



# The School Reading List

Suggested reading books for primary & secondary aged children in the UK

EYFS & KS1 BOOKS

KS2 BOOKS

KS3-5 BOOKS

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## Suggested reading list for Year 6 pupils in KS2 age 10-11

by **Tom Tolkien** and last updated on [December 28, 2021](#)

**Books for Year 6 – here’s our selection of recommended titles chosen by experienced teachers and librarians.** Are you looking for a storybook for the classroom, the library, or your child’s collection, or choosing titles for a class reading list, or curriculum spine of year 6 books to motivate your pupil to read more? The following list contains 40 titles for children aged 10-11 in KS2 of primary school, suitable for individual reading, paired reading, class teaching, and book clubs. These age-appropriate reading for pleasure recommendations for 10-year-old pupils consist of a variety of fiction and nonfiction books for all ability ranges and interests. The books in this list are reviewed termly and include middle-grade novels and stories by Jamila Gavin, Onjali Rauf, David Almond, Lara Williamson, JRR Tolkien, Michelle Magorian, Zizou Corder and Nina Bawden.

 For book prices and ordering, click on the cover image. [International orders click here](#)

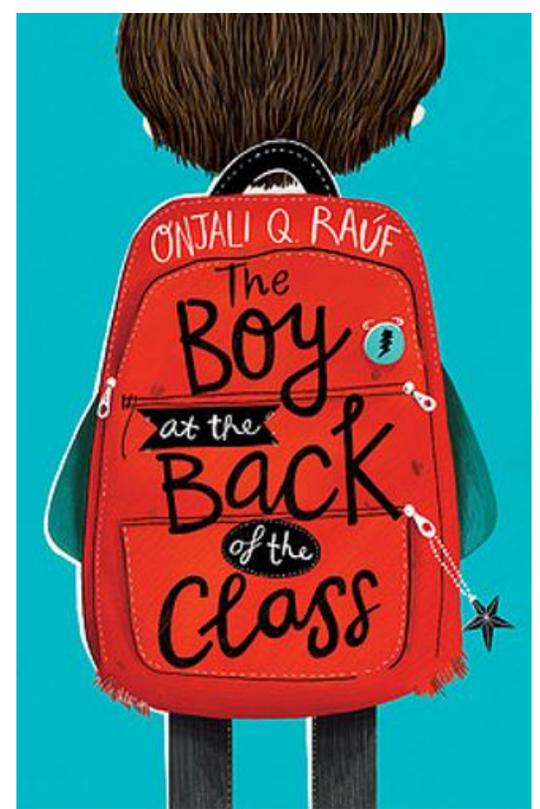
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### Books for Year 6 – our recommendations

#### The Boy At the Back of the Class by Onjali Rauf

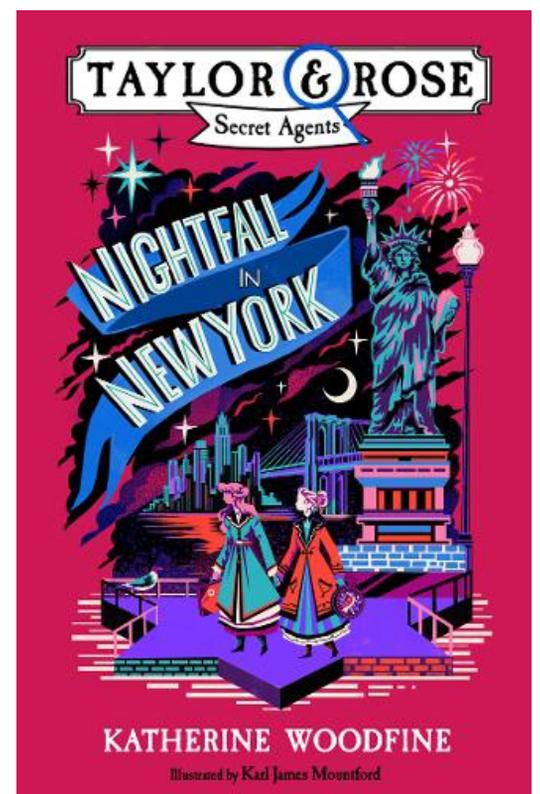
Narrated in the first person by Ahmet, a nine-year-old Syrian refugee, this story follows how he copes with life in London, and how he plans to find the family he left behind. A masterpiece of

empathy with situations and storylines that pupils will relate to, this is an excellent book to spark discussion, hot seating, and creative writing in Year 6 literacy and English lessons.



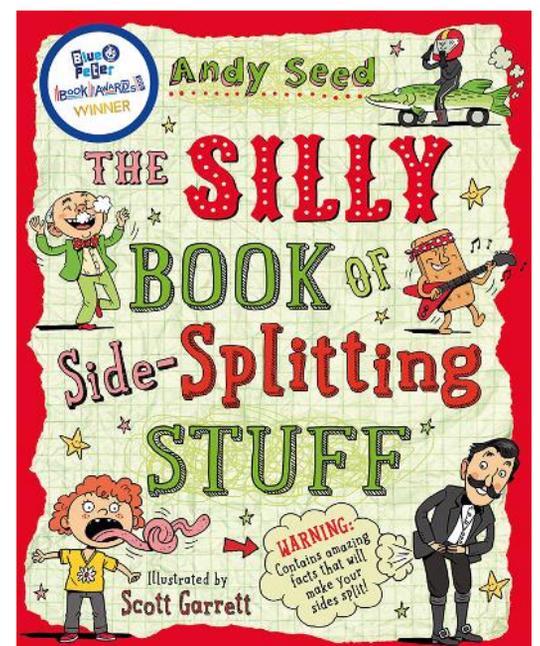
## Nightfall in New York by Katherine Woodfine

The gloriously atmospheric and enigmatic quest story sees young heroines Sophie and Lil cross the Atlantic Ocean to New York in search of their captive friend. However, the dangerous and shadowy Fraternitas have other ideas and will stop at nothing to thwart their rescue attempt. A perfect class reader for year 6 teachers who are looking for a new Titanic era text.



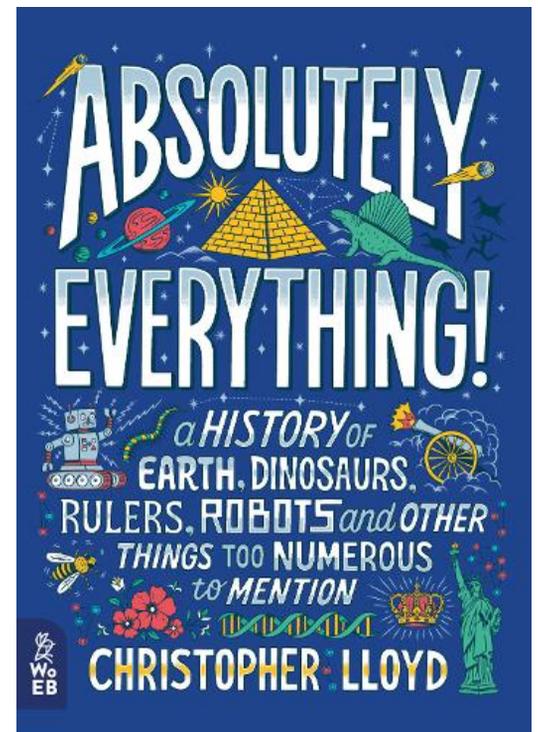
## The Silly Book of Side-Splitting Stuff by Andy Seed

An extremely funny book of facts and true stories which will appeal to reluctant readers. Bright and engaging illustrations. A great book for year 6s to dip into.



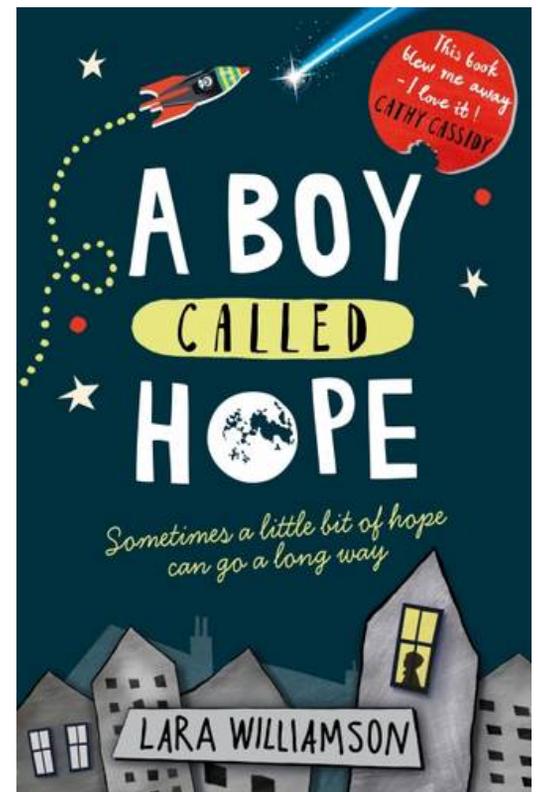
## Absolutely Everything by Christopher Lloyd

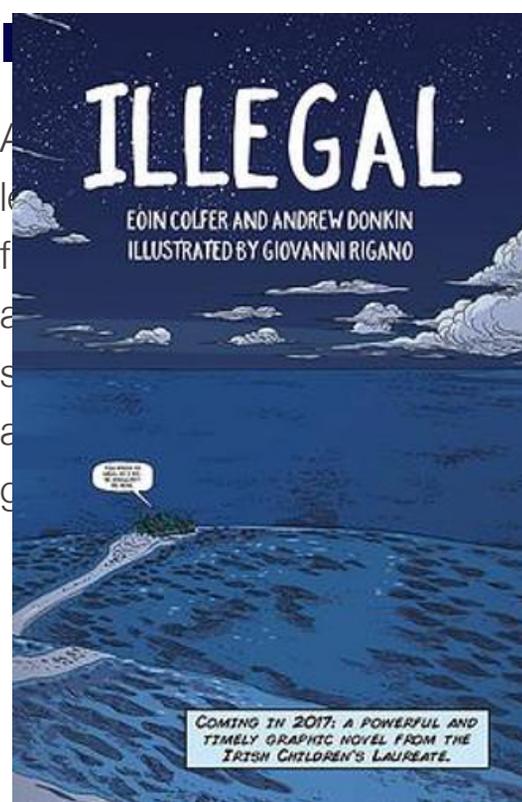
“A History of Earth, Dinosaurs, Rulers, Robots and Other Things Too Numerous” – this fantastic and unique non-fiction book is highly recommended to stretch and encourage inquisitive children and encourage critical thinking. This is a brilliant resource for any year 6 classroom or your 10-year old’s bookshelf at home. Read [our review](#) for more details.



## A Boy Called Hope by Lara Williamson

An original and interesting peek into the life of Dan Hope and his dysfunctional family. Touching and thought-provoking, this is an excellent book to read after Wonder and a great book to discuss with Year 6 pupils in PSHE. This story is a brilliant study of family relationships and changing friendships.

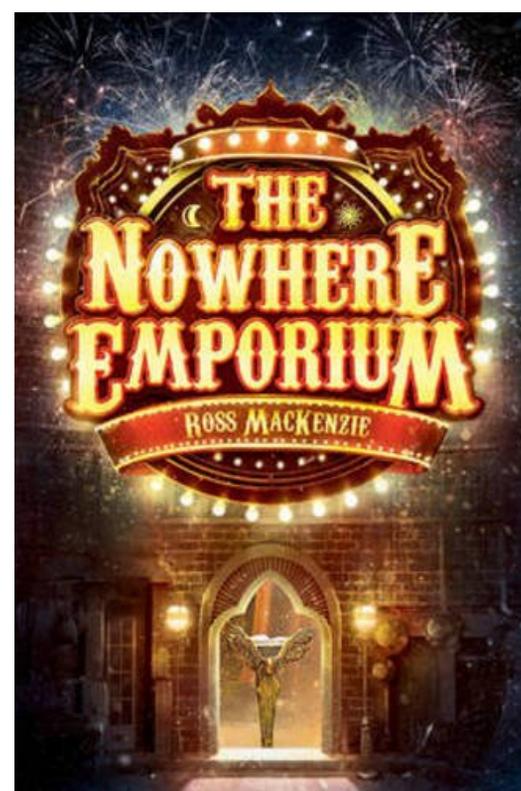




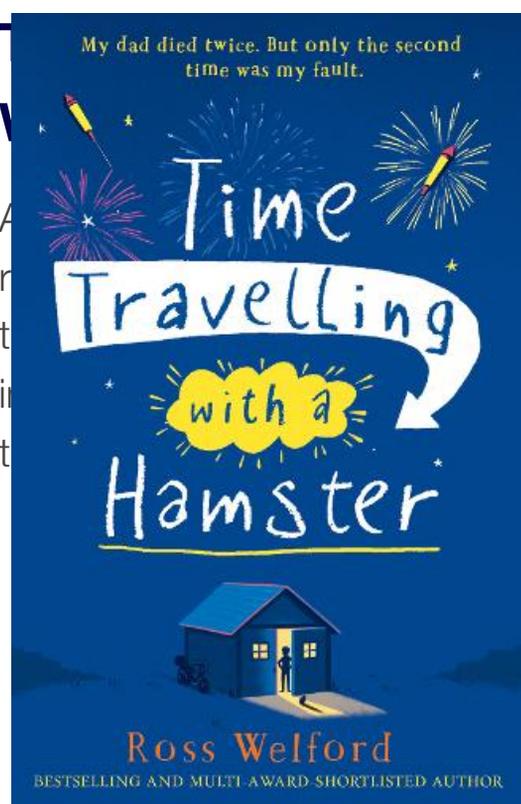
markling text and dialogue. Ebo is appears and his sister has already n epic and dangerous journey ngerous city streets to reach the nd find his family. An accessible this is an ideal year 6 book for

## **The Nowhere Emporium by Ross Mackenzie**

When a strange shop appears out of nowhere, Daniel finds himself drawn into the mysterious building and its never-ending passages and surprises. He starts working for the owner – Mr Silver – but when Mr Silver vanishes into thin air, Daniel has to face threats and dark forces to save the Emporium. With rich language and sharply written descriptions, this is a great class reader book for Year 6.



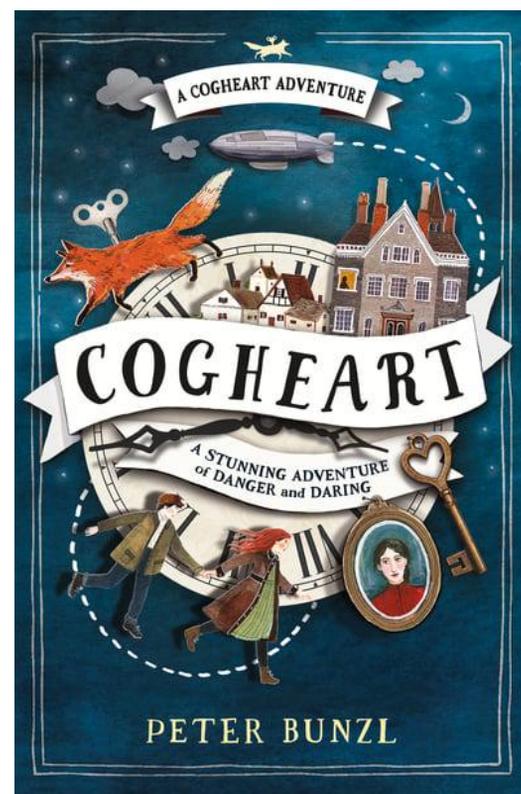
## Time Travelling with a Hamster by Ross



... about time travel. When Al ... of events in which he races to ... save his late father. A highly ... king middle-grade chapter book, ... -year-olds.

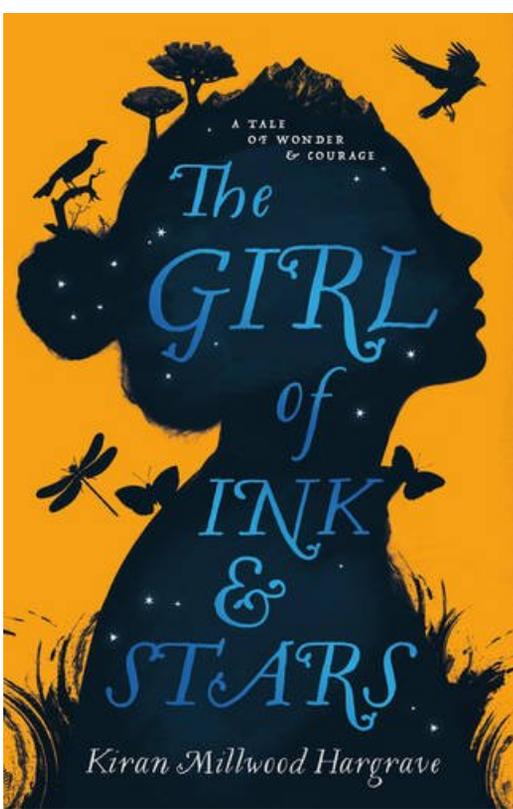
## Cogheart by Peter Bunzl

When her father goes missing in mysterious circumstances, Lily's life is in sudden danger. Who took her father, and what do they want? A great page-turner book for ten-year-olds set in a steampunk Victorian world of shadowy clockmakers. With relatable characters and an ever twisting plot, this is a compelling book for group reading in year 6.



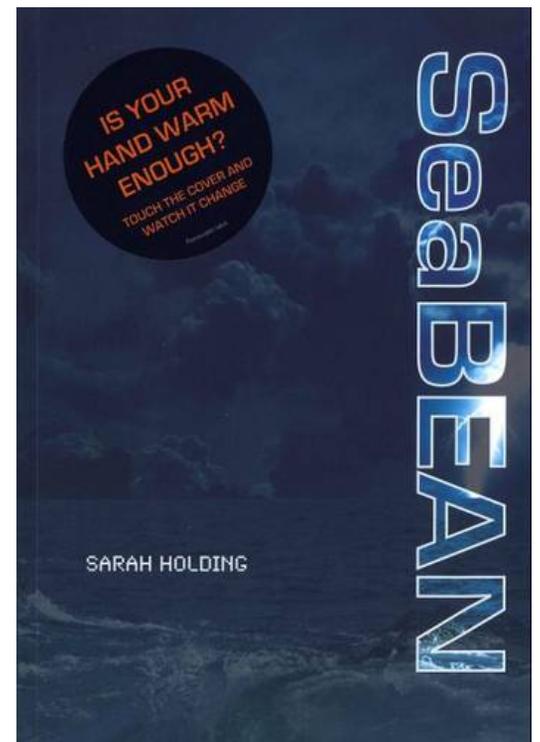
## The Girl of Ink and Stars by Kiran Millwood Hargrave

Isabella finds herself in a captivating quest to find the mysterious lands her father once mapped. In this beautifully realised adventure story with elements of magic, myth and legend, Isabella finds herself the unlikely heroine tasked with saving her world. With rich language and atmospheric description, this is a high-quality text to underpin a year 6 literacy unit.



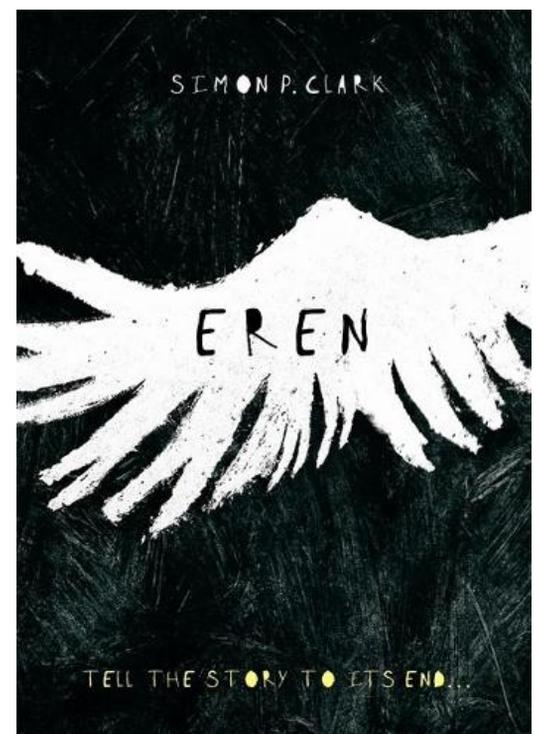
## SeaBEAN by Sarah Holding

Set on the remote island of St Kilda, this is an interesting fantasy reality story involving a magic black box that can transport 11-year-old Alice and her friends to exotic and far-flung locations. There, they have to work together to safeguard the planet in this, the first of a unique trilogy of eco climate thrillers. A useful book to point year six children who are interested in climate change towards.



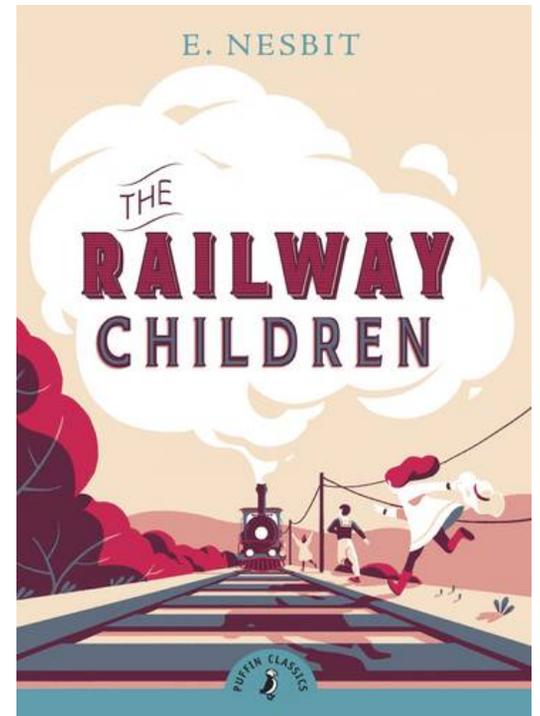
## Eren by Simon P Clark

A deceptively dark story about a boy taken by his mum to live in the country after a family drama. Eren is the strange and magical creature that lives in the attic. The surprising and unpredictable twists will keep year six children reading until the end. With taut plotting and short crisp chapters, this is a good option to read with a year six class that wants something slightly different.



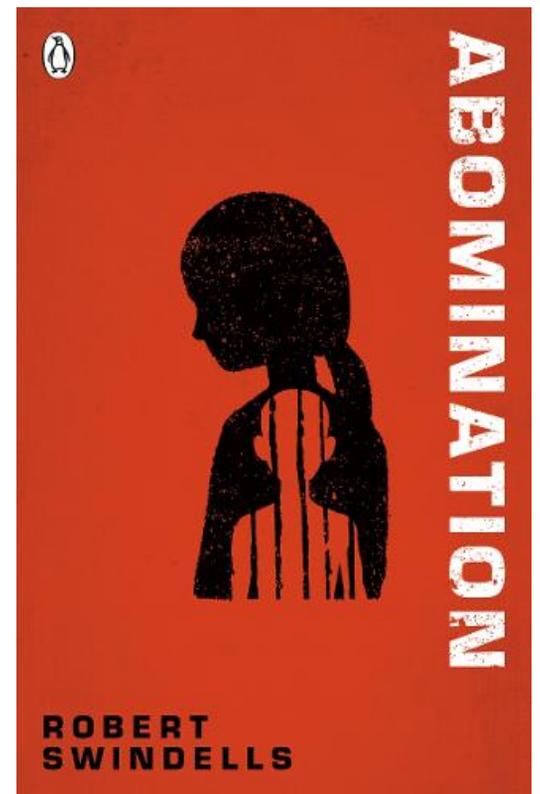
## The Railway Children by E Nesbit

A classic story of adventure and loss. Three children and their mother leave their life in London to live in a small cottage in the country. Will they discover the mystery of their father's disappearance? A classic novel to study in year 6 literacy lessons, this book is a useful resource for teaching empathy, characterisation and inference.



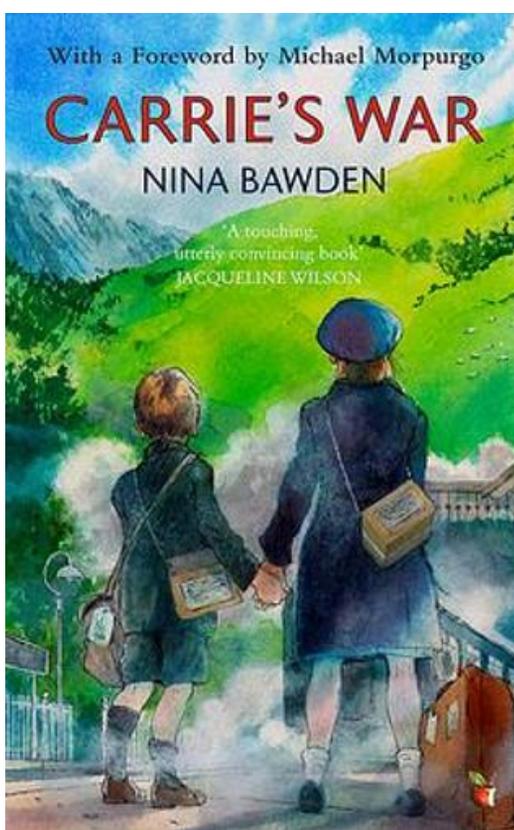
## Abomination by Robert Swindells

Martha lives with a dark secret – the abomination. Can she escape her strict upbringing and reveal the secret or is she better keeping quiet? A more challenging novel for 10-year-olds, this text is a good option for year 6 children who are interested in books with bite and dystopian storylines.



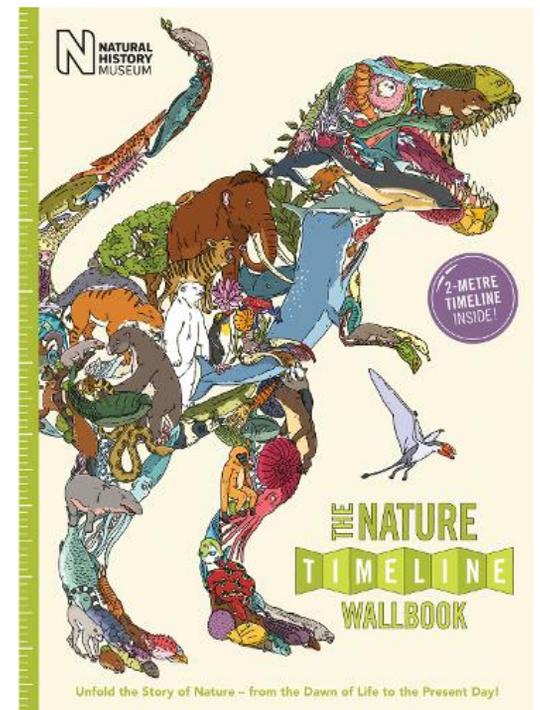
## Carrie's War by Nina Bawden

Carrie and her brother Nick are evacuated to Wales to live with the strict Mr Evans. When Carrie visits Hepzibah Green she does perhaps the worst thing imaginable. How can she make things right? This modern classic is an ideal class reader for Year 6 pupils, and there are numerous teaching guides and resources available for this text.



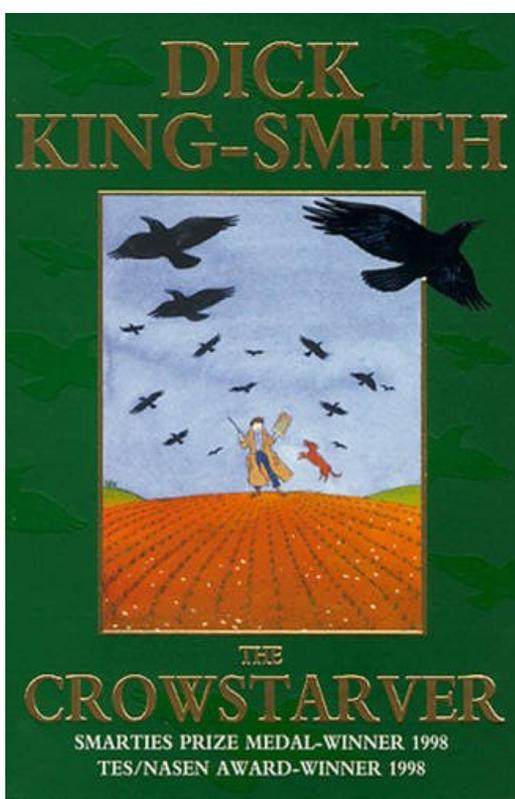
## The What on Earth? Wallbook Timeline of Nature by Christopher Lloyd

A mind-blowing fold out wallchart book that depicts life as we know it from the earliest cells to the present day. Produced in association with the Natural History Museum it is painstakingly illustrated by Andy Forshaw. A perfect research book, extension activity or display resource for Year 6 classrooms.



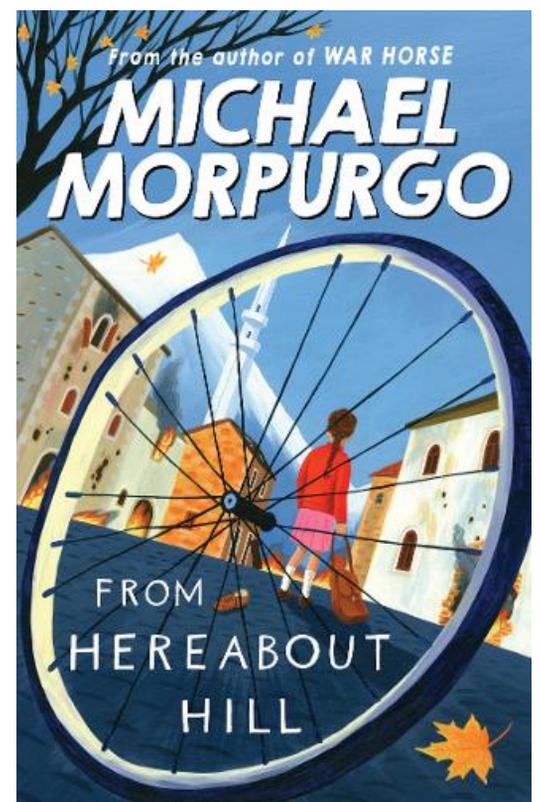
## The Crowstarver by Dick King-Smith

Left abandoned as a baby on a farm, Simon Sparrow lives a tough life. However, he has an amazing gift. Every animal he meets understands and trusts him. A more challenging book for 10-year-old pupils, this award-winning children's novel explores farming life, our relationship with animals and what defines friendship and loyalty. This is a great book to discuss with more advanced readers in year 6 books clubs.



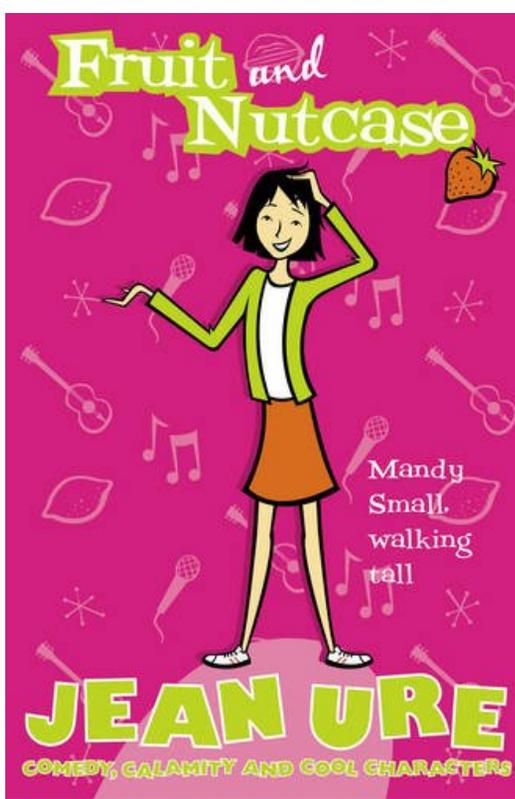
## **From Hereabout Hill by Michael Morpurgo**

An enchanting collection of nine short stories by the former Children's Laureate. Each with a thought-provoking theme, these stories are perfect to read and discuss in literacy or PSHE with children in year 6, or to use as a guided reader with groups of children who prefer shorter texts.



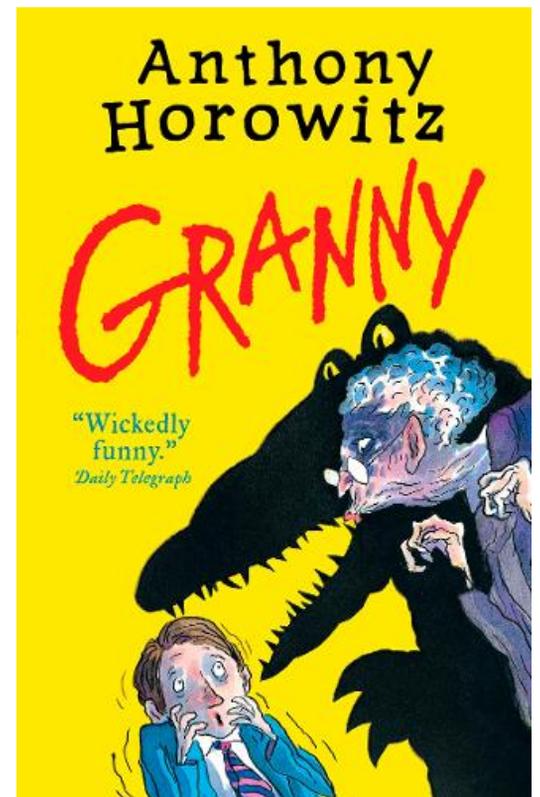
## **Fruit and Nutcase by Jean Ure**

A story, told in diary entries, of Mandy's unpredictable life and crazy parents. Mandy has so many things to worry about she starts to wonder if she's going mad. A lively choice to read and model for classes studying autobiographies in year six, this book will appeal to children who enjoy high interest, funny, and shorter texts.



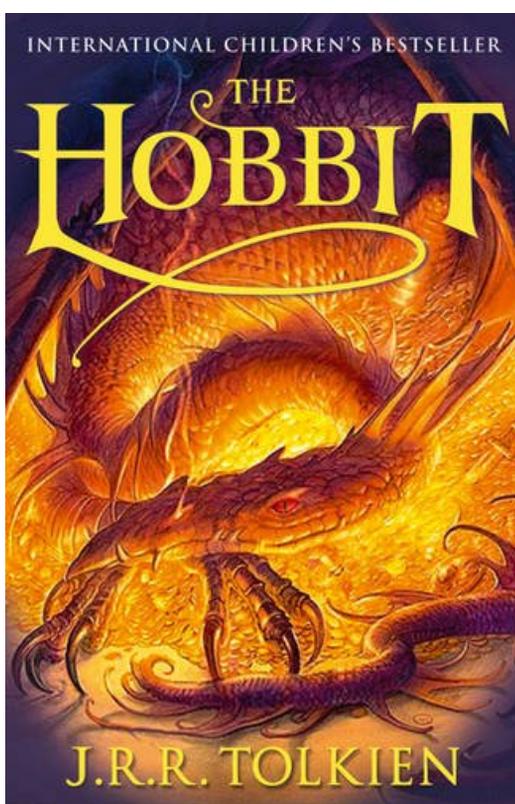
## Granny by Anthony Horowitz

Joe is miserable and longs to escape from his huge family mansion. But his dangerous and evil granny has truly horrid plans for him. Can Joe escape her clutches? This darkly humorous tale will appeal to children who want something quirky, with irony, wickedly nasty characters and clever plot twists.



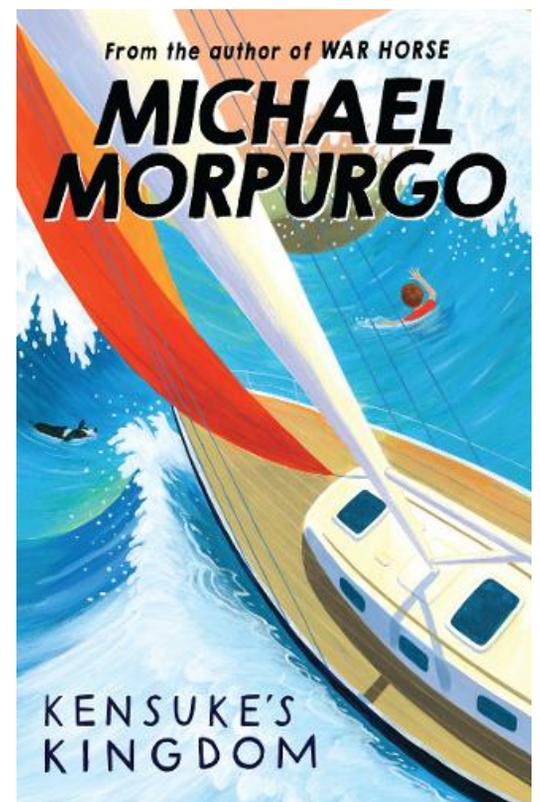
## The Hobbit by JRR Tolkien

The classic tale of Bilbo Baggins, a Hobbit, and his quest to travel with Gandalf and a band of dwarves to steal the treasure of a fearsome dragon. A more challenging book for 10-year-olds, The Hobbit will appeal to children who enjoy immersive fantasy worlds and memorable characters.



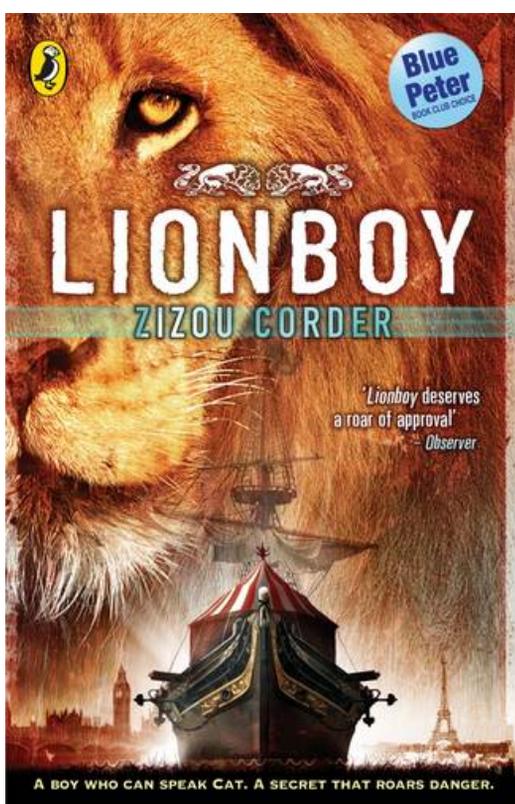
## **Kensuke's Kingdom by Michael Morpurgo**

After a storm, Michael is washed overboard from his parent's yacht and finds himself marooned on a distant island with a Japanese soldier who survived the Hiroshima bombing. Kensuke and Michael become unlikely friends and Kensuke has to make a decision whether to stay on his island home or help Michael complete a dangerous quest to find his mother and father. A great book for year 6 group reading and book clubs.



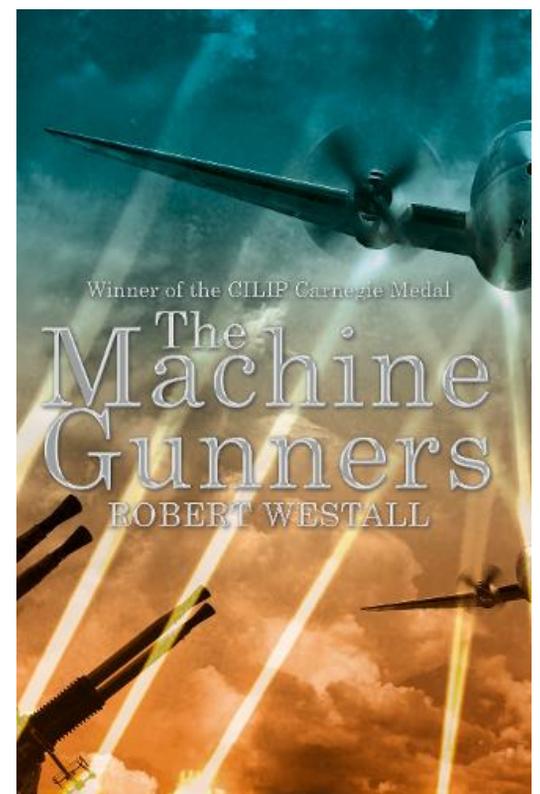
## **Lion Boy by Zizou Corder**

Charlie can speak to cats – and every type of cat – even a lion. He sets out on a perilous journey to find his kidnapped parents who have found a cure for asthma. Can his circus animal friends protect him from being captured before he finds them? A moving and emotive animal story with rich language and evocative descriptions, this is an ideal class reading text for year six.



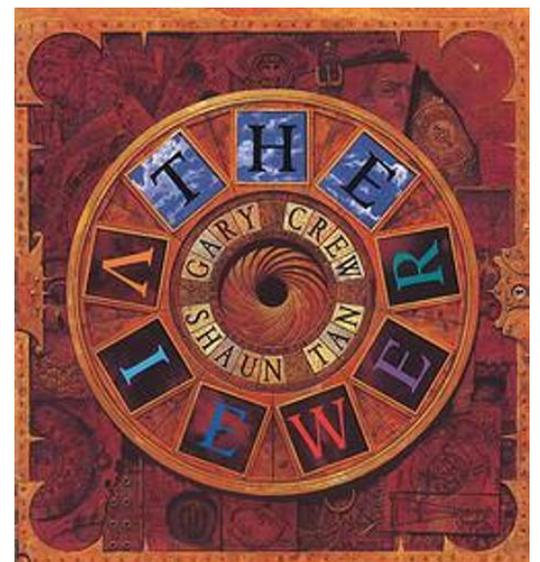
## The Machine Gunners by Robert Westall

Chas has a good collection of wartime bullets, shells and memorabilia. But it's not quite the best collection in Garmouth. That's until he finds a machine gun and 2000 rounds of ammunition, ready to fire. A gripping and fast-paced story with lots of dialogue, this is an ideal addition to Year 6 WW2 topics.



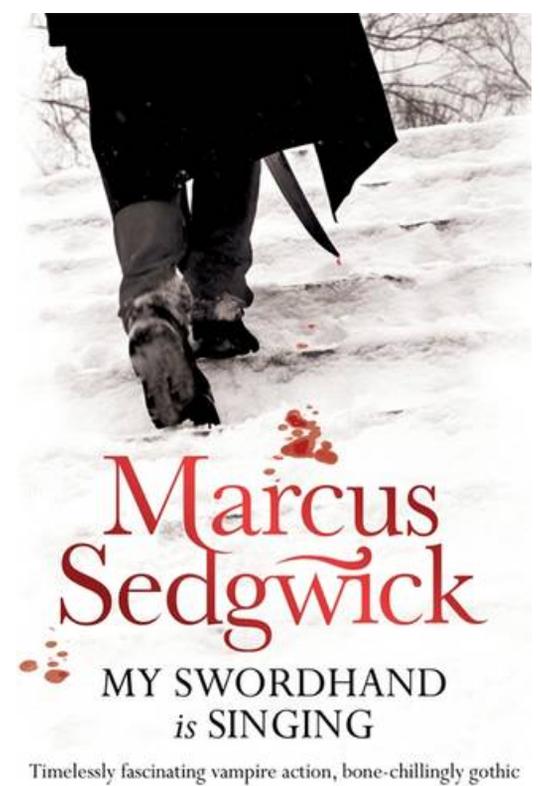
## The Viewer by Gary Crew

An imaginative picture book ideal for older reluctant readers. Tristan finds an old picture viewing device in a rubbish dump and becomes drawn further and further into the places and worlds he sees – until finally, he disappears into one of them. A perfect book for year 6 children who are imaginative, but reluctant readers.



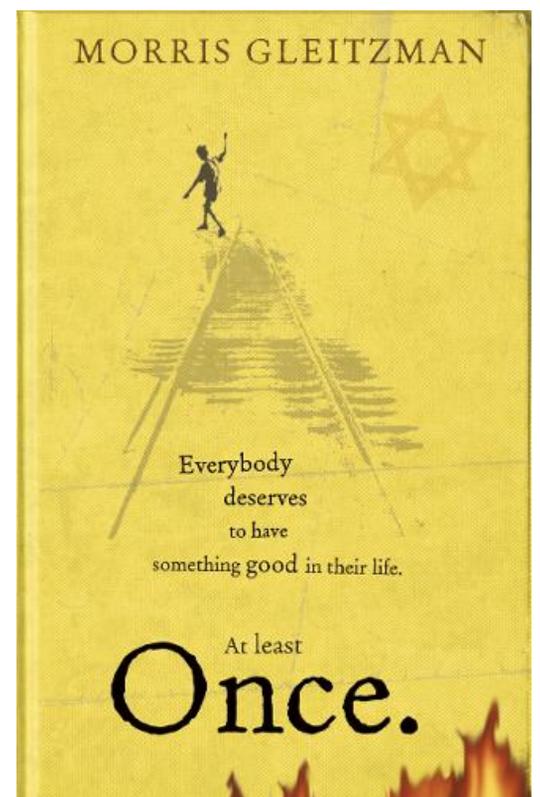
## **My Swordhand is Singing by Marcus Sedgwick**

A mystical historical story of travelling gypsies, vampire slayers and a princess. Peter discovers there's more to his father than meets the eye. An ideal book for 10-year-olds interested in historical fiction, this multi-layered story is a useful text to use when analysing and modelling characterisations with pupils who are working at a 'greater depth' level in year 6 literacy lessons.



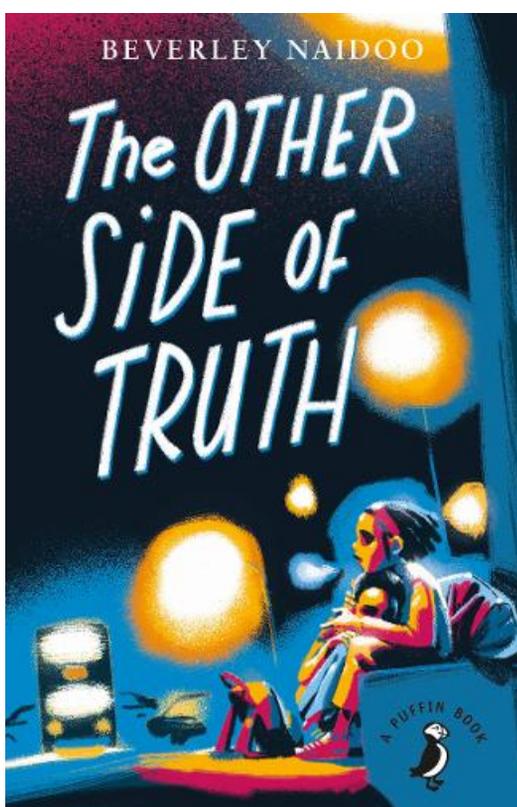
## **Once by Morris Gleitzman**

A young Jewish boy is determined to escape from an orphanage to find and rescue his parents from Nazi Germany. The first of a ground-breaking series, this story is an excellent analysis of war from a child's perspective. A moving book to discuss in year 6 books clubs with more able pupils, it is also a good choice to compare and contrast with The Silver Sword by Ian Serraillier.



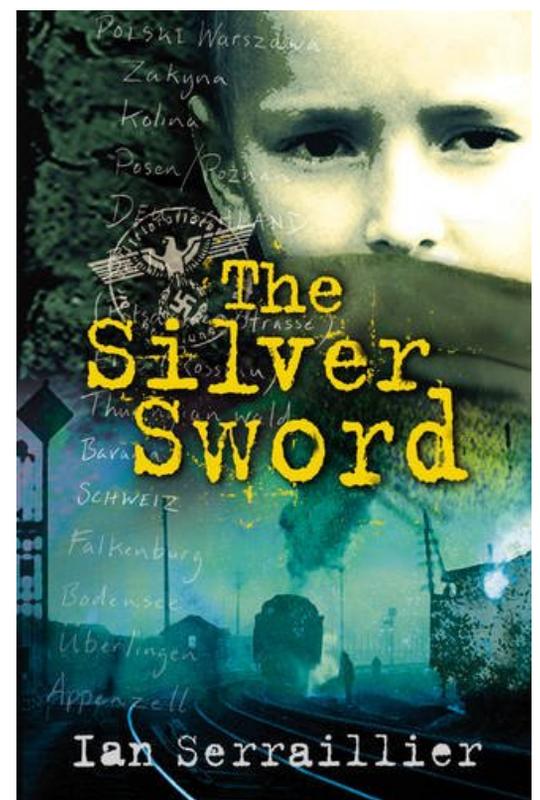
## **The Other Side of the Truth by Beverley Naidoo**

Sade and her brother Femi are 'illegals'. They have fled from Nigeria where their father is being persecuted only to find London a harsh and unforgiving environment and not the safe haven they had hoped for. This modern classic is a children's novel that lends itself to character hot seating and discussing different viewpoints in year six literacy lessons.



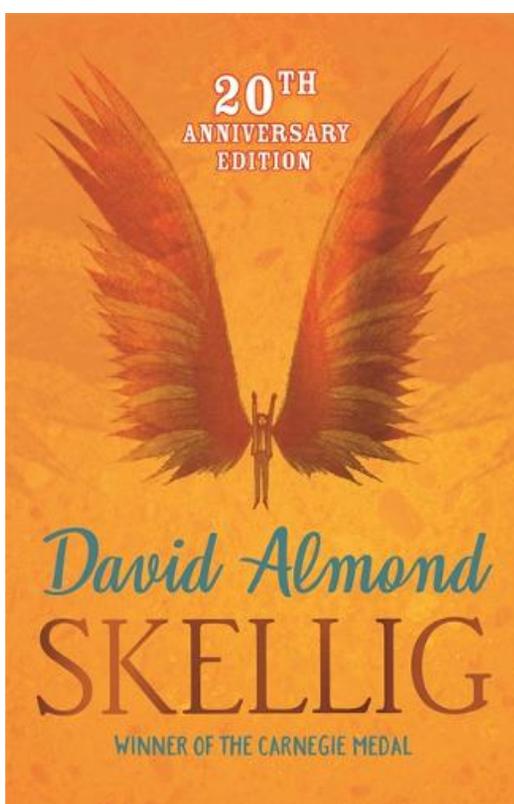
## **The Silver Sword by Ian Serrailier**

Separated from his parents in Poland in World War Two, Jan and his three friends travel through war-torn Europe to Switzerland with only a silver sword for protection. Will he find his parents? This gripping children's novel is an addictive storytime read-aloud that pupils will look forward to each day.



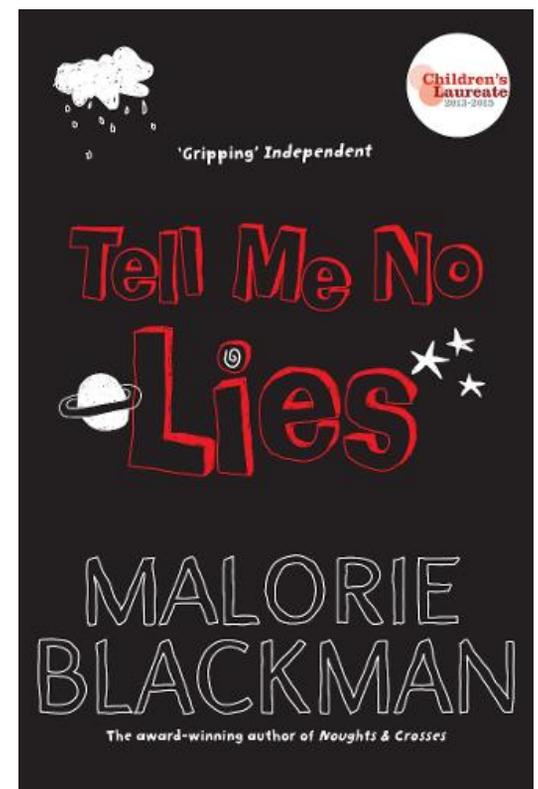
## **Skellig by David Almond**

In the run-down garage of his new home, Michael finds a magical creature called Skellig. At the same time, Michael's baby sister is gravely ill in hospital. Somehow Skellig seems to hold the key to saving her. Great for reluctant readers and perfect to add to a year 6 classroom library.



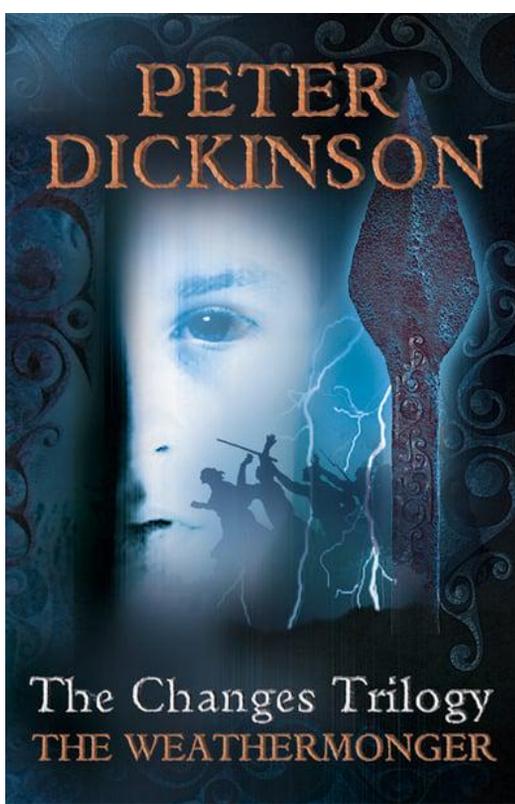
## **Tell Me No Lies by Malorie Blackman**

Gemma struggles to deal with the pain of losing her mother and Mike struggles with a dark secret. When the two children meet they uncover a shocking secret that explains both of their pasts. A gripping psychological thriller that examines social issues, this is an ideal book for Year 6 readers who want a more challenging read.



## **The Weathermonger by Peter Dickinson**

Set in the future, Adults have decided machines cannot be trusted and a world without them is better. When Geoffrey tries to repair a motor, he and his sister are hunted as witches. The story follows their flight to France, where everything is very different. A clever dystopian novel, this book will appeal to more able 10-year-old readers who enjoy fantasy, magic and imagination.



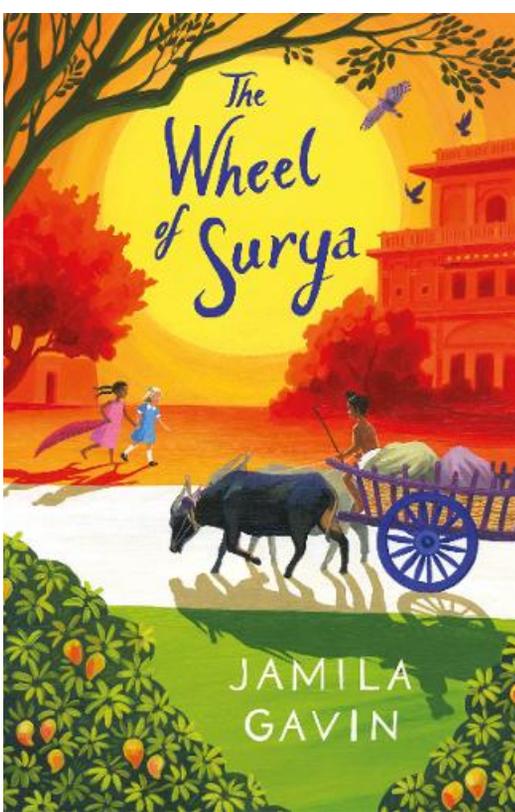
## What Katy Did by Susan Coolidge

Katy is a tomboy, her hair is always a mess and her clothes look awful. But when there's an awful accident, her life changes forever. The first in a series of books, this story will appeal to upper KS2 pupils who enjoy school-based stories with laugh out loud funny moments.



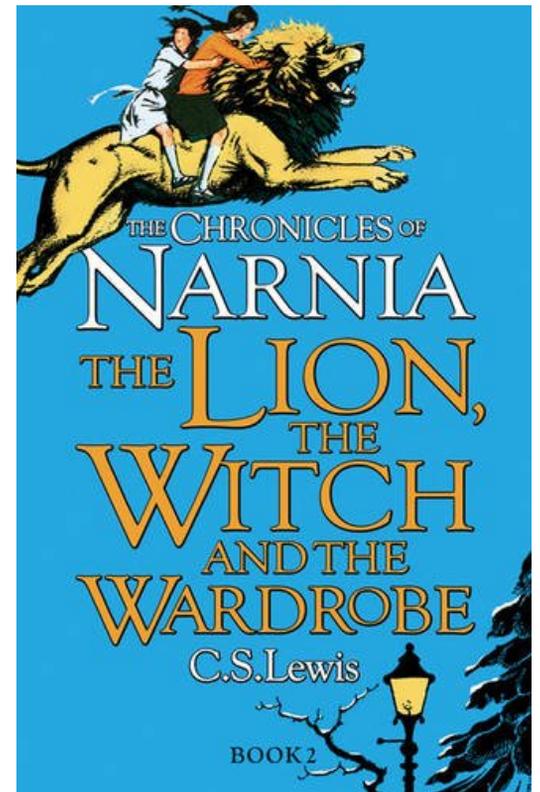
## The Wheel of Surya by Jamila Gavin

Jaspal and Marvinder travel from civil war-torn India in 1947 to find their father who is studying far away in England. A stunning historical novel, the epic and atmospheric story will immerse pupils in the landscape, politics and culture of post-war colonial India. This is a memorable narrative to discuss in books clubs or read as a class novel in year six.



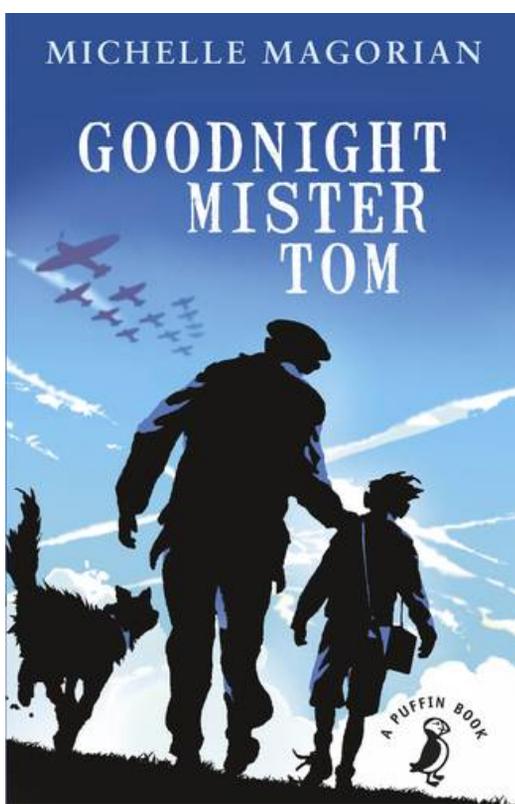
## **The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis**

When four children are evacuated to a country house, Lucy looks into the wardrobe and discovers a doorway to the world of Narnia with Aslan, Mr Tumnus the Faun and the White Witch. This classic fantasy puts characters pupils will empathise with into perilous situations that only heroic actions can overcome. The sparkling storyline has a timeless and endearing quality that may well help to engender a lifelong love of reading in your child.



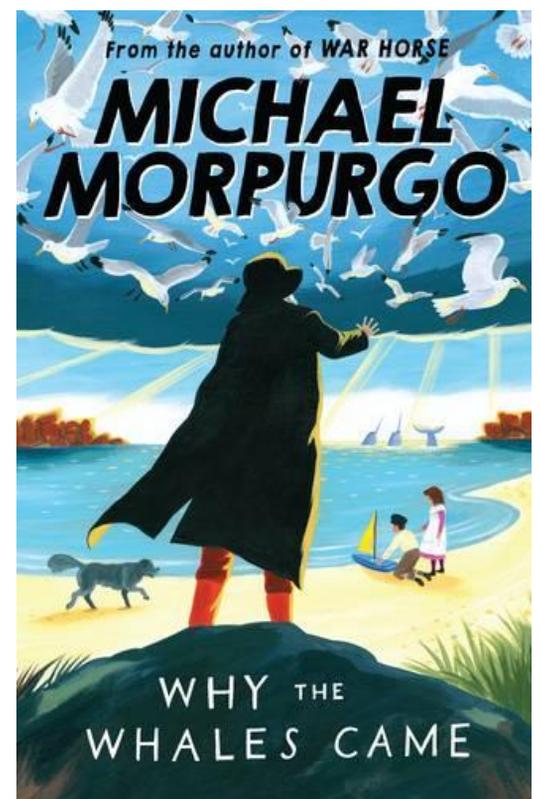
## **Goodnight Mister Tom by Michelle Magorian**

Set during WW2, William "Willie" Beech, a boy from London who is abused by his mother, arrives at the home of Mr Thomas Oakley, a bad-tempered widower in his sixties who lives in the village of Little Weirwold. An ideal book for year 6 pupils studying 1939-1945.



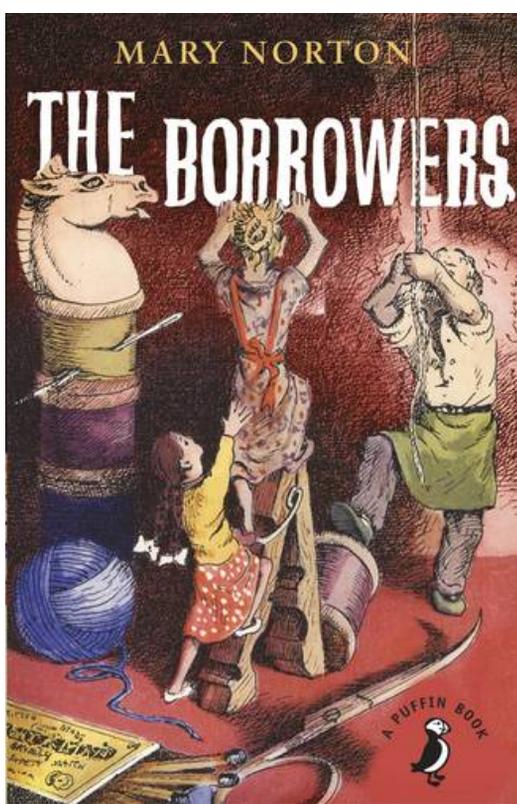
## **Why the Whales Came by Michael Morpurgo**

There are rumours that the Birdman is mad and dangerous. When Gracie and Daniel cannot find a place to sail their boats they eventually run into him. Despite all they have been told, they build up a friendship and the Birdman reveals the island is under an ancient curse. An enchanting and magical story, this is a good text to read as part of WW1 or Remembrance topics.



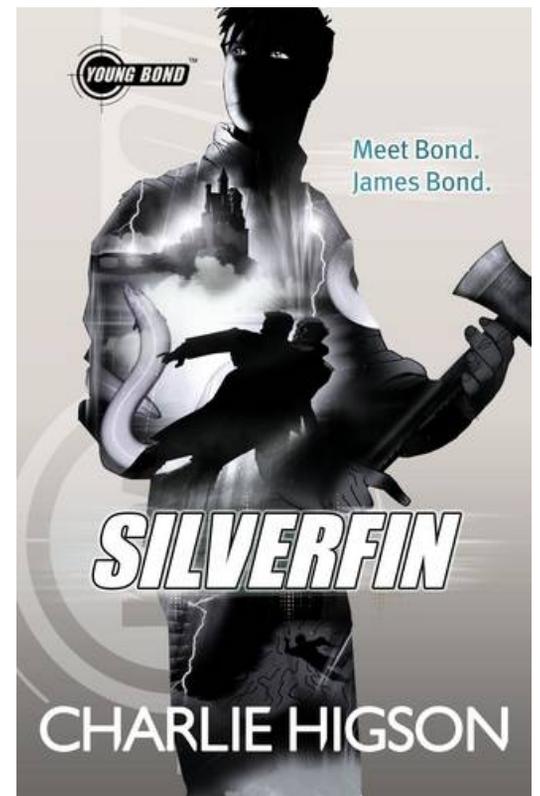
## **The Borrowers by Mary Norton**

A wonderful story about a family of tiny people who live secretly in the walls and floors of an English house and “borrow” from the big people in order to survive. This immersive classic is a great novel to encourage your ten-year-old to read for pleasure.



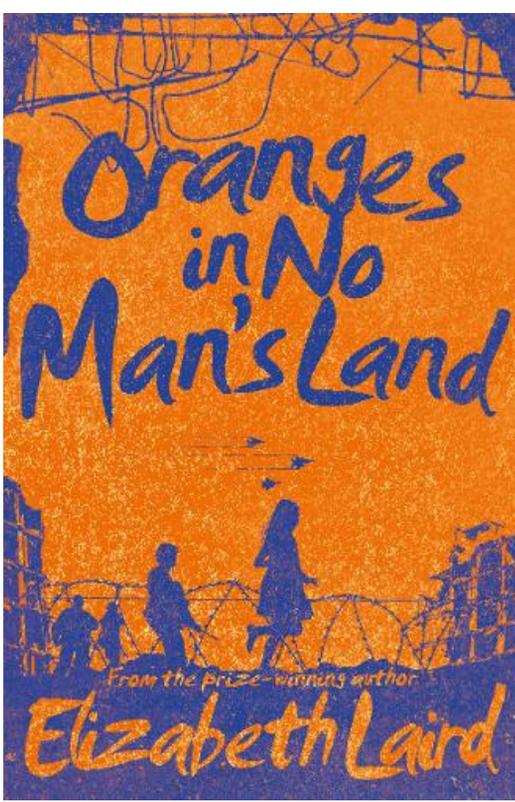
## **Siverfin by Charlie Higson**

The adventures of the 13 years old young James Bond, set at school and in the Scottish Highlands. With a fast-paced plot, quick-fire dialogue and great action sequences, this would make an exciting adventure option group reader for Year 6 pupils.



## **Oranges in No Man's Land by Elizabeth Laird**

Ayesha is a ten-year-old living in Beirut. Her father left the family for work and her mother was killed by a missile strike. Living with her grandmother and younger siblings, she faces a huge dilemma when her grandmother falls ill. Does she stay to look after her, or does she travel into the unknown to find help? An ideal issue-based storybook for Year 6 reading groups.



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**How many of our year 6 books have you read?**

**Here's a free background wallpaper of our recommended books for year 6 to use on your classroom computer**

# Year 6 books - our recommended reading list



To read more about these books for year 6 children aged 10-11, visit <https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk>

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For less demanding books for year 6, try the [Books for Year 5 reading list](#).

For even more books for 10-11-year-olds, see [this list](#).

For the more able child, try the [Books for Year 7 reading list](#).

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## About Tom Tolkien



Tom Tolkien is an experienced teacher and educational consultant who taught for 20 years in primary and secondary schools, including Woodleigh School in North Yorkshire, where he was Head of English and ran a 4000 book prep school library for pupils aged 3-13. He now reviews books for children and teens. Social profiles: [Twitter](#) | [Linkedin](#)

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