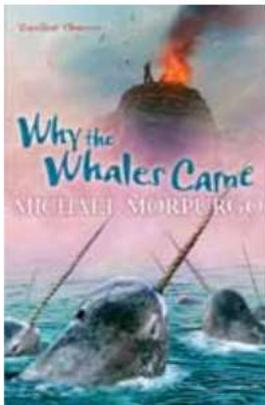


Year 5

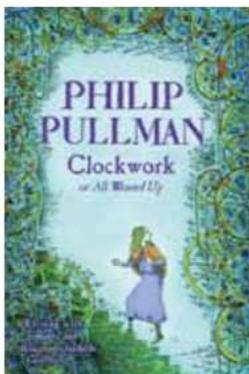
These are romping reads as well as stories that touch deeply. They are listed in a suggested order that leads towards what Pie Corbett feels is the greatest novel ever written for children.



Why the Whales Came

Michael Morpurgo (Egmont)

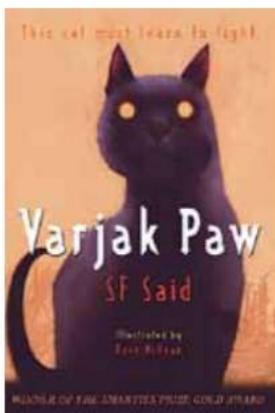
Provide the children with some information about Narwhals as they feature in the story. Also, check out Bryher on the Isles of Scilly, and Rushy Bay – which is a key setting – and research on the internet why families left Samson Island. On the board draw a map of Bryher and together label with events. Ask: *How do our views of the Birdman change and why?* Issues to discuss in class: fear, bullying, friendship and should whales be hunted. (See the *Read & Respond* series for further ideas.)



Clockwork

Philip Pullman (Random House)

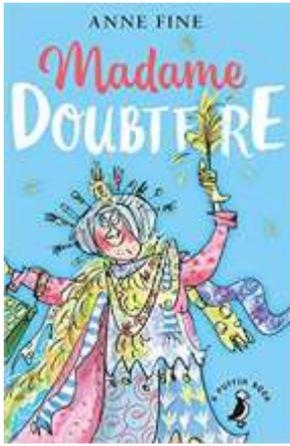
Before reading, ask: *What does the cover suggest the book will be about?* While reading it in class create a story map of the story and show how the main events and characters interconnect. Ask: *Which are the good/bad characters? Where is your evidence?* Together compare Karl and Gretl using evidence from the text. Ask: *In what way is the book like 'clockwork'? How are our lives like clockwork? In what ways do we 'wind up the future like clockwork'?* Re-read the book and pause at the places where there is the most suspense. Ask: *How does Philip Pullman create suspense? What techniques does he use? How does he keep the reader 'all wound up'?*



Varjak Paw

SF Said (Random House)

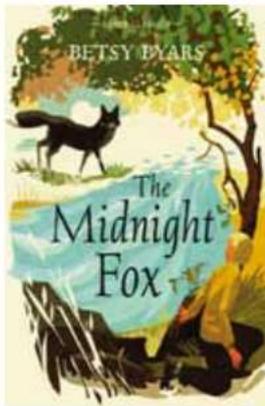
After reading the book, ask children to paint dark city landscapes and skylines. Then together draw role-on-the-wall for Varjak, collecting clues and quotes about his developing character. Ask: *Why is Varjak rejected and yet why does he return?* Explain the difference between Varjak, the Elder Paw and the other cats. Can the children contrast the inside of the house with outside in the city? Together invent a 'Jalal tale' and explain 'the way'. Invite the children to write a night adventure for Varjak – for example, a story in which he nearly gets caught by Sally Bones. Encourage them to write a sequel adventure and then read *The Outlaw Varjak Paw* (Random House).



Madame Doubtfire

Anne Fine

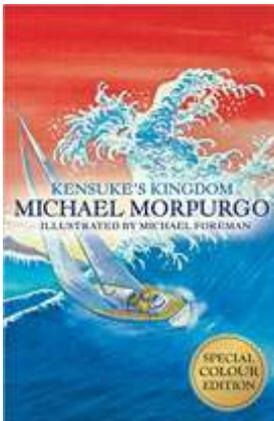
Daniel and Miranda Hillard are separated and Miranda, a successful businesswoman, severely limits the amount of time Daniel, an impractical, out-of-work actor, is allowed to spend with their three children Lydia, Christopher and Natalie. When Miranda decides to hire a nanny, however, Daniel disguises himself as a woman and gets the job. The two eldest children immediately know who "Madame Doubtfire" is, but the youngest and Miranda are fooled. Daniel uses his disguise to spend time with his children. Miranda comments that the house has never been run better. After Miranda discovers Daniel's secret — and after one more terrible fight — both parents admit to mistakes and make arrangements for Daniel to see his children more often



The Midnight Fox **READ&RESPOND**

Betsy Byars (Faber)

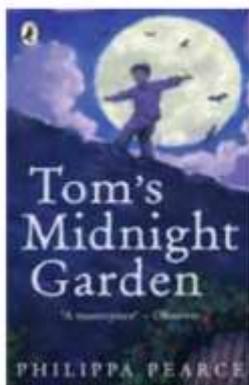
Read the first two paragraphs and discuss as a class what the story might be about. Tom says: *'I like the way I am'*. Discuss the tension between his father's and Uncle Fred's expectations and Tom's view. Ask the children to invent newspaper titles for key incidents and use these to label a class map of the story. Provide time to write letters to Petie Burkis about the main events. Ask: *Why did Uncle Fred and Aunt Millie 'never mention what I had done'?* At the end, Tom says *'it was as if it had happened to another boy'*. *What did happen? How did he change?* Then discuss who was right: Uncle Fred or Tom?



Kensuke's Kingdom

Michael Morpurgo

This is a treat for lovers of drama-filled stories. It tells of how a young boy named Michael mysteriously disappears the night before his twelfth birthday. The next morning, Michael finds himself washed up on a beach on a remote island with a bowl of water and some grilled fish next to him.



Tom's Midnight Garden **READ&RESPOND**

Philippa Pearce (Oxford University Press)

This book demands a timeline of events so that the class can see the way in which the plot is constructed and how time shifts. (You can see the house that Philippa Pearce used as a basis for the book online: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2644779/Country-house-inspired-Philippa-Pearces-Toms-Midnight-Garden-goes-market-3-5million.html>) Mime moving as a ghost through a door into a different world. When reading Chapter 20 discuss *'time no longer'*. Before reading Chapter 26, discuss with the class how the tale will end. Invite them to draw the garden and write an extra episode for Tom and Hatty. Can they write their own midnight trip into another world, such as *Pie's Midnight Forest* and identify the link with time travel in *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* from Year 3? (See the *Read & Respond* title for further ideas.)



FARTHER Picture book

Grahame Baker-Smith (Templar)

Begin by reading the cover and ask: *Why is the title 'FARTHER'? Why the poppies? The birds? The wings? Are dreams important? Explain 'another call claimed him'. Ask: What is the story about? What does it mean to each child?* Gather clues as a class about each character and then interview them in turn – mother, father and son. Also, read and explore the wonderful *Leon and the Place Between* (Templar), as well as picture books by David Wiesner, such as *Free Fall*, *Flotsam*, *Hurricane*, *Art and Max*, *June 29, 1999* and *Sector 7* (Houghton Mifflin).

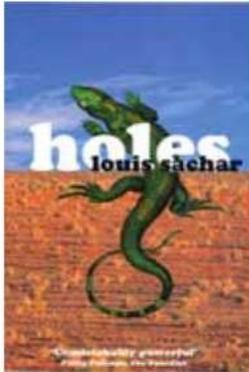


Poetry Spine

- The Works 4
- Lost Magic – The very best of Brian Moses
- Juggling with Gerbils
- The Magic Box

Year 6

A selection of great novels for Year 6 children. These books are the reading rites of passage that pave the way for the great literature that lies ahead. The books are intense reads, meaty books that are crafted beautifully. They will stay with the reader forever. These books are life-changers. Do read them before sharing with the class as some touch on challenging themes.

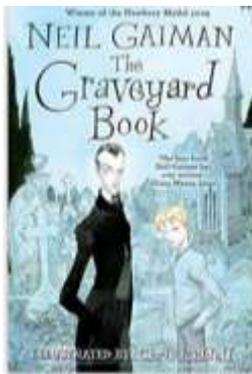


Holes

READ & RESPOND

Louis Sachar (Bloomsbury)

Invite the children to keep a diary for each of the key events – and by contrast, write a letter home from the camp. Together collect information about the main characters and discuss why they behave as they do. Ask: *Why did the author give Stanley a palindromic name?* Draw two timelines to track the present and past events. In role as journalists, encourage children to carry out interviews and write a news item for the start and end of the book. Ask: *Why is the book called 'Holes'?* Talk through all the possibilities. Discuss *'the holes in their lives'*. Then make a comparison with the film (it has a PG certificate, so you might want to check with parents before showing it). (See the *Read & Respond* title for further ideas.)



The Graveyard Book

Neil Gaiman

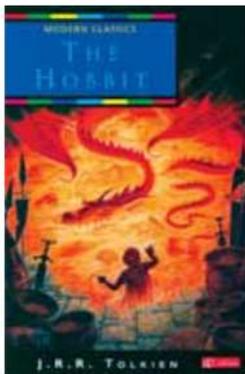
When a baby escapes a murderer intent on killing the entire family, who would have thought it would find safety and security in the local graveyard? Brought up by the resident ghosts, ghouls and spectres, Bod has an eccentric childhood learning about life from the dead. But for Bod there is also the danger of the murderer still looking for him – after all, he is the last remaining member of the family. A stunningly original novel deftly constructed over eight chapters, featuring every second year of Bod's life, from babyhood to adolescence. Will Bod survive to be a man?



Coraline

Neil Gaiman

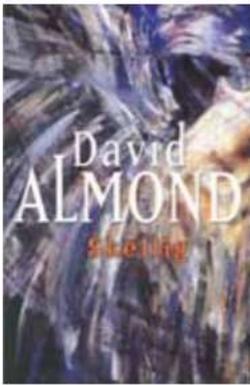
There is something strange about Coraline's new home. It's not the mist, or the cat that always seems to be watching her, nor the signs of danger that Miss Spink and Miss Forcible, her new neighbours, read in the tea leaves. It's the other house – the one behind the old door in the drawing room. Another mother and father with black-button eyes and papery skin are waiting for Coraline to join them there. And they want her to stay with them. For ever. She knows that if she ventures through that door, she may never come back.



The Hobbit

JRR Tolkien (HarperCollins)

With the class create maps and a timeline for the adventure. Can they write messages in runic code? Invite them to write letters to Bilbo to persuade him to join the journey. Together create a set of instructions, such as 'How to Trap a Troll'. Role play the Troll scene in lesson. Invite them to write riddles for Bilbo to use against Gollum or the Dragon. Provide time to write Gollum's story, asking: *How did he get inside the mountain and how did he come by the ring?* Together write a poem listing what you would do with a magical ring. After each key part of the story, interview a child in the role of a dwarf and ask them about what has happened or create and film news bulletins. Challenge children to draw or describe Smaug, as well as write an 'end of term report' for Bilbo. Ask: *How has the journey changed him?* Work out the underlying pattern of the Quest story – and the key archetypal characters – then create your own quest in chapters.



Skellig **READ&RESPOND**

David Almond (Hodder)

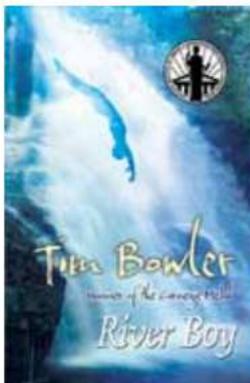
Together in class discuss Mina's views on education. Ask: *Who or what is Skellig? What is the book about?* Invite them to collect key lines to talk about, such as 'truth and dreams are always getting muddled'. In role as Mina, encourage children to write her diary extracts about what is happening. Perform and talk about 'Tyger' by William Blake. Provide time to write Michael's story for Miss Clarts in Chapter 33. Ask: *Why does Michael want to call the baby 'Persephone'?* Tell the class to read 'Mina – my story' and write a sequel to *Skellig*. (See the *Read & Respond* series for further ideas.)



Fireweed

Jill Paton Walsh (Hot Key Books)

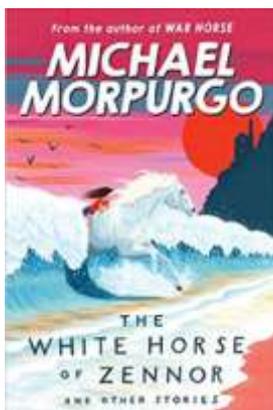
This book benefits from background knowledge about the bombing of London in 1940 and the evacuation. Split the class in two with both halves keeping diary entries for the two main characters. Hold discussions after each chapter as this is a demanding read. Pause for 'think alouds' where children in role think aloud about their thoughts, hopes, motives, and so on. Discuss with the class what happens in the last two chapters. Ask: *Why is the story called 'Fireweed'?* Also, read *Dolphin Crossing* (Faber) by the same author (about Dunkirk).



River Boy

Tim Bowler (Oxford University Press)

This is another mysterious book and you should read it before reading it to the class. Ask: *Who, or what, is the 'river boy' and how can he be 'part of her'?* *What does Grandpa want? How can Jess 'be his hands'?* When reading Chapter 17 discuss the relationship between the painting and the river boy and Grandpa. Discuss the importance of the swim and ask: *how does this help Jess come to terms with Grandpa's death? By the end of the book who has changed and how?* At the end of the book discuss *the spirit of the river boy was in her alone*. Try to summarise what the book is about and what it means to the children. Some of these meanings might be private.

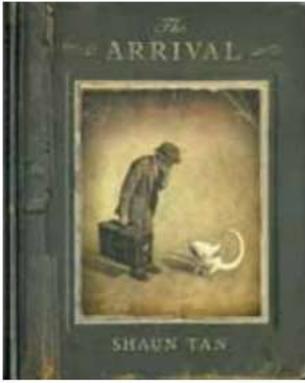


The White Horse of Zennor – The Giants Necklace story

Michael Morpurgo

A tense and thrilling ghost story from the internationally acclaimed author of *War Horse*.

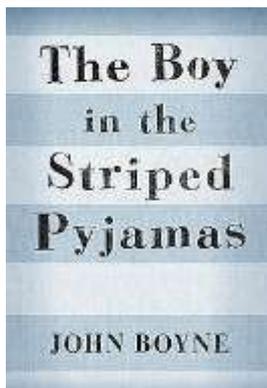
It all began with a necklace, made of glistening pink cowrie shells. A long, long necklace that had taken Cherry days - weeks - of careful, painstaking work. It was nearly complete, and Cherry was determined it would be the longest necklace she had ever made; that it would be fit for a giant! But the end of the holidays had arrived. You've only got today, Cherry, said her mother. Just today, that's all. Cherry didn't mind, a day would be enough - she only needed a few more shells. So, amidst the taunts of her older brothers, she set out to search for them. Then the clouds grew dark and the waves grew large, and as the storm blew in, Cherry realized, to her horror, that she was cut off from the shore. From then on, events began to take a decidedly dark turn. One from which there was no turning back...



The Arrival Picture book

Shaun Tan (Hodder)

Before reading this in class you may find it handy to explain immigration, especially the migration to America at the end of the 19th century (Ellis Island). Read carefully and discuss. Study each section at a time. Ask: *What is happening?* As there are no words, the reader has to work hard! Discuss in class how the story makes you feel – and how the characters seem to feel. (Being in a new country, migrants often feel at a loss in the same way that the reader does.) Discuss the three 'helpers'. Invite the children to write the letters that they send. Ask: *What is the story about? Are all the illustrations real or in someone's imagination? Are they symbols for anything?* Encourage the class to write story sections to go with different parts of the book or diary entries for characters. Also, read other Shaun Tan books, such as *The Lost Thing*, *The Red Tree* and *Rules of Summer* which makes a good model for writing. Also, check out picture books by Armin Greder, *The Island* and *The City* (Allen & Unwin).



The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas

John Boyne

Nine-year-old Bruno knows nothing of the Final Solution and the Holocaust. He is oblivious to the appalling cruelties being inflicted on the people of Europe by his country. All he knows is that he has been moved from a comfortable home in Berlin to a house in a desolate area where there is nothing to do and no one to play with. Until he meets Shmuel, a boy who lives a strange parallel existence on the other side of the adjoining wire fence and who, like the other people there, wears a uniform of striped pyjamas.

Bruno's friendship with Shmuel will take him from innocence to revelation. And in exploring what he is unwittingly a part of, he will inevitably become subsumed by the terrible process.



Poetry Spine

- Collected Poetry for Children
- Ted Hughes Collected – Poems for children
- The Works – KS2
- Carol Ann Duffy – new and collected poems for children