

For all the family

All About Families Written by Felicity Brooks



Illustrated by Mar Ferrero
Usborne £9.99
ISBN: 978-1474949071

A bright, colourful celebration of the diversity of families. From the beginning, it's clear that this book is completely inclusive, with all types of families represented. It covers the different composition of families, where they might live, what families are for, languages families might use, what they do, how they celebrate and much more. There is an excellent glossary which explains some of the more difficult words or terms linked to families and there is a comprehensive index. The family tree goes through some basic genealogy and the illustrations help with the explanation of how families work. A perfect book for teachers and parents to introduce children to how they might fit into their own family. (5+)

Nicole Jordan

The Little Book of the Dawn Chorus

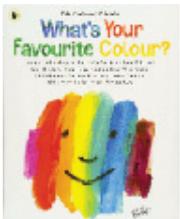
Devised by Andrea Pinnington and Caz Buckingham
Fine Feather £12.99
ISBN: 978-1908489333



Part of this nature publisher's *Sound Books* collection, this lovely board book will appeal to young 'twitchers' and their parents. Beautiful photographs of 12 different birds that sing at dawn each day are accompanied by succinct descriptions which includes their Latin names, precise information about where and when to spot and hear them, and other interesting trivia. A wonderful bonus is the push-button sound generator, which allows the reader to hear the song of the birds they are reading about. Night-time animal sounds, ocean animal sounds and further bird sounds, including woodland bird song and garden bird song, feature in other titles in the same series. (6+)

Paul Dowswell

What's Your Favourite Colour?



Devised and edited by Eric Carle
Walker £7.99
ISBN: 978-1406356526

With artwork and contributions from a whole host of children's book illustrators, *What's Your Favourite Colour?* explores the importance of colour in our lives and the images and feelings it evokes. Everyone has a favourite colour and this book encourages you to consider why certain colours appeal to you. It also offers a fascinating insight into the creative minds of others. Eric Carle's favourite colour is yellow because most children put a yellow sun in their pictures, but also because it is so difficult to mix with any other colour. The thoughts which accompany some pictures encourage the reader to find out more - indigo is the colour of the veils worn by the Tuareg nomads. Some colours evoke memories - Yuyi Morales shares how Mexican pink reminds her of flowers she used to take to her grandmother when a child. The illustrations throughout are wonderful - each a different style. At the back, there is concise biography of each contributor with details of their websites to encourage the reader to explore further. A great way of encouraging children to explore colour, create stories and get painting! (7+)

Sue Wilsher

So You Think You've Got It Bad?: A Kid's Life in Ancient Egypt

Written by Chae Strathie
Illustrated by Marisa Morea
Nosy Crow £12.99
ISBN: 978-1788001359



A fascinating introduction to what life was like as a kid in Ancient Egypt. The approach is humorous and light-hearted, but the book contains plenty of information. We learn about clothes, hairstyles, family life, the home, chores and jobs, education, discipline, diet, health and medicine, gods and amulets, as well as fun and games. The language is colloquial and chatty, and the text combines references to modern life with accurate historical facts. The illustrations are appealing. An unstuffy, zany book that makes learning fun. Published in collaboration with the British Museum. Highly recommended. (7+)

Brenda Marshall

Grandad Mandela



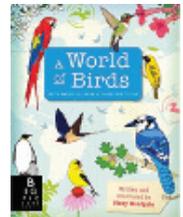
Written by Zindzi, Zazi and Ziwelene Mandela
Illustrated by Sean Qualls
Francis Lincoln £12.99
ISBN: 978-1786031365

Zindzi Mandela is the youngest of Nelson Mandela's children, while Zazi, aged eight years, and Ziwelene, aged six years, are his great granddaughters. This trio introduces the life, the challenges and the achievements of Nelson Mandela in a question-and-answer format which will strike a chord with young readers. How else do we learn about our grandparents than by asking questions of our elders? As Zindzi patiently answers the questions, the reader enjoys an intimately familial commentary on Nelson Mandela's experiences and their impact on those closest to him. With highly original, action-packed and accomplished illustrations from award-winning Brooklyn artist, Sean Qualls, this unusual picture book is a refreshing and inspiring way to learn about an exceptional man. (8+)

Tessa Strickland

A World of Birds

Written and illustrated by Vicky Woodgate
Big Picture Press £14.99
ISBN: 978-1787410398



It is rare to find a compact information book containing such carefully selected facts and descriptions of 74 different birds - their habits, courtship and partnership behaviour, food, flight, speed and particularly notable features, like the cassowary's kick. Each bird is given a whole page, colourfully illustrated and clearly annotated. It is helpfully arranged in continents, each clearly mapped, with a concise contents' list, a two-page spread, and a very usable index. A most informative and interesting reference book for school and class libraries, but also ideal as a gift for budding ornithologists, both young and not so young. (8+)

Tina Massey



Holes

Written by Jonathan Litton
Illustrated by Thomas Hegbrook
360 Degrees £19.99
ISBN: 978-1848576346

So many books in children's information publishing cover perennial topics like the animal world and the working of the human body. This science-themed book takes a completely fresh perspective as it looks at the subject of holes. Jonathan Litton's lively text and Thomas Hegbrook's attractive illustrations cover the topic with commendable depth. We have natural holes from caves to animal burrows, space holes of the black and worm variety, man-made holes like mines and tunnels, and even a section on holes in western and eastern philosophy. I loved this book, and I am sure it will be loved by any child with an enquiring mind. (10+)

Paul Dowswell

Pioneers of Science and Technology

Written by Georgia Amson-Bradshaw
Illustrated by Rita Petruccioli
Wayland £13.99
ISBN: 978-1526304223



One of a series of books about brilliant women from the past, this is an excellent book about pioneering women scientists and mathematicians. It starts with a riddle which quickly challenges stereotypes about the roles of women. After a short introduction, the book focuses on eight women, summarising their work and achievements. It then provides short paragraphs on nine more and ends with some practical ideas on how to pursue an interest in science. This is a very informative book, written in an upbeat and very positive style, which clearly demonstrates the role played by women in important discoveries in the history of science and technology. Brief biographical facts are given, and the contribution made by each subject is made clear. Fun illustrations help to convey the message, making for very pleasing page designs, and the whole book is extremely accessible and readable, complete with a useful glossary and index. Perhaps best of all are the multitude of tips on how to get more involved in science including where to find relevant scientific games and challenges on the internet. (10+)

Liz Dubber

What is Right and Wrong?



Written by Michael Rosen and Annemarie Young
Wayland £13.99
ISBN: 978-1526304940

Its full title is *What is Right and Wrong?, Who Decides?, Where do Values come From? And Other Big Questions*. What do we mean by right and wrong? What's the difference between prejudice and discrimination? How does fairness and unfairness affect people? These are just some of the questions

discussed in this thought-provoking book, part of a series aimed at getting younger readers to start thinking about the values of the society in which they live. Climate change, war, democracy, justice and injustice, are words we hear again and again, but it is only by thinking carefully about where these ideas come from, that we can form our own. With contributions from the writer and broadcaster, Michael Rosen, and the publisher, Annemarie Young, the topics in this book will have us all questioning our own beliefs and prejudices. Photographic illustrations and drawings add to the debate. Other titles in the same series, already reviewed in the magazine, are *What is Humanism?* and *Who are Refugees and Migrants?* (12+)

Richard Monte



The Rhythm of the Rain

Written and illustrated by Grahame Baker-Smith
Templar £12.99
ISBN: 978-1787410145

This gorgeous book, which is both magical and factual, is a stunning celebration of the journey taken by Isaac's little jar of water, depicting each and every stage including, "laughing streams" down the mountainside, plunging waterfalls, coursing wide rivers meandering through countryside and city to the vast great ocean. And at each stage consideration is given to the use people and creatures make of the water. With minimal text, it is the absolutely wonderful illustrations which actually tell the story. The truly stunning full-page illustrations from this Kate Greenaway medal winner, make this breath-takingly beautiful and exquisite book worthy of another prestigious award. A true work of art at every level, for every age. (Family)

Gill Roberts

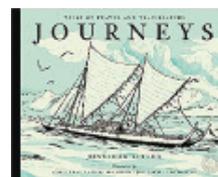
A Year in the Wild

Written by Ruth Symons
Illustrated by Helen Ahpornsiri
Big Picture Press £12.99
ISBN: 978-1783707966



Intricate illustrations made from petals, leaves, seeds and grasses accompany the journey through the seasons in this beautiful book. The reader can only marvel at the skill and dedication of the artist, Helen Ahpornsiri, as she magically transforms flowers into the insects that feed on them, ferns into feathers and autumn leaves into foxes and a hibernating hedgehog. Nature's colours glow from the pages and there is something new to discover at every opening. All the ingredients of each collage have been responsibly grown or foraged in the wild and preserved using traditional flower-pressing methods. The seasons' changes are described in a lyrical, gently informative text, with additional notes accompanying some pictures. This is a book to invoke awe and awaken an interest in the natural world, encouraging adults and children to go out and explore the changing seasons, and maybe even be inspired to try similar artwork themselves. From the endpapers through to the artist's note and glossary, this book is a visual feast and one not to miss. (Family)

Jayne Gould



Journeys

Written by Jonathan Litton
Illustrated by Chris Chalick, Dave Shephard,
Jon Davis & Leo Hartas
360 Degrees £17.99
ISBN: 978-1848575936

I defy anyone to open this book anywhere at all and not start planning a life-changing adventure. Arranged in four sections, Water, Land, Ice & Snow, Man & Machine, it is international in scope and both historical and multicultural in emphasis, starting as far back as the 23rd century BCE and bringing us right up to the present day. A vivid magazine-style spread-by-spread record of trailblazing adventures, *Journeys* also works its magic by being exceptional as a piece of art. Elegant and understated typography and page layouts, carefully drawn illustrations, detailed maps and tactile matt paper make reading the entries a compelling exploration in its own right. Jonathan Litton strikes a happy balance between scene-setting descriptions and intriguing details, for example, did you know that Che Guevara spent time in a leper colony? It's obvious that everyone involved in the creation of *Journeys* had a lot of fun and did their best to create a book that is scholarly, accessible and inspiring. Now, where's that rucksack? (Family)

Tessa Strickland