



## More about the UKLA Book Awards 2018 Longlists

### ***Odd Dog Out* Rob Biddulph**

There's one dog who just can't fit in with the world around her. Feeling isolated she goes in search of a place where everyone is just like her. However, she soon begins to question whether being the odd dog out mightn't be better after all. Biddulph's gentle, witty book explores a theme which will be important to many readers. There is a grace in the verse and an emotional impact in the pictures.

### ***The Storm Whale in Winter* Benji Davies**

When Noi's fisherman father seems lost in an arctic storm, Noi tries to rescue him but in turn has to be saved by his friends the whales. With its wonderful setting and powerful themes of friendship and courage this is a thought-provoking story. The language fits the narrative perfectly, unobtrusive while conveying powerful ideas.

### ***A First Book of Animals* Nicola Davies, ill. Petr Horacek**

A mixture of poetry and factual information, this is a book for sharing in every classroom. Davies focuses on a broad range of animals from the popular and huge such as the blue whale to more unusual creatures like the pleasurable horrifying eyelash mite. The language and illustrations are glorious.

### ***The Night Gardener* The Fan Brothers**

William's grim town is transformed as night by night, trees are clipped to wonderful animal shapes. As the town is transformed so are the people. When William discovers the secret of the night gardener, he will never be the same again. The important themes of this book are carried through spare language and evocative pictures.

### ***Old Hat* Emily Gravett**

Harbet has a hat which his Nana knitted for him long ago. When he wears it, he is told it is old fashioned. His attempts to find fashionable hats become more and more gloriously extreme until Harbet reveals his big surprise. While this book has a valuable theme of making decisions for oneself, children will mostly love it for the riotous humour.

***Oi Dog!* Kes and Claire Gray ill. Jim Field**

Dog likes to sit on a frog but the frog isn't keen so he makes up a new set of rhyming rules about seating arrangements in this clever, funny and rather subversive book. There has to be time for young children to revel in the pleasure of playing with language. *Oi Dog* offers just such an opportunity.

***A Bottle of Happiness* Pippa Goodhart, ill. Ehsan Abdollahi**

On one side of the mountain, people have all the material things they could possibly want. The people on the other side have little except story, laughter and music. When one brave boy carries a bottle of happiness over the mountain, all lives are made better. This beautiful modern fable is enriched by unique artwork.

***The Darkest Dark* Chris Hadfield and Kate Fillion ill. The Fan Brothers**

There was once a boy who was afraid of the dark but who overcame his fears to become an astronaut and work in the darkness of space. The true story of astronaut Chris Hadfield is told with warmth and honesty. This excellently written and illustrated autobiography will inspire readers.

***Goodnight Everyone* Chris Haughton**

As night falls all the creatures in the forest begin to feel sleepy except Little Bear. When none of his friends want to play, even Little Bear becomes sleepy. The kindly humour of *Goodnight Everyone* is conveyed in spare but vivid language and the bold design of the pictures. Very young children will understand and appreciate the story.

***Colin and Lee Carrot and Pea* Morag Hood**

Just because you happen to be a pea, is that any reason why you can't be friends with a carrot? Lee doesn't think so. This clever book explores the idea that diversity enriches our lives in a very simple way which children will understand. Illustration and text work together perfectly to offer a story which can be enjoyed in different ways.

***A Child of Books* Oliver Jeffers & Sam Winston**

This beautiful book is a celebration of the transformative power of story in all our lives. Readers are led through situations created by the words of classic children's literature. As imagination begins to blossom, the pages become more and more colourful. This is an inspiring book which could be explored in many ways in the classroom.

***It Starts with a Seed* Laura Knowles & Jennie Webber**

The growth of a seed into a huge tree is described in vivid verse and clear, almost diagrammatic pictures which are beautiful and informative. *It Starts with a Seed* treats its young readers with great respect, recognising their desire for a greater understanding of the natural world while showing that growth is wonderful.

***Grandad's Secret Giant* David Litchfield**

Billy thinks that his grandad's stories of a helpful giant can't be true. When he encounters the Giant he runs away but comes to realise that, just because people are different, it doesn't mean that they are a threat. This important message of *Grandad's Secret Giant* is told through vivid language and engaging pictures.

***Pigeon P.I.* Meg McLaren**

The pigeon private detective has decided not to take on any more cases but then birds start to go missing all over the town. Older children will be drawn to Pigeon P.I. for its unique voice and references to other genres. It is a witty, exuberant book which grows even better with each rereading.

***My Name is not Refugee* Kate Milner**

Before they are forced to leave their home, a mother explains to her young child what it will be like to be a refugee. From the endpapers which show rows of identical tiny tents, readers are encouraged to consider how they would react to the situations which face refugees. It is a poignant book which addresses the issue in a very accessible way.

***Don't Cross the Line* Isabel Minhos Martins & Bernado P Carvalho trans. Daniel Hahn**

As you open this book, a guard stands on duty preventing anyone crossing from the left-hand page to the right-hand one. Gradually the left-hand pages become more and more congested until a ball crosses the line. This inventive and highly original book gives young readers a great deal to explore and enjoy as well as encouraging them to consider some complex issues.

***The Wolf who Cried Boy!* James O'Neill ill. Russell Ayton**

The village children are warned about the wolves which live in the forest. The wolf cubs in the forest are warned about the villagers. When a cub and a boy meet, first there is fear but then they become friends. This is a wittily written book with pictures which capture the tone perfectly. There is plenty to amuse and fascinate children and teachers.

***You Must Bring a Hat* Simon Phillip & Kate Hindley**

The party invitation says you must bring a hat but when the boy arrives the doorman makes another stipulation, and another and another. In the world of *You Must Bring a Hat* of course all badgers can

play the piano and elephants wear tutus. Woven into the glorious silliness is the message of deciding just how far you should go to conform to what others want of you.

***Counting with Tiny Cat* Viviane Schwarz**

There are many counting books but there has never been one quite like this! There is a story, a character and humour in *Counting with Tiny Cat*. There is also a focus on the informal language of number, such as 'lots' which is used every day but seldom explored in school. This is certainly a very useful book but, more importantly, it is a book to love.

***A Perfect Day* Lane Smith**

It is a perfect day in the garden for cat, dog, bird and squirrel but then bear comes along determined to make his day perfect too. Pictures and poetic text combine beautifully in this book, bringing the animals and the garden to life for readers. The theme of respecting the needs and wishes of others is treated in a thought-provoking but subtle way.

***Under the Same Sky* Britta Teckentrup**

Written in lilting, unforced verse, *Under the Same Sky* explores animals living in different environments but having the same ways of enjoying life. The theme is valuable to all of us and as it is handled in such a gentle, engaging way, children will choose to return to this book to explore the rich language and pictures.

***My Pictures after the Storm* Eric Vielle trans. Daniel Hahn**

This is unique. On one side of each spread there is a fairly conventional, thematic group of pictures but the other side tells a different story as something has mixed them up. Humour is everywhere in word play and in illustration. It is great to see a book which asks children to focus closely, find links and bask in the best sort of silliness.

***Grumpy Frog* Ed Vere**

Frog has made his mind up about everything in his life. After a close encounter with a crocodile he decides that some of his opinions might need to change. Children will love the varied, contemporary text and the strong clever pictures. This wise, very funny book explores the ways in which we can grow into new ideas.

**7-11**

***The Tale of Angelino Brown* David Almond ill. Alex T. Smith**

Bert Brown is a notorious grumpy bus driver. When one day he finds a tiny boy with wings who he takes home, life changes for Betty and Bert Brown. The story develops into a funny but poignant

exploration of goodness which is both accessible and rewarding. David Almond writes with unique, inventive sureness which draws readers in from the first sentence.

***Peter in Peril* Helen Bate**

This is the true story of Peter, a young Jewish boy who survived the Second World War in Budapest. Its presentation in a graphic form and the immediacy of the recollections make this a very accessible story of life lived in terrible times. Despite the terror there is love and kindness running through this book.

***Football School Season 1* Alex Bellos & Ben Lyttleton ill. Spike Gerrell**

Can you imagine what it would be like if the whole curriculum was football focused? You don't have to because Alex Bellos & Ben Lyttleton have done it for you. Everything from Biology to Philosophy is covered in this naughty but very informative book. Even football haters will be impressed.

***Lesser Spotted Animals* Martin Brown**

There are some animals that don't appear in most animal books. Martin Brown has brought together some of the most strange and interesting of these 'lesser spotted animals' here. Written in a witty engaging way which children will love, this book offers a great deal of information and celebrates the range of the natural world.

***Aubrey and the Terrible Ladybirds* Horatio Clare ill. Jane Matthews**

A family of ladybirds arrive on a ship and decide that Woodside Terrace would be the perfect place to make a new home. But the newspapers are full of stories about invading killer ladybirds and not all the insects are very welcoming either. It takes a human boy, Aubrey, to save the situation. This timely allegory can also be enjoyed as a clever and funny story.

***Fish Boy* Chloe Daykin ill. Richard Jones**

When everything gets too much for Billy he swims in the sea or imagines life as a wildlife documentary. Then he meets a mackerel who speaks Hungarian, and Patrick, conjuror and naturalist, starts at Billy's school. This highly original novel is beautifully written with a pace which ensures that there isn't a wasted word. Billy's worlds of land and sea are completely convincing.

***Me and Mr P* Maria Farrer ill. Daniel Rieley**

Arthur's younger brother's special needs seem to dominate the family. When a huge and helpful polar bear arrives on the doorstep, Arthur finds that things begin to change. The story is told conventionally and through Arthur's journal entries. Though raw and very honest, it also has a strong sense that things can become better.

***Rabbit and Bear* Julian Gough ill. Jim Field**

Spring is in the air and Rabbit feels like a snooze in the sunshine. However, Woodpecker is at work making a nest hole in a tree and the noise is intolerable. Bear helps Rabbit to climb the tree and see the world differently. Very warm, witty and wise, this book recognises that young children appreciate big ideas.

***The Street Beneath my Feet* Charlotte Guillain ill. Yuval Zommer**

This beautiful book takes the reader down beneath the city street past cables, pipes, archaeology and fossils right to the centre of the Earth. Then we come out again, this time through the layers of a natural environment. The information is intriguing and, as it is presented through vivid text and detailed pictures, is very accessible.

***The Song from Somewhere Else* A.F. Harrold ill. Levi Pinfold**

Nobody in school really likes Nick. He's too big and he smells strange. When he rescues her from bullies, Frank gets to know Nick and finds out the reason for the songs she hears coming from his cellar. Text and pictures work together perfectly to wrap the reader in the strange beauty of this remarkable book.

***Yours Sincerely, Giraffe* Megumi Iwasa, ill. Jun Takabatake translated by Cathy Hirano**

Giraffe is bored and lonely until he becomes penfriends with a penguin. The difficulty is that he'd love to be as much like his new friend as possible but he doesn't really know what a penguin looks like. There is a lovely silly seriousness about giraffe's actions which makes this book very funny as it explores the nature of friendship.

***Welcome to Nowhere* Elizabeth Laird**

All twelve-year-old Omar wants is for his happy life in Bosra to continue. When the bombs start to fall, the family has no choice but to try to reach the safety of Jordan. Elizabeth Laird writes about important events with a passion and immediacy which will communicate to all readers. This is not always a comfortable book, nor should it be. This world is not always a comfortable place.

***The Legend of Podkin One-Ear* Kieran Larwood ill. David Wyatt**

When Podkin's happy life in the warren is ended by a sudden attack, he has to accept his responsibilities and become a leader of rabbits. This exciting, fast paced adventure story will grip the attention of young readers. Characterisation is attractive and believable and the world of the rabbit realms is entirely convincing.

***A Story Like the Wind* Gill Lewis ill. Jo Weaver**

Rami is in an inflatable boat in the middle of the ocean. Nothing is left of his former life but the instrument case he is clutching. Everyone else in the boat is a stranger. Then Rami starts to play and to tell an ancient story which draws strangers together to talk about the dreams and hopes that are keeping them alive. With memorable words and pictures, this is a special book.

***The White Fox* Jackie Morris**

Sol feels out of place and alone in Seattle. When he sees an arctic fox at the dockside, it seems to offer a way to become close to his father again and to return to the wild cold places which he loves. The settings and characters are fascinating. This beautifully written and illustrated book explores themes which will resonate with readers.

***Good Dog McTavish* Meg Rosoff ill. Grace Easton**

When McTavish the dog decides to rescue the Peachey family, he knows it will take a great deal of patience to train them properly. He is a clever, well-informed dog so his efforts are gradually rewarded. This very accessible book is about everyday family life from a perspective which children and adults will find original and entertaining. Perhaps we all need a McTavish!

***The Goldfish Boy* Lisa Thompson**

Matthew only feels safe in his bedroom where everything is clean and predictable. He spends a lot of time looking out of his window noticing what is happening in his quiet road. When a toddler disappears, Matthew realises that he must try to end his isolation to save the child. There is a brilliantly fast paced story at the heart of this warm-hearted book.

***There May be a Castle* Piers Torday ill. Rob Biddulph**

When the car crashes on Christmas eve, only eleven year old Mouse is able to struggle from the wreckage. He knows he must find help but the snowy landscape has changed: Mouse is caught up in a magical quest. Twisty, clever and compassionate, *There May be a Castle* rewards children more on each rereading.

***What Not to do if you Turn Invisible* Ross Welford**

Desperate to clear up her acne, Ethel buys a product from the internet which is guaranteed to cure her spots. It certainly does but only by making her invisible. In the hands of a less accomplished writer this could be little more than a romp. However, Ross Welford creates a book which is certainly funny but which also has real depth.

***The Road to Ever After* Moira Young ill. Hannah George**

In a small American town, a homeless boy called Davy David creates images of angels onto the bare earth outside the priest's house. This is the beginning of a story which finds Davy and his dog helping

an old lady return to her childhood home. Wild, strange and full of extraordinary incidents, this remarkable book will amply reward its readers.

## **12-16**

### ***The Hypnotist* Laurence Anholt**

In 1960's America, orphan Pip is hired as a farmhand. Jack, who lives close to the farm, is a hypnotist. When racial tensions threaten Pip, Jack must use his skills to save him. This powerful novel exposes attitudes and behaviour which are still raw and relevant. The structure is rewardingly complex and very well controlled.

### ***Alpa: Abidjan to Gare du Nord* Bessora & Barroux trans. Sarah Ardizzone**

Alpha is a cabinet-maker in Cote d'Ivoire. His wife and child are travelling to Paris without visas and, when he has not heard from them for a very long time, Alpha decides he must follow. The story of his journey is told through harrowing text and pictures. This book will make you weep and will deepen understanding of the reasons why refugees risk everything.

### ***We Come Apart* Sarah Crossan & Brian Conaghan**

Jess and Nicu meet when they are both doing community service. Nicu is expecting to return to Romania and an unwanted arranged marriage; Jess lives in an abusive household. Their love brings them together, everything is pulling them apart. Written in the voices of the main characters in very accessible verse, this poignant story is unforgettable.

### ***Mind the Gap* Phil Earle**

Mikey's father wasn't around much in his life but when he dies suddenly and very young, Mikey's grief almost destroys him. His best friend, the narrator, does everything he can to save Mikey from himself. Written to be accessible to teenagers who struggle with reading, this is a very engaging, satisfying book with real situations and characters.

### ***Lydia* Natasha Farrant**

Lydia, the youngest daughter of the Bennet family finds life in 1811 Hertfordshire very tedious indeed. When she escapes to the pleasures of Brighton, she is determined to enjoy herself and find a husband. You do not have to have read *Pride and Prejudice* to enjoy this funny, rumbustious diary of a young lady living life to the full.

### ***The Bone Sparrow* Zana Fraillon**

Subhi was the first child to be born in the refugee camp where he still lives. Jimmie is a girl who lives outside the camp. Their friendship grows but there are no simple happy endings in this situation. As readers realise where the camp is situated, this tragic story becomes even more powerful. Written with real humanity and flashes of humour, this is an important book.

***The Island at the End of Everything* Kiran Millward Hargrave**

Culion Island in the Philippines is a beautiful place but no-one would want to go there. It is where people suffering from leprosy are sent. Ami has always lived there with her mother so she has never experienced the cruelty of the outside world. Interwoven with folklore, this remarkable novel offers vivid narration and emotional depth.

***Passing for White* Tanya Landman**

In 1847 Benjamin a young slave, meets Rosa, a beautiful girl whose skin is pale enough for her to appear to be white. They find a way to escape to freedom where their love can survive. This is such an extraordinary story it is hard to believe it is based on true events. Vivid, fast-paced and very accessible, *Passing for White* deserves a very wide readership.

***Orangeboy* Patrice Lawrence**

Marlon has managed to be almost invisible in Hackney, avoiding all the troubles which his elder brother brought home. However, when beautiful Sonya buys him a hotdog he is propelled into a life he never wanted. This gritty novel feels completely authentic and readers will empathise with Marlon. The dialogue and incidents are very dramatic.

***Kid Got Shot* Simon Mason**

Garvie Smith, 'all brain and no energy', is supposed to be revising for his exams but then a boy is shot. Garvie has no confidence that the police will find the killer so he'd better do it himself. Witty and deeply disrespectful, Garvie is the perfect hero for a teenage novel. This is a slick, filmic, clever novel which is irresistible.

***Out of Heart* Irfan Master**

Adam feels a huge responsibility for his family, as his father has gone and his younger sister doesn't speak. Then the recipient of his grandfather's heart seems compelled to become very close to the family. Quotations and wordplay help to build the portrayal of Adam in this complex and original book. This is one to read slowly; it will certainly be worth it.

***Where the World Ends* Geraldine McCaughrean**

On a bright August day in 1727, Gwilliam joins the men and boys who are going to collect seabirds for winter food. He has done it before and the boat will collect them in a couple of weeks so

Gwilliam isn't worried. But the boat does not return. As powerful, beautiful and terrifying as the sea around St Kilda, this is a remarkable book.

***Optimists Die First* Susin Nielsen**

Tula isn't looking for love; she is too busy avoiding all the dangers of her world. Then Jacob joins her therapy group; pessimist and optimist are brought together. Susin Nielsen brings two complex characters vividly to life. Their problems are very real and raw but there is also humour and a message of hope in this very satisfying book.

***Frogkisser* Garth Nix**

Princes Anya is perfectly happy that her older sister Morven will inherit the kingdom. She is quite happy in the castle library. But she hasn't considered the machinations of her wicked stepfather. This glorious twisting of the conventions of a traditional fairy tale is crammed with inventive quirks of plot and language. It is a delight.

***Black Light Express* Philip Reeve**

In a universe of sentient trains which travel between worlds, two teenagers struggle to survive and to understand the wonders they find beyond the known train tracks. The scope of the imagination in *Black Light Express* is stunning; every detail is believable. The balance of the fantasy with the realism of the characters and their situations makes this a compelling book to read.

***Saint Death* Marcus Sedgwick**

Arturo lives near the Mexican-US border in a nightmare world of gangs and drug lords. St Death reaches out in all her forms. This is an extraordinarily powerful book, a thriller which brings empathy for Arturo whose desperate poverty forces desperate decisions. The beauty of the writing intensifies the darkness of the plot of this powerful book.

***The Hate U Give* Angie Thomas**

Starr lives a difficult double life, living in a poor neighbourhood but attending a prestigious school some way away. When she is the only witness to an incident where a policeman shoots her unarmed friend, deciding what she should do begins to tear her apart. Despite its American setting, the dilemmas in this book will be very real for many readers.

***Encounters* Jason Wallace**

It is 1994. Many of the students at a school in Zimbabwe believe that they have seen an alien vessel land in the woods. Gary is sceptical but the children, especially one little , are very scared. Unflinchingly depicting the racist and homophobic attitudes of the time and setting, this is a very powerful book for older teenagers.

***Wolf Hollow* Lauren Wolk**

In the summer of 1943, Annabelle and her family are living a peaceful life in the rural community of Wolf Hollow. But when Betty arrives from the city, her malicious lies tear the village apart. This is a perfectly structured book in which every word and incident is significant. A subtle thought-provoking book.

***Goodbye Days* Jeff Zentner**

When Carver's three best friends are killed in a road accident, he believes he is to blame. So do some of the dead boys' relations. Through 'goodbye days' where Carver meets with the family to do the things which their boy loved most, a kind of reconciliation begins to grow. *Goodbye Days* is both heart-breaking and heart-warming.

Jackie Brien

UKLA Team