

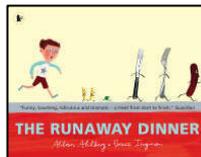
## Christmas Giving term 4, 2007

Every year there is an almost overwhelming number of new children's and teens' books recently available. And each year we review a selection of our favourites as recommendations for Christmas gift giving. Again, it is pleasing to have a number of New Zealand books, reprints of some old favourites, new illustrations of classics, and new authors.

Contributors to this list are: Kerry Aluf, Helen Beckingsale, Crissi Blair, Tina Collins, Annie Coppell, Sarah Fordyce, Lois Huston, Wayne Mills, Lorraine Orman, Frances Plumpton, Helen Schwarz and Rosemary Tisdall.

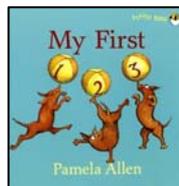
### Picture books for all ages

*The Runaway Dinner*  
Allan Ahlberg, illus Bruce Ingman  
Walker Books 2006  
Pb ISBN 9781406305494

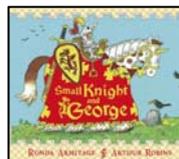


A picture book that is a delight to share with young children. A little boy called Banjo sits down to eat his dinner and his sausage (called Melvin) decides he doesn't want to be eaten. Melvin jumps off the plate and runs away, followed by the knife and fork, peas, fries, table and chair, and four baby carrots. Banjo and his parents chase after them, until everyone is exhausted. But this isn't quite the end of the story. The detailed illustrations of the runaways on their little stick legs add to the humour, a great match between written and visual text. HS

*My First 123*  
Pamela Allen  
Puffin Baby 2007  
Pb ISBN 9780143502036  
A simple counting book from Pamela Allen that invites an expressive read aloud performance. Recognise the characters from other Allen books while counting your way to ten. This will delight the under-fours and follows last year's *My First ABC*. 2+. KA

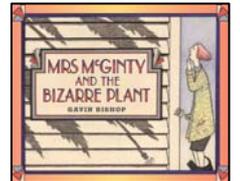


*Small Knight and George*  
Rhonda Armitage, illus Arthur Robins  
Hodder 2007  
Hb ISBN 9781846163760



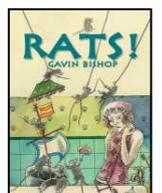
Small Knight doesn't want to go out and fight a big, scary dragon. But that's what he's expected to do. So, dressed in his slightly-too-big armour, he sets off. On the way he finds lots of evidence for dragons, but – luckily – no big, scary dragon, only a little George, who is scared of big, scary dragons, too. When he brings George home, everyone is in for a surprise. 4+. AC

*Mrs McGinty and the Bizarre Plant* [new edition]  
Gavin Bishop  
Random House 2007 (first published 1981)



Pb ISBN 9781869418922  
1982 Russell Clark Award winner. Mrs McGinty's life is dull and grey until she brings home a bizarre plant that grows and grows, transforming Mrs McGinty's life and attitude and making her friends. 4+. AC

*Rats!*  
Gavin Bishop  
Random House 2007  
Hb ISBN 9781869419028



Miss Polly Piper likes to keep a tidy house but she is overrun by rats. One day Rapsallion Claw turns up at the door and offers to rid her of the rats. Curiously, as they go through the house, the rats seem to have disappeared (cleverly disguised as wallpaper and upholstery!) but they can't help but follow the sounds of the accordion. Miss Polly finds she misses her rodent companions. Lively illustrations, using pen and ink and watercolours, portray the story in fine detail, with much to discover on repeat readings. 3+. CB

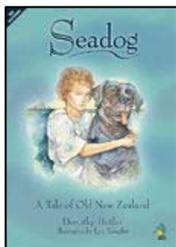
*Harvey Slumfenburger's Christmas Present* [new mini edition]  
John Burningham  
Candlewick Press 2007 (first published 1993)  
Hb ISBN 9780763635176

This is a delightful story about a very determined Santa Claus and his intrepid solo journey to get a forgotten present to poor little Harvey Slumfenburger by Christmas morning. 4+. KA

*Seadog: A Tale of Old New Zealand*  
Dorothy Butler, illus Lyn Kriegler  
Reed 2007

Pb ISBN 9781869780517

Based on a true story from Karekare Beach on Auckland's west coast. Joseph is a young boy whose family have settled in Karekare during the 1980s. He is unable to climb the rocks and trees like his siblings due to a disability, but one day while roaming the beach he discovers an injured dog and takes him home. His father doesn't want a useless dog, but says they can keep it until it has recovered. They call on a local Māori woman for natural remedies to help Seadog recover, and come up with an ingenious way for him to be useful. A lovely family story for 8+ years, with gorgeous watercolour illustrations capturing the colours of the sea. CB



*Dear Zoo* [new edition]

Rod Campbell

Pan Macmillan 2007 (first published 1982)

Board book ISBN 9780230015258

A special 25th anniversary edition of this fabulous lift-the-flap book.

*Guji-Guji*

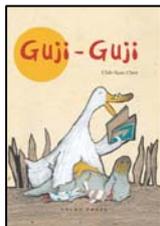
Chih-Yuan Chen

Gecko Press 2007

Hb ISBN 9780958278706

A warmly satisfying telling of the classic ugly duckling scenario by a Taiwanese author/illustrator.

An extra egg is added to the nest of the mother duck, who doesn't notice because she is reading! She's not bothered by the difference in her extra baby, who just happens to be a crocodile – the other babies have their differences too. All is well until three crocodiles come on the scene and try to persuade Guji-Guji to join them in a duck-hunting plan. Ink and watercolour illustrations in natural tones are simple but capture the characters perfectly. This book will enjoy repeat readings with children 2-7. CB



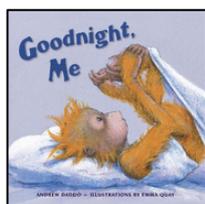
*Good Night Me*

Andrew Daddo, illus Emma Quay

Hachette Children's Books Australia  
2006

Hb ISBN 9780733619069

Beautifully illustrated, with a simple but humorous text, *Good Night Me* follows a baby orang-utan as it settles down to sleep. As he says goodnight to each part of his body he, and his audience, gradually become calmer and sleepier. Sure to become a firm favourite with all those families who battle with children at bedtime! 2+. SF



*Slinky Malinki; Slinky Malinki Catflaps; Slinky Malinki Open the Door* [new miniature editions]

Lynley Dodd

Mallinson Rendel 2007

Hb ISBNs 9781877423109; 9781877423123;  
9781877423116

These old favourites about a very cunning black cat hardly need describing. Mallinson Rendel has produced a set of sturdy, handy-sized, reasonably-priced miniature editions that are ideal for popping into a child's Christmas stocking. Grandparents, take note! LO

*Tiddler: The Story Telling Fish*

Julia Donaldson, illus Axel Scheffler

Alison Green/Scholastic 2007

Hb ISBN 9780439943772

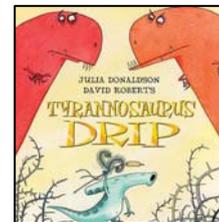
Tiddler always comes up with the most amazing stories to explain why he's late for school. One day something amazing really happens – he's caught in a net and ends up miles from home. He follows versions of his stories all the way home. A great look at how stories and evolve. Another offering from the creators of the Gruffalo. 3+. AC

*Tyrannosaurus Drip*

Julia Donaldson, illus David Roberts  
Macmillan 2007

Hb ISBN 9781405090001

Dinosaur books are always popular and so is Julia Donaldson. Drip, a baby duckbill, accidentally hatches in a nest of aggressive dinosaurs. This story reads aloud really well and is fun for adults as well as children. 4+. HB



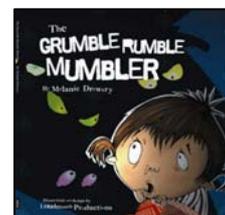
*The Grumble Rumble Mumbler*

Melanie Drewery, illus & design  
Loudmouth Productions

Huia 2007

Pb ISBN 9781869692841

There's a real kiwi flavour to this tongue-twisting lift-the-flap book that will delight young readers. All the usual household noises intensify at night and keep a little girl from sleep. The rhythmic, repetitive text, with bold computer designed illustrations and large, distinctive typography, make this a great fun read aloud. A glossary on the inside back cover describes each monster. 3+. KA



*Amy & Louis*

Libby Gleeson, illus Freya Blackwood

Scholastic 2007

Hb ISBN 1865049352

This award-winning picture book explores the friendship of neighbours Amy and Louis, who are only on the other side of the fence. How will they be able to stay in touch when Amy moves to the other side of the world? A delight for sharing with 3+. AC

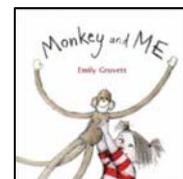
*Monkey and Me*

Emily Gravett

Macmillan 2007

Hb ISBN 9781405089494

Once more, Emily Gravett has produced a picture book to delight the youngest readers. With a simple catchy repetitive rhyme, accompanied by illustrations of a small girl and her soft toy monkey playing an animal guessing game, this is a winner. From the cover to the final endpapers, the unity of text and illustrations is superb. Toddlers will enjoy joining in the fun. FP



*Fiapule*

Catherine Hannken, illus Trish Bowles

Mallinson Rendel 2007

Hb ISBN 9780958262675

Fiapule has been invited to his best friend's birthday party and of course he is keen to go! So when his parents say he has to attend his new baby sister's christening instead,

he is devastated. Fiapule learns about the importance of family, and discovers things can turn out okay in the end. This lovely picture book is a wonderful partnered book to *Selafina*, although a totally separate story. RT

*Taniwha* [new edition]  
Robyn Kahukiwa  
Puffin 2007 (first published 1986)  
Pb ISBN 9780140505986

*The Growing Story* [new illustrations]  
Ruth Krauss, illus Helen Oxenbury  
HarperCollins 2007  
Hb ISBN 9780007233328

Originally written in 1947, this is simply a story about growing bigger. The little boy can see the baby chicks, the puppy, the plants, all growing during the change from winter to spring. What he can't see is any changes in himself, despite his mother's constant reassurances. All through summer he observes the changes around him, and it is only when he tries to put on his winter clothes again that he can finally see how much he has grown. Beautifully illustrated by Helen Oxenbury, the farm setting is timeless and will appeal to all. KA



*The Peasant Prince*  
Li Cunxin, illus Anne Spudvilas  
Penguin/Viking 2007  
Hb ISBN 9780670070541

A picture book version of the author's story, first told in *Mao's Last Dancer*. He tells of the grinding poverty of village life in China, his escape through dance and his eventual defection to the west, all told in a manner suitable for this age group. Spudvilas' illustrations are beautiful and perfectly capture the emotions. 7+. AC

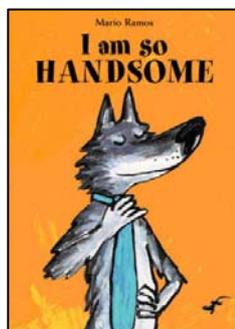


*A Summery Saturday Morning* [reprint]  
Margaret Mahy, illus Selina Young  
Penguin NZ 2007 (first published Hamish Hamilton 1998)  
Pb ISBN 014056327X

This is a perennial favourite, and as so many Margaret Mahy books are out of print, it is good to see this one being regularly reprinted. The story of a group of children walking their dogs to the beach and being pursued by a flock of geese is based on an actual event, and the rhyming text is great to read aloud for 2+. HB

*I am so Handsome*  
Mario Ramos, trans Jean Anderson  
Gecko Press 2007  
Pb ISBN 9780958272094

Wolf, who is very vain, goes for a stroll in the forest so that everyone can admire him. Well, Little Red Riding Hood think he's handsome, so do the Three Little Pigs, even the Seven Dwarves and Snow White too, but then the vain animal gets his comeuppance from an extraordinary creature. This, and the companion volume *I am so Strong* (ISBN 9780958272056) are notable for both the exuberance of the text and the skill of Ramos' illustration of the incorrigible wolf. FP



*The Emperor of Absurdia*  
Chris Riddell  
Pan Macmillan 2007  
Pb ISBN 9781405090285

One night a small boy tumbles into an absurd world full of dragons and monsters. Chased by them all, the boy – the Emperor – manages to make it home to bed, where he wakes up again. The bright colourful illustrations are the perfect accompaniment. 3+. AC

*We're Going on a Bear Hunt* [pop-up edition]  
Michael Rosen, illus Helen Oxenbury  
Walker 2006  
Hb ISBN 9781844288489

The pop-up edition of this fabulous picture book is well-worth having, even if you have a copy of the 'normal' book. The construction is quite robust, which is a good thing. There are pop-ups, tabs, flaps... absolutely perfect. AC

*Christmas: A Pop-up Stocking Filler*  
Robert Sabuda

Hb ISBN 9781406306675  
A compact novelty pop-up book celebrating the Christmas season. Each page has an intricate white paper pop-up with either a gold or silver trim and just the one word. From candle, ribbon, snowflake to a manger and then finally a colourful Santa declaring Merry Christmas. This is a delicate book to treasure with the very young. KA

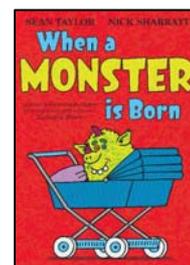


*My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes* [board book edition]  
Eve Sutton, illus Lynley Dodd  
Mallinson Rendel 2007 (first published 1984)  
Hb ISBN 9781877423086

This classic New Zealand story is now available in a sturdy board book edition, perfect to add to Christmas stockings. AC

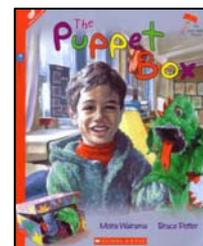
*When a Monster is Born*  
Sean Taylor, illus Nick Sharratt  
Hodder 2007  
Pb ISBN 9781846165115

*When a monster is born there are two possibilities...* A fun book exploring these possibilities – but only one ever leads on to another set of possibilities until the end... when a monster is born. 3+. AC



*The Puppet Box*  
Moira Wairama, illus Bruce Potter  
Scholastic NZ 2007  
Pb ISBN 9781869438005

Winner of the 2006 Joy Cowley Award, this appealing picture book looks at the apprehension many children experience when beginning kindergarten. Rua feels very whakama (shy) until the teacher introduces him a hand puppet in the form of a kiwi. Other puppets follow, until Rua is relaxed and smiling. Bruce Potter's friendly, realistic portrayals of children make the book a delight. LO



*Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late*

Mo Willems

Walker 2007

Pb ISBN 9781406308129

The latest book featuring the pigeon with attitude and the long suffering bus driver. It's bed time for the pigeon and the bus driver asks the reader to make sure he doesn't stay up late, but... In a scene played out in thousands of homes, the pigeon comes up with all the reasons why he's not tired and doesn't need to go to bed. Fun for all, especially adults. 4+. AC

*Leonardo, the Terrible Monster*

Mo Willems

Walker 2007

Hb ISBN 9781406308075

Leonardo is a terrible monster. Well, terrible at being terrifying. After extensive research, he finds the perfect victim, Sam. When he scares Sam, Sam cries and Leonardo is happy – but then Sam tells him why he's crying and Leonardo decides, maybe instead of being a terrible monster, he could be a great friend. 4+. AC

## Junior fiction (ages 7-12)

*Take the Long Path* [new edition]

Joan de Hamel

Puffin 2007 (first published 1978)

Pb ISBN 9780143303497

1979 Esther Glen Winner

*X Marks the Spot* [new edition]

Joan de Hamel

Puffin 2007 (first published 1973)

Pb ISBN 9780143303480

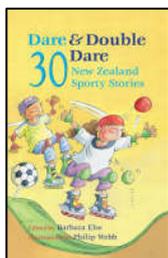
*Dare and Double Dare: 30 New Zealand Sport Stories*

Edited by Barbara Else, illus Philip Webb

Random House NZ 2007

Hb ISBN 9781869418748

Another anthology in a very popular series, this focuses on a theme that will appeal to many primary and intermediate-aged readers. The stories from funny to exciting to serious, and include topics such as going off the high dive board, dancing, doing tae kwon do or going fishing. Some stories are also about making decisions or trying and new scary things. Authors are a mix of new and experienced writers, including David Hill, Tessa Duder and Sandy McKay. Excellent cartoon style illustrations by Philip Webb. LO



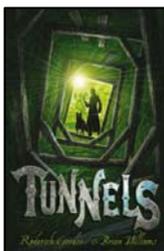
*Tunnels*

Roderick Gordon and Brian Williams

The Chicken House 2007

Pb ISBN 9781905294428

Will Burrows and his father love digging tunnels until one day Will's father disappears down a secret tunnel. Will and his friend go in search of him, digging their way down, until they come across a whole city of people living underground, led by a very strict sect called the Styx. An exciting adventure/fantasy story that keeps you reading as Will tries to find his way back to the real world, but not until he has found his father. First in a series. 11+. RT



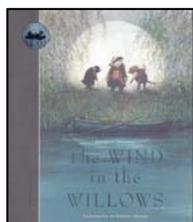
*The Wind in the Willows* [new illustrations]

Kenneth Grahame, illus Robert Ingpen

Walker Books 2007

Hb ISBN 9781921150289

A newly illustrated version of an old classic to celebrate 100 years since it was first published in 1908. Every home should own *The Wind in the Willows*, and this is a beautiful version with an abundance of warm and timeless pictures to bring all the characters to life.



Each chapter begins with a double page spread illustration setting the scene, with additional pictures scattered through the text. Introduce your children to the incorrigible Mr Toad, loveable Mole, Ratty and the rest of the clan in their adventures and the glorious world of their everyday lives on the riverbank. Read aloud 4+. CB

*The Dumpster Saga*

Craig Harrison

Scholastic NZ 2007

Pb ISBN 9781869438166

Ben has a knack for getting into trouble. Things only get more complicated when his younger brother finds a weird helmet that enables him to predict the future – in a very garbled fashion. One hilarious adventure follows another until the unthinkable happens – an alien arrives to claim the helmet! A very funny read for boys (and girls) aged about 11 to 14. LO



*Star Fairy's Top Secret Guide to Fairyland*

Karen Jarvis, illus Alex Snellgrove

Pan Macmillan 2007

Hb ISBN 9781405038010

Karen Jarvis (aka Star Fairy) performs in the entertaining duo StarFish. After years of bringing Fairyland and other fantastical worlds to life in her performances, she has now packed a stack of stories, poems, activities and games into an annual-style collection, with delicate but vibrantly coloured illustrations by Australian illustrator Alex Snellgrove. The stories will need to be read aloud, or alone by a reasonably competent reader, but this will be a long-lasting treasure for any fairy-made child. 4+ (read aloud), 8+ (read alone). CB



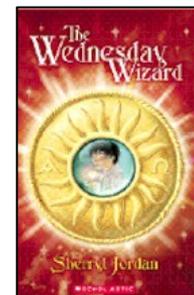
*Wednesday Wizard* [new edition]

Sherryl Jordan

Scholastic 2007 (first published 1991)

Pb ISBN 9781869438388

The story of Denzil, an apprentice wizard from the middle ages who accidentally transports himself to the 20th century, was very popular when it was first published and it is good to see it back in print. It is also available in a boxed set, along with three other tales about Denzil, one of them – *The Silver Dragon* – is a new title. These books combine fantasy and humour and would make a great gift for 8 to 11 year olds. HB



*The Puffin Treasury of New Zealand Children's Stories  
Volume 4*

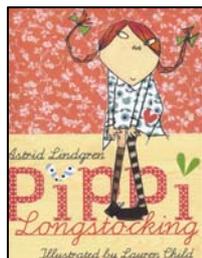
Compiled by Jenni Kestra  
Puffin NZ 2007  
ISBN 9780143303466

A new collection of favourite New Zealand stories, ranging over picture books, early chapter books, including several previously published in the Kiwi Bites series, through to excerpts from longer novels. There's something for every interest here – history, lots of laughs, touching stories and stuff to make you think. Good to see several titles that have been out of print for a while making an appearance here, such as Margaret Mahy's *Wind Between the Stars* and Dorothy Butler's *Hector an Old Bear* along with many other well-known authors and illustrators including Jack Lasenby, Patricia Grace, Robyn Belton and David Elliot. A good collection for some holiday reading. CB

*Pippi Longstocking* [new illustrations]

Astrid Lindgren, illus Lauren Child  
Oxford University Press 2007  
Hb ISBN 9780192782403

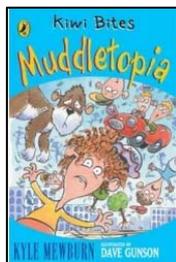
*Pippi Longstocking* has been a favourite character for generations of young readers since the book was first published in 1945. The crazy red-headed nine-year-old girl does whatever she wants, following her own rules and sharing her adventures and outrageous stories with her friends Annika and Tommy, and shocking everyone she meets. This vibrant new edition, produced to celebrate 100 years since Lindgren's birth, has been illustrated by Lauren Child, well known for her collage-style illustrations in her *Clarice Bean* and *Charlie and Lola* books. Her crazy mix of fabrics, textures, and drawing is a perfect match for Pippi's story. A very special book for 7-10 years. CB



*Muddletopia* (Kiwi Bites)

Kyle Mewburn, illus Dave Gunson  
Puffin NZ 2007  
Pb ISBN 978014330351

*Muddletopia* – a world where everyone looks alike and all the buildings look alike – people are constantly getting muddled and mistaken for one another. The Queen declares a new law and everyone must have an official muddle-free hat with label. Karley hates her new hat with its silly 'child' label and is desperate for a change when a sudden earthquake causes lots of hats to fly off. A madcap adventure follows that will delight young readers. 7-9 years. KA



*Beowulf*

Michael Morpurgo, illus Michael Foreman  
Walker 2006  
Hb ISBN 9781844287543

Morpurgo offers a new children's version of this ancient tale, including the oft ignored last part – Beowulf's fight to the death with the dragon and his funeral. A fantastic and accessible version for today's children. 9+. AC

*Born to Run: The Many Lives of One Incredible Dog* (also published as *Best Mate*)

Michael Morpurgo, illus Michael Foreman  
HarperCollins 2007  
Pb ISBN 9780007262434

Rescued from drowning by young Patrick, a greyhound puppy is named Best Mate, and becomes the inseparable companion for the lonely boy. Best Mate's life takes a turn when he is stolen and sold to a cruel greyhound racer, stepfather to Becky. Best Mate seems destined to turn up in people's lives just when he is needed most and for Becky, an unhappy teenager, and then Joe, retired and recently widowed, Best Mate provides the support and companionship they need. A delightfully sensitive tale from master storyteller Michael Morpurgo. 9+. KA

*The Invention of Hugo Cabret*

Brian Selznick  
Scholastic 2007  
Hb ISBN 0439813786

This beautifully presented book is a novel that depends equally on words and pictures. Half the story is told by means of exquisite, finely detailed pencil sketches on black pages, plus stills from the silent films of Georges Melies, a magician and the creator of 500 films including the first science-fiction film, *A trip to the moon*. Much of the book is based on the later life of Melies, the rest of this mystery being invented. And what an invention it is! It tells the story of young Hugo who lives secretly in the walls of a Parisian railway station, taking care of the station clocks. A treasured notebook, a stolen key, a missing uncle, a mysterious message from his dead father and Hugo's struggle for survival all combine to make a haunting, fast-paced mystery. This book would appeal to all from middle-primary to secondary. SF

*Carbonel: The Prince of Cats and The Kingdom of Carbonel* [new editions]

Barbara Sleigh  
Puffin 2005 (first published Parrish 1955) and Puffin 2007 (first published Parrish 1959)  
Pb ISBNs 0141319739 and 0141323108

As with all good fantasies there is a task to be fulfilled and Rosemary and John's task is to restore the cat, Carbonel, to his position as King of the Cats. To do this they must remove a silent spell and outwit a witch. Those of us who read these as children remember them with great affection. It is good to see them made available to another generation. These books have a rather old-fashioned feel to them but they are still a good read for 9+. HB

## Senior fiction (ages 12+)

*A Great and Terrible Beauty*

Libba Bray  
Simon & Schuster 2006  
Pb ISBN 0689875355

Spence Academy is a finishing school for young ladies and Gemma Doyle has just arrived from India after the mysterious and violent death of her mother.

The atmosphere is charged with repression, cliques and shadowy mystery. Gemma and her friends sneak out at night to a small cave and then together they pledge themselves to The Order, a sisterhood of an unknown realm using an old diary as their guide. A gothic thriller that is followed by *Rebel Angels* (2007) and the not yet published *The Sweet Far Thing*. 15+ KA.

### *Just Listen*

Sarah Dessen  
Penguin 2006  
Pb ISBN 9780141322919

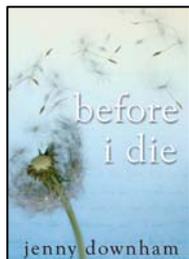
A year ago Annabel had it all. Now there's nothing. Owen, the school's troublemaker, is the only one who understands, the only one who listens. And it is Owen who makes Annabel listen to herself. Dessen's characters have a way of lingering, so it's wonderful that her novels are becoming available in the New Zealand market. Look out for *The Truth About Forever* (ISBN 0142406252). 14+. AC



### *Before I Die*

Jenny Downham  
David Fickling Books 2007  
Pb ISBN 9780385613538

Tessa is 16 and she's going to die soon. We – Tessa and the reader – know this from the start and there's no changing that. But there are things to be done, all the important stuff she wants to experience before the end comes and she's made a list. This is not for the faint-hearted with having sex and number one on the list, and first to go, and drug-taking along the way too. None of it is easy and it's heart-breaking for her friends and family too, but it's an intense and often rewarding journey with some unexpected results. Not the final result though, you'll definitely need those tissues, and you'll want to get out and pack a few things into your own life too. 14+. CB



### *In Too Deep*

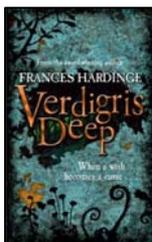
D.K. Grant  
Scholastic NZ 2007  
Pb ISBN 9781869438197

Josh's world has turned upside down. Not only has he suffered a vicious beating from Bevan, the school bully, but his father has just filed for bankruptcy and they are about to lose their family home and the holiday bach at Piha as well. Josh, a keen surfer, has lived for the summer and endless days spent in the water. With only this last holiday to look forward to, he's angry and frustrated, barely speaking to his father. Bevan turns up at Piha and suddenly they're competing for the same waves and the same girl. Waking each morning from a vivid and disturbing dream of drowning in powerful surf adds to Josh's turmoil. There's lots of action on and off the water in this coming of age story. 14+. KA

### *Verdigris Deep*

Frances Hardinge  
MacMillan Children's Books 2007  
Pb ISBN 9780230018686

Being stranded, with no money for the bus, has landed Ryan, Josh and Chelle in a pile of trouble. Josh jumps in a wishing well and grabs a few coins for their bus ride home. Now they are being haunted by the sinister well-witch, they have unbearable powers and must make the wishes belonging to the stolen coins come true. Not all wishes are pleasant they quickly learn. Creepy reading for 12+. KA



### *Duet*

David Hill  
Mallinson Rendel 2007  
Pb ISBN 9781877423062

15-year-old Kallum plays blues guitar and thinks classical music is for nerds. But when he joins the local Youth Orchestra he finds he's enjoying it. Part of his enjoyment is because of Paige – who plays the flute and is Kallum's duet partner. Kallum and Paige are deeply attracted to each other and their relationship becomes sexual. The inevitable happens and Paige becomes pregnant. How are the pair going to cope? Heartily recommended for early teens, both boys and girls. LO

### *Slam*

Nick Hornby  
Penguin 2007  
ISBN 9780141382982

Sam's mum was only 16 when she fell pregnant with Sam. Now Sam is 16, a keen skateboarder, with a talking poster of legendary skater, Tony Hawk. He's just starting to think about what he can do with his life, maybe sign up for art school? But Sam's girlfriend has found out she's pregnant. His life is about to spin out of control and his unplanned future doesn't seem to belong to him anymore. A realistic look at teen parenthood. 15+. KA

### *Snakehead*

Anthony Horowitz  
Walker 2007  
Pb ISBN 9781406312287

*Snakehead* is the seventh book in the Alex Rider series. When we last saw Alex, he was as up as can be – in outer space. When he crash lands off the coast of Australia, the Australian Secret Service recruits him to infiltrate one of the ruthless gangs operating across South East Asia. Alex accepts the assignment, in part for the chance to work with his godfather and learn more about his parents. What he uncovers, however, is a secret that will make this his darkest and most dangerous mission yet. A suspenseful spy story leaving you hooked and eager for more. 12+. TC

### *The Time of the Eagle*

Sherryl Jordan  
Simon & Schuster  
Pb ISBN 9781416904472

Avala, daughter of Gabriel from *Secret Sacrament*, struggles to find her own identity apart from being his daughter. Her destiny is to bring about the Time of the Eagle, but that isn't easy. When she saves the life of an Igaal tribesman, she feels that the unification is beginning. However she is soon turned into a slave and struggles to find her balance and role as Daughter of the Oneness. 14+ AC



### *Taking Off*

Janet Marriott  
HarperCollins NZ 2007  
Pb ISBN 1869506375

Alana is due for an appointment with the eye specialist – unfortunately she suspects her eyesight is deteriorating and she may end up blind, like her father. As she tries to cope with this knowledge, she becomes involved with two other youngsters with problems. Good characterisation, a vivid setting, and the symbolism of flight make this a very special story of early teens. LO

*Mad Dogs*

Robert Muchamore  
Hodder Children's 2007  
Pb ISBN 9780340911716

*Mad Dogs* is the eighth book in the CHERUB series. When two gangs start a turf war, violence explodes on to the streets. The police need information fast, and James Adams has the contacts to infiltrate the most dangerous gang of all. James works for CHERUB, trained professionals, aged between ten and 17. They exist because criminals never suspect that kids are spying on them. Yet, for official purposes, these children do not exist. 12+. TC

*Here, There Be Dragons* (The Chronicles of the Imaginarium Geographica)

James A. Owen  
Simon & Schuster 2007  
Pb ISBN 9781416932499

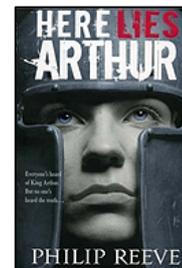
In 1917 a young World War One veteran visits his old professor, after receiving a message from him. Upon his arrival he discovers his professor is dead, and there are two other men, around his age, visiting. The three are approached by a strange man and given an old book. It is the *Imaginarium Geographica*, the atlas of 'imaginary' places, only they're not so imaginary. 12+. AC

*Here Lies Arthur*

Philip Reeve  
Scholastic 2007  
Hb ISBN 0439955335

Reeve takes the traditional stories of King Arthur and delivers a historically based story of a 'little tyrant in an age of tyrants' whose life and actions are filtered through the tellings and plotting of Myrddin.

Gwyna, the narrator is Myrddin's servant, and close enough to see the truth. An intriguing look at how story becomes fact, when enough people believe. Here lies Arthur, indeed. 12+. AC



*I am the Great Horse*

Katherine Roberts  
The Chicken House 2007  
Pb ISBN 9781905294275

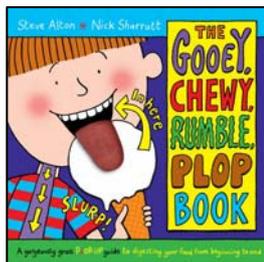
This epic novel is narrated by Bucephalus, the legendary warhorse of Alexander the Great. From their first encounter a strong unbreakable bond is forged between the great stallion, the boy prince and the lowly groom, Charm. Woven through this stunning story are mystical elements of ghostly images and legends as Macedonia's conquering army, led by Alexander, sweeps through Asia Mino to the edge of the world. An outstanding adventure. 12+. KA

**Non fiction**

*The Gooley, Chewy, Rumble, Plop Book*

Steve Alton, illus Nick Sharratt  
Random House 2007  
Hb ISBN 9780370329147

Follow food through the digestive system, all the way from the sticky tongue on the front cover, through to the inevitable end (with fact file tiles). It's brightly illustrated, irreverent in tone, but sneakily educational and fun! Great for young children 5+ wanting to know about the body. AC



*Pick Me Up: Stuff You Need to Know*

Edited by Roger Bridgman  
Dorling Kindersley 2007  
Hb ISBN 9781405316217

The fantastic hologram cover invites the reader in and suggests progress through the book that can be more like a computer game than a book. An ideal read for children who enjoy interesting information and are fascinated by connections between the Roman Empire and McDonalds, or whether Beethoven was a punk, Exciting layout with illustrations, graphics, and photographs that ensure information is readily accessible to different readers. While the book encourages selective reading, there is an index for those looking for specific information. HS

*Girl Stuff: Your Full-on Guide to the Teen Years*

Kaz Cooke  
Penguin 2007  
Pb ISBN 9780670028870

Everything a teen girl needs to know. Shopping, body changes, friends, guys... all told in Cooke's usual fun style, with help of teen girls and consultation with medical and other experts. It's also pretty handy for parents and other concerned adults. AC

*The Dalai Lama Story: Making of a World Leader*

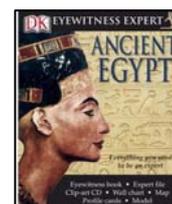
Andrew Crowe  
Longacre 2007  
Pb ISBN 9781877361838

Andrew Crowe, better known for his books exploring our native flora, sets out the Dalai Lama's story in the form of an adventure tale, from his early childhood to his life today. Bookended by a chance meeting with a young Chinese tourist, Crowe places His Holiness' life in historical context, including the invasion of Tibet by China. An inspirational read that is accessible to 10+. AC

*Eyewitness Expert: Ancient Egypt*

Dorling Kindersley 2007  
Kit ISBN 9780756631345

Containing books, a wall chart, activity sheets, stickers, a CD-ROM of clip art and lots of other fun stuff, this boxed kit will keep budding Egyptologists busy for hours – even when the school holidays are a wash out. 9+. AC



*Discoverology: Tutankhamen's Tomb*

Jen Green  
Allen & Unwin 2007  
Hb ISBN 9781741753387

An interactive book exploring the wonders of the famous Egyptian burial. There are pop-ups, lift-the-flaps, cross-sections and other fun ways to explore. 9+. AC

*Owen & Mzee: The True Story of a Remarkable Friendship*

Isabella Hatkoff, Craig Hatkoff and Dr Paula Kahumbu,  
photographs by Peter Greste  
Scholastic 2006  
Hb ISBN 9780439829731

This is the true story of two great friends, a baby hippopotamus named Owen and a 130-year-old giant tortoise named Mzee. In 2004 a tsunami orphaned a young hippo. Villagers found him stranded on a coral reef

and took him to a nearby conservation park. There he found a surrogate mother – a grumpy old tortoise. This book is very readable, with large colour photographs. Heart warming, and suitable for all ages. There is also a sequel, *Owen & Mzee: The Language of Friendship*. LH

*Can You Feel the Force?: Putting the Fizz Back into Physics*

Richard Hammond  
DK Publishing 2006  
Hb ISBN 1405315431

Richard Hammond, from TV's *Top Gear*, introduces children to physics in this approachable DK title. As with most DK publications, it is of great quality and very child-friendly. For budding scientists out there, 9+. AC

*Over a Thousand Hills I Walk with You*  
Hanna Jansen

Andersen Press 2007  
Pb ISBN 9781842706732

This is Jeanne's story retold by her German foster mother. Jeanne, her brother and sister, and her middle class teacher parents lived in Rwanda during the mid-1990s when the Hutu's massacred the Tutsi. Jeanne lost her family to rampaging Hutu. Jeanne survived and was taken to Germany to live with relatives. This is an important book for students to read and would accompany any literature to do with the Holocaust. WM

*Singing for Mrs Pettigrew: A Story-maker's Journey*  
Michael Morpurgo, illus Peter Bailey

Walker Books 2006  
Hb ISBN 9781406300765

An inspiring semi-autobiographical collection of short stories mainly written during his time as Children's Laureate (2003-2005). Morpurgo has also sketched an outline of his story-maker's journey, a number of short essays where he explains the craft of writing and how he has used simple ideas or incidents to make a story. All ages 8+. KA

*Right Book Right Time: 500 Great Reads for Teenagers*  
Agnes Nieuwenhuizen

Allen & Unwin 2007  
Pb ISBN 9781741148831

A user-friendly guide for adults and teenagers alike. If you're looking for inspiration about what to read next, suitable books to give to older children, or great authors for teens to seek out in the library, this new book is right-up-to-date and compiled by one of Australia's foremost authorities on young adult literature. The book is divided into broad categories, with a single-page review for most titles and lists of suggestions for particularly prolific authors. Highly recommended and bound to lead to more great reading. CB

*Encyclopedia Prehistorica: Mega Beasts*

Robert Sabuda & Matthew Reinhart  
Walker Books 2007

Hb ISBN 9781406305913

Third in the series of Encyclopedia Prehistorica pop-up books, this is a treasure trove packed with more than 30 pop-ups. Each spread features a large central creature, with extra panels on the corners, and sometimes further foldouts from those too. This is not



for clumsy fingers, but a great book for older kids keen on dinosaurs. There are brief panels of text about the animals, but the star of the show is the artful and intricate paper engineering, all of which are created under fair trade principles. See [www.robertsabuda.com](http://www.robertsabuda.com) to try out creating your own pop-ups too. 7+. CB

*The Bedtime Treasury of Real Fairy Tales*

Jane & Graeme Smallfield  
Scholastic NZ 2007  
Hb ISBN 9781869438593

A treasure to add to a family bookshelf. Four traditional fairy tales are collected in a nicely produced hardback edition suitable for long-term use. The illustrations are the special feature – they are elaborately staged photographs, including full pages and borders of vines and other decorations, bringing the stories to life. The tales are true to the spirit of the original but in easy to read and understand language suitable for today's families. CB

*Alive: The Ultimate Pop-up Human Body Book*

Richard Walker  
Dorling Kindersley 2007  
Hb ISBN 9781405326414

Ultimate is almost an understatement. This book even breathes! There are 3D skeletons, beating hearts... and enough facts to intrigue curious kids 8+. AC

*101 Ingenious Kiwis: How New Zealanders Changed the World*

Tony Williams  
Reed 2006  
Pb ISBN 9780790011103

This is a compendium of 101 ingenious Kiwis. It contains biographies of a diverse range of New Zealanders, from Ernest Rutherford to Peter Leitch, the Mad Butcher. Presented in stylish silver and blue, it will be useful for school projects and interesting to dip into for years to come. LH

*Jacky Daydream*

Jacqueline Wilson, illus Nick Sharratt  
Doubleday 2007  
Hb ISBN 9780385610155

This is a wonderful gift for Jacqueline Wilson fans of any age. Jacqueline writes about her own life with the same humour and insight that makes her fiction so popular. She writes about her favourite books, memorable teachers, friends, family and even 'being late for my own birth.' Readers will be familiar with many of the experiences she describes, because they are shared with some of her well-known characters. The black and white photographs and engaging illustrations by Nick Sharratt add to the appeal. HS

*Here's a Little Poem: A Very First Book of Poetry*

Collected by Jane Yolen and Andrew Fusek Peters, illus Polly Dunbar  
Walker Books 2007

Hb ISBN 9781844287536

Polly Dunbar's colourful, energetic illustrations are an ideal accompaniment for the glorious selection of poetry in this handsome book. Jane Yolen is an acclaimed writer, and grandmother, Andrew Peters a poet and Polly Dunbar an exceptional illustrator and their combined skills have produced a book to bring joy to the entire family. FP