

UKLA Book Award Winners 2016

The unique UKLA Book Awards are the only awards judged entirely by teachers, who are able to share the books with their classes and genuinely discover what works with young readers.

12-16+ Winner

The Lie Tree by Francis Hardinge, published by Macmillan.

It is the brilliant powerful language of Frances Hardinge's wholly compelling, dark mystery that so impressed the judges. The perfectly portrayed Victorian period with the themes of science, religion and the role of women stimulated really interesting class discussion. Despite the fantastically weird story of the Lie Tree itself this is an intensely human novel with young readers able to really relate to Faith and feel her anger and frustration and her growing realization of parental fallibility.

7-11 Winner

The Imaginary by A.F. Harrold and Emily Gravett, published by Bloomsbury

A beautifully written and perfectly illustrated tale that has clever elements of observational comedy and refreshingly candid, engaging characterisation set within a deliciously scary story that completely won over the judges. A.F. Harrold's poetic language takes readers to the dark heart of imagination where the very nature of friendship is tested. This is a very moving, accessible and yet challenging book which certainly stimulates young readers to use their own imagination.

3-6 Winner

Little Red and the Very Hungry Lion by Alex.T. Smith, published by Scholastic

Little Red Riding Hood transposed to an African town setting where a lion is really no match for a clever small girl delighted the judges with its exuberant original twisting of the traditional story. The inventive layout of the text and its relationship to the witty, beautifully coloured illustrations really enhance the child friendly storytelling. The empowering portrayal of different cultures and a heroine who is not a naive victim ensure that this will become a classroom classic.

Highly Commended

7-11: The Boundless by Kenneth Oppel, published by David Fickling

Judges commended this adventure on a huge scale, with hurtling action beautifully complemented by an unusually reflective hero and a wonderfully vivid supporting cast and setting. A much faster paced read than the length would suggest, helped by the use of present tense, with young readers also stimulated by the imaginative use of language and fascinated by the moral dilemmas portrayed.

3-6: On Sudden Hill by Linda Sarah and Benji Davies, published by Simon & Schuster

Judges commended this poignant tale which approaches difficult areas for children and does so with sensitivity and a real understanding of childhood relationships with each other. Emotive imagery in both the poetic language and the subtle, gentle pictures can prompt useful discussion of restorative justice as well as inspiring imaginative use of cardboard boxes!