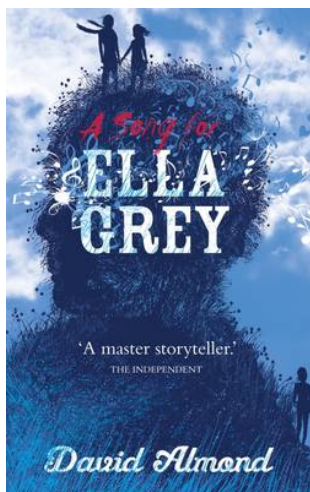


## A selection of books especially selected for children in Year 10 (14 - 15 year olds) of average reading ability for the 2024/25 academic year.

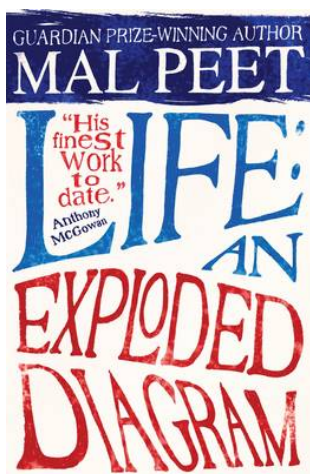
If your child finds these books are a little challenging try books from the Year 9 list. Our overall mission is to promote reading for pleasure with quality texts that are perfectly pitched for the age group and the curriculum. We have particularly avoided blockbusters, classic or set texts, known to everyone, so that we can include poetry, stunning information texts and inspirational books in which all children and young people can find themselves reflected.



### A Song for Ella Grey

**Author:** David Almond **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/06/2015

Award-winning David Almond is at his lyrical best in this eloquent, tender and ultimately devastating contemporary teenage love story which draws lightly but to great effect on the story of Orpheus and Eurydice. Camping on a beach near home as a break from school and its pressures, a group of teenagers, minus their friend Ella, come across Orpheus, a wandering musician. No one knows where he comes from or whether he will appear again but his music is so special that Claire plays it down the phone to Ella. And Ella is entranced. But who is Orpheus? The power of love and the terrible danger it can pose drives this exceptionally touching and thoughtful story.



### Life An Exploded Diagram

**Author:** Mal Peet **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 06/06/2011

This is a brilliant coming-of-age story set against the backdrop of the Cold War and events leading up to the Cuban Missile Crisis. The story is told in flashback by Clem when he is living and working in New York City as a designer, and moves from the past of his parents and grandmother to his own teenage years. Not only the threat of explosions, but actual ones as well, feature throughout in this latest novel from one of the finest writers working today.



## Moonrise

**Author:** Sarah Crossan **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 12/07/2018

**Shortlisted for the YA Book Prize 2018 | Shortlisted for the Centre for Literacy in Primary Poetry Award 2018 | One of Our Books of the Year 2017 | Shortlisted for the Costa Children's Book Award 2017** | A book to break your heart, quicken your blood and stir your soul by one of the most outstandingly distinctive writers to have emerged in a long, long time. New Yorker Joe Moon was only seven when he took the call in which his big brother Ed told him he'd been arrested because "they think I done something real bad". That "something" led to Ed winding up on death row, convicted of murdering a cop, though he insists he's innocent. Ten years later, now Ed's execution date has been set, Joe travels to Texas to say goodbye. The sublimely-formed structure slips between present and past, recounting the brothers' troubled upbringing - how their Mom took off; how Aunt Karen took control and decided that Bible study and never mentioning Ed again was the only route to their salvation. While she insists that there's no point wasting life or money helping someone who wasn't sorry, Joe sees things differently. "He's my brother," and that's really all that matters. He has to see him. Lawyer Al, who's taken on Ed's case for free, offers some hope, but time is running out. "It's better to be guilty and rich, I reckon," Joe remarks, as he experiences the excruciating injustices of a legal system in which the harshness of a sentence depends on where a crime takes place, who the victim was, and who you can afford to pay to represent you (crucially, Ed had no representation when he was first arrested). Once again, Crossan's free verse form is breathtakingly powerful - always the right word, in the right place, at the right time. Yes, this is harrowing and heartbreaking, but the kindness of the strangers Joe meets in Texas is achingly uplifting, as is the deep bond of love between Joe and Ed. This really is a magnificent feat of writing.

NOW A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE FROM TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX



## The Hate U Give

**Author:** Angie Thomas **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 09/08/2018

**Awarded the Amnesty CILIP Honour commendation from the Carnegie shortlist 2018 | Shortlisted for the CILIP Carnegie Medal 2018 | One of Our Books of the Year 2017 | Longlisted for the UKLA 2018 Book Award | April 2017 Debut of the Month** | Stunning, vital wake-up call of a novel about racism, social inequality and not giving up told through the eyes of an incredible, unforgettable sixteen-year-old. Starr straddles two very different worlds. She has one foot in Garden Heights, a rough neighbourhood ruled by gangs, guns and dealers, and the other in an exclusive school with an overwhelmingly wealthy white student population. One night she's at a party when gunshots are fired and Khalil, her friend since childhood, takes her to his car for safety. Khalil is unarmed and poses no threat,

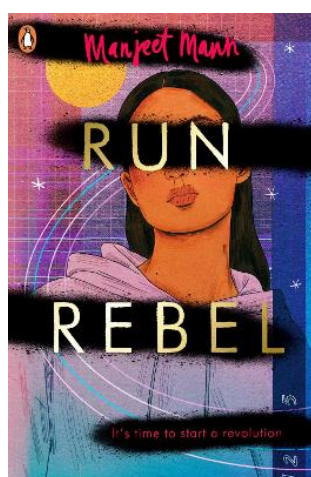
but he's shot dead by an officer right in front of her. It will take a lot of courage to speak to the police, and to face the media who choose to highlight that Khalil was a "suspected drug dealer", while omitting to mention that he was unarmed. But, with their neighbourhood under curfew and a tank on the streets, Starr risks going public. Danger escalates as the hearing approaches (and beyond), but Starr isn't about to give up fighting for Khalil, and for what's right. Alongside the intense struggles and conflicts faced by Starr's family and community, there are some truly heart-melting moments between Starr and her white boyfriend Chris (their shared love of the Fresh Prince of Bel Air is super cute), and also between Starr and her parents. Complex, gripping, stirring and so, so important – I can't recommend this remarkable debut enough.



## The Bunker Diary

**Author:** Kevin Brooks **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 07/03/2013

**Winner of the Carnegie Medal 2014.** This is a hard-hitting novel which has divided opinion since winning the 2014 Carnegie Medal. Whilst having great literary merit, in Lovereading's view it is unsuitable for younger teenagers. The Bunker Diary is award-winning, young adult writer Kevin Brooks' pulse-pounding exploration of what happens when your worst nightmare comes true - and how will you survive?

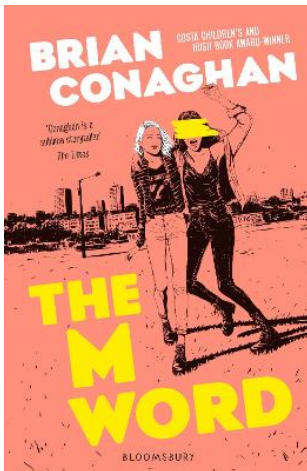


## Run, Rebel

**Author:** Manjeet Mann **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/03/2020

**Shortlisted for the CLIPPA (CLPE Children's Poetry Award) | 2021 Shortlisted for the 2021 Branford Boase Award | Shortlisted for CILIP Carnegie Medal 2021 | Winner of the UKLA Book Awards 2021 | March 2020 Debut of the Month** This debut novel was inspired by the author's work creating Run the World, an organisation that empowers women and girls from marginalised backgrounds through sport and storytelling and the authenticity of this, at times harrowing story, is palpably evident. As is the skill of the accomplished writing which makes great use of typography and layout to really make every word count. This speeds the reader through the narrative, but it also cuts deep to reveal the emotions experienced by our narrator. Amber Rai is only 'truly alive' when running and shows great potential. But her alcoholic, abusive, misogynistic father refuses to allow her on the track. She has seen her older sister Ruby denied university and married off against her will and her downtrodden, abused mother is literally powerless to help, trapped as much by illiteracy and lack of English as the violence of her equally illiterate, unemployed

husband. Amber has friends and teachers who believe in her, but she cannot explain what really goes on at home. She is a complex and believable character with very real flaws that she painfully recognises: 'inflicting pain on others/halves your own hurt'. But the story is cleverly structured on *The Anatomy of a Revolution* and inspired by her reading about revolutions for history, Amber, Ruby and her mother gradually empower each other to take small steps to freedom. This is an important, rewarding, highly empathetic read which, despite the dark subject matter, offers hope but no simplistic solutions.



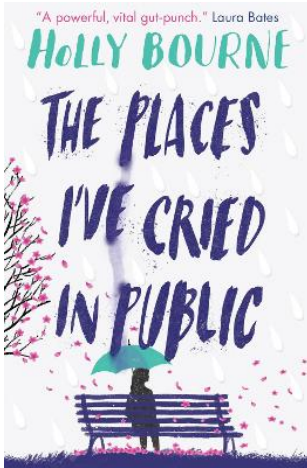
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## The M Word

**Author:** Brian Conaghan **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/04/2020

**September 2019 Book of the Month** Hitting rock bottom, hanging on, and coming back from the edge. Brian Conaghan has an incredible talent for telling it like it is. His characters are authentic and absorbing; flawed underdogs with serious troubles, like 17-year-old Maggie whose dad "drank his liver into a spreadable pâté", and whose laid-off dinner lady mum is "gifted in the art of attracting pure dickheads". And Maggie? Maggie's "an island: the way I dress; the music I listen to; the patter my brain discharges; everything". Maggie's struggling to deal with the tragic loss of her best friend Moya whose death she feels excruciatingly guilty about. Moya was a "mad riot" of a girl, but as Maggie "couldn't be arsed with all the love-struck vom" Moya was spewing, because she didn't speak out against the Internet trolls, she believes she was a "failure friend". Alongside her grief, guilt and self-harm, Maggie struggles with her mother's severe depression, but also tingles with the hope that comes from starting art college: "now's the time to make something of myself." Indeed, she soon forms a band with new friends. Throughout, Maggie's love of bands like The Smiths looms large, as does her relationship with her depressed mother. Maggie's rage at her mother's condition derives entirely from her primal love for her. She's desperate for Mum to be happy, and her scheme to help her find happiness is heart-achingly poignant. Grief, depression, self-harm, online abuse, this novel is no walk in the park, yet it never drags the reader down. On the contrary. It's sensitive, insightful, funny (Maggie is a master of biting one-liners), and genuinely uplifting as Maggie and Mum begin to find their way back to the world, with glinting prospects of love and new life.

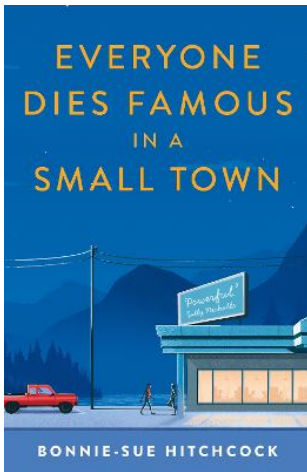




## The Places I've Cried in Public

**Author:** Holly Bourne **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 30/09/2019

An authentic, raw, disturbing portrait of a teenage girl and her descent into a coercive, controlling relationship with an important message about self-belief

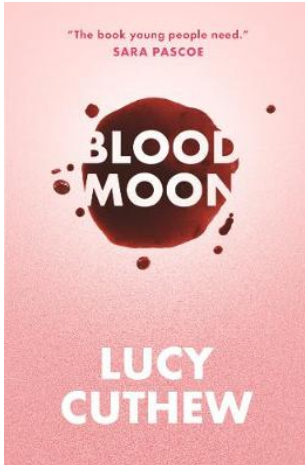


## Everyone Dies Famous in a Small Town

**Author:** Bonnie-Sue Hitchcock **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 20/04/2021

**Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2022 ages 11-14 |**

**Shortlisted for the Yoto Carnegie Medal 2022** Exhibiting the same intense sense of place as in her highly acclaimed debut, *The Smell of Other People's Houses*, and set once again in Alaska and the American West during the 1990's, this collection demonstrates absolutely remarkable storytelling and authenticity. Every word in each short story counts in bringing another character so vividly to life that we become completely immersed in their lives. These troubled teens encounter love, loss, coming of age, grief, abuse, and friendships with the minutiae of daily life often revealing or foreshadowing a deeper and darker truth. All the narratives share the backdrop of an increasingly devastating forest fire and the history of a little girl's disappearance. Each story relates to these major events in different ways and the links between the individual stories and these shattering events gradually become apparent. What is also revealed is the universal dichotomy of small communities, where everybody knows everybody and yet does not actually know them at all. The struggle to get your voice heard and for people to accept your truth is at the heart of these beautifully crafted stories. This is a book which should be garlanded with awards and will definitely linger long in the reader's mind.



## Blood Moon

**Author:** Lucy Cuthew **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/07/2020

**Nominated for the 2021 CILIP Carnegie Medal - Shortlisted for the 2021 Amazing Book Awards** A brilliant and empowering verse novel about feminism, menstruation, and bullying.



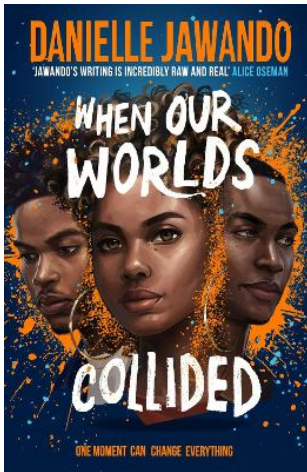
## Punching the Air

**Author:** Ibi Zoboi, Yusef Salaam **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/09/2020

**Shortlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2022 ages 11-14 | September 2020 Book of the Month | Shortlisted for the Yoto Carnegie Medal 2022** Co-written by award-winning novelist Ibi Zoboi and Dr Yusef Salaam, a prison reform activist, poet and one of the Exonerated Five, *Punching the Air* is a timely, heartachingly powerful free verse novel. Through its shatteringly succinct lyricism, Amal's story is a mighty call to action that rouses readers to question the deep-rooted and damaging consequences of racially biased societal systems, while radiating the light and hope of art and Amal himself. Sixteen-year-old Amal is a talented poet and artist, but even at his liberal arts college, he's victimised by destructive preconceptions, deemed disruptive by people who "made themselves a whole other boy in their minds and replaced me with him." Amal's budding life careers off-course when he's wrongfully convicted of a crime in a gentrified area. Even in the courtroom it feels to him "like everything that I am, that I've ever been, counts as being guilty". Standing before judgemental eyes in his specially chosen grey suit, he's aware that "no matter how many marches or Twitter hashtags or Justice for So-and-So our mind's eyes and our eyes' minds see the world as they want to/Everything already illustrated in black and white." In the detention centre, Amal considers his African ancestry: "I am shackled again," he says. "Maybe these are the same chains that bind me to my ancestors. Maybe these are the same chains that bind me to my father and my father's father and all the men that came before." He expresses society's double standards with searing clarity too - Black boys are "a mob/a gang ghetto/a pack of wolves animals/thugs hoodlums men" while white boys "were kids having fun home loved supported protected full of potential boys." But through the beatings and despair, through anger and frustration, Amal finds solace in the supportive letters he receives from a girl in his school, and his "poet, educator and activist" teacher. By turns soul-stirring and inspiring, this sharp exposure of injustice and testament to the transformative power of art comes highly recommended for readers

who love the work of Jason Reynolds and Elizabeth Acevedo. Find a selection of recommended books that celebrate difference in our blog, Diverse Voices.

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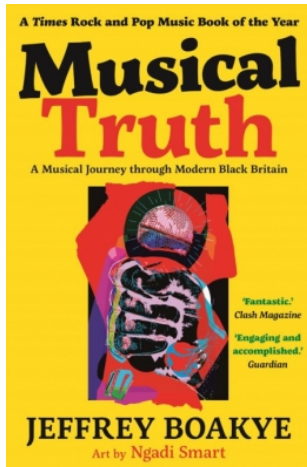


## When Our Worlds Collided

**Author:** Danielle Jawando **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 31/03/2022

**Winner of the YA Book Prize 2023 | Winner of the Jhalak Children's & Young Adult Prize 2023** Following her highly acclaimed debut novel, *And The Stars Were Burning Brightly*, we have another powerful story depicting an authentic story of young lives impacted upon by the institutional and everyday racism experienced here in the UK; which makes it an even more important and challenging read. Narrated by three very different teenagers brought together by a moment of terrible violence when they witness a stabbing and for whom the overwhelming impact of this experience is exacerbated by what they are forced to confront. For rich and privileged Jackson at an exclusive school, the casual assumption of his classmates and potential girlfriend that the crime is gang related and the victim blamed, together with police failures and the subsequent biased media coverage, really opens his eyes and draws him closer to Chantelle and Marc. They live in Manchester's Moss Side and attend the same school as the victim, but even there, the school will not challenge this biased view and it is where we see Chantelle struggle to overcome negative teacher assumptions about her abilities. When Jackson becomes a victim too, we see the ultimate failure of the justice system. But this is not just an angry novel, although it should indeed spark anger and awareness of white privilege, it is a nuanced portrayal of three individuals and those around them and emphasises the importance of family and friendship. Marc, after a life in care, finds his family with these friends and both he and Chantelle gain confidence that they can make something of themselves. The touching, gentle romance between Chantelle and Jackson and the strength of his own family ties gives him and the reader hope that his life has not been ruined by injustice. An absolute must have for schools.

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## Musical Truth

**Author:** Jeffrey Boakye **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 07/04/2022

**Winner of the UKLA Book Awards 2023: Information Books 3 - 14+** An outstanding combination of musical and Black British history which shows the strength and cultural significance of Black music and reveals the people behind the music, what they're really saying and why.



## The Blue Book of Nebo

**Author:** Manon Steffan Ros **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 06/01/2022

**Winner of the Yoto Carnegie Medal for Writing 2023 | Shortlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2023: 11 - 14** At first glance this looks like a short, light novel but how wrong anyone would be to think that. Translated from the original Welsh, this is a deep thought-provoking novel – filled with actions and philosophical questions that create a lasting impression. Dylan was only 6 when the world as he knew it stopped. The electricity went off, everyone left - and just him and his Mum were left to survive on a remote Welsh mountainside above the village of Nebo - with no services. Now 14, Dylan has learned new survival skills and is as wise as any adult. On a scavenging raid into Nebo, they find a blank notebook with a blue cover and decide to use it to record their thoughts and actions – neither reading the others writings. The two voices in the notebook show the scale, horror, and commitment to survive for each other – and the secrets they both keep. The background to the story is so strange, quite unsettling in places, that the reader is entirely caught up in their day-to-day struggles, their fears, and their triumphs. Set in such a bleak scenario the book could be very dark – but although it does have moments of darkness, the love and sense of hope pervading the story wins out creating an immersive, emotive experience. A difficult read in terms of its subject matter but one that will live with the reader in a very positive way.

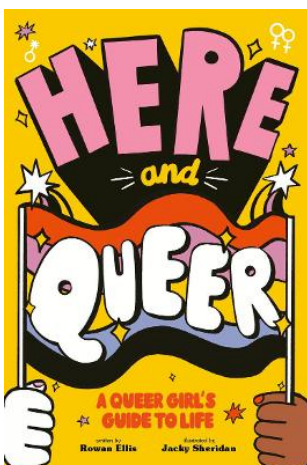




## Furious Thing

**Author:** Jenny Downham **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/02/2021

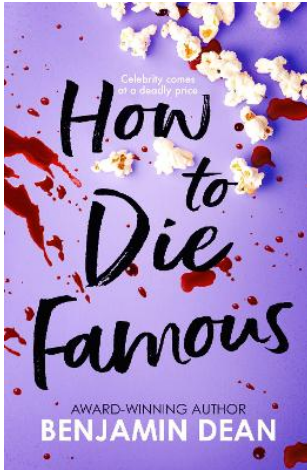
**Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2021 | Shortlisted for the Costa Children's Book Award 2019** Empathetic, insightful and buzzing with drama, the brilliant Jenny Downham has done it again in this vital, true-to-life treasure about a young woman's struggle to stand up to her bully-boy stepfather. "She threw things and slammed things and swore. She was clumsy and rude and had no friends. Her teachers thought her dim-witted. Her family despaired." On the verge of turning sixteen, Lexi is a firework of frustration. Her furious outbursts are getting worse now John, her soon-to-be-stepdad, has taken over their family home, and his son – Lexi's best friend (and long-time crush...) – has moved away to uni. On top of that, her younger half-sister is John's favoured child, while she's blamed for everything that goes wrong, including – most viciously of all – what happened to her beloved granddad. It's no coincidence that the intensification of Lexi's rage coincides with John's increasingly coercive behaviour. Thanks to his constant criticism and angry desire to have everything exactly how he likes it, Lexi can see that her mum has become a shadow of herself. Trapped in this unbearable situation – one in which no one listens or believes her – what else can Lexi do but kick out? Interwoven with fairy tale motifs that combine to create a satisfying whole at the novel's heartrending climax, this is a brilliantly exacting exposé of coercive control and emotional abuse, and a powerful portrayal of a young woman's refusal to give in. Lexi is a dazzlingly-created character that readers will root for and empathise with. Her battle to break the abuse elicits much compassion and sympathetic fury, while her irrepressible wit provokes plenty of laughs.



## Here and Queer

**Author:** Rowan Ellis **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 10/05/2022

**Shortlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2023: Information Books 3 - 14+** A helpful and friendly guide for girls about living your best queer life. Vibrant and inclusive, this is the queer guide you've been looking for.

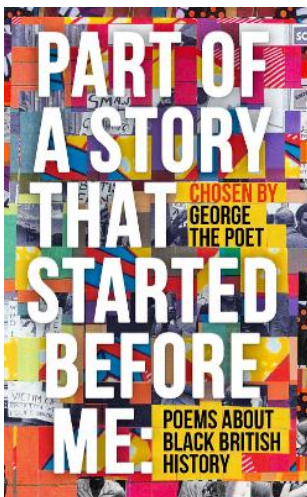


## How To Die Famous

**Author:** Benjamin Dean **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 20/07/2023

**Shortlisted for the YA Book Prize 2024 | Shortlisted for the Children's & YA Jhalak Prize 2024**

Fame, beauty, success, happiness...the stars of soon-to-be hit TV show Sunset High seemingly have it all. But behind the glitz and glamour the truth is very different - scandal, rivalry, secrets and possibly even murder reign supreme in the land of Hollywood dreams. British Abel is thrown into the world of celebrity culture when he is cast as the new teen star of a blockbuster Hollywood TV show reboot. Joining his fellow cast mates, Lucky, Ryan and Ella, he soon discovers that all is not as it seems. Between them the glamorous foursome have more off-screen drama than on-screen: secret affairs, addictions, controlling parents, buried grief and a ruthless production company. When an obsessed stalker starts leaving ominous messages, they soon realise that it's not just the tabloids after them. An addictive, dark, queer thriller full of drama. With a background in celebrity journalism Dean skilfully brings to life the fake world of high stakes TV production, and the lives of the rich and famous. Alongside this he sensitively handles issues of grief and addiction. The story is told in alternating chapters from the four main characters, plus podcast excerpts, building a rounded picture of the action and keeping the reader on their toes. Fans of Karen McManus will love this. Full of twists, this is a pacy book you'll want to read in one sitting. Unputdownable!

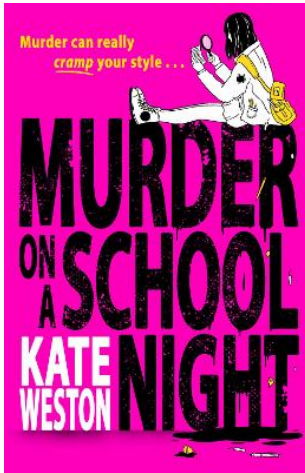


## Part of a Story That Started Before Me

**Author:** George the Poet **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 13/07/2023

**July Book of the Month** From Ancient Rome to the Tudors to the 2020 Euros football final, Black people have always lived and contributed to British society. In this exceptional anthology George the Poet has collected poems and examples of the Black British experience. The impressive list of contributors includes: Patience Agbabi, Jeffrey Boakye, Sophie Thakur, Derek Walcott and Benjamin Zephaniah. A number of the poems are new and written specifically for this anthology, whilst others have been curated from older collections, such as Sunrise by Grace Nicholls, first published 1993. Throughout the collection historical notes are added for each era by writer and historian Dr Christienna Fryar. In addition, a number of the poems benefit from enlightening notes from the poets themselves, giving context and further info about their subjects. The subjects covered by the poems are varied and full of interest - from celebrating Black trailblazers, such as Maggie Aderin-Pocock, to commemorating Belly Mujinga. I challenge anybody to read this anthology without being inspired to learn more! And there's an extensive reading list provided to guide you forwards. Not only are the subjects of the poems varied and interesting, but innovative use of style and formats mean the structures of the poems themselves add further

depth. Highly recommended, this is an anthology to contemplate, revisit and relish.



## Murder on a School Night

**Author:** Kate Weston **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 06/07/2023

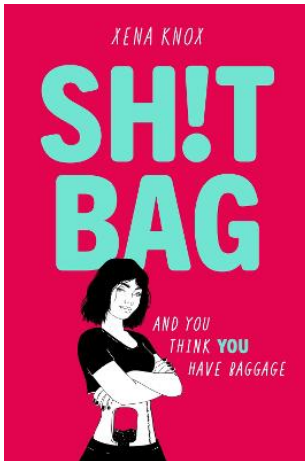
**Shortlisted for the YA Book Prize 2024** Aspiring sleuths Kerry and Annie are just starting sixth form, but both have much better things to think about than their studies. Annie is obsessed with making this the year she finally becomes popular, and Kerry is smitten by new boy, Scott. When the most popular girl in school tasks them with finding her cyberbully things start looking up. But when a failed kiss leads to the discovery of a dead classmate, choked with a menstrual cup, things turn serious. The Menstrual Murderer is on the hunt and the bodies soon start piling up. This is a whip-smart, hilarious, feminist YA thriller. The main characters are endearingly awkward as they muddle through killings and crushes, whilst the popular crowd are deliciously dramatic. With tampons and period pads as the murder weapons of choice, there's an ongoing theme of periods throughout the novel; this is handled openly, with lots of humour and honesty. Likewise, Kerry and Annie are proud feminists and Weston expertly calls into question the sexism they face as teenage girls. A fresh take on the YA thriller, mixing suspense with hilarity and social commentary. Perfect for fans of A Good Girl's Guide to Murder and the books of Holly Bourne.



## The Eternal Return of Clara Hart

**Author:** Louise Finch **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/08/2022

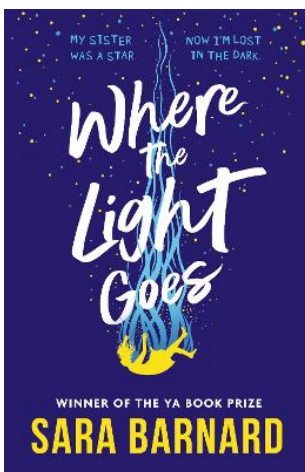
**Shortlisted for the Yoto Carnegie Medal for Writing 2023 | Shortlisted for the YA Book Prize 2023 | Shortlisted for The Branford Boase Award 2023** Groundhog Day meets #MeToo in this compelling account of sexual assault and complicity.



## SH!T BAG

**Author:** Xena Knox **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 22/06/2023

**July 2023 Debut of the Month** After collapsing during her exams and waking with a temporary ileostomy bag, Freya is angry. She's meant to be enjoying the summer of her life before she starts sixth form. But instead of hot summer holidays abroad with her best friends and fit boyfriend, she's at a midge-infested "Poo Camp" for young people with bowel problems. Unable to accept that her life has irreversibly changed and sickened by her own body, Freya is resentful, miserable, and self-absorbed. Slowly though, new friends and a potential new love interest help her see that her future may be different, but it can still be hopeful. This is a sharp book full of dark humour, that doesn't shy away from the truth about an often-taboo subject: poo. When Freya returns to school not everybody reacts with kindness, instead she must deal with cruel bullies and a deceitful ex. She does so with strength and an impressive level of sass. With authentic disability representation, Sh!t Bag highlights a subject rarely covered in YA and is a refreshing read, perfect for empathy building. Full of embarrassing moments to make you cringe, Freya's journey is far from easy, but it's definitely worth travelling with her. A fresh, fierce book about self-acceptance that older teens will love.



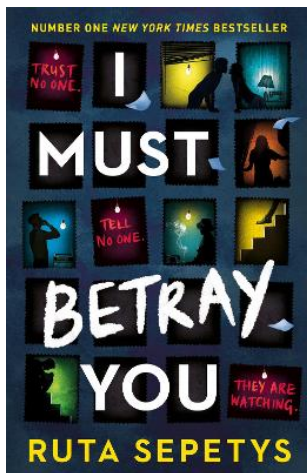
## Where the Light Goes

**Author:** Sara Barnard **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/05/2023

**May 2023 Book of the Month** YA Book Prize winner, Sara Barnard, writes fearlessly about some really tricky issues, but always with great emotional honesty and depth. This extraordinary novel is no exception since it is tackling the issue of suicide and the impact on those left behind. The book opens with an appropriate trigger warning because these are difficult issues to read about. The book also explores the causes of this particular young girl's death and in doing so we find out just how toxic and damaging fame can be for young women. Lizzie Beck is the lead singer for a band that rose to dizzying heights of fame at a very young age and the media follow her every move, every relationship, every stint in rehab. The novel does not flinch from showing the misogyny with which young women are treated. But Lizzie is also Beth, a beloved sister and daughter and the agony of the family's grief and the way it changes everything in their lives is heartbreakingly laid out. The story is told from the perspective of Emmy, the equally talented younger sister who wanted nothing more than to emulate her big sister, but skilfully uses lots of different media- text messages, articles, interviews, and emails to show a wider view. The story is divided by poignant black pages noting: 1 day gone etc and very, very subtly, more light appears until we see Emmy at 5 years gone living her life in the limelight but having learned so much from having had Beth as sister. This difficult journey towards finding light in the darkest of times is both truthful and hopeful. This powerful multi-layered and important



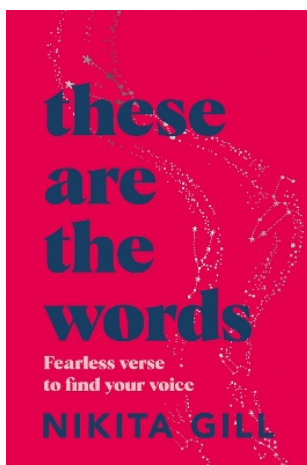
novel is enthralling, moving and utterly compelling.



## I Must Betray You

**Author:** Ruta Sepetys **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/08/2022

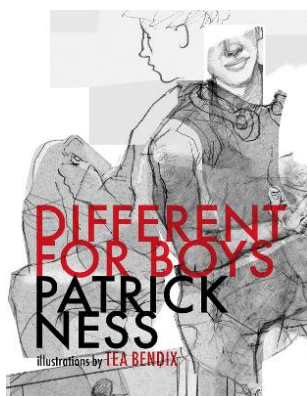
**Shortlisted for the Yoto Carnegie Medal for Writing 2023** Trapped by an evil dictatorship, will Cristian be forced to betray his family or will he risk everything he loves to resist? A bestselling YA thriller based on real events, from a prizewinning author.



## These Are the Words

**Author:** Nikita Gill **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 18/08/2022

**Shortlisted for the CLIPPA 2023 | Longlisted for the Jhalak Children's & Young Adult Prize 2023** From international poetry sensation Nikita Gill comes her highly anticipated YA debut These Are the Words: an empowering, feminist and beautifully illustrated poetry collection exploring all the things Nikita wished someone had told her when she was younger.



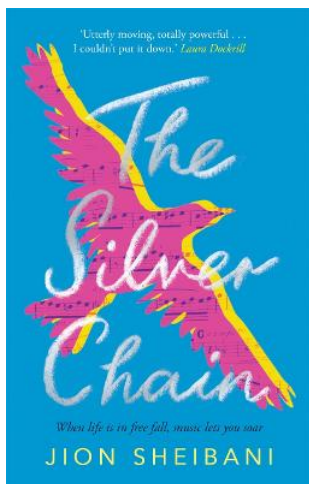
## Different for Boys

**Author:** Patrick Ness **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 02/03/2023

Authentic, inclusive and refreshingly candid, Patrick Ness' Different for Boys packs mighty punch as it relates the pitch-perfect story of teenage boys grappling with questions around sex, sexuality, friendship and masculinity, with Tea Bendix's cool, evocative illustrations enhancing its already-considerable clout. Ant is friends with three very different boys – camp and confident Jack, Charlie, who's a tinderbox of alpha-male confusion, and Freddie, who's returned to their school after moving away. The boys were inseparable through primary school, but people change, and not everyone handles change well, especially Charlie, who's outright homophobic. At the same time, Ant is awash with big questions: "Are there degrees of virginity?" Is he still a virgin? Is virginity different for boys. Is it different again for boys who like boys? In

this context, Ant and Charlie's especially intense, confusing relationship sees them come to blows before Ant comes to some clarity. Suffused in empathy, and funny with it, *Different for Boys* is a brilliantly incisive account of how it feels to be a boy who likes boys, battling homophobia while grappling with big questions around sex and relationships. It's also a fine story of courage and support.

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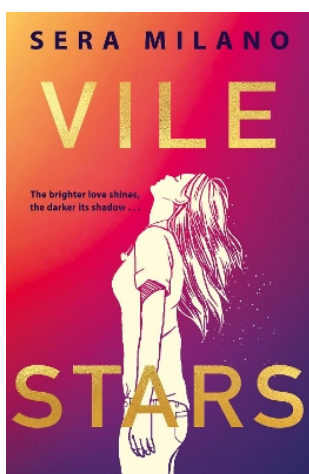


## The Silver Chain

**Author:** Jion Sheibani **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 23/06/2022

An uplifting coming-of-age story told in verse, about mental health, family and the restorative power of music.

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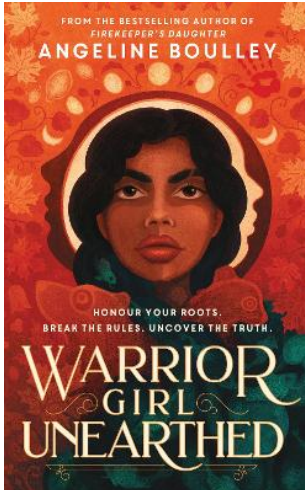


## Vile Stars

**Author:** Sera Milano **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 14/04/2022

A unique look at coercive teen relationships during the 2020 covid lockdowns. Told through multiple viewpoints, this is an important and inclusive novel about obsession, friendship and grief.

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## Warrior Girl Unearthed

**Author:** Angeline Boulley **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 04/05/2023

Insightful and eye-opening, this is a heist novel with a difference, First Nation twins Perry and Pauline determine to bring home their ancestors in this nuanced exploration of cultural appropriation.



## Seven Million Sunflowers

**Author:** Malcolm Duffy **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/02/2024

**February 2024 Book of the Month** “Thursday 24 February 2022. The day the Russians came” was the day everything changed for 15-year-old Kat and her family. Beginning at this fateful moment, and informed by the author and his family having hosted refugees from Ukraine, Malcolm Duffy’s *Seven Million Sunflowers* is incredibly moving, authentic and perfectly-pitched. Two months on from the February missile strike on her Kharkiv hometown, Kat lands in the UK with her Mama and brother Marko, while her website designer dad stays behind to fight, his designer shoes replaced with combat boots. In the UK, Kat finds a friend (and more) in Felix, who’s as reluctant to talk about his family as Kat is about her dad. At the same time, Kat feels guilty about her newfound happiness while her father and compatriots back home are risking everything as they fight for her country. Conflict, in all its forms, is poignantly evoked when devastating news comes from home just as Kat experiences troubles in her new UK life — the politics of war becomes excruciatingly personal, with all the challenges of being a teenager heightened by the conflict. Written in attention-grabbing style — a potentially direct first-person narrative with poetic impact — *Seven Million Sunflowers* is charged with empathy and utterly un-put-down-able.



## Us in the Before and After

**Author:** Jenny Valentine **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 06/06/2024

**June 2024 Book of the Month** A new YA novel from Jenny Valentine is always something to celebrate. She writes with beautiful economy, there is never a wasted word, and her books will always leave an indelible impression upon the reader and will have them thinking deeply about what they have just experienced. This is a mesmerising story about friendship, love, loss and grief. Elk and Mab are sixteen, on the cusp of independence, with everything ahead of them. They met at age eleven and have been inseparable ever since. They have the sort of friendship that everyone dreams of. In an instant, a tragic accident takes that away from them, but they are not ready to leave each other and in their ghostly conversations we learn about their lives, their families, how they met, what they wanted and what led up to the accident. We see Elk reluctantly falling in love with Mab's brother France and the threat that this situation presents to the friendship, and a relationship which ultimately becomes the catalyst for the tragedy, with all the guilt this brings in its aftermath. Sensitive, utterly compelling and profound, with a twist that will leave you reeling, this superbly crafted novel is an absolute must read.

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## Glasgow Boys

**Author:** Margaret McDonald **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/05/2024

**June 2024 Debut of the Month** Finlay and Banjo have both grown up in care, once as close as brothers, now they don't speak at all. Finlay has recently aged out of the care system and has just started a nursing degree; but without a safety net and completely alone in the world, writing essays comes second to keeping his head above water. Banjo has just been placed with yet another set of foster parents and is starting yet another new school, unsurprisingly he's full of anger and fear. As both boys struggle with impending adulthood and uncertain futures, will the hope of new friends, the pain of past trauma and the possibility of future love, help them find each other again? Raw and unflinchingly honest, Glasgow Boys will make you fall in love with its vulnerable main characters, and make you want to scream at the injustices so many some young people face. McDonald writes with authenticity and a beauty that is startlingly, especially for a debut author. Her nuanced depiction of the care system and the reality of a life without foundations is a lesson in empathy building. The powerful impact that a hug has on boys starved of physical affection is heartbreaking to read, whilst Banjo's delight at having a photo of himself for the first time makes you want to weep for all he deserves but has never had. This is the type of skilful character development that will have you laughing one minute and crying the next. As readers we are occasionally lucky enough to read a book that is not just good, or even



great, but so strikingly beautiful that it irreversibly slightly changes who we are and will live on forever in our hearts. Glasgow Boys is one such book. Right now, I'm deeply envious of all those readers who still have the pleasure of meeting Finlay and Banjo for the first time, and bracing my heart for my own imminent reread. Exceptional in every way, this is a book that you want to consume whole, but also linger over. I predict great things and many accolades for Glasgow Boys. Perfect for fans of Brian Conaghan and resolutely not to be missed.



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## Where the Heart Should Be

**Author:** Sarah Crossan **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 14/03/2024

**March 2024 Book of the Month** Every new novel from the Carnegie Medal winning author and past Laureate na nÓg is a highly anticipated event and fans will certainly not find themselves disappointed by this outstanding offering. Set in 1846 as the potato famine swept across Ireland, it introduces us to Nell, the eldest daughter of a family that are tenants on the estate of Lord Wicken, a wealthy English aristocrat. She has been forced to give up her studies and start work as a scullery maid in his home to keep her family from starvation. It is here she meets John Browning, the nephew and heir of Wicken, and they fall in love despite the fact that class and nationality should keep them apart. But whilst Lord Wicken, is the ultimate malignant landlord, completely without feeling for his starving tenants, Nell sees that Johnny is different. It is an extraordinary achievement to be able to use the verse novel form to powerfully present an unflinching account of the hardship and horror of the Great Hunger, while at the same time telling a compelling love story full of hope. The verse form is both accessible and immersive and creates a very intense and unforgettable reading experience. This is a powerful exploration of love in all its forms and a profound and eloquent evocation of a devastating period in Ireland's history.