

## A Few Good Reads - Year 4

### ***Aquila* - Andrew Norriss**

This entertainingly written, prize-winning book is an exciting adventure. On a boring school trip, Tom and Geoff discover an ancient flying machine. Determined to find out more about it but also desperate to keep their find a secret, the boys return to the spot and, having mastered how to fly the thing, are soon off on incredible travels in a ship with strange powers including the ability to make them invisible. Along the way, they even have to learn some Latin for purposes of communication. Soundly based in a convincing everyday setting, *Aquila* is also a tightly plotted and well-imagined adventure. If you like this, you will certainly enjoy the sequel, *Aquila 2*, as well as another very different time-travelling adventure by Andrew Norris, *Ctrl-Z*.

### ***Barkbelly* - Cat Weatherill**

An award-winning adventure story set in a beautifully realised world that's almost but not quite like our own. Brought up by loving human parents, Barkbelly is a little wooden boy who goes on the run after a tragic accident. The world he encounters is full of the unexpected including pirates, giant hedgehogs and life in the circus. Presenting poetry, magic, and dark twists of fate, this story discovers what can happen when your dreams come true, but not in the way you expect.

### ***The Battle of Bubble and Squeak* - Philippa Pearce**

The Sparrow children adore their new gerbils, Bubble and Squeak, but their mother detests them. A major family battle results, and it's clear life is never going to be quite the same again. But after a near fatal encounter between Bubble and Ginger the cat, Mrs Sparrow begins to see that life with a pair of gerbils might not be so bad after all. If you enjoy this award winning book, why not try *A Dog So Small*, also by the wonderful Philippa Pearce.

### ***Bill's New Frock* - Anne Fine**

Bill Simpson wakes up one day to find he's a girl, and worse, his mother makes him wear a frilly pink dress to school. How on earth is he going to survive a whole day like this? Everything just seems to be different for girls. The bully whistles at him, instead of kicking him, he can't be picked to lift a table - not being a 'big strong boy' - his work's supposed to be ultra-neat and he's being cast as Lovely Rapunzel, who in any case never gets to say anything! Stylishly written by the former Children's Laureate and highly thought-provoking, this is a book that's not to be missed.

### ***The Butterfly Lion* - Michael Morpurgo**

The inspiring magic of a white lion brings friendship and hope to a lonely ten year old in this inspiring story by the former Children's Laureate. Miserable at his boarding school, Bertie runs away. He is rescued by a kind old lady who tells him of how another Bertie, a little boy from a long time before, saved an orphaned lion cub in Africa. The symbol of the white lion becomes an emblem of hope as well as a link across generations.

### ***Charlotte's Web* - E B White**

A magical and timeless farmyard story which tells of the power of friendship. When the runty little piglet, Wilbur, is saved from an early death, he grows into a fine and handsome pig. And the farmer wants to kill him. Can Charlotte, the spider who has grown to love him, save his life? If you enjoy this classic story, you will probably also love *Stuart Little*, by the same author.

### ***Charm School* - Anne Fine**

'I am NOT going to Charm School...' But Bonny has no choice. Forced to spend a day at Charm School while her mother is on a course, Bonny makes some surprising and hilarious discoveries. Can Bonny cope with listening to Mrs Opalene's Helpful Handy Hits (like 'how to bleach your elbows!')? And what about the other girls - the awful, self-obsessed little princesses who really want to win the 'Glistening Tiara' and are prepared to do almost anything to get it? After Bonny's day there, Charm School will never be the same again...

***The Children of Green Knowe* - Lucy M. Boston**

Set in a beautiful and magical place, this is an award-winning classic story of a friendship that stretches across centuries as Tolly, newly arrived at Green Knowe, his great grandmother's old wonderfully atmospheric house, makes friends with Alexander, Toby and Linnet, his long distant relatives who lived in the house centuries before. Although from another time, Tolly's relatives are not ghosts; they and Tolly share a home and, through the stories of long-ago that Tolly's grandmother tells him, Tolly knows all about their lives while they can visit him in his. Together the children have wonderful adventures in the surrounding countryside. Further adventures set in the same house but now occupied by other children follow in *The River at Greene Knowe*.

***A Dog Called Flow* - Pippa Goodhart**

This is a lovely, satisfying story about bravery and friendship which was shortlisted for the Smarties Prize. Oliver is finding it hard at school, and he longs for a dog. A dog could be a friend who didn't care whether or not he was good at school work. Oliver's parents say 'no' to a dog ... so Oliver gets his puppy in secret. Will he be allowed to keep Flow? Boy and dog are both tested at the local show, and then face a challenge on the fells that shows just what they're made of.

***A Dog Called Grk* - Joshua Doder**

A very different dog story from Pippa Goodhart's and the first in an excellent adventure series. When Tim finds a loveable little dog called Grk on his doorstep, he embarks on a mission to reunite him with his owners, who have been kidnapped and taken to their native Eastern Europe. His quest involves breaking into a high security prison, the hair-raising piloting of a helicopter, and a nail-biting race for the border. Other grk books include *Grk and the Pelotti Gang*, *Grk and the Hot Dog Trail* and finally *Grk Smells a Rat*.

***Down with the Dirty Danes!* - Gillian Cross**

A hilarious story, told in letter form, about King Alfred - he who burnt the cakes - and his battles with the Vikings. Berwin, son of Egfrith, writes to Wulfric, son of Elred, using his miraculous new talent of reading and writing. Berry's spellings leave a lot to be desired and in his hilarious letters he tells a tale of mixups and mayhem when King Alfred hides in his family's cottage but is mistaken for a Dirty Dane - their word for the Vikings. A completely new perspective on why and how those cakes got burned! Fast and very funny, from the prize-winning author of *The Demon Headmaster* and many other books.

***An Elephant in the Garden* - Michael Morpurgo**

Once again the amazing Michael Morpurgo weaves an intensely moving story about an extraordinary animal caught up in a very human war. It's World War Two in Germany, the animals in Dresden Zoo are to be killed because of the bombing but Elizabeth's mother, who works there, decides to save a young elephant and keep it in her garden. When her house is bombed she and her children and Marlene the elephant must escape the bombings and the Russians. An utterly compelling tale.

***Emil and the Detectives* - Erich Kastner**

A classic detective story told at a cracking pace, which has never been out of print since it was first published nearly 90 years ago. Emil is charming and clever, the ideal hero of this terrific adventure, and when he is robbed of his mother's hard earned savings from right out of his pocket as he is asleep on a train, he takes swift action. Emil has no confidence in the police and so recruits his own assistant, Gustav. The two boys round up a group of friends and set up a clever trap to catch the thief. Emil is handsomely rewarded and all ends happily.

***The Fire Within* - Chris d'Lacey**

The first in an exciting, best-selling series and a magical book in every respect. 'David ran a hand through his mop of brown hair. Dragons. It was certainly different from his last set of lodgings, where all you got were spiders and the occasional mouse. "It's perfect," he said.' When David arrives at Wayward Crescent he has no idea what lurks inside the Pennykettle house. Only when he's given his own special dragon does he begin to unlock their mysterious secrets, and to discover the fire within...

***The Firework Maker's Daughter* - Philip Pullman**

More than anything else in the world, Lila wants to be a Firework- Maker. But every Firework-Maker must make a perilous journey to face the terrifying Fire-Fiend! Can Lila possibly survive? Especially when she doesn't know she needs special protection to survive his flames...A gripping adventure by prize winning author, Philip Pullman.

***The Raven Mysteries 1: Flood And Fang* - Marcus Sedgwick**

First in brand new series of quirky tales of mystery (with a touch of goth-froth) by an award-winning author. Meet the wonderfully weird Otherhand family and their faithful guardian, Edgar the raven, and discover the dark secrets of Castle Otherhand. Edgar is alarmed when he sees a nasty looking black tail slinking under the castle walls. But his warnings to the inhabitants of the castle go almost entirely unheeded. Only Solstice, the black-haired, poetry-writing Otherhand daughter, seems to pay any attention. As the lower storeys of the castle begin mysteriously to flood, and kitchen maids continue to go missing, the family come ever closer to the owner of the black tail... If you enjoy this, look out for the equally entertaining sequels.

***Fortunately, the Milk ...* - Neil Gaiman**

Award-winning Neil Gaiman brilliantly weaves a spell-binding story taking readers up and away on a wild fantasy in which dinosaurs and space travel happily coexist. You know what it's like when your mum goes away and Dad's in charge. She leaves a really, really long list of what he's got to do. And the most important thing is DON'T FORGET TO GET THE MILK. Unfortunately, Dad forgets. So the next morning, before breakfast, he has to go to the corner shop, and this is the hilarious and exciting story of why it takes him a very, very long time to get back.

***Fudge: Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing* - Judy Blume**

Peter thinks he has the world's biggest problem - his little brother, Fudge. Fudge causes trouble wherever he goes and it's usually up to Peter to sort out the mess. When Peter wins a tiny green turtle called Dribble, he's determined to keep it away from his brother. But when Fudge does get his hands on Dribble - disaster strikes! Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing is the first book in this hugely successful series from bestselling author Judy Blume.

***Goblins* - Philip Reeve**

This is a wild world of magical creatures and heroic adventure from the extraordinary imagination of Philip Reeve. The squabbling goblins who live in the great towers of Clovenstone spend their time fighting and looting. Only clever young Skarper understands that dark magic created by a vanquished sorcerer is rising again. From the lands of men come fortune-seekers - and trolls, giants, cloud-midens, boglins, swamp monsters, tree-warriors and bloodthirsty goblins are swept into a fabulous magical conflict to thrill all fantasy fans.

***Goth Girl and the Ghost of a Mouse* - Chris Riddell**

Children's Laureate, Chris Riddell, creates a fantastical world in which Ada Goth, daughter of the strange Lord Goth of Ghastly-Gorm Hall, is growing up. Ada's mother is dead and her father is very, very strange! Surrounded by a motley crew of servants and many ghosts, Ada's life is lonely until she meets Ishmael, a ghostly mouse. Soon Ada and Ishmael are off on some very special adventures! This is a story filled with magic, invention and jokes and Chris Riddell's illustrations bring everything he imagines to life. If you enjoy this, don't miss the exciting sequels.

***Groosham Grange* - Anthony Horowitz**

A wickedly funny and rather spooky story by the bestselling author of the Alex Rider books, amongst many others. Sent to Groosham Grange as a last resort by his parents, David Eliot quickly discovers that his new school is a very weird place indeed. New pupils are made to sign their names in blood; the French teacher disappears every full moon; the assistant headmaster keeps something very chilling in his room...What's the meaning of the black rings everyone wears? Where do the other pupils vanish to at night? Most important of all, how on earth can David get away - alive?

***How to Train Your Dragon* - Cressida Cowell**

The first volume of Hiccup's exciting and brilliantly funny *How to Train Your Dragon* memoirs...Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III was an awesome sword-fighter, a dragon-whisperer and the greatest Viking Hero who ever lived. But it wasn't always like that. In fact, in the beginning, Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III was the most put upon Viking you'd ever seen. Not loud enough to make himself heard at dinner with his father, Stoick the Vast; not hard enough to beat his chief rival, Snotlout, at Bashyball, the number one school sport and CERTAINLY not stupid enough to go into a cave full of dragons to find a pet...It's time for Hiccup to learn how to be a Hero. If you like this book, there are lots more in the series to enjoy.

***I Don't Like Poetry* - Joshua Seigal**

*I'm a lovely little poem. I'm snoozing in your book. I'm like a dainty dragonfly - Come and have a look.* With poems on every topic from the power of books to the joys of fried chicken, this collection is packed with award-winning poet, Joshua Seigal's, subversive humour and insight into the world of children. If you don't like poetry after reading this, there's probably something wrong with you! Joshua visited our school a year or two ago and was a huge hit. He left us with some of his other poetry which you will enjoy if you like this.

### ***The Iron Man* - Ted Hughes**

Written by the former Poet Laureate, this is the exciting and dramatic story of the strange Iron Man, an enormous creature who arrives unexpectedly from nowhere and terrorises a community, destroying everything he comes across. It seems there is no way to stop him until a little boy called Hogarth befriends the giant and helps to find a way of keeping him from eating all the metal in sight that works for everyone. Then a terrifying monster arrives from outer space threatening the world with total destruction and the Iron Man fights him to the death, saving the planet and becoming a hero to all. If you enjoy this, you should also read for the sequel, *The Iron Woman*.

### ***I Was a Rat* - Philip Pullman**

Who is Roger? He says he was a rat - and some of the time he behaves like a rat. But he is also a small boy. Or, he could be the Monster of the sewers...Everyone has a view - including *The Daily Scourge* - which tells its own version in screaming newspaper headlines. There is just one person who really knows who Roger is. And she's the princess... Cleverly, award winning author Philip Pullman weaves together strands of story from different sources creating a fast-paced and multi-layered adventure.

### ***The Kingdom of Silk 1: The Naming of Tishkin Silk* - Glenda Millard**

This unique and tender novel is the first book in a multi-award-winning series by one of Australia's best-loved children's authors. Griffin Silk is from an uncommon sort of family, parents Ben and Annie Silk have a brood of five daughters ('the Rainbow Girls') and one son. Griffin has a secret in his heart that nobody else knows - but when he meets Layla, a princess with a daisy chain crown, he knows he's found a friend. So Griffin shares his inner thoughts with her and together they find a way to deal with his secret. Just like the mythical beast whose name he bears, Griffin discovers he has the courage of a lion. But it will take a friend like Layla to help him find the answers. Through her whimsical, lyrical stories, Glenda Millard writes about families like no other writer writes about families. The books explore important themes of love, loss, friendships, home and belonging, in ways that pull at the heartstrings but are never over-sentimental.

### ***The Legend of Frog* - Guy Bass**

*The Legend of Frog* is the first book in a three-part series by award-winning and best-selling author, Guy Bass, - a mash-up of fairy tale, fantasy and science fiction with a good helping of humour. Once Upon the End of the World, a frog-like prince sets out to claim his throne, armed with nothing more than a pair of Catastrophe Pants and his trusty stick, Basil Rathbone. The hilarious tale of a frog, a princess and an all-out alien invasion... If you enjoy this, look out for the sequels - *Frog the Barbarian* and *The Mighty Frog*.

### ***The Little House in the Big Woods* - Laura Ingalls Wilder**

Laura Ingalls and her family, Ma, Pa, Mary and baby Carrie, live deep in the Big Woods of Wisconsin. Their closest neighbours are deer, bears, bees and wolves. In between helping Ma and Pa with chores, Laura and her sister Mary find time to climb trees, make paper dolls, and play with their baby sister, Carrie. Based on the real experiences of Laura Ingalls Wilder, who was born almost 150 years ago, *Little House in the Big Woods* is the first book in an award-winning series. You can follow the Ingalls family's adventures as they travel west across America and watch Laura and her sisters grow up in the other five *Little House* books.

### ***The Magician's Nephew* - C. S. Lewis**

*The Magician's Nephew* is book one in the classic fantasy series, *The Chronicles of Narnia*. On a daring quest to save a life, two friends are hurled into another world, where an evil sorceress seeks to enslave them. But then the lion Aslan's song weaves itself into the fabric of a new land, a land that will be known as Narnia. And in Narnia, all things are possible. This is a stand-alone novel, but if you would like to journey through the wardrobe and back to Narnia, you should read the other books in the series starting with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. #

### ***Marsh Road Mysteries 1: Diamonds and Daggers* - Elen Caldecott**

The first in a fantastic series filled with friendship, adventure and mystery. Meet Piotr, Minnie, Andrew, Flora and Sylvia - true friends and even better mystery-solvers! Hollywood sensation, Betty Massino, has come to star in the theatre down the road and Piotr and his friends Andrew and Minnie couldn't be more excited! But when the famous actress's hugely expensive diamond necklace goes missing, Piotr's dad, a security guard at the theatre, is a prime suspect. Soon, Piotr faces the very real threat of being sent 'home' to Poland. Can the friends solve the crime or will they lose Piotr forever? The other books in the series are equally gripping!

#### **Mary Poppins - P. L. Travers**

Most of you will have seen the film version, starring Julie Andrews, of this classic book about the world's most famous nanny, but have you read the original story, which is a bit different? Jane and Michael Banks need a new nanny so they set about writing a job description. In reply, blown in by the East Wind, comes Mary Poppins. From the moment that she slides up the bannisters the children know that Mary is not any ordinary nanny! Although Mary Poppins is not one to stand any nonsense, she is perfectly fair. And she is full of surprises. Soon the children are off on the most wonderful magical adventures - including flying! Needless to say, when at last 'the wind changes' and she flies away, the children are devastated. But the magic of Mary Poppins will stay with the Banks family forever and nor does the adventure end here - don't miss the equally enjoyable sequels!

#### **Midnight for Charlie Bone - Jenny Nimmo**

This gripping fantasy tale filled with mystery is the first in the series called *The Children of the Red King*. Since his father died, Charlie Bone has lived with his mother and her mother, in the house of his other grandmother, Grandma Bone. Charlie doesn't want to believe he has a special talent: it means he will be sent away to the dreaded Bloor's Academy. But the voices in the photographs whisper to Charlie of dark secrets from the past - and a mystery that he must solve. If you enjoy this book, you will definitely want to read the rest of the series.

#### **Mr Stink - David Walliams**

The second original, touching, twisted, and most of all hilarious novel for children written by David Walliams and beautifully illustrated by Quentin Blake. "Mr Stink stank. He also stunk. And if it was correct English to say he stinked, then he stinked as well..." It all starts when Chloe makes friends with Mr Stink, the local tramp. Yes, he smells a bit. But when it looks like he might be driven out of town, Chloe decides to hide him in the garden shed. Now Chloe's got to make sure no one finds out her secret. And speaking of secrets, there just might be more to Mr Stink than meets the eye... or the nose.

#### **My Brother is a Superhero - David Solomons**

This is a multi-award-winning book - deservedly so! This is an excellent adventure story with real heart, that's also properly funny, with humour that comes from the characters as well as the situation. Luke is a comic-mad eleven-year old who shares a treehouse with his geeky older brother, Zack. Luke's only mistake is to go for a wee right at the wrong time. While he's gone, an alien gives his undeserving, never-read-a-comic-in-his-life brother superpowers and then tells him to save the universe. Luke is massively annoyed about this, but when Zack is kidnapped by his arch-nemesis, Luke and his friends have only five days to find him and save the world...

#### **Nicholas - Rene Goscinny**

Written by the author of Asterix, Rene Goscinny, this is the first of the five Nicholas books which tell of the endearing exploits of the young French school boy and his friends. Nicholas has an engagingly positive outlook on life, loves school despite his academic failings, and has refined the art of driving his parents up the wall, while remaining blissfully unaware of how infuriating they find him. Goscinny and the equally brilliant illustrator Jean-Jacques Sempe have created a world of confusion that will make you laugh out loud. These classic books are not only very entertaining, but offer a vivid description of French life and culture.

#### **Operation Gadgetman! - Malorie Blackman**

Beans calls her dad 'Gadgetman' because of the weird and wonderful gadgets he comes up with - everything from exploding biscuits to Spy Kits. But when Gadgetman accidentally invents a device that could be used to steal millions of pounds, the wrong people find out and Gadgetman is kidnapped! With the help of her friends - and her special Gadgetman Spy Kit - Beans is determined to track down the kidnappers and rescue her dad. But can she find Gadgetman before he is forced to hand over the details of his invention...? A brilliant mystery story by Malorie Blackman, former Children's Laureate.

#### **The Orchard Book of the Legends of King Arthur - Andrew Matthews**



This book is filled with exciting and vivid retellings by best-selling author, Andrew Matthews, of some of the best loved legends of King Arthur and is a brilliant introduction to these enthralling and enduring stories. Peter Utton's dramatic and atmospheric illustrations add greatly to the adventure. If you enjoy this book, why not try Michael Morpurgo's book *Arthur High King of Britain* which tells Arthur's story in a very different way.

***The Racehorse Who Wouldn't Gallop* - Clare Balding**

Steeped in farm and family life and full of fascinating details from the world of horse racing too, this exciting story by the multi-talented Clare Balding, is the rags to riches story of Charlie who buys the racehorse no-one else wants and goes on to enter him in the Derby. With a terrific cast of characters, animal and human, it's a properly heart-warming story. Noble Warrior isn't the only one to prove what he's made of thanks to the support of those who believe in him; Charlie too finds the confidence to ignore her brothers' taunts about her thighs, and even persuades them to work as part of her team.

***The Sheep-Pig* - Dick King-Smith**

The magic of a special animal is perfectly captured in the heroic antics of Babe, a piglet with a difference. The runt of a litter, Babe is taken under the wing of the sheep dog and trained by her along with her own puppies. And Babe turns out to be a genius at it. His secret? Babe treats the sheep with courtesy and respect. A farmyard story with a difference, *The Sheep-Pig* is an exciting and unexpected adventure by an award-winning author and has been made into a highly successful film.

***Stig of the Dump* - Clive King**

When Barney falls down the cliff of the chalk pit he lands in what might be a rubbish dump. But the dump turns out to be the home of Stig, a cave-boy who turns what he finds to good use. Stig and Barney have a series of wonderful adventures in Barney's world from scaring Barney's enemies to chasing away Granny's burglars. And then, Barney finds himself back in Stig's world for a special adventure set way back in the past.

***Sideways Stories from Wayside School* - Louis Sachar**

There has been a terrible mistake. Wayside School was supposed to have been built with thirty classrooms all next to each other in a row. Instead it was built with the thirty classrooms all on top of each other - thirty storeys high! That may be why all kinds of strange stuff happens at Wayside School. Especially on the thirtieth floor. It is a school full of unusual characters too: Mrs Gorf, the meanest teacher in the world; Terrible Todd, who always gets sent home early; John, who can only read upside down. It is a crazy mixed-up place, brilliantly brought to life by prize winning author Louis Sachar and if you enjoy this, there are several other hilarious books about Wayside School.

***Tom Trueheart 1: The Secret History of Tom Trueheart Boy Adventurer* - Ian Beck**

This exciting adventure with its striking silhouette illustrations is by award-winning author/illustrator, Ian Beck. Young Tom Trueheart wants to be an adventurer like his six older brothers. They're all employed by the Story Bureau to take the lead in thrilling tales. But something's gone wrong - none of the stories are being finished and none of the Trueheart brothers have returned home. Does little Tom have the courage to become the hero who can bring the stories to an end and bring his brothers safely home? A celebration of make believe for all lovers of a good story. Don't miss the sequels where you can read more of Tom's thrilling adventures.

***The Unlikely Adventures of Mabel Jones* - Will Mabbitt**

The first and award winning book by brilliant comic author, Will Mabbitt, When Mabel Jones unknowingly commits 'The Deed' she finds herself swiftly bundled into a sack and carried off to the pirate ship the Feroshus Maggot. Crewed by the strangest bunch of pirates you would ever want to meet and captained by the dreaded Idriss Ebenezer Split, the Feroshus Maggot whisks Mabel Jones off on the adventure of a lifetime. If you like this book, there are now two equally wacky sequels featuring Mabel Jones, which you will also enjoy.

***Varjak Paw* - S. F. Said**

This award-winning book is stylish, original and inventive. Varjak Paw is a Mesopotamian Blue kitten. He lives high up in an old house on a hill. He's never left home, but then his grandfather tells him about the Way - a secret martial art for cats. Now Varjak must use the Way to survive in a city full of dangerous dogs, cat gangs and, strangest of all the mysterious Vanishings. If you are gripped by this story, don't miss the equally exciting sequel - *The Outlaw Varjak Paw*.

***Violet and the Smugglers* - Harriet Whitehorn**

This gripping story is the first in a brilliant series of detective stories set in exotic locations. Meet Violet Remy-Robinson, an amateur Sherlock Holmes in the making...Uncle Johnny has invited Violet and her friends to spend the summer with him on a sailing adventure around Europe and Violet couldn't be more excited! But when she suspects that the captain of a boat nearby might be up to no good, Violet needs to put her detective skills into action...could he be the head of a smuggling ring? Don't miss the exciting sequels.

#### ***War Game* - Michael Foreman**

Winner of the prestigious Smarties Prize, this un-put-downable, yet at times harrowing story of a group of boys from Suffolk who sign up to fight in World War One is a classic. It was Christmas Day in the trenches in France during World War One and a remarkable football match took place. British and German soldiers put down their weapons and took up a game of football instead. For one day, the enemies are friends: they talk and play instead of fighting. But, the war isn't over and next day they pick up their weapons and the lads from Suffolk are ordered to go over the top... An astonishing story beautifully told in words and pictures.

#### ***The Wind in the Willows* - Kenneth Grahame**

This is one of those books which everyone should read! This classic story filled with adventure, excitement and fun, follows quiet, cautious Mole as he ventures out from his little underground home into the spring sunshine and finds his life is changed forever when he meets the kindly Water Rat. From then on, with his new-found friends, sensible Ratty, wise Badger and fun-loving Toad, there's never a dull moment!

#### ***The Wizards of Once* - Cressida Cowell**

The first in an exciting series by the author of the How to Train Your Dragon books set in This is the story of a young boy Wizard and a young girl Warrior who have been taught since birth to hate each other like poison; and the thrilling tale of what happens when their two worlds collide. Once there was Magic, and the Magic lived in the dark forests. Until the Warriors came... Xar is a Wizard boy who has no Magic, and will do anything to get it. Wish is a Warrior girl, but she owns a banned Magical Object, and she will do anything to conceal it. In this whirlwind adventure, Xar and Wish must forget their differences if they're going to make it to the dungeons at Warrior Fort. Where something that has been sleeping for hundreds of years is stirring...

#### ***The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* - L Frank Baum**

You have probably seen the famous film which is based on this exciting book. Now read the original - follow the yellow brick road with Dorothy into a magical world filled with extraordinary characters that unfurls before you. A classic with more magic on every page than almost any other book! Read this and follow it with Michael Morpurgo's equally brilliant *Toto*, telling the story from the point of view of Dorothy's companion and friend, Toto the dog.

#### ***The World According to Humphrey* - Betty G. Birney**

The first in the best-selling series of stories about Humphrey the Hamster. Read this, and you'll never see a pet in the same way again! A hamster-eye view of school, families and having fun takes readers on a roller-coaster of human/pet relationships. Classroom pet Humphrey gets to go home each weekend with a different pupil. It's a steep learning curve as he learns to handle all kinds of weird behaviour both human and animal. Humphrey's diary is a joy to read - don't miss this or his many other adventures.