

Meath County Council Library Services

Class Novels

A Guide for Primary School Teachers

Úrscéalta don Rang – Treoir do Mhúinteoirí Bunscoile



Published in 2016 by Meath County Council Library Service

Copyright © Meath County Council Library Service 2016

Class Novels: A Guide for Primary School Teachers is an introduction to a collection of over eighty books, which are available for loan to all primary schools in the county. The guide is an initiative of the Council's Public Library Service and it is a welcome addition to the County Meath 2016 Centenary Programme. The guide highlights the very best of contemporary children's writing, including a wide range of titles which explore the Easter Rising and the revolutionary period.

We wish to acknowledge the work of individual library staff, who contributed so much to this project, in particular Dymphna Herward, Schools Librarian and Emma Smith, who compiled the reviews.

We hope that through this guide, teachers will find book selection easier and that children will be introduced to books that they will enjoy and value.

Cllr Brian Fitzgerald, Cathaoirleach, Meath County Council

Jackie Maguire, Chief Executive, Meath County Council

Ciarán Mangan, County Librarian & 2016 Coordinator, Meath County Council

Is éard é *Class Novels: A Guide for Primary School Teachers* ná réamhrá ar bhailiúchán ina bhfuil os cionn ochtú leabhar agus atá ar fáil ar iasacht ag gach bunscoil sa chontae. Is tionscnamh de chuid Sheirbhís Leabharlainne Poiblí na Comhairle atá sa treoirleabhar agus cuireann sé go mór le Clár Comórtha 1916 Chontae na Mí. Leagann an treoirleabhar béim ar an gcuid is fearr de scríbhneoireacht leanaí na linne seo, lena n-áirítear raon leathan teideal a dhéanann iniúchadh ar an Éirí Amach agus ar thréimhse na réabhlóide.

Is mian linn aitheantas a thabhairt d'obair bhaill foirne aonair na leabharlainne, a chuir go mór leis an tionscadal seo, go háirithe Dymphna Herward, an Leabharlannaí Scoile agus Emma Smith, a chuir na léirmheasanna i dtoll a chéile.

Tá súil againn go mbeidh sé níos éasca do mhúinteoirí leabhair a roghnú tríd an treoirleabhar seo a úsáid agus go gcuirfear leabhair a dtaitneoidh leo agus a mbeidh luach ag baint leo faoi bhráid na leanaí.

An Comhairleoir Brian Fitzgerald, Cathaoirleach, Comhairle Chontae na Mí

Jackie Maguire, Príomhfheidhmeannach, Comhairle Chontae na Mí

Ciarán Ó Mangáin, Leabharlannaí Contae & Comhordaitheoir 2016, Comhairle Chontae na Mí

This item may be photocopied for use in the school or educational establishment to which it was presented, but may not be reproduced in any form or by any means – graphic, electronic or mechanical, including recording, taping or information retrieval systems, without the prior permission in writing of the publishers.

Designed by Anú Design, Tara

Printed by xxxxxx

Contents

1st–2nd Class

Beryl Goes Wild	Jane Simmons	8
Care of Henry	Anne Fine	8
The Diary of a Killer Cat	Anne Fine	9
Flat Stanley	Jeff Brown	9
The Hodgeheg	Dick King-Smith	10
The Legend of Captain Crow's Teeth	Eoin Colfer	10
The Legend of the Worst Boy in the World	Eoin Colfer	11
Rover Saves Christmas	Roddy Doyle	11
The Owl Tree	Jenny Nimmo	12
The Owl who was Afraid of the Dark	Jill Tomlinson	12

2nd–3rd Class

Aladdin and the Enchanted Lamp	Philip Pullman	13
Esio Trot	Roald Dahl	13
The Evil Hairdo	Oisín McGann	14
Fantastic Mr Fox	Roald Dahl	14
The Giggler Treatment	Roddy Doyle	15
The Girl with the Broken Wing	Heather Dyer	15
The Hundred-Mile-An-Hour Dog	Jeremy Strong	16
The Meanwhile Adventures	Roddy Doyle	16
The Poison Factory	Oisín McGann	17
Return of the Hundred Mile-An-Hour Dog	Jeremy Strong	17
Specky Becky Bucks	John Quinn	18
The Tale of Despereaux	Kate Di Camillo	18
The Worst Witch	Jill Murphy	19
The Worst Witch to the Rescue	Jill Murphy	19

3rd–4th Class

Bill's New Frock	Anne Fine	20
Billy Angel	Sam Hay	20
Born to Run	Michael Morpurgo	21
The Butterfly Lion	Michael Morpurgo	21
Charlotte's Web	E.B. White	22
Cool	Michael Morpurgo	22
Dominic's Discovery	Gervase Phinn	23
I Believe in Unicorns	Michael Morpurgo	23
Ivan the Terrible	Anne Fine	24
The London Eye	Siobhan Dowd	24
My Dad's A Birdman	David Almond	25
Shadow Forest	Matt Haig	25
Sky Hawk	Gill Lewis	26
Thanks for Telling Me, Emily	Deirdre Madden	26
Thar an Trasnán	Áine Ní Ghlinn	27
The Thing With Finn	Tom Kelly	27
Tom Crean: Ice Man	Michael Smith	28
When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit	Judith Kerr	28

4th–5th Class

The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips	Michael Morpurgo	29
Bill & Fred	John Quinn	29
The Black Book of Secrets	F.E. Higgins	30
Cosmic	Frank Cottrell Boyce	30
The Eighteenth Emergency	Betsy Byars	31
Esty's Gold	Mary Arrigan	31
The Guns of Easter*	Gerard Whelan	32
James and the Giant Peach	Roald Dahl	32
Kensuke's Kingdom	Michael Morpurgo	33
Matilda	Roald Dahl	33
Safe Harbour	Marita Conlon-McKenna	34
Scoil an Chnoic	Jacqueline de Brún	34

The Summer of Lily & Esme	John Quinn	35
Tom's Midnight Garden	Philippa Pearce	35
Treasure Island	Robert Louis Stevenson	36
WarHorse	Michael Morpurgo	36
Wilderness	Roddy Doyle	37

5th–6th Class

Airman	Eoin Colfer	37
Alone on a Wide Wide Sea	Michael Morpurgo	38
Anne Frank – The Diary of a Young Girl		38
Benny and Babe	Eoin Colfer	39
Benny and Omar	Eoin Colfer	39
The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas	John Boyne	40
Blood Upon the Rose: Easter 1916*	Gerry Hunt	40
Bridge to Terabithia	Katherine Paterson	41
Broken Glass	Sally Grindley	41
The Butterfly Heart	Paula Leyden	42
Faraway Home	Marilyn Taylor	42
Friend or Foe Which Side Are You On?	Brian Gallagher	43
Goodnight Mister Tom	Michelle Magorian	43
Holes	Louis Sachar	44
Michael Collins: Most Wanted Man*	Vincent McDonnell	44
The New Policeman	Kate Thompson	45
No Goodbye	Marita Conlon-McKenna	45
17 Martin Street	Marilyn Taylor	46
The Silver Notebook	Enda Wyley	46
Spilled Water	Sally Grindley	47
Stig of the Dump	Clive James	47
Titanic: An Edwardian Girl's Diary, 1912 – My Story	Ellen Emerson White	48
Under the Hawthorn Tree	Marita Conlon-McKenna	48
War Children*	Gerard Whelan	49
A Winter of Spies*	Gerard Whelan	49
Wonder	R.J. Palacio	50
The Young Rebels*	Morgan Llywelyn	50

Classroom Novels

Meath County Council Library Service has developed a classroom novel collection as part of its range of services to primary schools in the county. There are over 80 highly recommended titles in the collection with up to 30 copies in each set of novels.

Titles are arranged here by class. An alphabetical list of titles and an index of authors is also included.

The class allocation is a general guide.

Titles which support the decade of commemoration 2012–2022 are marked with an asterisk.

There may be some variation from year to year in the titles available.

Conditions of Use

- One set of novels per school at a time.
- The loan period is six working weeks. Books must be returned promptly and in good condition.
- Lost or damaged books will have to be replaced or paid for.
- The books are for classroom use only.
- Books may be collected from and returned to a local branch library.
- Titles may be requested by e-mail, telephone or by post
- Requests may be made one term in advance.

*Primary Schools Department, Meath County Council Library Service,
Railway Street, Navan, Co Meath
primaryschools@meathcoco.ie
046-9021134*

Úrscéalta Ranga

Tá bailiúchán úrscéalta ranga forbartha ag Comhairle Contae na Midhe mar chuid dá raon seirbhísí ar fáil do bhunscoileanna an chontae. Tá os cionn ochtó úrscéalta atá molta go h-ard sa bhailiúchán, le oiread is trocha cóip de gach úrscéal ann.

Cuirtear na teidil in eagar anseo de réir aicme. Tá innéacs aibítreach na teideal agus na n-údar iniata chomh maith.

Tugtar catagóiriú de réir aicme mar treoir ginearálta.

Aibhsítear le asterisk na teidil a dhéanann taca leis na Deich mBliana na gCuimhneachán.

D'fhéadfadh a bheith comhathrú ó bhliain go bliain maidir leis na teidil atá ar fáil.

Coinníollacha Úsáide

- Beidh tacar úrscéalta amháin i gcomhair scoile ag aon phointe amháin.
- Is é sé seachtaine oibre tréimhse na h-iasachta. Caithfear leabhair a fhilleadh go pras agus i ndea-chaoi.
- Caithfear íoc as leabhair atá caillte nó damáiste, nó earra ionaid a thabhairt ina n-áit.
- Is do úsáid ranga amháin atá na leabhair.
- Is féidir leabhair a bhailiú agus iad a thabhairt ar ais do bhrainse leabharlainne áitiúil.
- Is féidir teidil a iarraidh trí r-phost, trí fhón, nó tríd an phost.
- Is féidir iarratais a dhéanamh téarma amháin roimh-ré.

*Roinn na mBunscoileanna, Seirbhísí Leabharlainne Chomhairle Chontae na Mí,
Sráid an Iarraid, An Uaimh, Co. Na Mí
primaryschools@meathcoco.ie; 046-9021134*

Foreword

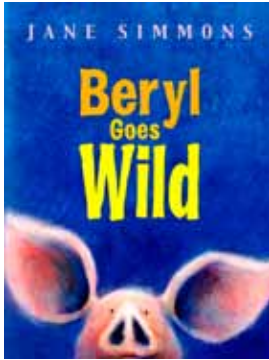
When you're in school, you're inclined to think of books as *work*. Textbooks, workbooks, readers . . . even the books that are just stories have to be thought about and talked about and even written down about. We speak all the time in class (even when we're not supposed to) and yet we don't think of speaking as *work*, when it's not work we're talking about. But writing is just speech printed onto paper. There's just something about text pages, bound together, with a cover on them, that so easily gets labelled as 'academic'.

I particularly remember in history classes, when I was a child back in the olden days, in the last century, when I was reading about real things that had happened even further back in time; big dramatic stuff, like wars, assassinations, disasters, revolutions . . . and some of the smaller stuff too, like when the first proper bicycle was invented. Or someone printed a poster declaring the birth of a new nation, but they didn't have enough of the right letters, so the poster looked a bit odd. There was a lot of really interesting stuff there and it was written well enough to make the facts clear. But it didn't get you in the gut, or in the heart, because there were a lot of facts to get across and not a lot of room for story.

Things have improved since I was in school, because the people who make schoolbooks understand that facts inform us, but it's the stories behind those facts that make us *care* enough to learn them. That *caring* bit is vital to learning – to *wanting* to learn. Stories do something facts often struggle to do. They make us care about what's happening. They get us emotionally involved; exciting us, worrying us, depressing us, scaring us, frustrating us, entertaining and satisfying us. They inspire empathy with others, promise experiences we might otherwise never have, might never have considered. They lift us up and drop us down and then lift us right back up again. And once we've gone on that ride to the end, we want to go straight back to the start and climb on board again.

Facts are essential, practical . . . but stories make us care and they make us curious and hungry, qualities that I developed as a child and value to this day. Thanks be to books.

Oisín McGann



Beryl Goes Wild

Jane Simmons

When a bumpy ride hurls Beryl and some other battery-farmed pigs from a lorry bound for the abattoir, she alone has the courage to seize the opportunity to escape. Her instinctive quest for liberty sees this motherless swine strive to survive in the wild, make new friends and find a home. The ensuing adventure highlights issues of endurance, growth, self-discovery, identity, companionship, interdependence, community and society. It also brings to the fore themes of love, loss, belonging and hope and deftly explores discrimination and injustice to ultimately avow diversity and tolerance.

This beautifully illustrated story of friendship, belonging and freedom offers many opportunities for young readers to reflect on important life lessons, including the impact of humans on the natural environment and the threat they pose to animals. With its blend of tension, humour, emotion and tragedy, this tale is ultimately very satisfying.

“.. packed with adventure and mystery.” **School Librarian**

“slightly kookie and totally hilarious – we want more Beryl books, please!” **National Geographic Kids**

Orchard Books, 2008



Care of Henry

Anne Fine

With his mother about to have a baby, Hugo must decide whom to live with while she is in hospital. Granny? Mrs. Mariposa next door? Uncle Jack? Never good at making decisions, Hugo adopts a new method to figure out who will offer him, and his dog Henry, the best care.

This gentle and heartwarming story about the friendship between a boy and his dog suggests that sometimes your heart has to overrule your head.

“Engaging...young readers are too rarely offered treats of this calibre.” **Books for Keeps**

“Rounded characters, revealing dialogue and stories, and mother’s help in resolving Hugo’s problem make this one of those stories which transform familiar sights into insights.” **Times Educational Supplement**

Walker Books, 2005, 1996



The Diary of a Killer Cat

Anne Fine

First a bird, then a mouse, Tuffy shows no remorse as he drags dead creatures through the cat flap much to the horror of his owner Ellie and her family. While soft-hearted Ellie beseeches her beloved pet to change his wild, wild ways, this cheeky feline cannot understand what all the fuss is about. Things take on a more serious tone when the next-door neighbour's rabbit arrives on the doormat.

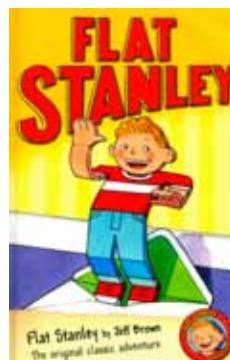
Littered with lighthearted illustrations, readers experience a wonderfully sharp and hilarious view of the world through a cat's eyes.

*"Okay, okay. So hang me.
I killed the bird.
For pity's sake, I'm a cat...."*

"Funny throughout. . . the black-and-white sketches, some full page, bring movement and personality to the characters." **School Library Journal**

Anne Fine is a distinguished prize-winning writer for children of all ages.

Puffin, 2004



Flat Stanley

Jeff Brown

Amazing things can happen when you are flat!

When the large bulletin board that hung above his bed falls off the wall one night, Stanley Lambchop emerges unharmed but flat as a pancake. The 9-year-old initially enjoys the advantages his altered shape affords him. His younger brother Arthur watches on with jealousy as Stanley slides under doorways, avoids walking by being entirely rolled up and carried, and gets to fly like a kite. One particularly special perk is that Stanley can now travel by post to America to visit his friends. In another adventure, Stanley helps capture some dangerous art thieves by posing as a painting on the museum wall. Eventually, however, the paper-thin hero tires of being different and confides in Arthur of his wish to return to his former round self. A compassionate Arthur springs to his aid with an inventive use for a bicycle pump!

This simple, humorous tale illustrates the ebb and flow of sibling dynamics and highlights some important lessons on the issues of manners, fame, and discrimination.

Methuen & Co., 1968, 2003



The Hodgeheg

Dick King-Smith

Victor Maximilian St George, or Max for short, has a dream that will benefit the whole of hedgehogkind. He wants to uncover how humans cross the road safely. Spurred by the recent loss of close relatives, this brighter-than-average hedgehog is determined to discover how he can safely cross the dangerous road that lies between his family home and the enticing park. His pioneering research is not without its perils however, and, along the way he encounters many challenges that not only test his perseverance but temporarily scramble his brains!

This endearing and humorous little story told from Max's perspective will amuse readers young and old and highlight some valuable life lessons.

"A writer with every kind of surprise in his bag."

Sunday Telegraph

Readers Comments

"I liked it when Max muddled up his words (after a bump on the head). I liked trying to work out what he was trying to say. It was fun to find out more about hedgehogs....." Matthew, aged 7, **Goodreads**

"The Hodegheg has everything – humour, adventure, inspiration and plenty of advice for youngsters on the issue of safety when crossing roads!"

LoveReading4Kids

Puffin, 2010



The Legend of Captain Crow's Teeth

Eoin Colfer

"I didn't believe in ghosts, certainly not ones with gold teeth hunting for nine-year-old cabin boys. All the same, I wished I was ten, or even eight. Anything but nine..."

Ten-year-old Marty likes nothing better than to terrorise his four younger brothers with bedtime stories of the cut-throat pirate Captain Augustine Crow. He is said to haunt the seaside town where the Woodman family take holidays. Legend has it that when the sea glows at night, Captain Crow roams the shore seeking revenge on the cabin boy who got the better of him hundreds of years ago. Marty, an expert at scaring people, notes that the restless spirit will settle for ANY nine-year-old boy.

Bolstered by science nine-year-old Will dismisses the bloodcurdling tale as hogwash, but it is easy to be brave in the daylight. Forced by his trickster brother to walk back alone after the junior disco across the haunted rocks, he hears a *ghostly* voice calling.....

In this vivid and witty story Colfer displays an understanding of childhood fears, sibling antics, and some of the challenges of coming of age. The book blends hilarity with just the right amount of apprehension and chills to produce an engaging read for the 7–9 age group.

Puffin, 2006



The Legend of the Worst Boy in the World

Eoin Colfer

‘What’s the matter, Marty?’ asked Mum who knew Marty’s guilty face when she saw it. ‘Marty! What have you done? Where’s your little brother?’

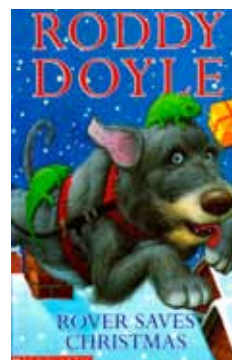
Growing up with four complaining brothers affords Will Woodman little occasion to air his problems. The younger two siblings keep Mum busy and older brother Marty has the monopoly on Dad’s limited time. Looking elsewhere for a confidant Will turns to his Granddad, who agrees to hear Will’s tales of woe as they work together at the lighthouse. However, their Saturday morning sessions are a two-way exchange, and Granddad’s stories always seem more shocking than those of his second in command. It is not until Will finally has a chance to spend some time alone with his father that he learns of an incident involving his two-year-old self that is sure to trump any of the incredible tales his grandfather will be able to recollect.

This humorous tale accurately captures the dynamics and scheming that can arise in a household of five boys. Its conclusion also offers a nice moral about perspective in that Granddad’s big tribulations always made Will’s problems seem smaller.

“a sparky and witty read.” (Inis Magazine)

In 2014 Colfer was named Ireland’s third Laureate na nÓg for children’s literature.

Puffin, 2008



Rover Saves Christmas

Roddy Doyle

“A tickle-me-funny tale that not only speaks but screams to young readers, engaging their attention every step of the way.” – Associated Press

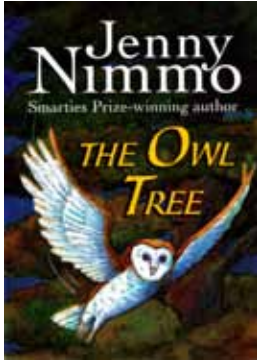
Struck by the flu and something of a mid-life crisis, Rudolph calls in sick on Christmas Eve, so Santa turns to Rover to pull his sleigh and secure the future of Christmas. The canine mastermind of the “poo-for-cash” scheme in Doyle’s *The Giggler Treatment* reluctantly accepts the challenge but insists on bringing a four-strong juvenile crew: Rover always brings a child in case of an emergency, and this was a big emergency! A mad dash ensues around the world to deliver presents before dawn so that children everywhere will still believe in Santa and the magic won’t disappear.

This wacky escapade boasts witty chapter progressions and dedications, random interruptions, peculiar tangents, quirky supporting characters and multiple endings to satisfy various tastes.

“Fans of Dav Pilkey, Jon Scieszka, and Lemony Snicket will appreciate this zany, irreverent story... Don’t expect a straightforward, traditional, linear narrative. The wordplay and the gags are the important things here.” School Library Journal

“Roddy Doyle is an absolute genius!” J.K. Rowling

Scholastic, 2002



The Owl Tree

Jenny Nimmo

The owl-tree is not like any tree Joe has ever seen. It's huge and leafy and shivers like a person. It even seems to speak.

Perhaps it was time for the owl tree to talk to him. Joe opened the window. With half-closed eyes he peered into the night and asked "What shall I do? Tell me?"

When he arrived with his sister Minna to spend half-term with Granny Diamond, Joe never expected to take on a matter of life and death. Ever since Granny Diamond saw an owl perched on the huge tree rooted in Mr. Rock's neighbouring garden, the leafy giant has been a source of comfort for her. The rather brusque Mr. Rock, however, plans to have it chopped down. Can a boy too scared even to climb a tree really be the one to save it? As the day of the felling draws nearer the normally shy and quiet Joe summons up all his inner resources to try and save the magical owl-tree and, ultimately, his Granny.

This endearing tale of vulnerability, sensitivity, blossoming identity and courage sees all the principal characters changed by one boy's efforts to fight for what he believes in and holds dear.

"A gripping and highly atmospheric read." **Junior Education**

Smarties Book Prize Gold Award Winner (1997)

Walker Books, 2007



The Owl who was Afraid of the Dark

Jill Tomlinson

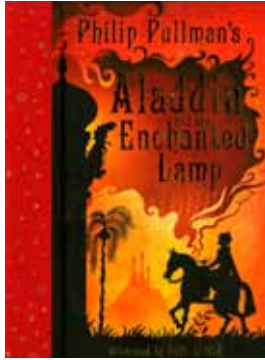
'You *can't* be afraid of the dark' said his mummy. 'Owls are never afraid of the dark.' 'This one is' Plop said. 'I don't want to be a night bird', he mumbled. 'I want to be a day bird.'

Plop is like every other baby barn owl there ever was, except for one thing – he is afraid of the dark. Indeed, he does not like the dark AT ALL and so refuses to go hunting with his parents. This is quite a problem for a nocturnal animal, but his mother has an idea. She explains that he is only afraid of the dark because he does not know about it, and so she sends him down from his nest-hole to gather some information. On his research trips Plop meets a little boy waiting for the fireworks to begin as well as an old lady and a boy scout out camping. He also meets a girl who tells him about Father Christmas, a man with a telescope and a black cat who takes him exploring. Through these encounters Plop discovers the wonders of the dark and all the benefits it offers.

The language is suitably concise, rhythmic and repetitive for young readers. Wry humour is used superbly to deal with a typical childhood fear.

The Owl who was Afraid of the Dark is a classic in children's literature.

Egmont Books, 2004



Aladdin and the Enchanted Lamp

Philip Pullman

This is a story that has everything – comedy, drama, fantasy, magic, fear, excitement and a terrific plot.

The story of Aladdin has delighted young and old for centuries and this vivid retelling by one of the greatest children's authors of our time will not disappoint. Pullman, known for his ability to create worlds full of drama, excitement, and dark battles of good versus evil, employs a mild tone in this rendition of the classic tale of the mischievous boy who becomes heir to a magical lamp. His fast-paced, lively account is set in the story's original location, China. With skilled use of contemporary language he still maintains the tale's mystical, long-ago quality, while Ian Beck's beautiful rich illustrations capture the Arabian Nights mood beautifully. With magic and mischief in equal measure, this sumptuous edition is sure to captivate a new generation of young readers.

"Written with masterly ease and wit...from the reigning master of children's literature." **The Times**

"A perfect match of new author to old tale." **Guardian**

Puffin, 1995, 2011



Esio Trot

Roald Dahl

This is the story of a very shy man who's in love with a very kind woman, and of a small tortoise who brings them together.

Mr. Hoppy, a retired bachelor, was a lonely man with a secret passion for his neighbour, the lovely Mrs. Silver. He longed to invite her to his flat upstairs for a cup of tea and a biscuit, but his courage failed him every time, so their interactions never went beyond polite conversations from their balconies. Compounding his plight was the fact that the lovely Mrs. Silver lavishes all her affection on another... Alfie, her pet tortoise. However, in a wildly ingenious twist, Hoppy uses his rival for Silver's affection as the key to win the adoration of his neighbour.

Mr. Hoppy's tireless endeavours will delight and amaze, involving as it does some cryptic incantations, a mechanical tortoise-catcher and no fewer than a hundred and forty tortoises of varying sizes.

"Esio Trot reveals Roald Dahl at his sunniest and best....Quentin Blake's drawings make a perfect accompaniment." **The Times**

Puffin, 2001



The Evil Hairdo

Oisín McGann

Deep in the cellars of the O'Brien press is a safe that contained stories too horrible to be read. But somebody has broken into that safe and the stories have been released. This is one of those forbidden files...

"I just want to begin by saying that none of this was my fault." So begins the peculiar story of ten-year-old Melanie. It all started with her favourite girl band *WitchCraft*. They were her idols. They were beautiful, they could sing and dance and, above all, they were cool. She wanted the *WitchCraft* hairdo more than *anything* else in the world; she even went behind her mother's back to get the cool look at a new salon that had just opened down the road from their house. That's when the trouble started. Although initially thrilled with her new style, she soon realises that her hair is evil and has a mind of its own. From cutting up all her Mum's clothes to summoning a plague of rats, Melanie's hair tries to destroy her entire life.

"Thrilling plotlines and peculiar characters ... An amusing read for more advanced readers in search of some revolting fun." **Katelyn Romano, Bookfest Ireland**

The O'Brien Press, 2006



Fantastic Mr Fox

Roald Dahl

"..... they've concocted a cunning plan to dig him out of his hole once and for all. But it never occurs to them that Mr Fox has a fantastic plan of his own....."

This funny and imaginative tale centres on the clever Mr. Fox who feeds his wife and four children from the spoils of his nightly raids on neighbouring poultry farms. Tired of being robbed, the three nasty, dim witted farmers named Boggis, Bunce, and Bean formulate a plan to ambush Mr. Fox as he leaves his lair, but they succeed only in shooting off his tail. When their efforts to dig the burrow out fail, the trio of farmers enlist the workers from their farms to surround the area and wait until hunger forces Mr. Fox to emerge. The Foxes and all the other families of underground creatures of the wood are cornered. For three days and nights the stalemate continues until Mr. Fox has a fantastic plan that will allow him and all the underground residents of the hill to safely stay below the surface and feast like royalty courtesy of the clueless Boggis, Bunce, and Bean.

"Whether you're looking for a good book for a literature focus unit, a fascinating read-aloud for your students, or just a good read for your child (or yourself!), this book will be a hit!" **Amazon**

Puffin, 1970, 2004



The Giggler Treatment

Roddy Doyle

Little did Mister Mack realise as he set off one sunny morning to catch his train to work at the biscuit factory that he was about to get The Giggler Treatment! Since time began, tiny fairy-like creatures known as Gigglers have been bringing adults to justice for the maltreatment of children with a particular method of punishment: Poo on the shoe. So when they overheard Mister Mack send his children to bed without any supper the night before, their course of action seemed clear. The Gigglers prepared to have this unsuspecting biscuit taster step in a huge pile of fresh dog poo. But maybe these mischievous guardians of children are mistaken this time; after all, they had left before they heard Mister Mack call his boys back downstairs for a supper of their choice. Can Rover, an essential supplier in the Giggler treatment chain, and Mister Mack's family help avert a super-poo disaster?

"Riotously funny." **The Times**

"The award-winning adult novelist offers a delightfully funny and gross book that should appeal to the many fans of Dav Pilkey's 'Captain Underpants' series (Scholastic) . . ." **School Library Journal**

Scholastic, 2007



The Girl with the Broken Wing

Heather Dyer

She could be their guardian angel, but would an angel have filthy feet and snore?

One rainy night a winged girl named Hillary crash-lands on the roof of the Mulroney house much to the astonishment of resident twins Amanda and James. Unbeknownst to their parents, the twins allow the injured creature in through the skylight and agree to let her recover in their attic bedroom. Imaginative Amanda is certain that they have discovered an angel, but her logical brother is sceptical.

Fortified by sleep and chocolate buttons, Hillary is eager to explore. After all, her home is boring what with all the hymn singing, demure dancing, and expectations of do-gooding. Hiding her wings under Amanda's old brown duffle coat, the impulsive, energetic Hillary makes quite an impression wherever she goes. She brings a family picnic to a subdued, premature end; causes a commotion on a class field trip; and, in the story's most comical scenario, steals the spotlight at James's school nativity play with her *authentic* portrayal of the angel Gabriel. Even her efforts to make up for her escapades present further problems and surprises.

"Dyer writes in accessible, rhythmic language, and the story is perfect to read aloud." **Child Education**

"A substantial story but easy to read and full of fun."

Carousel

Chicken House, 2006



The Hundred-Mile-An-Hour Dog

Jeremy Strong

Streaker is no ordinary dog. She's a rocket on four legs with a woof attached.

No one likes walking Streaker, but Trevor just cannot resist Mam's offer of £30 to walk the mixed-up canine every day over the Easter holidays. In reality, Streaker does not do walks; it's more like a series of gigantic jerks. She can run at breakneck speed, and unfortunately she does not respond to even the simplest of commands like "Sit" or, more importantly, "Stop!" To add to his troubles, Trevor accepts a bet from the nasty Charlie Smugg that he and his best friend Tina cannot successfully train Streaker in two weeks. The forfeit is a dip in a putrid sludge.

Trevor and Tina first try simple bribery but then advance to some more unorthodox and comical methods to gain control of Streaker, including roller skates, a mobile phone and a bicycle. The madcap schemes that they pursue see the duo lurch from one disastrous scrape to another, often ending with a trip to the local police station.

Winner of the 1997 Children's Book of the Year Award

"Comic energy and general fizz are Jeremy Strong's trademark." **Independent (UK)**

Puffin, 2007



The Meanwhile Adventures

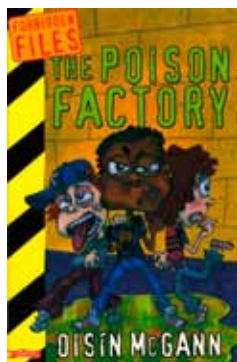
Roddy Doyle

"Tell your mammy," he said over the Garda shoulders.
"Tell her what?" said Robbie.
"I'm not sure," said Mister Mack.

Forced to quit the biscuit factory due to his personal disdain for cream crackers Mister Mack has decided to become a "mad" inventor instead. His new career proves very prolific until it hits a snag. Mister Mack is arrested following a small misunderstanding at the bank involving a saw inconveniently shaped like a machine gun. His wife, Billie Jean Fleetwood-Mack, could help him clear up the confusion but unfortunately she has slipped away to become the first woman to circle the globe without telling anyone. The task now falls to their children Jimmy, Robbie and Kayla and their trusted wonder-dog Rover to orchestrate a jail break and let Mammy know what's going on. Meanwhile, the rescue team must also manage to avoid a nasty orphan catcher and save the world from an army of militant slugs. Can they do it?

Peppered with zany interjections and random, amusing "facts," this finale to Roddy Doyle's hilarious Mack Family trilogy is an action-packed, splendid tale of misadventures and magical nonsense.

Scholastic, 2004



The Poison Factory

Oisín McGann

Deep in the cellars of the O'Brien Press is a safe that contained stories too horrible to be read. But somebody has broken into that safe and the stories have been released.

When the Root Street Gang loses a football in the Kanker & Byle Chemical Factory Gaz Flynn sends his little brother Joey to retrieve it. After all, he was the one who kicked it over the wall. As the others wait outside the perimeter of the "fart factory," so-called for obvious reasons, they hear a series of chilling screams from Joey, followed by an eerie silence. Going home without his brother and facing his Mam's wrath is not an option, so Gaz leads his friends Hayley and Damo into the factory to find Joey and their football. However, this is no ordinary factory and, in no time at all, they meet with decaying zombies, a kitchen run by giant insects, taste-testing cybercritters, and a man with the most disgusting job in the world. Little do they know an even worse fate awaits them at the end of their search!

"Thrilling plotlines and peculiar characters... An amusing read for more advanced readers in search of some revolting fun." **Katelyn Romano- Bookfest**

The O'Brien Press, 2006



Return of the Hundred Mile-An-Hour Dog

Jeremy Strong

Streaker was so gobsmacked she leaped into the air as if she had a pogo stick attached to each leg.

This is Jeremy Strong's second book about Streaker, Trevor's jet-propelled hurricane of a dog. When Streaker topples the beautiful Melinda Boffington-Orr into the mud, Trevor is warned by her father, the local Police Superintendent, to train his dog to compete at the local dog show. To add to the pressure, local brute Charlie Smugg bets Trevor that Streaker cannot beat his Alsatis in the show's agility test. If Trevor loses, he and his best friend and fellow trainer Tina will have to bathe in slimy muck. On the day of the dog show Streaker proves that she really is the hundred-mile-an-hour dog, Chief Superintendent Boffington-Orr ends up humiliated and Charlie and Melinda get their just deserts.

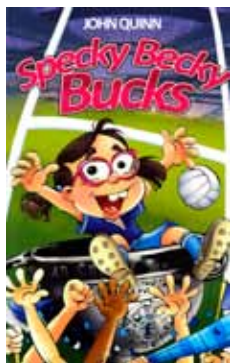
This amusing story will appeal to both boys and girls in the 8–10 age group.

"King of comedy." **Guardian**

"His books crackle with good humour and invention."

TES

Puffin, 2007



Specky Becky Bucks

John Quinn

The true story (as told by herself) of Rebecca Jane Buckley age 9¼ known to her friends as Becky Bucks and to her enemies as Specky Becky Bucks (guess why!) whose passion is Gaelic football and whose dream is to play in Croke Park.

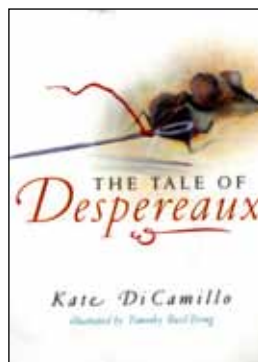
Becky has Gaelic football in her blood: Her Grandad, 'Jimmy the Shimmy' played in Croke Park and she herself sat in the Sam Maguire Cup as a baby when the All-Ireland 1999 champions Meath took the cup to Navan for victory celebrations. According to her Mum, she is destined to be a football star. She practices her skills with her friend Josh and makes it onto the under-10 squad.

With lots of training and some real match experience under their belt, her team are just one game away from the final of the Primary Schools League in Croke Park. Then disaster strikes: Our bespectacled protagonist misses an open goal and they are out! Croke Park seems but a distant dream again, or is there still a chance?

With the love of Gaelic football at its heart, this book also draws the readers' attention to gender equality, multi-ethnicity, intergenerational relationships and teamwork. It also touches gently on bereavement.

Ballivor native and award-winning children's author John Quinn offers a wonderful, action-packed tale whose appeal will spread far beyond Gaelic fans.

Poolbeg, 2009



The Tale of Despereaux

Kate Di Camillo

"The world is dark, and light is precious.
Come closer, dear reader. You must trust me.
I am telling you a story."

This fantasy tale centres on the quest of an unlikely hero, Despereaux Tilling. Set apart from birth by his tiny stature and huge ears, Despereaux finds himself constantly at odds with the rules of conduct of the mouse community. Indeed, it is his very refusal to conform that ultimately sees him trapped in the dungeon of a castle while the human princess that he loves is facing certain misery at the hands of a disappointed rat and a forgotten child.

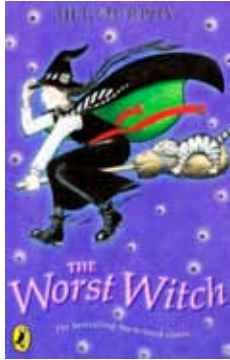
Despereaux must draw on his wits, courage, and inner strength to save himself and the princess. This touching tale of heroism grapples with the powerful emotions of love, hope, happiness, and forgiveness but with an enchanting deftness of hand that will both entertain and inspire the reader.

Winner of the 2004 Newbery Medal

Based on a 2007 online poll, the *National Education Association* (USA) named the book as one of its "Teachers' Top 100 Books for Children."

It was one of the "Top 100 Chapter Books" of all time in a 2012 poll by *School Library Journal*.

Walker Books, 2004



The Worst Witch

Jill Murphy

She didn't exactly mean to break rules and annoy the teachers, but things just seemed to *happen* whenever she was around.

The accident-prone but likeable Mildred Hubble is starting her first year at Miss Cackle's Academy for Witches — and making a mess of it! She can't ride her broomstick without crashing, she's always getting her spells mixed up, and now the teacher's pet, Ethel Hallow, has just become her sworn enemy.

When the class performs a flying display for this year's Halloween celebrations, Mildred finds herself wrongfully blamed when their broomstick formation ends in disaster. No-one would believe her that Ethel had enchanted the broom that caused all the mayhem and Mildred decides to run away. On her way she stumbles upon a coven of evil witches plotting to invade her school and turn its inhabitants into frogs. Can Mildred save the day and redeem herself at the Academy?

This first in Murphy's Worst Witch series is a light-hearted, easy to read book with charming black and white illustrations throughout. The magic and mayhem woven through this funny story are sure to appeal to newly confident readers.

"Millions of young readers have fallen under the spell of Jill Murphy's Worst Witch." **Sunday Express**

Puffin, 1978, 2001



The Worst Witch to the Rescue

Jill Murphy

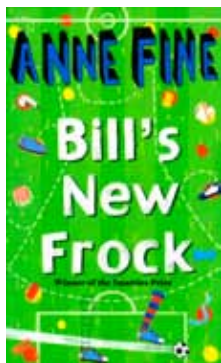
Since 1974 millions of readers have enjoyed Mildred Hubble's exploits, and now she's back to cast her spell on a new generation of readers. How will the good-hearted but bungling young witch-in-training fare in this sixth instalment of the Worst Witch series?

Mildred's track record at Miss Cackle's Academy has not been great. No matter how hard she tries things always seem to go wrong, but the summer term of her third year is going to be different. Mildred cannot wait to reveal her holiday project! It's an entirely original spell that can make animals no bigger than 25 squared centimetres speak for the limited period of two weeks. Even her form mistress, the fearsome Miss Hardbroom, is bound to be impressed. Unfortunately for the lovable and accident-prone Mildred, her arch-nemesis Ethel Hallow has other plans. Ethel steals Mildred's brilliant project and passes it off as her own. The only one who can corroborate Mildred's story is her enchanted pet tortoise Einstein and someone has hidden him. How will Mildred manage the perilous rescue mission and can she do it before Einstein forever loses the ability to talk?

"Brilliant." **Sunday Express**

"Jill Murphy is one of the most engaging writers and illustrators for children." **Observer Review**

Puffin, 2008



Bill's New Frock

Anne Fine

"When Bill woke up on Monday morning, he found he was a girl."

Sent off to school in a frilly pink dress, Bill Simpson realises one of the worst days in his life is about to unfold. Throughout the course of this nightmarish day Bill experiences firsthand how differently girls are treated. Bewildered and frustrated by these differences, Bill falls headlong into trouble as he encounters gender discrimination on the way to school, in the playground and in the classroom.

Anne Fine highlights the gender stereotyping evident in society's expectations regarding appearances, interests, and behaviour. This unique and stimulating story will prompt discussion among young readers on gender inequality.

Fine's fun school stories have been delighting children for over 20 years, gaining her awards such as the Smarties Book Award and Carnegie Medal along the way.

"Stylishly written and thought-provoking."

The Guardian

"A gloriously feminist romp ... the result is a gem. Don't miss it." **Chris Powling, The Times Educational**

Supplement

Egmont UK, 2007



Billy Angel

Sam Hay

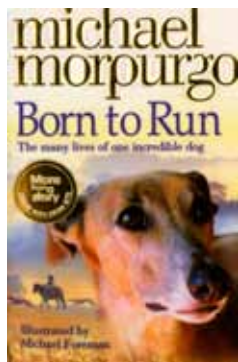
"It was the eve of my eleventh birthday and life was about to go down the pan. Completely!"

Since time began Billy Box's family have trained as plumbers, and so it seemed written in the stars that he would follow family tradition.....but fate had something *far* stranger in store for him.

While the thought of living his life with his arm down people's toilets did not thrill this aspiring international footballer, it suddenly didn't seem so bad following the revelations of the night before his 11th birthday. On this night -when traditionally his family had the "Dream" of their plumbing vocation – a thuggish-looking angel visits him to deliver the unexpected news that his true destiny is to be a guardian angel on Earth and his first mission is to protect Thelma Potts, the toughest girl in school. Billy soon finds himself caught up in a world of competitive pie eating, skeletons and magic, not to mention pongy drains.

"The story is pacey and the principal character appealing. The plot includes plenty of aspects that will appeal, greedy eating, parental pressure, frightening girls and of course magic." **The School Librarian** (Autumn 2008)

A & C Black, 2008



Born to Run

Michael Morpurgo

"There was something inside the bag, squeaking and squealing in terror; Patrick didn't think about it. He leaped into the canal."

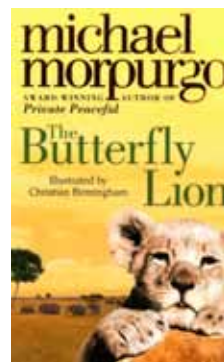
For Best Mate, being rescued from drowning as a young puppy is only the beginning of his adventures. From discarded burden to treasured friend, and from loyal pet to champion race dog, this extraordinary greyhound proves that it is not just cats who have more than one life. Cast aside, kidnapped, adopted or living rough on the streets, Best Mate can always find a way to survive. But will he ever find a real home?

Joy and heartbreak merge in this bittersweet tale of a champion greyhound's journey through life and from owner to owner. The human characters are vivid and engaging so it is hard to remain unmoved by their plights, and the addition of the dog's perspective only adds to the magic of the story.

Michael Morpurgo is a former Children's Laureate and has won many prizes, including the Smarties Prize and the Whitbread Prize.

"Morpurgo writes with a fine mixture of clarity, depth and feeling." **Sunday Times**

HarperCollins Children's Books, 2007



The Butterfly Lion

Michael Morpurgo

"All my life I'll think of you, I promise I will. I won't ever forget you."

An unhappy schoolboy runs away from boarding school in Wiltshire, England, and encounters an old lady, Millie. She introduces him to the butterfly lion carved in the hillside behind her house and relays the remarkable story behind it. The fascinating tale revolves around her late husband Bertie and his unique relationship with a white lion whom he rescued as a cub from the African veldt. When Bertie was separated from his beloved pet and forced to attend boarding school in England the lion was sold to a circus in France. The heartbroken Bertie vowed to be reunited with his lion and, aided by his friend Millie, succeeded in that years later as a wounded soldier in France during the First World War.

This engaging tale of friendship and loyalty highlights loneliness, love, courage and success against all the odds. Morpurgo also conveys some of the hardships and terrors of the Great War in an age-appropriate manner. His story of perseverance never wallows in sentimentality but rather inspires a range of emotions from sadness to joy and awe.

Winner of the Smarties Prize and the Writers Guild Award

"This beautiful story of love and war has everything—even a great twist." **Young Telegraph**

HarperCollins Children's Books, 1996, 2009



Charlotte's Web

E.B. White

This classic novel tells the endearing story of a pig named Wilbur and his friendship with a barn spider named Charlotte. As the runt of the litter, Wilbur's survival was always in danger until Fern Arable persuaded her father to allow her to nurse him to health and then sell him to her Uncle Homer down the road.

Installed in the manure pile in the cellar of Zuckerman's barn, Wilbur meets up with and befriends a wise grey spider Charlotte. As Wilbur is made aware of his unpalatable fate, Charlotte promises to help her friend avoid the butcher's block. Through Charlotte's terrific web skills and the efforts of other residents of the farmyard, Wilbur eventually becomes the prize-winning pig of the County Fair and secures his place in the barn for all his natural days.

E.B. White's Newbery Honor Book is a tender tale of friendship, love, life, and death that will continue to be enjoyed by future generations young and old. White also articulates the often overlooked magic and mystery of the natural world.

"An outstanding book for young children." **The Times Literary Supplement**

Ranked one of the "Top 100 Chapter Books" of all time in a 2012 poll by *School Library Journal*.

Hamish Hamilton, 1952, 2003



Cool!

Michael Morpurgo

"Nothing seemed to work. I couldn't move anything, not my fingers, not my legs. But *inside* my head I had woken up. Inside I was wide awake."

Cool! tells the story of Robbie Ainsley, a 10-year-old boy who dashed out on the road to save his dog and was knocked unconscious by an oncoming car. Locked inside his head, Robbie is unable to speak, move or eat but he is aware of what is going on around him in his hospital room, and he can remember the accident. As the story unfolds, Robbie describes the sounds, smells, and voices that fill his new world. We also hear Robbie's thoughts on the hospital staff and the family and friends that visit. Despite a visit from his football hero Robbie remains unconscious and the doctors begin to wonder if he will ever wake up. Then one day, against hospital rules, Dad brings a four-legged visitor into the hospital. Will this bring Robbie back?

Through Robbie's thoughts and emotions, Morpurgo offers a child's perspective on family and friendship, touching on the sensitive issues of parental separation, guilt, death and grief.

Winner of the Portsmouth Book Award

"Absorbing and satisfying with a real story at its heart."

Guardian

HarperCollins Children's Books, 2003



Dominic's Discovery

Gervase Phinn

Ghostly tales....
hidden treasure...
and a troublesome teacher!

Dominic Dowson's middle name is trouble, but not because he has a difficult nature, but quite simply because he is ALWAYS in the wrong place at the wrong time. Indeed, following a week of being brought before the principal for his involvement in several incidents, it is only by the skin of his teeth that he is allowed on the week-long school trip to Thundercliff Bay on the Yorkshire coast. Dominic has been looking forward to the trip for ages so even the prospect of being under the beady eye of the strict Mr Risley-Newsome cannot dampen his enthusiasm for the excursion. In a surprising turn of events it is a very special discovery made by Dominic that saves the day when the whole group is in grave danger.

This hugely entertaining story of the misadventures of the accident-prone Dominic sees an interesting and satisfying reversal of power among the leading characters following their experience at the Bay.

"Bought this to read to my class who were going on a school trip soon, thoroughly enjoyed it."

Amazon Reviews

Puffin, 2004



I Believe in Unicorns

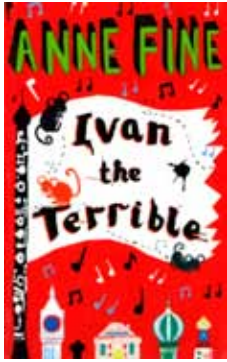
Michael Morpurgo

Set against the backdrop of war-torn Europe, this book centres on eight-year-old Tomas Porec, an only child who has no interest in school, books or stories and far prefers to be roaming the mountains and forests around his home. One day his mother insists he visit the town library to hear the stories told by the new librarian lady. Tomas is very reluctant at first but he eventually gives in and, just like all the other children who attend, is quickly captivated by the magical tales that the Unicorn Lady spins. Indeed, the stories he hears draw him in, make themselves part of him and change the course of his life forever.

Morpurgo's enchanting story is an eloquent reminder of the power of storytelling to change our lives. Simple sentences and a captivating storyline make this a great book for early readers. An accompanying CD offers a magical telling of the story by the author himself.

"As usual Michael Morpurgo has managed, in this attractive little book, to interweave several strands – his recurrent children in war motif, the redemptive power of storytelling and an original take on one of the oldest, best loved and most familiar of myths . . . it's vintage Morpurgo, sensitively told and full of interesting ideas..." **School Librarian** (Spring 2006)

Walker Books, 2006



Ivan the Terrible

Anne Fine

‘Lowly shivering worms? It’s pretty rude. I couldn’t let him get himself into everyone’s bad books so quickly. So I just told them: ‘Ivan said “Good morning everyone”.’

It is Ivan’s first day at his new school, St. Edmund’s, and fellow student Boris is assigned as his interpreter because Ivan can only speak Russian. Now Principal Blaizely prides herself on running a civilised school where everyone has good manners and a positive attitude, but Ivan isn’t civilised. Boris realises he has his work cut out for him when Ivan starts addressing people as lowly shivering worms and weak-witted maggots. When Ivan tells the whole school (in Russian) that he is planning to make them into his slaves, Boris feels compelled to translate instead that he hopes to make lots of new friends. Things only get worse when they visit the infants’ class, where Ivan relishes in just how bloodthirsty British nursery rhymes really are.

Winner of *The Nestlé Children’s Book Prize Silver Award* 2007

“Fine has a rare genius for building a funny, enriching and moving story around the nuts and bolts of school life.” **The Times**

Egmont UK, 2007



The London Eye

Siobhan Dowd

“This is how having a funny brain that runs on a different operating system from other people’s helped me to figure out what had happened.”

The London Eye Mystery is a children’s mystery novel by the late author Siobhan Dowd. Ted and his older sister Kat arrange to take their cousin Salim on the London Eye, but although they watch him board a pod of the giant Ferris wheel and track his half-hour journey he never comes down again. The police are brought in to investigate, but the 12-year-old Ted and his sister also try to solve Salim’s mysterious disappearance from a sealed capsule of the famous city attraction. Despite their prickly relationship the siblings overcome their differences to follow a trail of clues across London in a desperate attempt to find their cousin. Ultimately it comes down to Ted, whose analytical mind struggles with reading body language and emotions but whose thinking proves a real asset in unravelling the mystery.

Bisto Book of the Year 2008

“This is a wonderfully written mystery. It is funny, nerve-wracking and tender by turns, with plenty of pace and excitement as well as some moments for serious reflection.” **The School Librarian** (Autumn 2007)

Random House Children’s Books, 2008



My Dad's A Birdman

David Almond

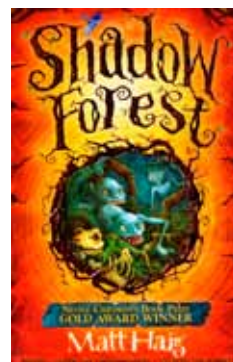
Join a young girl and her dad as they find their wings and take to the skies in a joyful, quirky, tender tale from a masterful author and illustrator.

In a rainy town in the north of England, there are strange goings-on. Dad is building a pair of wings and eating flies all in preparation for his flight across the River Tyne in the Great Human Bird Competition. Auntie Doreen is getting cross and making dumplings. Contest barker Mr. Poop is parading the streets shouting louder and louder, and even Mr. Mint, the headmaster, is not quite himself. At the centre of it all is Lizzie, missing her mother and looking after Dad by indulging his newfound whimsy, which it seems is a comfortable retreat since bereavement shattered his reality. From an inspired creative pairing comes an exuberant tale of the healing power of flights of fancy and a very special father-daughter bond.

Award-winning British author David Almond blurs the boundaries of fantasy and fiction for younger readers in this slightly surreal but very heart-warming celebration of the healing power of love.

"Flight as a metaphor for love's transcendence over grief takes a new form in this comic piece of magical realism." **School Library Journal**

Walker Books, 2008



Shadow Forest

Matt Haig

Samuel and Martha Blink struggle to come to terms with the sudden death of their parents in a freak traffic accident. The bereaved siblings are forced to relocate to Norway to live with their distant Aunt Eda, a former Olympic javelin thrower who lives with an elkhound Ibsen right beside the dreaded Shadow Forest. Martha—who has not spoken since she witnessed her parent's death—shows little emotion over her new surroundings, but Samuel is determined not to like anything about his new life. When they get to Aunt Eda's house Samuel has a feeling he has been there before. Indeed, he witnesses some very strange sights that have haunted him in dreams for years. Aunt Eda subsequently reveals to him the secret of Shadow Forest, of how Uncle Henrik entered 10 years ago and never returned. Little does Samuel know he is about to experience the mysterious world firsthand as he tries to rescue Martha, who disappears into the sinister forest the very next day.

As they voyage through the enchanted world ruled over by the evil Changemaker, the siblings encounter an intriguing mix of fantastic original and mythical creatures. The strength of this story as a whole is its ability to lead Samuel on a journey through the sadness and anger of losing his parents, to a place of new hope.

Winner of the Nestle Children's Book Prize Gold Award and shortlisted for the Carnegie Medal

"A fascinating and magical tale. This is an outstanding piece of literature." **The Times**

Bodley Head, 2007



Sky Hawk

Gill Lewis

“She turned her head, and fixed me with her brilliant yellow eyes. She looked right into me. And suddenly I knew then, in that one moment, I was as much part of her world as she was of mine.”

Deep in the Scottish highlands, eleven-year-old Callum McGregor lives with his parents and brother on his family farm. Cycling in the glen one day with his friends, Callum meets Iona, granddaughter of the local recluse. Callum is intrigued by this strange, wise girl who confides in him that his farm is home to an osprey, a very rare and endangered bird of prey. She shows him where the osprey is nesting, and only when an emergency arises is a ranger from a local nature reserve allowed to share the secret. Later, when a female osprey (Iris) arrives, the ranger fits her with a tiny transmitter so that her migration to Africa can be tracked by computer. Callum and Iona go to great lengths to protect the rare bird at all costs. In a tragic twist, Iona dies suddenly of meningitis, and Callum is left to cope with her loss and honour his last promise to her to keep Iris safe.

From the glittering lochs of Scotland to the mangrove swamps of the Gambia, *Sky Hawk* is an enthralling tale about a promise between two friends that will change lives forever, and the power of friendship, loyalty, and hope. Rich in atmosphere and full of heart, Lewis’s award-winning debut is a book to treasure.

Oxford University Press, 2011



Thanks for Telling Me, Emily

Deirdre Madden

Aunt Emily’s pet shop in the picturesque town of Gillnacurry is no ordinary pet shop and the animals in it are no ordinary animals. When the owner’s niece Keira comes to help out for the summer holidays she is entranced by the community of animals she meets in the shop but a bit puzzled, because her Aunt Emily never seems actually to sell any of them. Everything changes when social climber Mrs. Henrietta Fyshe-Pye and her long-suffering son Ryan enter the premises. The demanding Henrietta is determined to find some suitable pets for her new castle but three attempts all end in complete disaster. The animals set about putting the world to rights with their cunning and a touch of magic, courtesy of a former magician’s rabbit.

The secret lives of the pet shop residents provide much of the humour and the adventure of the story, while the human characters are concerned with growing relationships. This gratifying tale also contains a quiet message about the amount of care an animal needs and the responsibility that comes with ownership.

“Madden’s talents enable her to make a very imaginative and fantastic tale, full of character and humour.” **Inis Magazine (No. 23)**

“.. an ideal story for children taking their first steps to reading longer novels.” **Junior Education Plus**

Orchard Books, 2008



Thar an Trasán

Áine Ní Ghlinn

Is é Eoghan an príomhcharachtar agus is iontach an t-iontas atá air nuair a thagann sé ar ghinid i seanchrúscá atá i gcupard a sheanmháthar. Bronnann an ghinid trí mhian air, céard a dhéanfaidh sé leo? Toisc gur chaill sé an seisiún traenála le haghaidh an chluiche idir buachaillí agus cailíní rang a sé, tá imní ar Eoghan nach roghnófar don fhoireann é. Caitheann sé mian ag iarraidh a bheith ar an imreoir is fearr ionas gurb eisean an duine a chuirfidh na cúil uile isteach agus go mbeidh meas mór ag gach mac máthar air. An mbainfidh sé amach an clú agus an cháil lena bhfuil sé ag súil, áfach?

Tá sé suimiúil carachtar Eoghain a leanúint de réir mar a athraíonn iarmhairtí a chuid gníomhartha é féin, ó dhuine leithleach ar dtús ina dhuine brónach faoi dheireadh. De bharr go mbogann an scéal ar aghaidh go sciobtha agus go ndírítear isteach ar a dtiteann amach ar an bpáirc imeartha, beidh an léitheoir gafa ag an scéal seo ón gcéad leathanach go dtí an leathanach deireanach.

Cé go bhfuil baint ag an draíocht leis an scéal, tá na heachtraí a tharlaíonn ann réalaióch, tá na carachtair inchreidte agus tá sé éasca dáimh a bheith agat leo.

Bheadh an cineál teanga oiriúnach do leanaí 12 bhliain d'aois agus os a choinn sin a fhreastalaíonn ar Ghaelscoil, ach d'fhéadfaí go mbeadh an teanga ródheacair d'fhoghlaimoirí níos óige.

The O'Brien Press, 2011



The Thing With Finn

Tom Kelly

"To tell the truth, I'm scared stiff of all the things we used to share because they must've been so easy to break all along and I just didn't know."

Danny knows he's going somewhere but he just doesn't know where. However far or fast he goes this troubled ten-year-old can't outrun the memories that have chased him ever since his identical twin brother died. Where can Danny hide when every day his own face reminds him of Finn? Danny is leaving so he won't remind his family of their loss anymore and to try and cope with his own grief and guilt about his brother's death. His journey takes him back to an island the family visited once on holiday.

This is the poignant story of a bereaved boy who embarks on a physical and emotional journey, and ultimately finds his way home. For all the gravity of the subject Danny's journey to come to terms with the death of his twin brother offers plenty to smile about. Short chapters in a quirky style engage the reader's attention from the very first page.

"A funny, tragic and deeply fulfilling emotional journey for the reader – a modern classic." **Books for Keeps, No. 163, March 2007**

"A very impressive debut novel...beautifully paced; very warmly recommended." **School Librarian**

Macmillan Children's Books, 2007



Tom Crean: Ice Man

Michael Smith

An inspiring tale of an ordinary man who rose from humble beginnings on an Irish farm to become a legendary figure of Antarctic exploration.

Tom Crean was no ordinary man, and his adventures in the Antarctic are sure to thrill readers in this stirring story of survival in extraordinary conditions. The Kerry-born hero saved comrades from drowning in frozen waters and rescued others from freezing snow whilst following his leaders Captain Robert Scott and Sir Ernest Shackleton, the famous Polar explorers. Indeed, Crean was awarded the Albert Medal, the highest recognition for gallantry, for his efforts during the 1910 expedition with Scott to the South Pole. Written by Crean's biographer who wrote the best-selling *An Unsung Hero*, this story describes the courage, strength and determination that enabled Tom, the "iron man", to overcome the odds and successfully explore the then unknown frozen land.

"Fascinating true story of an Irish adventurer." **Books Ireland**

"An exciting story that's all the more powerful for being true." **Sunday Tribune**

"Succeeds admirably, an ideal book for children." **Inis**

The Collins Press, 2003



When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit

Judith Kerr

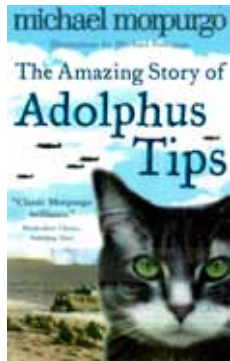
This is the semi-autobiographical story of a young Jewish girl who is forced to flee her home in Germany to escape the Nazis against whom her father had campaigned. The story begins with the relatively comfortable and uncomplicated life of nine-year-old Anna in Berlin in 1933. This is one of the country's most troubled eras but Anna is too busy with her schoolwork and her friends to dwell on Adolf Hitler's rising prominence or the implications of her Jewish background. Then, one day, she awakens to find her father, a well-respected Jewish author, suddenly gone. Soon after, she and her brother Max are hurried by their mother with alarming secrecy away from everything they know – home, school, friends and well-loved toys.

They are refugees and Anna soon discovers that it requires special skills to stay a few steps ahead of the Nazis.

This award-winning story gives a distinctive, child's perspective on the rise of Nazism in 1930s Germany and the experience of being a refugee in Europe at that time. *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit* is the first part of Judith Kerr's "Out of Hitler Time" trilogy. It avoids most of the details of the actual Holocaust but rather provides young readers with a gentle, yet important, introduction to a devastating chapter in world history.

"An engrossing autobiographical novel." **School Library Journal**

Collins, 2002



The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips

Michael Morpurgo

It's 1943, and Lily Tregenza lives on a farm in the idyllic Devon seaside village of Slapton Sands. The war has taken her father away from the farm and brought "townie" evacuees to her school, but now the entire village is being ordered to move out of their homes to clear the way for dangerous military exercises. Soon, the whole area is out of bounds as the Allied forces practice their landings for D-day in preparation for the invasion of France. However, on the day they are to vacate their farm Lily's beloved cat Tips is missing. Frantic to find her Lily decides to enter the forbidden zone to look for Tips herself.

The story opens with 12-year-old Michael describing his close relationship with his Grandma Lily and his concern at her sudden departure after the funeral of his Grandpa. To help explain her strange disappearance, his grandma sends him excerpts from her childhood diary written during World War II. During this unsettled period, Lily's comforts are her cat and the friendship she forges with a black American soldier, Adolphus T. Madison, better known as 'Adie.'

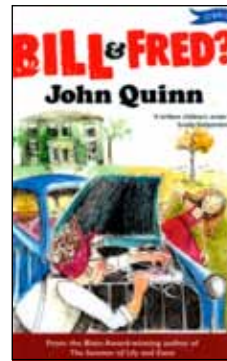
"A succinctly engaging tear-jerker, it is also full of happiness and affection and has a joyful ending... It is also about people who care enough to look after each other, offering a lesson in life as well as history."

Sunday Times, Children's Book of the Week

"Put this book at the top of your 'Must Buy' list"

Books for Keeps

HarperCollins, 2005



Bill & Fred

John Quinn

"Bill and Fred invite you to meet them at Walburley Hall this Saturday 3–5pm. Come and meet your new neighbours! Refreshments served."

The entire village, including Katie Lynch and her family, are invited to afternoon tea at Walburley Hall to meet the new owners Bill and Fred. There is much surprise as it transpires that the hosts are spinster sisters Wilhelmina and Frederika, who have travelled from East Africa to take over their newly inherited home in the Irish countryside. More surprises are revealed as Katie gets to know the siblings: Fred is a wizard at fixing cars of all ages, cooking, and snooker, while Bill can organise anything. The sisters desperately need funds to repair the tumbledown house, so the prize money offered by the Grand Knockdown Charity Snooker Challenge seems like the ideal opportunity, if only Fred can beat Flash Fagan. And the old house has secrets of its own...

This charming and entertaining story from the Bisto Award-winning author of *The Summer of Lily and Esme* has it all, a witchdoctor's prediction, a snooker championship, hidden treasure, and a lazy donkey.

"A delightful book, full of warmth, humours and surprises; Quinn has a light touch and his prose is a joy to read." **The Irish Independent**

The O'Brien Press, 2005



The Black Book of Secrets

F.E. Higgins

“When I opened my eyes I knew that nothing in my miserable life prior to that moment could possibly be as bad as what was about to happen.....”

When Ludlow Fitch’s parents cruelly betray him he steals away on the back of a carriage and leaves behind the stinking City. He arrives in the dead of night at a remote village where he crosses paths with the tall and limping figure of Joe Zabbidou – a mysterious pawnbroker. Rather than goods, Joe trades in secrets, paying troubled souls to unburden themselves of their ruinous guilt.

Employed as Joe’s assistant, Ludlow records the villagers’ fiendish confessions in an ancient leather-bound volume: The Black Book of Secrets. In the course of his duties he takes dictation from many. The people of Pagus Parvus have much to hide. Joe refuses to disclose any details of his past experiences or future intentions, and Ludlow Fitch himself has his own, very dark, secrets.

Framing her book as texts discovered in a hollowed wooden leg, Higgins expertly sustains the audience’s curiosity, revealing just enough information to keep readers engrossed. For all the grisly details, the novel still manages to highlight important themes about self-determination and trust.

“Terrific.....an excellent debut.” **The Times**

“Children will love this book. How could they not?”
Guardian

Macmillan Children’s Books, 2007



Cosmic

Frank Cottrell Boyce

“Maybe everyone’s got their own special gravity that lets you go far away, really far away sometimes, but which always bring you back in the end.”

It’s hardly surprising that Liam has always felt a bit stuck between two worlds – he is a twelve-year-old boy who looks like he’s about thirty. Sometimes it’s not so bad, like when he is mistaken for a teacher at his new school or when a car dealer offers him the keys to test drive a Porsche. Mostly, however, it’s just frustrating being a kid trapped in an adult world. Things escalate to a new level of confusion when this big lad from Bootle, Liverpool, cons his way onto the first spaceship to take civilians into space as the sole adult chaperone for a group of specially selected children. It’s not long before Liam is stuck between two worlds again – only this time he’s 239,000 miles from home. The book is actually Liam’s recorded message to his Dad trying to explain how he ended up in deep space when he said he was going pond dipping in the Lake District.

Through his adventure, Liam learns to appreciate his own father and to value being a kid.

“Readers will appreciate the sharp, realistic, and very funny dialogue.” **School Library Journal**

“With echoes of Roald Dahl, the novel ends with an elegant punch line, and a touching endorsement of filial love.” **New York Times Book Review**

Macmillan Children’s Books, 2008



The Eighteenth Emergency

Betsy Byars

'Some boys are going to kill me...'

When Benjie "Mouse" Fawley and Ezzie were younger they used to enjoy inventing solutions to jungle emergencies, but their plans to handle such dilemmas as lion attacks, charging bulls, and quicksand never envisaged dealing with Marv Hammerman. Hammerman, the toughest bully in their middle school, is after Mouse for writing his name under a picture of Neanderthal man. Left to prepare for this crisis alone, Mouse recalls that most of the 17 emergency measures they previously devised amounted to doing whatever was hardest. In his current predicament, the unforeseen 18th emergency, the hardest thing of all for Mouse is not to flee, and so after days of avoiding Hammerman he decides to seek him out. Without managing to land any hits in return, Mouse accepts the five powerful blows that he knows are necessary to redeem Hammerman's honour.

Newbery Medal winner Betsy Byars presents a timeless, poignant and humorous account of surviving the school bully.

"The best bullying story ever, Betsy Byars's The Eighteenth Emergency manages to be very funny indeed without for a moment under-estimating its horrors or significance of the victim's feelings as he struggles for survival." **Books for Keeps**

Red Fox, 2000



Esty's Gold

Mary Arrigan

"I was too frightened to ask what had happened. A cold fear took hold of me. Something had happened that would change our lives-I knew that"

Esther (Esty) Maher's childhood world is shattered when her father is killed defending poverty-stricken Irish peasants during the Irish potato famine. Suddenly forced to leave home and work as a maid, it is only the dream of gold and a better life in Australia that keeps her going. With steely determination she gets her family to the goldfields of Ballarat. Despite the harsh conditions, deceit, and rebellion they encounter in their new surroundings, Esty holds fast to her dream.

Mary Arrigan brings to life the horror of the Famine from a child's perspective and shows the determination and spirit that even the youngest can have in the face of adversity.

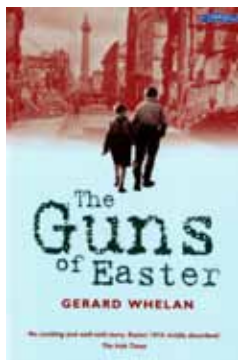
"A highly recommended book for both children and adults, Esty's Gold is suitable to read aloud in the classroom and is a must for the home library."

Inis Magazine

"The distances between the Ireland of the Famine and Australia's goldfields are skilfully bridged in a young heroine's story of courage and determination."

The Irish Times

Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2009



The Guns of Easter*

Gerard Whelan

It is 1916 and Europe is at war. To twelve-year-old Jimmy Conway in the Dublin slums, it all appears as glorious. Jimmy loves the British Army for which his father is fighting, but his loyalties are divided when war erupts on the streets of his home city. The rebels occupy the General Post Office and other parts of the city, and Jimmy's uncle Mick is among them. Dublin's streets are ravaged, business grinds to a halt, and looting ensues.

In a bid to find food for his struggling family Jimmy crosses the city, dodging the shooting, weaving through the army patrols, hoping to make it home before curfew. His daring mission is fraught as danger looms at every corner. Before our eyes Jimmy changes from a trusting child, gaining insight into the horrors of war and the complexity of the Ireland of this time. *The Guns of Easter* is a gripping tale of suspense and terror, firmly grounded in the life of an ordinary boy at an extraordinary stage of the country's history.

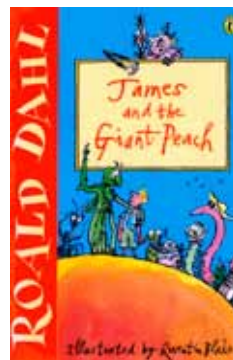
*Bisto Book of the Year Award 1997,
Historical Novel Category Winner*

*Bisto Book of the Year Award 1997,
Eilís Dillon Award Winner*

"An exciting and well-told story. *Easter 1916* vividly described." **The Irish Times**

A fine, humane anti-war novel which young people will relish." **Books Ireland**

The O'Brien Press, 1996



James and the Giant Peach

Roald Dahl

When the parents of James Henry Trotter are tragically eaten by an escaped rhinoceros, the four-year-old orphan is forced to live with his aunts, Sponge and Spiker, on a desolate hill. For three years he endures the cruel treatment meted out by his malicious relatives, until a mysterious man offers him a sack of tiny luminous crocodile tongues to make a magical potion. A slip sees the magic contents spill out onto the ground beneath a barren peach tree, which almost immediately begins to bear a rapidly growing peach. This enchanted fruit grows to the size of a house, and once James steps inside he begins a wild and surreal adventure with six magically-altered garden bugs.

James and his unusual travel companion's journey by sea and air across the Atlantic Ocean, meeting with hungry sharks and malevolent Cloud-Men along the way. When the strange craft is finally impaled on the tip of New York City's Empire State Building, the arrivals are believed to be monsters or Martians. Once James clears up the confusion, they are given a hero's welcome, and James is free to enjoy millions of potential new playmates.

This charming, fast-paced fantasy is a 20th century classic that will uplift and entertain. Dahl creates a marvellous, fantastical world for young independent readers.

Readers Comments

"James and the Giant Peach, is a story of sadness, magic, and a lot of hope."

Puffin, 1973, 2001



Kensuke's Kingdom

Michael Morpurgo

"I heard the wind above me in the sails. I remember thinking, this is silly, you haven't got your safety harness on, you haven't got your lifejacket on. You shouldn't be doing this . . . I was in the cold of the sea before I could even open my mouth to scream."

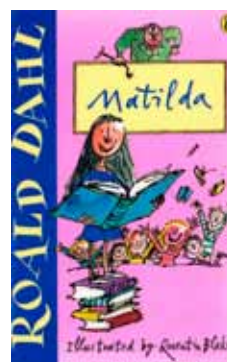
When Michael is washed up on an island in the Pacific after a sudden swell hurls him from his parent's yacht, the *Peggy Sue*, he struggles to survive with his dog *Stella Artois*. Although unable to find food and water himself, the 12-year-old soon realises there is someone watching over him and helping him to stay alive. Initially, his interactions with his mysterious fellow-castaway, *Kensuke*, are tense and distant, but their relationship changes dramatically when Michael suffers an almost fatal sting from a poisonous jellyfish. His aged Japanese host patiently and tenderly nurses Michael back to health, and the pair forge a close bond, sharing knowledge and stories with each other, until the inevitable day of separation.

The former Children's Laureate spins a yarn that gently encapsulates the adventurous elements one would expect from a desert-island tale, but the story's real potency lies in the poignant and subtle observations of friendship, trust and, ultimately, humanity.

Shortlisted for the Whitbread Prize

"A dazzling adventure." **The Times**

Egmont Books, 1999, 2005



Matilda

Roald Dahl

"I know you are only a tiny little girl, but there is some kind of magic in there somewhere."

Matilda Wormwood is a sweet, exceptional young girl, but her idiotic parents dismiss her talents and view her as just a nuisance. The gifted five year old is often ill-treated by her dishonest father and routinely neglected by her self-centred mother. Then at school, Matilda has to contend with the spiteful headmistress Miss Trunchbull, a former hammer-throwing champion given to flinging pupils at will. Fortunately for Matilda, she has the inner resources to deal with such annoyances.

She warms up with some practical jokes aimed at her hapless parents, but the true test comes when she rallies against the diabolical Trunchbull in defence of her teacher, the sweet Miss Honey, who consistently recognises and encourages Matilda's talents. Along the way, Matilda discovers she has a mysterious magical power with which to fight back.

Although Matilda's eventual triumph is never in any doubt, this wonderful story is far from predictable.

Winner of the Children's Book Award (1988)

"This may not be a teacher's or principal's first choice as a classroom read-aloud, but children will be waiting in line to read it." **School Library Journal**

Puffin, 2007



Safe Harbour

Marita Conlon-McKenna

Sophie hated the war! It had changed everything, turned her world topsy turvey, upside down, like sand shifting beneath your feet.

As the Blitz engulfs the city of London, 12-year-old Sophie and her brother Hugh are no longer safe in their own home. With their house bombed, their mother seriously injured, and their father away fighting in the war, it is decided that they should be evacuated to Ireland to live with their paternal grandfather. They know very little about him only that his occasional letters used to enrage their father greatly. Despite their misgivings they must leave all they know and love and go to Greystones, Co. Wicklow.

Although now safe from the dangers of war, the children must become accustomed to their brusque and somewhat cold grandfather and the new way of life they encounter at the seaside town. As time passes, various incidents yield more understanding between the generations and start to heal the rift that has divided their family for years.

Award-winning Irish author Marita Conlon-McKenna presents a moving story of children facing the horrors of war and the heartbreak of a family feud.

Shortlisted for the Bisto Book of the Year award

“Great Reading.” **The Irish Times**

The O'Brien Press, 1995



Scoil an Chnoic

Jacqueline de Brún

Agus shíl tusa ar feadh an ama gurb'in í an fíor Mhona Lisa a bhí ar crochadh ar bhalla ard i seomra de chuid an Louvre i bPáras? Ceann bréagach atá ag na Francaigh ina músaem ardghradaim lárchathrach. Is i scoil Bhaile an Chnoic, gráig aduain iargúlta áit éigin i dtuaisceart na hÉireann a chaith La Giaconda cheart a cuid ama ó 'fuarthas ar ais í' sa bhliain 1913 (tar éis a goidte ón Louvre dhá bhliain roimhe sin).

In airde ar bhalla Halla na Scoile a bhí mórshaothar Leonardo le beagnach céad bliain – a bhuíochas ar ghaol aisteach idir clann Victor Perugia (an té a ghoid an pictiúr i dtosach) agus scoil atá níos aistí fós. Ar ndóigh, ní fhaighimid an méid seo amach gur dtí go ngoidtear an saothar in athuair (ó Halla na Scoile féin an uair seo). Nuair a bheartaíonn beirt daltaí, Seán agus Éimear, a fháil amach cad a d'imigh ar chailín an leamhgháire cháiliúil, de thimpiste, scaoileann siad rún dorchá na scoile – agus go deimhin an bhaile féin. Agus éiríonn leo an mallacht rúndiamhair – a bhí ag luí ar mhuintir an bhaile mar a bheadh scamall dubh – a chloí san am gcéanna.

As Béal Feirste do Jacqueline de Brún and is é seo a céad saothar nuascríofa, cé go bhfuil saothair eile asirithe go Gaeilge aici. Tá maisiú an-chliste déanta ag Jean-Baptiste Vendamme ón Cartoon Saloon.

“Seo an chéad leabhar ó Jacqueline de Brún... Agus is seoid é.” **Inis**

An Gúm, 2007



The Summer of Lily & Esme

John Quinn

There was no doubt now. Whether he wanted to or not, he would have to see Lily and Esme again. He would have to enter their world to find out more about Albert.

What a summer it is for Alan, a boy who felt he was never given the opportunity to make any real friends in his native Dublin. He wasn't much looking forward to leaving the city for a new home in the countryside, but then Glebe House in Kildavock threw up some interesting mysteries. The locked attic is said to be haunted by the ghost of Albert, a boy of Alan's age, who died tragically a long time ago. Then Alan accidentally stumbles down an overgrown chute in the back garden and falls into the world of two aged neighbours, Lily and Esme, who mistake him for their dear friend Albert. Enchanted by the elderly twins and their childlike talk of times past Alan is determined to solve the mystery. With the help of his new friend Lisa and some friendly grown-ups, Alan unearths the story of another summer seventy years before and is at last able to grant his new friends their dearest wish.

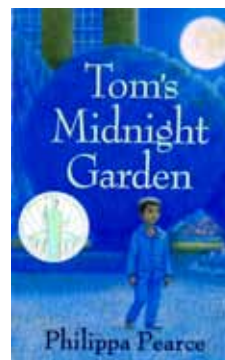
This offering by Meath-born author John Quinn has been described as an instant classic.

Bisto Children Book of the Year award, 1992

"A piece of writing breathtaking for its simplicity and sheer readability... highly recommended."

Books Ireland

Poolbeg Press, 1991, 2003



Tom's Midnight Garden

Philippa Pearce

Tom Long is reluctantly staying with his Aunt Gwen and Uncle Alan in their flat while his brother recovers from the measles in the family home. With no garden to play in, and prohibited from mixing with other children, Tom resigns himself to weeks of boredom. Lonely and restless, Tom is awake in his bed one night and hears the grandfather clock in the communal hall strike 13!! Tom is eager to investigate and slips downstairs to discover that the back door now opens onto a large, sunlit garden. It is home to a Victorian child Hatty who is also lonely and glad of a playmate. Each night Tom returns to the Victorian era grounds where he is visible only to Hatty and the gardener. On the final night before he is due to return home Tom goes downstairs to find the garden is not there. In a frenzied struggle to find his magical garden he crashes into a set of bins from the present day courtyard waking up several residents. He shouts Hatty's name in disappointment before Uncle Alan finds him and attributes the events to sleepwalking. The following morning the reclusive landlady who resides in the attic flat summons a crestfallen Tom to apologise for the disturbance, only to reveal herself as Hatty. A children's classic in time travel fantasy.

Winner of The Carnegie Medal, 1958

*"This is a rare, moving story, beautifully written, and true in every way that matters." **The Guardian***

*"...a story that came to be loved by children, parents and teachers everywhere." **The Times***

*"Masterpiece of English children's literature." **The Independent***

Oxford University Press, 1958, 2008



Treasure Island

Robert Louis Stevenson

Set in the eighteenth century, *Treasure Island* spins an exhilarating tale of piracy, a mysterious treasure map, and a multitude of sinister characters charged with diabolical motives. Seen through the eyes of the young protagonist Jim Hawkins, the rollicking adventure tells of a perilous sea voyage across the Spanish Main, a mutiny led by the charming villain Long John Silver, and a lethal scramble for buried pirate booty on an exotic island.

The unexpected and complex relationship that develops between Silver and Jim helps transform what appears at first to be a simple, swashbuckling adventure story into a deeply moving study of a boy's growth into manhood, as he learns hard lessons about friendship, loyalty, courage and honour, as well as the uncertain meanings of good and evil. With its swiftly moving plot and memorably drawn characters Stevenson's tale of pirates, treachery and heroism was an immediate success when first published in 1883 and has retained its place as one of the greatest of all adventure stories.

This edition has an introduction from award-winning writer Eoin Colfer and concludes with some interesting facts and suggestions for activities.

"Treasure Island has become a classic because of its essential human appeal: it makes adventurers of us all." **Morton Cohen (The Guardian archive)**

Puffin, 1946, 2015



WarHorse

Michael Morpurgo

This poignant story recounts the heroism of Joey a horse purchased by the British Army for service in France during the First World War, and the relentless efforts of young Albert Narracott, his previous owner, to bring him safely home.

Joey was bought at auction by Albert's father during one of his drunken bouts. He arrives unexpectedly at the family farm in Devon and is left to the tender care of 13-year-old Albert. Albert is instantly in awe of this bay-red foal whom he later describes as the only creature on this earth that he felt any kinship for. So deep is the bond between the boy and animal that when Albert's father sells Joey to a British cavalry unit in 1914, Albert solemnly vows to find him again. Joey confronts firsthand the horrors of the conflict when he is thrust into the midst of the war on the Western Front. Yet, even in the desolation of the trenches, Joey's courage endures and touches the soldiers around him. However, there is a long and harrowing journey ahead before he is reunited with his one true master.

War Horse highlights the cruelty of war for both animals and people while also highlighting just how powerful love and courage can be.

Runner up for the Whitbread Award

"Superb . . ." The New York Times Book Review

"An excellent choice for fans of historical fiction."
School Library Journal

Dean, 2012



Wilderness

Roddy Doyle

While Johnny and Tom are in the snowy wilderness of Finland on a husky-sledging holiday with their mother Sandra, their teenage half-sister, Gráinne, is back home with their dad in a wilderness of her own as she prepares to meet with her birth mother for the first time since she walked out on them about 13 years ago. The snow safari expedition was triggered by Sandra's wish to avoid this prickly reunion, but when her sled fails to meet with the group at the end of a day's run, a concurrent drama unfolds. Despite the dangers, her 12 and 10-year-old sons somehow know it was up to them to save her life.

In the stories of both Gráinne and the boys, finding your mother is a simultaneously painful and deeply rewarding process. Doyle displays amazing skill in seamlessly bringing these two intense storylines together and uses alternate chapters to keep both stories moving apace. The rough-and-tumble nature of siblings, with all the love and casual cruelty, rings through loud and clear in Doyle's crisp prose. As well as explorations of feelings and self, the story also offers plenty of action and excitement.

Winner of the Irish Book Awards 2008 Children's Book of the Year

"The outstanding feature of this novel is the quality of the dialogue – often sparse but brilliantly captured for a story that will linger with readers both young and old."

Inis

Scholastic, 2005



Airman

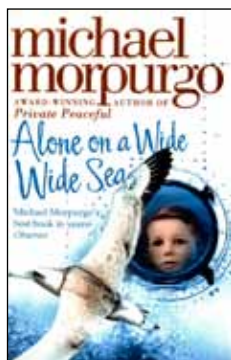
Eoin Colfer

From his legendary birth in a hot air balloon to his heroic feat saving Princess Isabella from a deadly fire by turning a flag into a parachute, Conor Broekhart has always looked to the skies for inspiration. However, 14-year-old Conor's idyllic life takes a brutal turn when the island's Marshall Hugo Bonvilain secretly throws him into the diamond mines as part of a murderous plot to overthrow the progressive government of King Nicholas. Aided by the advice of his cellmate Linus Wynter, an American musician and spy, Conor adapts to prison life and manages to survive the inhuman conditions of the diamond mines. Aged 16, he executes an elaborate aerial escape that leads him to safety. However, his plans for a new life in America are thwarted by his discovery that Bonvilain intends to overthrow the monarchy again by poisoning Isabella and her greatest supports, Conor's mother and father. Conor must now decide if he will turn his back on those whom he feels abandoned him or stand against the evils that threaten the freedom of his nation.

Shortlisted for Bisto Book of the Year Award 2009 and Carnegie Medal 2009

"Laced with explosions and sudden violence, well-stocked with ugly customers and replete with cliffhangers, this high-flying page-turner will keep readers riveted to their seats from opening gunshot to final sword thrust." **Kirkus**

Puffin, 2008



Alone on a Wide Wide Sea

Michael Morpurgo

When 6-year-old orphan Arthur Hobhouse is deported to Australia after WW II he loses his sister Kitty, his country and everything he knows. With nothing but a treasured “lucky key” given to him by Kitty prior to departure, the coming years will test him to his limits. He endures years of cruel, forced labour on a sheep station before managing to escape to the contrasting kindness of another farm until finally undertaking a boat-building apprenticeship and developing an enduring love of the sea. While recovering from a nervous breakdown, Arthur finds love with Zita, with whom he has a daughter Allie. His last project before his early death was building a yacht with Allie, whose love of the sea is as strong and as vital as her father’s. Together they were to sail to England in search of his long-lost older sister. Determined to complete her father’s story, Allie undertakes the perilous journey alone. Will the threads of Arthur’s life finally come together?

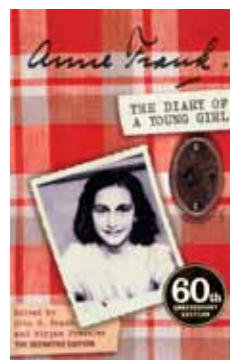
Morpurgo’s roller-coaster novel highlights slavery, oppression and death, but also speaks of courage and determination, self-belief, loyalty and devotion.

“Executed with Morpurgo’s distinctive flair. His language remains beautifully clean and clear.”

Waterstone’s Books Quarterly

“A powerful story.” **The Guardian Children’s Books Supplement**

HarperCollins Children’s Books, 2006



Anne Frank – The Diary of a Young Girl

Fleeing the horrors of Nazi occupation, Anne Frank and her family hid in the back of an Amsterdam warehouse. Between June 12, 1942 and August 1, 1944, Anne records adolescent preoccupations and emotions alongside the upheaval of the political climate to yield a compelling, poignant insight into family life under Nazi rule. The diary entries depict life for this 13-year-old Jewish girl in the Secret Annexe, which her family shared with 4 others. Cut off from the outside world except for the help of a few of her father’s trusted colleagues, the occupants faced hunger, boredom, the cruelties of living in confined quarters, and the constant risk of discovery and death. In August 1944, the family was betrayed, arrested, and deported to various concentration camps. Anne died in Bergen-Belsen shortly before her sixteenth birthday.

Published after the war by her father Otto H. Frank, the only surviving member of the family, the diary has become a worldwide classic: an extraordinary account of a girl’s emotional transformation from childhood to adolescence and a stark reminder of the horror of prejudice and persecution.

“A modern classic . . . Anne’s diary tells a story that is true, memorable, important and strongly personalized . . . compelling reading.” **The Times**

Puffin, 2002



Benny and Babe

Eoin Colfer

Internationally acclaimed author Eoin Colfer delights in this hilarious and heartwarming story about the ever-incorrigible Benny Shaw. First introduced in *Benny and Omar*, the now 13-year-old Benny Shaw is spending his summer holidays in the small fishing village of Duncade with his lighthouse-keeper Granda. This hurling-obsessed, carefree kid is confident he can take on the world until he meets resident tomboy and all-around tough-girl Babe Meara. Benny may be a wise guy, but Babe is at least three steps ahead of him, and now he's on *her* territory. As a visiting "townie," Benny is the object of much teasing from the natives, yet a prickly friendship evolves between the two. Babe even takes Benny on as a partner in her thriving business retrieving the lost lures and flies of visiting fishermen and selling them at a tidy profit. However, things become very complicated and dangerous when local bad boy Furty Howlin wants a slice of the action. What's more, Benny has to navigate uncharted territory when a disco reveals a transformed Babe—can they still be friends now that she is a *real* girl?

Shortlisted for the Reading Association of Ireland Award 2001

"Humour, sensitivity and candour underscore this coming-of-age story that features incredibly well-drawn characters ... This book has it all." **School Library Journal**

The O'Brien Press, 1999



Benny and Omar

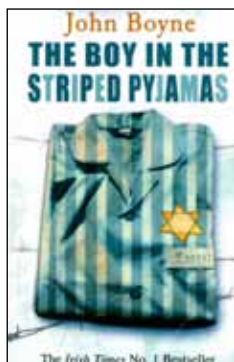
Eoin Colfer

For Benny Shaw, his family's relocation to Tunisia for his father's new job is catastrophic. The young sports fanatic must deal with not only missing his home team of Wexford playing in the All-Ireland hurling final but also the scorching heat, the deadly wildlife, and a new school run by two ex-hippies. Struggling to adapt to his new life, Benny scales the wall of the company's gated compound one day and meets Omar, a wild and resourceful orphan scrabbling for survival on the streets. Benny and Omar establish a friendship based on Omar's small knowledge of English gleaned entirely from television catchphrases. A madcap friendship develops between the two boys that leads to trouble, escapades, a unique way of communicating and ultimately, a heartbreaking challenge. The two bounce from one scrape to the next, and Benny learns a lesson about family loyalty when his friend's dedication to his institutionalized sister sparks a climactic finale, with the two on the run from the law. Benny is exposed to real life in Tunisia, actual pain and suffering bigger than losing a sports match, and realizes just how lucky he is.

The internationally acclaimed and award-winning author offers a funny, insightful, sad, exciting, scary, and very thought-provoking tale.

"Hilarious – there is hardly a page which will not have a reader laughing aloud." **The Irish Times**

The O'Brien Press, 1998



The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas

John Boyne

Nine-year-old Bruno knows nothing of the Final Solution and the Holocaust and is blissfully ignorant of the appalling cruelties being inflicted on the people of Europe by his country. All he knows is that his father's promotion to Commandant has seen his family abruptly uprooted from their comfortable home in Berlin and relocated to a house in a desolate area where there is nothing to do and no one to play with. Then he meets Shmuel, a 9-year-old Jewish boy of radically different circumstances, who lives on the other side of the adjoining wire fence and who, like the other people there, wears a uniform of striped pyjamas. The boys meet regularly, and conversations with Shmuel provide much of the information about life on the other side of the fence as well as shedding light on Bruno's life here and in Berlin. Bruno's friendship with Shmuel highlights his innocence and in exploring what he is unwittingly a part of, he will inevitably become subsumed by the terrible process.

This award-winning fictional tale explores the themes of innocence, friendship, and human nature. The powerful and complex issues are sensitively highlighted by Irish author John Boyne.

The Bisto Book of the Year award and others

"An extraordinary tale of friendship and the horrors of war seen through the eyes of two young boys, it is stirring stuff. Raw literary talent at its best." **Irish Independent**

David Fickling Books, 2006, 2010



Blood Upon the Rose: Easter 1916*

Gerry Hunt

Blood upon the Rose tells the complex story of the 1916 Rising, an attempt by a small group of militant Irish republicans to win independence from Britain. Hunt's book spans the revolt from its early planning to the final defeat and executions of the leaders. For dramatic effect, the story opens with the wedding of rebel leader Joseph Plunkett and Grace Gifford in Kilmainham Gaol just prior to Plunkett's execution by a British firing squad. The story then moves back in time to portray the internal divisions within the Volunteers about whether the rebellion should proceed as planned following the British interception of the German arms shipment.

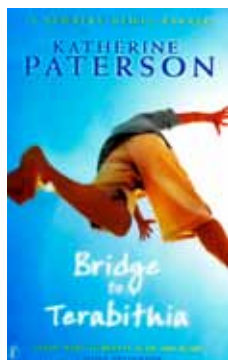
Graphic illustration of the initial storming and defence of the GPO, of the occupation of other public buildings, and finally of the successful British counterattacks is an imaginative way of retelling these events. While all aspects of the rebellion cannot be covered in detail, the novel does not shy away from more sensitive topics such as looting and civilian loss and brings to life the tension and atmosphere of fear that must have surrounded the city in those days.

"a landmark Irish graphic novel." **Irish Times**

"a fantastic way of digesting a bit of history in a fun and vivid format ... Hunt's graphics bring the story of their struggle for Irish freedom to life in a way that sterile prose in a school history book never could."

Books Ireland

The O'Brien Press, 2010



Bridge to Terabithia

Katherine Paterson

'We **need** a place,' Leslie called to him, '...just for **US**.'

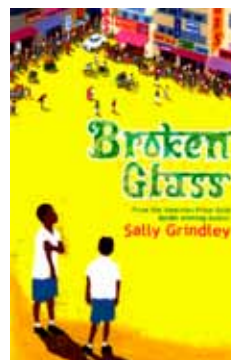
Set in the mid-1970s, shortly after the conclusion of the Vietnam War, most of the action in this novel occurs in rural Virginia.

Jess Aarons has been practicing all summer so he can be the fastest runner in the fifth grade at Lark Creek Elementary and he nearly is until new girl Leslie Burke outpaces him. Despite their dissimilar backgrounds, he and his new neighbour become firm friends, and the worlds of imagination and learning that she opens to him change him forever. It was Leslie's idea to create Terabithia, their imaginary country in the woods beyond the dry creek bed. Accessed by a swinging rope, this clandestine kingdom offers them refuge from the burdens of their everyday life, a space to reveal their pain and express their dreams. On their adventures in Terabithia they learn much about each other while plotting to vanquish their foes both real and imagined. Their magical friendship allows both characters, particularly Jess, to find their true selves. One morning, Leslie goes to Terabithia without Jess and a tragedy occurs. Jess's days of absolute, carefree, childish happiness in Terabithia are over, but he passes Leslie's legacy on by building the bridge to Terabithia.

1978 Newbery Medal Winner

"Jess and Leslie are so effectively developed as characters many young readers might feel that they were their classmates." **School Library Journal**

Puffin, 1980



Broken Glass

Sally Grindley

"It was as if we inhabited a shadow world, hidden away like some guilty secret behind the acceptable face of the city."

The formerly comfortable lives of nine year old Sandeep and twelve year old Suresh are turned upside down when their recently bereaved father loses his office job with the Indian Railways. Struggling with the loss of his mother and his job, their father turns to alcohol and becomes abusive toward his family. Convinced their mum would be safer from their angry father without two extra mouths to feed, Suresh persuades Sandeep to run away to the city with him. Their dreams of getting jobs with their reading and writing skills are soon shattered by the harsh reality of living on the streets. Penniless, homeless, and starving, they are forced to become rag pickers, scrabbling through allotted rubbish heaps in search of broken glass to sell to an unscrupulous dealer.

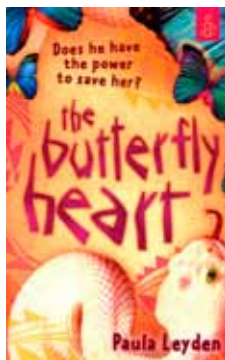
Through Suresh's eyes, Sally Grindley offers a vivid portrayal of life as a street kid in an Indian city – the grinding hardships, the rivalries and brutal squalor.

Children's Book of the Week by The Sunday Times, February 2008

Teachers Comment

"Broken Glass indeed proves the strength of Sally Grindley's handling of the "big issues" of today."

Bloomsbury, 2008



The Butterfly Heart

Paula Leyden

Bul-Boo and Madillo are concerned about their friend Winifred, a usually vivacious child who has become sombre and disengaged in class. Then the twins learn her heavy secret. She is to be married to her uncle's friend who drinks heavily and is old enough to be her grandfather. Winifred seems resigned to her fate but her friends are determined to prevent the union. They covertly seek the advice of Ifwafwa, the Snake Man, who promises to think about the problem. Ifwafwa is wise and has a gift with snakes but he does not like to rush and Bul-Boo is growing impatient. Will he be able to save their friend before it is too late?

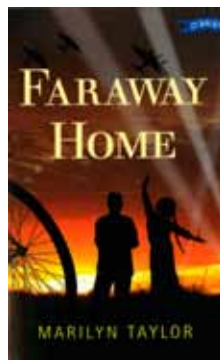
Set in Zambia, the butterfly heart of Africa, Leyden's moving debut novel tackles the issue of child marriage while simultaneously blending the refreshing directness of a child's worldview. It also highlights many social and cultural issues. The author's successful use of humour manages to lighten what might otherwise be an overly dark tale.

Winner of the Eilís Dillon Award (CBI Book of the Year Award) for a first book

"A beautifully written debut – transporting the reader into the heart of Zambia. Leyden has created an epic tale, with mesmeric voices, suspenseful narrative and vivid imagery. One to watch!" **Bookfest, CBI**

"A story with humour, charm and mystery." **Books for Keeps**

Walker Books, 2011



Faraway Home

Marilyn Taylor

As the horror of the Nazi take-over of Austria becomes apparent to the Muller family in Vienna, Karl and Rosa's parents decide to send the children out of the country on a *Kindertransport*, one of the many ships carrying refugee children away from Nazi danger. Isolated and homesick, Karl ends up in a Jewish refugee centre at Millisle Farm in County Down, while Rosa is fostered by a couple in Belfast. Here, the refugees must adapt to a new life, all the time living with the fear of never seeing their loved ones again. Karl makes friends with fellow refugees, locals Peewee and Wee Billy, and also with the volunteers from neutral Dublin who come to help on the farm, especially Judy. However, Northern Ireland does not escape the terror of the Second World War, with rationing and air-raid warnings, and the destruction wrought by the Belfast Blitz all bringing the reality of war right to their doorstep. Nevertheless Karl learns that extraordinary friendships can grow out of the conflict and despair.

Winner of the Bisto Book of the Year Award 2000

"by far the most successful fictional interpretation of the kindertransports. A very well constructed and beautifully written narrative." **The School Librarian**

"an absorbing new book from Marilyn Taylor ... a remarkable blend of fiction and historical fact, which also reveals a relatively unknown facet of World War Two." **The Irish Times**

The O'Brien Press, 1999



Friend or Foe: Which Side Are You On?*

Brian Gallagher

As the Great War rages on in Europe, nationalist fervour swells to a bloody climax in Ireland with the revolution of Easter 1916 in Dublin. The conflict divides the city and her people, setting friends and family against each other. However, some bonds refuse to be severed.

When Emer Davey saves her neighbour Jack Madigan from drowning, it seems they'll be friends forever, nevertheless just eight months later they find themselves on opposite sides in the city's violent struggle. In this story of division, parents attempt to draw the friends apart but loyalty between the pair holds steadfast. Like her father, who is a part-time officer in the Irish Volunteers, Emer believes that armed revolution is the only way to gain independence from Britain. Jack, meanwhile, follows the rule of law like his father in the Dublin Metropolitan Police. So the two young friends find their loyalties tested as the Easter Rising hits closer to home than either could have imagined. Their firsthand experience of the anguish and destruction inflicted by the rebellion reveals to them that warfare is anything but glamorous.

"This is an exciting, well written adventure story, which captures the atmosphere of revolutionary Dublin and the misery and chaos of war. This book is a good addition to any school library and complements conventional school history texts." **Children's Books Ireland**

The O'Brien Press, 2015



Goodnight Mister Tom

Michelle Magorian

It is September 1939 and William Beech has been evacuated from London to the countryside, fleeing from the threat of World War II. His mother's instructions that he be housed with someone religious or near a church see the eight-year-old paired with the reclusive Tom Oakley, whose small cottage lies next to the village Church. Cowering from the emotional and physical abuse he has experienced, William arrives in Little Weirwold a timid and sickly specimen. When the middle-aged Tom reluctantly agrees to take William in neither of them realise how this small act of 'national duty' was going to change their lives forever. With Tom's patience and kindness, William overcomes the memories of his troubled childhood to enjoy a life filled with love, friendship, and the pursuit of his artistic passions. Tom is likewise changed, pulled out of the years of reclusive grief triggered by the tragic loss of his wife and newborn child.

Michelle Magorian's powerful yet gentle writing delicately handles the themes of loss and bereavement, to produce a touching and powerful story.

Winner of the Guardian Children's Fiction Award

"A marvellous story that knows just how to grab the emotions." **The Guardian**

Puffin, 2014



Holes

Louis Sachar

Stanley Yelnats IV is a teenage boy from a poor family dogged by a curse dating back to his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather. This evil hex has brought misery and financial ruin to the Yelnats clan for generations. Stanley's latest misfortune is to be wrongly accused of stealing a pair of shoes donated to a children's orphanage by the baseball player Clyde "Sweet Feet" Livingston.

As punishment, Stanley is sent to Camp Green Lake, a juvenile detention and correctional facility located in the middle of a barren Texan desert. Here, Warden Walker insists the boys "build character" by digging holes five feet wide and five feet deep every day. However, it doesn't take long for Stanley to realise that there is more behind the warden's endeavours than character improvement: She is looking for something. Stanley sets about digging up the truth.

Ultimately, fate conspires to resolve it all. The great wheel of justice has turned slowly for generations, but now it is about to issue its verdict.

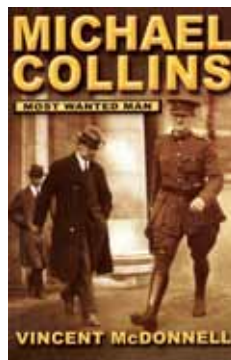
Winner of the 1998 U.S. National Book Award for Young People's Literature and the 1999 Newbery Medal

"An exceptionally funny and generous book that is also a tightly plotted detective novel." **The Guardian**

"A multitude of colorful characters coupled with the skillful braiding of ethnic folklore, American legend, and contemporary issues is a brilliant achievement. There is no question, kids will love Holes."

School Library Journal

Bloomsbury, 2000



Michael Collins Most Wanted Man*

Vincent McDonnell

"...Michael Collins was no ordinary man. He was an extraordinary man who did extraordinary things during an extraordinary time in Ireland's troubled history."

Award-winning author Vincent McDonnell reflects on the life and times of Michael Collins to reveal why the revolutionary figure has come to be regarded as "one of the greatest Irishmen of the twentieth century." The story outlines how a farmer's son became the most wanted man in the British Empire, a minister in the first Irish government and Commander-in-Chief of the Irish army. Action-packed and highly informative, this new biography for young readers follows 'the Big Fellow' as he takes part in the 1916 Easter Rising, plans and directs a guerrilla war against the British and helps to negotiate the treaty that led to the Irish Civil War. The story closes with the August 1922 ambush at Béal na mBláth in Collins's home county, where the leader was shot dead.

"Presents a rounded appraisal for both Collins and de Valera." **Irish Examiner**

"McDonnell writes well in a way that conveys a lot but will not lose a young reader's interest." **Books Ireland**

The Collins Press, 2008



The New Policeman

Kate Thompson

The first of Kate Thompson's fantasy trilogy, sometimes referred to as the Liddy series, *The New Policeman* is set in Kinvara, Ireland where there never seems to be enough time anymore. The main protagonist, 15 year old J.J. Liddy, is steeped in his family's musical traditions which take on new meaning when he seeks to fulfil his mother's birthday wish for more hours in her day. Charged with the seemingly impossible task, J.J. is shown a portal to the world where time stands still or at least is supposed to.

Bravely venturing into this alternate fairy world via a souterrain, J.J. takes on a thrilling, epic quest in which he confronts dark family rumours and tries to repair a time leak between his world and "the land of eternal youth" or Tír na nÓg.

The book is suffused with the lure of Irish music and each chapter relates to a tune, printed out so that the reader can also become a performer. As for the village's new policeman, Larry O'Dwyer, he is an enigmatic figure who has a significant bearing on the plot but whose identity is kept a superbly guarded secret to the very last surprising moment.

The CBI Bisto Book of the Year Award (2005) and other awards

"Charming, seductive and completely enthralling."

Eoin Colfer

"A storyteller of genius." **Irish Times**

The Bodley Head, 2005



No Goodbye

Marita Conlon-McKenna

'She's gone!'

"The letter said she needed time to be herself again. But what does that mean?"

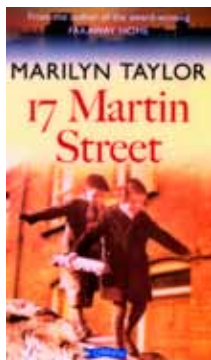
The Dolphin family are in turmoil, well how would you feel if your mum left suddenly? The two older children, 14-year-old Greg and 12-year-old Lucy, try to stay calm and responsible. However, 6-year-old Grace is simply bewildered, and her troubled 10-year-old brother Conor ends up taking drastic action to show how he feels. Meanwhile, their father struggles to make sense of it all. Yet behind the heartbreak of this young family there is hope, and the beginnings of a plan to bring their mother back.

Spanning the six weeks immediately following the mother's abrupt departure, the book highlights the emotional and practical challenges that ensued for each member of the family and how they adapted to their new reality. *No Goodbye* has been recommended by Book Trust in their guide for One Parent Families.

"This book ends on a hopeful note, but doesn't gloss over the difficulties and turmoil that parental separation brings." **Good Books**

"A compelling tale, told with simple and undiluted power." **The Irish Times**

The O'Brien Press, 1994



17 Martin Street

Marilyn Taylor

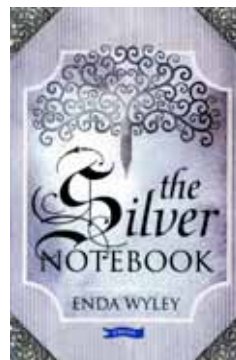
A dramatic wartime story covering issues of race and prejudice and the rights of refugees.

Set in an area of Dublin which came to be known as Little Jerusalem, the action takes place over a twelve-month period from winter 1940. Marilyn Taylor explores the lives of Jews in Ireland at this time. She displays a comprehensive knowledge of the historical context, lovingly recreating the period detail and sense of place to offer entirely authentic accounts of the customs, food and family dynamics.

Twelve-year-old Hetty Golden and her Jewish family move into number 17 Martin Street in inner city Dublin, just two doors away from Ben Byrne's family home. Jews and Christians live side by side and the novel shows how the native and immigrant communities co-existed in an atmosphere of prejudice and suspicion but also in a spirit of co-operation for the common good. Central to the plot are rumours of a Jewish refugee girl who is at large in Dublin and deemed to be an "enemy alien" by the state. Hetty decides that she should be the one to find this refugee girl and save her from detention or deportation. She enlists the help of her cousin and Ben in this plan, which proves instrumental in ensuring that the young girl, Renata, is eventually able to stay in Ireland.

"Taylor deftly weaves a tale of misunderstandings, secrets, anxiety and mistaken identity . . . evokes the period with carefully chosen detail." **The Irish Times**

The O'Brien Press, 2008.



The Silver Notebook

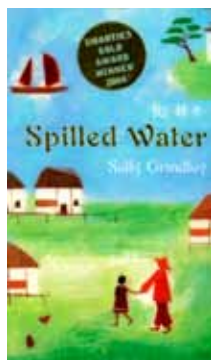
Enda Wyley

Timothy Finn is a boy with two dreams and a mystery to solve.

It might not seem odd to receive a birthday present from your father, but Timothy Finn's father had never been around and now a birthday gift arrives in the post from this man he has never known. Life for eight-year-old Timothy and his mother Julia started to change with the arrival of the silver notebook. On that day, Julia revealed that his father had unexpectedly left just before his birth. Timothy sought solace from his animal friends, but he could no longer see or hear their words as he had always done. He then began writing in his silver notebook, crafting new stories to build a new world for himself. Two years later Timothy befriends the feisty Fleur and is inspired to discover the truth about his father. With the help of his quirky French companion Tim gradually comes to separate fact from fiction and, in the process, makes some heart-breaking discoveries. Nevertheless, he also sees the direction his talent for words and storytelling will almost certainly take him. Despite the sombre themes explored – death, loss, pain, loneliness – the novel is a life-enhancing celebration of the creative imagination and its power to serve as a buffer against life's difficulties.

"Her (Enda Wyley) lyrical use of language and imagery shines through . . . ideal for reading aloud and would make a great class reader as there is so much to talk about." **Irish Independent**

The O'Brien Press, 2007



Spilled Water

Sally Grindley

"Today is a big day for you. From today, you must learn to find your own way in the muddy whirlpool of life."

Lu Si-yan's happy home life in the Chinese countryside is shattered by the sudden death of her father. On the day her uncle dispassionately sells her into domestic servitude to help repay the family's debts, our 11-year-old heroine learns what it really means to be born a girl in her culture. Likened to worthless "spilled water," Lu Si-yan seems destined to serve at the home of a wealthy couple in the city until she is old enough to marry their brain-damaged son. However, in her determination to be reunited with her mother and younger brother, Lu Si-yan seizes an unexpected chance to flee her master's miserable household. Unfortunately her freedom is short-lived as she falls foul of another economic trap as an exploited factory worker.

With a brilliant first-person narrative and a powerful description of time and place, this novel is captivating, heart-wrenching and completely mesmerising.

Smarties Gold Award Winner 2004

"This is a powerful, emotional story ... With strong characters and simple but effective writing, this is a captivating book." **Waterstone's Guide to Kid's Books**

Bloomsbury, 2005



Stig of the Dump

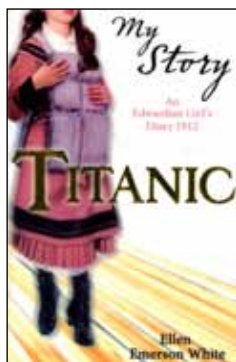
Clive King

Nobody believes Barney when he says he's discovered a boy living wild in the dump. But for Barney, Stig is totally real.

One day Barney is lying on the edge of a disused chalk-pit near his grandmother's house when the ground gives way and he lands in a sort of cave. Here he encounters "Something, or Somebody" with a lot of shaggy hair and two bright, black eyes wearing a rabbit skin and speaking in grunts. He names him Stig. Of course nobody believes Barney. Despite the linguistic and cultural barriers that separate them, the two become great friends. They learn each other's ways and embark on a series of unforgettable adventures. In the final chapter, they enter Stig's prehistoric world to help his tribe erect a set of standing stones that Barney recognises as a weathered landmark from his own modern home. The central theme of the book is a wonderful story of friendship and trust between Barney and Stig, despite the vast differences that separate them. Clive King's imaginative writing from a child's perspective not only allows children to identify and engage with the story but also offers various outlets for young readers to develop their reading, writing and even numeracy skills.

"This story has wonderful appeal." **Guardian**

Puffin, 1963



Titanic: An Edwardian Girl's Diary, 1912 – My Story

Ellen Emerson White

"I felt a shiver of excitement each time the steam whistles blew, trumpeting our departure. The air seemed filled with a sense of tremendous anticipation."

Titanic is the thrilling story of a young orphan on board the most famous sinking ship. Margaret Anne, who dreams of leaving the orphanage behind and joining her brother William in Boston, can hardly believe her luck when she is chosen to accompany wealthy Mrs Carstairs aboard the great RMS Titanic. However, on a freezing night in April 1912 her journey on the finest ocean liner in the world turns into an unimaginable nightmare and ultimately a fight for survival.

This creative account of an Edwardian girl's experience on board the doomed vessel brings this piece of history to life for younger readers. Emerson White captures the initial excitement and then the fear as she presents Margaret Anne's detailed diary entries. The inclusion of a Timeline and Historical Note greatly enrich the story's historical context, and the many photographs will really inspire readers' imaginations. The **My Story** series provides vividly imagined accounts of life in the past.

Scholastic, 2012



Under the Hawthorn Tree

Marita Conlon-McKenna

In this first instalment of her *Children of the Famine* trilogy, Marita Conlon-McKenna presents the story of three children's struggle for survival in the Great Famine of 1840s Ireland. Eily, Michael and Peggy O'Driscoll are left to fend for themselves when both parents are gone in search of food. The reality of eviction and the dreaded workhouse loom over them. With nothing left in the world only their courage and each other, they begin a long, desperate journey to the town of Castletaggart to reach their great aunts Nano and Lena whom they have only heard of in their mother's stories. Their journey across a country ravaged by starvation will test their courage, resourcefulness, and loyalty to the limits.

This award-winning depiction of the Irish famine has been described as the biggest success story in children's historical literature.

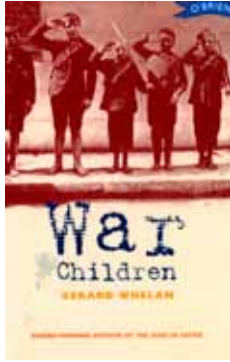
Winner of the International Reading Association Award and the Reading Association of Ireland Award (1991)

"Beautiful and moving ... historically true and fictionally vivid." **The Sunday Times**

"The horrors of the potato famine in Ireland leap vividly from the pages of this first novel."

School Library Journal

The O'Brien Press, 1990



War Children*

Gerard Whelan

Award-winning author Gerard Whelan presents six stories about children who get caught up in the War of Independence and endure dire consequences. The young protagonists in these stories, one set in Dublin and the rest in the countryside, become sometimes willing and sometimes reluctant participants in situations they only vaguely understand. The stark intrusion of war on their familiar lives and the poignant loss of childhood innocence unite all the stories. Among the other themes highlighted by the accounts are death and loss, conflict, family life, prejudice, betrayal, revenge, friendships, selfishness, and influence of memories and childhood experiences on later life. This compelling and powerful collection brings to life one of the most dramatic periods in Irish history.

Winner of the Bisto Book of the Year Merit Award 2003 and the Reading Association of Ireland Award 2003

"Excellent collection ... They will impel their readers towards new questioning as to what "war" actually is."

The Irish Times

"Roller-coasters of emotion ... A riveting read."

Inis Magazine

The O'Brien Press, 2002



A Winter of Spies*

Gerard Whelan

The winter of 1920 sees Dublin caught in the violent grip of the War of Independence. Sarah refused to be intimidated by the terror: British soldiers, checkpoints, even the dreaded Black and Tans hold no fear for this spirited 11-year-old, who wants to be 'a rebel for Ireland'. However, her thinking is less clear cut when she is exposed to the secret deadly war being waged behind closed doors. Contrary to their apparent neutrality towards the war, the Conway family is embroiled in this covert battle of spies and counter-spies, of whispers and assassinations, all played out under the watchful eye of Michael Collins. Indeed, now Sarah herself knows things that could cost her her life.

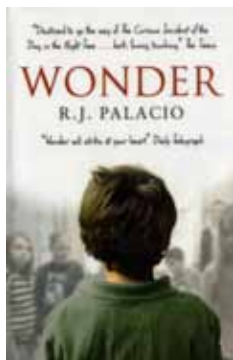
In this historical novel, award-winning author Gerard Whelan highlights how Sarah's initial excitement with the times evolves into a more astute understanding. The young protagonist raises some thought-provoking questions about this troubled time.

Sequel to the award-winning *The Guns of Easter*

"thrilling... adventures set against a completely realised period city, and Sarah is a terrific heroine." **RTE Guide**

"The picture of a city and a period characterised by duplicity and deception is excellently portrayed, as is Sarah herself, a remarkable feisty creation." **The Irish Times**

The O'Brien Press, 1998



Wonder

R.J. Palacio

"I wish every day could be Halloween. We could all wear masks all the time. Then we could walk around and get to know each other before we got to see what we looked like under the masks."

Auggie was born with a terrible facial abnormality and has been home-schooled by his mother in a bid to shield him from the cruelty of the outside world, where he is met with stares, sometimes screams, and embarrassed withdrawals. Now his parents suggest he go to a real school, a departure that both terrifies and excites him. All he wants is to be accepted. He wants to be seen as "ordinary" which is how he feels he is inside but can he convince his new classmates that he is just like them, underneath it all?

The story is told partly from Auggie's perspective, and partly from the other kids in his life. These include his sister Via, her oldest friend Miranda, Via's boyfriend Justin, and Jack and Summer, Auggie's new friends at Beecher Prep. Palacio writes with just the right balance of humour and pathos rendering each character both flawed and sympathetic.

"Palacio has an exceptional knack for writing realistic conversation and describing the thoughts and emotions of the characters.... This is a fast read and would be a great discussion starter about love, support, and judging people on their appearance. A well-written, thought-provoking book." **School Library Journal**

".... powerful and heartbreaking but never sentimental."
The School Librarian

Black Swan, 2013



The Young Rebels*

Morgan Llywelyn

With a feckless, brutal father and a loving but sickly mother, 12-year-old John Joe is dispatched to board at St. Enda's. The school in Rathfarnham, County Dublin is run by Pádraic Pearse and the pupils are inspired by their headmaster's vision of freedom and an Irish Republic. John Joe readily absorbs the charismatic Ardmháistir's teachings on Irish nationalism and the injustice of British rule in Ireland. As members of the St. Enda's company of Na Fianna Éireann John Joe and his friend Roger are eager to support the cause of Irish nationalism. Adamant not to miss out on the action, the young rebels disobey orders to stay away from the city centre and so become caught up in the dramatic events of the Easter Rising.

The book is written in a first person narrative, as if it was a diary of events. The timeframe spans from the Dublin Lockout in 1913 to the Easter Rising of 1916 and the ensuing executions and eventual closing of the school. Although we know there can be no happy ending, it is the young narrator's hope in the future and his capacity for love and understanding in the face of intense human suffering.

"A readable, exciting history that introduces the young reader to historic events and those who made them." **Books Ireland**

"An informative and thought provoking read, bringing 1916 alive for a new generation of children." **The Irish Independent**

The O'Brien Press, 2006

Index of authors

- Almond, David, 25
- Arrigan, Mary, 31
- Boyne, John, 40
- Brown, Jeff, 9
- Byars, Betsy, 31
- Colfer, Eoin, 10, 11, 37, 39
- Conlon-McKenna, Marita, 34, 45, 48
- Cottrell-Boyce, Frank, 30
- Dahl, Roald, 13, 14, 32, 33
- De Brun, Jacqueline, 34
- Di Camillo, Kate, 18
- Dowd, Siobhan, 24
- Doyle, Roddy, 11, 15, 16, 37
- Dyer, Heather, 15
- Fine, Anne, 8, 9, 20, 24
- Frank, Anne, 38
- Gallagher, Brian, 43
- Grindley, Sally, 41, 47
- Haig, Matt, 25
- Hay, Sam, 20
- Higgins, F.E., 30
- Hunt, Gerry, 40
- Kelly, Tom, 27
- King, Clive, 47
- Lewis, Gill, 26
- Leyden, Paula, 42
- Llywelyn, Morgan, 50
- Madden, Deirdre, 26
- Magorian, Michelle, 43
- McDonnell, Vincent, 44
- McGann, Oisín, 14, 17
- Morpurgo, Michael, 21, 22, 23, 29, 33, 36, 38
- Murphy, Jill, 19
- Nimmo, Jenny, 12
- Palacio, R. J., 50
- Paterson, Katherine, 41
- Pearce, Philippa, 35
- Phinn, Gervase, 23
- Pullman, Philip, 13
- Quinn, John, 18, 29, 35
- Sachar, Louis, 44
- Simmons, Jane, 8
- Smith, Michael, 28
- Stevenson, Robert Louis, 36
- Strong, Jeremy, 16, 17
- Taylor, Marilyn, 42, 46
- Thomspson, Kate, 45
- Tomlinson, Jill, 12
- Whelan, Gerard, 32, 49
- White, E.B., 22
- White, Ellen Emerson, 48
- Wyley, Enda, 46

Meath County Council
Library Services



Primary Schools Department

Library HQ
Railway Street
Navan
T 046 902 1134
E primaryschools@meathcoco.ie



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

Meath County Council Library Service

Primary Schools Department

Our aim is to assist schools in improving literacy and developing a love of reading and learning. The following resources are available for short term loans:

Class Novels

Sets of titles suitable for 1st-6th classes

Literacy Schemes

Early and graded readers, including The Red Rocket Reading Scheme

Leabhair Gaeilge

Réimse fhairsing idir pictiúr-leabhair agus ábhar do na ranganna sinsearacha

Teacher Resources

Teaching aids and project material

Multicultural Collection

Fiction and fact books on different countries and cultures

Environmental Collection

Books on topical "Green Issues" for all ages

Children's Classics

A selection of old and modern works

Popular Author Collection

Books by Roald Dahl, Michael Morpurgo, Anne Fine, Eoin Colfer, Jacqueline Wilson and others

Large Print Collection

A small selection of large print size books, most useful for children with learning difficulties or a visual impairment

Picture Books

Aimed mainly at junior classes these books tell a story through picture and illustration, with little text

Large Format Picture Books

"Big Books" suitable for classroom story time sessions and other activities

CD's & DVD's

A collection of popular children's stories and films

Book/CD Packs

A selection of Barrington Stoke/Oakhill sets

For further information see our web site meath.ie/library
email primaryschools@meathcoco.ie or call 046 902 1134