

**National
Literacy
Trust**

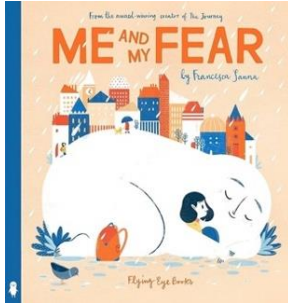
Change your story

Young Readers Programme

Wellbeing Booklist

Picturebooks

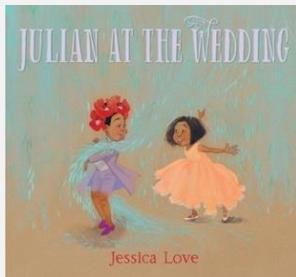
A wide range of books that explore themes of family, nature, empathy and love. You can find all of these titles on Browns [here](#).



Me and My Fear by Francesca Sanna | Identity and Emotions

Written and illustrated by Francesca Sanna, an Italian author and illustrator known for her compassionate approach to addressing the complex emotions that children can feel when facing significant life changes. The story is about a young girl who has an imaginary friend named Fear. Fear follows her everywhere and grows bigger as she encounters new people, places, and experiences. The book beautifully encapsulates the theme of overcoming anxiety and finding courage through friendships and connections.

Interest Age: 5-8 Reading Age: 5+



Julian at the Wedding by Jessica Love | Self-acceptance and Growth

A heart-warming story that explores themes of love, self-acceptance, and the joy of celebrating special moments. Julian, a young transgender boy, is invited to a wedding in a magical forest, where he forms a special bond with Marisol, the bride's niece. Together, they explore the enchanting surroundings and have their own adventures. With stunning illustrations and a message of inclusion, the book encourages young readers to embrace diversity and be proud of their identities.

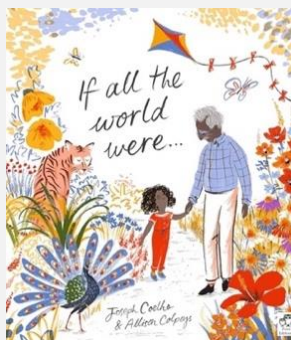
Interest Age: 5-8 Reading Age: 5+



Sunny and the Birds by Wendy Meddour | Empathy and Nature

The story follows Sunny, a young boy with a special connection to birds, and through Meddour's vivid illustrations, readers are transported into his world of feathered friends and soothing melodies. The story celebrates the bond between humans and nature, highlighting the healing power of connection and empathy. It reminds young readers that amidst life's challenges, nature's beauty offers solace and inspiration. Meddour's book is a delightful and inspiring tale that encourages young readers to spread their wings and embrace the enchantment of the world around them.

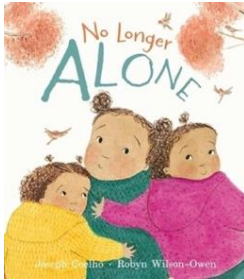
Interest Age: 5-8+ Reading Age: 5+



If All the World Were by Joseph Coelho | Family and Love

Within the pages of "If All the World Were", readers embark on a poetic journey through the profound emotions of love, loss, and the timeless power of cherished memories. This book envelops us in the story of a young girl and her beloved grandad. As he departs from this world, their shared moments become precious treasures, and love endures in the face of grief. Joseph Coelho's lyrical prose, paired with Allison Colpoys' evocative illustrations, paints a portrait of enduring memories. A touching narrative that invites children to contemplate the everlasting impact of love and connection.

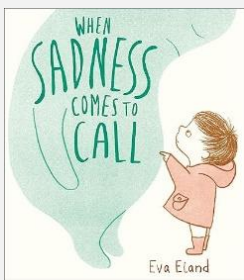
Interest Age: 3-6 Reading Age: 4+



No Longer Alone by Joseph Coelho | Significant Others and Feelings

The story follows a little girl as she tries to understand her sad emotions and navigate through the world around her. The book helps children to deal with emotions after losing someone important or special. It offers an insightful take on how children feel and perceive the world and it's perfectly complimented by gorgeous illustrations from Robyn Wilson-Owen.

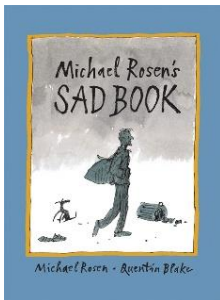
Interest age: 4-5 Reading age: 4+



When Sadness Comes to Call by Eva Eland | Emotional Well-being

"Sometimes sadness arrives unexpectedly. It lingers, touching every part of us." The book offers young readers a guide to express feelings and seeking support. It is like a warm hug, telling children that it's okay to have sad days and that they won't last forever. So, if you're looking for a gentle way to talk to your child about sadness, this book is a perfect choice.

Interest age: 4-8 Reading age: 4+



Michael Rosen's Sad Book by Michael Rosen | Family and Feelings

In this picture book, Rosen shares his personal journey of coping with the death of his son. The book offers a sensitive portrayal of grief, making it valuable for both children and adults dealing with loss, while also emphasizing the importance of talking about one's feelings and seeking support during difficult times. A touching piece to be added to your bookshelves.

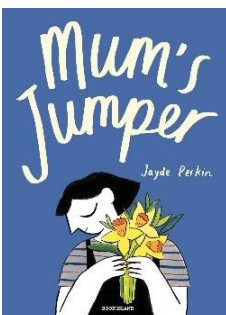
Interest age: 6+ Reading age: 6+



Meesha Makes Friends by Tom Percival | Friendships and Inclusivity

Masha has a passion for crafting, but she struggles to make friends. Using her creative talents, she crafts a group of friends from paper, paint, fabric, and everyday objects. The book carries themes of kindness, acceptance, and forming friendships when growing up, making it a perfect addition to any children's library.

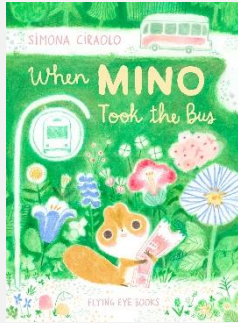
Interest age: 4-5 Reading age: 4+



Mum's Jumper by Jayde Perkin | Loss and Family

In "Mum's Jumper" by Jayde Perkin, a young girl learns to cope with the absence of her mum. The emptiness feels like a dark cloud that never goes away. But memories of past times act like a warm, comforting jumper she can hold onto. The book beautifully conveys the idea that memories help keep loved ones close, even when they're gone. A warm, uplifting story for anyone coping with the loss of loved ones.

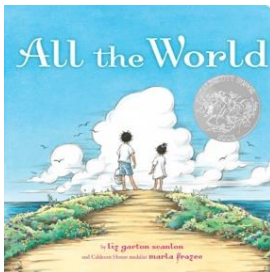
Interest age: 4-8 Reading age: 5+



When Mino Took the Bus by Simona Ciarolo | Adventure and Growth

Mino is turning eight weeks old, which is a big deal for a chipmunk. Today, he is about to explore the bigger world on his own. With charming illustrations, the book takes readers on a journey of discovery, friendship, and the joy of exploring the world beyond one's comfort zone. Through Mino's adventure, the book conveys a message of courage and to experience new things. It's a tale of curiosity and the wonderful surprises that can happen when you dare to take a chance.

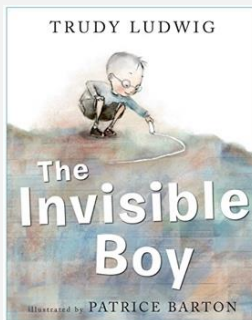
Interest age: 3-7 Reading age: 4+



All the World by Liz Garton Scanlon | Love and Community

Written by Liz Garton Scanlon and illustrated by Marla Frazee. Liz is an American author known for her ability to explore childhood, family and the wonder of everyday life in children's literature. The story is a series of vignettes that follow a diverse group of people, from a family at the beach to farmers in the fields, as they go about their everyday activities. It explores the idea that we are all part of a larger world, and our actions and emotions have an impact on others. It encourages children to appreciate the beauty of the world around them and the importance of love, community, and shared experiences.

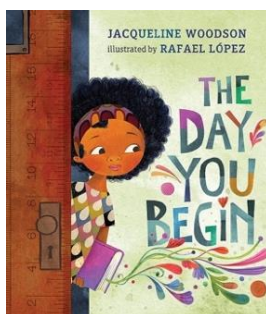
Interest age: 5-8 Reading age: 5+



The Invisible Boy by Trudy Ludwig | Friendship and School

The story focuses on a young boy named Brian, who often feels invisible and left out at school. He is quiet and unnoticed by his classmates, and he struggles to connect with others. However, when a new student named Justin arrives and befriends Brian, the power of kindness and inclusion gradually helps Brian come out of his shell and become visible to his peers. The book explores themes of friendship, kindness, empathy, and the impact of inclusion. It highlights the importance of recognizing and valuing the feelings and contributions of those who may be overlooked or marginalized.

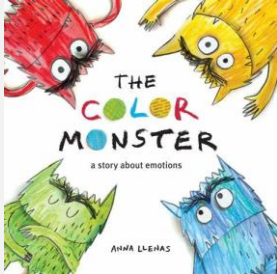
Interest age: 5-8 Reading age: 5+



The Day You Begin by Jacqueline Woodson | Self-Acceptance and Inclusivity

The book tells the story of a young girl who feels like an outsider when she starts a new school. Because of her unique experiences and background, she is initially hesitant to share her stories and fears that she won't be accepted by her classmates. However, as she gradually opens up, she discovers that everyone has their own unique stories and differences, and this realisation helps her form friendships with her peers. Woodson's storytelling celebrates the power of embracing diversity and the strength that comes from connecting with others who may have different backgrounds or perspectives.

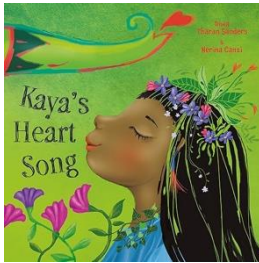
Interest age: 5-8 Reading age: 5+



The Color Monsters by Anna Llenas | Emotions and Feeling

A little monster is feeling all mixed up inside. His emotions are represented by different colours, but he can't quite understand how he feels. With the help of a friend, the monster learns to identify his emotions. The book serves as a tool for children to recognize and express their emotions. It teaches them that it's okay to experience ups and downs in life; and there are ways to navigate and express those feelings. The colourful illustrations make it engaging and accessible to children, making it easier for them to relate to the emotions being depicted.

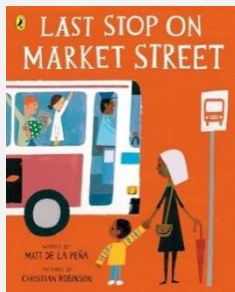
Interest age: 5-8 Reading age: 5+



Kaya's Heart Song by Diwa Tharan Sanders | Nature and Mindfulness

“Let me tell you a secret—if you have a heart song, anything is possible. Even magic!” The story follows the journey of Kaya, a young girl searching for her heart song. As she explores the natural world, she encounters different animals, each with its own unique sound and heart song. While the book's longer text and abstract subject suggest a slightly older readership than most picture books, its bright colours and vivid illustrations will capture younger eyes.

Interest age: 3-5 Reading age: 3+



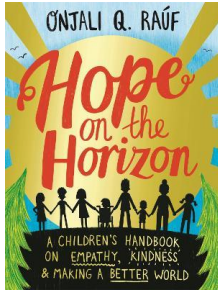
Last Stop on Market Street by Matt de la Peña | Gratitude and Positivity

The story follows the journey of young CJ and his grandmother as they take a bus ride through their city. As they travel, CJ questions why they don't have the same luxuries as some of their peers, but his wise grandmother helps him see the beauty and richness of their urban community. This story celebrates the magic in everyday life, the importance of gratitude, and the bond between generations, offering valuable lessons about empathy and appreciating the world around us.

Interest age: 5-8 Reading age: 5+

Chapterbooks

These books explore themes of family, nature, empathy and love.



Hope on the Horizon by Onjali Q. Raúf | Positivity and Mindsets

A handbook that focuses on empathy, kindness, and how to positively impact the world. “No one is too small to make a change.” The book is divided into ten chapters, each sharing a “secret” for creating positive changes and turning the world into a better place. The main themes revolve around empathy, kindness, and individual actions that can contribute to a better world. It encourages children to be mindful of the positive impact they can have on society by exemplifying traits such as kindness, hope, and friendship.

Interest age: 8-11 Reading age: 8+



Cloud Boy by Marcia Williams | Friendships and Growth

The novel unfolds through friendship between Angie and Harry, who consider themselves almost like twins. They share a world of cloud-spotting, sweet-eating, and dreams of building their dream treehouse in the upcoming summer. However, when Harry is suddenly taken to hospital for his persistent headaches, he needs Angie more than ever. Told through Angie's lively diary entries, this bittersweet tale explores friendship, resilience, and the challenges of growing up as the duo faces unexpected adversity.

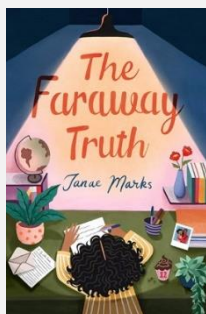
Interest age: 9-11 Reading age: 9+



Running on Empty by S. E. Durrant | Friendships and Resilience

The story delves into the life of AJ, a 12-year-old boy grappling with the loss of his mother and his father's absence. Living with his caring but overwhelmed grandfather, Poppy, AJ finds solace in an abandoned railway carriage. When Emily, a new girl at school, stumbles upon his hideaway, their unexpected friendship becomes a source of healing. Durrant beautifully explores themes of family, friendship, resilience, and the power of connection, painting a touching portrait of two young souls navigating the complexities of life and loss.

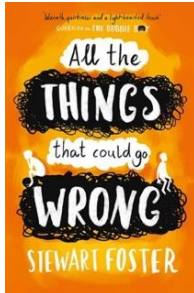
Interest age: 9-12 Reading age: 9+



The Faraway Truth by Janae Marks | Mixed-raced Family and Justice

Zoe loves baking and dreams of becoming a cook on TV shows. On her 12th birthday, a letter arrives from her father in prison, stating that he may not have committed the crime for which he is in prison for. Determined to uncover the truth, Zoe embarks on a journey to find a missing witness who may hold the key to her father's innocence. The novel explores themes of family, forgiveness, and the power of determination, offering a heartwarming tale for young readers.

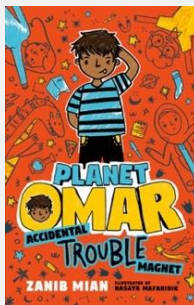
Interest age: 9-11 Reading age: 8+



All the Things That Could Go Wrong by Stewart Foster | Family and Love

Alex is an introverted boy who faces severe anxiety, while Dan is the school bully with his own hidden struggles. As they reluctantly get to know each other, their lives become intertwined, revealing the depth of their personal challenges. The novel explores themes of friendship, empathy, and the complexities of mental health. A perfect piece for young readers.

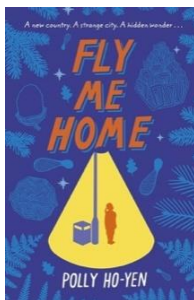
Interest age: 9-11 Reading age: 9+



Planet Omar: Accidental Trouble Magnet by Zanib Mian | Humor and Diversity

A humorous middle-grade novel that introduces readers to Omar, a Muslim boy navigating the challenges of being the new kid at school. As Omar juggles his quirky family and the ups and downs of school life, readers follow his adventures and misadventures. The book is featured with huge imaginations and addresses themes of friendship, family, and finding one's place in the world.

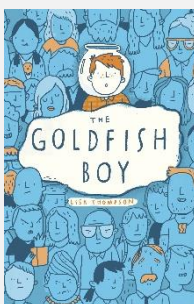
Interest age: 8-11 Reading age: 8+



Fly Me Home by Polly Ho-Yen | LGBT and Family

Feeling lost and alone in London, Leelu wishes she could fly back home. Struggling to adapt to her new life and missing her father terribly, Leelu discovers solace in caring for a group of pigeons. However, her world becomes even more uncertain when her mother falls seriously ill. This story explores themes of resilience, belonging, and the universal desire to find home amid adversity.

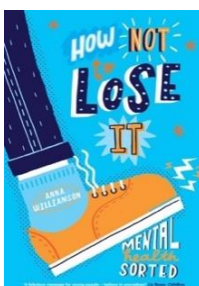
Interest age: 9-12 Reading age: 9+



The Goldfish Boy by Lisa Thompson | OCD and Mental Health

Matthew Corbin is a 12-year-old boy whose life revolves around his bedroom window due to his severe obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). However, his world takes an unexpected turn when a toddler goes missing in his neighbourhood. With the help of his friend Melody, Matthew finds himself drawn into a compelling mystery. The novel navigates the challenges of OCD while weaving a story of friendship, courage, and triumph over personal fears.

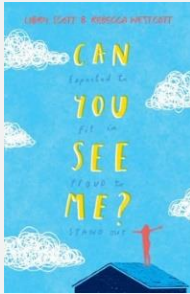
Interest age: 9-12 Reading age: 9+



How Not to Lose It: Mental Health by Anna Williamson | Emotional Well-being

The book is a valuable guide for young readers on managing their mental health. With relatable advice and anecdotes, Williamson offers strategies to cope with the ups and downs of life, including stress, anxiety, and self-esteem issues. This book equips young people with the tools to navigate their emotional well-being, promoting resilience and mental health awareness in an approachable and informative manner.

Interest age: 9-14 Reading age: 9+



Can You See Me by Libby Scott and Rebecca Westcott | Autism and Friendships

Tally is a young autistic girl who is worried about her upcoming secondary school life. Readers follow her struggles as she navigates through the challenges of social interaction, sensory overload, and the desire to be truly seen and understood. This novel not only sheds light on the experiences of individuals with autism but also celebrates the power of friendship and acceptance, which is suitable for both young readers and adults seeking insight into neurodiversity.

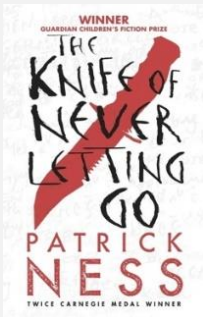
Interest age: 9-11 Reading age: 9+



Worry Angels by Sita Brahmachari | Refugee experience and Friendships

The story revolves around Amy-May, a young girl struggling to cope with anxieties of her life. Her parents have divorced, and her dad has moved far away to a remote cottage. Luckily, Amy finds solace at Grace's art school, where she rediscovers the beauty of simple activities, such as drawing, crafts, growing, and cooking. Guided by a supportive and inspirational teacher, Amy starts to gather the courage to adjust to her new school life. The novel explores themes of mental health, friendship, and the importance of reaching out for support during challenging times.

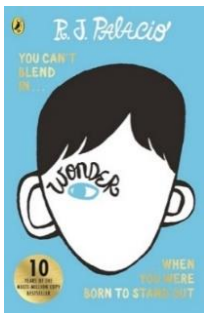
Interest age: 8-12 Reading age: 8+



The Knife of Never Letting Go by Patrick Ness | Dystopia and Adventure

In the haunting dystopian world where everyone's thoughts can be heard by each other, Todd Hewitt's life is a discordant symphony of exposed emotions and unrelenting noise. In the town of Prentisstown, where Todd resides, a mysterious virus "Noise" has plagued the population. Fleeing the town and its sinister secrets, Todd embarks on a journey with Viola, a girl who crashed onto their planet. This novel explores themes of communication, identity, and the consequences of a world without secrets, making it a must read for young readers.

Interest age: 12+ Reading age: 12+



Wonder by R.J. Palacio | Disability and Family

The novel tells the story of August Pullman, a young boy with facial differences who embarks on his first year of public school, after being home-schooled for years. As August navigates the challenges of fitting in and facing the reactions of his classmates, the story unfolds from multiple perspectives, providing insight into the lives and struggles of those around him. This book explores themes of empathy, kindness, and the power of embracing differences, making it an inspirational read for readers of all ages.

Interest age: 9-12 Reading age: 9+