

## Wakefield's Finest

Wakefield Schools Library Service has chosen its 50 favourite books published in 2008. We hope you try out some of these titles and share them with your pupils. We have tried to cater for all ages and abilities and hope you enjoy them as much as we have.

### ***Under 8's***

Anholt Laurence **The Ugly Duck Thing** *Orchard Books*  
£8.99 9781846160769

Mummy Duck retrieves one of her eggs which rolled down the hill and into a cave, but when it hatches it doesn't look or act like the rest of the ducklings.

A lively, funny, rhyming twist on the original fairy tale.

Brown, Anthony **Little Beauty** *Walker* £10.99  
9781406308662

Gorilla was very lonely, so the zoo keepers gave him a little kitten called Beauty to care for, and they were very happy together. However, one day the gorilla became very angry and broke the T.V., which made the keepers try to take Beauty away. Upset, Beauty confessed that it was her so they could stay together.

A straightforward tale of caring and friendship is told beautifully with the help of Anthony Brown's striking illustrations.

Catchpool, Michael **Grandpa's Boat** *Andersen Press*  
£10.99 9781842706909

Grandpa loves his boat "The Periwinkle", but after his death, the boat is left, dirty and unused. However, the family decides to mend the boat and sail it again.

A heartfelt, simple story of loss and remembrance that is wonderfully told, with realistic pastel illustrations of the sea and beach landscapes.

Conway, David **Lila and the Secret of Rain** *Frances Lincoln*  
£11.99 9781845074074

Lila lives in a village in Kenya which is experiencing a devastating drought. She desperately wants the rains to come and when her grandfather tells her about a man who made the sky weep, she sets off alone to see if she can do the same.

Jude Daly's illustrations of a typical African landscape complete the beautifully simple story of courage and hope.

Docherty, Thomas **Little Boat** *Templar* £10.99  
9781840118261

Little Boat is a tiny boat in a big ocean, facing many dangers and sharing fun adventures with his friends.

An engaging picture book, with dramatic illustrations and plenty to discuss.

Fearnley, Jan **Martha in the Middle** *Walker* £10.99  
1844280254

Martha is a mouse who is sick of being in the middle of everything. Feeling invisible, she meets a frog who makes her realise that being in the middle is not necessarily always bad.

A reassuring tale of family life, with appealing illustrations and characters.

Graham, Bob **How to Heal a Broken Wing** *Walker* £10.99  
9781406307160

Will is the only person to stop and help an injured bird lying on a crowded city pavement. He takes it home, but will it recover?

Fantastic use of perspective, light and colour. Very little text is needed as the illustrations dictate the pace and depict the characters' emotions perfectly.

Graves, Sue **Miss Lupin's Motorbike** *Franklin Watts* £3.99  
9780749679576

When Miss Lupin gets a motorbike as a leaving present from school she has a bit of trouble trying to ride it – with hilarious consequences.

This Leapfrog title is part of an outstanding series of early readers. The rhyming text races us through the village with Miss Lupin's runaway motorbike and the illustrations of the resulting devastation add to the fun and give lots to talk about.

Green, Jessica **Scratch Kitten on the Pirate's Shoulder**  
*Little Hare Books* £3.99 9781921272455

Scratch is rescued by pirates and longs to take the place of Squawk, the parrot on Captain Patch's shoulder. However, the more his plans to replace Squawk go wrong, the more responsible he feels for silly Squawk.

A light hearted early read for young children, full of humour especially when the partially deaf Squawk gets his words mixed up.

Horacek, Petr **Leon Spreads His Wings** *Walker* £3.99  
9781406307153

Leon is determined to overcome his fear of flying when he is invited to visit his baby cousin in Spain.

A gentle and warm family story about growing up. Perfect for early readers.

Impey, Rose **One Man Went to Mow** *Hodder* £10.99  
9780340911723

An illustrated version of the popular rhyme depicting the various items the dog buries on the journey.

A fun way of setting out the rhyme to keep the reader guessing what Spot will bury next.

Inkpen, Mick **Baggy Brown** *Hodder* £5.99 978034932315

To celebrate the birth of the princess, a thousand bears were produced with Baggy Bear as number one being a gift for the princess. When Baggy Bear gets lost in the factory, it is found by Alfie's father. Alfie discovers who it should belong to, but will he return it to the Princess?

Appealing illustrations from the Kipper book creator, recalling memories of the much loved bear from everyone's childhood.

Jeffers, Oliver **The Great Paper Caper** *Harper Collins*  
£11.99 9780007182299

Trees are going missing in the forest. The animals each have an alibi, so who is the culprit?

This is a simple and enjoyable book in which the thief is only revealed by the illustrations. Lightly touches on the idea of deforestation.

Jeffers, Oliver **The Way Back Home** *HarperCollins*  
£5.99 9780007182329

A little boy runs out of petrol and is stuck on the moon, but finds he's not alone. His new friend has crashed his spaceship on the moon and is stuck there too. How can they get home?

An amusing, quirky tale of friendship, teamwork and problem-solving.

Lloyd, Sam **You're Not So Scary, Sid!** *Templar* £8.99  
9781840117882

Scary Sid, the monster thinks he is terrifying, but is he as scary as he makes out?

Read this book for a fun and humorous time. The vibrant and pop-out illustrations will make sure children will want to read and interact with this book often.

McNaughton, Colin **We're off to look for aliens** *Walker*  
£10.99 9781406306453

Dad's a writer, so when his new alien book comes through the post, he leaves his wife and children to read it and give their opinion.

I like the idea of having a book within a book, and the amusing twist at the end.

Manning, Mick **Cock-a-Doodle-Hooooooo!** *Little Tiger Press*  
£10.99 9781845064549

One stormy night, lost and lonely, Owl finds shelter in a farmyard. When he wakes up the next morning he is surprised to find himself in the hen house and the hens are not too pleased. However, speckled hen tries to teach him to be the perfect cockerel so that he can be accepted.

Read this hilarious story with vibrant illustrations to find out if Owl succeeds.

Newbery, Linda **Posy** *Orchard Books* £10.99  
9781843629900

A wonderfully illustrated tale of Posy, the kitten, and her everyday, playful activities.

A simple rhyme book, beautifully illustrated, perfectly capturing the movement and poses of a little kitten.

Oxenbury, Helen **The Growing Story** *HarperCollins* £5.99  
9780007254514

A little boy is curious about how things grow and becomes worried that he is not getting bigger along with the grass and the flowers. Will he grow?

A simple story that conveys change through Helen Oxenbury's warm and appealing illustrations.

Rayner, Catherine **Harris finds his feet** *Little Tiger Press*  
£5.99 9781845065904

Grandad shows Harris all he needs to know about the world around him and the skills he needs to grow up.

Wonderful illustrations, capturing the movement and personalities of both the young and older hare and their loving relationship. A joy to read and look at.

Rickards, Lynne **Pink!** *Chicken House* £10.99  
9781905294732

Patrick, the penguin, wakes up one day to find he is pink! Upset at being teased at school he decides to go and live with the flamingos to see if he will fit in. However, after being with them, he is not so sure he fits in there either.

Read this story to find out how Patrick deals with feeling different. This topic is dealt with sympathetically and gently with help from the comical, colourful illustrations.

Shaw, Hannah **Evil Weasel** *Random House* £10.99  
9780224070911

Weasel is mean and thinks rather a lot of himself. He decides to throw a party and is confused when nobody comes. When asking around he learns that everyone thinks he is nasty and a bully. However, he turns this around and learns to say sorry.

A light hearted story, with bright and humorous illustrations, which perfectly convey emotions such as guilt and friendship

Sykes, Julie **That Pesky Dragon** *Hodder* £10.99  
9780340931998

The most surprising animal on Izzy's dad's farm is a dragon. It causes so much trouble that he has to call "Remove-a-dragon" to help.

A creative spread of wonderfully coloured illustrations.

Webb, Matilda **The Ship's Kitten** *Happy Cat* £4.99  
9781905117833

A little kitten is sheltering from the wind and rain in a cardboard box in the harbour. She tries to find a home on one of the many different boats, but they all appear to have a ship's cat.

A lovely tale with an appealing main character and a satisfying ending. Suitable for early readers, with distinctive black and white illustrations.

Willis, Jeanne **Mammoth Pie** *Andersen Press* £10.99  
9781842706596

Og is a hungry caveman who decides to catch the mammoth on the mountainside in order to make yummy mammoth pie. He needs help and a plan, but his friends can help him catch the mammoth and eat the pie.

A fun book, pacy, with lots of rhyme and bright, colourful illustrations.

Wormell, Chris **Molly and the Night Monster** *Jonathan Cape*  
£10.99 9780224070737

Molly wakes up to the sound of a step on the stairs and imagines all sorts of monsters on the other side of her bedroom door.

The layout of the double spread pages and the muted blue colours, evocative of twilight, add to the atmosphere and tension. Molly's facial expressions and her bravery give us an appealing heroine and the ending is absolute perfection for a bedtime story.

Wormell, Chris **The Saddest King** *Red Fox* £5.99  
978009948384

Set in a country where it is the law to be always happy. A small boy cries and is taken to the King, where he tries to convince the King that it is natural to cry sometimes.  
A lighthearted way to look at grief and its acceptability.

**8 – 12**

Almond, David **The Savage** Walker £7.99 9781406308150

Blue's father has died and he is being bullied at school by Hopper, so instead of a happy story he writes about a wild boy who lives and fends for himself. However Blue's story seems to come alive and the Savage enters Blue's real life.

A powerful, emotional story, brilliantly written and illustrated. A must-read!

Cole, Steve **Astrosaurs** Red Fox £4.99 9781862302556

Teggs commands a spaceship crewed by dinosaurs, but when his crew is kidnapped, not only does he have to face old enemies, but has to become an outlaw.

An enjoyable, lighthearted action adventure, with Astrosaur cards to collect, a website to visit and a whole series of books to read.

Colfer, Eoin **Airman** Puffin £6.99 9780141322216

Conor is thrown into Saltee Island's dungeons and branded a traitor. He needs to escape and clear his name, but to do that he needs to fly and Conor Broekhart was born flying.

An enjoyable action adventure story, shortlisted for the Carnegie award.

Gamain, Neil **The Graveyard Book** Bloomsbury 2008  
£12.99 9780747569015

Bod lives in the graveyard, adopted by the dead who take responsibility for his care and safety after his family is murdered by the sinister man, Jack. However, Bod's life is still in danger and the skills he learns from the dead, his own strength of character and the love and friendships he has developed will be vital if he is to survive.

An outstanding story, bursting with imagination, adventure, danger and horror. Silas and Bod are particularly appealing characters, and the story can be read a chapter at a time, making it ideal to read aloud.

Golding, Julia **The Chimera's Curse** Oxford 2008 £5.99  
9780192754639

This is book four in the "companions" series, where Connie is the last universal, keeping the peace between humans and hidden mythical creatures, who are threatened by our pollution. Kullervo, the shapeshifter, wants to use Connie to wipe out humanity and Connie and her friends must find a way to stop him.

A fast paced, enthralling fantasy with lots of action.

Golding, Julia **Black Heart of Jamaica** Egmont £8.99  
9781405237574

The heroine, Cat, decides to join a travelling theatre company and ends up in Jamaica, where she meets an old enemy.

An enjoyable, well-written story and funny in places. The characters are well described and the plot is good.

Golding, Julia **Dragonfly** Oxford University Press £5.99  
9780192727602

Princess Taoshira and Prince Ramil are ordered to marry in order to unite their lands, but they hate each other from the start. When they are kidnapped they have to work together in order to escape, but matters are complicated further as they have to work out who is their enemy and who they can trust.

An exciting adventure with strong characters and contrasting cultures.

Golding, Julia **Empty Quarter** *Egmont* £5.99  
9781405228190

Darcie is sent on a cruise ship to escape from her enemies, only to find herself unknowingly involved in another plot of her scheming grandfather's. After being shot at, kidnapped, left to die in the desert, and drugged by a "friendly" president, she learns a hard lesson in international politics.

A very exciting story, with a believable set of characters and realistic situations. Thoroughly enjoyable.

Hollyer, Belinda **Everything I Know About You** *Orchard Books* £5.99 9781846167669

Lizzie thinks Eric is making it up when he says their mum is working in the gift shop at the Natural History Museum. After all, their mum is dead so it can't be true. .. or is it?

A warm and engrossing family mystery.

Lacey, Josh **Bearkeeper** *Scholastic* £5.99  
9781407105437

Pip leaves home to go to London and punish a companion in the violent robbers who have stolen his family's life savings. He finds work at the Globe theatre and a companion in a badly mistreated bear.

An exciting story set in Tudor London, where life is hard, dirty and dangerous. Beware of the violent bloodbath at the end!

Laird, Elizabeth **Lost Riders** *Macmillan* £9.99  
9780230528956

Rashid and his little brother are taken to foreign country to work as camel jockeys. They are separated and although the work is punishingly hard and dangerous, Rashid finds he has a talent for

it. His brother is really suffering and Rashid must find a way to rescue him and escape.

A gripping story based on real life experiences, taking the reader to a very different land and way of life.

Lincoln, Christopher **Billy Bones** *Macmillan* £8.99  
9780330450140

The orphaned Millicent has to go to live with her greedy wicked uncle, where she becomes entangled with beings from the afterlife. Her adventures with ghosts and skeletons result in a happy ending for all.

A lively, fast paced story which is well-written with a depth of knowledge of children's imaginations.

Morpurgo, Michael **Kaspar Prince of Cats** *Harper Collins*  
2008 £12.99 970007266999

Prince Kaspar is wonderfully looked after by the Savoy Hotel and especially by the bell-boy, Johnny Trott, even if he is only a cat. Johnny and Kaspar share adventures and even survive the sinking of the Titanic in this gentle, heroic historical story.

Memorable characters and stunning illustrations combined with an easy-on-the-eye spacing of text result in an enjoyable and unforgettable read.

Priestley, Chris **Tales of Terror from the Black Ship**  
*Bloomsbury* £10.99 9780747589877

A stranger tells grisly, blood curdling stories to young Ethan and Cathy on a stormy night in the Old Inn. As the storm abates the children learn the truth of their predicament.

Don't read aloud to those of a nervous disposition!

Stanton, Andy **Mr Gum and the Dancing Bear** *Egmont*  
£5.99 9781405241793

When Polly meets a sobbing big brown bear in the town square they become firm friends and she decides to help him to return to the Kingdom of the Beasts where he belongs. However, those villains Mr. Gum and Billy have other plans for the bear – a dancing bear will be a ticket to fame.

Zany characters, funny illustrations, easy-on-the-eye text and madcap adventures add to the fun.

Strong, Jeremy **Lost! The Hundred-Mile-An-Hour Dog** *Puffin*  
£4.99 978014323251

Streaker jumps inside a delivery van to investigate the pie smell and ends up miles away from home and lost! She teams up with a cat and after many adventures, a baboon.

Streaker is a very funny and loveable dog and this latest tale about her exploits will be popular with readers.

### **Over 12's**

Brooks, Kevin **Black Rabbit Summer** *Penguin*  
9780141381459

Pete gets a call from Nic to meet up in the den with the old gang and then visit the funfair. When Pete's best friend, Raymond, disappears, he starts to worry, but then Nic goes missing and a police hunt begins. Tensions rise and secrets unfold as Pete tries to uncover the truth.

Skilful writing and characterisation as the tension rises to an almost unbearable level.

Dowd, Siobhan **Bog Child** *Definitions* £6.99  
9781862305915

Fergus and his Uncle Tally find the ancient body of a child in the bog and he becomes involved in the mystery of the bog child's life and death.

Set against the back drop of the Troubles and its affect on the lives of Fergus and his family, this is a sensitive and uplifting story.

Gray, Keith **Ostrich boys** *Definitions* £5.99  
9780099456575

Kenny, Sim and Blake are on a mission - they have stolen the ashes of their best friend Ross and are travelling to Ross in Scotland to give him a more fitting memorial.

A very thoughtful and at times funny story about friendship and growing up.

Hartnett, Sonya **The Ghost's Child** *Walker* £6.99  
9781406313192

Matilda looks back over her seventy five years and recalls her life and her love for Feather, a strange young man she meets on a beach.

This is a mixture of fable and ghost story. A beautiful, strange novel about life and the power of love. They say "if it's love set it free".... Read and weep. Lovely.

Ness, Patrick **The Knife of Never Letting Go** *Walker* £12.99  
9781406310252

Set in a place and time somewhere in the future this is the story of Todd, the last boy in his town. Just a month before he becomes a man Todd's life changes drastically and forever, and he begins a dangerous and sinister journey.

An extraordinary, astounding and very different book which holds the reader's attention from beginning to end (which comes far too soon). It is beautifully written with strong memorable characters and a storyline you wished you'd thought up yourself. Fantastic!

Rees, Celia **Sovay** *Bloomsbury* £10.99 9780747592006

Set in 1794 in England this is the story of Sovay, a young woman from a good background, who becomes a highway robber. At first her adventure is a bit of a game, but very soon Sovay is involved in all kinds of deceit and treachery.

The story moves at a cracking pace and is full of adventure and intrigue. Lovers of historical fiction will really enjoy this book, with its strong central character and real sense of time and place.

Thompson, Kate **Creature of the night** *Bodley Head* £10.99  
9780370329291

When Bobby's mother moves the family to the country, she says it's to get him away from his wild life in Dublin, drinking, taking drugs and stealing cars. Bobby tries to get his old life back, but strange things are happening at the cottage and he finds some aspects of his new life aren't so bad after all.

Contrasting settings and values with a touch of fantasy make a strange, but compelling novel. Bobby seems a thoroughly dislikeable character, but is he really?