

# THE GREAT BIG EASTER HOLIDAY READING LIST

<p><b>Sparrow The Story of Joan of Arc</b> <b>Michael Morpurgo</b></p>	<p>A vivid re-telling of the story of the great French heroine Joan of Arc which weaves together the hopes and aspirations of a contemporary French girl with the stirring story from the past. Inspired by a picture at home, Eloise has always loved the thought of the brave and determined Joan. When her family move to Orleans Eloise gazes up at the site of the English fort which Joan stormed. Like her heroine, Eloise befriends a sparrow and soon the true story of Joan unfolds. Award-winning Michael Morpurgo is moving and compelling in this retelling which was originally published as Joan of Arc. ~</p>
<p><b>The Bolds to the Rescue</b> <b>Written by Julian Clary</b></p>	<p>The Bolds are back, cause for celebration! Written by Julian Clary and illustrated with élan by the incomparable David Roberts, this is a book that will have children in stitches. For those that don't know, the Bolds are a family of hyenas living happily in Teddington disguised as humans. Word of their lifestyle has spread through the animal world and in this episode, a series of unhappy creatures turn up at their door looking for help. These include a crocodile named Sheila, Roger a ram, two flighty ex-racehorses, and a poodle with dreams of singing super-stardom! Ever optimistic and warm-hearted, the Bolds welcome them in and start teaching their guests how to be human. It's ludicrous, charming and very, very funny, with a subtle underlying message about live-and-let-living. As delightful as their first adventures, and that's really saying something.</p>
<p><b>The Nest</b> <b>Written by Kenneth Oppel</b> <b>Illustrated by Jon Klassen</b></p>	<p>A truly exceptional, uniquely unsettling work in which the stinging clarity and poignancy of Oppel's writing is exquisitely echoed by Jon Klassen's haunting illustrations.</p>

	<p>Steve's baby brother, Theo, is sick and doctors are struggling to diagnose exactly what's wrong with him. Even if he becomes strong enough to undergo heart surgery, and even if the procedure is successful, he still won't be completely well. While his parents are preoccupied with Theo, and while Steve struggles with his own anxieties, he dreams of an otherworldly being and her fluttering, glittering companions. <i>'We've come because of the baby,' she says. 'We've come to help',</i> and Steve wonders if she might be an angel. While she turns out to be something entirely different, she offers Steve the chance to fix the fact that his brother's ill. All he has to do is say yes, which he does. But when these dreams contort into nightmares and the line between Steve's internal world and reality becomes horribly blurred, he wants out of what he agreed to, but is told <i>'once you say yes, you can't say no'</i>. And then there's the menacing wasps' nest swelling in the roof of the family home, and the sinister phone calls from Mr Nobody... As his world implodes, Steve feels 'all in pieces', but must find the strength to save his brother.</p>
<p><b>The Great Chocoplot</b>  <b>Written by Chris Callaghan</b></p>	<p>Roald Dahl, a man who knew his way round a chocolate bar, would have approved of this book. Imagine how awful it would be if the world's supplies of chocolate were threatened by an impending chocopocalypse - it doesn't bear thinking about, but that's what's facing Jelly, the young hero of this book. Chocoholics both, Jelly and her gran team up to get to the bottom of this chocopocalypse, and it seems snobby posh chocolate shop owner Garibaldi Chocolati might just have something to do with it. Inventive, original and genuinely funny with a quirky cast of characters and an internal logic all of its own, kids will gobble this up.</p> <p>This will be enjoyed by fans of David Walliams's children's books, while Frank Cottrell Boyce's <b><i>The Astounding Broccoli Boy</i></b> is another wacky adventure, and there are kids up against eccentric and unscrupulous criminals in William Sutcliffe's <b><i>Circus of Thieves</i></b> series.</p>

<p><b>The Shadow Keeper</b> Written by Abi Elphinstone</p>	<p>Fabulous, feisty Moll returns with the ever faithful and courageous Gryff by her side in their quest to save the old magic and stop the Shadowmasks from destroying them. This is a tale of friendship, about finding courage in the darkest of moments and the desire to fight and stand up for those you love and what you believe in.</p>
<p><b>Beetle Boy</b> Written by M.G. Leonard Part of the The Battle of the Beetles Series</p>	<p>A rollicking adventure spiced up with fascinating information about beetles, this debut novel fuses science, survival and sleuthing! Darkus's life is turned upside down when his father goes missing. Darkus refuses to accept that his father is dead and he is determined to find out what happened for himself. Sent to stay with his uncle, he discovers the strange neighbours have a yard full of junk - and beetles. Darkus is befriended by a handsome, giant beetle who seems to understand Darkus and is also connected to his dad's disappearance. What is going on? And who is Lucretia Cutter, one of the best villainess since Cruella de Vil?</p>
<p><b>Whispers in the Graveyard</b> Written by Theresa Breslin</p>	<p>This is a gripping supernatural thriller and one of those rare books that makes the reader want to put life on hold for as long as it takes to finish it. The writing is breathtakingly good and whilst tackling some serious issues it also delivers a storyline that is superb. Meet Solomon, a boy who is bullied who finds solace in the local graveyard, but when an evil spirit threatens a young girl he must confront his demons in order to try and save her.</p>
<p><b>Tales from Shakespeare</b> Written by Charles Lamb, Mary Lamb, Dame Judi Dench</p>	<p>Charles and Mary Lamb's retellings of twenty of Shakespeare's tales are rich with humour and telling imagery; and the authors reflect much of Shakespeare's insight into the human condition. The language they use is striking and memorable, and there are lots of direct quotations too making these stories particularly good for reading aloud. Indeed, reading or listening to the appropriate tale before going to see a production of one of the plays would be an ideal way to give children a grip on the plot. This edition</p>

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<p><b>Part of the Puffin Classics Series</b></p>	<p>comes with a fascinating introduction by Judi Dench, whose passion for these retellings should certainly catch young readers' attention: <i>'you will find heroes and villains, heroines and deceivers, kings, queens, fairies and magic - the same ingredients that all the very best stories are made of.'</i> Indeed!</p>
<p><b>What's So Special About Shakespeare?</b> Written by Michael Rosen Illustrated by Sarah Nayler</p>	<p>Shakespeare's writing was extraordinary four hundred years ago, and it's still extraordinary today says Michael Rosen in this splendid and inspiring introduction to the bard. Rosen demonstrates to young people just why Shakespeare is still acted, read and quoted today and how his work still shapes our language and culture. His enthusiasm is irresistible. Taking examples from <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> he shows how relevant the play still is to young people and explains - clearly and succinctly - how the action, characters and dramatic tension still affect modern audiences. There's also fascinating information about Shakespeare's life, times and schooling and about the first Globe Theatre, and this is one of the very best books to introduce children to Shakespeare.</p>
<p><b>Flamingo Boy</b> Michael Morpurgo</p>	<p><b>In a nutshell: classic Morpurgo story of war, nature, bravery and love</b> Flamingo Boy is vintage Michael Morpurgo, just the kind of story he tells so brilliantly. Eighteen-year old Vincent is 'following the bend in the road', letting life take him where it will, and finds himself in the wild and beautiful landscape of the Camargue. There he meets Kezia and Renzo and, as they nurse him through a fever, hears their life stories. Vincent hangs on every word and readers will too as Kezia describes the events that brought her and Renzo together, and the threats and dangers their families faced during the war. It's a story of love, loss, renewal and reconciliation, vividly told and touching on important issues that matter to every one of us. Inspired by his own grandson, who is autistic, Renzo, the boy with a special connection to nature and animals, is one of Morpurgo's most striking and vital characters.</p>
<p><b>Brightstorm</b> By Vashti Hardy</p>	<p><b>In a nutshell: thrilling, original adventure story</b> <i>Brightstorm</i> is everything a proper children's adventure story should be: it's exciting, funny and surprising, and stars two young people who show real courage,</p>

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	<p>loyalty and resilience. Twins Maudie . and Arthur Brightstorm are left alone in the world when their explorer father dies on a daring expedition to the uncharted territory South Polaris. Worse news follows when he is accused of breaking the explorer's code. Not only is he disgraced, but his property is forfeit leaving the children destitute. The twins are determined to clear his name and run away to join the crew of the sky-ship <i>Aurora</i>, also setting off for South Polaris. Under Captain Harriet Culpepper, they'll explore strange lands, meet some extraordinary people, and learn more about themselves, as well as their father. A terrific read, this is one to recommend to fans of Abi Elphinstone and Katherine Rundell.</p> <p>Readers who enjoy <i>Brightstorm</i> should read Sinead O'Hart's <i>The Eye of the North</i> too.</p>
<p><b>Ned's Circus of Marvels The Gold Thief by Justin Fisher</b></p>	<p><b>In a nutshell: thrilling adventure in a magical other world</b>   After his adventures in the thrilling <b>Circus of Marvels</b>, all its young hero Ned wants is a quiet life: no chance of that. The mysterious disappearance of tonnes of gold from a locked vault draw him into an exciting new adventure, and the future of the world is in his hands. Once again much of the adventure takes place in a brilliantly described other world, filled with strange and fascinating creatures and machines. A kind of <b>Harry Potter</b> meets <b>James Bond</b>, this intriguing magical story will appeal to all young readers who dream of a more exciting life in a more exciting world, and Ned is the perfect young hero. Readers who enjoy Ned's magical adventures will relish <i>Knights of the Borrowed</i> by Dave Rudden and the <i>Darkmouth</i> series by Shane Hegarty. ~ <b>Andrea Reece</b></p>
<p><b>Meeting Cezanne by Michael Morpurgo</b></p>	<p>This is a gentle, evocative story of a young Parisian boy's summer in 1960s rural Provence. This book is beautifully illustrated inside and out by one of France's finest illustrators. <b>Meeting Cezanne by Michael Morpurgo</b> When Yannick learns that he is to stay with his Aunt Mathilde in the South of France, he cannot believe his luck. If the paintings of his mother's beloved Cezanne are to be believed, surely Provence is paradise itself. So begins an idyllic month for the young boy: roaming the gentle hills and rolling valleys of Aix-en-Provence; daydreaming about his beautiful cousin Amandine; helping in his aunt and uncle's bustling</p>

	<p>village inn; and, feeling that he has come to the most wonderful place in the world. Then the idyll is spoilt when an important local comes for dinner and Yannick accidentally destroys a precious drawing the man leaves behind. Yannick is devastated by what he has done, and resolves to put things right. But in so doing he makes a surprising discovery...</p>
<p><b>Jake Atlas and the hunt for the feathered God</b> By Rob Lloyd Jones</p>	<p><b>In a nutshell: page-turning, explosive treasure-hunting adventures</b> Indiana Jones meets Alex Rider in this excellent series. The Atlases are just like any other family, bickering away, with parents generally on one side against Jake and his teenage sister Pandora. There's one big difference though: Mr and Mrs Atlas are super-tech treasure hunters, tomb robbers with a conscience if you like, and after years keeping this a secret, they've reluctantly recruited their children to join the family firm. This episode pits the Atlases against the mysterious People of the Snake again, and the ruthless Snake Lady, and takes them to South America for adventures in ancient Aztec ruins. It's a treat for anyone who likes their reading fast-paced and their gadgets hi-tech, and there's humour too - Jake's voice is spot on - while Lloyd Jones slips in lots of accurate and fascinating historical detail.</p>
<p><b>Doctor Noel Zone presents Danger is Still Everywhere</b></p>	<p><b>Shortlisted for the Laugh-Out-Loud Book Awards 2016, 9-13 years Category</b> Dr Noel Zone is without doubt the world's greatest dangerologist, and his books are required reading for anyone eager to avoid danger wherever it may lurk and, as we know from his first book, danger really is everywhere: toast, pets, birthday cake, bicycles EVERYTHING is a potential threat to wellbeing! Imagine the doctor's horror therefore when danger is introduced into his house in the form of a yapping, shoe-chewing, pee-and-poop-doing havoc machine called Napkin (ie a small puppy belonging to his sister). This is another brilliantly funny</p>

	survival guide, the kind of book readers carry around so that they can read favourite passages out loud to friends and family. Huge fun and great for dipping into.
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