

# BOOKS FOR KEEPS

MARCH 1982 No.13  
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Illustration by Colin McNaughton from Football Crazy

LEARNING TO READ - FOOTBALL BOOKS - TEENAGE FICTION...

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# Reviewers

in this issue



### Jill Bennett

Jill is currently in charge of the Reading Centre for the London Borough of Hounslow. She is Literary Editor of *Child Education* and on the Board of the SBA.



### David Bennett

David (no relation to Jill) is a former librarian, and currently Head of English in a Nottinghamshire secondary school.



### Steve Bowles

Steve is currently teaching secondary English in Havering and was co-producer of *Reviewsheet* until it ceased publication. He continues to write when he can find time.



### Colin Mills

Colin is in the Division of Teaching Studies at Worcester College, where he helps run a Diploma in Children's Literature. He's taught in a comprehensive school, a primary school and worked in radio.



Cover illustration and those on these pages from *Football Crazy* by Colin McNaughton, Piccolo  
£1.25 0 330 26747 7 (published April 1982)

Also available in hardback from Heinemann, 434 94991 4, £4.95.  
We are grateful to Piccolo for their help in reproducing this illustration in full colour.

# EDITOR'S PAGE



If we were superstitious we might have anticipated the putting together of this issue — **Books for Keeps 13** — with some unease. In the event all the bad luck seems to have been hurled in the path of Number 12, our January issue. At one point we were beginning to wonder if you would ever get it.

Our January gloom was made, if possible, even gloomier by the arrival of the National Book Committee's report on **Public Library Spending in England and Wales**. It's a profoundly depressing document: more severe cuts in bookfunds (only eleven out of 119 library authorities have maintained or improved their bookfunds since 1978-9), branch libraries closed and mobile services withdrawn, provision for minority groups such as pre-school children, the disabled, adult illiterates severely eroded or withdrawn completely, schools library services under attack, reductions in the availability of specialist staff, like children's librarians and school librarians. The implications for education are dire.

By law (the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act) the Secretary of State for Education has a duty to superintend and promote the improvement of the public library service. Library Authorities must provide a comprehensive and efficient service for all citizens who desire to make use of it. Clearly these duties are not being carried out. As rate-payers we should make sure that everyone knows about this. Sometimes it seems difficult to fight for books in the face of demands for the old, the ill, the homeless. It's easy for local authorities to talk about 'priorities' and to dismiss those campaigning for libraries as 'middle-class do-gooders' or 'cultural elitists'. The point is that there should be no conflict, no question of priorities. Libraries and books are essential if we are to have a literate, well-informed society. Literacy is freedom of a very particular kind as Margaret Meek points out in her splendid book, **Learning to Read** (see page 4). We must preserve it. For ammunition you'll need the booklet. Get it from The Publications Officer, NBL, 45 East Hill, London SW18, 2QZ. Please enclose a stamped, addressed A4 envelope.

## Cover Story

By our next issue the country will be engulfed in a wave of football mania. Many of you, we know, will be seizing the opportunity to give some children a nudge along the path to literacy. To help you prepare we offer Bill Boyle's selection of football titles (page 12). Prominent among them is Colin MacNaughton's **Football Crazy**, a picture book for all ages which we are delighted to feature on our cover. We think the picture we've chosen is a masterpiece of insight and humour — two characteristics which mark all Colin

MacNaughton's work. In this book he uses the comic-strip format so inventively that the pictures do everything but move — and they come pretty near to that. **Football Crazy** is out in paperback, from Piccolo, in April. Great timing.

## A new feature

Getting prepared to seize the moment, finding new ideas, keeping up with new developments: things all good booksellers try to do. We hope that **Sales Point** (page 26), our new regular one-page feature for all those who sell books in schools will help with this. We hope too that you will look upon it as YOUR page. So if you have any ideas, experiences, advice, problems, queries, let us know.

Linked with **Sales Point** is this issue's **How to . . .** (page 25) which is packed with ideas and advice from the organisers of Wingfield Primary School's Book Fair. A report on Children's Book Fairs prepared for the Book Marketing Council last autumn indicated that school-based events like Book Fairs are the most effective way (aside from school bookshops) of promoting enthusiasm for books. Where their own teachers organise the activity on-the-spot, the children become more involved. Good advance publicity is also a crucial requirement. So Wingfield with its six month build-up seems to have got it right — and first go too.

## Another innovation

Also new on the scene are the distinctive tap, click and buzz sounds currently to be heard coming from the SBA office. It's our new computer. Immediately it is helping us to keep track of your subscriptions to **Books for Keeps** and printing the labels for us to send it to you. But we are also putting on to it all the available information about school bookshops. This information is widely scattered at the moment and no-one has yet tried to bring it all together in one place. We hope eventually to have, for instance, a more precise idea of exactly how many school bookshops there are — no-one knows for sure — where they are and how they operate. Even our very preliminary activities are giving us a fascinating insight into how the school bookshop movement grew and revealing that even now in some parts of the country school bookshops are still very thin on the ground. Our research should give us insights into how existing bookshops can be best served and how we can encourage the growth and development of new ones. You can help by filling in our School Bookshop questionnaire if you haven't already done so. (Our thanks to all of you who have.) Just drop a line or give us a ring and we'll send you one.

## Children's Books in Perspective

Another arrival in the office, equally potent in stimulating ideas, suggesting connections and increasing understanding is the classic **Children's Books in England** by F.J. Harvey Darton, (CUP, 0 521 24020 4, £12.95). First published in 1932, this is the third edition, revised exhaustively (and, it seems, exhaustingly) by Brian Alderson. Darton was born in 1878 into a publishing family and spent all his working life in the book world as publisher, editor, writer, reviewer and editor of *Chatterbox*, a children's magazine. His review of children's books in England runs from the publication by John Newbery in 1744 of **A Little Pretty Pocket Book**, to approximately 1910. But it is no mere history. It is an immensely readable and enjoyable survey of children's books by a man who knew and loved books and understood the commercial workings of the book world. In a few paragraphs about Charles and Mary Lamb's **Tales from Shakespeare** (1806) Darton reveals effortlessly the state of the nursery and of Shakespearean theatre so that it is easy to imagine how the children of the time would receive the book. (With this perspective how interesting to look forward to Leon Garfield's **Tales from Shakespeare** promised from Kestrel later this year — see page 14).

A fascinating book. Let's hope the libraries have enough left in the book funds to buy it. Put in a request — just in case.

Good luck

Pat



'The way children are taught to read tells them what adults think literacy is.'

Margaret Meek gives her views on

# LEARNING TO READ



Photo by Tony Bradman

Some children learn to read before they go to school; some never need a single reading lesson; others progress slowly; some isolated people remain illiterate all their lives. The individual differences of children are both perplexing and intriguing, so that researchers into the processes of learning are naturally attracted to reading. Their expertise fills many books, mostly written for teachers and mostly about reading failure. Yet we have still not discovered the best means of helping all children to learn.

A great deal of thoughtful research has concentrated on ways of teaching reading. Most of it is designed to reassure teachers about the *class* teaching of reading and to offer advice about teaching thirty children in one room. The unhappy effect of the pronouncements of reading experts is to make both teachers and parents uneasy by distinguishing certain kinds of reading failure. Before a child goes to school he doesn't really know he can fail. Parents rarely fail to teach their children what they want them to learn. Their parents have already taught them all the things that make them human — to smile, to walk, to talk and to take part in conversations, to meet people, and to feed and wash themselves. At first, reading seems to be another natural activity. Then, as school approaches, it suddenly becomes strange, something to be learned in a different way, in a different place, so parents quickly forget how many things their children have successfully learned with their help.

## Anxiety and failure

Now parents look to the experts, the teachers and the reading specialists, and become anxious in case their child may not 'get on' in school. A 'reader' is no longer a child or a person who reads, but a special kind of reading book. There is also a special jargon for reading progress which is judged not by the books children are able to read and enjoy, but by a stage on a chart or a scale. Before long, parents feel that reading is so special a skill as to be unnatural, like Olympic gymnastics or playing a violin in the Albert Hall at seven. They are often surprised to learn that teachers, faced in their turn by other experts, are equally worried and confused.

The victim of all this anxiety is, of course, the child.

For the last twenty years I have been a parent, with children at school, a teacher of reading to both children and adults, and a lecturer involved in research into the nature of the reading process. As a parent I have often been puzzled by my children's reading progress. As a teacher I have confronted stony-faced seven-year-olds, aggressive adolescents, and nervous adults for whom learning to read and write seemed an insurmountable barrier. When I came to be a teacher of reading teachers I discovered that, while much extensive research revealed no more than common sense would assume, it also offered a great deal of help and encouragement from which everyone could profit. I have seen a sensitive student achieve as much in a reading lesson as a seasoned veteran in remedial teaching, and I have observed how delight in a simple story well told can bring more success to a child than the most carefully graded reading scheme. At the same time, I have seen parents show all the signs of distress as they pushed their children towards books. I have watched teachers fail for want of genuine knowledge about reading, including the child's view of what reading is all about. And I have learned, painfully sometimes, that parents, teachers and reading experts can achieve most if they collaborate and co-operate on the child's behalf. A parent needs the teacher's expertise to tell him how the child's progress compares with that of others over a period of time. A teacher who hears a child read every day does it for such a short time that practice at home is always necessary. Both profit from the expert's understanding of what reading is — compared with talking and writing, for instance. Above all, each needs the trust and confidence of the others, [and an understanding that] readers are made by reading books and enjoying them.

## Shared enjoyment

To learn to read, children need the attention of one patient adult, or an older child, for long enough to read something that pleases them both. A book, a person, and shared enjoyment: these are the conditions of

success. The process should begin at an early age and continue as a genuine collaborative activity until the child leaves school. Understanding the reading process may help, but there is nothing so special about it that any interested adult cannot easily grasp it by thinking about why he or she enjoys reading.

If this is so, why are there reading problems and problem readers? Adults forget how they learned to read; only unsuccessful readers remember the details of their struggles. Once we have learned to read, we stop worrying about whether we can do it or not. We may even read much less than before. It is possible, even in a literate society, to read and write very little. Being able to read when you have to is one thing: doing a lot of it when you don't have to is another. Reading takes time, and nowadays most people are generally much more sociable than in the past when solitary private reading was more common. We have to understand the difficulty children now have when there are so many demands that their lives should be socially motivated. They will read well and may enjoy the activity, sometimes choosing to do it in preference to many other enjoyable things. They will not enjoy it just because adults tell them reading is important. To be fully convinced, they have to find books they like and to see adults and other children reading for pleasure.

But it is still true that reading is very much bound up with school and the academic performance of the individual. Teachers cannot help favouring good readers; they make classroom life easier. They seem to progress more quickly because they learn for themselves. In the same way, teachers like to think that their teaching method works. A teacher and a child who confirm each other form a creative partnership. In our social system literacy is the way to success. Those rites of initiation into a society — the examinations — favour the literate, and most jobs require special reading skills. Every teacher worth her salt wants her pupils to be competent and sensitive readers. So how can parents, teachers and reading experts meet and make the collaborative job of helping a young reader, especially a beginner, a pleasant and profitable undertaking?

### When reader meets writer

I make four basic assumptions. First, that reading is an important thing to do. Without this conviction nothing can happen. It is also important to realize that not all the electronic media in the world will replace what happens when a reader meets a writer. Reading is far more than the retrieval of information from a collection of printed records. It is the active encounter of one mind and one imagination with another. Talk happens; the words fly, remembered or not. Writing remains; we read it at our own pace, which is the rate of our *thinking*. Real reading cannot be done without thought. As it is a kind of 'inner speech', it is bound to have a marked effect on the growth of the mind of the reader. When your child is learning, or has learned, to read, his thinking is changing in a remarkable way. We often don't notice, because, like all successful development in children and in ourselves, we take it for granted. Can you really imagine what life would be like if you had never learned to read? The social disadvantages — not being able to read street signs or the notices in the post office — are easy to understand. But what about the encounters with new ideas, and the ways we confront ourselves, and society, and our view of life, even when we seem to be doing nothing more sophisticated than reading a novel? We are at home in the world to the extent that we discover there are other people like ourselves, and reading is one of the most significant ways of doing this.

### The importance of how and what

My second assumption is that reading is learned by reading. This is not so simple as it sounds, but it is absolutely fundamental. Right from the start the learner has to behave as if he meant to become a reader. The helping adult must confirm him in this role by treating the beginner as a serious apprentice. The biggest mistake we make is in giving the five-year-old the notion that you learn to read by a series of exercises, like scales in music, and then you are rewarded with a 'real' book or 'real' reading in another form. The children who teach themselves to read do it by turning the pages of books and looking at the pictures long before they tackle the print. When they focus their attention on the print it is because they want to know the story and to tell it to themselves.

The third assumption is the crucial one: that what the beginning reader reads makes all the difference to his view of reading. For very young beginners, reading is a kind of play, something you do because you like it. Gradually you discover it's a specially good kind of play, less trouble than dressing up, but just as exciting for imagining you are someone else and somewhere else. Real readers discover how to be more than themselves. The natural way to do this is to sink into a story. Ask yourself where you *are* when you read a novel and you will see what I mean.

### Sharing

[Then, lastly, I assume] that teaching and learning, to be successful, must be genuinely shared. In the early stages of helping children to learn anything, the adult has to do a great deal. You see this clearly as children learn to talk, when, right from the start, the learner takes part in real conversation — even by making noises in response to something said to him. Gradually the nature of the sharing changes and becomes more a matter of taking turns. So with reading and writing. A mother looking at a picture book with a four-year-old who is telling her a story about it is doing something essentially the same as a university tutor discussing a text with a student.

### What is reading for?

I believe that every child now in school, or about to go there, should have the opportunity and the help to become as fully literate as he can. By this I mean several things that extend our understanding of learning to read and write far beyond the idea that these are basically useful skills. We all need the kind of literacy that makes us un-worried by the notices at a bus stop, the instructions on a packet or even the writing on an airline ticket. No one should be victimized by our print-dominated world, obliged to believe all he reads or to buy everything he sees advertised. To be literate, in the civic or material sense of belonging to a literate society, is to be able not only to read but also to question the authority of even the most official-looking document that makes demands on us. It is as important to understand the notice about the rates as it is to pay the bill.

But literacy doesn't begin and end in the official sphere of social contracts. It concerns us as people who create our culture, in all its variety and complexity. Good readers are more than successful print-scanners and retrievers of factual information. They find in books the depth and breadth of human experience. Think of all that you would never have experienced if you had not learned to read. Readers are at home in the life of the mind; they live with ideas as well as events and facts. They understand a wider range of feelings by entering into those of other people. They are free to choose one kind of existence rather than another. They can travel over the universe without moving from a chair, or read simply for the delights of idleness.

If you ask habitual readers what reading is for, they will say that it is a special kind of pleasure, or that it has purposes so distinctive that it cannot be replaced by anything else. Reading is so closely linked with their growth as individuals that often they cannot distinguish in memory what actually happened to them from what they have read about. Reading may not necessarily have made them better people, but it certainly has given them access to more experience than anyone can encompass in a single lifetime. Good readers say that they discovered all of this (without knowing until later that they had discovered it) in childhood. [I contend that] we must offer all our children the possibility of this kind of reading, right from the start.

### Powerful consequences

In the act of reading what someone has written, we enter into a kind of social relationship with the writer who has something to tell us or something to make with words and language. The reader takes on this relationship, which may feel like listening, but is in fact different in that it is more active. He recreates the meaning by processing the text at his own speed and in his own way. As he brings the text to life, he casts back and forth in his head for connections between what he is reading and what he already knows. His eyes scan forward or jump backwards. He pauses, rushes on, selects from his memory whatever relates the meaning to his experience or his earlier reading, in a rich and complex system of to-ing and fro-ing in his head, storing, reworking, understanding or being puzzled. Some successful readers say that they feel they are helping to create the work *with* the author. Children talk about being *in* a book, as if that were a place. We know we can possess a book in our heads after the actual volume has been returned to the library. Sometimes we carry phrases and characters about with us for the rest of our lives. Later we read significant things that illumine texts we had read before we left school. We gain more lives than one, more memories than we could ever have from what happened to us: in fact, a whole alternative existence, in our own culture or that of others. This is what the learner has to learn to do, and what we expect teachers to teach. Literacy has powerful consequences; not the least is that it changes one's view of oneself and the world. ●

This article is an extract from the opening chapters of Margaret Meek's new book *Learning to Read*. We are grateful to Margaret Meek and The Bodley Head for permission to reproduce it here.

Margaret Meek (known to many of her colleagues in the academic world as Mrs Margaret Spencer) is Senior Lecturer in the Department of English at the University of London Institute of Education. She has for some years concentrated her research on the development of literacy in the young and how children become competent and sensitive readers of literature. Her conviction is that children's reading becomes a problem when those who teach them neglect the importance of what children read, and she has lectured in Canada, Australia and the U.S.A. on this subject. In the children's book world she is best known as a critic and as the Reviews Editor of the *School Librarian*; in 1970 she received the Eleanor Farjeon Award for her services to children's literature. She is joint editor of *The Cool Web*, *The Pattern of Children's Reading* (Bodley Head, 0 370 30144 7, £3.95).

*Learning to Read* (Bodley Head, 0 370 30154 4, £5.95) draws on Margaret Meek's wide experience with parents and teachers. It sets out to help develop an understanding of what is happening when a child learns to read. Each chapter deals with a different stage of learning and is followed by a section on answers to questions parents typically ask and advice on choosing books for that stage. There are also some useful booklists. The book is addressed to parents but it should be required reading for all teachers who really care, as Margaret Meek does, about children, books and reading.

# REVIEWS

## Nursery/Infant

### Brian Wildsmith's ABC

Oxford University Press,  
0 19 272122 4, £2.50

First published twenty years ago, this alphabet book has established itself as a classic and justifiably so; those children who were first excited by its brilliance may well be among the adults who will delight in sharing this full-sized paperback edition with a new generation of children. It's a book I'd still rather have in hardback and I hope Oxford will not let the paperback replace the hardcover edition.

JB



### The Bears' Bazaar

Michelle Cartlidge,  
Picture Lions,  
0 00 661792 1, 90p

I am sure young children will love this story wherein two small bears make a variety of items for their school bazaar. However, this is more than a story book; as part and parcel of the text, craft ideas (mobiles, paper dolls, painted stone paperweights, for instance) are presented without being prescribed.

I tend to avoid craft books of the 'how to make' (as opposed to technique) variety, but this is a book I would happily share with children. The story is sufficient to set most infants off on the activities (though detailed instructions are given at the end of the book should they be needed).

JB

### Norton's night-time

Jane Breskin Zalben,  
Picture Lions,  
0 00 661771 9, 90p

Strange noises and things that go bump in the night make Norton the raccoon very frightened. He tries

unsuccessfully to emulate what his braver friends would do only to discover that *they* are just as frightened of the rustles and crunching sounds that *he* was making. The author's well chosen words help to convey the atmosphere of being alone in the forest; however, this paperback edition is larger than the original hardcover and something of the depth and density of her colour wash illustrations has been lost, somewhat lessening the impact of the half-light quality of the originals. This larger paperback, though, can be shared more easily with a group of children.

JB

### Meg's Veg

Helen Nicoll and Jan  
Pienkowski, Picture  
Puffin, 0 14 050.356 0,  
£1.00



Meg  
sowed  
some  
seeds  
she  
had  
found  
in  
her  
cauldron

In my experience this series about the friendly witch and her companions, Mog and Owl, has done more than any other to establish the 'reading is fun' message in learner readers; in this story the three friends plant some seeds with rather surprising results. Little else needs to be said except that if you do not have a copy in your classroom or home, make sure you take the opportunity with this new paperback edition.

JB

### Jafta

0 85122 267 6  
**Jafta — My Mother**  
0 85122 268 4  
Hugh Lewin/Lisa  
Kopper, Dinosaur, 70p  
each

These two picture stories first appeared last year in hardback (from Evans) so they are an unusual, but no less welcome, addition to the Dinosaur list, best known for its distinctive originals. Two of a series of four books, they portray life in a traditional South African village home. Though the

Reviews of paperback fiction are grouped for convenience under teaching range. Books and children being varied and adaptable, we suggest you look either side of your area. More detailed recommendation for use can be found within the reviews.



Jafta and a lioncub, drawing by Lisa Kopper from *Jafta* . . .

setting is specific, Jafta's feelings: love, joy and anger are universal. Through Hugh Lewin's simple but poetic words and Lisa Kopper's beautiful brown and white pictures the books offer an enriching encounter with another culture. I hope the other two titles will follow shortly.

JB

### Mog and the Baby

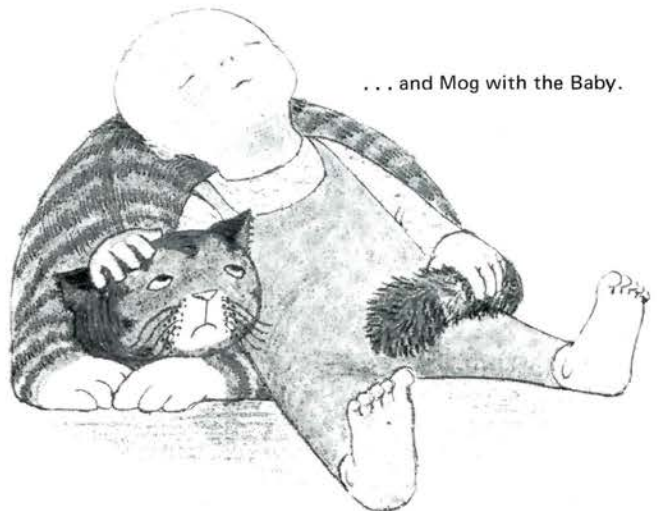
Judith Kerr, Picture  
Lions, 0 00 661799 9,  
90p

Mog the cat is an established favourite with most young

children. In this new paperback Mrs Thomas is looking after a neighbour's baby and to Mog's chagrin pays the infant too much attention whilst remaining oblivious to the unwanted attention the child is giving Mog. However, as is her wont, Mog eventually emerges as the day's heroine.

The pictures of Mog are marvellous: her moods and feelings being beautifully captured in her expressions; those of the baby are less good and some are decidedly odd.

JB



. . . and Mog with the Baby.

# Infant/Junior

## New Dog Next Door

Elizabeth Bridgman,  
Hippo, 0 590 70082 0,  
90p

A large, lovable canine neighbour takes up residence with a small boy and his family. Simple, amusing line drawings with just a touch of colour match the brief, easy-to-read text in a small paperback which, in my experience, has already proved very popular with readers from five to ten. JB



Elizabeth wasn't well.  
Mother served her meals in bed.

## I Don't Feel Well!

Franz Brandenburg, Ill.  
by Alik, Picture Puffin,  
0 14 050.343 9, 95p

Like most sisters, kitten Elizabeth resents the extra attention her brother receives when he isn't well. But then she falls ill and realises that, as Edward says: 'The best part of being ill is getting well.' The limp-whiskered patients are amusingly depicted in chalk coloured illustrations that are full of witty touches: great fun whatever the state of your health and equally suitable for solo readers or for sharing with a group. JB

## The Wild Washerwomen

John Yeoman and  
Quentin Blake, Picture  
Puffin, 0 14 050.367 6,  
£1.15

It's splendid to have this zany, rumbustious folk tale for the hties in paperback. Blake is at eighties in paperback. Blake is at Yeoman's parable about Dottie, Lottie, Molly, Dolly,

Winnie, Minnie and Ernestine and their uprising against the oppressive laundry owner, Balthazar Tight. Excellent ammunition in the fight against sex-stereotyping, it's anarchic fun at its best and five-ups will love it. CM

## The Mouse and the Egg

William Mayne, ill. by  
Krystyna Turska,  
Picture Lions,  
0 00 661884 7, 90p

In what is essentially a neo folk tale, Grandfather and Grandmother are unfailingly supplied with brown eggs for tea — that is until Grandfather wishes for 'a different sort of egg'. Their speckled hen obligingly lays a golden one; but what use is a golden egg?

The subtlety and depth of Krystyna Turska's peasant-style illustrations draw the reader into this moral story for which Mayne has adopted a deliberately mannered prose style: an ideal complement of words and pictures. Both text and illustrations are contained within borders and friezes which serve to embellish and harmonise the two.



A picture book of enduring quality; strongly recommended. All ages. JB

## Johnny's Dragon

Irina Korschunow, trans.  
Anthea Bell, Hippo,  
0 590 70088 X, 70p

Sustained stories for six-to-nines need to be sought out and it's good to have writers from other countries to enrich our stock. This one, beautifully translated, is about Johnny, teased and taunted at school, and not too good at Maths. His luck and his self-image change when he meets a strange little dragon whom Johnny teaches to read and write. By the end of the story Johnny has learned to stand up for himself.

It's well told, with wit and immediate characterisation. Mary Rahn's pictures are unusual and effective: black and white, near-photographs, but catching the imaginative quality of the story. CM

# Junior/Middle

## The House that Moved

David Rees, Puffin,  
0 14 03.1256 0, 85p

A short gentle, absorbing story (large print) for seven-to-elevens about two boys' adventures in a derelict Tudor house. Books for this age group which can both spin a story and give a sense of history are rare — this one achieves both. The boys' brushing with the past is understated, but is there in their play and in their imaginations.

Illustration by  
Laszlo Acs



Sturdy dialogue, credible grown-ups who are at the receiving end of the super joke at the centre of the book, and lively snatches of contemporary Exeter. CM

## Here Comes Charlie Moon

Shirley Hughes, Fontana  
Lions, 0 00 671934 1,  
95p

The vitality of Shirley Hughes' pictures is also present in her writing. This is a splendid story of Charlie's seaside holiday in his Auntie's seaside joke shop. The action is racy and humorous as Charlie becomes involved in efforts to revive the seaside entertainments — and there is some mysterious jewel thieving and a couple of superb chases too! The seven-to-eights I read it with loved the gallery of characters: cousin Ariadne, Carlo Cornetto and the dastardly Morgan boys.

The grown-ups are gloriously quirky, eccentric and the seaside atmosphere rings very true. Great stuff. CM

## Daggie Dogfoot

Dick King-Smith, ill.  
Mary Rayner, Puffin,  
0 14 03.1391 5, 95p

The story of Daggie, the small, weak piglet, born with a deformity, could be maudlin and sentimental, but Dick King-Smith is a writer with energy and humour. Daggie's exploits in learning to swim and to fly are splendidly paced,

and there's some memorable characters here in Felicity the Duck, Mrs Barleylove and the 'Pigman'.

The story read aloud well to seven-to-nines. Those going it alone will find Mary Rayner's illustrations an added pleasure. This, and the same writer's **The Fox Busters**, offer good material for reading and talking in classrooms. Basic stock for the bookshop as well (though the cover is not so immediately appealing as in the hardback edition and you may need to 'sell' it). CM

## More Stories for Seven-Year-Olds

ed. Sara and Stephen  
Corrin, ill. Shirley  
Hughes, Puffin,  
0 14 03.1347 8, £1.10

## Stories for Tens and Over

ed. Sara and Stephen  
Corrin, ill. Victor  
Ambrus, Puffin,  
0 14 03.1364 8, £1.25

The art of making an anthology can be underestimated and the Corrins know better than anyone how important the genre can be in introducing the young and their teachers to stories and writers, forms and



Illustration by Shirley Hughes

fashions. The balance, the pairings, the length and even the order in the book are all-important.

**More Stories for Seven-Year-Olds** shows the sensitive and skilled choosers who know their literature and their seven-year-olds. I cannot praise too highly. We are given one of the best **Just So** stories; James Reeves; Joan Aiken's **A Necklace of Raindrops**; a powerful and breathtakingly simple (not simplified) **Cave of the Cyclops** from, yes, Philippa Pearce. Also, a hilarious **Boffy and the Teacher Eater** (read at your own risk!) from one of the best writers around, Margaret

Stuart-Barry (see *Simon and the Witch*). All with Shirley Hughes' super illustrations, don't miss this important collection.

The anthology for 'tens and over' reflects sensibly widening story experiences. The paperback edition has four fewer stories than the hardback original; but the fifteen remaining are still riches. Bill Naughton is here, and Thurber and Damon Runyon. The Corrins' particular gift is in seeking out good retellings of traditional tales, of myths and legends; here Penelope Farmer handles the Icarus story like fine-spun silk and Stephen Corrin's own Prometheus is an object lesson. As these storytellers really care about what Margaret Spencer has called 'handing down the magic', they all read aloud beautifully. Other gems here are a Sutcliffe and Pearce's *What the Neighbours Did*. If I had to persuade a Head that money on real books was worthwhile, I'd use this collection. You'll need copies for your bookshop. CM

**Wally**  
Judie Wolkoff, Hippo,  
0 590 72154 2, 70p

Michael's mother doesn't like pets so when he jumps at the chance of giving a temporary home to a friend's chuckwalla (it looks like a baby dinosaur) he knows he's got problems. Solving them and facing more involves much knockabout comedy and a nicely-observed relationship with brother Roger. Nothing to compare with Philippa Pearce's *Battle of Bubble and Squeak* but a sharp, dry, first-person narrative makes an easy read. Quite funny. Very American. PT

**The Super-roo of Mungalongaloo**  
Osmar White, ill. Jeff Hook, Puffin,  
0 14 03.1110 6, 75p

Puffin really went down under in February — three titles from the Antipodes. This one features the intrepid Scottish explorer, Dr A.A.A. McGurk, and his equally intrepid camel,

Cathie Khan. Together they set out to find what's in the dead centre of the dreaded Deadstone Desert, where it's so hot in the day the emus lay hard-boiled eggs and so cold at night the frogs wear jumpers to keep them from freezing to death, where the budgerigars are called garbudgeries because they always fly backwards to keep the dust out of their eyes. If that makes you laugh and you like the idea of a giant talking kangaroo and jokes about a sporran — this is the book for you. Short chapters, bigish print and the cartoons help. There's a sequel next month. PT

**The Pochetto Coat**  
Ted Greenwood, ill.  
Ron Brooks, Puffin,  
0 14 03.1475 X, 80p

Patrick, the latest in a long line of Pochettos, tells stories to Sam (Samantha) who wants to be a clown. His stories are of past owners of the Pochetto coat with its mass of pockets, and in between the tellings another story of the present-

day circus unfolds almost imperceptibly. Varied in pace and mood, good for reading aloud. PT



Pochetto chased the animals, tripping over his coat as Pochettos always do. He couldn't catch them so he stood still, took off the wizard's hat and blew it like a trumpet. One of Ron Brooks' illustrations for *The Pochetto Coat*.

## Middle/Secondary

**Superfudge**  
Judy Blume, Piccolo,  
0 330 26602 0, £1.25

The sequel to *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing* so a must for top juniors upwards. It's possibly the most contrived Blume to date — I don't usually agree with that common criticism of her work — but my first year addicts (all girls) haven't complained. Shortly after the birth of a new baby, the Hatchers move to Princeton for a year so Peter has some new characters to incorporate alongside all the usual mischief of young Fudge, who's just starting kindergarten. Dead simple, light and gently amusing. It looks easy — so why aren't there any British counterparts? SB

**A Kind of Wild Justice**  
Bernard Ashley, Puffin,  
0 14 03.1262 5, £1.10

Equals Terry as Ashley's best, 60 pages shorter — cheers — but still a very solid read; as usual, one wishes for tougher editing. It's a powerful story of an illiterate boy running scared because of his Dad's involvement in gang crime. Dumped by his bitch Mum when Dad's inside, Ronnie eventually finds safety and gets revenge on the evil Bradshaws who rule the East End, though Manjit from school also suffers as a result. Used as a class reader in some secondary schools, despite the internalised drama you get with 'loner' characters; otherwise, push with committed book lovers, 10-14. SB



**Which Witch?**  
Eva Ibbotson, Piccolo,  
0 330 26586 5, £1.25

A substantial comic fantasy, reminiscent of some Diana Wynne Jones but less weighty. For a wizard seeking a 'blighting and smiting' successor, the only apparent solution is marriage, so . . . a witchcraft competition with Arriman's hand as prize for the blackest magic. How will he get the beautiful *white* witch Belladonna, not one of the grotesque old hags or terrifying Madame Olympia? Conventional structure slows the pace but frequent jokes keep it alive. A fair bet for experienced 10-13s with a taste for such material and a good source of extracts to inspire more detailed descriptive passages in kids' own work. SB

**Ghosts and Shadows**  
Dorothy Edwards, Lions,  
0 00 671950 3, £1.00

A collection of junior ghost stories, interspersed with a motley array of poetry and extracts. The stories are short, rarely more than five or six pages long, and — as one would expect with Dorothy Edwards editing — they're largely cosy, anodyne stuff. The exception is Margaret Gore's *The Shadow Man* which has a slightly shivery, open ending that could make it a useful read-aloud trailer to the book. Dorothy Edwards' own *Friend Nimmy* is also worth knowing. I've found several uses in a secondary classroom with the single-page pieces proving particularly handy. Keep a copy by you. SB

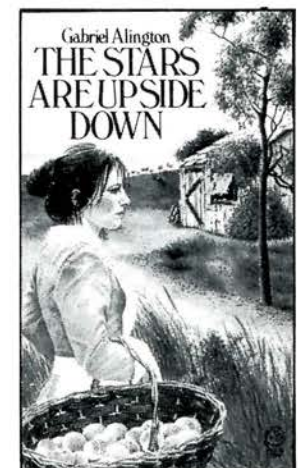
**The Fox at Drummer's Darkness**  
Joyce Stranger,  
Carousel,  
0 552 52159 0, 85p

It would take considerable patience and reading experience for the average child to fathom out the complexities and shifts in this strange story, let alone to comprehend the somewhat quasi-poetic language that Ms. Stranger employs. A remarkably astute fox lives in a place haunted by ghostly marching armies and their camp-followers. Hunger, occasioned mainly by a serious drought, compels him to seek food in a nearby industrial town, dominated by a lethal-sounding chemical factory. On the one hand, in his own element, a demented farmer

sets traps for him, on the other, the factory nightwatchman with severe personal hang-ups, encourages him. At the end everyone is made content in rather contrasting ways . . . and into all this has wandered an ineffective huntsman with senile dementia! This seems like a classic instance of someone deciding that it is a book for children since it is a story about animals. DB

**The Stars are Upside Down**  
Gabriel Alington, Lions,  
0 00 671965 1, £1.00

When she was less than 2 years old Octavia Finch was left, along with five gold sovereigns at an orphanage. At fifteen she very enterprisingly used that wealth to buy a passage to Australia. After exemplary good fortune with most of the people she met she





arrived at her employment with *The Champions* far out in the outback. However, secret assignations developed with uncouth Jake and his baby son, both of whom had been deserted by the father's live-in woman. Despite adversity their relationship developed and before long 'Tavy' knew where she wanted to be most and where her allegiances lay. In a sense this very readable story sidesteps what must have been the harsh realities of early outback life but on the other hand it displays an honesty and depth of emotion that would commend it to older

girls, especially those who have hitherto found enjoyment in historical romance. DB

### My Pal Spadger Bill Naughton, Puffin, 0 14 03.1379 6, 90p

Bill's reminiscences of his friendship with Spadger in Bolton in the early twenties. Lots of local colour and remembrance of things past: back street football — with tin can or pig's bladder, the back yard privy, trams, first jobs — in pit or mill. Comic, tragic, episodic — some chapters are very short. A useful book

which could be much enjoyed, especially by those who relish *Goalkeeper's Revenge*, Lancashire, football and nostalgia. PT

### Falcon Island Joan Ambrose, Beaver 0 600 20555 X, 95p

'The trouble with you econuts — you can't see a good thing when it's staring you in the face' — so speaks Jack Brady, Falcon Island's answer to Joe Grundy. His threat to mine the ilumenite on his land occasions dissension and skullduggery in an antipodean backwater.

Fortunately there is a band of kids, aided by a dutchman in exile, who are going to make last minute discoveries of historical proportions and save the situation.

If this sounds like the script of an imported TV serial for children, that is just what it is — rewritten as a novel. When it reaches our screens it will probably be worth a copy or two in the bookshop. Otherwise there are better adventure stories around. DB

## Older Readers

### The Bewitching of Alison Allbright A.D. Langholm, Carousel, 0 552 52160 4, 95p

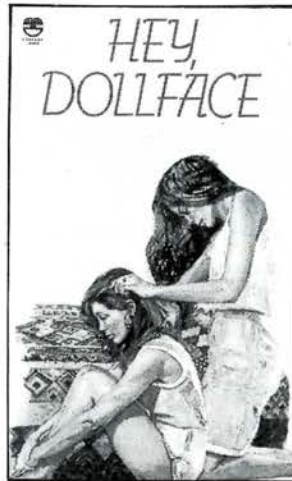
I had the greatest difficulty suspending my disbelief whilst I read this, but then I'm way beyond the stage of seeing other people's parents and lifestyles as being better than my own and therefore enviable. I think that in our adolescence most of us see the other man's grass as infinitely greener, and so young people, most especially girls, are likely to identify with the lonely and miserable Alison. However, for her a kind of dream-come-true parent emerges, the wealthy, elegant Mrs Considine. As she plays her benefactor's idiosyncratic games Alison is drawn to adopt her dream persona with results that are enviable for no one. At the end things are rather too conveniently drawn together, but nevertheless Alison's experiences and final resolutions do point towards a greater happiness for all adolescents, once they can adopt a less self-absorbed approach to their lives. DB

### A Long Way to Go Marjorie Darke, Puffin Plus, 0 14 03.1359 1, £1.25

Marjorie Darke is an excellent writer who probably deserves as much credit for her painstaking research, so thorough that her novels seem almost like documentaries on their period. This is especially true in this one where Luke and Bella, twin descendants of Midnight, the freed African slave in *The First of Midnight*, are trying to survive not only the sufferings of the working classes at the time of World War I, but also their conflicting and shifting attitudes towards the patriotic (brutal and bloody) spirit engendered by the times. Bella goes into munitions but must cope too with Luke's decision to be a conscientious objector, with all the humiliations and sufferings that that entailed.

This is a painful book to read, but a rewarding one for experienced, thoughtful older readers, including staff. DB

### Hey, Dollface Deborah Hautzig, Lions, 0 00 671964 3, £1.00



Note for timid teachers: don't worry — this is a very safe book. Val meets Chloe at the posh school where neither fits in. They get on spectacularly well but Val is increasingly bothered by her feelings for Chloe — are they 'normal'? what would Chloe think if she knew? Worry puts the relationship under some strain but lesbianism is finally ruled out and the friendship continues with the girls realising that they can ignore society's ready-made moulds. The storyline could be stronger, especially early on, but it's a useful second-line novel to try with girls who've devoured the never-been-known-to-fails. SB

### A Sense of Shame Jan Needle, Lions, 0 00 671901 5, £1.00

An important collection; seven stories dealing with prejudice from some not-too-obvious angles. There's a family facing local hostility when they borrow a Welsh holiday home;

obvious potential for CSE courses and some stories should be particularly useful for stimulating talk. Don't miss it. SB

### A Quest for Orion Rosemary Harris, Puffin Plus, 0 14 03.1321 4, £1.50

At the close of the twentieth century Western Europe has been reached to a bleak and repressed Zone, ruthlessly ruled by barbarian neo-Stalinist 'Freaks'. The world as we know it has been wilfully destroyed and is pervaded by terror, suspicion and chaos. This depressing picture is only saved by the echoes of hope, symbolised mainly in medieval chivalric honour and the constellation of Orion, which are adopted by the tiny isolated cells of hopeful young people, who determine to struggle for a happier, saner future. Between them they manage to construct a fine filament of resistance across Europe in their search for a happier destiny.

This very complex, obliquely-written novel demands much of the reader and truthfully speaking, whilst I thoroughly enjoyed it, it only commends itself to older, very tenacious pupils. A second novel *The Tower of Stars* is also available. DB



Detail of cover by Julek Heller for *A Long Way to Go*



a weak-willed student left holding the screaming baby which has 'trapped' him into marriage; police evidence being given excessive credence in a magistrate's court; liberalism vanishing when West Indian neighbours get a noisy dog. The longer title story, a touching romance, sees a white Catholic girl becoming pregnant by a Pakistani boy. This set has



# Beginner's Guides

School age children are continually dabbling in, or being encouraged to take up, new 'hobbies' and 'interests'. Publishers are not slow to cash in on this. Books for newly enthusiastic chess players, campers, knitters, collectors of all manner of things, and so on almost without end appear in a steady stream. How helpful are they? How realistic?

We took some recent offerings for aspiring painters, drawers and photographers and asked a group of secondary school teachers what they thought.

**Whizz Kids — Painting and Drawing**  
Linda Douglas, Macdonald,  
0 356 06336 4, 95p

**Anyone Can Draw**  
Albert Murfy and Sara  
Silcock, Armada,  
0 00 691743 7, 90p

**Learnabout . . . Painting**  
0 7214 0496 0

**Learnabout . . . Drawing**  
0 7214 0495 2  
Kathie Layfield, Ladybird,  
40p each

**Drawing with Ink**  
0 7232 2468 4

**Pencil Drawing**  
0 7232 2470 6  
John Brobbel, Warne  
Observer's Guides, £1.95  
each

**Usborne Guide to Painting**  
0 86020 546 0

**Usborne Guide to Drawing**  
0 86020 540 1  
Patience Foster, Usborne,  
£1.85 each

Teaching art in a comprehensive school today we learned is about 'visual education' — getting kids to 'see', be aware of the world around them — rather than 'learning to draw'. Teachers want their pupils to value their own vision and develop their own style.

But there are problems. 'Kids are very aware for instance of the high standard of design of record covers. Dissatisfied with what they produce themselves, they undervalue it. They also want an instant effect so they'd rather copy than draw or paint what they see. And if they make a poor copy they get frustrated.' The books were considered against this background.

**Anyone Can Draw** got a universal thumbs down, not because the text tells the reader to copy but because the layout and presentation of the book encourage it. 'Kids don't read the words.' No-one liked the fact that Tony Hart's name (he wrote the introduction) appears more prominently on the cover than the authors'. And 90p seemed a lot for black and white compared with the opposition.

**The Observer's Guides** were considered 'not for children — more for adult amateurs'. 'They don't really leave you free to develop your own style.' Lots of text, small type and difficult formal language ('the usefulness of geometric schemata') make these non-starters.

**The Usborne Guides** got rave reviews. 'Attractive large format and very good layout. There's lots of information but it's so cleverly designed the text doesn't look daunting.' 'I'd like a set to give out for homework.' 'It gave me some ideas.' 'It's how teachers work.' 'Good advice and information about equipment, materials and techniques.' But expensive.

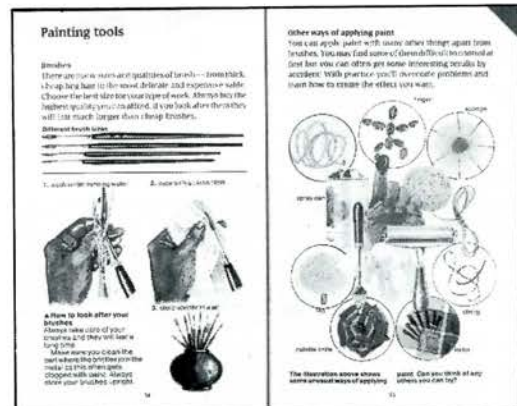


A whole page from the Usborne Guide to Painting . . .



. . . and a detail from the Usborne Guide to Drawing.

**Whizz Kids — Painting and Drawing** was also approved for its practical ideas and clear, lively presentation. 'Particularly good value because it deals with both topics in one book and has quite enough information to support the beginner.'



Double spread from Whizz Kids — Painting and Drawing

**Learnabout . . . Drawing** was less immediately attractive. 'But it's got some sound ideas and advice and it's amazingly good value for money at 40p.'

**Learnabout . . . Painting** deals specifically with painting in gouache, water-colour and oils. Our teachers thought this tended to be over-technical in parts and to appear rather daunting for the beginner.

The general feeling was that older (say 13 plus) children would get most out of these books. There was also a strong feeling that the writers had underestimated what young beginners can afford on equipment. 'They say brushes are "expensive" — but they don't say how expensive — and then they advise you to buy at least three!' 'The Usborne Guide to Painting mentions airbrushes which is really quite unrealistic for kids I teach.'

**Young Photographer**  
John Craven and John  
Wasley, EP Publishing,  
0 7158 0667 X (limp),  
£2.50

**Snap**  
Christopher Wright, Puffin  
Plus, 0 14 03.1449 0,  
£1.50

**Learnabout . . . Taking Photographs**  
Colin Garratt,  
0 7214 0538 X, 40p



Action photo taken with a box camera, from Snap!

**Young Photographer** raised grave doubts. 'It's a very misleading book — the cover shows John Craven and a couple of twelve-year-olds so it looks as if it's for beginners but there's very little basic information. Most of what is covered is for the more experienced photographer; it's full of unexplained technical expressions and the language is very sophisticated.' There's also a lot of emphasis on expensive equipment. In his introduction John Craven claims 'it isn't the camera that counts, it's you' and then speaks with approval of the man in the photographic shop who tells the 'genuine enthusiast' beginner to 'come back when they have got about £50' for a camera. And one photograph shows about £2,000 worth of lenses! Not recommended.

**Snap** on the other hand is 'well worth putting in the library and the bookshop'. Our teacher of photography praises Christopher Wright for 'encouraging kids to experiment with inexpensive or old cameras before investing in sophisticated equipment, and suggesting cheap alternatives to costly equipment and materials wherever possible'. He welcomed a book that concentrates on the understanding and control of photographic techniques. It's organised chapter by chapter on a progressive course, taken at the beginner's pace, and is exclusively about using black and white film, including developing and printing of negatives. There's an invaluable section on common mistakes and putting faults right. The style is simple and concise, and specialist terms are identified and explained. 'It's a book that really encourages you to take photographs.'

**Learnabout . . . Taking Photographs** assumes that the beginner is using colour film and will not be involved in processing it. As well as basic advice on cameras, composition, etc., it encourages the beginner to think in terms of 'a personal style' and choice of subject. 'It's not what do you like to photograph, but what do you like enough to want to photograph?' A useful mind opener for new owners of Instamatics. Can't be bad for only 40p. ●

# Knight Books for football fact and fiction

**GOALS FOR GLORY  
THE GOLDEN GOAL  
SHOOTING STARS  
WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS  
HOT SHOT!**

by Sean McCann  
Authentic, action-packed football adventure – a must for all young fans and reluctant readers.



**WORLD CUP 82**  
by Philip Evans  
with black and white photographs

The complete guide to this year's final

KNIGHT  BOOKS

# WORLD CUP 82



## WORLD CUP 82

The eyes of the footballing world will be centred on Spain this summer as the 1982 World Cup reaches its climax. This book gives a brief history of the World Cup, details of the teams as well as charts to be filled in by the reader as each game is played. A lasting, personal souvenir for all football fans.  
Published April 1st. 50p

## SPORT BILLY (THE WINNING GOAL and RUNNING OUT OF TIME)

The children's NEW T.V. super-hero now in full-colour comic-strip Ladybird format. Two great new titles to tie-in with Sport Billy's 26 week 30 minute cartoon television series now showing nationally.  
Published March 1st. 50p

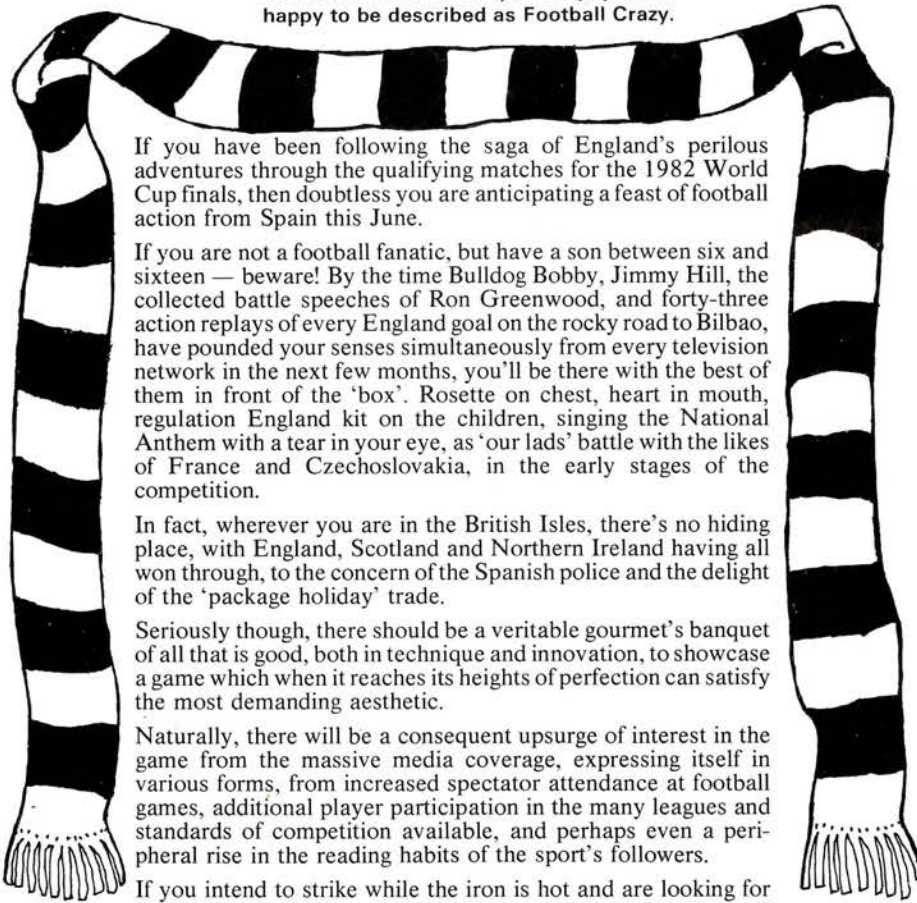


## WORLD CUP FINAL IN DANGER

featuring NARANJITO, the Little Orange. A Ladybird action-packed, full-colour comic-strip edition following the hair-raising adventures of the Little Orange, Naranjito, the 1982 Spanish World Cup mascot.  
Published March 1st. 50p



Bill Boyle teaches in a middle school in the Wirral. He and many of his pupils are happy to be described as Football Crazy.



If you have been following the saga of England's perilous adventures through the qualifying matches for the 1982 World Cup finals, then doubtless you are anticipating a feast of football action from Spain this June.

If you are not a football fanatic, but have a son between six and sixteen — beware! By the time Bulldog Bobby, Jimmy Hill, the collected battle speeches of Ron Greenwood, and forty-three action replays of every England goal on the rocky road to Bilbao, have pounded your senses simultaneously from every television network in the next few months, you'll be there with the best of them in front of the 'box'. Rosette on chest, heart in mouth, regulation England kit on the children, singing the National Anthem with a tear in your eye, as 'our lads' battle with the likes of France and Czechoslovakia, in the early stages of the competition.

In fact, wherever you are in the British Isles, there's no hiding place, with England, Scotland and Northern Ireland having all won through, to the concern of the Spanish police and the delight of the 'package holiday' trade.

Seriously though, there should be a veritable gourmet's banquet of all that is good, both in technique and innovation, to showcase a game which when it reaches its heights of perfection can satisfy the most demanding aesthetic.

Naturally, there will be a consequent upsurge of interest in the game from the massive media coverage, expressing itself in various forms, from increased spectator attendance at football games, additional player participation in the many leagues and standards of competition available, and perhaps even a peripheral rise in the reading habits of the sport's followers.

If you intend to strike while the iron is hot and are looking for material to inform, to entertain or to sustain this interest and excitement, we hope our selection of available material will point you in the right direction.

## Young Fiction

### The Great Marathon Football Match

Janet & Allan Ahlberg, Picture Lions, 0 00 661931 2, 90p

Originally in hardback (Collins), this marvellous, innocent tale of the Brick Street Boys' attempts to raise the money to buy a new football kit, has been recently released in paperback. For any age from six upwards, enjoy Janet Ahlberg's illustrations of football as you've never ever seen it played (and never will again!), lose yourself in the Marathon match, which by supper time had reached 98-98, and 'by bedtime nobody knew what the score was, but Stanley said it was quite a lot.'

If you missed it the first time round, go out and buy it now!

### Football Crazy

Colin McNaughton, Heinemann, 0 434 94991 4, £4.95 (hardback)

You won't need telling that Colin McNaughton is a football fan — his enthusiasm for the game leaps out of the pages of this superbly, sympathetic tale of the heroic Bruno and his 'match of the season' against Leroy's Lions. Funny, sad, gently poking fun, a brilliant book woven around McNaughton's zany illustrations.

Again, from six to sixteen, something to enjoy for all in this one.

### Brinsly's Dream

Petronella Breinburg, Puffin, 0 14 03.1112 2, 80p

Petronella Breinburg's sensitive account of a London based West Indian boy's attempt to keep his football team together in the face of many problems is well worth a read. For nine-year-olds and younger, this is a lively story which realistically describes children, their ups and downs, their loyalties, and their sense of achievement after struggling together to reach their 'goal'.

### Cup Final For Charlie

Joy Allen, Hamish Hamilton (Gazelle), 0 241 10691 5, £1.95

Young Charlie goes to the 1979/80 Cup Final — West Ham 1, Arsenal 0 — with Uncle Tim. He's an Arsenal supporter, but never mind because the climax of the story concerns a rope swing over the canal in the car park and not the match at all. *Just* about enough football interest to keep a young fanatic reading — but they could feel a little let down; no mention of any players, not even Trevor Brooking who scored in the thirteenth minute (I'm indebted to David Barber's **We Won the Cup**, Pan, 0 330 26401 X, £1.75, for that piece of information. Invaluable for quizzes, challenges and solving arguments.)

### Lion Cubs Rule

Leslie Coleman, Blackie, 0 216 90880 9, £2.95

More football action in this story of the Lion Lane Under Twelves' battle with their rivals, tricky, 'professional' Gipsy Park Juniors. The Cup Final looms and morale is low in the Lion Cubs' dressing room as they grapple with the Gips' dirty tricks on and off the field. But the arrival of a three-foot tall stranger who claims to be Chairman of the non-existent Supporters Club changes things for everybody including Debby who plays football as well as any boy.

## Tens and upwards

### Goalkeepers are Different

Brian Glanville, Puffin, 0 14 03.0646 3, 95p

For the ten-plus age group, Brian Glanville (recently announced as Sports Reporter of the Year by the Sports Council and Sports Writers' Association) calls on all his vast experience of reporting and writing about the game to produce a story packed with fascinating insights into the 'real life' of a footballer.

The novel has a magnetism which makes it a compulsive 'start to finish' read. Glanville's well

# FOCUS ON

## Bill Boyle selects books for

honed reporter's skills in describing the action, the thrills, the goals and the incidents occurring in an actual game raises the book far above so many that are written about the sport. As an account of what it feels like to be a professional footballer, the realism behind the headlines, informing and yet sustaining the interest of the pre-teen audience, this book is a must!

### Soccer at Sandford

Rob Childs, Blackie, 0 216 90890 6, £3.75 (hardback)

Rob Childs trains and manages the eleven-year-olds' team at the school where he teaches. In an exciting first novel, he has managed to combine his experiences coaching youngsters and knowledge of the game, with a facility at writing children's dialogue. As a result the book is believable, technically interesting and full of credible episodes from the boys' matches.

I especially liked his description of the problems caused by Gary, the brilliant but temperamental star of the team. I think everybody who has coached or worked with a boys' football team can empathise with this portrayal, and can probably name a Gary or two of their own.

### The First Goal

Michael Hardcastle, Armada, 0 00 691794 1, 75p

### Kick Off

Michael Hardcastle, Armada, 0 00 691757 7, 80p

### Breakaway

Michael Hardcastle, Armada, 0 00 691795 X, 75p

Just three of the many Michael Hardcastle football stories available on the market. Ideal material for lads to identify with, all these tales centre around Mark Fox, who inevitably manages to score the crucial goal at the vital moment! **Kick Off** is very typical of the series and the style. Lots of atmosphere, bright and lively accounts of the games, leaving you as breathless as the schoolboy teams involved, goals galore, good entertainment for the pre-teens at a reasonable price for an average 125 pages.

[**Half a Team**, the sixth Michael Hardcastle story in his series about the shifting fortunes and relationships of the teams in the Junior Sunday League, goes into paperback in May, Magnet, 0 416 25210 9, 75p.

### Shoot on Sight

Sean McCann, Hodder & Stoughton, 0 340 26428 4, £4.25 (Hardback)

### Shooting Stars

Sean McCann, Knight, 0 340 25497 1, 75p

Like Glanville, McCann is a football reporter putting his knowledge of the game to excellent use. **Shoot on Sight** is the sixth novel in a series about Georgie Goode and his gang, and they are all excellent entertainment for the 10-13 age range.

**Shooting Stars** is an easy introduction to the series. It's in paperback, it's a quick moving story, McCann knows what he's talking about, and there's plenty happening to keep the reader on his toes. The later books of the series, **Hot Shot** and **Shoot on Sight** have widened the appeal by mixing in some intrigue with the goals.

### Thanks to Sam

Lance Salway, Macmillan Education, 0 333 26093 7, 65p non-net

Lively, exciting action for ten-pluses woven around a simple story of the annual football match between neighbouring villages with the consequences for the local youngsters.

# FOOTBALL

football-packed months ahead

Fast moving, undemanding, sometimes a bit too 'gollygosh' for most kids to swallow, but the fights and chases usually intervene just in time to salvage the story from embarrassment and sustain the interest.

## Teenage Fiction

### It's only a game

Eamon Dunphy, Penguin,  
0 14 00.5355 7, 95p

Eamon Dunphy was a league and international footballer, who drifted through the lower divisions in the latter stages of his career. When he 'hung up his boots', he wrote this superb book about his experiences as a player. Nobody is spared — the managers, directors, players, supporters — everyone feels the sharp end of Dunphy's biting humour. An amusing satire, and yet serious criticism of what is after all 'only a game' and not the be all and end all of life itself, as some nameless television commentators would like us to believe.

Dunphy has got a lot to say about his varied career, and he says it well, sustaining interest throughout the book. If you saw the play adapted for television from the main theme of the novel, read the book, it's much better!

### The Goalkeeper's Revenge

Bill Naughton, Puffin, 0 14 03.0348 0,  
65p

A collection of short stories, beginning with the title story. Tightly constructed, brilliantly told, with a twist in the tale, it's a real 'goalkeeper's revenge'. Each tale is constructed and told equally well — they're not all about football, although sport does come into each story. The dialect and the environment which Naughton paints so well, revived memories of childhood scrapbooks of Lofthouse, Finney and the Busby Babes. Nostalgia, certainly, but helped me to enjoy the stories even more.

### Behind the Goal

John Griffin, Longman, 0 582 20089 X,  
90p non-net

Six short stories based around the activities of a group of youngsters supporting Nottingham Forest, but in fact, fiction, language and experience, relevant to teenage readers whoever they support. John Griffin reveals an excellent grasp of this adolescent sub-culture, with its tribal rites, chants and sense of brotherhood. Recommended reading for 13s and upwards.



### The Blinder

Barry Hines, Penguin, 0 14 00.2951 6,  
90p

The author of *Kes* revealed all the sensitivity in this earlier novel that gained him so many admirers for his treatment of the boy and his kestrel. The theme is similar, although in this case the alienation is personified by the

character of Lenny Hawk, who had the footballing gifts to take him to the League club of his choice. School boy escapades evolved into adolescent problems, increasing brushes with authority in whatever form it crossed his path, a giant social chip on his shoulder, and gradually the gift becomes submerged.

Barry Hines' novel is a remarkable social commentary, a tale which must have been realised in many young men's lives while striving for the end of the rainbow through the skill in their feet.

### Kicked into Touch

Fred Eyre, Senior Publications,  
0 903839 63 X, £1.95

Apprenticed to a famous football club on leaving school, Fred Eyre's character's world comes to an end when he breaks his leg and is released by his club, untrained for any other role in society. By learning fast in the world of business, possessing a good sense of humour, and with some luck, Eyre becomes a successful businessman. In between, he plays for and coaches a vast range of semi-professional clubs, preserving experiences and anecdotes from his travels around the fringes of the Soccer world. He may have been 'kicked into touch' as a heartbroken youngster but the way in which he has turned that experience to his own benefit provides a lesson for today's youngsters starry-eyed with the prospect of being tomorrow's million pound transfer.

## Non-Fiction

### Learning about Football

Ladybird, 0 7214 0697 1, 50p

In the tradition of 'Ladybirds' this provides comprehensive, basic coverage of most aspects of the game. Its history, dating back to 1681 is signposted in a time chart, the pitch, the ball, footwear, the laws, skills and fitness, are among the subjects covered in simple language. Ideal reference book for non-combatant parents pressganged in front of the set for the June finals from Spain, and faced with embarrassing questions from young sons. Even a basic section on tactics if you want to appear really knowledgeable — excellent value for 50p, well illustrated.

### Soccer — Skills, Tricks & Tactics

Simon Inglis, Usborne, 0 86020 544 4,  
£1.85

Rather more sophisticated treatment of the basics of the game, but essentially again, the armchair spectator's encyclopaedia for easy reference, a glossary to the intricacies and jargon of the television presentation of the matches. Lots of tips for the youngsters to go out into the park or school playground and practise, with the skills illustrated clearly in picture sequence strips.

A clear spread on the laws of the game which help you to decipher the offside rule and discover the difference between a direct or an indirect free kick. Indispensable for any age from ten to grandparents!

### Discover the World of Football

Sparrow, 0 09 923650 8, 70p

Similar production to the Usborne book, tracing the history of the game from its origins, through the uncomfortable realisation that foreigners could not only play it, but actually beat us at it! Sections then deal with how a ball is made, the rules of the game, tactical formations, basic skills and exercises, and an interesting section on diets for footballers.

I found some of the artwork disappointing, and lacking in clarity, which was a pity, because the book contained interesting items not covered in either the Ladybird or the Usborne treatment of the theme. Good value for 70p.

### Football Quiz 1981/82

Gordon Jeffery, Armada, 0 00 691945 6,  
95p

Everything you could possibly want to know. Photo quizzes, national badges, jumbled letters, alphabetical quizzes, all interspersed with photo-biographies of famous names from the game today, from Ardiles to Dalglish. Information sections on the game at home and abroad, plus World Cup facts pack out the pages. If you don't know who was the youngest ever player in a Football league match, this is the book for you.

### Famous Names in Soccer

Jim Bebbington, Wayland,  
0 85340 790 8, £2.95

One page biographies of the major names in world football from the past thirty years until the present day, each faced with a black and white photograph.

The text is concise, factual, uncritical, about each player's career and his major achievements in the game. Among those featured are Pele, Bobby Charlton, George Best, Denis Law, the late Bill Shankly and Kevin Keegan.

### Kevin Keegan

Brian Glanville, Hamish Hamilton,  
0 241 10594 3, £3.25

The probable England captain in the World Cup matches in Spain is featured in Brian Glanville's succinct contribution to Hamish Hamilton's Profiles series. Criticism is interwoven with high praise in the above average text for books of this genre, as Glanville recounts Keegan's career from his childhood in a Yorkshire mining village, through his rise to fame with Liverpool, consequent adventure in European football with Hamburg and subsequent return to play for Southampton and captain England.

### Football

Duncan Scott-Forbes, Heinemann,  
0 435 27004 4, 70p

A potted round-up of the game throughout the world for the lower Secondary market. Simple format includes A Great Match, A Great Player, a quick summary of world football, the inevitable glossary, including (sign of the times?) 'violence' and 'boring'. Restricted appeal.

Also available (late March) but not seen by us so far:

### World Cup 82

Philip Evans, Knight, 0 340 27747 5,  
£1.25

### Book of Footballers

Brian Glanville, Puffin Plus,  
0 14 03.1508 X, £1.25

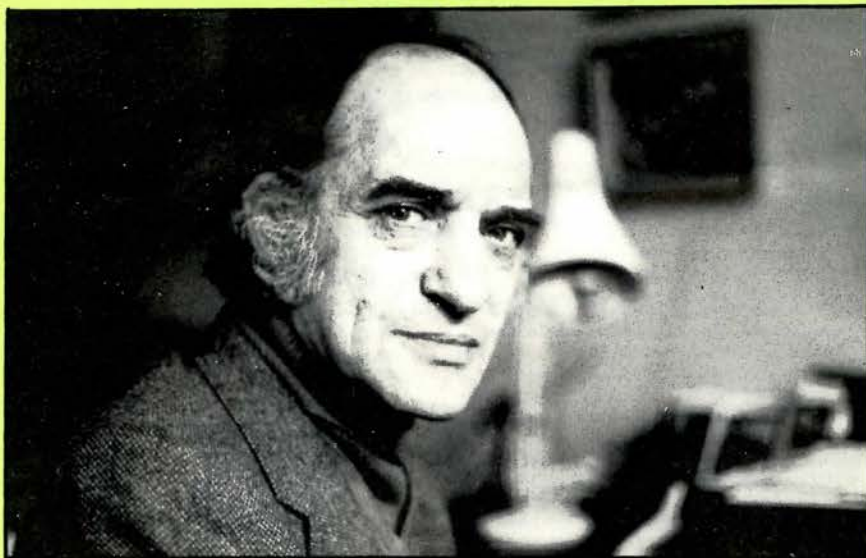
An alphabetical, biographical guide to the footballing personalities who have achieved prominence through their high levels of skill, from the pioneers in the game's infancy to today's million pound superstars.

Glanville has included in this special World Cup edition (original publication 1978) many of the contemporary figures who will be the centres of attraction in Spain this June.

On a subject that is often over lavish in praise, and short on criticism, it is refreshing to find that Glanville's comments are always interesting, pithy, and non-sycophantic. His selection is personal, as he stoutly proclaims in the preface, but through it he has endeavoured to illustrate the game's development. He retains a sense of perspective about today's media inflated stars, through a realisation that critical evaluation of a player and his true significance is often re-assessed with the passing of time. 'Today's footballers one has had to take on trust.'

An ideal reference book which will help to bring to life for the armchair viewer, many of the 'names' which will fill our screens this summer. ●

# Authorgraph No. 13



*Leon Garfield*

When you walk along the road where Leon Garfield lives in Highgate, north London, it's temptingly easy to believe you've passed through a time warp and stepped into the eighteenth century.

Only the cars parked carelessly outside the Georgian houses and the roar of pneumatic drills spoil the illusion. Leon Garfield's house, albeit one of the youngest in the street — about 80 years old — has a pleasingly rural aspect. But then a broken gate which hangs on its one remaining hinge might make you feel that about any house.

Garfield hasn't always lived in Highgate, even though that particular area of London — and the city itself — has played such a large and important part in his work. He is now almost as much of an institution in the world of children's books as St Paul's Cathedral is in London. He won the first Guardian fiction award with his second book, *Devil-in-the-Fog*, and he's also received the Carnegie Medal (with Edward Blishen for *The God Beneath the Sea*) and the Whitbread Award for John Diamond.

He was born in Brighton in 1921, and his family background could have come straight out of one of the novels he was later to write. 'My father was a businessman, and he wasn't a very good one. My mother was always highly critical of him.

'It was always a very up and down life. One moment we'd be enormously wealthy, and the next we were in the most dismal debt. I had one older brother, but to all intents and purposes I was an only child.'

The young Leon was despatched to Brighton Grammar School, but his 'further education was brought to a halt by one of my father's periodic debts.' As a child he had 'always written. I wrote absurd stories, based a lot on my desultory, unsystematic reading. I read a lot of detective and school stories, and for some reason I'd come across Anatole France, who was a great influence.'

He'd also shown a talent for drawing, and had turned to it more and more. 'I think that was because I needed to do it, and also because it expressed the normal desire of a child to show off. It's far easier to show off a drawing than a page of writing in an exercise book.'

Eventually Leon made it to art college, and when he left two things happened. He got married — a marriage which really lasted only three or four months — and joined the army 'more or less to get away from home.' The army decided that because he'd been trained as an artist they'd put him in the medical corps 'because they thought I'd know about anatomy — a completely erroneous assumption.'

He left the army in 1946, but not before he'd seen the worst the twentieth century had to offer. 'I had a brief and grisly spell on the War Crimes Commission investigating two or three-year-old murders in concentration camps. I think it did have a tremendous effect on me. We had to do things like dig up murdered corpses and put them together from the fragments they'd decayed into, then take photos of the skulls to see where the bullet had entered. One thing I'll never forget is the hideous stench.'

The difficult relationship with his father reached a low point when he left the army. 'I was thrown out of my home because I wanted to divorce my first wife. At the time my father was in one of his enormously wealthy periods, and he offered me a choice — a business or nothing. But I was young enough to do without comforts, and by then I wanted to be a writer. So I took a job in a hospital working on biochemistry and set about becoming a writer.'

Part of his decision to become a writer appears to have been influenced by Vivien Alcock, whom he'd met in Belgium and who was to become his second wife. 'I showed her some of my drawings and she said that I'd do better as a writer! But it was to be a long time before success came to him. His first book — *Jack Holborn* — wasn't published until 1964.

'I tried every sort of writing until I found a sort that suited me. I sent loads of stuff off to publishers — I even finished three novels — but I knew the rejection slips were justified. They just weren't very good. I was doing a lot of imitation — which isn't a bad thing, that's the way you learn — but I simply hadn't found my voice.'

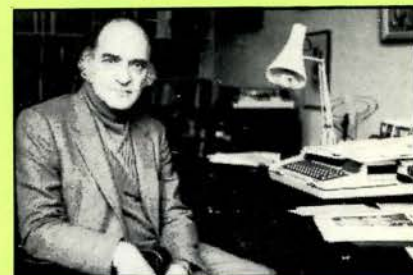
The essentials of the Garfield mixture were already there, waiting to be put together. His war experiences had given him a vision of evil and its consequences which was always to stay in his mind. The ups and downs of his father's business dealings filtered later on into his novels in the many fortunes suddenly won and lost. London too played a part in his childhood, as did the sea.

'I've always liked the sea. I suppose that's because I was born near it. But living by the sea we naturally had our holidays in London where we had relatives. When I was small London was a vast, glittering place. We made visits to shops like Selfridges, which seemed like a palace to me with its glamorous lift attendants in gilded lifts which had an overpowering smell of perfume.

'But most of all I remember — and these memories are so early they're probably memories of memories — the London fogs. Fog is absolutely fascinating to a child. My earliest and strongest memories are of London fogs where the sky was brown and the lights were strangely orange. You had no sense of direction in a fog like that, the road had vanished, the pavement had disappeared, and you felt that once you'd stepped out of the front door you could be lost forever.'

To the ups and downs of fortune, evil and its consequences, London, the sea and fogs, he added a love for a particular part of the City of London. 'A friend became an articled clerk to a solicitor and we used to meet for lunch in St Paul's Churchyard. I became fascinated by the area round St Paul's where there are so many solicitor's offices and articled clerks having lunch in little cafes, and gradually I developed a strong feeling for the necessity — and the absurdity — of the law. I was also overwhelmed by the sheer size and beauty of St Paul's dome, which almost seems to float above the streets around it.'

But between 1946 and 1964, despite all the writing and the sending off to publishers, nothing happened to advance the career of Leon Garfield, writer. Except that is, for a chance meeting with a man from the *Daily Mail* on a train, who found out he wrote and asked to see some short stories. 'I sent him one, and he used it in a *Daily Mail* annual. I got £5 and spent £20 celebrating.'



All the Garfield strands, however, came together in *Jack Holborn*, a book he wrote with adults in mind. 'I think I'd realised what is meant by the advice given to writers so often — "use your own experience". Up to then I'd misinterpreted it. It's really a question of recognising the right idea for a novel. Lots of people who try to write worry about not having something to say, but that comes along later. Everyone's got something to say.

'With *Jack Holborn* it was the first time I had that sensation of the pen coming into contact with the paper with nothing in between. It was the first time I'd used actual places, and that was exciting. And it was the first time I'd ever done a proper historical novel.'

The third publisher to see the book — Constable — liked it sufficiently to publish it on two conditions — one that it should be cut by a third, and the other that it was to be published as a children's book. 'I had the cuts done in a week,' said Garfield, who found himself at last a published author.

The flow from the Garfield pen hasn't stopped since. 'Even before that I was writing in a very concentrated way, starting something else as soon as I'd finished one thing. Since **Jack Holborn** I've done a book a year, really.'

The praise and awards and commissions have flowed steadily since, too. His books have also been translated into television and film. **Devil-in-the-Fog**, **Smith**, and **The Strange Affair of Adelaide Harris** have all been serialised on television, and **John Diamond** was made into a television film which was shown last year. **Black Jack** is now a feature film, and there are several other Garfield tales in production.

The success of the books has surprised some. Historical novels are not what is wanted, they say; contemporary books for contemporary children is the banner cry. Leon Garfield — as you might suspect — disagrees.

'It's very hard for anybody to say what's "wanted". Often that sort of thing leads to something being imposed. I feel to a certain extent anyone who goes along with that is going along with a very poor sort of popular culture which is, in the end, in very cynical hands — a lot of people are making an awful lot of money out of teenagers.

'I think it's very sad to see adult writers and critics going down on all fours and trying to get into the playground, trying to become children. Anatole France said a very interesting thing about writing for children which I believe — "The child is naturally curious, and wants to enter into your world. He doesn't want you to come into his."

He thinks that there are two ways of writing a historical novel. 'The first is looking back, the other is looking around you. I prefer the second, and it's really a sort of science fiction in reverse. Doing it that way you can draw clear, social parallels.

'You get a picture of a whole society, and as with people, it's easier to see them more sharply if you put them in new clothes. It's like seeing someone you know in fancy dress — all of a sudden it's like seeing them for the first time.

'In my books I'm creating a place in which my stories happen, not a time. I've looked back rather than forward because my imagination needs hard fact to shape and confine it. But the historical novel does allow you to look at things which you might take for granted around you in a new perspective, and then you see how monstrous they are.'

That's why he writes about violence and the absurdities of the law, evil and its consequences and fortune and redemption. At the moment all these themes are coming together for he's in the middle of writing a **Tales from Shakespeare** for Victor Gollancz, which will be illustrated by Michael Foreman. Garfield says that 'any writer who writes in English is totally dominated by Shakespeare', and although finding some of the tales 'formidably difficult' is enjoying them greatly. He lists his other influences as Dickens (although he didn't read any until after his first three novels were published), Swift, Fielding, Defoe, Victor Hugo and Balzac among others.

He's also writing some more stories for picture books and finishing off a novel for Kestrel. In fact the Garfield home is very busy. Leon's wife Vivien — she who told him to concentrate on writing instead of drawing — has developed into a writer herself. Her book **The Haunting of Cassie Palmer** has been made into a TV South serial, and she is now working on her fourth novel.

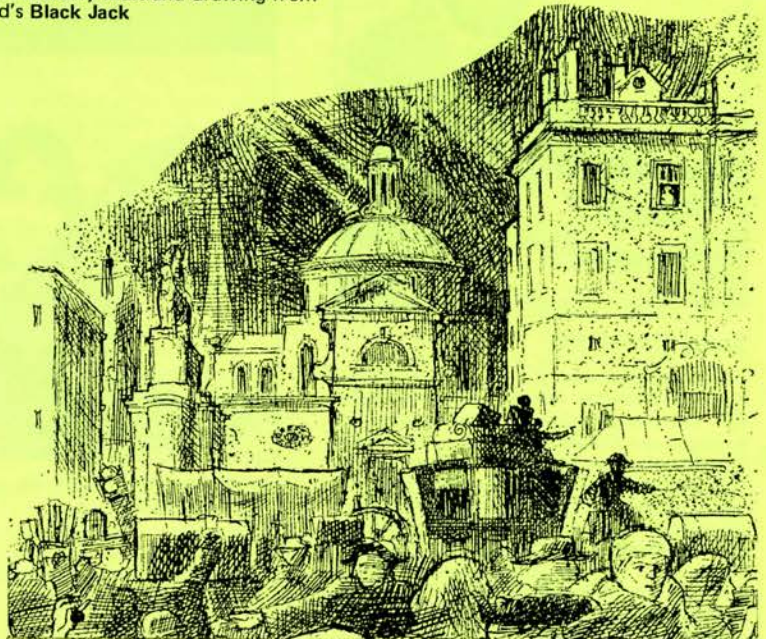


'Vivien works upstairs, and I work downstairs, and we meet in the mornings over coffee with some pages of manuscript to discuss. We've agreed to take it in turns to talk about each other's work, and we're finding that we can be more and more of a help to each other now.'

It was a dark and overcast day when Leon Garfield talked to us. His study at the front of his house grew progressively darker. On one wall is a huge facsimile of a 1745 map of London to which he often refers while writing his books. His dog, Ben, a retriever lay at his feet, and the family cat, a British Blue called Sam sat staring out of the window. He talked of how much he'd enjoyed working with artists like Antony Maitland and Charles Keeping, both of whom have illustrated his work. He talked of adapting his prose style to suit the needs of each story he was working on, whether it was a short story, a novel for children or a picture book text — or indeed, a tale from Shakespeare.

'A **Midsummer Night's Dream** is almost my favourite Shakespeare play, and there's a line in that which just about sums up what I think every artist is trying to do. "To give to aery nothing a local habitation and name." That's what I try to do, anyway.' ●

A detail of an Anthony Maitland drawing from Leon Garfield's **Black Jack**



## The books

### Jack Holborn

Puffin, 0 14 03.0318 9, 50p

### Devil-in-the-Fog

Kestrel, 0 7226 5089 2, £4.50  
Puffin, 0 14 03.0353 7, 90p

### Smith

Kestrel, 0 7226 5090 6, £4.50  
Puffin, 0 14 03.0349 9, 95p

### Black Jack

Kestrel, 0 7226 5092 2, £3.50  
Puffin, 0 14 03.0489 4, 90p

### Mister Corbett's Ghost and Other Stories

Kestrel, 0 7226 5091 4, £4.95 (Reissue August 1982)  
Puffin, 0 14 03.0510 6, 85p

### The Strange Affair of Adelaide Harris

Kestrel, 0 7226 5095 7, £4.50  
Puffin, 0 14 03.0671 4, 90p

### The Ghost Downstairs

Kestrel, 0 7226 5094 9, £4.95  
Puffin, 0 14 03.0788 5, 85p

### The Sound of Coaches

Puffin, 0 14 03.0961 6, 65p

### The Prisoners of September

Kestrel, 0 7226 5097 3, £3.50

### The Pleasure Garden

Kestrel, 0 7226 5098 1, £4.50  
Peacock, 0 14 047.119 7, 70p

### The Confidence Man

Kestrel, 0 7226 5407 3, £4.50

### Bostock and Harris

Kestrel, 0 7226 5529 0, £4.50  
Puffin, 0 14 03.1308 7, Winter 1982

### John Diamond

Kestrel, 0 7226 5619 X, £4.50  
Puffin, 0 14 03.1366 4, 95p

### The Apprentices series

Heinemann, 11 titles available, £2.10 — £2.50

### King Nimrod's Tower

Pictures by Michael Bragg, Methuen,  
0 416 24410 6 about £3.95 (mid 1982)

### Fair's Fair

Pictures by Margaret Chamberlain,  
Macdonald, 0 354 08126 8, £3.25

### With Edward Blishen

#### The God Beneath the Sea

Kestrel, 0 7226 5093 0, £5.50

#### The Golden Shadow

Kestrel, 0 7226 5162 7, £4.50

# Teenage Fiction— Fewer Fireworks and Quieter Voices

Chris Kloet recommends three British authors

Honestly, I'm not normally a chauvinist and don't get me wrong, I enjoy reading the latest titles by Blume, Cormier, S.E. Hinton, Zindel *et al.* as much as anyone. But these successful, much-written-about American authors for teenagers certainly hold no monopoly in writing approachable, realistic fiction for and about today's kids. Isn't it perhaps time we looked again at some of our own excellent British writers in this field who, with fewer fireworks and quieter voices, have just as much to offer as their more abrasive and brasher American cousins? My nominations for the writers who deserve more 'exposure' here are **John Branfield**, **Peggy Woodford** and **John Gordon**. I know I could be wrong about this. If these are the 'in' writers whose names are on every pupil's lips and whose books are being devoured avidly at your school, then so much the better, and good for you; but I get the impression that many book-informed teachers and kids still haven't come across these authors, and I think that's a pity.

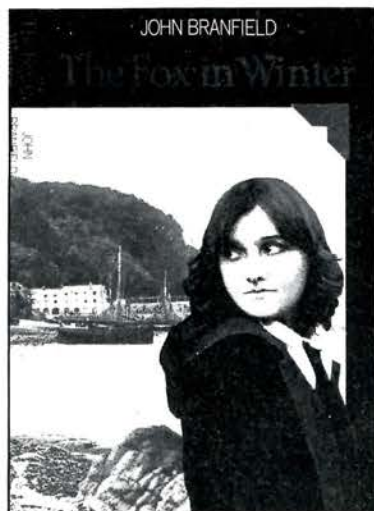


## John Branfield

I've been a fan since 1972 when I read his first book for teenagers, *Nancekuke*, (now, alas, OP, but library copies are probably still around), and I'm delighted that he has finally made it into paperback — not before time — with his latest novel, *The Fox in Winter*, which is, I feel, his best book to date. But that's skipping ten years and three other books, so back to the start. *Nancekuke*, which was written, like several of this author's works, while he was on a sabbatical from teaching, showed Branfield to be a shrewd but sympathetic portrayer of adolescent girls;

equally important, it established him as one of our few writers who can tackle what he calls (in his prefatory note), 'real issues' in teenage fiction, without sinking to worthy didactics or propaganda. The issue in *Nancekuke* is the debate about the ethics of chemical warfare and the individual's right to protest. Too heavy? No, because throughout this story of a girl's attempts to penetrate the mystery surrounding her scientist father's sudden death, she is shown to be an ordinary sixteen-year-old, facing the usual adolescent preoccupations — family quarrels, the need for autonomy and the first steps towards love — in short, a character with whom the thoughtful reader can easily identify.

Adolescent girls at odds with themselves and their families are well-described also in *Sugar Mouse* and *The Scillies Trip*. The former shows a young diabetic learning to cope with her disability. Although the author is heavy-handed at the end, where he describes society's attitude to diabetics, the book stands out, both for the prickly spiritedness of its heroine and the unawkward treatment of its subject. Incidentally, the plot uses a 'horse and dog' theme, which could provide an entrée for the book-shy. *The Scillies Trip*, (now OP), sees Branfield tackling the drug scene, but obliquely, through the eyes of a girl who watches the destructive effect of her feckless elder sister's experiments with drug-taking, on herself and on her parents. It's as much a story about sibling rivalry as about drugs. Typically, the author ensures that the parents get as much sympathy as the young protagonists; also typically, he provides no easy solutions at the end. Depressing, but guaranteed to make you think, which is what Branfield's books are intended to do.



Gollancz hardback cover for *The Fox in Winter*

I'll skip his next book, *Castle Minalto*, a sort of Gothic historical adventure, because to my mind it doesn't quite come off, and repeat that for me, this author's best work, and undoubtedly the one which will win him the most young readers, is *The Fox in Winter*. It's the moving story of an at first unwilling friendship between young Fran, daughter of the District Nurse, and a ninety-year-old patient of her mother's. The book speaks volumes about the indignities of old age, people's differing attitudes to death and, best of all, the mutual support which the very old and the young can give each other. Fans of *The Pigman*, take note.



Photo by Andrea Nelki

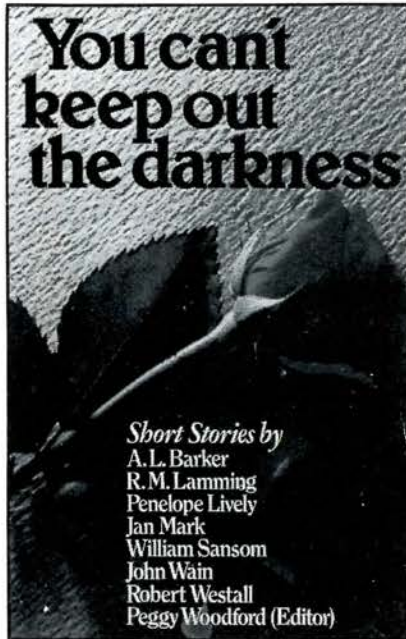
## Peggy Woodford

I suppose it was inevitable that Peggy Woodford would be labelled as a writer of romantic fiction for teenage girls with the publication of her first novel, *Please Don't Go* in 1972. That this labelling has dogged her since and has, in some ways limited her potential audience is unfortunate. *Please Don't Go* set the high standard of writing we have come to expect of her — closely observed characters and setting, and crisp, telling dialogue. This is a compelling story about adolescent love found and lost — Brittany, and a teenage girl's holiday, when she falls first for the older, sophisticated married man and then for a lad her own age. There's much sound sense here, too, for the reader who likes a good weepie. Expectations for 'more of the same' perhaps coloured her readers' and her publisher's approach to Woodford's next novel, *Backwater War* (now OP) and this was probably unhelpful, because it's not a love story, (although there is an element of romance in it), but an adventure story. Set in Guernsey under German Occupation during the Second World War (a background which the author herself experienced), it is just as exciting a read for boys as for girls. Alas, the book's cover and



blurb both emphasize the story's main character (female) in a romantic way.

**The Real Thing:** seven stories of love, edited by Woodford comes next. An accomplished writer of short stories for adults, she commissioned this collection and contributed to it. As good a collection as you'll find anywhere, of stories about the different facets of love; perhaps a good way into it would be to point out to readers who have read and enjoyed **Please Don't Go**, that this author's contribution is a short story sequel. A more recent collection of short stories, **You Can't Keep Out the Darkness**, all tales about the loss of innocence which Woodford again edited and contributed to, proved beyond any doubt that she is well able to write from the adolescent male viewpoint.



Probably the most accessible of this author's books is **See You Tomorrow**, although the brief outline of the plot I can give here does the book an injustice by implying that its theme is too sombre to assure a wide appeal. Briefly, it's about a girl in her mid-teens who, finding her own family infinitely boring, spends more and more time with her quixotic neighbours. Her Dad, who is a depressive, attempts suicide. The substance of the book is the differing ways in which the girl's family adjusts to this situation, and the girl's gradual recognition that her glamorous neighbours are not the staunch allies that she supposed. Woodford is very good indeed at showing the stifling undercurrents of family life, in a way which will be immediately recognised as truthful by teenagers. That she can do it with such a light touch is greatly to her credit. Following on from this story, and loosely connected to it, in that it is about a different member of the same family, is this author's most recent novel, **The Girl with a Voice**. Told mostly from the viewpoint of a young man, it is the story of his gradual falling in love with a tempestuous, musically gifted girl who works with him at a holiday youth camp. The reasons why she is unable to return his feelings are but one aspect of this novel, which touches on many other adult, as well as adolescent, insecurities. Given that the story could appeal to boys as well as girls (there are few enough stories about first love seen through the boy's eyes), why on earth the publishers should choose a jacket illustration which gives most prominence to the girl character is beyond me. And, incidentally, beyond the author too. She wonders if they wouldn't do better issued with plain, or abstract wrappers, so that boys aren't put off them! Still, it's good to see Bodley Head backing teenage fiction, by bringing out new titles in this large trade paperback edition. It may be beyond most kids' purses, but it's well worth several copies for the library.



### John Gordon

One of the best pieces of news I have heard about teenage fiction recently is that this marvellous author's two superb spine-chillers, **The Ghost on the Hill** and **The House on the Brink** will be re-issued in the Puffin Plus range this Spring. I can't think of anyone quite like Gordon. There is no-one else, I am sure, who can suggest, as he does, the inner motives of his characters. It isn't what he, or his characters, say in the books, but what they *don't* say which is so important. To call his works spine-chillers is also, in some way, to diminish them. True, these two particular books already mentioned, and his more recent books **The Waterfall Box** and **The Spitfire Grave** do chill, with their emphasis on the thin boundaries which separate us from the supernatural. But as well as being horror/fantasy stories, they are also much more. The full-length novels (**The Spitfire Grave** is a collection of short stories by Gordon), are piercingly accurate portraits of developing boy/girl relationships, and their attendant sexual tensions below the surface; they are a persuasive comment on the way the rural landscape (usually the Fens), shapes the character of people; and finally, they are finely observed studies about social class barriers which affect us all. I asked John Gordon about this aspect of his work recently. He admitted that he used to rub up against the class system when he was younger, that he detests it, and that it still operates, and hurts his own kids just as it used to hurt him, so that's why he writes about it. I also asked him about the almost



suffocating power of the suppressed sexuality in his writings. He said that the sexual elements in his stories, just as the magical elements in them, are contained and controlled; he thought he had greater power in his stories by 'holding things down', but admitted that his writings are 'aimed at a level of disturbance'. What more could we ask? Other than a new John Gordon title as soon as possible, that is. But even if a new one isn't forthcoming for a while, let's make sure that every kid who expresses an interest in ghost stories or the supernatural, has a chance to read something by this author. The experience could be memorable, and that, surely, should be one of the things we are aiming for. ●

### The books in print

#### John Branfield

**Sugar Mouse**, Gollancz, 1973, 0 575 01508 X, £4.95  
**Castle Minalto**, Gollancz, 1979, 0 575 02730 4, £4.50  
**The Fox in Winter**, Gollancz, 1980, 0 575 02860 2, £4.95, and Fontana Lions, 0 00 671932 5, £1.00

#### Peggy Woodford

**Please Don't Go**, Bodley Head New Adults, 1972, 0 370 01243 7, £3.50  
**See You Tomorrow**, BHNA, 1979, 0 370 30204 4, £4.50  
**The Girl with a Voice**, BHNA, 1981, 0 370 30423 3, £3.50 pb  
**The Real Thing: seven stories of love** (ed.), BHNA, 1977, 0 370 30018 1, £2.95, and Peacock, 0 14 047.149 9, 80p  
**You Can't Keep Out the Darkness**, BHNA, 1980, 0 370 30293 1, £4.50

#### John Gordon

**The Giant Under the Snow**, Puffin, 1971, 0 14 03.0507 6, 95p  
**The Ghost on the Hill**, Puffin Plus, 0 14 03.1372 9, £1.00  
**The Waterfall Box**, Kestrel, 1978, 0 7226 5490 1, £3.95  
**The Spitfire Grave and other stories**, Kestrel, 1979, 0 7226 5618 1, £4.50  
**The House on the Brink**, Puffin Plus, 0 14 03.1370 4, £1.10

Chris Kloet, A.L.A., is Young People's Librarian for Tameside near Manchester.

# LIFELINE LIBRARY

**Elaine Moss** introduces a new five-part series



Elaine Moss

'I ought to know,' said a parent governor at the Christmas party, 'but what do you actually *do* in this school?' It became clear that she thought ordering and covering and counting books were a librarian's main occupation; and it was with pleasure that she discovered that helping children in a Primary School to enjoy books took precedence over tasks that only existed in order to facilitate that aim. When I mentioned that I also introduced books, new and old, to teachers she was clearly amazed: 'Surely teachers already know all there *is* to know about children's books.'

I do not think that parent governor is alone in her cloud cuckoo land; neither do I consider it wise to undermine parents' belief in teachers' skills. But if parents, as well as their children, look to teachers for advice and help in the field of children's books, then every Primary School teacher should surely have a personal 'kit' of books as the base from which to operate with enthusiasm.

It is to this end that my 1982 series of five articles for *Books for Keeps* is directed. Obviously there are some

books that 'are' top Junior, other that 'look right' for Infants. But in selecting fifty books, a tiny number, that every Primary School teacher should know and — yes — *own*, I shall try to find those whose appeal is wide, books that, with confidence and imagination on the part of the teacher, can be used up and down the Primary School. Strangely, paradoxically when one considers the mass media philosophy of low artistic level = wide appeal, with books it is the *best* in literary and artistic terms that have the magic that entralls children of different ages, varying backgrounds. I am assuming, of course, that teachers read *to* and *with* their classes, as well as encouraging children to read to themselves.

The scheme for the series is as follows:

1. **Picture Books**
2. **Learning and Listening**
3. **First Fling and Classics of Childhood**
4. **Novels**
5. **Poetry and Traditional Tales.**

## Part 1: THE PICTURE BOOKS

Ten picture books! Picture books are a passion with me. I carry loads about when I go to talk with teachers; my canvas bag is full of them when I go into schools. Which ten should I choose for the Lifeline Library? I look at my shelves and discover that I must have over a thousand to choose from. Each seems to have a voice, an image. Ten only shall I allow myself — because the worst sin we book buffs indulge in is overkill.

So, I choose only one by each outstanding illustrator, confident that having bought one you will be spurred on to look at others . . . And I select from each illustrator the less sophisticated type of picture book because this has the widest appeal. (The more sophisticated picture books have found a place in my Signal Bookguide, *Picture Books for Young People 9 – 13* reviewed in the last issue of *Books for Keeps*.)

I choose *Each Peach Pear Plum* by **Janet and Allan Ahlberg** because it combines simplicity of style with an irresistible invitation to the reader to join in the treasure hunt, meeting famous folk tale and nursery rhyme characters along the trail. 'Each peach pear plum/I spy Tom Thumb' runs the rhyming text — and in the picture of an orchard opposite, spy Tom Thumb up a peach tree. Because of the superb planning, each page a cliff hanger leading on to the next, readers are drawn stage by stage towards 'Plum pie in the sun/I spy . . . (turn over) EVERYONE'.

*Mister Magnolia* by **Quentin Blake** was chosen because Quentin Blake's delicious line in kinetic humorous cover drawing seems to say to children 'this is a laugh' before they even open the book to discover how right they are. Mr Magnolia 'has an old trumpet that goes tooty-toot/And two lovely sisters who play on the flute/But Mr Magnolia has only one boot.' Light-hearted nonsense tale with frolicking frogs, mincing mice, obtrusive owls in attendance, and some interesting rhymes — boot, fruit, flute, newt, for phonics freaks to consider.

*Father Christmas* by **Raymond Briggs** won its place in the list against stiff opposition from other Briggs picture books because it is the one that has everything: brilliant use of strip cartoon technique, immensely detailed painting within each frame, a touching story (Father Christmas overworked on Christmas Eve delivering presents to all and sundry in snow, sleet, rain, fog), humorous thought bubbles ('Good, the flag's flying. They're in,' as the old man approaches Buckingham Palace) and a determination not to spoil the magic of Father Christmas for children.

*Mr Gumpy's Outing* by **John Burningham** is quite simply the picture book all young children should have read to them, and every older child should read alone. The text, set in large type, has pattern, a rising tempo, latent humour. 'May I come please?' asks the pig when he sees Mr Gumpy setting off in his boat. 'Yes, if you don't muck about' is the reply. 'Can we come, too?' ask the chickens. 'Yes, if you don't flap.'

Perfect animal pictures. Punning text. Splashing climax!

*The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by **Eric Carle** chose itself. Hugely popular, wonderfully inventive, it quite casually introduces children to the life cycle of a butterfly, to counting and to the days of the week — as the hero eats his way through one apple on Monday, two pears on Tuesday . . . until hungry no more he enters the cocoon stage and emerges a butterfly. Holes in the pages 'nibbled' by the caterpillar make this a book you should buy in the hard-cover edition — which has tougher paper — if you can afford to. It will need to last.

I chose *Dinosaurs and all that Rubbish* by **Michael Foreman** because, like all this artist's work, it is a thought-provoking picture story. Man with his rubbish has destroyed much that is good on Earth; the small-headed but large-hearted Dinosaurs who had great respect for their surroundings, reappear to remind him of some 'home' truths.

*Millions of Cats* by **Wands Gág** tuned in exactly to my mood — for it is about an old man and an old woman who have to choose one cat from among 'hundreds of cats, thousands of cats, millions and billions and trillions of cats' — in the way I have to choose ten picture books from a multiplicity of enchanters. An enduring favourite (first published in 1929) it has pathos, simplicity, rhythm, repetition, resolution — and is a model of black and white picture book design.

**Up and Up** by Shirley Hughes is a superb example of the textless picture book, a concept that was slow to grab teachers' imagination when it first surfaced (in the 1950s) but is now recognized as immensely fruitful. Any child 'reading' **Up and Up** — a complex story told entirely in narrative two-colour strip — will have to concentrate hard, use intuition, find words to describe the experience of the heroine who, for a wonderful interlude, manages to fly round the town.

**Rosie's Walk** by Pat Hutchins is a big joke against the adult reader who, straightfaced (if wise, and willing), will read the 36 word text which tells the story of Rosie the hen's walk 'across the yard, around the pond . . . and back in time for dinner' — whilst the young audience discovers, by looking at the pictures, that a fox is dogging Rosie's heels and that she is tripping him up (knowingly?) at every stage. A brilliant first lesson in dramatic irony.

**Where the Wild Things Are** by Maurice Sendak is by no means the picture book that all adults love and every child enjoys but it is a work of genius that children have, by and large, taught their elders to appreciate. Poetic text, dream-like pictures accompany Max (sent to his room in disgrace for behaving like a 'wild thing') to the land Where the Wild Things (his passions) Are. He learns to master them, sails home in his 'private boat' to his room and his supper. 'And it was still hot.'

That's my ten.

How about writing to **Books for Keeps** about your favourite picture book that I have left out? ●

**Book information**

**Each Peach Pear Plum**  
Janet and Allan Ahlberg, Kestrel,  
0 7226 5335 2, £4.50  
Fontana Lions, 0 00 661678 X, 90p

**Mister Magnolia**  
Quentin Blake, Cape, 0 224 01612 1, £3.95  
Fontana Lions, 0 00 661879 0, 90p

**Father Christmas**  
Raymond Briggs, Hamish Hamilton,  
0 241 02260 6, £3.50  
Picture Puffin, 0 14 050.125 8, £1.25

**Mr Gumpy's Outing**  
John Burningham, Cape, 0 224 61909 8,  
£3.95  
Picture Puffin, 0 14 050.254 8, 95p

**The Very Hungry Caterpillar**  
Eric Carle, Hamish Hamilton,  
0 241 01798 X, £3.95  
Picture Puffin, 0 14 050.087 1, £1.00

**Dinosaurs and all that Rubbish**  
Michael Foreman, Hamish Hamilton,  
0 241 02234 7, £3.95  
Picture Puffin, 0 14 050.098 7, 95p

**Millions of Cats**  
Wanda Gág, Faber, 0 571 05361 0, £2.25  
Picture Puffin, 0 14 050.168 1, 85p

**Up and Up**  
Shirley Hughes, Bodley Head,  
0 370 30179 X, £3.50  
Fontana Lions, 0 00 661809 X, 90p

**Rosie's Walk**  
Pat Hutchins, Bodley Head,  
0 370 00794 8, £3.50  
Picture Puffin, 0 14 050.032 4, 95p

**Where the Wild Things Are**  
Maurice Sendak, Bodley Head,  
0 370 00772 7, £3.95  
Picture Puffin, 0 14 050.031 6, £1.50

Elaine Moss was for ten years the compiler of the NBL's Children's Books of the Year (1970-1979). In 1977 she won the Eleanor Farjeon Award and is much in demand to talk and write about children and books in this country and abroad. For over five years she worked as a part-time librarian in Fleet Primary School in London. She compiles the Good Book Guide's **Young Readers Booklist**, and is a regular contributor to **Signal** and **Junior Education**.

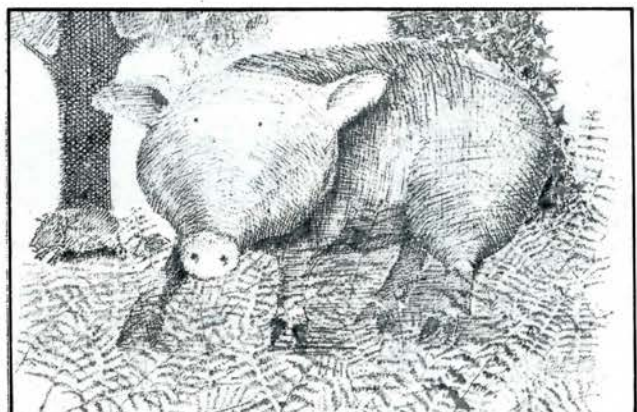
**Picture Books for Young People 9-13** is available from The Thimble Press, Lockwood, Station Road, South Woodchester, Stroud, Glos. GL5 5EQ. £1.65 including postage.



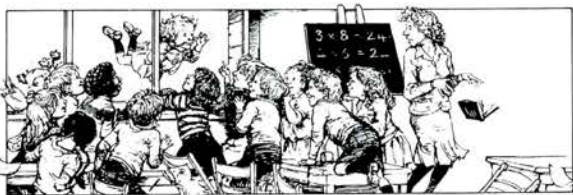
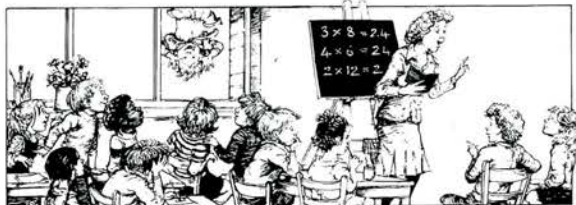
Wanda Gág's drawings for Millions of Cats



Cats here, cats there,  
Cats and kittens everywhere,  
Hundreds of cats,  
Thousands of cats,  
Millions and billions and trillions of cats.



'May I come, please, Mr Gumpy?' said the pig.  
'Very well, but don't muck about.'  
From John Burningham's **Mr Gumpy's Outing**



Page from **Up and Up** by Shirley Hughes

# Needing to know—NOW

Anne Griffiths, who believes it's never too soon to start, shares her approach to choosing and using information books for young children.

Young children's curiosity can be very demanding. They constantly want to know more about some object they bring into school, about some item of news that has filtered through from the TV screen, what this is and what that is. And what is more, they want to know IMMEDIATELY.

Often a child brings in a flower, or a butterfly, picked up on the way to school. The teacher may or may not know what it is. But using a book, with the child, for identification is one way in which children can begin to learn how to use books for reference. A book will help them, with the teacher, to answer immediate needs and also further their interest.

**Wild Flowers** by Roger Philips, is produced for adults, but its clear photographic illustrations help both adult and child to make identification of a flower easier. The text is clearly too difficult for the under-7 child, but it gives essential information for the teacher to mediate.

When Barbara Woodhouse was showing us how to train dogs the Woodhouse way, many of our young children showed interest in the dogs, and in the nursery class some children engaged in spontaneous and imitative dog-training behaviour. This interest was taken up and developed. Good information books on dogs for the young child seemed unobtainable. **Dogs** by Wendy Boorer, produced for adults, gave lots of beautiful colour photos. The small amount of text gave the important points about difference of breeds and was useful for the teacher to interpret for the children.

When Mt St Helens erupted, the dramatic pictures on TV captured the imagination of many of our children. Quick to capitalize on such an interest, we searched our book stock and found an excellent H.M.S.O. publication, **Volcanoes**, with a wealth of exciting and stimulating photographs of volcanoes in action. After that we had to go outside for more information books to answer the innumerable questions and to develop children's interest in an informed way. This was one of the many occasions when we made use of the public library and the school library service. This is a necessary and valuable source of information books to supplement the resources of a small school. Whilst constantly adding to our own stock, to answer specific needs, we cannot hope to provide the quantity needed, nor meet rather unusual demands such as that occasioned by the eruption of the volcano.

Adult information books are essential for staff, but these books are there to be handled by the children as well. They are not special resources hidden away. In finding information we put great importance on the interaction between adult and children. In using a book *with* children, questions are stimulated which might not otherwise occur, and the teacher is there to take children further in finding answers to those questions. In this kind of way the seeds of training are sown for the child to find out for himself. And we have found children coming back to look again and again at books which they have been introduced to in this way.

In the foyer of the school displays are mounted by staff, and these change regularly. The present display about birds contains, amongst other information books, **The Book of British Birds** produced by Drive publications. For adults, it has outstandingly good artist's impressions, one bird to a page, with a highly informative text. Children may and frequently do look at the book as they pass by.

Other things displayed about the school, or kept permanently in corridors, are also accompanied by reference books. Musical instruments are available for children to experiment with, and beside them we put out **Musical Instruments**, by Dorothy Diamond and Robert Tiffin, a book which shows a variety of other instruments.

The rather vocal budgerigar who lives in the school foyer, has his own range of books. **Budgerigar** by Kazuyoski Takagi is written for young children. The text is simple and within the scope of the 7-year-old, giving essential information in a minimum amount of text.

When finding information books written for children rather than for adults, we need to bear in mind that the majority of children between the ages of 3 and 7, for whom we in our school provide, will not be able to read at all, or not well enough to manage texts on a wide variety of subjects without help. Those specifically produced for the 5-7 range tend to be very, often too, simplistic and need to be supplemented by others. Certainly we have found that there are not enough books for young children to satisfy our needs, so we also provide books written for children of Junior or Secondary age.

Machines are the centre of interest in one class at the moment. **What Makes It Go?** by Joe Kaufman is written for older children, but we find it useful and successful because it contains a large number of artist's diagrams showing the internal workings of machines. These are simplified so that even young children can understand the general principles of an escalator, for example, whereas the details in an adult book might have been too advanced and confusing.

On the other hand we must take care not to water down information on a mistaken assumption about what children can take in. When the mother



7-year-old children using **The Book of British Birds** for identification and reference.

of a child in the nursery class was expecting a baby, the child needed some preparation. All the children in the nursery at that time were the youngest in the family and had no experience of a new baby coming. With their parents' knowledge and support we decided to develop the children's natural curiosity and interest in a variety of ways. As is our custom, even with the youngest children, information books were sought, but most of those produced on this subject for children were found to be either entirely unsuitable because of the poor quality and even crudity of the illustrations, or to fall far short of the detail and quality of photographs in **The Everyday Miracle** by Axel Ingelman-Sundberg and Claes Wirsén. The children responded keenly to the photographs, and staff found the text useful in helping them to answer the numerous and searching questions stimulated by the illustrations.

There is hardly an activity in school which is not in some way supported by information books. Trying to help a nursery child to an understanding of 'round' or 'circle' is aided by pictures of car wheels etc., as well as by concrete objects.

Brick play can be stimulated and enriched by reference to books about buildings or building sites. **The Book of the HOUSE: a Way of Seeing**, edited by Pinin Carpi, is written for older children, but to explore the pictures is to go on a delightful tour which reveals the immense variety in buildings. A pleasure at any age.



Adult reference books used for display with a bird project.

Sand and water may be found in many classrooms, but the development of scientific activities can be supported by a large number of very well written books and pamphlets for children. Favourites for me are still the **Young Investigator Series**, published some years ago and now sadly out of print. The text is simple; the drawings are clear. And the books make no concessions about language. The terms 'porosity', 'solubility', 'buoyancy', are there on the covers — and the material inside leads the young child, through experiment, to some understanding of these. Many will be able to read the text for themselves, but as in most instances, it is the interaction with an adult which helps them to a fuller understanding.

Children's own artistic impressions, whether in paint, collage or junk modelling, are fine; but they can produce these only from what they have already absorbed or experienced. We can help them by drawing their



5 and 6-year-old children consulting *What Makes It Go?*

attention to details, to colour, to shape — if not of the real thing, then through information books, and always discussing these things with them. The young child will not be tempted or even able to copy the illustrations. What he produces will still be his own impression, his individual interpretation, but enriched and informed by his greater knowledge and awareness. He will also be alerted to looking more closely at objects which surround him.

During the school year, our children go on as many visits as can be managed at the present time. In preparation and follow-up, information books play a vital part, helping children to know what to look for, and later helping them to check, or even to recall what they have seen. Recalling experience is not always easy for the young child without visual stimulus. One of our favourite places for a visit is Berkeley Castle, and one good starting point is *Castles in the Starters Long Ago* series produced by Macdonald Educational for the young child. We supplement it by a text for older children, *The Castle Story* by Sheila Sancha.

Whilst we are laying stress on the use of information books to support our teaching, to stimulate and satisfy children's curiosity, we are also concerned to help children to an independent use of information books. This training is tied in with organisation and retrieval, as well as use of these books.

For a small school we have a lot of information books, and only the large, usually adult reference books are kept centrally in an open 'library' area in the foyer. The other books are in subject sections in corridors outside classrooms. All books are kept on open bookshelves, at a height suitable for young children to reach, and they are usually placed with the front cover outwards, so that information about the content of the book is immediately seen. Whenever something arises which calls for information, a child is sent off to find a suitable book.

He learns which area to go to for transport, for castles, for birds and so on. He will select and bring back the book of his choice. The teacher will then go through the book with him, or with the group, to check that it will give them the information they want. She will then suggest other books they might look at, and these will be retrieved by the children.

Constant reinforcement of this procedure lays the foundation for more advanced work in using information books which children will most certainly need as they grow older and move into other sectors of the educational system. But perhaps as importantly, or even more so, it equips them with a skill which they can use throughout life to further their own self-education and enjoyment.

I started the article with children's curiosity and our need to respond to this. And one way is through the constant, imaginative and informed use of information books. Paradoxically in responding, we not only satisfy their curiosity, we stimulate it even more. This I consider an essential part of the education of the young child. ●

## A rule-of-thumb guide to selecting information books for young children.

### Look out for:

- An adequate coverage of the subject — whether at adult or child level.
- Quality of illustrations: photographs, preferably in colour for young children; artist's drawings should be clear and detailed, bringing out salient features of an object or process, which might not be apparent in a photograph.
- More illustration than text, in both adult and child books. Text provides difficulty for most young children; good illustrations can be very informative.
- Text which is extremely informative but succinct.
- Attractive and informative cover. This helps the child to select books for content, as well as selling the book to the child.
- Hardback. These books are going to be handled a lot. They are expensive and not readily replaced. Hardbacks, laminated, will stand up to years of careful handling — and these books are essentially for children to handle.

## A handful of information books which we have found useful

(A — adult; OC — older children; YC — younger children; P — photographs; AI — artist's impressions)

**Wild Flowers of Britain (A/P)**  
Roger Philips, Pan, 0 330 25183 X, £5.95

**Trees (A/P)**  
Herbert Edlin and Maurice Nimmo, Orbis, 0 85613 179 2, £6.95

**Dogs (A/P)**  
Wendy Boorer, Sundial, 0 904230 92 9, out of print but worth searching out in libraries.

**The Book of British Birds (A/AI)**  
Drive Publications/Hodder and Stoughton, 0 340 25308 8, £8.95

**Musical Instruments (A/AI and P)**  
Dorothy Diamond and Robert Tiffin, Macdonald Educational, 0 356 05077 7, £2.95 non-net

**Making Musical Instruments (OC/P and AI)**  
Bryan Tolley, Wayland, 0 85340 529 8, £2.75

**Budgerigars (YC/AI and P)**  
Kazuyoski Takagi, ill. Smoko Arai, Wayland, 0 85340 782 7, £2.95

**See Inside an Abbey (OC/AI)**  
R. J. Unstead, Hutchinson, 0 09 128680 8, £1.95

**Young Investigator Series (YC/AI and P)**  
Solubility; Shadows; Rust; Porosity; Buoyancy; Wind. Schofield and Sims, now out of print.  
[But see **Flight and Floating**, Usborne Pocket Scientist Series, 0 86020 529 0, £1.25 and **Science Workshop** (based on the BBC TV series shown last autumn), Longman, 0 582 18348 0, £1.95, which contain similar material and follow the enquiry approach recommended by Sheila Parker in **Books for Keeps 9**. Ed.]

**What Makes It Go? (OC/AI)**  
Joe Kaufman, Hamlyn, 0 600 39265 1, out of print but worth searching out in libraries.

**The Know How Book of Batteries and Magnets (OC/AI)**  
Heather Amery and Angela Littler, Usborne, 0 86020 008 6, £1.85 pp

**The Everyday Miracle (A/P)**  
Axel Ingleman Sundberg and Claes Wirsen, photos by Lennart Nilsson, Allen Lane, out of print.  
[A junior version, **How You Began**, is published by Kestrel, 0 7226 5116 3, £4.50, in April.]

**The Book of the House: A Way of Seeing (OC/P)**  
ed. Pinin Carpi, Ernest Benn, 0 510 00034 7, £6.95

**Castles (YC/AI)**  
Starters Long Ago Books, Macdonald Educational, 0 356 04084 4, 75p

**The Castle Story (A/P and AI)**  
Sheila Sancha, Kestrel, 0 7226 5595 9, £6.95

**The Garden Spider (OC/P and AI)**  
Jan Ethelberg, A. & C. Black, 0 7136 1635 0, £2.95

**Volcanoes (A/P and AI)**  
H.M.S.O., 0 11 880621 1, 55p

Anne Griffiths is Head of Gay Elms Infant School in Bristol, and previously taught in nursery, infant, junior and special classes in Bristol. She was a film maker and photographer for the Schools Council Pre-School Project, and more recently took the photographs which illustrate the Terraced House Books — Sets C and D (Methuen), winner of the Other Award 1980.

# SOUND & VISION

Murphy's Mob is now into its stride on television. The tie-in book has been on sale since January.

Chris Powling takes a look at them both.



As the sports-commentators say "there's a lot to play for" in young people's television these days — about twelve million regular viewers if we accept *Grange Hill* as the current front-runner. Plus, of course, tie-in paperback sales that have now topped a million. So how much of a challenge is Central T.V.'s new series *Murphy's Mob*? Will attendance at the Dunmore United Supporters Club be as compulsory for young viewers as at that most over-subscribed of all comprehensive schools? According to Phil Remond in the last issue of *Books For Keeps* he hasn't much to worry about:

'To make any inroads into *Grange Hill* now they'd need to do something with a lot of episodes, and no ITV company has got the money for that. They're in a cleft stick. They want the success but they are frightened of the risk. They are also frightened of controversy, frightened Mary Whitehouse is going to be offended.'

Well, enough money has been found for *Murphy's Mob* to go out twice weekly for eight weeks with a follow-up series already in production. Its writer, Brian Finch, has neatly side-stepped the second difficulty, too. *Grange Hill* came as a shock to many adults who don't actually work in schools because the youngsters it portrays have more than a passing resemblance to human beings — very different from the forelock-tugging little swots of popular preference. On the other hand we all know about football supporters, don't we? The discovery, via *Murphy's Mob*, that they too are uncannily human will be greeted with relief in some quarters, and as a cop-out in others. What Brian Finch has sussed at the outset is that kids are just people who haven't lived very long — and like the rest of us are avid producers and consumers of that staple soap-opera commodity *gossip*. This out-of-school series, like its in-school rival, is an unashamed celebration of the button-holing, ear-bending, well-I-never-did chinwaggery in which we all participate unless we've opted to become a hermit. As such, there's bound to be a certain overlap of subject-matter. The personal rivalry, the conflict with authority, the sense of young wings nervously, truculently being spread is standard stuff — as is the characterisation: the shadow of resident heavy Bernie Russell was first cast by Booga Benson, for example, and it's not hard to identify other outlines that Trisha, Tucker, Benny et al., have made their own. All this, as Brian Finch would recognise, is no more than canny slip-streaming that won't do the series a bit of harm — especially when backed up by a catchy title-song, nippy narrative line and lickety-split direction and editing. So far so good . . . but also merely what twelve million fans have come to expect. Where *Murphy's Mob* hopes to score a decider is through the *adults* it has on offer. For *Grange Hill* grown-ups do have an unfortunate tendency to be either parents or teachers which is no way to make themselves popular with kids. I've a hunch that the impact of this new series won't depend on its uniformly competent young players at all but on the appeal, or not, of Ken Hutchinson as manager Mac Murphy, Terence Budd as the pop-star turned club chairman Rasputin Jones, and on Peter Blake as the errant soccer international Jock Ferguson. Who on the staff of *Grange Hill* can compete with this trio? Succeed or fail, *Murphy's Mob* as a T.V. serial is at least an honourable contender.

Not so the book. It's 'written', if that's the right word, by 'Michael Saunders', if he's the right person. My guess is that he doesn't exist. He's a figment of typography, a mere peg on which to tie-up the tie-in. Take this for example:

'Hidden behind a buttress in the forecourt, they watched Mac lock up his offices and drive away in his battered old Jaguar. Then they stole out and forced a side door. As they made their way behind the terraces, they passed a chained and barking Rover . . .'



## WHAT DO THE ACTORS THINK?

When we asked the young actors for their opinion, they were full of praise for the new series. Mandy Mealing who plays Cathy said she preferred it to *Grange Hill*, (in which she also acted) because "There are real stories in it, not just kids hanging around in school corridors!" Others liked the way it centred on separate characters and their problems with their families. A definite plus for them, and perhaps for the viewers too, is the way adults are involved in the story in a very positive way. Mac Murphy is much more than the statutory grown up.

The latter is a dog, of course, not a car — but if you think a joke is intended you won't by the time you've got as far as this passage on page 34. Like Mr Lee on page 62 who "sat down, his heart beating as he tried to control his anger" (what was his heart doing up till then?) or Luigi and Angelo who on page 76 "seemed to be taking a perverse pleasure in the hammering United was getting" (why perverse when it's their own side doing the hammering?) What we have here is evidence of a mind-sapping indifference to language. To say that the text of *Murphy's Mob* is hack-work would be to dignify it. Its sole object is to plod its way through the plot — the sort of 'story so far' that never actually reaches the apotheosis of 'now read on'. Perhaps Brian Finch, along with Phil Redmond, would admit to being "not a literary writer". However, Phil Redmond at least had the sense to call in someone who is — Robert Leeson. In comparison with *Murphy's Mob*, Leeson's *Grange Hill* novels are luminously literate. *Murphy's Mob* must be the first book on the Puffin list which takes longer to read than it did to write. For the missed opportunity alone, someone, somewhere ought to be thoroughly ashamed.

# SOUND & VISION

## IN VIEW SOON

A re-run of the Victorian children's story, *The Little Silver Trumpet*, starts on BBC 1 on 28th March. It will run for five weeks in the tea-time serial slot.

An 'updated' version of L.T. Meade's original story, by Thea Bennett, is available from Knight, 0 340 28041 7, 95p.

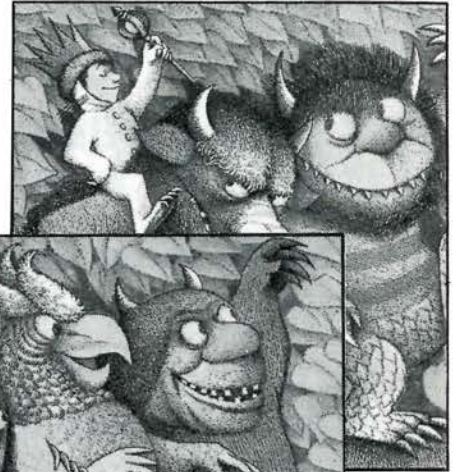
## IN VIEW BUT LATER

The Thames TV serial of *Coral Island* announced for this Spring has now been postponed until the Autumn. Too late though, we hear, to stop Magnet's tie-in version (by Olive Jones) from hitting the shops. So that's one tie-in cover which will have to wait around for a bit for the rest of the package to turn up. ▶

## SENDAK ON OMNIBUS

On 9th May BBC 1's *Omnibus* programme will be devoted to Maurice Sendak and his work. It's over two years since he completed *Outside Over There* (Published here by the Bodley Head last May) and since then he has spent an increasing amount of time working on stage sets and costume designs for, amongst others, Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Janacek's *The Cunning Little Vixen* and his own *Where the Wild Things Are*.

Last year he was in this country working on the sets for the opera, *The Love of Three Oranges*, due to be produced at Glyndebourne at the end of May.



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... exceptionally good colour photographs... relevant to the text which is simple and clearly printed... The activities suggested are both interesting and practicable for schools. This series can be highly recommended...

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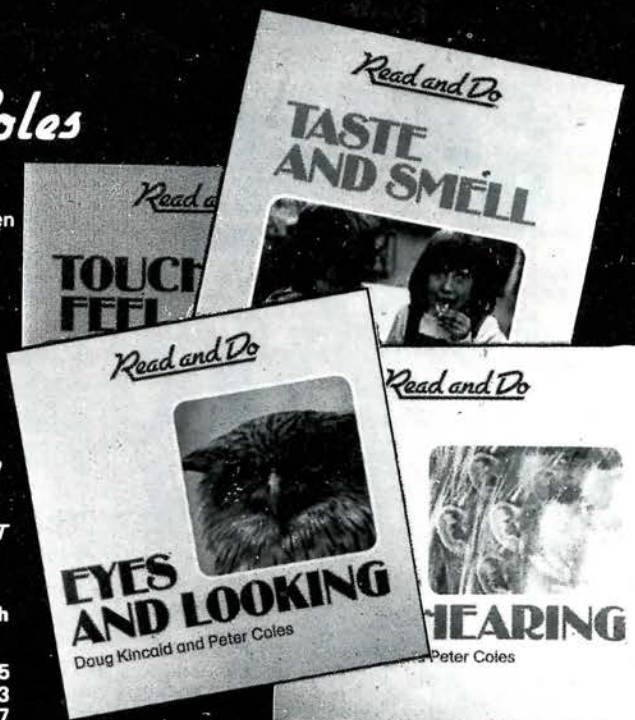
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## Books for Very Young Children

The King and Queen welcome you to their crackpot palace full of madcap characters – the Court Magician who can never get his magic right, the Court Jester who bursts into tears because the King doesn't laugh at his jokes, and the Palace Cat and Mouse who usually manage to get into the picture somehow.

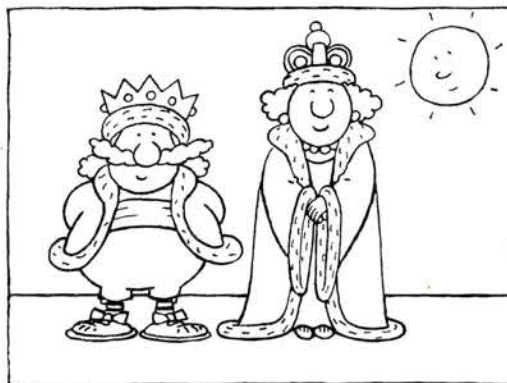
The first two books of this brilliant new series for young children, written by Allen Saddler and illustrated by Joe Wright are:

### The King Gets Fit

The King sees some acrobats and decides to get fit.  
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Each 16 × 15 cm 32 pages, illustrated in full colour, laminated boards **£1.95**

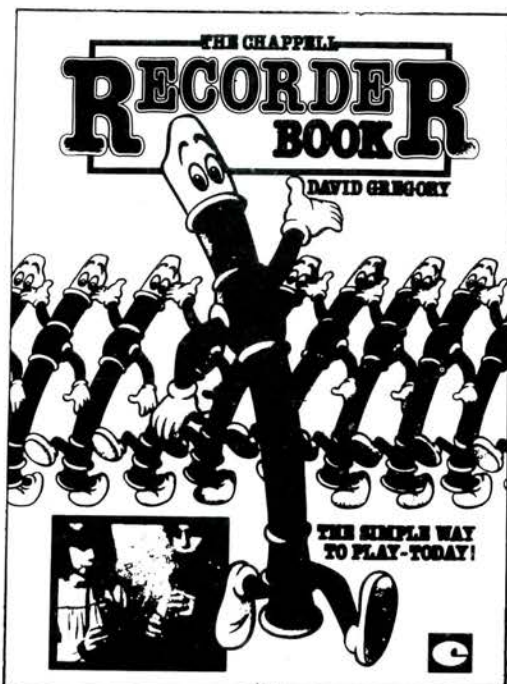
### Aktil's Bicycle Ride by Inga Moore

Aktil, the mouse, and his cousin Arnie, set off on their bicycles to deliver fireworks to the wizard's sister. They use two rockets to whizz them along. But the rockets shoot them up into the sky. Will they ever get down again? Perhaps the answer lies in their sandwiches . . .

A beautiful picture-book for very young children by the author/illustrator of the successful **Aktil's Big Swim**.  
28.5 × 22 cm 32 pages, illustrated in full colour 0 19 554319 X **£4.50**

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Hamish Hamilton



# HOW TO...make a Book Fair last all year

Wingfield Primary School stands on the edge of the Ferrier Estate in Kidbrooke, South East London. For the most part the school's children come from the estate's high rise flats and not from the relatively affluent detached and semi-detached houses of Blackheath and Greenwich which surround it.

In September 1980 the school was eleven years old and had a new headmaster who was looking around for something to signal the start of a new age with a bang. One of the teachers had wanted to try putting on a Book Week ever since he heard about one on an ILEA course. The head was enthusiastic, the staff agreed to support the idea and on 18th May 1981 Wingfield found itself at the start of a week-long Book Fair.

**David Lewis, Susan Jones and headmaster, Edward Hayter, the organising committee, pass on what they learned from the experience.**

- This isn't the sort of thing one person can 'impose' on a school. There must be consultation with all the staff and the parents. We couldn't have done it without everyone's support and help.
  - There's a lot of help and advice available. We didn't know anything to start with. We contacted Abbey Wood Comprehensive School where they'd had a Book Bang and they plugged us into the network. The NBL, the SBA, the Publishers Association all gave us ideas for what to do, who to invite, how to organise.
  - When we announced in assembly well before Christmas that we were going to have a Book Fair, it was clear that the children had absolutely no idea what it was all about. So we decided to start our build-up then and there.
- 1) We organised a 'Design a Book Fair logo' competition. In January when the children came back to school we had Book Fair badges of the winning entry and from then on the Green Octopus popped up all over the school on our own silk screen posters.

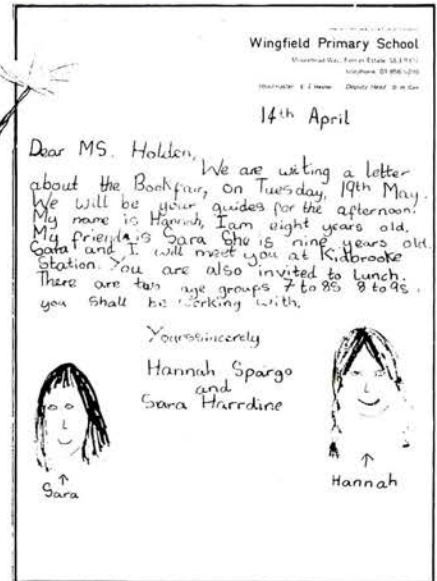


- 2) We involved the children as much as possible. When we knew which 'book people' were coming, individual pupils wrote official invitations and the replies were read out in assembly.
- 3) Once a week, or once a fortnight during the Spring term, we had news in assembly about how things were going.
- 4) When we knew Bernard Ashley was coming, we arranged for the children to watch the TV serial of *Break in the Sun* and they also saw some of our visitors' books featured on *Read On*.
- 5) Teachers organised and encouraged reading and talking about the work of people who were coming — Ian Serraillier, Leon Garfield, Nicholas Fisk, Michael Rosen, Grace Hallworth and Caroline Holden.

- 6) In the Easter holiday David Lewis went to the Puffin Show and got lots of ideas for competitions. We had seven competitions, all in the weeks before the Book Fair. We thought, correctly as it turned out, that the children would be too busy to enter in the week itself. It also proved to be good publicity.
  - 7) The older children put on a play of *Alice in Wonderland* as part of the week. Rehearsals and preparations all added to the excitement.
- We wanted to make it a community event as well so
    - 1) for two hours a day the school was open to the general public
    - 2) we organised a Family Film Show on one evening with *Watership Down*
    - 3) we invited local playgroups and a group of handicapped children to join us for events specially planned for their interest.

This worked very well.

- To involve the staff as 'celebrities' we included an 'Interest Afternoon'. Each teacher offered an activity and the whole school had a free choice of which to go to. We ended up with groups of all ages working together. It was such a success the children keep asking us to do it again.
  - During the week we had only one competition — Fancy Dress. On one morning the children could come to morning assembly dressed as a book character. The response was amazing.
  - Also during the week a group of top junior children worked as a team to produce a Book Fair Magazine which was published on the last day. They collected contributions, interviewed authors, teachers, children, reported on events. The original intention was that Michael Rosen would help in the final editing when he visited us on the Friday. In fact he was ill and unable to come. But the magazine still came out. We'd like to develop this activity if we repeat the Fair.
  - What about Money? At the beginning we really had no idea what it would cost but the head and the PTA backed us so we went ahead. We learned that to get a Greater London Arts Association grant you have to apply *in advance*. We were very lucky to be allowed a 'posthumous' application. We organised raffles and other fund-raising activities. People who came to the film made a donation.
- A local bookseller stocked and for some of the time staffed our Book Fair Bookshop. A huge amount of books was sold.
- Next time we'll make more constructive use of the massive support from parents. Schools shouldn't assume that they'll just make the tea.

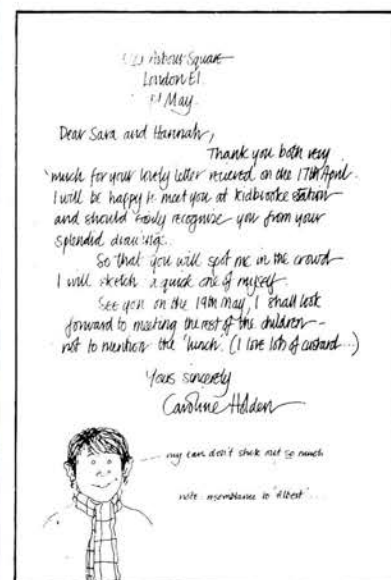


## Was it all worth it?

No doubt at all. By the time it was over the kids knew some books inside out. The enthusiasm was enormous; we had non-stop talk about books. In fact we probably didn't capitalise on it as much as we might. Maybe we were all too exhausted! But we could have made the spin-off last all year. As it is we are setting up our own bookshop.

In a press release the headmaster said 'At a time when the printed word, which is the cornerstone of a good education, is under attack through commercial and economic pressures we intend to involve our children in the wonderful world of books and to demonstrate to our parents — and we hope the local community — just how important books are to their children's education.'

We think we succeeded. And everyone had a lot of fun doing it. ●



# SALES POINT

— a page for people who sell books in schools

## GET YOUR TEETH INTO A GOOD BOOK



TASTY  
BOOKS FOR  
CHILDREN  
WHERE YOU  
SEE THIS  
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Bernard the furry Booktaster is the central figure in the Book Marketing Council's Children's Book Promotion which runs from 3rd — 17th April.

Bernard — accompanied by Beverley Mathias of the NBL — will tour the country starting in Covent Garden on 3rd April and calling at Southampton, Bristol, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Newcastle, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Bernard is taking a 'menu' of 52 books from 24 publishers on his travels and expects to be widely interviewed in the press and on radio and television.

Here is the list of questions the BMC hope will be discussed in this way during the tour:

- What effect does the absence of books have on children's education?
- What sort of situation exists in schools as a result of shortages?
- Are fewer books being used as a result of new technology, computers, etc?
- should local authorities cut other services rather than books?
- Is it the Central Government or the local authorities who should be blamed for book shortages?
- Which regions of the country have the worst levels of provision?
- Which have the best?
- What are the current best-selling school books?
- Do not publishers have a vested interest in complaining about school book provision?

The promotion is aimed at parents and children during the holidays. But it may well be that Bernard is too good a monster to miss — and the questions he wants to discuss are certainly relevant to schools in their partnership with parents and children.

If Bernard doesn't come your way, why not arrange your own Monster Booktasting next term? Posters, badges and a list of the books on the menu are available from Maggi Turfrey, BMC, The Publishers Association, 19 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3HJ.

### The visit of Pope John Paul II

On 28th May the Pope arrives in this country for a six-day visit. British publishers are well prepared.

In the adult lists Michael Joseph/Rainbird have the official biography by Lord Longford; Faber and Faber have a personal evaluation by Norman St John Stevas.

For children a biography **Pope John Paul II** by Mary Craig appears this month in hardback in the Hamish Hamilton Profiles series (0 241 10711 3, £3.25). The paperback follows in Puffin in April (0 14 03.1543 8, 80p).

A Ladybird to mark the visit also appears in April (0 7214 0733 1, 50p) with the same title. There's also a book of photographs with text by Mary Craig, **John Paul II, Welcome to Britain** (Coronet, 0 340 28355 6, £2.50 paperback).

### Coming Shortly in Paperback

Some advance information to help you prepare

#### April

Puffin are feeling pleased with themselves, as well they might, for persuading World's Work to release the paperback rights to Patricia Coombs' stories about Dorrie the little witch who is always in trouble. Four titles at once mean there's plenty on offer to fans new and old: **Dorrie and the Birthday Eggs**, **Dorrie and the Haunted House**, **Dorrie and the Goblin** and **Dorrie and the Wizard's Spell**.

Also from Puffin **Quest for the Gloop** — a sure-fire hit from Nicoll and Pienkowski. Science fiction fans (especially Steve Bowles) will be pleased to see Douglas Hill's **Day of the Starwind** (Piccolo). Also from Piccolo, for younger readers, Alison Uttley's **Tales of Little Grey Rabbit** with illustrations by Faith Jaques.

For older readers Hippo have **Summer of Fear** by Lois Duncan whose **Killing Mr Griffin** Steve Bowles judged to



be 'an impressive book with just a few minor flaws' (BFK No. 10). Also from Hippo, **Brain Benders**, over 100 word puzzles compiled, **Supergran** fans may be interested to hear, by Forrest Wilson.

## COMPETITION CORNER

### Watch this space for good ideas for competitions

#### Which Witch?

Have a display of witch, wizard and magic books. The competition uses as its starting point **Which Witch?**, Eva Ibbotson (Piccolo). Arriman the Awful, Loather of Light and Wizard of the North decides to take a wife. He organises a competition where all the local witches have to show off their blackest magic and perform impressive feats to show their power.

Imagine *you* are in the competition. What evil deed would you do to impress Arriman? Describe your magic feat and make up the spell you would say to make the magic work.

#### What about prizes?

Books obviously. But if you want to have lots of prizewinners and can't manage lots of books, think about badges (remember the kudos of winning a **Blue Peter** badge), bookmarks, bookplates, and make a big thing of the prize-giving. Or be inventive and create something to do with magic and spells.

If you have bright ideas for selling books, send them to Sales Point and share them with other school booksellers.



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## **MONEY – THE FACTS OF LIFE**

**6th edition by W. Reay Tolfree**

As part of a continuing programme of educational sponsorship this book has been produced by the Bank, in association with the publishers, Woodhead-Faulkner Limited, 17 Market Street, Cambridge.

Written for those starting in regular employment for the first time, the book contains useful information such as how wages and salaries are paid, how to look after money and how to budget. Suitable for school-leavers, students, and teachers instructing in money matters.

Copies from booksellers or, in cases of difficulty, direct from the publishers.

**Price £1.**

## **MONEY – THE FACTS OF LIFE**

### **Audio-Visual Presentation**

A new audio-visual teaching pack based on the book has now been produced, comprising four 20-minute filmstrips with accompanying cassettes, teachers' notes, suggested projects and a copy of the book.

Specifically for classroom use, the filmstrips trace the early working lives of two cartoon characters, Zack and Zelda, through numerous drawings, photographs and charts, combined with a lively informative soundtrack.

**Each pack costs £30 plus VAT and is available under special preview offer from Public Relations Department (FS), Lloyds Bank Plc, 71 Lombard Street, London EC3P 3BS.**

## Sad News for Children and Books

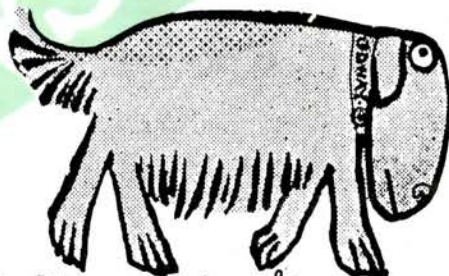
Three large gaps have appeared in the children's book world with the news of the deaths of Jill McDonald, Gareth Adamson and Peter Opie.

Working with Kaye Webb, Jill McDonald, artist and designer, literally created an image and personality for the Puffin Club and its magazine *Puffin Post*. Her brilliant use of colour, strong sure line and irresistible sense of humour made her work instantly recognisable and instantly appealing. It would be difficult to say which of her many creations was the best-loved, but a strong contender must be fat Puffin, or Odway, the dog with philosophical problems, who provoked a strong and deep response from many of the quarter of a million members of the Puffin Club whom she served so caringly.

Of her twelve picture books *Maggy Scraggle* and *The Pirate's Tale* — based on a story from a five-year-old Puffineer — were possibly her favourites. Kaye Webb writes of her: 'Everything she drew or wrote contained the same joyfulness and delight in life which was the essence of her personality.' Her death at the age of only fifty-four is a great sadness and a great loss.

Gareth Adamson and his wife, Jean, worked together writing and illustrating the *Topsy* and *Tim* books for over twenty-one years. The twins, their family and their everyday adventures and exploits have been a much-loved part of the lives of millions of children, bringing warmth, reassurance and humour. Gareth's tirelessness in visiting schools and book fairs and his sense of fun won him the popularity of children all over the country.

Peter Opie with his wife Iona did more perhaps than anyone else to establish the world of childhood as a proper subject for research and study. Their books, *The Lore and Language of Children* and *Children's Games in Street and Playground* are required and fascinating reading for anyone who claims an interest in what makes children tick. As indispensable and enlightening is their work on *Nursery Rhymes and Fairy Tales*. We would all be poorer and less well-informed without the work of Peter Opie. While regretting his death we should be grateful for his curiosity, his scholarship and his love and respect for children.



Odway, Jill McDonald's creation for *Puffin Post*

*Odway ponders the great mystery of the universe*



Gareth Adamson, photo by Barbara Liles



Iona & Peter Opie



### Easter Holiday Institution

7 - 17th April. The Fifteenth Puffin Exhibition Starts at 2.00 p.m. on 7th April with a Grand Fancy Dress opening — come as your favourite London character.

The Bishopsgate Institute (opposite Liverpool Street Station), London EC2. Open 10.30 a.m. — 5.00 p.m. from 8th April. Closed Sunday, 11th April. Puffin Club members 50p. Non-members 75p. Discount for groups of 10 or more only in advance. Phone 01-759 5722.

This year Puffins are creating a Book City complete with Magic Mews, Spook Street, Adventure Arcade. As usual lots of activities, competitions and visits from authors and illustrators.

### Puffins Ring the Bell

From 9th April British Telecom's Bedtime Story Service will be replaced by

**Puffins Storyline.** If you dial-a-story you will hear a story, extract or poems from a Puffin book, perhaps read by its author. The service will be launched by Roald Dahl - reading from *The Twits*. After each call details of the book will be given. A poster with all the titles to be featured will be available in April from the Children's Marketing Department, Penguin Books, 536 King's Road, London SW10 0UH.

### Suck it and Read

At the beginning of May Puffins launch what they call the first edible book token. As a result of a Puffin/Trebor deal, children will get a free Puffin book in exchange for tokens from ten tubes of Refreshers plus postage. Twenty books are on offer and with each book goes a Puffin Reading Chart to help parents encourage their children's reading.

Trebor say they are keen to make a worthwhile contribution to family life at a time when parents and schools are feeling the financial squeeze. Puffin hope to get to children and parents who may not be traditional bookbuyers or bookshop customers.

It's a bold and enterprising move, but bound to provoke a reaction from the dental care lobby. Perhaps Puffin should have got a toothpaste manufacturer involved as well — just to safeguard the image!

### The Annual Children's Poetry Competition

This year the Poetry Society has got Puffin and Kestrel Books, British Rail, Book Tokens and Books for Students involved in its Annual Poetry Competition for Children and seems to be promoting it as never before. Well done, the Poetry Society. The competition which closes on 16th August is open to poets up to the age of 16. The judges are Kit Wright, Kaye Webb and Joanne Edwards (one of last year's winners and a pupil at Bill Boyle's school).

The explanatory leaflet is packed with information — worth sending for even if you don't intend to enter. Write to the Education Officer, The Poetry Society, 21 Earls Court Square, London SW5 9DE, tel. 01-373 7861/2.

### Book Events Ahead

28th April, 2.30 p.m., Loughborough University. Elaine Moss delivers the fifth Annual Woodfield Lecture on children's literature. Her subject: *A Sense of Community*. Admission free. Details from Margaret Fearn, tel. 0509 63171, ext. 5041.

20th May, Birmingham. A one-day seminar on *The Art of the Strip* — children's comics, past, present and future. Organised by IBBY. Details from Judith Elkin, tel. 021 744 1928.

### Useful Information

**A Choice of Stories**, selected by Jill Bennett for the School Library Association, 0 900641 40 1, £1.80 (SLA members £1.30).

The second in a series of three booklists designed to help teachers and librarians in primary schools build up well-balanced collections of books. Three sections: Picture Books; Folk and Fairy Tales, Myths and Legends; and Story Books. Plus an introductory essay.

Available from the SLA, Victoria House, 29-31 George Street, Oxford OX1 2AY.

### Children's Book Week

It's not too early to start thinking about an event for CBW (2nd — 9th October). The arrangements for booking authors are a little different this year.

If you are on the CBW mailing list you will already have received a letter explaining the new system. If you are new to the game or haven't had a letter, contact the Centre for Children's Books, CBW, Book House, 45 East Hill, Wandsworth, London SW18 2QZ, which is co-ordinating the scheme, or get in touch with your County Librarian or Education Advisers who may be helping to organise events locally.

In any case DON'T DELAY — we expect all author bookings to be confirmed by the end of JUNE.