

Easter Holiday 2023 Reading Recommendations from the Main Library

Listed *roughly* in ascending order of difficulty

There's a Beast in the Basement by Pamela Butchart



There's a Beast in the Basement is Pamela Butchart's latest instalment in her Baby Aliens mega series. This series is very popular for a simple reason; it combines bold illustrations, funny storylines and light text to create super engaging chapter books for newly confident readers. This series often provides the spark needed to embed a love of reading - even older readers return for the new releases as a quick fun read. This latest edition continues to follow Izzy and her friends as they navigate the perils of an unusual school life - this time they're looking for treasure in the basement but the 'evidence' suggests it might not be treasure and in fact it might be a 'beast'!

Space Blasters: Suzie and the Moon Bugs by Katie & Kevin Tsang



Space Blasters is a great new series following STEM heroine Suzie. Suzie sees herself as an inventor however things don't quite go to plan. In the first novel (, her Super 3DTV Gizmo went a little awry and blasted her into her favourite TV show, Space Blasters where it was down to her to save the universe. In 'Moon Bugs', the second in the series, Suzie's happily exploring the Space Blasters universe when it again falls upon her to save the day. Cue hilarious antics, and fun-filled adventure.

Katie and Kevin Tsang's latest creation sits midway between their Sam Wu adventures and the Dream Realm, with occasional illustrations, making the series a fun, engaging read.



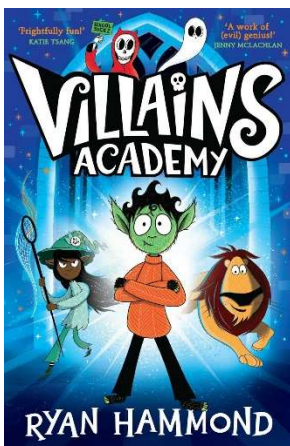
Worst Week Ever: Monday by Eva Amores & Matt Cosgrove



First in a brand new 7-part series, starting off with Monday, this hilarious book will appeal to fans of the Storey Treehouse series and Tom Gates as it's packed full of funny illustrations and silly storylines.

The main character is Justin Chase and he's having a bad week. His mum has just married a vampire. His Dad is driving a giant toilet on wheels. His cat has probably been abducted by aliens. A bully is making his first day at a new school miserable. To make matters worse, it's only Monday and he's hanging off the edge of a 10-metre-high diving tower in front of his entire class wearing nothing but rapidly disappearing crocheted swimmers.

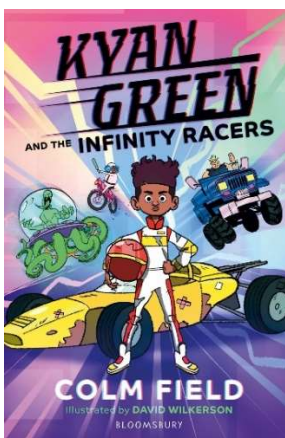
Villains Academy by Ryan Hammond



Villains Academy is a great new accessible series packed with fabulous illustrations throughout. It follows Class Z, with Bram, Skele-Tony and the Tooth Hairy, as they start at Villains Academy, the most prestigious evil school in the land. Werewolf Bram doesn't really feel like a villain but the coveted Villain of the Week trophy is up for grabs so perhaps he can dig deep to achieve glory.

This spooky funny adventure should appeal to fans of Loki and Grimwood.

Kyan Green and the Infinity Racers by Colm Field

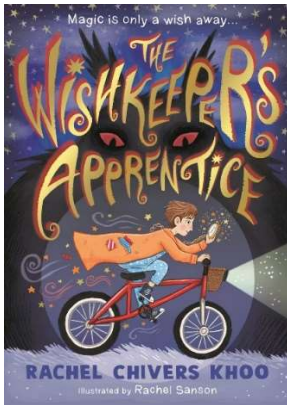


Kyan Green and the Infinity Racers is a new action-packed adventure series. Kyan's adventures start when he finds an old racing car game in the loft. With only 7 pieces of track, Kyan isn't particularly enthralled - however he doesn't realise the pack is entranced. The game soon whisks him off on an epic adventure, through multiple universes. With each new universe, his challenges get more and more dangerous and he starts to wonder if he will ever find the way out and back home.

With a seat-of-your-pants storyline and exhilarating illustrations, this new series should appeal to fans of David Baddiel and Danny Wallace.



Wishkeeper's Apprentice by Rachel Chivers Khoo



When Felix makes a special and desperate wish, little does he realise he is about to be catapulted into a secret world of magic and adventure. Now, Felix is an apprentice wishkeeper and must save the town's wishes from the terrifying wishsnatcher, who wants to destroy hopes and dreams everywhere. Beautiful and endearing black-and-white illustrations add to the magic of this new book.

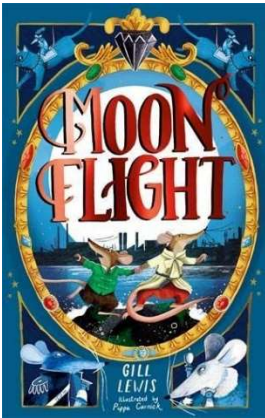
Murder at the Museum by Alasdair Beckett-King



Bonnie Montgomery is the world's best detective, though only her Grampa Banks has heard of her. However, people might have heard of the great Montgomery Bonbon, the well-dressed gentleman detective who (apart from the hat and moustache) looks suspiciously like a 10-year-old girl. Together (though no one ever realises that they are never in the same place at the same time) they attempt to solve the mystery surrounding a highly suspicious death at the Hornville Museum.

The comedy of this fun and engaging read is enhanced throughout by Clare Powell's dynamic illustrations.

Moonflight by Gill Lewis



Moonflight follows sibling rats, Tilbury & Nimble-Quick Twitch-Whiskers, as they embark on the adventure of a life-time. Tilbury is fascinated by flight and flying, so is determined to find the lost plans to the Silk Wing, a legendary flying machine invented by a famous rat, the Great Bartholomew. At the same time, the dark forces are rising and the Elders must find the chosen one to return the black diamond, aka the Cursed Night, to its rightful owners.

Folklore suggests that the diamond is cursed, able to reach the darkest depths of the soul - only a rat of integrity and ingenuity can unravel its secrets.

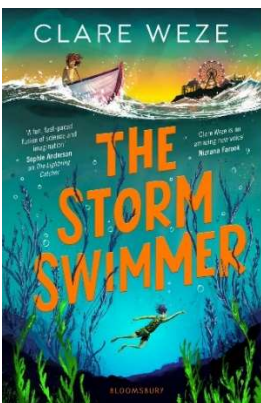
Saving Neverland by Abi Elphinstone



Martha Pennyworth carries the world on her shoulders; her mother is missing, her father busy and she feels she needs to grow up quickly to protect her brother, Scuff, after the 'Terrible Day'. She and her family have come to live at 14 Darlington Road, previously inhabited by the Darling family, and soon find gold dust and a bedroom window that is impossible to shut. It's not long before the pair are embedded in Neverland, helping Peter Pan save the resident fairy-tale creatures from Captain Hook's ice curse.

Packed full of courage and adventure, Elphinstone's reimagining of the classic 'Peter Pan' is daring and delightful. She manages to modernise the secret world without jeopardising its magic.

The Storm Swimmer by Clare Weze



Ginika was expecting a summer of fun, but instead finds herself living in her grandparent's dead-end seaside town missing everything she loves back home. That is until she meets Peri. He's not exactly a mermaid, but he's definitely something Ginika's never seen before. When they're together they don't need anyone else. But then the lights and noise of the human world start to change Peri. And when things spin out of control, Ginika must be the bravest she's ever been to face her fears and make the hardest decision of her life.

An original story of adventure and friendship combining to overcome feelings of grief and abandonment.

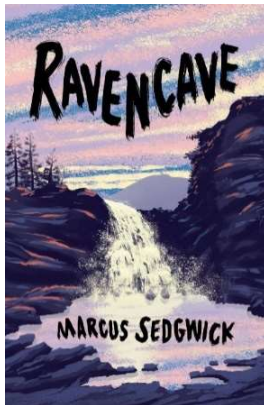


Valentine Crow and Mr. Death by Jenni Spangler



Valentine Crow and Mr Death offers an interesting, warm and funny take on the topic of death. Twelve-year-old Valentine Crow has lived his entire life at the Foundling Hospital. Now, he and his best friend Philomena are leaving to begin their new lives as apprentices – but Valentine has been assigned to Death himself. Valentine finds himself in an impossible situation when his best friend’s name appears on the list of souls to take. Can he fight Death to save her soul, or does fate have other ideas? An engaging read for confident readers able to compartmentalise this interesting topic.

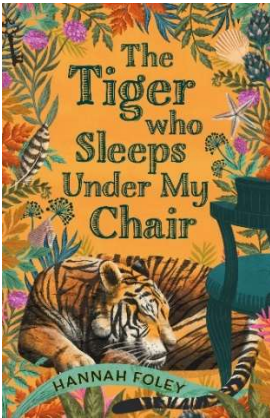
Ravencave by Marcus Sedgwick



Ravencave is the posthumous book from award-winning Marcus Sedgwick and published by accessible publisher Barrington Stokes. At just 138 pages, this book is a masterpiece in concise, gripping writing.

On holiday in Yorkshire, James is bored out of his mind being dragged around various old ruins as his dad tries to trace his family’s roots. Then one day as his parents bicker and his moody teenage brother ignores him, James hears mischievous laughter and the ghost of a young girl appears to him at Crackpot Hall. When the girl first urges James to follow him, he’s afraid and runs away. But when she appears again after another argument between James and his brother, he goes after her, leading to a gruesome discovery that reveals a terrible truth about his family.

The Tiger who Sleeps under my Chair by Hannah Foley

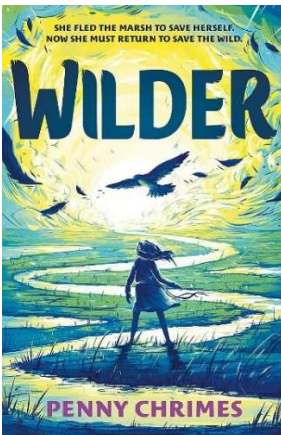


1884. Emma Linden dreams of following in the footsteps of the famous fossil-hunter, Mary Anning on the Jurassic Coast. But Emma's world begins to spiral when her brother James becomes obsessed with a glassy-eyed tiger at the museum.

2023. Rosie Linden is found having been missing for four days and four nights, no one believes her when she says she has turned into a tiger. On her path to recovery, and with her friend Jude, Rosia uncovers family secrets buried like layer upon layer of rock. Together they must sift the past to find the truth and heal the present.

An immersive tale spanning both contemporary and Victorian times from Kelpies Prize winner Hannah Foley. It is a bold, brave story of friendship, discovery and mental well-being, which teaches readers empathy and acceptance.

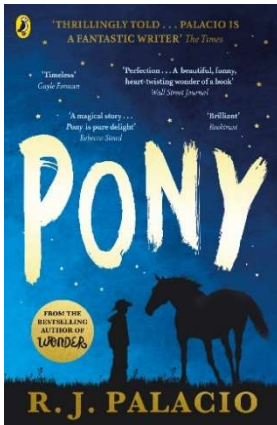
Wilder by Penny Chrimes



Wilder is a captivating and intriguing book from the author of Tiger Heart, hinting at the impact of human greed on our world. It is the story of a 'girl' who emerges from the marshes one day, and is adopted by a wisewoman who names her 'Rhodd'. The villagers remain weary of her, and it's clear that she's not quite a simple girl. She has special powers, particularly in relation to nature and her marsh homeland. Over time, it becomes clear that the land is dying and it falls upon Rhodd to act. Peppared with beautiful pencil drawings, Chrimes' latest novel with its courageous heroine is well worth a read.



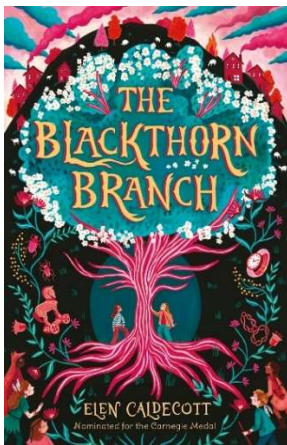
Pony by R.J. Palacio



Pony is the latest release from Palacio, author of the acclaimed Wonder. It follows Silas and his ghost companion Mittenwool as they undertake a perilous journey. It all starts when Silas wakes in the middle of the night to see his father being taken by three strangers, while he watches on powerlessly. He is left shaken and scared, and then a mysterious pony arrives at his door - he knows just what to do. Together they embark on a journey that sees him discover and connect him with his past, his future, and the unknowable world around him.

A beautiful story of love and courage that is tipped to be a classic.

The Blackthorn Branch by Elen Caldecott



Long listed for this year's Yoto Carnegie Medal for Writing, Caldecott's latest novel is full of atmosphere and Welsh mythology.

Cassie's older brother Byron has fallen in with the wrong crowd - it's soon clear these boys are wild, reckless and not human at all. They are tylwyth teg - Fair Folk, who tempt humans down into the dark places of the world. And Byron is tempted. When he goes missing, Cassie and her cousin, Siân, follow his trail to an old abandoned railway tunnel which goes down and down into Annwn, the underworld. Here they find that the tylwyth teg are restless and angry. Their leader, Gwenhidw, wants to protect Annwn from the damage humans are doing to the world. Byron is part of her plan. But Cassie won't let her big brother be part of anyone's plan, so it's up to her to rescue him before it's too late.

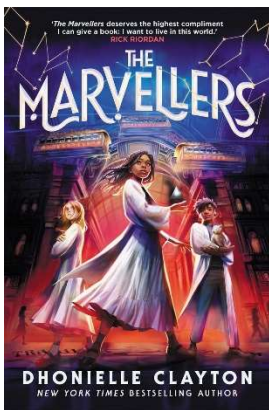
21% Monster: Ice Giant by P.J. Canning



Since Darren Devlin and Marek Masters joined forces in the first of this series, there has only been one thing on their minds - taking down XSP, the secret organisation that transformed them into genetically-modified superhumans. Even with 21% monster Darren's incredible strength, and 19% alien Marek's super intelligence, XSP is more than a match for them. But what if there was another survivor of XSP's experiments? A tall, tough, athletic teen girl able to withstand sub-zero temperatures and track potential predators? A girl who's 17% sabre-tooth polar bear, and out for revenge.

The 21% Monster trilogy series (3rd book due 3 July 2023) is fast paced and high octane, perfect for fans of Alex Rider.

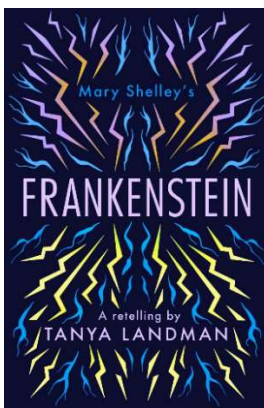
The Marveller by Dhonielle Clayton



The Marvellers was a bestseller in America last summer and has finally made its way across the pond. This action-packed fantasy follows Ella Durand, who is the first Conjuror to attend the Arcanum Training Institute, a magic school in the clouds for Marvellers from around the world. Ella soon finds it's tricky to settle in as a misfit, and even harder when people start to blame you for the escape of a convicted criminal. Pressure grows on her to clear her name and track down her missing mentor.

Packed with twists and turns, readers will be hooked on this magical new world and desperate for Clayton to produce a sequel.

Mary Shelley's Frankenstein by Tanya Landman

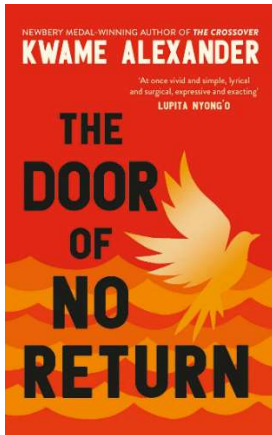


Tanya Landman's retelling of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein is not for the faint hearted, but is accessible for all. Part of Barrington Stoke's new classics series, this formidable gothic tale is presented using modern language and is dyslexic friendly, allowing more readers to enjoy this powerful and yet complex tale.

Landman's approach manages to retain both the original menacing atmosphere and Shelley's recognisable style. A superb mix of science fiction, mystery and thriller, this retelling is a success in itself and has the scope to inspire readers to consider tackling the original.



The Door of No Return by Kwame Alexander



The Door of No Return is a thought provoking and moving book written in Alexander's trademark award-winning verse.

Eleven-year-old Kofi Offin has dreams of water, of its urgent whisper that beckons with promises and secrets. He loves these things above all else: his family, the fireside tales of his father's father, a girl named Ama, and, of course, swimming. But when the unthinkable - a sudden death - occurs during a festival between rival villages, Kofi ends up in a fight for his life. What happens next will send him on a harrowing journey across land and sea, and away from everything he loves. Yet Kofi's dreams may be the key to his freedom

Set in the Ashanti Kingdom in Africa in 1860, against a backdrop of cultural oppression, this book includes references to slavery and abuse which can be both interesting and harrowing. As such it should be approached with caution, and yet this gritty ending will have readers keenly waiting for the next release in the trilogy.