

Books for Christmas giving

Do give books – religious or otherwise – for Christmas. They're never fattening, seldom sinful, and permanently personal. Lenore Hershey

As always, it is lovely to see a fair amount of New Zealand books in this list – proving that homegrown can stand against overseas work any day. There are new books from old favourites, continuations of series, new series and new authors to explore. Enjoy.

Contributors to this list are: Kerry Aluf, Helen Beckingsale, Crissi Blair, Tina Collins, Annie Coppel, Sarah Fordyce, Patricia Kay, Libby Limbrick, Lorraine Orman, and Helen Schwarcz.

For under 6s

Noisy Noisy Fart! and Noisy Noisy Nee – Naw!

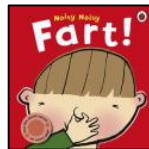
Mandy Archer, illus Emma Dodd

Ladybird 2008; ISBN 9781409301349 and

Ladybird 2009; ISBN 9781409302056

Two new additions to the wonderful board book series to give to young children which encourage interactive and imaginative play.

Young children love to press buttons and when the sounds are amazing realistic, such as 'man-made' delights as slurping, farting, yawning and sneezing or the sounds of rescue vehicles splashing, screeching, and vrooming then all the better. The books are perfect for sharing and fun to read again and again. 2+. TC.



OK Go

Carin Berger

Greenwillow Books/ HarperCollins 2009

ISBN 9780061576669

A quirky take on looking after the planet. The text is sparse but there's plenty to look at in the collaged illustrations using recycled materials including magazines, old letters and ticket stubs. We start with some quirky people and animals driving sporty cars. As more vehicles arrive so the pollution increases until they finally have to call a halt and think of different ways to do things. Ideas about things to do and other books to read at the back. 4+. CB.



There Was a Crooked Man

Gavin Bishop

Gecko Press 2009; ISBN 9781877467240

A sturdy board book that because of the vertical format my two-year-old granddaughter calls her "long book". She loves joining in the read-aloud rhyme and finding everything else on the page that is crooked from the man's legs and fingers to the font and the landscape. Beautiful illustrations and lots to talk about and enjoy with young readers. HS.

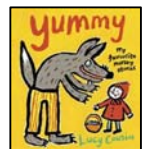


Yummy: My Favourite Nursery Stories

Lucy Cousins

Walker Books 2009; ISBN 9781406316216

The bright yellow cover of this treasury of nursery stories features a hungry wolf in striped trousers and the startled Little Red Riding Hood and it's completely irresistible. This is a large book with super-sized illustrations in Lucy Cousins' child-like and boldly coloured style. There's just enough scariness to provide the necessary thrill, and some giant painted text to emphasise on occasion. Stories included are Little Red Riding Hood, The Three Billy Goats Gruff, The Enormous Turnip, Henny Penny, Goldilocks, The Little Red Hen, The Three Little Pigs and The Musicians of Bremen. Totally terrific! CB.



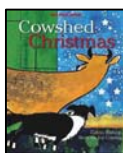
Dear Readers...

All being well, this is likely to be the last print booklist from Storylines. Next year we are hoping to move to an electronic format – as voted for overwhelmingly by you in our survey. To ensure your continued supply – please update your email address with our membership secretary at membership@storylines.org.nz. If you are unable to receive booklists by email, or would prefer a print version, please let us know by emailing, as above, or writing to us at Storylines, PO Box 96 094, Balmoral, Auckland 1342

Cowshed Christmas

Joy Cowley, illus Gavin Bishop
Random House NZ 2009; ISBN
9781869790738

A wonderfully New Zealand-centric Christmas story. Animals make their way to the cowshed door, each bringing a Kiwi icon, to see the baby Jesus. Spot the pavlova, the jandal and the chocolate fish, among other gifts. 2+. AC.



The Twelve Days of Holidays

Yvonne Morrison, illus Jenny Cooper
Scholastic 2009; ISBN 9781869439163

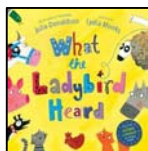
Another Christmas treat from this author – a parody on an old favourite – will have the family singing along. Mothers & children alike will see themselves in it, as Mum becomes more harassed with the kids as the holidays go on until, at last, in sheer desperation she hits on the ideal solution. Send them to Grandma's! SF.

What the Ladybird Heard

Julia Donaldson, illus Lydia Monks
Macmillan 2009; ISBN 9780230018174

What the ladybird heard was thieves planning to steal the prize cow and she comes up with an idea to foil their plans.

Julia Donaldson's books are always great favourites with pre-schoolers and this one will be no exception, with its rhyming text, lots of animal noises and a sparkly ladybird to find on every page. 2+. HB.



Tiny Miss Dott and her Dotty Umbrella

Michelle Osment & Sarah Neliswe Anderson
Scholastic 2009; ISBN 9781869438982

When Miss Dott set out for work she took her umbrella just in case of rain. She left it just outside the door of the charity shop where she worked and before long her first customer (who had bought himself a fancy new shirt) borrowed it so he wouldn't get wet. He went to the music shop and was so busy there that he forgot all about the umbrella when he left. Emiline Pink found it and took it to the hairdressers where Timothy had just had his hair all spiked up with gel and didn't want to get it wet. He and his dad borrowed the umbrella to use on their way to the charity shop where they had such a good time that they left the umbrella behind as well. When Miss Dott was ready to go home the sun was shining and there was the umbrella back outside the door waiting for her. A lovely story to read aloud with catch rhyme and lovely illustrations that build a sense of anticipation and fun. HS.

Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes

Mem Fox, illus Helen Oxenbury
Puffin 2009; ISBN 9780143503583

This is an appealing book for parents as well as young children. Lovely illustrations of children from all around the world make it the ultimate in living local and thinking global. Pre school but also useful for values education with older children. PK.



Red Ted and the Lost Things

Michael Rosen & Joel Stewart
Candlewick Press 2009; ISBN 9781406310375

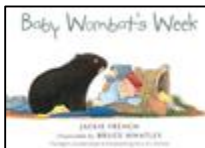
Red Ted is a little bear who gets left behind on the train and finds himself in a special place for lost things. Being brave, sensible and working together with his new friends. Ted manages to get himself back home to the little girl who has been missing him. 2+. HS.



Baby Wombat's Week

Jackie French, illus Bruce Bruce Whatley
Angus & Robertson 2009; ISBN
9780732286941

Mothball, star of Diary of a Wombat, returns with her daughter – who is even cuter and stropier than Mothball! There's one baby wombat I know of who will be getting this one for Christmas. 2+. AC.



Dinotrux

Chris Gall
Little Brown 2009; ISBN 9780316027779

How have authors missed the opportunity to put together dinosaurs and trucks – the 3-year-old boy obsessions – before! Journey back millions of years to meet these part-dinosaur, part-truck creatures when they ruled the world. AC.



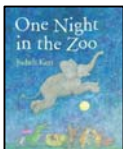
Say Hello to the Dinosaurs

Ian Whybrow, illus Tim Warnes
Children's Books 2009
ISBN 9780230531383 hardback, 9780230707399 paperback

Dinosaurs are perennially popular and this colourful book, with bumpy scales for young children to touch and all sorts of noises for them to join in with, is bound to be a hit. 2+. HB.

One Night in the Zoo

Judith Kerr
Harper Collins 2009; ISBN 9780007321124
Judith Kerr's books about Mog the cat have been loved by children for over 30 years so a counting book from this popular author /illustrator is a great event. The rhyming text has animals taking part in a "magical, moonlit night in the zoo". 2+. HB.



New appearances of favourite characters and welcome reprints:

Princess Smartypants Breaks the Rules! by Babette Cole. Puffin 2009; ISBN 9780141501550

Greedy Cat and the Goldfish by Joy Cowley & Robyn Belton. Scholastic 2009; ISBN 9781869436896

The terrible Taniwha of Timberditch by Joy Cowley & Rodney McRae. Puffin 2009. ISBN 9780143503880.

Originally published by Oxford University Press 1982.
Hairy Maclary, Shoo by Lynley Dodd. Mallinson Rendell 2009; ISBN 9781877423314

Mr Underbed by Chris Riddell. Andersen 2009. ISBN 9781842708217. Originally published 1986.

For 6 to 10 years

Saffron

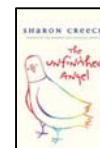
Victoria M. Azaro
Mallinson Rendel 2009; ISBN 9781877423260
Saffron is a very sophisticated and cosmopolitan young lady. She doesn't much like giving a presentation in class, but she is totally nonchalant about travelling to exotic overseas destinations. Ten lanes of traffic in Buenos Aires, ordering escargot in Bonnieux, and getting lost in Hong Kong – she takes everything in her stride. The quirky narrative is enhanced by the author's wacky cartoon sketches on every page. Best for girls of about 8 to 10. LO.



the River of Death with the four round legged monsters that travel on it; or ponder whether one can love something that one eats. Joy Cowley's superb story telling creates lovable characters while the illustrations by Gavin Bishop capture the delightful pair in their strange desert life. LL.

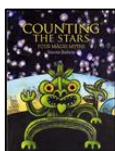
The Unfinished Angel

Sharon Creech
Penguin 2009; ISBN 9780143203759
In a tiny Swiss village an angel resides – quite aimless – until Zola arrives. Zola and the angel collide and the village changes forever. AC.



Counting the Stars: Four Māori Myths

Gavin Bishop
Random House 2009; ISBN 9781869790721
A welcome follow-up to Taming the Sun and Riding the Waves, this book includes the well-known tales of Ranginui and Papatuanuku, and Hinemoa and Tutanekai, as well as two lesser-known tales: the battle of the birds and Kae and the whale. As always, a joy to hold and behold. All ages over 6. AC.



The Magician's Elephant

Kate DiCamillo, illus Yoko Tanaka
Candlewick Press 2009; ISBN 9780763644109
Another delightful book by Kate DiCamillo. Peter is an orphan, living with a retired soldier who tells him that his sister died at birth. One day a fortune teller predicts he'll find his sister, she is alive, and an elephant will lead him to her. Beautifully paced and with eloquent prose this unlikely story slowly unfolds just as the fortuneteller predicted. The whimsical illustrations are perfect. 8+. KA.

Cosmic

Frank Cottrell Boyce
Macmillan Children's Books 2008; ISBN 9780330440868
From the shiny silver cover this is "One small fib for twelve-year-old Liam Digby. One giant rocket-fuelled adventure for mankind." The narrator, Liam is extremely tall for a twelve year old and is often mistaken for a grown up (on account of his beard). Through a series of events and 'sort of by accident' Liam finds himself on a rocket two hundred thousand feet above the surface of the earth. His parents believe he is happily engaged in outdoor pursuits at a South Lakeland Activity Centre. However, Liam has won a World's Best Dad competition and persuaded his friend Florida to go along as his daughter. However the prize was not quite what Liam expected and he soon finds himself along with the other prize winning dads in space with only his own father's copy of Talk to Your Teen and his passion for computer games to help him. Like other books by Frank Cottrell Boyce this one is funny, thought provoking and very hard to put down and will be enjoyed by 9 + readers. HS.

The Spiderwick Chronicles: the Completely Fantastical Edition

Tony Diterlizzi & Holly Black
Simon & Schuster 2009; ISBN 9781416986850
This contains all five books of the Spiderwick Chronicles plus three bonus chapters and a section on the making of the series with early sketches of the characters. It would make a great gift for a keen reader just beginning to explore the wealth of modern children's fantasy or for someone who has already enjoyed the series and would like their own copy to treasure. 9+. HB.

A Treasury of Princess Stories

Amy Ehrlich, illus Gary Blythe
Walker 2009; ISBN 9781406310412
Princess and fairies are popular subjects with little girls and this lovely gift book brings together 6 classic fairy tales including Sleeping Beauty, The Princess and the Pea, The Frog Prince and Snow White. Each story is prefaced by a pop-up illustration. 6-9. HB.



Wholly Irresponsible Science! 120 Daring Experiments to Do in Your Home and Garden

Sean Connolly
Icon Books UK 2009; ISBN 9781906850067
A fantastic collection for some experimenting at home for scientists young and old! Create a weather system, build a matchbox microphone, make a storm in a bottle. Clear instructions and safety warnings, and scientific explanations. 9+ with some adult supervision recommended. CB.



Aunt Concertina and her Niece Evalina

Paula Green, illus Michael Hight
Random House 2009; ISBN 9781869790110
A sophisticated picture book with extensive and complex text, written in prose but with delicious poetic elements making it a delightful and lengthy read-aloud. Aunt Concertina is loves to spend time in junk shops adding to her collections, but her niece Evalina wants to go on adventures. Whilst out shopping they find a kite which takes them off around the globe. Each double-page spread (by Paula's artist husband Michael Hight) creates a complex international panorama with new and familiar places and things waiting to leap out from every page. 6+. CB.



Friends: Snake and Lizard

Joy Cowley, illus Gavin Bishop
Gecko Press 2009; ISBN 9781877467257
These further stories about of the incongruous friendship between Snake and Lizard are wonderful read-alouds. They will delight children and whoever has the joy of reading to them. Snake and Lizard, Helper and Helper, have many adventures as they try to understand human things;

The Dark Blue 100-Ride Bus Ticket

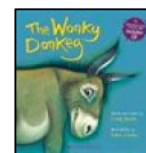
Margaret Mahy
HarperCollins NZ 2009; ISBN 9781869508166
This is a frothy, frivolous story written with the usual Margaret Mahy flair. Carlo and his mother Jessica are given a strange bus ticket that enables them to ride on an even stranger bus to a very odd supermarket at the end of the world. They meet up with Dominic and his daughter Pearlie, who also have a magical bus ticket. Everyone has fun – but then the evil and monstrous Dowlers arrive and try to destroy the supermarket. Only Carlo and Pearlie can defeat them... A good read for ages 8 to 10. LO.



touches of gold, the cut layers of each spread adding shadow and movement to the drama unfolding. The story is simply but dramatically revealed in six double-page spreads. CB.

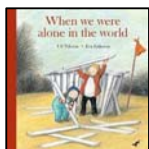
Septimus Heap boxed set

Angie Sage
Bloomsbury 2009; ISBN 9780747597360
Wizards, foundlings, a lost princess and magic. What more could a keen fantasy reader want? This set contains the first four books in the series: Magyk, Flyte, Physik and Queste. The fifth title, Syren is now available as a separate volume. 9-11. HB.



When We Were Alone in the World

Ulf Nilsson & Eva Eriksson
Gecko Press 2009; ISBN 9781877467349
A lovely picture book to share with school-aged children. A big brother learns the time at school and when no-one comes to pick him up at three o' clock he knows that something dreadful must have happened to his parents. He knows that he will have to take care of his little brother and look after him until they are both grown up. Once he has his brother they set to building a house that would probably be good enough to until "we grew old, left home and went to university." The two boys make their house comfortable, make a television and even manage an after school snack. Then just when things are getting a bit difficult and they're starting to feel sad their parents arrive and a big misunderstanding is resolved. Beautiful illustrations capture the expressions of care and concern between the two brothers with warmth and humour. HS.



Wonky Donkey

Craig Smith, illus Katz Cowley
Scholastic 2009; ISBN 9781869439262
A first book from this Christchurch pair and here's to many more! This cumulative tale will have tongues twisting & children chortling with delight over the tale of a smelly, three-legged, one-eyed, coffee-drinking, mischievous donkey with good looks & a penchant for country music! The accompanying CD has the tale in song form, but the story is equally enjoyable on its own with even the youngest children keen to join in. The delightful illustrations make the perfect accompaniment. SF.

The Composer is Dead

Lemony Snicket; illus Carson Ellis; music Nathaniel Stookey
Harper Collins 2009; ISBN 9780061236273
A madcap spin through the various sections of the orchestra as a suspicious Inspector hunts the murderer of the composer. In typical Snicket style with language play and deadpan humour this is extremely entertaining. Comes with a CD of orchestral music and the story narrated by Snicket himself. For all ages. KA.

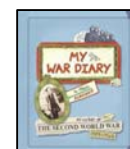
Haunted

Lorraine Orman
Walker Books 2009; ISBN 9781921150821
Georgia and her brother Ned are staying on their uncle's farm. While avoiding her cousin, Georgia comes across an abandoned house, with a strange girl – Lily – there. Georgia doesn't realise Lily is a ghost who wants friends to play with – forever – and has no problem with killing to get them. A creepy read for brave 8+s. AC.



My Secret War Diary by Flossie Albright

Marcia Williams
Walker Books 2008; ISBN 9781406309409
In this beautifully bound and presented hard cover diary nine-year-old Flossie Albright records the events of World War 2. When she is evacuated to the country with her little brother at the in 1939 she starts keeping a 'secret diary' which continues until 1945. Every page of the diary is filled with entries and observations. Stories about her friends, school and the animals on the farm are set alongside wartime rationing, the arrival of evacuees and news of bombings. Flossie fills her diary with drawings, secret folded notes, maps, stamps, coin rubbings and newspaper clippings. It is a collage of visual information about her life and that of Britain at war. A lovely book that will appeal to readers at many different levels. HS.



Snow White. A Three-dimensional Fairy-tale Theatre

Jane Ray
Walker Books 2009; ISBN 9781406311839
It's a great treat to see the story of Snow White reclaimed from Disney in this beautiful edition. Each spread is constructed like a theatre with three layers – two with cut-outs and a backdrop, and side curtains that open up to reveal the text. The illustrations glow with colour and



For 10 to 12 years

The Singing Cave

Margaret Beames
Scholastic NZ 2009; ISBN 9781869439132
Tom is bored on the Pacific Island his parents work on. Until he meets Pero, and hears Pero's tale of the Singing Caves – those who enter do not return. Tom challenges Pero to go in. When



Pero fails to return, Tom decides to follow him. There Tom finds an adventure not of this earth. AC.

Pinocchio

Carlo Collodi, trans Emma Rose, illus Sara Fanelli
Walker Books (2003) 2009; ISBN 9781406317473

This much-loved story is given a thoroughly modern treatment with Sara Fanelli's striking pen and ink sketches and collaged colour illustrations incorporating graph paper, photographs, stamps and other miscellany. The translation is perfect for reading aloud or alone, with a sing-song lilt and complex vocabulary. This classic tale of the wooden puppet who becomes a real boy should be an essential in the family library and I highly recommend this snazzy edition. 10+ or read aloud to younger children. CB.



The Selected Work of TS Spivet

Reif Larsen
Random House 2009; ISBN 9781846552786
T S Spivet is a brilliant 12-year-old boy who loves drawing maps. He maps everything and the margins and sidebars of every page are full of maps, illustrations, notes and diagrams. His scientific illustrations win him an invitation to the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC and he begins a long and adventurous train journey to accept his award (they are not expecting a twelve year old). An amazing illustrated novel for fluent readers. HS.

Glory

Fifi Colston
Scholastic NZ 2009; ISBN 9781869438685
Florence Bright can't believe it when she doesn't win the Information Technology prize. But when her best friend also fails to win an expected prize, Florence rebels. She goes to battle on behalf of all non-prize-winning kids – and some chaotic and hilarious scenes ensue. But at the end Florence faces her biggest challenge – only bravery and fast thinking will save the day. An entertaining read for intermediate-aged girls. LO.

Hate that Cat

Sharon Creech
Bloomsbury 2009; ISBN 9780747599807
For all those who fell in love with Love that Dog (pub. 2001), this is the sequel. Jack is back at school and Miss Stretchberry is insisting on more poems. But Jack is still struggling with the death of his dog – and he hates cats. But does he – really? AC.

Grace

Morris Gleitzman
Penguin 2009; ISBN 9780670073900
This is the story of an 11-year-old girl who lives with her family in a very strict religious community where they are not supposed to have anything to do with outsiders. Her family and her religion (which is not specified) are both very important to Grace but she is growing up and starting to ask questions about the way things are. This independent thinking is reflected in her schoolwork which is not acceptable to the community. Her dad finds himself in the position of defending his daughter and her right to think for herself. When her father is banned from the community and forbidden from seeing his family again Grace determines to do something about it. The character of Grace drives this story. She is independent, stubborn, often funny and totally engages the reader in her story. HS.



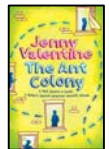
The Loblolly Boy

James Norcliffe
Longacre Press 2009; ISBN 9781877460258
The Loblolly Boy is a sort of Peter Pan like creature – he can fly, he doesn't have any cares, but he's also invisible and only appears to 'sensitive' children. For Red, it seems like the most marvellous thing and when he gets the chance to become the loblolly boy and exchange his loveless life at the orphanage for a life of flying and adventure he jumps straight in. The twists and turns of this adventure are perfectly done, unexpected and yet just right. A great fantasy read for all ages. KA.



The Ant Colony

Jenny Valentine
Harper Collins 2009; ISBN 9780007283590
Sam has run away from home and finds himself living in a dilapidated, old house alongside a rather disparate group of people. Sam just wants to be alone but ten year old Bohemia who lives upstairs with her rather feckless mother is looking for a friend. Each chapter is narrated in turn by one of these characters, so we get to know the house and the people who live there through their eyes. Sam has his own secrets and seems intent on punishing himself for something while Bohemia has learnt to manage her life with very little help from her mum. This is a story very much about friendship between different ages and learning to help each other (a bit like ants). In the end it is the resourcefulness and determination of Bohemia that is the catalyst for a change that seems to signal better times for everyone at 33 Georgiana St. A welcome gift for Jacqueline Wilson fans. HS.



Fire on High

David Hill
Mallinson Rendel 2009; ISBN 9781877423321
Jonno is flying back to New Zealand after a trip to South America to watch a total eclipse of the sun. The plane is hijacked by a group of protesters from the country he has just visited – they have demands for their corrupt government. Unfortunately their protest involves injecting Jonno's scientist friend with a venom that will kill her if she does not receive an antidote. To add to the danger, the aircraft must fly through a hail of metal parts from a disintegrating satellite... Pace, tension and plot that will appeal to 11 to 14 year olds. KA & LO.

Brother Sister Soldier Cousin

Phyllis Johnston
Longacre 2009; ISBN 9781877460319
Helen's family is facing a difficult year. Her brother Harry is fighting in Egypt, her friend is keeping secrets and her father hasn't told anyone that his heart is wonky. Then Helen learns that her family isn't what she has been told. A heart-warming New Zealand story. AC.



The Secret of Jelly Mountain

Des Hunt
Scholastic 2009; ISBN 9781869438913
Des Hunt's action packed adventures with a New Zealand setting and an ecological twist are proving firm favourites

with boys of 10+. Modern communications technology is used to thwart the intentions of a couple of villains intent on smuggling out a rare species found on the previously inaccessible Jelly Mountain. HB.

Bute View

Janice Marriott

Mallinson Rendel 2009; ISBN 9781877423253

This is a sequel to *Chute Thru*, a futuristic comedy starring the challenged young genius called Arlo. Our hero leaves his family behind on Raft 1,000,001 to demonstrate his inventions to the scientists at SPACE. But he soon finds that the people in power at SPACE are either morons or crooks, and he has to think very fast to avoid the sinister fate planned for him by Big Boss. A quirky, funny story for intermediate-aged readers. LO.

Eragon's Guide to Alagaesia

Christopher Paolini

Doubleday 2009; ISBN 9780385617888

A multi-layered treasury for fans of the Paolini trilogy. There are flaps and maps, letters and diagrams. Rediscover the landscape, flora and fauna (with a sample of feldunost fur and dragon's wing). Read about the people – spirits, elves, dwarves and more. Intricate illustrations and top-notch production values make this a fabulous treasure. 10+. CB.

The Crafting of Narnia: The Art, Creatures, and Weapons from Weta Workshop

Weta Workshop

HarperCollins 2008; ISBN 9780007270583

The ultimate gift for devotees of the Chronicles of Narnia and fans of Weta Workshop. This lavishly illustrated book outlines how designers, artists and craftsmen collaborated to create the costumes, props and characters for the recent productions of *The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe* and *Prince Caspian*. In-depth research & meticulous detail made the finished products used in the movies spectacular. This volume shows how they came to be that way. SF.

For Teens

End of the Alphabet

Fleur Beale

Random House 2009; ISBN 9781869790707

This is a sympathetically told tale of a 14-year-old with learning difficulties and a consequent lack of self esteem and how she struggles to escape from the role of family doormat. Ruby Yarrow has a reading/writing disorder and is constantly losing out at home to her smarter, manipulative brother, Max. Her best friend Tia tells her she needs to get a backbone. When Ruby finally starts standing up for herself, the family dynamics end up in turmoil. Ruby's journey to be respected and appreciated is made all the harder by her spoilt brother's arrogant, selfish attitude and her mother's favouritism. Teenage girls who enjoy stories of girls like themselves, striving to overcome their family circumstances, should enjoy this book. KA & HB.



Saving Sam

Susan Brockner

HarperCollins New Zealand 2009; ISBN 9781869507435

Two brothers are forced to relocate to Auckland and live with their Uncle and Aunt when their solo dad is once again in trouble and serving time in jail. Ben, the younger brother, quickly finds a soulmate in the German Shepherd that his Uncle has acquired but her temperament has been destroyed and she is terribly frightened of people. Naming her Layla, Ben slowly gains her confidence and together they make some unlikely friends. Sam, meanwhile, gets in with a bad element at their new school. KA.



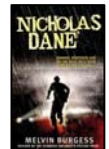
Nicholas Dane

Melvin Burgess

Andersen Press Ltd 2009; ISBN 9781842701812

Burgess writes truthfully and honestly about the real world that's out there and he writes for older teen boys. This is a harsh, brutal story about one boy's experience in a 1980's 'carehome'. The book describes terrible acts of violence and the sophisticated and predatory behaviour of the assistant headmaster on these young boys. Burgess makes a strong point of portraying how these abused boys cope with the shame of what has happened to them by a code of

silence, distrust in authority figures and a lifetime of failed relationships. For Nicholas, life deals him a really tough rap and we read to find if he does eventually rise above it. He is 14 when his solo mum ODs and leaves him all alone in the world. A social worker thinks he'll be best off in Meadow Hill, a home for boys, rather than left with his mother's unorganised but good intentioned friend, Jenny who is a solo mum herself of two youngsters and there his troubles begin... This is an important book that needed to be written, suitable for older teens as it deals with paedophile behaviour. KA.



Skeleton Creek

Patrick Carman

Scholastic 2009; ISBN 9781765043549

This is the handwritten journal of 14yr old Ryan, stuck at home with a broken leg after falling at a derelict dredge site in the forest behind the town. Ryan is forbidden further contact with his partner in crime Sarah. She posts her video journals on the web and sends him a password to view them. This is a great interactive mystery - ghosts, secret societies, hidden gold, forbidding adults. The reader must visit Sarah's website and view her video footage a lot of which is in the style of 'The Blair Witch Project'. The story ends on a really creepy cliffhanger that is viewed on the website and is not in the book which I think young teens would love. KA.

Graceling

Kristin Cashore

Orion 2009; ISBN 9780575085305

Katsa struggles to live with her own moral code, while burdened by the skill – the grace – she was born with – the Grace of killing. She is her uncle's favoured torturer. To redeem herself, Katsa establishes the Council – and underground movement formed to combat the destructive kings. Katsa stumbles across a mystery – and a fighter as good as she. A stunning debut novel. AC.



The Hunger Games [Book 1]

Suzanne Collins

Scholastic UK 2009; ISBN 9781407109084

Each year, each district is forced to send two representatives to the Hunger Games – only one competitor will survive. These Games are televised live – and all are forced to watch. Katniss is her district's female representative, in order to save her younger sister. While at the Games she discovers how live really is. And how completely domineering and scared the rulers are. First in a planned trilogy, the second of which, *Catching Fire*, has just been released. AC.

Cicada Summer

Kate Constable

Allen and Unwin 2009; ISBN 9781741758283

An enchanting timeslip novel set in present day Australia. Eloise has slowly clammed up since the death of her mother, she has been shunted to the edge of her father's life in Melbourne and now that his mother has signed over the old family home in a nearby country town he is full of plans for building a new conference centre on the site.. The old home, which hasn't been lived in for many years, is a 1930s art deco mansion fallen into decline surrounded by a magnificent but neglected garden. Eloise is drawn to the mansion and taken to a time where another lonely girl is missing her mother. Everything fits together beautifully in this fully fledged story with a nice twist towards the end. KA.

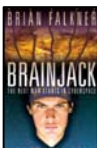


Brainjack

Brian Falkner

Walker Books 2009; ISBN 9781921150951

A fast moving action packed science fiction novel set in the not too distant future. Sam Wilson is a brilliant computer hacker and when he manages to break into the computer system at the White House he is initially placed under arrest on suspicion of network infiltration and sabotage. It isn't long before Sam finds himself involved in a dangerous world of spies and cyber terrorists. A perfect read for those who relish excitement, action, and have the knowledge to cope with some technical jargon. HS.



Tribal Ash [Chronicles of Stone Book 3]

Vince Ford

Scholastic New Zealand 2009; ISBN 9781869438326

The last in the exciting Chronicles of Stone series which is set in prehistoric North America.

Trei and his sister have trekked north to the tribe of the Northmen, a warmongering tribe called Manhunters by their neighbours. Trei wants to find out more about their superior weaponry which they use to hunt bison and mammoth. His sister Souk, a shaman in training, has had visions calling her to the north. This final book covers their continuing adventures and Trei's return to his people. KA.

The Crossing [Blood of the Lamb Book 1]

Mandy Hager

Random House NZ 2009; ISBN 9781869791506

Set in a post-apocalyptic world. The inhabitants of a small Pacific island survived the catastrophe with the help of people who live on a huge ocean liner wrecked on the reef. The cruise ship grounded by the island is ruled by the descendants of the original ship's captain and



crew who have set themselves up as the Apostles of the Lamb, using the islanders as their slaves. The Blessed Sisters are brought up separately, finally leaving the compound when their Bloods (periods) begin, raised to believe they will have a special purpose. Adolescent Maryam is sent to the ship, thinking she's going to enter paradise. But she soon finds that the Apostles of the Lamb are not saints – they are cruel and manipulative. Her life is in danger. The story ends with Maryam and three young companions sailing away from the island into the unknown. A dramatic and exciting story for teens. CB & LO

Scarygirl

Nathan Jurevicius

Allen & Unwin 2009; ISBN 9781741753707

Scarygirl is already a cult character online with a comic, game, artwork and designer toys and here at last she's within the pages of a big, and very pink, book. She's a kooky but appealing character with an eyepatch and other piratical accessories. The graphic novel is wordless, but there's an 'Intermission' in the middle where Jurevicius is interviewed and sketches, models and diagrams add to the experience of the book. 12+. CB.

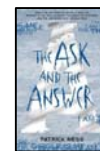


The Ask and the Answer [Chaos Walking Book 2]

Patrick Ness

Walker Books 2009; ISBN 9781406310269

This is Book Two in the Chaos Walking trilogy; the first volume was the award-winning *The Knife of Never Letting Go*. Set in the future on a planet recently colonised by humans, this riveting and thought-provoking story is impossible to put down. The young protagonists, Todd and Viola, are caught in the middle of a bloody war between the evil Mayor Prentiss and a guerrilla army calling themselves The Answer. The tension never lets up; the writing is superb. LO.



Nation

Terry Pratchett

Random House 2009; ISBN 9780552557795

A massive storm comes and sweeps away all Mau has known – his family, his village – his nation – has gone. Daphne is the sole survivor of a ship, caught up in the storm and beached on Mau's island. Together they form the beginnings of a new nation, as other survivors join them. Although this can be read by younger readers, the themes – some very subtle – deserve the attention and care of older readers. AC.

Banquo's Son

TK Roxborough

Penguin 2009; ISBN 9780143202493

First in a proposed trilogy, set years after Macbeth. Fleance, the eponymous hero, has hidden from view, raised in a travelling family. Now an adult he is haunted by the ghost of his father demanding revenge. Leaving behind his first love, Fleance journeys to his family home to discover the truth about his father's death, and lay his father's ghost. AC.

The Forest of Hands and Teeth

Carrie Ryan

Orion 2009; 9780575090859

Basically this is a zombie story, but it's written with a great

deal of class and a huge amount of suspense. Mary lives in a small fortified village in the middle of a forest which swarms with The Unconsecrated – the zombies, who have died and come to life again with the sole aim of infecting ordinary mortals. When the village is invaded by the Unconsecrated, Mary and a handful of friends escape – but the zombies are hot on their heels... The sense of impending doom never lets up. Great for teens who like horror. LO.

Revolver

Marcus Sedgewick

Orion 2009; ISBN 9781842551868

The setting is a mining town, 100 miles north of the Arctic Circle in Sweden. Young Sig is alone in a remote cabin alongside the frozen body of his father when a mysterious

stranger on some unfinished business arrives. The plot jumps back in time from 1910 to the Alaskan goldrush of 1899 and we learn a lot about ice, snow and the revolver. Menacing and tense, this is a great coming-of-age story. KA.

Leviathan

Scott Westerfeld

Penguin 2009; ISBN 9780670073030

A steam-punk novel, set in an alternative Europe in 1914. Prince Alex, from Austria, is on the run from the Clanker Powers who are attempting to take over the world with their machinery. England and France, meanwhile, have perfected biotechnology – or species fabrication. An action-packed novel for fans of Philip Reeve's *Mortal Engines* books. AC.

For Adults & Families

Looking for Answers: A Life of Elsie Locke

Maureen Birchfield

Canterbury University Press 2009; ISBN 9781877257803

Elise Locke is a true New Zealand icon. We know her for her iconic writing – particularly *The Runaway Settlers* – but she was also an outspoken campaigner on many issues, including birth control, nuclear disarmament, and women's rights. This is a fascinating portrait of a woman very much ahead of her time – a true gutsy Sheila. AC.

Cherry Cake and Ginger Beer

Jane Brocket

Hodder & Stoughton 2008; ISBN 9780340960899

A slice of nostalgia! Remember the way the action in books was always interspersed with taste bud ticklers? Lucy's toasty tea with Mr Tumnus, picnics with the Famous Five, or the posset recommended for Kay in the Box of Delights? All the recipes are accompanied by excerpts & reflections plus original illustrations. Sections include "Proper Elevenses", "School Food" and "The Adventurous Life" – aah, a veritable feast for those who think there's nothing better than curling up with a good book and something tasty to munch or sup! Also recommended, *Ripping Things to Do: The Best Games and Ideas from Children's Books* by the same author. SF.

Roald Dahl's Completely Revolting Recipes and Other Tasty Treats

Illus Quentin Blake

Random House 2009; ISBN 9780224083423

A must for Dahl fans! An updated compilation of *Revolting Recipes* and *Even More Revolting Recipes*. Who hasn't wanted to make Scrambled Dregs before? Or Wormy Spaghetti? AC.

1001 Children's Books You Must Read Before You Grow Up

Ed Julia Eccleshare

Cassell Illustrated 2009; ISBN 9781844036714

This is a great colourful reference tool for lovers of children's books. Everything is here, from picturebooks, first readers to young adult favourites. Old books, new books, books from around the world, even a few that might not be available in English. Divided into five age sections and listed by date of publication, some books are given full page reviews and a second page of illustration. Little yellow boxes are scattered throughout with suggested further reading either by writer or by subject matter. New Zealand entries include *I am not Esther*, *Under the Mountain* and *The Lighthousekeeper's Lunch*. KA.

The Word Witch: The Magical Verse of Margaret Mahy

Ed Tessa Duder, illus David Elliot

HarperCollins 2009; ISBN 9781869507077

The Word Witch is a treasury of stories and poems of Margaret Mahy's that children of all ages, from 0-100 have come to love over the years. Many of the poems that have been known and loved as picture books are included: *Down the Back of the Chair*, *Bubble Trouble*, *Summery Saturday Morning*, *Dashing Dog*, *17 Kings* and *52 Elephants* and many more. As well there are some delicious surprises; early poems published in the *Listener* or *School Journals*. *The Word Witch's* words are sure to become a classic in every home. It's a 'must buy' for anyone in the family. LL.

The Usborne Book of Poetry

Ed Sam Taplin, illus Kristina Swarner

Usborne 2009 ISBN 9781409507765

Every child's library should include at least one lovely poetry book and this luxury cloth bound book, embossed in silver, includes a selection from Classic and modern poets. All ages. HB.