
Reading differences: annotated booklist

The national curriculum requires children to read books from a variety of cultures and traditions. This booklist, which briefly describes over 60 books from different parts of the world, is a resource for widening children's reading around themes and styles that will appeal to them. Some of the books were originally written in English and some have been translated from other languages, but all are interesting and accessible to children in key stage 2.

The books are presented in four main categories within each group (years 3 and 4 or years 5 and 6):

- novels and stories
- folk and traditional tales
- picture books
- poetry.

There are of course imaginative ways of linking and comparing texts from the different categories, and the detailed teaching sequences available for eight of the titles provide a good starting point. The teaching sequences are accompanied by leaflets introducing classroom approaches to the material. *Teaching world literature in the primary school: a discussion paper* looks at the rationale behind reading differences and some of the challenges of reading texts from different cultures and traditions. The teaching sequences and discussion paper are available from the 'English' section of the QCA website (www.qca.org.uk/english).

Where possible we have chosen books that have been published in UK editions. Books published elsewhere can be ordered online or through suppliers who import multicultural books.

This list is not exhaustive. If you find any other books that may be appropriate, please let us know by email at englishteam@qca.org.uk.

Years 3 and 4

Picture books

Patricia Aldana (ed), *Under the Spell of the Moon*

Groundwood Books, Canada, ISBN 0888995598

(British edition to be published by Frances Lincoln in July 2006, ISBN 1845075277)

This is a truly international picture book. Each double-page spread, drawn by a highly regarded illustrator, includes text in the original language and in English translation. The highly individual styles of the illustrators reflect tradition and innovation in contemporary picture books from around the world.

Meshack Asare, *Sosu's Call*

Sub-Saharan Publishers, Ghana, ISBN 998855009X (available from African Books Collective, Oxford)

Sosu lives in a small Ghanaian village between the sea and a lagoon. He has never been able to walk. His family is supportive – his father teaches him practical skills and his brother and sister pass on what they have learnt at school. Some members of the community are superstitious and prejudiced about having a disabled boy in their midst. One day the village is threatened by the rising sea and Sosu finds a way to warn his people.

Caroline Binch, *Gregory Cool*

Frances Lincoln, ISBN 0711208905, big book, ISBN 0711215367

Gregory travels to Tobago to visit his grandparents and initially finds it hard to adjust to a contrasting way of life. However, the warmth of the people and the climate, depicted in the light and shade of Caroline Binch's vivacious illustrations, soon make him realise what he is missing by not opening up his heart and mind.

Christopher Gregorowski, *Fly, Eagle, Fly*, illustrated by Niki Daly

Frances Lincoln, ISBN 0711217300

An African parable, originating in Ghana and here interpreted by a South African author and illustrator, about recognising your potential – 'that we are all born to be eagles who are lifted up with the might of the Spirit – like the wind-borne flight of an eagle'. A farmer raises a baby eagle as though it were a chicken. The bird does not realise it can fly until a friend of the farmer intervenes.

Ann Grifalconi, *The Village that Vanished*, illustrated by Kadir Nelson

Ragged Bears, ISBN 1857142519

This is the story of how the inhabitants of a West African village thwart capture by slave traders, thanks to the wisdom, courage and faith of three generations of women: the child Abikanile, her mother Njemile and her grandmother Chimwala. Retold in a style resembling the oral tradition as narrated by an African storyteller or griot, this book won the English 4–11 Award for Key Stage 2 Fiction in 2002.

Amy Hest, *When Jessie Came Across the Sea*, illustrated by PJ Lynch

Walker ISBN 0744540879, paperback, ISBN 074456963X

In this vividly painted picture book, a young woman from a Jewish community in Eastern Europe is sent to America in the 19th century to make a life in the New World. On the boat she meets a young man with whom she becomes reacquainted in New York. Later she is reunited with her beloved grandmother. A heart-warmingly human story accompanied by illustrations that give a strong sense of time and place.

Sarah Stewart, *The Gardener*, illustrated by David Small

Frances Lincoln, ISBN 1845070089

A subtle story set over a period of a year during the American depression of the 1930s, told through letters from a girl called Lydia Grace to her relatives. The reasons for Lydia Grace moving from the countryside to stay with her Uncle Jim in the city, and her interest in gardening, are gradually revealed through the letters with complementary details in the illustrations.

Folk and traditional tales

Antonia Barber, *Hidden Tales from Eastern Europe*, illustrated by Paul Hess

Frances Lincoln, ISBN 0711221189

These seven tales are illustrated with pictures that enhance their mystery. They include darkly humorous stories from Poland and Croatia, and a Serbian story of a king who discovers the importance of learning a useful trade. The remaining stories are from Russia, Slovenia, Slovakia and Romania.

Bob Barton, *The Bear Says North: Tales from Northern Lands*, illustrated by Jirina Marton

Groundwood Books, Canada, ISBN 0888995334

Stories from Scandinavia, Russia and Canada's far north that draw on sources reflecting the oral tradition. They include folk tales such as 'The Honest Penny' in which a boy proves he has more faith in justice than the adults around him have, a fairytale about the moon descending to earth, and several stories featuring animals of the north – bear, wolf, reindeer and the legendary raven.

Sally Pomme Clayton, *Tales Told in Tents*, illustrated by Sophie Herxheimer

Frances Lincoln, ISBN 1845070666, paperback due August 2006, ISBN 1845072782

Storyteller Sally Pomme Clayton travelled through the countries of Central Asia, including Afghanistan and Kazakhstan, collecting stories from people she met there. The stories she retells are interspersed with information about the region and the society as well as proverbs and sayings. At the end of the book there are notes about the stories, a map drawn by the illustrator and a glossary.

Carmen Diana Dearden (ed), *Little Book of Latin American Folktales*, translated from Spanish by Susana Wald and Beatriz Zeller

Groundwood, Canada, ISBN 0888995431

A collection of ten tales retold by Latin American folklorists and storytellers, most of whom are from Venezuela. Many links can be made with stories from other parts of the world: 'Maria Tolete' is a Cinderella variant, 'Ocelot, Jaguar and Lion' contains elements similar to Hansel and Gretel, and a version of 'The Talking Bird, the Singing Tree and the Fountain of Gold' can be found in *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights*.

Malachy Doyle, *Tales from Old Ireland*, illustrated by Niamh Sharkey

Barefoot, ISBN 184148279X; CD, ISBN 1841484024

An attractive volume, with highly original illustrations, of tales from Ireland, where 'a story is rarely told the same way twice'. Included here are 'Fair, Brown and Trembling', a variation on Cinderella, 'The Children of Lir', who were transformed into swans for nine hundred years, and the legend of Oisín, who travelled to Tír na nÓg, the Land of Eternal Youth.

Jamila Gavin, *Three Indian Princesses*

Egmont ISBN 0749746130

From the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, significant story cycles in Hindu mythology, come these stories of brave, wise and devoted princesses: Savitri who outwits Death to save her husband's life, Damayanti who escapes the grip of the demon Kali, and Sita who chooses exile with her beloved Rama. A companion volume, *Three Indian Goddesses* (Egmont, ISBN 0749746181), includes the story 'Monkey in the Stars'.

Grace Hallworth, *Sing Me a Story*, illustrated by John Clementson

Frances Lincoln, ISBN 071121851X

Trinidadian storyteller Grace Hallworth relates five stories from the Caribbean, illustrated with bright collage pictures. Each contains a song for which the words and music are provided. Turtle uses a song and dance routine to evade capture. A girl named Hazel is captivated by a mermaid's song and her own desire for long silky hair.

Elizabeth Laird, *When the World Began*, illustrated by Yosef Kebede, Emma Harding, Griselda Holderness and Lydia Monks

Oxford University Press, ISBN 0192741896

The author collected these stories from all over Ethiopia. They include a story of an ill-tempered sister, and one of a dying man with a task for his three sons. Humorous stories about animals also teach lessons for life. The book has striking illustrations by four different artists.

Barbara Ker Wilson, *Wishbones: A Folktale from China*, illustrated by Meilo So

Frances Lincoln, ISBN 0711214158

A Chinese variation of the Cinderella story. After Yeh Hsien's stepmother kills her pet fish, the girl is able to use the fish bones to wish for anything she wants, including a pair of violet silken slippers. The loss of one of the slippers leads to her meeting with the King of T'o Huan, whom she marries. Reading this story could lead to an exploration of the many other versions of Cinderella.

James Mayhew, *Tales from Russia*

Kingfisher, ISBN 0753404737

James Mayhew retells five folk tales, including the story of the Firebird and a tale about Baba-Yaga Bony-Legs the witch, illustrating them in a style strongly reminiscent of Russian folk art. The stories are placed within a framework of another set of stories related by Kohska, the storytelling cat.

The following two books are collections of traditional tales from Japan and China, retold by Japanese and Chinese storytellers:

Florence Sakade, *Japanese Children's Favourite Stories*, illustrated by Yoshisuke Kurosaki

Tuttle Publishing, ISBN 0804834490

Mingmei Yip, *Chinese Children's Favourite Stories*

Tuttle Publishing, ISBN 0804835896

Novels and stories

Francisco Jiménez, *La Mariposa*, illustrated by Simón Silva

Houghton Mifflin, ISBN 0618073175

This book is based on the author's own experiences as the child of Mexican migrant workers in California. Francisco struggles in school because he speaks only Spanish and everything is in English. He develops his artistic skills, encouraged by his observation of a caterpillar turning into a butterfly, and slowly makes friends. Francisco's teacher eventually realises the necessity for him of maintaining his language. Spanish words and phrases are integrated within the text.

Tove Jansson, *Finn Family Moomintroll*, translated by Elizabeth Portch

Puffin, ISBN 014030150X

Tove Jansson, Finland's best-loved children's author, began to write and illustrate her series about the Moomins in the 1940s. In addition to the Moomin family, she introduces a wealth of eccentric fantasy characters who conduct their adventures with gentle and philosophical humour. The Moomin books were originally written in Swedish and have been translated into 34 languages. The characters have also appeared in an animated television series.

Erich Kastner, *Emil and the Detectives*, illustrated by Walter Trier, translated by Eileen Hall

Red Fox Classics, ISBN 0099413124

Emil is robbed on the train on his way to Berlin to visit his grandmother. He joins up with a gang of children and they work together to apprehend the thief. First published in Germany in the 1930s, this book, in which quick-witted children foil the grown-ups, has influenced many detective stories since. A book that may require some reading stamina for this age group.

Astrid Lindgren, *Pippi Longstocking*, illustrated by Tony Ross

Oxford University Press, ISBN 0192718436

A modern classic about the strongest girl in the world who lives in Vilkulka Cottage with only her horse and the monkey Mr Nelson for company. The Pippi books were first published in Sweden in the 1940s and marked a shift in children's literature towards independent and unconventional child characters.

Lensey Namioka, *Yang the Youngest and his Terrible Ear*, illustrated by Kees De Kieft

Dell Yearling, USA, ISBN 0440409179

The first of four books about a musical family that has recently moved from China to the USA, written by an Asian-American author. The story of how Yingtao adapts to a new society is told with sympathy and humour, touching on mutual misunderstandings relating to customs (especially about food and eating), names and language.

Miriam Schlein, *The Year of the Panda*, illustrated by Kam Mak

HarperTrophy, USA, ISBN 0064403661

Lu Yi rescues an orphaned baby daxiong mao or giant panda. He learns to look after it until a government programme takes over its care. Lu Yi is rewarded for his help and looks set to make a career as a scientist working with animals. This short novel gives some insight into life in rural China, in particular the conflicting needs of humans and animals where the use of land is concerned. The basic details of the story are based on Chinese government policy aimed at saving the giant panda.

Laurence Yep, *The Magic Paintbrush*, illustrated by Suling Wang

HarperTrophy, USA, ISBN 0064498523

A short novel set in San Francisco's Chinatown that draws on a folk tale about a paintbrush that brings scenes to life. Steve, the wielder of the brush, is an orphan living with his grandfather and Uncle Fong. Contemporary life experiences in a Chinese-American family and traditional folklore are interwoven in a story that is also about longing for the past and lost loved ones.

Poetry

John Agard, *Why is the Sky?*, illustrated by Andrzej Klimovski

Faber, ISBN 0571179428

A compact book that brings together poems from a wide range of cultures based around questions children ask about life, the universe and everything.

John Agard and Grace Nichols (eds), *A Caribbean Dozen*, illustrated by Cathie Felstead

Walker, ISBN 074455201X

The work of thirteen Caribbean poets is included in this rich collection, with illustrations that truly enhance the words on the page. The poets each share a childhood experience with the reader as an introduction to their poems and there are biographical notes on each at the end of the book. To taste the impressive variety in this book, try Pamela Mordecai's light-hearted 'Remember' and then turn the page to discover her moving 'Lament of an Arawak Child'.

John Agard and Grace Nichols (eds), *Under the Moon and Over the Sea*, illustrated by Cathie Felstead, Jane Ray, Christopher Corr, Satoshi Kitamura and Sara Fanelli

Walker, ISBN 0744598427

A Caribbean Dozen gave voice to thirteen poets of Caribbean origin. Here the authors have adopted a thematic approach, beginning with the Caribbean as a home and ending with journeying away from it. Each of the five thematic sections is illustrated by a different artist. Cathie Felstead's collages portray the underwater worlds surrounding the islands. Jane Ray illuminates the vibrant storytelling traditions. Christopher Corr's bright colours give life to flora and fauna, while Satoshi Kitamura uses humour to make a display of Caribbean food. Finally, poems about migration from the Caribbean give flight to Sara Fanelli's imagination.

[NB: A reprint of this book is currently under consideration with the publisher, so it may not be available.]

James Berry, *A Nest Full of Stars*, illustrated by Rachel Merriman

Macmillan, ISBN 0330397524

Melodious rhythms permeate these poems, many of which sing of James Berry's Caribbean childhood. Many are about common feelings and experiences, such as 'The Adding Up of Birthdays' or never getting a ride on your sister's new bicycle. All beg to be read aloud, whether it's a tongue twister like 'Skeleton Sisters' or the 'Gobble-Gobble Rap'.

James Berry (editor), *Around the World in 80 Poems*, illustrated by Katherine Lucas

Macmillan, ISBN 0333962311

A poetic journey from Greenland to England via the Americas, Australia, Asia, Africa and Europe, as shown on a map by the book's illustrator. Through the poems, the reader visits Chile with Gabriela Mistral, India with Rabindranath Tagore and Wales with Gillian Clarke, and is introduced to many other poets along the way. A culturally diverse collection of poems, most of which are not readily available in anthologies for children.

Grace Nichols, *Everybody Got a Gift: New and Selected Poems*

A & C Black, ISBN 0713673753; paperback, ISBN 071367251X

Many of Grace Nichols' poems hark back to her childhood in Guyana, both in their subject matter and in the language she uses. Readers can step into her 'tropical garden', taste a 'sweet rainwashed sunripe mango', tremble on hearing about a 'jumbie' (ghost), and watch 'Me mudder catch crab mek calaloo stew'.

Uzo Unobagha, *Off to the Shores of Africa and Other Talking Drum Rhymes*, illustrated by Julia Cairns

Chronicle Books, ISBN 0811823784

A Nigerian author has created these verses in the style of nursery rhymes, drawing on the culture of West Africa. She evokes the landscape and climate and the cultural traditions of the people, especially their music, as the rhymes echo with the beat of talking drums. The verses are presented in a picture-book format with colourful illustrations of rural life.

Years 5/6

Picture books

Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe, *East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon*, illustrated by PJ Lynch

Walker, ISBN 1844284980

A Norwegian fairytale that has many elements of traditional stories from all around the world. The ethereal magic of the tale and the harsh northern landscape are evocatively portrayed in PJ Lynch's illustrations.

Jeannie Baker, *Where the Forest Meets the Sea*

Walker, ISBN 0744513057; big book, ISBN 0744563011

A boy and his father spend the day in the rainforest of northern Australia and the boy imagines both the primeval past and the possible future for the area. The striking illustrations, which are collages made largely from natural materials, combine with a spare but thought-provoking text.

Also by this author/illustrator: *The Hidden Forest* (Big Book, ISBN 0744578760; paperback, ISBN 1844285189)

Paul Fleischman, *Weslandia*, illustrated by Kevin Hawkes

Walker, ISBN 0744577357

Wesley is an individualist who doesn't want to run with the crowd. His parents and schoolmates regard him as a misfit. One summer Wesley decides to use what he has learnt to grow his own staple food crop and found a civilisation. The development of Weslandia is a wonder to behold as gradually people join him, and new fabrics, games, foods and an entire language are created. A picture book that is a tribute to originality and open-mindedness.

Virginia Hamilton, *The People Could Fly*, illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon

Knopf, USA, ISBN 0375824057

A moving visual and written interpretation of a story from African-American folklore. Africans taken as slaves to America forgot their ability to fly until the need to escape from their oppression enabled some of them to rediscover it.

John Marsden, *The Rabbits*, illustrated by Shaun Tan

Lothian, ISBN 0850918782; paperback, ISBN 073440221X

A powerful allegory depicting the devastating effects of colonialism. The language used is deceptively simple and evokes a strong response as the reader comes to a gradual realisation of the situation and its implications. The Australian setting becomes apparent near the end through vocabulary such as 'billabong' and 'gum trees', but the message is universal and the circumstances could apply to a number of places, both in the past and the present. The surreal and abstract illustrations are in a variety of styles and media.

John Steptoe, *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: an African Tale*

Puffin, ISBN 0140559469

A story set in Zimbabwe that, while being very much located within its culture and context, finds echoes in well-known European fairytales such as Cinderella. Sisters Nyasha and Manyara are sent

to the king, who is searching for a bride. Manyara is proud and selfish while Nyasha is kind and generous. No prizes for guessing who becomes queen – but the journey Mufaro’s daughters make has its own wonders.

Folk and traditional tales

Patricia Aldana (ed), *Jade and Iron: Latin American Tales from Two Cultures*, illustrated by Luis Garay, translated by Hugh Hazelton

Groundwood Books, Canada, ISBN 0888992564

This collection brings together folk tales from the traditions of the original Native peoples of South and Central America and the Latin peoples who conquered them. The former primarily take the form of myths, explaining how the world came to be as it is, while the latter deal more with people and their relationships with each other and the natural world. The illustrator is from Nicaragua.

Carol Ann Duffy, *Rumpelstiltskin and other Grimm Tales*, illustrated by Markéta Prachatiká

Faber, ISBN 0571196314

Carol Ann Duffy's spare prose retellings of Hansel and Gretel, Ashputtel (Cinderella), Snow White and Little Red-Cap, along with some less well known stories, originated in the adaptations she developed for the Young Vic Theatre's two productions of Grimm Tales. Her language is colloquial, raw and poetic, linking the stories back to their origins in oral tradition, before they were collected and written down by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm in Germany in the early 19th century (*Collected Grimm Tales*, Faber, ISBN 0571221424). An edition is available that contains the plays as well as retellings in story form. However, in this new edition the prose has been honed further, the layout is more attractive to the eye and there is the further enhancement of spiky black and white illustrations to draw out the macabre elements of the stories.

Madhur Jaffrey, *Seasons of Splendour*, illustrated by Michael Foreman

Puffin, ISBN 0140346996

In this collection of Indian folk tales, Madhur Jaffrey recalls the rich storytelling traditions of her own childhood in Delhi. She links the stories with associated religious festivals around the year – in late September the acting out of the story of Ram defeating the demon Ravan, and in November a story of the goddess Lakshmi to celebrate Divali.

Robert Leeson, *My Sister Shahrazad: Tales from the Arabian Nights*, illustrated by Christina Balit

Frances Lincoln, ISBN 071121767X

Robert Leeson has consulted several translations of the Arabian Nights to construct this selection in which the framing story is told from the viewpoint of Dunyazad, Shahrazad’s younger sister. This is a smaller selection than Geraldine McCaughrean’s and the prose is tighter and more muscular while the illustrations are more lavish.

Geraldine McCaughrean, *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights*, illustrated by Rosamund Fowler

Oxford University Press, ISBN 0192750135

A retelling of a selection of tales from the Arabian Nights. The framework of Shahrazad telling these stories to her husband King Shahryar in order to postpone her death draws you on to read just one more story. The tales include Sindbad, Ali Baba and Ala al-Din in addition to many other

less well known stories. Leeson's version is a good taster while McCaughrean's should be sampled for the fuller flavour.

Swedish Folk Tales, illustrated by John Bauer, translated by Holger Lundbergh

Floris Books, ISBN 0863154573

A large-format compendium of tales of magicians, princesses, kings, queens, giants and, most especially, trolls. The atmospheric illustrations evoke a world of fairytale forests within the natural landscape of Scandinavia.

Laurence Yep, *The Rainbow People*, illustrated by David Wiesner

HarperTrophy, USA, ISBN 0064404412

A Chinese-American author who has written contemporary and historical novels for children explores his heritage by retelling these Chinese folk tales collected from communities living in California. They include tales featuring tricksters, dragons, snakes and ghosts. Yep says in his introduction that 'although all but one of the tales is set in China, each seemed like a lens that helped focus on some facet of Chinese life in America.'

Novels and stories

James Berry, *A Thief in the Village and Other Stories*

Puffin, ISBN 0140326790

These short stories are vignettes of Jamaican village life, full of the rhythms of Caribbean speech. The stories are about relationships between weak and strong, between generations and among young people. The themes are universal and there is a strong sense of culture and place. The reader also has an awareness of the stories continuing after the last words appear on the page. Did the boys eventually capture the mongoose from Elias? Did Fanzo go in search of his father and brothers and sisters?

Eoin Colfer, *Benny and Omar*

O'Brien Press, ISBN 0862785677

Benny moves from Ireland to Tunisia because of his father's job. At first, Benny is unhappy about the move, especially missing his favourite sport of hurling. Then he meets Omar, a local boy. The way the two boys communicate, by means of advertising slogans and catchphrases from satellite TV as a friendship develops between them, is very funny.

Francesco D'Adamo, *Iqbal*, translated from Italian by Ann Leonori

Simon & Schuster, ISBN 0689837682

This novel is based on a true story about a boy in Pakistan during the 1990s who worked to free children like himself from the slavery of bonded labour. Iqbal's own life came to a tragic end, but not before he had alerted people internationally to the plight of child labourers. The story is told from the viewpoint of a girl who, like Iqbal, is a carpet weaver.

Mala Dayal (ed), *The Puffin Treasury of Modern Indian Stories*

Puffin, India, ISBN 0670049476

This is a collection of short stories and extracts from novels by significant modern Indian writers, each illustrated by a different artist. Most were originally written in English, but a few have been translated from Hindi or Bengali. Most are contemporary realistic stories, although fantasy and

history are also included, as is a story in verse by Vikram Seth. Other authors include Salman Rushdie, Satyajit Ray, Ruskin Bond and Anita Desai.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, *The Conch Bearer*

Chicken House, ISBN 1904442544

This quest story is set in India and involves a boy, a girl and a shape-shifting old man on a mission to return a conch shell with powerful spiritual significance to its rightful place in a magical valley. They travel from the city of Kolkata through the countryside in a journey that combines the mythical and mystical with real life. There is a strong appeal to the senses in this novel, in particular the smell and taste of Indian food.

Curdella Forbes, *Flying with Icarus and Other Stories*

Walker, ISBN 0744590671

These seven stories set in the Caribbean are all about interesting characters, both children and adults, and are told in lively language. Like Oscar in the final story, this author has 'learnt the secret of weaving words so others can see the magic that is there all the time'.

Roseanne Hawke, *Soraya the Storyteller*

Allen & Unwin, ISBN 0734407092

Soraya and her remaining family are refugees who have recently arrived in Australia from Afghanistan. They face detention and racism, but also have the support of friends. Soraya receives encouragement to write about her experiences and she is inspired by the many Middle Eastern stories related by Khala, her adoptive grandmother. They include the Arabian Nights, Afghani folk tales and stories about Mullah Nasruddin, the wise fool renowned throughout the region.

Elizabeth Laird, *The Garbage King*

Macmillan, ISBN 0330415026

Two boys in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, lead very different lives. Dani is from a rich family, but is a disappointment to his father. Mamo and his sister Tiggist are orphans, struggling to make ends meet. Both boys run away. When they meet, they help each other survive on the city streets. A well-constructed novel that gives insight into the lives of street children in Ethiopia, this book was written by a British author who has spent considerable time in the country.

Meme McDonald and Boori Pryor, *My Girragundji*

Allen & Unwin, ISBN 1864488182

Australian Aboriginal writer Boori Pryor has written this short first-person account of life in collaboration with Meme McDonald. Using his own dialect and a light-hearted tone, a boy describes his pet frog ('My Girragundji'), his fear of a household spirit known as the Hairyman, and a family trip to where the river meets the sea. The narrative draws on Boori Pryor's own family experiences and is illustrated with black and white photographs. *The Binna Binna Man* (Allen & Unwin, ISBN 1865080713) is a companion volume.

Ana Maria Machado, *From Another World*, illustrated by Lucia Brandao, translated from Brazilian Portuguese by Luisa Baera

Groundwood Books, Canada, ISBN 0888996411

A group of modern Brazilian children encounters the ghost of Rosario, a 19th-century slave girl who died in horrific circumstances. The narrator Mariano – a boy who does not enjoy reading and

writing – is galvanised into setting down her story as he and his friends discover the links between the past and the present in the place where they live. An opportunity to sample the work of a highly regarded Latin American author, of whose work very little is available in English.

Beverley Naidoo, *The Other Side of Truth*

Puffin, ISBN 0141304766; Heinemann New Windmill, ISBN 0435125303

Audio: Puffin Audiobooks, ISBN 0141803827 (read by Olusola Oyeleye)

Two children travel to London from Nigeria as political refugees after the sudden and shocking death of their mother. The circumstances in which Sade and Femi find themselves, and how they attempt to take control of their lives, raise many issues about politics, racism and refugees in the context of a fast-moving story by a South African writer based in the UK.

There is now a sequel: *Web of Lies* (Puffin, 0141314664).

Polly Nolan (ed), *Giants of the Sun*

Macmillan, ISBN 033039617X

This is a collection of short stories in which fourteen contemporary Irish writers use settings and language to convey time and place. Most are set in the present day, although a Second World War story ('Rainy People') and a time-shift tale ('Colin of the Foleys') are included, as is a humorous story replete with deliberate anachronisms ('Stone-Age Peig'). Gerard Whelan's 'Immigrants' initially appears to be addressing Ireland's changing demography but develops in an unexpected and thought-provoking way.

See also:

Robert Dunbar (ed), *Skimming*, O'Brien Press, ISBN 0862786606

Robert Dunbar (ed), *Enchanted Journeys: Fifty Years of Irish Writing for Children*, O'Brien Press, ISBN 0862785189

Linda Sue Park, *A Single Shard*

Oxford University Press, ISBN 0192719580

This winner of the Newbery Medal is set in 12th-century Korea. Tree-Ear is an orphan who begins working for a master potter, this craft being the chief economic activity in their village. He undertakes a long and arduous journey on the elderly potter's behalf and eventually learns to become a potter himself under his tutelage. The caring relationships between Tree-Ear, the potter and his wife, and Crane-man, who has always looked after him, are set against an interesting historical, geographical and cultural background. The author is the daughter of Korean immigrants to the USA.

Daniel Pennac, *Eye of the Wolf*, translated from French by Sarah Adams

Walker, ISBN 0744590108

A boy and a one-eyed wolf stand face to face staring at each other, although a cage encloses the wolf. The story of how they each came to be there, one from the cold climate of Alaska, the other from the heat of Africa, gradually unfolds. The wolf remembers his life with the pack, their constant attempts to evade the human hunters and his beautiful sister with golden fur who, thanks to him, remained free when he was captured. The boy journeys across Africa, animals being his only friends, until he finds a home with Pa and Ma Bia. He travels with them to the Other World where he meets the wolf in the zoo and is reunited with his animal companions. At the heart of this story is the mystical communication between boy and wolf. Also by this author: *Dog* (Walker, ISBN 0744590094) and *Kamo's Escape* (Walker, ISBN 0744583535).

Other novels of ideas, translated from French:

Antoine de Saint-Exupery, *Le Petit Prince*, Egmont, ISBN 0749707232

Andre Maurois, *Fattypuffs and Thinifers*, illustrated by Fritz Wegner, Jane Nissen Books, ISBN 1903252075

Pam Muñoz Ryan, *Esperanza Rising*

The Chicken House, ISBN 190343498X

The author based this novel on the experiences of her grandmother, who emigrated from Mexico to California in the 1930s. It is a riches to rags story of Esperanza, who lives a comfortable life on her parents' ranch in Mexico. When her father is killed, she and the rest of her family must leave their home for a harsh new life. 'Esperanza' means hope, and many other Spanish words are woven into the story, including the chapter headings, which are all named after fruit and vegetables.

Mildred D Taylor, *Song of the Trees*, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney

Puffin, USA, ISBN 0142500755

A brief novella based on a true story from the author's own African-American family heritage. Some white men try to bully Cassie Logan's grandmother into allowing them to cut down ancient trees on the Logan family's land while Cassie's father is away. Thanks to his children's intervention, David Logan returns in time to prevent them in a dignified manner.

Poetry

Valerie Bloom (ed), *One River, Many Creeks*, illustrated by Amanda Hall

Macmillan, ISBN 0330397680

A fresh collection from around the world, beginning with an English poem celebrating a boy's assertion of his identity and ending with Tagore's 'Paper Boats'. The contents in between come from all continents. Many are redolent of the place where they originate while others speak of the experience of migration.

Seamus Cashman (ed), *Something Beginning with P*, illustrated by Corrina Askin and Alan Clarke

O'Brien Press, ISBN 0862789060

This stunningly designed, exciting and engagingly illustrated anthology of over a hundred newly commissioned poems conveys a strong flavour of the flourishing climate for poetry in Ireland today. Some names (Seamus Heaney, Matthew Sweeney) may be familiar to British children and most of the other names will open up new paths for exploration. A few poems are printed in Irish with English translations at the back of the book.

Debjani Chatterjee (ed), *Masala: Poems from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka*

Macmillan, ISBN 0330415018

Poems from the four countries named are interwoven with poems reflecting aspects of life for people with cultural backgrounds from those countries who are now in the UK. Themes covered include people and identity, travel and landscape, and language.

Naomi Shihab Nye (ed), *The Flag of Childhood*

Aladdin paperbacks, New York, ISBN 0689851723

An anthology reflecting the cultural diversity of the Middle East and the diaspora from that region. The poets originate from several Arab countries including Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria in addition to Iran, Israel and Turkey. Some of the poets have written in English and others have been translated. The compiler is herself a respected Arab-American poet. Her collections include *19 Varieties of Gazelle: Poems of the Middle East*.

(Greenwillow Books, USA, ISBN 060097655; HarperTempest, ISBN 0060504048).

Andrew Fusek Peters (ed), *Sheep Don't Go to School*, illustrated by Markéta Prachatiká

Bloodaxe Books, ISBN 1852244089

This refreshing collection of poems is translated from the languages of Eastern Europe. They range from short poems such as riddles to a traditional Albanian story poem, 'The Story of Doruntina'. There are humorous and nonsense poems and as well as descriptive verse concerning nature and the seasons. Often poems with linked themes are printed together, for example one double-page spread has poems about mice translated from Czech, Latvian and Russian.

Michael Rosen (ed), *A World of Poetry*

Kingfisher, ISBN 1856972216

Poems from across continents, across time, are organised in alphabetical order of the poets; this a rich and eclectic collection to dip into. There are sections of ballads, limericks, riddles and nonsense rhymes, an index indicating examples of form, style and technical device, and a subject index. Altogether there are a number of ways of accessing the material in this useful and enjoyable classroom resource.

Websites

Books for keeps www.booksforkeeps.co.uk

An online magazine about children's literature for adults (teachers, librarians, authors and publishing professionals).

Booktrusted.com www.booktrusted.com

Booktrust's dedicated site for children's books includes recommendations for reading and resources for teachers

Centre for literacy in primary education (CLPE) www.clpe.co.uk

CLPE is an education centre for teachers, parents and educators and offers training courses, consultancy and publications.

The International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) www.ibby.org

A non-profit organisation that links people from all over the world to bring books and children together.

Paper tigers www.papertigers.org

A website about young readers' books from and about the Pacific Rim and Asia.

Passport: International children's literature <http://passport.imaginarylands.org>

A website about international (rather than multicultural) children's literature.

White ravens www.ijb.de/whiteravens.htm

A selection of literature for children and young people.

WingedChariot Press www.wingedchariot.com

A publishing company dedicated to publishing translated children's books.

Author websites

Tove Jansson www.lysator.liu.se/nordic/authors/tove_uk.html

Beverley Naidoo www.beverleynaidoo.com

Lensey Namioka www.lensey.com

Laurence Yep www.laurenceyep.com and www.scils.rutgers.edu/~kvander/yep.html

Useful publications

Deborah Hallford and Edgardo Zaghini (eds), *Folk and fairy tales: a book guide*, Booktrust, 2004, ISBN 0853534969

Deborah Hallford and Edgardo Zaghini (eds), *Outside in: children's books in translation*, Milet Publishing (www.milet.com), 2005, ISBN 184059487X

Liz Morris and Susanna Coghlan (eds), *Cross-currents. A guide to multicultural books for young people*, IBBY, Ireland, 2005, ISBN 0954135210 (Available from Children's Books Ireland, 17 Nth Great George's Street, Dublin. info@childrensbooksireland.com)