



## SHORTLISTS ANNOUNCED FOR THE UNIQUE AWARDS FROM TEACHERS

- **Lockdown could not dampen teacher’s enthusiasm for reading**
  - **Past winners and dazzling debuts vie for the prizes**
  - **Morag Hood could win for an unprecedented third time**
- **Elizabeth Wein and Patrick Ness could join the ranks of double winners**

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Once again COVID 19 has impacted upon the judging of these unique book awards, the normal process for which includes assessing the impact of the books within the classroom and the students’ responses to them. With the nation in lockdown and teachers facing the challenge of providing both online teaching and face to face teaching for keyworker children, it is quite remarkable how they have maintained their enthusiastic reading and sharing. As Chris Lockwood, Chair of the Book Awards, said *“The UKLA has been enormously impressed by the commitment and resilience of our teacher judges and group leaders for the 2021 Book Awards. Despite the difficulties of printing and distribution of our longlisted books during the pandemic, as well as school closures and home learning, they have kept in touch with each other and their pupils with skill and enthusiasm, and produced four varied, diverse and scintillating shortlists”*

The judging criteria call for the selection to be from a “wide and inclusive range” of publishers and for books which “recognise a broad range of perspectives, experiences and voices” and this is reflected in all four categories with themes of diversity, inclusion, empathy and inspiration all represented amongst books which have proved effective in engaging readers, even when shared remotely.

In the 3-6 age group we have back to back shortlisting for the Wendy Meddour and Daniel Egnéus partnership, who also featured in 2020. *Tibble and Grandpa*, is a touching intergenerational tale of loss and resilience. *It's a No Money Day* by Kate Milner reflects an unfortunate reality for all too many children but has an important and positive message about family resilience. Already the winner of the Waterstone's Children's Book Prize, Nathan Byron and Dapo Adeola's *Look Up!*, has an inspiring space obsessed heroine as a positive role model, while night time reassurance is provided by *I am not (very) afraid of the Dark* by Anna Milburne and Daniel Riley, praised for its very clever design. The final two places in this category go to books on the list of Two Hoots, a small press with a very good awards record. *One Fox* by outstanding debut illustrator Kate Read was also shortlisted for the Klaus Flugge prize but here is up against *Brenda is a Sheep* by Morag Hood, who already has two UKLA wins in this category.

The 7-10+ category features three exciting debut authors and amazing stories which really engaged young readers. From tiny Welsh publisher, Firefly Press, *Lori and Max* by Catherine O'Flynn is a wonderfully relatable and poignant tale of friendship. *The Girl Who Stole an Elephant* by Nizrana Farook is a vivid, exciting jungle adventure and *The Super Miraculous Journey of Freddie Yates* by Jenny Pearson manages to be both hilarious and touching. They are all competing against the previously shortlisted Stewart Foster, whose *Check Mate* is the empathetic tale of a boy struggling with school and an intergenerational mystery. *Owen and the Soldier* by Lisa Thompson touches upon grief, remembrance and mental health in a highly accessible format. Branford Boase winner, M.G Leonard, completes the category with a thrilling adventure, *The Highland Falcon Thief*, written in partnership with Sam Steadman.

Two previous category winners go head to head in the 11-14+ category. Patrick Ness is shortlisted for *Burn*, a powerful integration of alternative history and dragon mythology and Elizabeth Wein for *The Enigma Game*, with its thought provoking themes of loyalty and friendship in WW2. Elizabeth Acevedo could improve on her 2019 Highly Commended award with her verse novel *Clap When you Land*, also currently shortlisted for the Carnegie medal, as is yet another verse novel, *Run Rebel*, by debut British author Manjeet Mann. Another independent publisher continues to do well with teachers. The appearance of another Branford Boase winning author with Liz Hyder's dramatic debut *Bearmouth*, which

has also won a Waterstones prize, makes this the third 11-14+ shortlist in a row for Pushkin Press. Completing the set is a powerful Hiroshima survivor story, *The Last Paper Crane* by Kerry Drewery, the second book from Hot Key Books in this category.

The category of Information Books 3- 14+, still in its infancy, seeks creative non-fiction from a “diverse range of voices and perspectives” where issues and themes are represented “inter-culturally and with equality”. The judges’ selections span a range of subjects from Michael Rosen’s *The Missing*, his search for family lost in the Holocaust; to questions of philosophy in *Big Ideas for Young Thinkers* by Jamia Wilson and Andrea Pippins; Russian social history through the story of *The Apartment* by Alexandra Litvina and Anna Desnitskaya; endangered animals in Ben Rothery’s *Hidden Planet*; Black history in *The Undefeated* by Kwame Alexander and Kadir Nelson and *Exquisite*, the life of Pulitzer prizewinning poet Gwendoline Brooks by Suzanne Slade and Cozbi Cabrera. Delivering important messages about equality and racism, the shortlist demonstrates the quality and sheer beauty of informational publishing. Judges commented enthusiastically on the interest, engagement, curiosity and enjoyment provoked by these titles both within the classroom and extending into the home.

The fact that these shortlists are judged by class teachers and can be heartily recommended to their peers makes them particularly useful as co-sponsor Deborah McLaren, Director of LoveReading4kids said: *“The UKLA does it again in creating a magnificent shortlist of children’s books. Thanks to all who took part in curating this selection of stunning quality information texts and fantastic fiction right across the age ranges. Many of these we have also adored at LoveReading and we can’t wait to see which ones nab the winning spots in each category this year. It is a pleasure to again be part of this important award judged by class teachers who are heartily recommending them to their peers. LoveReading4Kids and LoveReading4Schools are delighted to again partner with the UKLA to help encourage reading for pleasure and engender a lifelong love of reading in children.”*

For UKLA, giving classroom practitioners the opportunity to read high quality new children’s books is as important as finding an overall winner. Research carried out by members of UKLA (Cremin et al 2008) clearly demonstrated the links between teachers’ knowledge of

children's books and the likelihood of pupils becoming successful readers. Despite this evidence, teachers are seldom given time to read new books or funding to purchase them when they do.

*"I have found that being involved in the UKLA judging process has reignited my enthusiasm for young adult fiction and have been so impressed by the diversity and richness of what is being written for young people. I have found powerful texts which really resonate and encourage the students I teach to explore new texts, or perhaps to rediscover the joy of reading".* Ruth Kidman 11-14+ Teacher Judge

12 teachers nominated from the 70 involved in the shortlisting will now form the final judging panel and have the challenging task of reading all the shortlisted books in all categories. The winner's announcement will take place at the Virtual UKLA International Conference on July 2<sup>nd</sup> but it is hoped that a live celebration and presentation of the awards will take place later in the year.

**For further information and to request an interview with the shortlisted authors and illustrators, or for images, please contact** fao Chris Lockwood [awards@ukla.org](mailto:awards@ukla.org)

### **The Shortlists in full**

#### **3-6**

**Look Up!** Written by Nathan Bryon, illustrated by Dapo Adeola, Dapo (Puffin)

**Brenda is a Sheep** written and illustrated by Morag Hood (Two Hoots)

**Tibble and Grandpa** written by Wendy Meddour, Wendy, illustrated by Daniel Egnéus (Oxford)

**I'm Not (Very) Afraid of the Dark** written by Anna Milbourne, illustrated by Daniel Riley (Usborne)

**It's a No Money Day** written and illustrated by Kate Milner (Barrington Stoke)

**One Fox: a Counting Thriller** written and illustrated by Kate Read (Two Hoots)

#### **7-10+**

**The Highland Falcon Thief** written by M.G. Leonard and Sam Sedgeman, illustrated by Elisa Paganelli (Macmillan)

**The Super Miraculous Journey of Freddie Yates** written by Jenny Pearson, illustrated by Rob Biddulph (Usborne)

**Owen and the Soldier** written by Lisa Thompson, illustrated by Mark Lowery (Barrington Stoke)

**Check Mates** written by Stewart Foster (Simon & Schuster)

**The Girl Who Stole an Elephant** written by Nizrana Farook (Nosy Crow)

**Lori and Max** written by Catherine O'Flynn (Firefly Press)

#### **11-14+**

**Run Rebel** written by Manjeet Mann(Penguin)

**Burn** written by Patrick Ness (Walker)

**Clap When You Land** written by Elizabeth Acevedo (Hot Key)

**The Last Paper Crane** written by Kerry Drewery, illustrated by Natsko Seki (Hot Key)

**Bearmouth** written by Liz Hyder(Pushkin)

**The Enigma Game** written by Elizabeth Wein(Bloomsbury)

#### **Information Books 3 -14+**

**Big Ideas for Young Thinkers** written by Jamia Wilson, illustrated by AndreaPippins (Wide Eyed Editions)

**The Missing** written by Michael Rosen(Walker)

**The Apartment** written by Alexandra Litvina, translated by Antonia Bouis and illustrated by Anna Desnitskaya (Abrams Books for Young Readers)

**Exquisite : The Life and Poetry of Gwendolyn Brooks** written by Suzanne Slade, illustrated by Cozbi Cabrera (Abrams Books for Young Readers)

**The Undefeated** written by Kwame Alexander, illustrated by Kadir Nelson (Andersen Press)

**Hidden Planet** written and illustrated by Ben Rothery,Ben (Ladybird)

#### **Notes to Editors**

#### **About UKLA**

UKLA is a registered charity, which has as its sole object the advancement of education in literacy. UKLA is committed to promoting good practice nationally and internationally in literacy and language teaching and research. The Association was founded in 1963 as the United Kingdom Reading Association. In 2003 it changed its name to the United Kingdom Literacy Association, to reflect more accurately its wider range of focus and interest.

UKLA especially supports the development of approaches to literacy learning and teaching which underpin these understandings. The Association recognises the significance for effective language and communication learning of literature, drama, the visual media, non-fiction texts and information technology, as well as welcoming approaches to teaching which draw on the resources of a wide range of cultures and which are informed by a detailed understanding of how literacy and language work.

#### **About Capita Reading Cloud**

Sponsors Capita Reading Cloud have over 30 years' experience providing innovative software for schools and colleges. Today they support thousands of schools worldwide with managing their libraries, engaging their students and promoting reading for pleasure.

Reading Cloud provides all the features and functionality needed for day to day school library management as well as a safe online student engagement community and a new innovative literacy tool to ensure all students are able to develop long lasting positive attitudes to reading. To find out more visit [www.capita-readingcloud.co.uk](http://www.capita-readingcloud.co.uk).

### **About LoveReading4Schools and LoveReading4Kids**

We all know that reading is fundamental to the development of children. Countless research shows the links between good reading skills from an early age and future success in life. However we also know it can be hard to get children really excited by books given the many other exciting leisure time activities fighting for their attention.

Finding books to inspire children or finding authors that excite them, can be difficult; the choice is daunting and guidance rather thin on the ground. That's where LoveReading4Kids and its sister site LoveReading4Schools can help.

LoveReading4Kids is the UK's biggest and best recommendation site for children's books. Their passion for children's books ranges from toddlers to teens and ensures that whatever the age, whatever the interest, that they provide a steady stream of brilliant book recommendations for every child.

Unique features and services help parents and anyone who likes to buy books for children choose the best books for boys and girls of all ages ... and best of all, it is free to use. You can

- Download and print off the opening extract of over 10,000 children's books.
- Read exclusive online book reviews by children's book experts including Julia Eccleshare (author and ex-children's books editor at the Guardian).
- Explore reviews by members of our children's reader review panel.
- Dive into the Kids Zone, an area designed specifically for children, with competitions, quizzes and additional book related content.

At LoveReading it's all about sharing book love and LoveReading4Schools is a critical part of this and one we take very seriously. As a community we believe we have a social responsibility to support time-strapped teachers and librarians in schools to help engender a lifelong love of reading in their students.

The site has tons of functionality to encourage a reading for pleasure culture in schools and homes across the country. The website offers schools an easy, impartial and free way to create and share either our recommended reading lists or the school's own tailored lists with their parents and pupils, offering age appropriate books as well as themed collections of titles. This includes a fully updated set of reading recommendation lists for every year group from Early Years to Year 11.

There are also specialist categories for Reluctant and Dyslexic Readers that can make a real difference to those who struggle with their reading.

This March the LoveReading team launched this year's LoveReading4Kids #PoetryPrize with an extra-special poetry workshop by award-winning poet Joshua Seigal. If you have a creative 7-11 year old or a class of aspiring poets, find out more about this year's prize <https://www.lovereadings4kids.co.uk/blog/book-award-news/calling-all-aspiring-young-poets-6071>

Visit the websites [LoveReading.co.uk](http://LoveReading.co.uk), [LoveReading4Kids.co.uk](http://LoveReading4Kids.co.uk) and [LoveReading4Schools.co.uk](http://LoveReading4Schools.co.uk)

### **Past Winners**

#### **2020**

##### **3-6+**

Mixed written and illustrated by Aree Chung (Macmillan)

##### **7-10+**

The Eleventh Trade written by Alyssa Hollingsworth (Piccadilly Press)

##### **11-14+**

No Fixed Address written by Susin Nielsen (Andersen Press)

##### **Information 3-14+**

Counting on Katherine written by Helaine Becker and illustrated by Dow Phumiruk (Macmillan)

##### **Highly Commended.**

Child of St Kilda written and illustrated by Beth Waters (Childs Play)

#### **2019**

##### **3-6**

After the Fall written and illustrated by Dan Santat (Andersen Press)

##### **7-11**

The Explorer written by Katherine Rundell illustrated by Hannah Horn (Bloomsbury)

##### **Highly Commended**

Running on Empty written by S. E. Durrant illustrated by Rob Biddulph (Nosy Crow)

##### **12-16**

Long Way Down written by Jason Reynolds and illustrated by Chris Priestly (Faber)

##### **Highly Commended**

The Poet X written by Elizabeth Acevedo (Egmont Electric Monkey)

#### **2018**

**3-6:** Colin and Lee, Carrot and Pea written and illustrated by Morag Hood (Two Hoots)

**7-11:** (Joint Winners) Lesser Spotted Animals written and illustrated by Martin Brown (David Fickling Books)

Welcome to Nowhere written by Elizabeth Laird and illustrated by Lucy Eldridge (Macmillan)

**12-16:** Come Apart written by Sarah Crossan and Brian Conaghan (Bloomsbury)

#### **2017**

**3-6:** There's a Bear on MY Chair written and illustrated by Ross Collins (Nosy Crow)

**7-11:** The Journey written and illustrated by Francesca Sanna (Flying Eye Books)

**12-16:** The Reluctant Journal of Henry K Larsen written by Susin Nielsen (Andersen Press)

**Highly Commended:** The Marvels by Brian Selznick ( Scholastic)

**2016**

**3-6:** Little Red and the Very Hungry Lion by Alex.T. Smith, ( Scholastic)

**Highly Commended:** On Sudden Hill by Linda Sarah and Benji Davies(illustrator), (Simon & Schuster)

**7-11:** The Imaginary by A.F. Harrold and Emily Gravett (illustrator), ( Bloomsbury)

**Highly Commended:** The Boundless by Kenneth Oppel, (David Fickling)

**12-16+ :** The Lie Tree by Francis Hardinge( Macmillan)

**2015**

**3-6:** The Day the Crayons Quit, Drew Daywalt , Oliver Jeffers (illustrator)( HarperCollins

**7-11:** Oliver and the Seawigs, Philip Reeve and Sarah McIntyre, (Oxford University Press)

**Highly Commended 7-11 Award:** Us Minus Mum, Heather Butler, (Little,Brown)

**12-16:** Every Day by David Levithan, published by Egmont

**2014**

**3-6:** This is not my Hat, Jon Klassen (Walker Books)

**Highly Commended 3-6 Award:** Open Very Carefully, Nick Bromley, Nicola O'Byrne (Illustrator), (Nosy Crow)

**7- 11:** The Story of the Blue Planet, Andri Snær Magnason, Julian Meldon D'Arcy, (translator), Áslaug Jónsdóttir (Illustrator), (Pushkin Press)

**12- 16:** Now is the Time for Running, Michael Williams, (Tamarind Books, an imprint of Random House Children's Books)

**2013**

**3 - 6:** Good Little Wolf, Nadia Shireen Rayner (Jonathan Cape)

**7 - 11:** The Weight of Water, Sarah Crossan (Bloomsbury)

**12- 16:** Code Name Verity, Elizabeth Wein (Electric Monkey)

**2012**

**3 - 6:** Iris and Isaac, Catherine Rayner (Little Tiger Press)

**7 - 11:** Sky Hawk, Gill Lewis (Oxford University Press)

**12 - 16:** A Monster Calls, Patrick Ness, illustrated by Jim Kay (Walker)

**2011**

**3-11:** Birdsong, Ellie Sandall (Egmont)

**12-16:** Out of Shadows, Jason Wallace (Andersen Press)

**2010**

**3-11:** Then, Morris Gleitzman (Puffin)

**12-16:** The Graveyard Book, Neil Gaiman and Chris Riddell (illustrator) (Bloomsbury)

**Special commendation:** Tales from Outer Suburbia, Shaun Tan, (Templar)

**2009**

**3-11:** Archie's War, Marcia Williams (Walker)

**Highly commended 3-11:** The Invention of Hugo Cabret, Brian Selznick (Scholastic)

**12-16:** Bog Child, Siobhan Dowd (David Fickling - Random House Children's Books)

**2008**

Picture book category: Penguin, Polly Dunbar (Walker )

Here lies Arthur, Philip Reeve, (Scholastic)