



Editorial 227

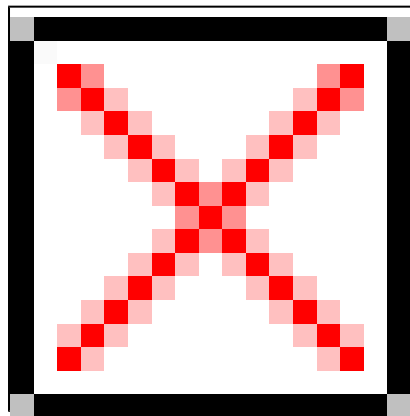
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Guest Editorial: **Sarah Odedina**, Editor-in-Chief, **Scoop** magazine



The world is full of stories. People use stories to navigate life ? their own lives as well as the lives of others. In these rapidly changing, fractured times stories give us a way to understand and a way to share our experiences. Never before have they been as important as they are now nor has there ever been such a loud and vocal demand for stories that reflect all our stories, giving voice to people previously marginalised from the publishing canon.

It is a great time to be a young reader in terms of the wealth of choice, the range of voices, and the quality of the stories on offer. It is now possible for the first time, I believe, to see a truly golden world of literature that offers access to all children and all authors.

Just in the last few days there has been the exciting announcement of the launch of the new publishing house **Knights Of** . Aimee Felon, one of the founders, says, ?[Knights Of](#) [2] was born out of a frustration with the lack of representative voices and narratives in children?s fiction. With [Knights Of](#) [2] we can publish uniquely, putting our differences first and celebrating them, making it central to our business.? In so doing they offer all children the opportunity to see themselves in books as well as to read stories with children young readers consider different from themselves in starring roles.

The sales figures for children?s books continue to grow across all sectors of the market, from pre-school to teen and YA. This autumn will no doubt ensure a bumper year for the sales of teen and YA titles, with the launch of the highly anticipated **The Book of Dust** by Philip Pullman, which pulled crowds to bookshops at midnight on publication day, as well as a new John Green title five years after the phenomenally successful [The Fault In Our Stars](#) [3].

Young readers know that they can find something to read that will reflect their interests; teachers and carers know that they can access a huge resource of titles that spans decades of innovative and brave publishing, and publishers are now waking up to the demands of society to break out from their traditional white middle-class roots to ensure stories that encompass a more realistic portrait of society and the wider world are there to give children the bigger picture.

But still we have to work hard to allow all children access to the joys that are contained in the written word. Many children struggle with literacy or indeed don?t ?click? with the reading habit. Michael Morpurgo and Chris Riddell are

vocal on the need for children to see reading as a pleasure and not an educational chore. It is only once someone reads for pleasure that the true joys of stories are unlocked for them, and organisations like [BookTrust](#) [4] are at the vanguard of this movement.

The charity's c.e.o., Diana Gerald, said: 'At **BookTrust** we are all about getting children reading for pleasure. Children who enjoy reading are happier, healthier and more empathetic'.

Working alongside the fantastic range of titles published every year are magazines like **Scoop**, which celebrates the world of stories and aims to offer young readers a world of words in which to find pleasure. The concise nature of the writing (the longest piece in the magazine is 2000 words) means that the bite-sized offerings allow a more reluctant reader very manageable pieces to read while also offering more avid readers a 'Sunday supplement' type of experience across fifty-two pages of contrasting and complementary writing. Within its pages a young reader can enjoy fiction by writers such as Michael Morpurgo and Piers Torday as well as exciting new debut voices like Nadine Wild-Palmer and Kheryn Callender, poetry, non-fiction dealing with issues as diverse as the ability of wild dogs to communicate by sneezing, and the phenomenon of milky-seas that can be viewed from outer space, recipes, crafts, jokes and riddles, puzzles and lots of wonderful art. The magazine is themed monthly and each focus ties in with wider issues in the world that the child would be interested in, such as Black History Month, peace and pacifism, environmental issues or the role of girls and women around the world.

Today's child in today's world wants choice, wants the freedom to choose, wants to see their world reflected in the words that they read and wants to hear from their peers and friends about what is good. If we as publishers, writers, librarians, teachers and carers don't recognise this we will not be able to ensure that the love of reading that we so want to share is indeed passed on. I think we are all getting much better, even if there is still some way to go.

[Scoop](#) [5] is published monthly.

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[1] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/227>

[2] <http://knightsof.media/>

[3] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/198/childrens-books/reviews/the-fault-in-our-stars>

[4] <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/>

[5] <http://www.scoopthemag.co.uk>