



As 2022 begins, we hope this newsletter will help you start the year with a great selection of books, covering a wide range of interests and reading accessibility. We're also delighted that two fabulous authors have joined us to share some book recommendations themselves through video QR codes: simply scan with your phone's camera to watch the QR code videos of Phil Earle and Kalynn Bayron sharing their recommendations, as well as some other authors talking about their books or reading extracts from them.

**Please note that unless otherwise stated, the texts are suitable from Year 7 and up, but please do research the books before selecting them to ensure that they are appropriate for your child, as these are just a publisher's guide.**

If you're looking for ways to encourage your child to read more, consider some of the tips below:

- Research by the National Literacy Trust showed that reading for pleasure increased during the 2020-2021 lockdowns; one of the reasons young people gave for this was having the time to read and having fewer distractions. This would suggest that helping your child to balance their time and factor reading into their schedule in a quiet environment would be beneficial.
- Avoid reading becoming a chore through requests such as 'if you read for 15 minutes, you can...'. Whilst this may work for some, it's unlikely to lead to reading being seen as an enjoyable activity.
- Help your child to be proactive in their wider reading. For example, if they are covering World War II, explore age-appropriate texts on this through poetry, online articles or novels.
- Often, younger children enjoy reading with their parents and their interest wanes when it becomes an independent activity and they no longer share a connection with someone over a book. Read with them or listen to audiobooks if you don't feel confident enough to read yourself.

**Hachette publishers have kindly offered parents 20% off the books they publish which have been featured on this newsletter. The Hachette logo is next to each of the books this applies to.**

To place your order directly with Hachette and pay via card, please ring their customer services team on **+44 (0)1235 759555** or email **hukdcustomerservices@hachette.co.uk** including your name, delivery address and contact telephone number, along with the ISBNs that you would like to order. Please do not include card details on email. Please quote the promotional code **PIXLJANUARYNEWSLETTER** for 20% off your order.



## PHIL EARLE RECOMMENDS...

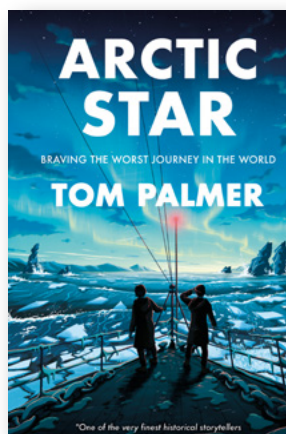


Phil Earle is the author of many books for young people, including the award-winning new novel *When the Sky Falls*. Having struggled with reading himself when he was younger, Phil now writes fantastic books and is keen to share stories with young people which may help them to find the book that will interest them. Watch Phil's recommendations video by scanning the QR code here.



## Arctic Star

TOM PALMER



Teenagers Frank, Joseph and Stephen are Royal Navy recruits on their first mission at sea, during WW2. Their ship is part of an Arctic Convoy sailing to Russia to deliver supplies to the Soviets. The convoys have to navigate treacherous waters, sailing through a narrow channel

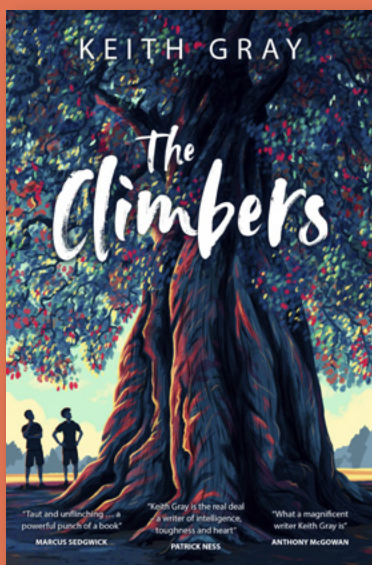
between the Arctic ice pack and German bases on the Norwegian coast. Faced with terrifying enemy attacks from both air and sea, as well as life threatening cold and storms, will all three boys make it home again?

## The Small Things

LISA THOMPSON

Anna's anxious when she's picked to befriend the new girl in her class. Ellie is ill and can't come to school herself, so Anna has to communicate with her through a new kind of robot. But Anna is also worried that her life's too small and boring to be of interest to her new friend. So, when Ellie asks her a question, a little white lie pops out. Then another and another. When Ellie finds out the truth, can their friendship survive?





## The Climbers

KEITH GRAY (13+)

Sully is the best climber in the village. He can scale Twisted Sisters and clamber up Double Trunker with ease. But when new kid Nottingham shows up and astonishes everyone with his climbing skills, Sully's status is under threat and there's only one way to prove who is best. They must race to climb the last unnamed tree. Whoever makes it to the top will become a legend. But something spiteful and ugly has reared its head in Sully... Is it worth losing everything just to reach the top?

## The Skylark's War

HILARY MCKAY

The Skylark's War follows a family growing up against the harsh backdrop of WW1. Clarry and her older brother Peter live for their summers in Cornwall, staying with grandparents. But normal life resumes each September. When Rupert goes off to fight at the front, can their family survive the fearful war?



## The Swallow's Flight

HILARY MCKAY

The Swallow's Flight is a story of family and friendship on opposite sides of the devastating conflict during WW2.

Erik and Hans are German boys. Ruby and Kate are English girls. They grow up in worlds that would never meet, until war tumbles their lives together and one September afternoon there are choices to be made.

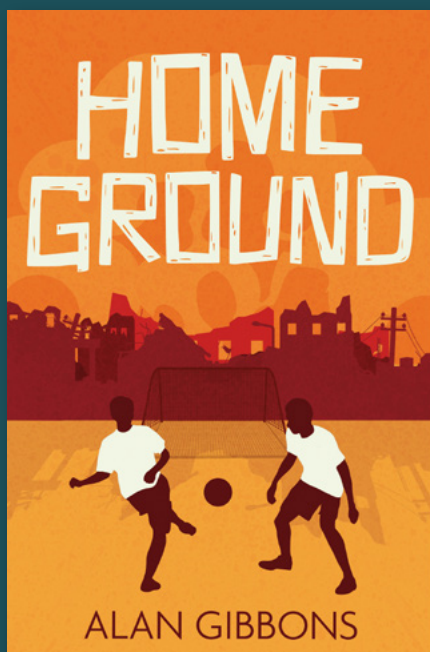


## MORE SHORTER-LENGTH FICTION

**Home Ground**

ALAN GIBBONS

Sam's team are edging closer to the bottom of the league this season and team captain Jordan's bad attitude isn't helping anyone. When Sam spots Hasan playing on the refugee team, he can see that Hasan's got talent and invites him along to practice. Hasan and his friend Faisal prove to be exactly what the team need – but Jordan's not going to accept his new teammates so easily. Can Sam get the boys to pull together and win?

**Escape Room**

CHRISTOPHER EDGE

PRE-ORDER  
FOR RELEASE  
ON 3RD FEB

When twelve-year old Ami arrives at The Escape, she thinks it's just a game – the ultimate escape room with puzzles and challenges to beat before time runs out. Meeting her teammates, Ami learns from the Host that they have been chosen to save the world and they must work together to find the Answer. But as he locks them inside the first room, they quickly realise this is no ordinary game... You can hear Christopher Edge talk about his new book by scanning this QR code:





## LONGER READS

**The Bird Singers** EVE WERSOCKI MORRIS  
£7.99 9781444963328

Strange things have been happening to Layah and her younger sister, Izzie, ever since their mother dragged them to a rain-soaked cottage miles from anywhere: there is a peculiar whistling at night, a handful of unusual feathers appear on their doorstep and there are murmurings of a shadowed woman in the forest. And their mother is behaving very oddly. Layah is mourning the loss of her dear grandmother in Poland – and can almost hear her Babcia's voice telling her the old myths and fairy tales from that magical place. And as the holiday takes on a dark twist, Layah begins to wonder if the myths might just be real...

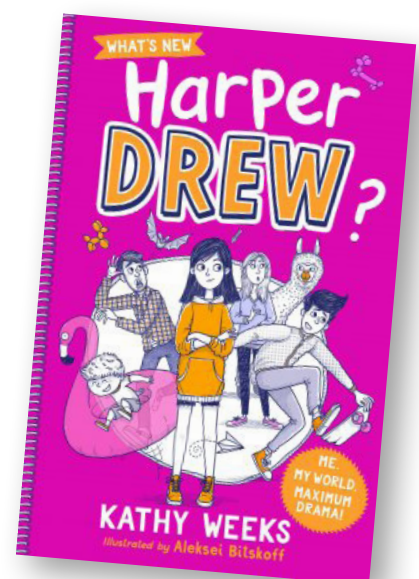


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**What's New Harper Drew?**

KATHY WEEKS

My name is Harper Drew. I'm using my new journal to take note of all the totally ridiculous things that seem to go on around me with my family and friends. I seem to be the only one who sees all of this stuff for what it is: completely beyond normal. Recently, I've been logging Drew Dial Ratings for all the mayhem. On a scale of 0 to 10, how likely is someone to say or do something that would be less sensible than (for example) a demented camel? First up is the annual Drew trip to France... and while there might not be camels, there are bats and llamas – and my brother Troy who is so obsessed with his hairstyle, he won't even go swimming... that's a whole lot of ratings... You can hear Kathy Weeks talk about her new book by scanning this QR code:



## Spark

MITCH JOHNSON

£7.99 9781510107632

PRE-ORDER  
FOR RELEASE  
ON 3RD FEB



Ash has always lived in Last Village, lonely since the day his father left and never came back. The world is unbearably hot, water is drying up and life is hard. After a vicious thunderstorm, Ash wakes to find that the

village's water has completely run out and all the other villagers have mysteriously disappeared. Accompanied by the outcast Bronwyn, Ash sets off in search of water, for answers about what happened to the villagers, with hope they might find 'The Kingdom' – a rumoured land to the north where life still flourishes. Ash and Bronwyn have to survive a journey across an arid landscape. Lying in wait are the answers Ash is searching for, and maybe even the truth about what happened to his father. If only he could get past The Wall...



## When the War Came Home

LESLEY PARR

The First World War has ended, but it hasn't gone away. When Natty has to move to a new village, she meets two young soldiers who are still battling the effects of war. Huw can't forget the terrible things

he's seen, but Johnny doesn't even remember who he is. As Natty tries to keep a secret and unravel a mystery, she finds her own way to fight for what she believes in – and learns that some things should never be forgotten.

You can hear Lesley Parr talk about her new book by scanning this QR code:



**Circus Maximus Series** ANNELISE GRAY

Twelve-year-old Dido dreams of becoming the first female charioteer at the great Circus Maximus. She's lost her heart to Porcellus, a wild, tempestuous horse she longs to train and race. But such ambitions are forbidden to girls and she must be content with helping her father Antonius – the trainer of Rome's most popular racing team, The Greens – and teaching the rules of racing to Justus, the young nephew of The Greens' wealthy owner. When her father is brutally murdered, she is forced to seek refuge with an unlikely ally. But what of her dream of Circus triumphs and being reunited with the beloved horse she left behind in Rome? And the threat to her life isn't over, as she faces a powerful and terrifying new enemy... the emperor Caligula. You can hear Annelise Gray talk about her first book in this series by scanning the QR code. The next book in the series, *Rivals on the Track*, will be published on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February.

**Diary of a Confused Feminist: Must Do Better (Book 2)**

KATE WESTON £7.99 9781444955064

Meet Kat Evans: Feminist. Overthinker. A hilarious antidote to our Insta-perfect world, for girls who want to do it right, but always feel they're getting it wrong.

16-year-old Kat has suffered through mortifying incidents, muddling moments and Instagram hell – but her extreme teenage confusion isn't over yet. It's a new term and Kat is determined to spread the word about doing good feminism to all her fellow students. But her new Feminist Society does not exactly go to plan and she's left feeling more of a failure than ever...

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## KALYNN BAYRON RECOMMENDS...



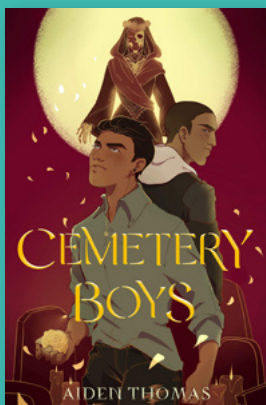
Kalynn Bayron is the author of YA fiction including *Cinderella is Dead* and *This Poison Heart*. Kalynn is passionate about sharing diverse book recommendations with young people and hopes that some of her suggestions may help young people to find a book they love. Watch Kalynn's recommendations video by scanning the QR code here.



## Cemetery Boys

AIDEN THOMAS (14+)

Yadriel has summoned a ghost, and now he can't get rid of him. When his traditional Latinx family has problems accepting his true gender, Yadriel becomes determined to prove himself a real brujo. With the help of his cousin and his best friend Maritza, he performs the ritual himself and then sets out to find the ghost of his murdered cousin and set it free. However, the ghost he summons is actually Julian Diaz, the school's resident bad boy, and Julian is not about to go quietly into death. Left with no choice, Yadriel agrees to help Julian, but the longer he spends with him, the less he wants him to leave.



## So Many Beginnings

BETHANY C MORROW (13+)



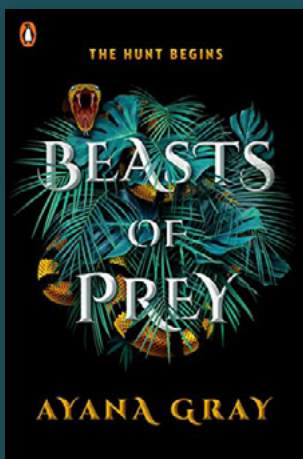
As the American Civil War rages on, the Freedman's Colony of Roanoke Island is blossoming, a haven for the recently emancipated. Black folk have begun building a community of their own, a refuge from

the shadow of the 'old life'. It is where the March family has finally been able to safely put down roots with four young daughters: Meg, a teacher who longs to find love and start a family; Jo, a writer whose words are too powerful to be contained; Beth, a talented seamstress searching for a higher purpose; Amy, a dancer, eager to explore life outside her family's home. As the four sisters come into their own as independent young women, they will face first love, health struggles, heartbreak and new horizons. But they will face it all together.



## Beasts of Prey

AYANA GRAY (13+)



Magic doesn't exist in the broken city of Lkossa anymore, especially for girls like sixteen-year-old Koffi. Indentured to the notorious Night Zoo, she cares for its fearsome mythical creatures to pay off her family's

debts. But when they are threatened by the Zoo's cruel master, Koffi unleashes a power she doesn't fully understand.

As the son of a decorated hero, Ekon is destined to become an elite warrior, until a fire at the Night Zoo upends his future and, on the brink of his final rite of passage, Ekon is cast out – his reputation left in tatters.

For Koffi and Ekon, the outlook is bleak – unless they can capture the Shetani, the vicious monster that plagues their city. As they enter the Greater Jungle, a world steeped in wild magic and danger, the tentative alliance between them is tested to the extreme...

## Legendborn

TRACY DEONN (14+)



After her mother dies in an accident, sixteen-year-old Bree Matthews wants to escape. A residential programme for bright high-schoolers seems like the perfect opportunity – until she witnesses

a magical attack her very first night on campus...

A flying demon feeding on human energies... A secret society of so-called 'Legendborn' that hunt the creatures down... A mysterious mage who calls himself a 'Merlin' and who attempts, and fails, to wipe Bree's memory of everything she saw.

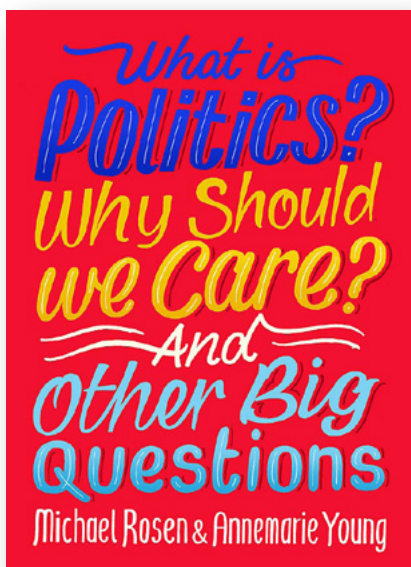
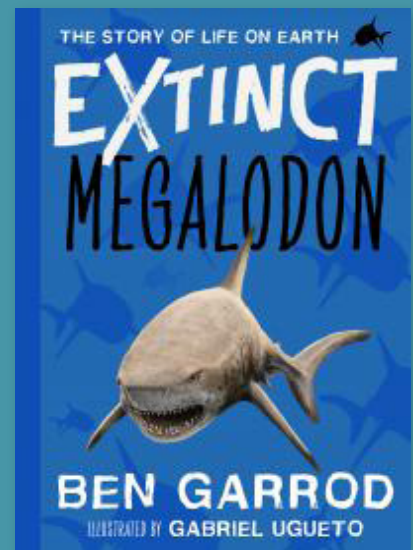
The mage's failure unlocks Bree's own unique magic and a buried memory about her mother. Now she will do whatever it takes to discover the truth...

## NON FICTION RECOMMENDATIONS

New Books from the Extinct Series  
Megalodon and Thylacine

BEN GARROD

TV scientist Ben Garrod presents the biggest extinction events ever, told from the point of view of evolution's superstars, the most incredible animals ever to swim, stalk, slither or walk our planet. His unique exploration of the most destructive, yet most creative, force in nature makes top level science fun. His two newest books in the series are Megalodon and Thylacine, and there are several others to explore too! Watch Ben talk about the series, and his reasons for writing it, by the scanning the QR code.

What is politics? Why should we care?  
And other big questions

MICHAEL ROSEN AND ANNEMARIE YOUNG

£9.99 9781526309068

This book is a highly topical look at how politics affects everyone in society. It looks at the whole political spectrum, in countries around the world and examines what politics means in different contexts and situations. There are contributions from a range of writers who, along with the authors, discuss how their ideas of what politics is and can do have been shaped by their life experiences.

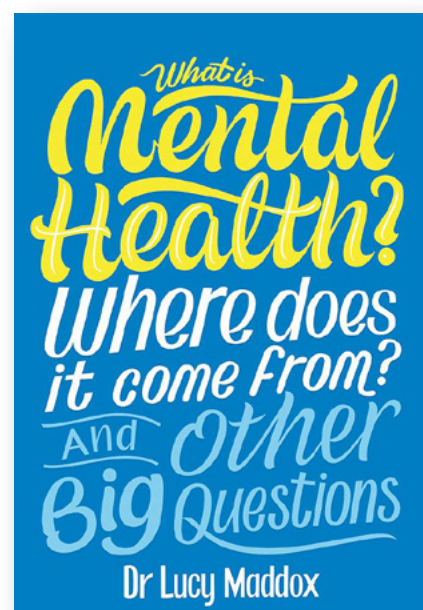


## What is mental health? Where does it come from? And other big questions

DR LUCY MADDOX £9.99 9781526311146

This book explains what mental health is, considering how it relates to lots of different experiences, from how we manage really big feelings, to how we get on with each other, how we make choices and how we handle stressful situations. The book thoughtfully examines the things that can help us look after our mental health and the things that might make it feel worse. It has suggestions for the support on offer, if we feel we're struggling.

It includes specially-written contributions from Chamique Holdsclaw, US gold medallist-basketballer, as well as a range of academics, artists and other professionals.



## A Celebration of India

ANITA GANERI

£12.99 9781445181448

This book charts the history of India, from the extraordinary Indus Civilisation of 2500BC to the present day, interspersed with glimpses of Indian life and culture in its people, places, food, clothing, religions, festivals, languages and stories. It includes some activities, a mixture of photos and artwork.

