

Eager to Read

Term Two, 2005

There are children who arrive at school having enjoyed rich language experiences at home and a stimulating programme at pre-school. They are soon reading fluently and eager to read independently.

The challenge for parents and teachers is to find recreational reading materials that is lively and interesting, yet with age appropriate content. Fluent young readers need to enjoy age appropriate material if they are to maintain interest and develop sound understandings. Unless enjoyment and understanding are experienced, these children may tire of reading by being faced with books they can decode but not fully comprehend. Such books will be thoroughly enjoyed later when they are age appropriate.

This list includes both picture books, which many children enjoy re-visiting when they can read them independently, and simple chapter books. We have also included sample representations from publishers lists for these young readers. Some to look out for are Banana Books, Corgi Pups, Kingfishers, Kiwi & Aussie Nibbles, Orchard's Crunchies, Scholastic Solos, Usborne Young Readers, Walker's Sprinters and Harper Collins' Young Blue Gums.

Some of the well loved titles may not be easily available in bookshops but you will be able to borrow them from your local library system.

Contributors to this booklist are – Carol Ardem, Helen Beckingsale, Crissi Blair, Anne Coppell, Noelene Coppell, Bronwyn Fox, Julie Harper, Lois Huston, Ann Luxton, Lorraine Orman, Frances Plumpton, Colleen Taylor, Rosemary Tisdall.

BOOKLIST

Titchy Witch and the Wobbly Fang



Rose Impey
 Ill Katherine McEwen
 Orchard Books 2004
 ISBN 1841211265

Loose teeth are a fact of life for children at the eager to read level. Titchy Witch decides to try a spell but oops! suddenly no teeth! Luckily Cat-a-bogus can fix that. Clear bright illustrations throughout. CA

The Incredible Present

Harriet Castor
 Ill Norman Young
 Usborne 2002
 ISBN 0746048556



Lily's parents are off exploring the world in a balloon. Lily is at home with Grandma. Her birthday presents are somewhat disappointing until she opens the one from her parents which contains a wishing bag. Lily's first wishes bring unexpected results but her last wish solves all her problems. A simple surprising story with coloured illustration on each page. CA
 will be many happy visits for the Noahs and Sophie. A gentle story, sensitively told. Australian Children's Book Council Book of the Year, 1995. Expressive black line drawings throughout. A Blue Gum book. CA

The Lost Watch

Philippa Werry & Alice Bell
Scholastic NZ 2003
ISBN 1869435664

Henry borrows his father's brand-new watch. He takes it to school, gets involved in a game of soccer – and then he can't remember where it is. His family hunt high and low, while Henry racks his brains to remember what he did with it. At last he finds it – but then he has the problem of returning it without letting anyone know he took it. A light-hearted story of only 40 pages, with zany coloured illustrations on nearly every page. Great for boys. LO

Walking Lightly

Fleur Beale
ill Michaela Sangl
Mallinson Rendel
2004
ISBN 0908783 906



Millie is a rich kid who's into nature rather than the latest designer gear. Her classmates think she's totally weird. But when they go on a trip to a tropical island and get marooned by an earthquake, it's Millie who saves the day with her survival skills. It's a morality tale wrapped up in a modern-day story. Minimal text and plenty of friendly black ink drawings make this book very attractive to newly-independent readers. LO



William and the Wolves
Kathryn Cave
Ill Chris Riddell
Hodder Children's
Books 1999
ISBN 0340713585

William is sick of his little sister's imaginary pet – a lamb. So he invents six wolves living in the shed. But he finds that managing six wolves (plus snakes, plus chimpanzees) is strenuous work. Meanwhile, his sister manages to out-imagine him all the way through the book! Clever subtext is provided in Chris Riddell's marvellous illustrations. LO

Clarice Bean Spells Trouble

Lauren Child
Orchard Books 2004
ISBN 1841219207



Lauren Child's wacky sense of humour translates well from her picture books to her short chapter books. Clarice's story combines several themes – her dislike of spelling, her desire to have a good role in the school play, and her worry over her friend Karl, who's getting into very bad trouble. Quirky and appealing; best for girls. LO

One Night at Lottie's House

Max Dann, illus. Stephen Axelsen
Puffin Australia, 2004
ISBN 0143301160

The *Aussie Bites* series are great for children who are newly confident readers, with their fast-moving stories and their numerous black ink cartoon-type illustrations. Arthur has to stay at Lottie's spooky old house, so he brings along his ghost-repellent, zombie-fighting kit. He gets spooked by lots of strange noises, which all turn out to be harmless. Eventually Arthur goes downstairs to make himself a magic ghost-repellent drink – but he falls asleep at the table. Lottie's family think the drink is excellent! LO

Adam Sharp series:

George Edward Stanley
Random House 2002

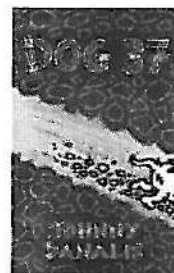
The Spy Who Barked ISBN 0307464121
London Calling ISBN 0307264149
Swimming With Sharks ISBN
0307264181
Operation Spy School ISBN
0375824049
Moose Master ISBN 0375826882
Code Word Kangaroo ISBN
0375826890

These books are ideal for boys – there are six titles so far. Adam Sharp is a schoolboy who is the only person in the school's "GATE" programme (for Gifted Children) This is so that when he gets the

"call" to go and be a spy he can leave school and no-one will know! They think he's at his GATE class. RT

Dog 37

Johnny
Danalis
Univ of Qld
Press 2004
ISBN
0702234311



When the Turnballs go away on holiday they book their lovable dog, Boof, into The Big Bone for three weeks of canine luxury. But The Big Bone is no ordinary kennel. It is a front for an illegal dinosaur mine and Boof is soon put to work digging deep underground, alongside his new found dog friends, in search of dinosaur fossils. But Boof finds a novel way of escape. A fast moving and funny tale. 7+ BF

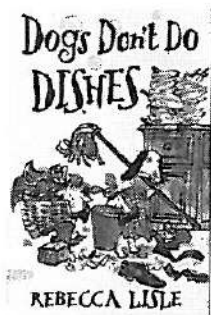
Rainbow Magic series by Daisy Meadows
Pub Orchard Books 2003

Seven titles in this series, one for every colour of the rainbow with a fairy to match. In Book One, Ruby, the Red Fairy, tells Rachel and Kirsty of the terrible spell that Jack Frost has put over Fairyland: the seven Rainbow Fairies have been banished to the mortal world. Each book in the series is about Rachel and Kirsty's adventures in finding each Rainbow Fairy. See also **The Weather Fairies** series. RT

The Invisible Dog

Dick King-Smith
Puffin Books 1977
ISBN 0141316039

Janie desperately wants a dog. So she invents Henry, a Great Dane, who is invisible to everyone else except Janie and old Mrs. Garrow who lives in the nearby cottage. Janie loves Henry, but will she ever have a real dog? Another winner by a very popular author. BF



Dogs Don't Do Dishes

Rebecca Lisle
Andersen Press
2004
ISBN
1842703145

Metal Mutt is a dog made of metal and microchips.

He longs for a home where he will be loved, patted on the head, and walked everyday. Instead, he ends up living with the Crumm family who make him do all the cooking, polishing, dusting and ironing. He even has to do he children's homework! Then, one day, his life takes a turn for the better when he meets Cherise and finds his dream home. Endearing illustrations by Tim Archbold. 7+ BF

Jalopy

Geraldine
McCaughrean
Orchard Books
2003
ISBN 1843622661



Elderly Mrs Ethel Turner wins a beautiful red car in a competition that she names Jalopy. Unfortunately she doesn't drive and decides to give the car away. Two would-be bank robbers steal the car for their getaway vehicle, the first of five adventures for Jalopy until she finds her way back to Mrs Turner again. A fast moving story featuring a colourful collection of characters. BF

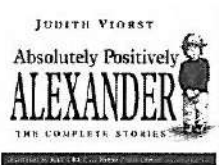
Bob the Builder and the Elves

Emily Rodda
Australian Broadcasting Corp 1998
ISBN 0733306934

Bob the Builder is a very happy man until one day his nice messy house is infested with elves. The elves tidy up Bob's house until it is horribly clean and bright. They even shine his working boots, polish his hard hat, and put fairy bread in his lunchbox. He is very embarrassed, but somehow he must find a way to live with them. BF

Absolutely Positively Alexander: the complete stories

Judith Viorst
ill Ray Cruz and
Robin Preiss Glasser (in the style of Ray Cruz)
Atheneum Books 1997
Hb ISBN 0689817738



Contains all three Alexander books: *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*; *Alexander, Who Used to Be Rich Last Sunday*; *Alexander, Who's Not (Do You Hear Me? I Mean It!) Going to Move*.

Alexander was first introduced to the world in 1972, but his stories are universal and timeless. Alexander is the kids who bad things happen to, but not so bad – just the bad that comes with big siblings, temptation, and family woes. If your children have been read the Alexander stories, now is the time to get them to read to you! Familiarity with the text will help them with their reading confidence. For ages 6 and up. AC

Mr Majeika
Humphrey
Carpenter
ill Frank Rogers
Puffin 1985
Pb ISBN
0140316779



The first in a magical series. Mr Majeika is Class Three's new teacher. When he arrives in the classroom on a magic carpet the class know this is going to be the best, most exciting, term ever! Mr Majeika asks the children to help him be an ordinary teacher and not to do any magic – but what a difficult promise to keep, particularly when Hamish Bigmore is such a meanie. For ages 7 and up. AC

Goblin in the Bush

Victor Kelleher
Random House Australia 2002
ISBN 1740517709
Gibblewort is a bad tempered goblin who lives in Ireland. Sick of his home country's rainy weather he decides to move to Australia. At first he is delighted

with his sunny new home but the he meets the local plants and animals and things begin to go very wrong. An entertaining story with an amusing view of Australian wildlife. 7+ BF

My Dog is a Carrot

John Hegley
Walker Books 2002
Pb ISBN
074458633X

Another quirky poetry collection. More shape poems, more weirdness, and lots of fun.

Keep an eye out for Colin McNaughton and Jack Prelutzy, too. Ages 8+. AC

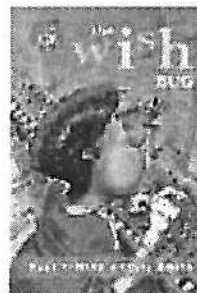


The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark

Jill Tomlinson
Candlewick 2001
ISBN 0763615625

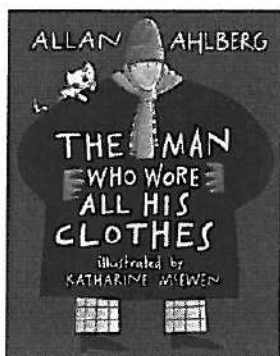
A British classic, this is a warm and endearing tale about Plop, the Barn Owl who is afraid of the dark. His mother suggests that he will overcome his fear if he learns more about it, so each night he ventures out and makes new acquaintances, both human and animal, who in turn teach him about the wonders of the dark. Eventually he decides that the dark is just right and becomes a night owl. BF

The Wish Bug



Paul Collins and
Craig Smith
Lothian Books
2004
Pb ISBN
0734406975

After watching *Aladdin* Josh is desperate to find something to grant him three wishes. After rubbing heaps of old lamps with no luck – he rescues a ladybug, hoping its luck will rub off on him. But when your wishes come true – are they worth it? NC



The Man Who Wore All His Clothes
Allan Ahlberg
ill Katharine McEwan
Walker Books 2003
Pb ISBN 0744589959

Welcome to the delightfully silly world of the Gaskitts. In this book Mr Gaskitt wakes up one morning and puts on all of his clothes, Mrs Gaskitt gives a lift to some bank robbers (she is a taxi driver), the twins' teacher has an accident and is replaced by an old-fashioned teacher, and Horace the cat goes visiting. But the best bit is finding out WHY Mr Gaskitt wears all his clothes! AC. Followed by:
The Woman Who Won Things;
Walker Books 2003; Pb ISBN 0744594960
The Cat Who Got Carried Away;
Walker Books 2004; Pb ISBN 0744598435

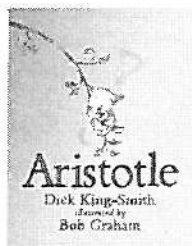
Zoo in the Sky: A Book of Animal Constellations and Kingdom of the Sun: A Book of the Planets



Jaqueline Mitton
ill Christina Balit
Frances Lincoln
1999 – Pb ISBN 0711213194
2003 – Pb ISBN 0711219478

Gorgeous illustrations, with just the right touches of glitter and gilt, adorn these pages. These are a wonderful introduction to the wonder and history of the constellations and planets. Although written and published in the northern hemisphere – the southern star maps are also included in the end papers. Jacqueline Mitton knows what she's talking about, having a PhD in astrophysics and she and her husband have a comet named after them. AC

Aristotle
Dick King-Smith
ill Bob Graham
Walker Books 2004
Pb ISBN 0744566800



Aristotle is such an adventurous kitten that his mother doesn't tell him that cats have nine lives. When a strange old lady takes him away to live with her his life is made. She is Bella Donna, and has a beaky nose, black clothes, a tall hat, and thinks it would be nice to have a white cat – not black – for once. Aristotle's lives get used up quite quickly, seeing as he is so curious, but he does learn from his mistakes. A fun little tale, with very cute illustrations. AC

Witch-in-Training: Flying Lessons
Maeve Friel
ill Nathan Reed
Collins 2002
Pb ISBN 0007133413

Ten-year-old Jessica learns she is a witch when she is blown into Miss Strega's shop. She sees a broom, with a note saying "flying lessons extra" and quickly discovers that she needs them. Jessica's lessons continue in:
Spelling Trouble (ISBN 0007133421)
Charming Or What? (ISBN 000713343X)
Brewing Up (ISBN 0007133448)
Broomstick Battles (ISBN 0007185243)
AC

Kev and Borax
Lorraine Orman
ill Mitch Vane
Puffin 2005
Pb ISBN 0143301438
An "Aussie Bites" book.



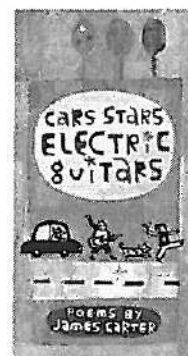
This is an excellent story of bullies being bested by the bullied, with help from a most unlikely Fairy Godfather. Lorraine Orman has written this with understanding and inventiveness. Kev's a wonderful Godfather, just what every kid being bullied needs. What an imagination to dream up Borax as a helper! For ages 7 and up. NC

26 Fairmount Avenue Series
Tomie dePaola.



Children's author and illustrator Tomie dePaola expands on the stories he has used in some of his picture books (*Nana Upstairs, Nana Downstairs; The Baby Sister; Tom*, for example) in this series of chapter books. The first book begins in 1938 with a hurricane and a new house, and was a Newbery Honor Book. Tomie has a way with words that draws the readers in, and the little historical facts are wonderful, like seeing *Snow White* – the new movie by Mr Walt Disney. He also tells about his first days of school and how well they DIDN'T go! AC

Cars Stars Electric Guitars: Poems
James Carter
ill. Mique Moriuchi
Walker Books 2002
Pb ISBN 0744586356



A quirky book of poetry, including lots of shape – or concrete – poems. A great resource for budding poets. AC

The Night of the Unicorn

Jenny Nimmo
ill. Terry Milne
Walker 2003
Pb ISBN 1844286312

Ever since the night Amber awoke to see shooting stars, magical and strange things have been happening. William, the rooster, flies out of the henhouse and Amber's hen, Hennie, follows him. The animals are all there to greet the horse – a creature of magic. Luke, the new and lonely boy in Amber's class wants a unicorn, but they don't exist, do they? A magical tale of adventure – for Hennie and William - and hope – for Luke and Amber. AC

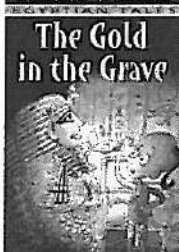
Singing to the Sun and Other Magical Tales

Vivian French
ill. Chris Fisher
Walker Books
2001
Pb ISBN
0744582342



A wonderful collection of eight stories, deeply embedded in the fairy tale tradition. There is the occasional word to trip young readers up, but with the tiniest of help, they will be fine. There is even a tale about empty nest syndrome for all those mothers who cannot sit still. Magical fun for ages 8 and up. AC

TERRY DEARY



The Gold in the Grave

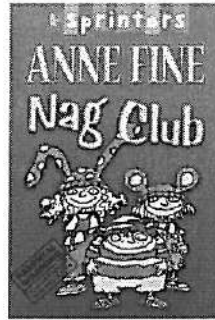
Terry Deary
A & C Black 2004
Pb ISBN
1404812709

Young Paneb gets swept up into a plot to rob

Tutankhamen's treasure chamber on the day that the young Egyptian king is to be buried. One of the Egyptian Tales, a series of simply told, amply illustrated stories, full of drama and humour and based on historical fact. FP

Nag Club

Anne Fine
Ill Arthur Robins
Walker 2004
Pb ISBN
1844289400



Everyone wants a boggle hat like Lola's, so she decides to give lessons in begging, wheedling and throwing tantrums to all the other children so that their parents will buy them one too. Children and their parents too, will recognise many of the manoeuvres here. FP

Ark in the Park

Wendy Orr
Ill Kerry Millard
Harper Collins 2002
ISBN 0207176337

Mr and Mrs Noah's wonderful pet shop is the Ark in the Park that Sophie can see from the window of her high-rise building. On her 7th birthday, Sophie visits it for the first of what will be many happy visits for the Noahs and Sophie. A gentle story, sensitively told. Australian Children's Book Council Book of the Year, 1995. Expressive black line drawings throughout. A Blue Gum book. CA



The Man Whose Mother was a Pirate

Margaret Mahy
ill Margaret Chamberlain
Picture Puffins
ISBN 0140506241

Sam is a very ordinary man who wears a brown suit and brown shoes, works in an office and writes very neatly in his books. His mother is something different. She is a large, colourful woman who happens to be a pirate! One day she decides she has had enough of living in the busy and smoky city and tells Sam she just has to go back to the sea. Despite all Sam's arguments, and his own best intentions, they do leave the city. Along the way Sam loses the strictures of city life and learns about the wonders of the

countryside, and the lure of the sea. Margaret Chamberlain's colourful and imaginative illustrations work well with Margaret Mahy's lyrical voice to create a fun read - though an adult may have to help with some of the words. AL

Annie & Moon

Miriam Smith
ill Lesley Moyes
Picture Puffins
ISBN 014054206X

Annie's father leaves when she is four, and she and her mother Meg move to town. As there are no children for Annie to play with, Meg brings home a little black kitten. Unfortunately they find it is too costly to stay in the flat and begin a period of change as Meg, Annie and Moon move from one place to another, trying to find where they can live happily. A warm story of a little girl and a little cat, both of which want a safe place to live. AL

The Great White Man-Eating Shark : a cautionary tale



Margaret Mahy
ill Jonathan Allen
Picture Puffins
ISBN 014054187X

Though a plain-looking boy, Norvin is a good actor. One

day Norvin decides the beach is far too crowded, and uses his acting ability and his looks to become a shark to scare everyone else out of the way. All goes well until a real shark decides she wants some company. AL

Rascal at the Show

Paul Jennings
Ill Bob Lea
Puffin 2005
Pb ISBN 014330092X

Poor Rascal, he's caught fleas from Sniff and has to wear a bucket around his head to stop him chewing his itchy tail. He'll never win a prize in the Dragon Show now, or will he? Another of the brightly-illustrated, simply told, humorous stories about Ben and his dragon friends for beginner readers. FP

There Once was a boy called Tashi
 Anna Fienberg and Barbara Fienberg
 Ill Kim Gamble
 Allen & Unwin 2004
 Hb ISBN 1741141982

“There once was a boy called Tashi, who had a way with witches and warlords and guessed the secrets of ghosts . . .” When the ogre Gloomin terrorises the village only Tashi is brave enough to find out why he is so upset. This lavishly illustrated picture book introduces readers to the young boy who is the hero of many other magical adventures. FP



Green Eggs and Ham
 Dr Seuss
 Collins
 ISBN 000171306X

One of the wonderful range of Dr Seuss books that are designed to tempt children into reading through the use of rhyme, repetition and humour. Though green eggs and ham don't look or sound very appealing, Sam is very persuasive and by the end of the story all arguments have been overcome, the green food is tasted and pronounced to be delicious. *Green Eggs and Ham* is an “I can read it all by myself Beginner Book”. A fun read for children alone or with their parents, who will undoubtedly enjoy revisiting these books from their own childhood. AL



Noisy Neighbours (I Am Reading)
 Nicola Moon
 Ill Liz Million
 Kingfisher 2003
 Pb ISBN
 0753408392

George enjoys peace and quiet and doing puzzles in magazines. Louis plays the trumpet and practices outside for an important concert. Harriet has a loud motorbike with a sidecar. Two entertaining stories about three very different neighbours and how they work together to solve their problems. CT



The Berenstain Bears and the Spooky Old Tree
 Stan and Jan Berenstain
 Random House
 1978
 ISBN 0394839102

Three little bears go walking at night

with a rope, a stick and a torch. “Do they dare go into that spooky old tree? Yes. They dare.” But what happens when they go into that spooky old tree, and do they dare go further?

Repetition, rhyme and humour work well in all the Berenstain Bear books to encourage children into the world of imaginative stories, and this is no exception. As with Dr Seuss, children with or without their parents will be able to enjoy these stories. AL

Patrick the Party-Hater
 Emily Smith
 Ill Georgie Birkett
 Young Corgi
 Pb ISBN 0552551732

Patrick doesn't like parties, in fact he HATES them! When Sophie hands him an invitation to her party in a PINK envelope, Patrick is determined NOT to display any interest and just keeps on talking about ball bearings. When the others find out he doesn't like parties they are quite shocked. How can he not like all the fancy food, games and getting dressed up? Patrick tries hard to think of a way he can avoid going to the party but he can't. The only good thing about Sophie's party is that Patrick meets another party-hater and the afternoon doesn't turn out too boring after all. JH



Space Race
 Malorie Blackman
 Ill Colin Mier
 Corgi Pups 1997
 Pb ISBN 0552545422

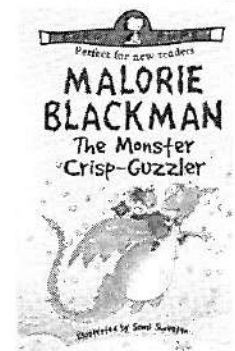
Lizzie loves living on the Astra Space Station. The one thing she doesn't like is a boy in her class called Jake. In fact Jake is not particularly well-liked at all as he is always boasting and has a tendency to cheat. One day Lizzie has had enough of Jake's boasting and she rashly remarks that her spaceship could beat Jake's any day. The challenge is on!



There is just one problem, Jake has a super fast, brand new spaceship that runs on diamond fuel, there is no way Lizzie could beat him. But with a clever idea and help from her friends, Lizzie manages to trick Jake into believing she has won. CT

The Monster Crisp-Guzzler
 Malorie Blackman
 Ill Sami Sweeten
 Corgi Pups 2002
 Pb ISBN 0552547832

Mira's favourite food in the whole, wide world is potato chips. Her Mum always puts a small packet of them in her school lunch box. When Mira starts at a new school she is quite upset when the other children tell her to put her chips away and not eat them. Mira just thinks they are jealous. But Mira is in for a big surprise! Mira's wonderful new teacher loves potato chips too, but when she eats them something VERY strange happens to her. JH



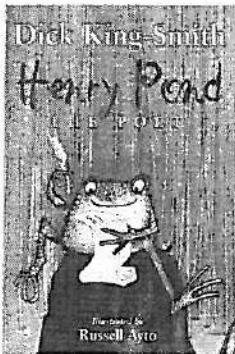
Henry Pond the Poet

Dick King-Smith
Ill Russell Ayto
Hodder 1989
Pb ISBN 0340657006

Henry Pond is a toad with a huge reputation, talked about with pride by toads far and wide! Ever since he was a 'toadpole' Henry has been creating and reciting poetry. One evening, at a poetry recital, Henry notices the most beautiful female toad

he has ever seen - Victoria Garden-Pool. But, unlike the others Victoria is not in the least bit impressed by Henry's

poetry, in fact she finds it boring! Victoria is more interested in Larry Lake, a large toad, a toad of action, not words. What will poor, love-struck Henry do? Another amusing animal story from the ever-popular Dick King-Smith. CT



First Friend (Aussie Nibbles)
Christobel Mattingley and Craig Smith
Puffin 2000
Pb ISBN 014130894X

Kerry is in her first year at school, she has many friends, a terrific teacher and loves to read. During the year her Dad changes jobs, the family moves to another town and Kerry has to start a new school. The new school is much bigger than her old one and Kerry feels lonely. But then the class goes to the library and Kerry is overjoyed. There are heaps of books for Kerry to choose from, including her old favourites. Lost in her reading Kerry is left behind and soon gets lost in the maze of corridors, only to be rescued by the school dog. JH

Blessu (First Young Puffin)

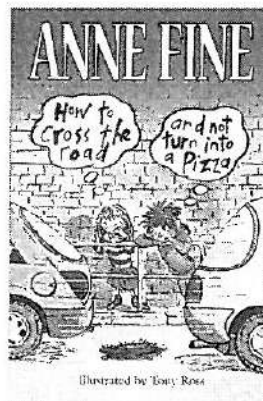
Dick King-Smith and Adrienne Kennaway
Puffin
Pb ISBN 014037373X

Blessu is a small elephant with hayfever and a very big sneeze. All his sneezing stretches his trunk and by the time he is 10 years old he is able to go deeper into the water and reach higher into the trees than his peers. And by the time he is fully grown Blessu's trunk is so long and his sneeze so huge, small trees are uprooted and the other animals stampede in panic. A fun story for younger readers from the author of 'The Sheep-Pig' (Babe). CT

How to cross the road and not turn into a Pizza

Anne Fine
Ill Tony Ross
Walker 2002
Pb ISBN 0744590345

One Monday Miss Talentino walks into the classroom to hear the children discussing a recent road accident in which Tom's cousin had ended up in hospital with broken legs. As the school is situated on a very busy road many of the children are not allowed to cross the road themselves without their parents or the Lollipop Lady. Miss Talentino decides it is time her class are given a lesson in safe road crossing without actually having to cross the real road - after all they don't want to end up flattened like a pizza! An amusing story that succeeds well in getting the road safety message across to younger children, especially those that don't take it too seriously! JH



Horrid Henry's Big Bad Book.

Francesca Simon
Ill Tony Ross
Orion Children's Books (1997) 2004
Hb ISBN 1842551035

Horrid Henry is the disreputable hero of this collection of ten stories. Henry is always in trouble in contrast to his goody-two-shoes brother Perfect Peter. A favourite will be *Horrid Henry's Nits* which sees Henry come up with an innovative solution to the curse of head lice. Henry's favourite poem will be a hit with those children keen on the gross and disgusting as it takes a detailed look at throwing up! This book is certain to entertain 7 to 10-year-olds, particularly boys, and the Tony Ross illustrations capture Henry's character and the school environment perfectly. CB

Lilac Peabody and Bella Bright

Annie Dalton
Harper Collins 2004
ISBN 0007137729

Lilac Peabody is a magical being who comes to the aid of children with problems. In the case of Bella Bright, who is a painfully shy circus child who is expected to be a performer, she teaches her how to sparkle with confidence. There are three other Lilac Peabody titles. With short chapters, plentiful cartoon like illustrations and well-spaced text, but with some challenging vocabulary these books are a good choice for a newly confident reader. HB

Ms Wiz Magic

Terence Blacker
Macmillan 2003
ISBN 0330420399

This an omnibus edition containing three of the Ms Wiz titles which were first published in 1989 and have been reprinted several times - a sure sign of popularity in the children's book world. Ms Wiz is a witch, or paranormal operative as she prefers to call herself. She goes wherever magic is needed, usually with chaotic results. Slapstick humour such as this generally appeals to 7-9 year olds and the books have large print and illustrations every few pages. HB

Arabel's Raven

Joan Aiken
Barn Owl Books 2001
ISBN 1903015146

The zany escapades of Arabel and her pet raven Mortimer were written in the 1970s and featured on the English television programme Jackanory. Illustrated by Quentin Blake they will appeal to children's sense of fun. HB Other stories about Arabel and Mortimer are

Mortimer's Bread Bin

ISBN 1903015154

The Spiral Stair

ISBN 1903015073



Sophie's Adventures

Dick King-Smith
Ill David Parkins
Walker Books 1995
Pb ISBN
0744547113

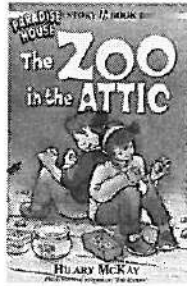
Three stories in one book - *Sophie's Snail*, *Sophie's Tom* and *Sophie Hits Six* follow the everyday activities in the lives of Sophie, her parents and her twin brothers. There are also altercations with Sophie's worst enemy, Dawn, who finds Sophie's lively exploits very distasteful. Sophie wants to be a farmer and begins with a snail as a pet. She collects "farm munny", encouraged by her special Great Aunt Alice. Eager new readers aged 6 and up will be drawn into Sophie's world as she experiences starting school, getting a kitten (Tom), having chicken pox and other familiar childhood events. Occasional line drawings capture Sophie's scruffy charm. CB

Paradise House series

Hilary McKay
ill Tony Kenyon

The text is smaller and there are less illustrations than first chapter books, making these a good choice for the next step up. First published in 90s these have recently been reissued. Danny, Anna and Nathan all live in flats in Paradise House. Although people

call them the angels from Paradise House and tease them, the children are perfectly normal and get up to mischief.



The Zoo in the Attic.

Hodder Children's
Books 1998; ISBN
034072286X

The Treasure in the

Garden. Hodder
Children's Books
1998; ISBN
0340722878

The Echo in the Chimney.

Hodder

Children's Books 1998; ISBN
0340722886

The Magic in the Mirror.

Hodder
Children's Books 1998; ISBN
0340722894

The Surprise Party. Hodder Children's
Books 2000; ISBN 0340753013

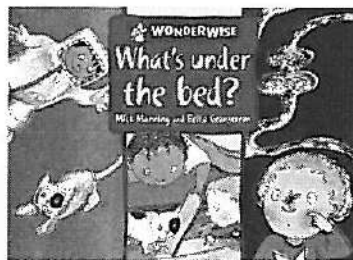
Keeping Cotton Tail. Hodder Children's
Books 2000; ISBN 0340753021

Once they've finished this series, you
could try McKay's **Pudding Bag School**
series. For ages 8 and up. AC

No Big Deal

David Hill
Ill Terry Fitzgibbon
Puffin 2003
ISBN 0143318098

Todd's problem was
that he was small.
People teased him,
thinking it all good
fun, but no-one realized how much it hurt.
It takes a cave-in for Todd to learn that
being small doesn't have to be a liability,
and that everybody has skills which are
valuable. One of the first in the Kiwi Bites
series, well told. LH



Wonderwise series

By various authors; Franklin Watts
This non-fiction series is great for
children wanting to explore their world.

The illustrations are bright and the text
is just enough, there are even little side
notes adding extra information and
textual difficulty. The hardback
versions of these were first published in
the 90s, and are now available in
paperback.

Titles in the series are:

Chomp! Munch! Chew! Karen
Wallace and Ross Collins; 2004; Pb
ISBN 0749658681

Hiding! Karen Wallace and Charles
Fuge; 2004; Pb ISBN 0749658614

**Is a Blue Whale the Biggest Thing
There Is?** Robert E. Wells; 2005; Pb
ISBN 0749662220

It Takes Two; Karen Wallace and Ross
Collins; 2004; Pb ISBN 0749656905

Let's Build a House; Mick Manning
and Brita Granström; Pb
ISBN 0749662247

My Body, Your Body; Mick Manning
and Brita Granström; 2004; Pb ISBN
0749658622

Out There Somewhere; Mick Manning
and Brita Granström; 2004; Pb ISBN
0749658673

Splish, Splash, Splish!; Mick Manning
and Brita Granström; 2004; Pb ISBN
0749656867

Stone Age, Bone Age!; Mick Manning
and Brita Granström; 2004; Pb ISBN
0749658649

Supermum; Mick Manning and Brita
Granström; 2004; Pb ISBN 0749658657

Wash, Scrub, Brush!; Mick Manning
and Brita Granström; Pb
ISBN 0749662255

What If?: A Book About Recycling;
Mick Manning and Brita Granström;
2004; Pb ISBN 0749656921

For ages 7 and up. AC

Aesop's Fables

Carol Watson
Ill Nick Price
Usborne 2003
ISBN 0746054084



There are eight
chapters, each a
simplified version of
a traditional fable.

The layout is clear with good sized font,
and rich vocabulary is used throughout.

The illustrations are colourful, many
including speech and thought bubbles.

CA