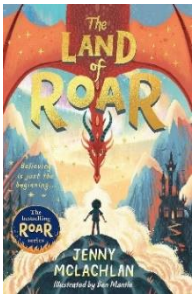
Ten-year-old Rory Branagan isn't just a normal kid. He eats bad guys for breakfast. Well, not ACTUALLY. But he IS the best detective in town, together with his sausage dog best friend Wilkins Welkin and his accomplice, Cassidy 'the Cat' Callaghan.

Marathon
A tome



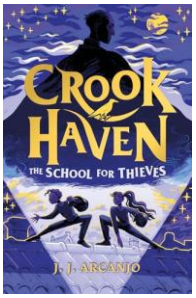
Sally Jones is not only a loyal friend, she's an extraordinary individual. She and the Chief are devoted comrades who operate a cargo boat. A job they are offered pays big bucks, but the deal ends badly, and the Chief is falsely convicted of murder. For Sally Jones this is the start of a grand adventure and a desperate quest to clear her friend's name.

Triathlon
A trilogy



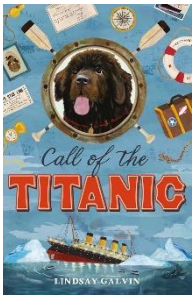
When Arthur and Rose were little, they were heroes in the Land of Roar, an imaginary world that they found by climbing through a folding bed. Now the twins are eleven, Roar is just a memory. But when they help Grandad clean out the attic, Grandad is pulled into the folding bed and vanishes. Is he playing a joke? Or is Roar... real?

Diving
Full of twists and turns



The 'criminally good' Crookhaven series is about a secret school where students are trained in lock-picking, forgery and 'crim-nastics', all with the intention of doing good out in the world, by conning the bad and giving back to the innocent. But ... can you ever really trust a thief?

Equestrian
A dual narrative

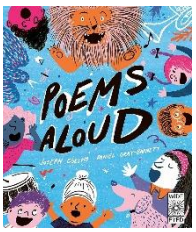


Young cabin steward, Sid, is proud to be working on the Titanic, the greatest stream liner ever built. Clara dreams of adventure at sea, and discovers it the hard way as a stowaway on a much smaller ship, the Carpathia. What neither of them can foresee is how they'll need each other on the night Titanic collides with an iceberg.

Breaking
A bear-sized heart

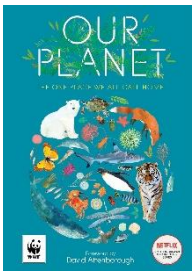
There are no polar bears left on Bear Island. At least, that's what April's father tells her. But one endless summer night, April meets one. He is starving, lonely and a long way from home. Determined to save him, April begins the most important journey of her life...

Rowing
Get into the rhythm



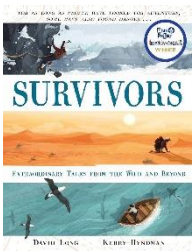
In this fantastic collection with witty illustrations, there are tongue twisters, poems to project, poems to whisper, poems to make you laugh. Waterstones Children's Laureate Joseph Coelho shows us that poems are made to read OUT LOUD!

Golf
A green theme



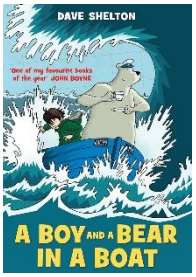
Lose yourself in icy landscapes, dense jungles and endless oceans. Learn how our fascinating habitats, and the plants and creatures living there, interconnect to create the one place we all call home – Our Planet.

Weightlifting
Stories of strength and resilience



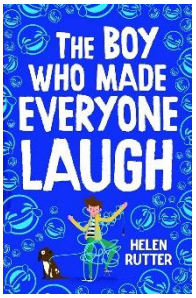
Combining classic tales such as Ernest Shackleton's Antarctic voyage, as well as more modern exploits such as the adventurer who inspired the movie 127 Hours, you will be shocked and amazed by these incredible real-life stories of extreme survival.

Sailing
Set on water



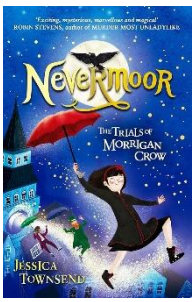
Faced with turbulent storms, a terrifying sea monster and the rank remains of a very dangerous sandwich, the odds are against our unlikely heroes. Will the Harriet, their trusted vessel, withstand the violent lashings of the salty waves? And will anyone ever answer their message in a bottle?

Boxing
A book with a punchline



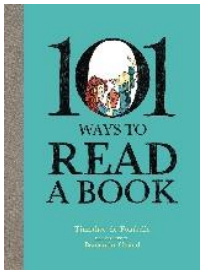
Billy Plimpton is an eleven-year-old boy with a big dream. He wants to be a stand-up comedian when he grows up: delivering pinpoint punch-lines and having audiences hang on his every hilarious word. A tough career for anyone, but surely impossible for Billy, who has a stammer. How will he find his voice, if his voice won't let him speak?

Climbing
A book that leaves you on a cliffhanger

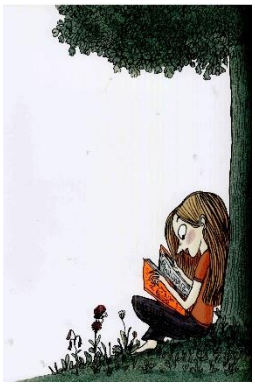


Morrigan Crow is cursed - and, worst of all, the curse means that Morrigan is doomed to die at midnight on her eleventh birthday. But as Morrigan awaits her fate, a strange and remarkable man named Jupiter North appears. Chased by black-smoke hounds and shadowy hunters on horseback, he whisks her away to the safety of a secret, magical city called Nevermoor.

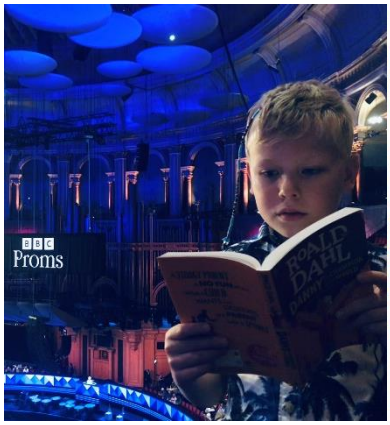
Win a prize in our competition

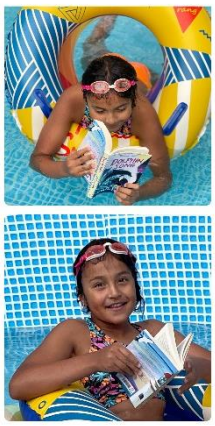


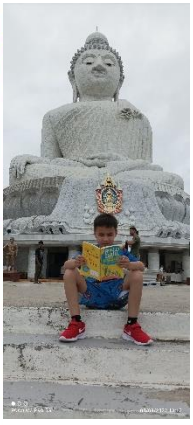
101 Ways to Read a Book written by Timothée de Fombelle and illustrated by Benjamin Chaud is a celebration of reading in its many and varied ways. We would like know how you read. Are you a classic, a tree leaner, a heavyweight champion or an explorer of distant lands? Think of one line to describe yourself and send us a picture so we can see what you mean.

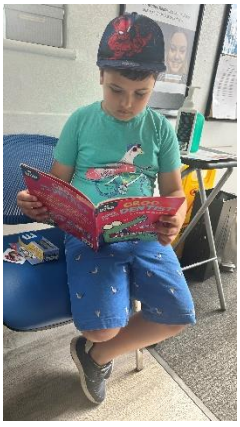


Alternatively, we enjoyed our Reading in Unusual Places competition from last summer so much that we would like to see if there are even more creative ideas this year. Find the most unusual or interesting place to read your favourite book. Remember to have a photographer with you to capture the moment!







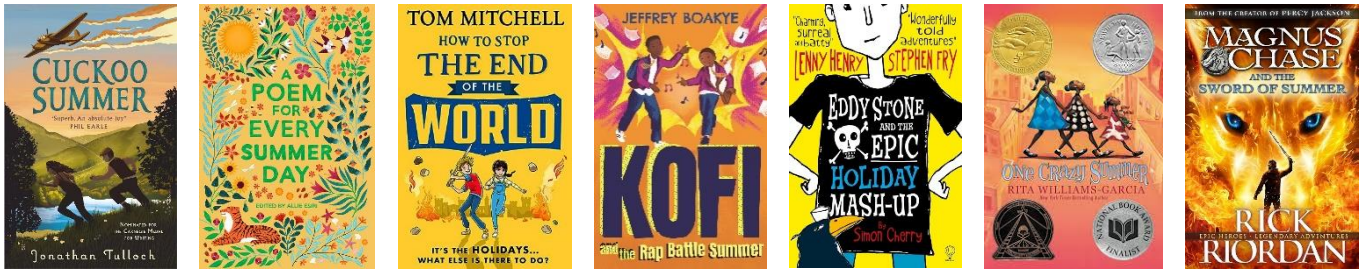


There is a task on Google Classroom where you can upload your picture (add an attachment to the assignment) or hand in a printed version to your teacher in September. It would be lovely to see some entries from our current Year 6 before they start secondary school as well as those joining Year 3 in September. The closing date is Friday September 6th.

Reading Through the Holidays

Click the images to open in Sora (instructions for logging in are here).

Celebrating Summer



Inspired by Euro 2024

Summer Reading Challenge

The Summer Reading Challenge is back and lots of the books are available on Sora. This year's theme is Marvellous Makers. Find out more on their website.

If you are looking for more inspiration, LoveReading4Kids has lots of brilliant recommendations for Books to Read This Summer or scroll through their Books of the Month. You get 10% off any books you buy from them while they contribute 25% for our school to get more books for our classroom shelves.