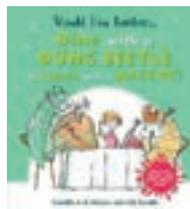


Would You Rather: Dine with a Dung Beetle or Lunch with a Maggot?

Written by Camilla de la Bédoyère Illustrated by Mel Howells
QED £9.99
ISBN: 978-1784931933



The weird and wonderful world of bugs is explored in this unusual picture book. The reader is invited to spend time with all sorts of insects. Dining with a dung beetle, dressing like a caddisfly and racing with a weevil, are just some of the temptations on show which illustrate the strangeness of a miniature world of which we are hardly ever conscious. Sitting at a table with a dung beetle eating elephant poo might not sound a great idea, but wearing an invisible cloak like a caddisfly and winning races like a giraffe-necked weevil sound much more intriguing. Among the creatures are some exceptional sporting figures. You would want to have a millipede on your football team – with its seven hundred and fifty legs it would be sure to score quite a few goals. And who could compete with a frog hopper which can jump a hundred times its own height, or the rhinoceros beetle which can lift over eight hundred times its own weight? Crammed with bug facts, this book is sure to excite interest in our more exotic friends. (4+)

Richard Monte

A Book of Feelings

Written by Amanda McCardie Illustrated by Salvatore Rubbino
Walker £11.99
ISBN: 978-1406355994

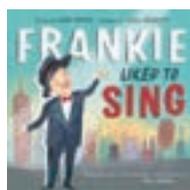


It can be very hard to talk about how we feel, so a picture book that sets out to explain that everyone experiences a whole range of feelings and emotions is a great addition to any child's bookshelf. Salvatore Rubbino's lively illustrations show Sam and his sister, Kate, in all kinds of recognisable situations. They are happy when they are playing with their dog or enjoying cuddles with their mum and dad. Happiness is the easy one, but we also see situations where they are angry or sad, nervous, shy or embarrassed, and we also see them being frightened or upset. The message is very clear. It's O.K. to feel like this. Everyone feels like this, and even their dog sometimes feels jealous. The illustrations are entertaining and the text is straightforward without being oversimplified. The author also recognises that, sadly, not all children are as well loved as Kate and Sam, which uncovers yet another set of feelings. This is a great book for sharing and talking about with children of all ages. (4+)

Jan Lennon

Frankie Liked to Sing

Written by John Seven Illustrated by Jana Christy
Abrams £10.99
ISBN: 978-1419716447



Frankie was born in Hoboken, New Jersey, and, from a very early age, he loved to sing. As he grew up he found that other people loved his voice and so he became determined to follow his dream of being a professional singer. He crossed the river to New York City and Frank Sinatra went from success to success, becoming one of the best known, and arguable one of the best loved, singers of the twentieth century. This husband and wife author/illustrator team are

clearly great fans of Ol' Blue Eyes. The book is an affectionate tribute and with a simple text and large full colour illustrations it aims to introduce a new generation to the singer and his songs one hundred years after his birth. Since the book is aimed at a very young readership it makes no mention of the many marriages and general hell-raising part of Frankie's life, but simply tells the story of a boy who followed his dream. (5+)

Jan Lennon

A Scottish Year

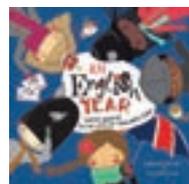
ISBN: 978-1921966873



An English Year

ISBN: 978-1921966866

Written by Tania McCartney Illustrated by Tina Snerling
Exisle £7.95 each



A Scottish Year is a wonderful celebration of Scotland's customs and traditions. It follows five Scottish children through a year – children representing the mix of religion and race. Spread out over two pages, each month's festivals, games, sports, fauna, flora, food and sites are presented in full colour. From Burn's Night, in January, with its

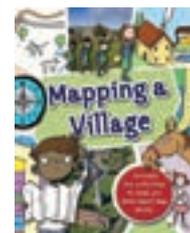
plates of haggis, neeps and tatties to Hogmanay, in December, when everyone sings Auld Lang Syne, the land of tartans and bagpipes is brought to life in this quirky picture book. The uniqueness of Scotland's traditions and the natural beauty of its highlands and islands are beautifully portrayed.

An English Year is a similar title, but depicting England's heritage and way of life. It follows five English children of assorted faiths and ethnicity through the twelve months of an English year, marking each month's festivals at their respective times. Here the land of playing conkers, Harvest Festivals, Stonehenge and thatched cottages is celebrated. (6+)

Richard Monte and Paul Dowswell

Mapping a Village

Written by Jen Green Illustrated by Sarah Horne
Wayland £12.99
ISBN: 978-0750285728



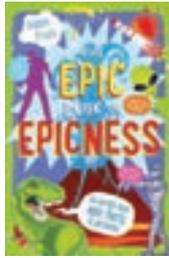
This is part of an excellent series of books that introduces primary school pupils to the whole concept of maps and map-making. It starts with the idea of visualising the village from above and drawing what you might see. It goes on to consider what information might need to be included on a map of the village, looks at the use of scale and symbols and encourages children to think about how they might use a map in everyday life. There are many suggested activities designed to develop an understanding of all kinds of maps and plans and their uses. The layout of the book is simple and very clear. The use of specialist vocabulary is kept to a minimum, but the subject matter demands the use of words and phrases that may well be unfamiliar to many children, like contour lines and grid reference, so the glossary, here entitled 'What Words Mean', is essential. The book ends with a page guiding the reader to other books and to useful age-appropriate websites. Other titles in the series look at mapping different environments like cities, the seaside and even a whole country. (7+)

Jan Lennon

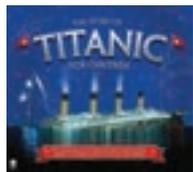
The Epic Book of Epicness

Written and illustrated by Adam Frost
Bloomsbury £6.99
ISBN: 978-1408862346

This epic book of facts will keep young minds engaged for hours. Did you know that the deepest cave on earth is about four times the height of Big Ben or that each season on Neptune lasts forty years? In 1900 there were a quarter of a million blue whales but now there are only about five thousand and in Capri it is against the law to wear noisy footwear. Each fact takes up a page or two and is presented in bright colourful pictures, perfect for entertaining a younger audience. The author has drawn on older editions of the *Guinness Book of World Records*, *Ripley's Believe It or Not* and *1,339 QI Facts to Make Your Jaw Drop*, as well as websites www.newscientist.com and www.britannica.com. (8+)



Richard Monte



The Story of Titanic for Children

Written by Joe Fullman
Carlton £12.99
ISBN: 978-1783121496

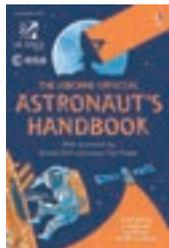
There is a great deal of information packed into these forty-eight pages. We learn about the design and construction of the vessel, how it was powered and why it was thought to be unsinkable. We see the contrast between the opulence of the first class accommodation and the rather less luxurious second and third class facilities. We are introduced to some of the crew and passengers by name and discover some of the strange items that were being carried as cargo. Then, of course, we follow the sequence of events that caused the ship to sink. We go on to look at what happened next, and how the story is still being remembered in books, films and even songs. This book examines much more than just the basic facts and looks at the individual stories of many of the people involved. Each double page spread covers a different aspect of the story and is lavishly illustrated. There are photographs, copies of tickets, letters and telegrams, all arranged in an attractive scrapbook style, which makes this a book that young readers will find approachable, but also gives enough detail to satisfy older readers. (8+)

Jan Lennon

The Usborne Official Astronaut's Handbook

Written by Louie Stowell Illustrated by Roger Simo
Usborne £6.99
ISBN: 978-1409590743

Young space enthusiasts can now start their preparation to train as an astronaut, but it's not going to be easy. Aside from being experts in their fields of engineering or sciences, astronauts have to learn to work in a weightless environment and survive the 'vomit comet', as well as training in all types of technical knowledge



and equipment, including surgery for medical emergencies. Written in association with the UK Space Agency and the European Space Agency, *The Usborne Official Astronaut's Handbook* is packed full of the current technology as well as the principles behind space-based science. Colour illustrations, funny cartoons and careful layout make this an engaging read which will reward repeated reading and engender awe for man's greatest achievement, reaching for the stars. (9+)

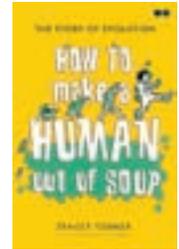
Benjamin Scott

How to Make a Human Out of Soup

Written by Tracey Turner Illustrated by Sally Kindberg
Little, Brown £6.99
ISBN: 978-0349124131

How did life on earth begin and how did it go from primordial soup to Homo sapiens? Tracey Turner writes an affable and informative guide to the story of evolution through the highs of the proliferating life to the lows of mass extinction, both of which happen surprisingly often in the history of this planet. Relevant scientific ideas are introduced along the way, and Quick Quizzes add interest. There are also experiments to undertake, including how to extract your own DNA at home! Tracey Turner's chatty and informal style is complemented by Sally Kindberg's black and white illustrations. A list of tricky words and a timeline are included for additional reference. Fascinating reading into the origins of all the species. (10+)

Benjamin Scott



Cool Architecture

Written by Simon Armstrong
ISBN: 978-1909396791



Cool Philosophy

Written by Daniel Tatarsky
ISBN: 978-1909396777
Portico £9.99 each

These two titles use lively design and easily-digested snippets of information to introduce children to the daunting and demanding topics of architecture and philosophy. Both books are full of fascinating information, presented with such finesse that they leave you wanting more.

Cool Architecture is packed with detail about the iconic buildings which litter the history of the world, from the pyramids in Egypt and the Parthenon in Athens to the world's tallest building, the Khalifa Tower in Dubai. If you've ever wondered what philosophy actually was then *Cool Philosophy* is the book for you. It deals with ancient thinkers such as Socrates and Aristotle and also modern thinkers such as Bertrand Russell, explaining why they are of such importance to our world. (11+)

Paul Dowsel

Editor's Recommendation

The Wonder Garden

Written by Jenny Broom
Illustrated by Kristjana S. Williams
Wide Eyed £20.00
ISBN: 978-1847806475

In this exquisite large format picture book the reader is able to explore five of the Earth's most diverse habitats. Explore the Amazon rainforest, climb to the roof of the world, the Himalayan Mountains, swim over the Great Barrier Reef, wander through the Black Forest and dare to survive in the Chihuahuan Desert. There you will see nature at its most spectacular and at its wildest – each double-



page filled with remarkable animals, birds, insects and sea creatures living amongst the most dramatic scenery. The informative text cleverly stimulates excitement and wonder as it describes the creatures in their natural surroundings – the comprehensive index also allowing the book to be used for reference purposes. But what makes this book so special are the stunning illustrations which fill every inch of every double-page spread. Beautifully coloured, almost breathtaking in complexity and detail, the engraved illustrations bring the wonders of our world to life; filling the reader with awe and helping us appreciate just how fortunate we are. A book to be enjoyed and treasured by the whole family, each at their own level. (Family)

Martin & Sinead Kromer