



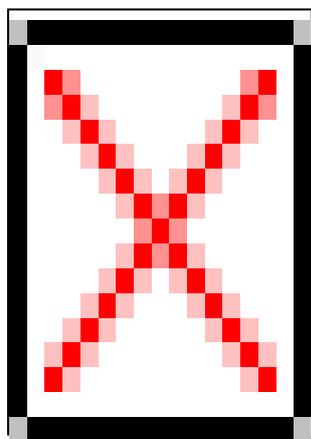
Books of the Year 2014

[209](#) [1]

Byline:

Chosen by leading children's booksellers.

A regular feature in **Books for Keeps** is our **Brilliant Bookshop** article, in which specialist children's booksellers comment on what is going on in their bookshop, highlight new and old favourites and describe special events. We asked some of the brilliant booksellers at those bookshops to pick out their Books of the Year 2014 (in just one hundred words). Here are their selections.



Sue Lake of [White Rose Books](#) [2]

Wonderful World by our own lovely local author, Tim Hopgood (with a little help from Louis Armstrong!) is a glorious, colourful picture book with CD. Another favourite celebrating our wonderful world is **Animalium** ? a sumptuous collection of creatures on every page. Thirdly, we've chosen an altogether quieter book, **Rooftoppers** by Katherine Rundell, for primary school girls and boys. Who could resist a chase across Parisian rooftops? Or the first line, ?On the morning of its first birthday a baby was found floating in a cello case in the middle of the English Channel.??

Tony Higginson of the **Formby Bookshop**

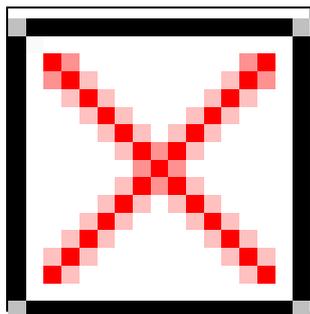
As far as we are concerned, children's books are the last bastion of quality, choice and originality. Our customers esteem top names and new talent equally, and prices don't seem to matter as much as they do in adult books.

When you see a Sarah McIntyre or a Kate Pankhurst book you know you are in for a treat. Joseph Delaney remains our own favourite: he is still improving with every book. We adore Stewart & Riddell, they do it all. New names doing well include Rachel Lyon with **I Wish I'd been Born a Unicorn** and demonstrate that there is still freshness. [Rain](#) [3] by Virginia Bergin is our hot YA tip too.

ALMA 2015 nominee, [Letterbox Library](#) [4], are specialists in selling inclusive children's books.

Our 2014 Top Inclusion Picks are: [5][Zeki Loves Baby Club](#) [6] ? scrumptious, perfectly smudgy illustrations bring a glow to a wiggling, zooming group of toddlers. The intrepid Stella negotiates with a goggly-eyed fishy monster in **The Great Googly Moogly** by Courtney Dicmas. Dan Lyndon's **Black History** series is the best account we've seen yet; a

strong, authentic voice delivers a satisfyingly complex but accessible historical overview. Starting with a wing beat and then a puff of air, **The Butterfly** is part Chaos Theory, part hymn to our inter-connectedness. Finally, [Hate \[7\]](#) by Alan Gibbons is our teen must-read, an intricate story about difference and prejudice told from multiple points of view.



The [Big Green Bookshop \[8\]](#)

Supertato by Sue Hendra captures an escapee (sic) in an action-packed picture book filled with super powers (super-strength, super-speed and a flannel-and-soapy-water) and jokes (?This jelly tastes of Pea!?) good to read aloud, and you can play 'spot the pea' on the last page.

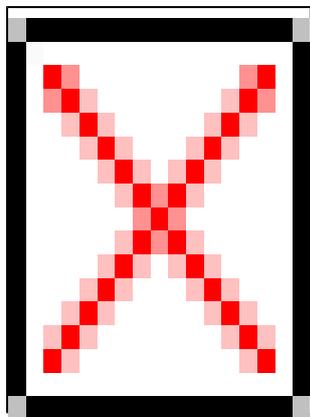
In **Oi Frog** by Kes Grey the Cat on the Mat is determined that the Frog should sit on a Log because it is the 'right thing'. Frog is not so sure. Logs are uncomfortable, and you get splinters in your bottom. Cat produces evidence to prove that frogs should sit on logs (mules sit on stools, pumas sit on satsuma, and lions sit on irons). A very funny book with a lovely twist to the tail.

Steve Adams of the [Willesden Bookshop \[9\]](#)

No.1 Car-Spotter Goes to School is the latest in Atinuke's brilliantly funny series about a boy living in a small African village which ? apart from a nearby road ? he describes as 'lost in the bush'. In fact, village life is disturbed by many a comic collision with modernity which, in this instance, takes the shape of a black American and his Nintendo-obsessed son whose car is brought to a halt by marauding village cows. No.1 befriends the pair and studies their urban manners and lifestyle with an enthusiasm normally reserved for car-spotting and when a school opens locally he must decide if their gadgets, computers and books have a place in his own future.

Katie Clapham of [Storytellers Inc \[10\]](#)

Kate Saunders's [Five Children on the Western Front \[11\]](#) is a tremendous achievement: faithful to the charm and



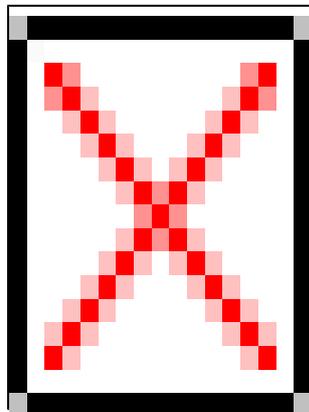
sentiment of Nesbit's original sand fairy story, the Psammead's magic is re-awakened in a war-time setting in this moving and memorable novel that deserves to become a future classic in its own right. A sensitive and timely testament to the enduring appeal of classic children's literature, Saunders has written a truly beautiful book that should be shared with every member of the family.

Sonia Benster at the **Huddersfield Children's Bookshop**

These books are guaranteed to appeal to pre-school and reception classes.

[Chicken Clicking](#) [12] gives off a subliminal message about the dangers of the internet in a very palatable form for the very young. When Chick discovers that a 'click' on the computer can yield gifts for everyone, she is encouraged to venture further to find a friend ? and realises that all is not what it seems. **The Pigeon Needs a Bath** is an encounter every parent has with a stropky, manipulative child. Very funny on many levels and perfect for reading to a toddler at bath-time. **Sam and Dave Dig a Hole** is told in a deadpan fashion with clever pictures that hold the clues. Maybe you get it first time, maybe it takes a while to spot the joke ?

Tamara Macfarlane of **Tales on Moon Lane**



The Sleeper and the Spindle by Neil Gaiman and illustrated by Chris Riddell is a retelling of the Sleeping Beauty story, in which the Queen of Kanselaire sets off on a quest to rescue the cursed Beauty.

Chris Riddell's beautiful illustrations perfectly complement Gaiman's brave new version of a timeless classic. The author/illustrator team combine to add new layers of sophistication, making this a perfect fairy tale for older readers.

Frances Hopkins of the [Urmston Bookshop](#) [13]

I love picture books and this year has been a bumper year for them but the one that really stands out for me is **Oi Frog** by Kes Gray and Jim Field. This is a really entertaining rhyming tale about a frog's dismay when he is told by a bossy cat that all animals have their special places to sit. Cats sit on mats, hares sit on chairs, mules sit on stools and gofers sit on sofas but the problem is that Frog does not want to sit on a log! The rhyme is simple but so effective and the frog's facial expressions are hilarious. This book is perfect for bedtime but also for classrooms where it can be used to develop phonic skills. Learning and laughing at the same time ? what a combination!

[Seven Stories](#) [14]

[Over the Hills and Far Away](#) [15] by Elizabeth Hammill is a beautiful illustrated collection of nursery rhymes from all over the English-speaking world. This ground breaking and comprehensive collection contains all the best-loved nursery rhymes, but also some new discoveries, and vibrant rhymes from Native American, First Nation, Inuit and Maori cultures. With over 150 rhymes and 70 contributions from award-winning illustrators and emerging talent, there is something for all artistic tastes and preferences. Whether it is nostalgia, introducing little ones to classic rhymes or discovering new ones from around the world, this book is rich in both content and style.

Books

Wonderful World, Bob Thiele, George David Weiss, illus Tim Hopgood, Oxford Children's Books, 978-0192736901, £12.99 hbk & CD

Animalium, Jenny Broom, illus Katie Scott, Big Picture Press, 978-1783700608, £20 hbk

Rooftoppers, Katherine Rundell, Faber and Faber, 978-0571280599, £6.99 pbk

I wish I'd Been Born a Unicorn, Rachel Lyon, illus Andrea Ringli, Maverick, 978-1848861176, £6.99 pbk

The Rain, Virginia Bergin, Macmillan, 978-1447266068, £6.99 pbk

Zeki Loves Baby Club by Anna McQuinn, ill. Ruth Hearson, Alanna Books, 978-1907825101, £7.99 pbk

The Great Googly Moogly by Courtney Dicmas, Child's Play, 978-1846436390, £5.99 pbk

Black History (paperback issue) by Dan Lyndon, 5 in series, Franklin Watts.

The Butterfly, Roger Vaughan, illus Ann James, Walker (new edition), 978-1921977664, £6.99 pbk

Hate, Alan Gibbons, Orion, 978-1780621760, £9.99 pbk

Oi Frog, Hodder Children's Books, Kes Gray, illus Jim Field, 978-1444910865, £6.99 pbk

Supertato, Sue Hendra, Simon and Schuster, 978-0857074478, £6.99 pbk

No.1 Car-Spotter Goes to School, Atinuke, illus Warwick Johnson Cadwell, Walker, 9781406342925, £4.99 pbk

Five Children on the Western Front, Kate Saunders, Faber and Faber, 978-0571310951, £10.99 hbk

Chicken Clicking by Jeanne Willis and Tony Ross 978-1783440528 Anderson Press £11.99 hbk

The Pigeon Needs a Bath by Mo Willems 978-1406357783 Walker £6.99 pbk

Sam and Dave Dig a Hole by Mac Barnett and Jon Klassen 978-1406357769 Walker £11.99

Over the Hills and Far Away, edited Elizabeth Hammill, Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 978-1847804068, £14.99

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