

Christmas Book List 2018

Junior Fiction

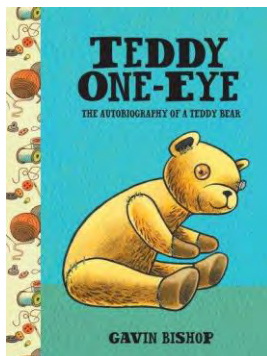


The Fire Stallion

**by Stacy Gregg
Harper Collins**

Gregg's books are complex tales with plenty of factual information and history skilfully woven in, richly drawn characters and fresh thrilling narratives. This time slip novel pulls us back into Iceland's past from a modern day film set. Drawing on Icelandic culture and mythology (did you know the bloodlines of the horse breed unique to Iceland are fiercely protected? If a horse leaves the island nation, it is never allowed to return), and based on real life events, Gregg yet again gives us a tale that will enthral all readers.

Ages 10+



Teddy One-Eye: The autobiography of a Teddy Bear

**by Gavin Bishop
Random House, (Comment by Millie, aged 9)**

Over the years boy and Teddy One-Eye have many adventures. As boy grows up will Teddy One-Eye be boys' best friend?

Ages 5+



My Happy Life and other titles

**By Rose Langercrantz, illustrations by Eva Erikson
Gecko Press (Comment by Millie, aged 9)**

A series of stories about Dani:

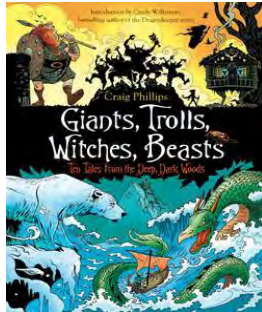
My Happy Life - In the first of the series, Dani starts school and finds a life-long friend, Ella, but something happens to change it all... but in the end all is well.

My Heart is Laughing - After Ella leaves Dani is devastated and all alone ... but she doesn't give up hope to see her friend again.

When I am Happiest - After another happy term at school, something terrible happens to Dani's Dad that upsets it all.

Life According to Dani - Another happy holiday for Dani. She is off to see Ella and her family for a fun holiday.

Ages 8+



Giants, Trolls, Witches, Beasts

by Craig Phillips

Allen & Unwin

Craig Phillips has brought ten fantastical stories, drawn from mythology and fairy tales from around the globe, to life. They are made new in Phillips' superb graphic stylings – each tale has its own individual and perfectly appropriate drawing style and colour palette. The skilful diversity of frame and layout, stroke and point of view, bring a freshness to the familiar, and delight to the previously unknown. The comic format is executed masterfully in this excellent publication.

Ages 8+



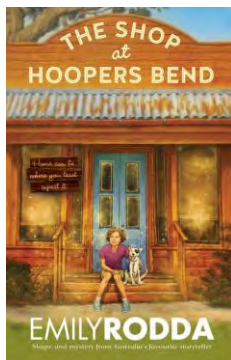
The Chocolate Factory Ghost

by David O'Connell

Bloomsbury UK

Set in a remote Scottish village in the Highlands, strange things happen after Archie inherits a huge old castle, an immense fortune and a chocolate factory. The first in a new series, this is an engaging, well-written mystery adventure featuring clues, villains, odd creatures, ghosts and sweets. Lots and lots of sweets.

Ages 8+



The Shop of Hoopers Bend

by Emily Rodda

Harper Collins Australia

This is a wonderful mix of adventure, families, friendships and with a little bit of magic thrown into a contemporary Australian setting. There are secrets and mysteries to be uncovered. It is all very relatable with 11-year-old Quil as the main character and would be fantastic as a read-aloud or book to share.

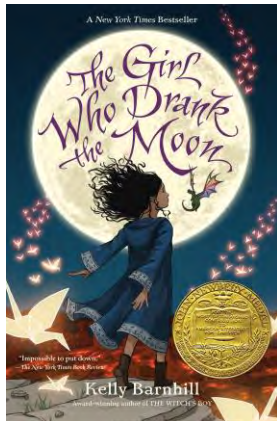
Ages 9+



Pages & Co
by Anna James
Harper Collins

A debut novel from British journalist turned author Anna James, this book turns to magic when characters from children's fictions like Alice (from Wonderland) and Anne (of Green Gables) appear in her grandparents' bookshop and take 11-year-old Tilly on all sorts of adventures. A true page-turner about the power of the imagination, certain to enthrall imaginative young readers.

Ages 9+



The Girl Who Drank The Moon
by Kelly Barnhill
Allen & Unwin

A remarkable fairytale with dark edges and fantastic heights, this Newberry Medal winner has something for every child. Each year, a kind witch called Xan finds unwanted and abandoned children in her forest. She matches every child with adoptive parents, until she meets baby Luna. After accidentally feeding her moonlight instead of starlight, Xan fills the infant with powerful magic. Xan decides to raise her as a witch with the help of The Perfectly Tiny Dragon and Glerk the Swamp monster. However, as Luna grows, secrets are waiting to be

discovered, including the truth behind the abandoned children and a mother who will never stop searching for her child. A moving story of the love and devotion of families, both those we are born into and the ones we build.

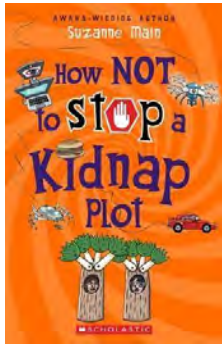
Ages 10+



Circus Quest Series: *The Playbill* and *Magician's Moustache*
by Maureen Crisp
Marmac Media

These are the first two books in a new chapter book series set in the exciting world of the circus. The stories follow the adventures of Skye and Kestrel, two circus children who are given the task of solving a mysterious quest which will save their circus. The story is fun and engaging, with interesting characters and illustrations to draw readers in to the fun.

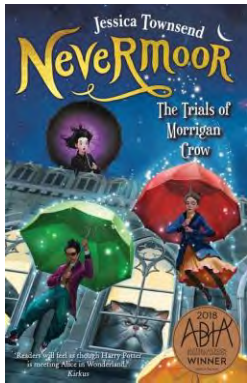
Ages 7+



How Not to Stop a Kidnap Plot
by Suzanne Main
Scholastic NZ

A humorous and high-tech adventure, this is a story worthy of every Christmas stocking. Michael has his hands full. First, he's battling his worst enemy AND he's stuck with being the tree in his school play. Discovering that a rich kid from his school is the target of a kidnapping plot just adds to his growing problems, but Michael is determined to save the day. Unless, of course, he just makes things worse... madness and mayhem ensue.

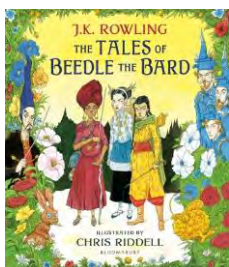
Ages 8+



Nevermoor: The Trials of Morrigan Crow
by Jessica Townsend
Hachette Australia

Everyone knows Morrigan Crow is unlucky. Born on the cursed date of Eventide, she's held responsible for every misfortune from hailstorms to heart attacks. Worse, she's doomed to die on a date which looms just around the corner ... if only someone would come and whisk her away to a magical land. Cue the enigmatic Jupiter North who whisks her away to mythical land of Nevermoor. But if she wants to stay she'll need to earn a place in the Wunderous Society and prove her worth. But could there be anything wonderful about Morrigan? Is she really bad luck? This story charms from the first page and is packed with adventure and humour. Often billed as the next Harry Potter, this book actually earns the right for comparison. The tone is very similar to J.K. Rowling's work, along with the world building. An overall winner of the 2018 Australian Book Industry Awards (ABIA), it's a series to watch out for.

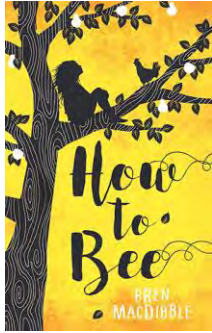
Ages 9+



Tales of Beedle the Bard
by J.K. Rowling, Illustrated by Chris Riddell
Bloomsbury

One of the reading favourites from the world of Harry Potter. Five magical stories from the 15th century, with commentary from Albus Dumbledore, gloriously illustrated with intricate detail throughout. A big and beautiful treasure.

Ages 7+



How to Bee
by Bren MacDibble
Allen & Unwin

A glimpse into a near future when bees are no more; instead children climb trees to pollinate the flowers. Peony loves her orchard home and longs to be a bee, until her Ma comes to take her to the city, away from her sister and beloved Gramps. New Zealand award winner.

Ages 9+

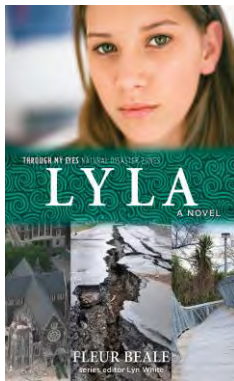


Miniwings: Firestorm's Musical Muck-Up
By Sally Sutton, illustrated by Kirsten Richards
Scholastic NZ

Readers of the earlier books in this series will know that the little winged toy horses owned by Sophie and Clara are trouble indeed. Perhaps if the girls did not need a last-minute practice before the school orchestra performance, the naughty little horses would not have hidden themselves and Firestorm would not have seen the fire alarm button in the hall! The

abundant colourful illustrations, and Sally's playful Miniwings language add to the fun.

Ages 6+



Lyla: Through my eyes - Natural Disaster Zones
By Fleur Beale
Allen & Unwin

An absorbing story of what it is like to be caught up in a natural disaster, in this case the 2011 Christchurch earthquake. Lyla is a high school student when the earthquake strikes and is soon involved in rescue operations. She and her brother open their home to needy neighbours while her parents are involved in rescue operations elsewhere and show initiative and bravery in coping with the challenges which arise every day. Her story also covers the ongoing stress of having endured such a disaster and the need to reach out for help when it is offered.

Ages 11+



Finding
David Hill
Penguin Random House

The story begins in Scotland in 1886 where it is narrated by Aggie, child of an emigrant family about to leave for New Zealand. Over seven generations descendants of the family and of the tangata whenua already resident in the Waimoana river valley where they settle, tell their stories and live peacefully side by side. The story covers war, depression, social change and the disasters, which are such an important part of our history. An immensely enjoyable read for all ages.

11+



The Skylarks' War
by Hilary McKay
Macmillan

Hilary McKay's previous books centre on modern family life portrayed with humour, warmth and understanding of the concerns which loom large in children's lives. This is the story of Peter, Clarry and Rupert whose story is touched on in one of the books about Binny, when their diaries and other items are discovered in the attic of a house in Cornwall. These children grew up before World War I with dysfunctional and remote parents and spent their summers in Cornwall with their grandparents. It lacks the light-heartedness of McKay's other books but Clarry is an inspirational character who fights for her rights to be educated, like the boys, and who eventually goes to Oxford. The second half centres on World War I and all its horrors but has a happy resolution for most and is a great read as are all the books by this author.

Ages 10+



Facing the Flame
by Jackie French
Harper Collins Australia

This is Book 7 of the Matilda Saga, Jackie French's inspirational and totally engrossing story of Australia from Victorian times through to the late 20th century and based around Matilda who began as an impoverished child working in the jam factory in Melbourne, with all its dangers and ended up as a respected

landowner running a sheep station. To read the whole series begin with ***A Waltz for Matilda***, but all titles are great reads, focussing on women's lives and social issues, politics and family life. ***Facing the Flame*** is centred on a rural community living in drought and facing the constant threat of bushfires. It is an exciting read with an unexpected twist which promises more to come, and sure enough ***The Last Dingo Summer*** was published this year. These can be found in the library in Junior fiction but I would recommend them for teens and adults.

Ages 12+