

#HookedOnBooks: 31 great books that could help get your child reading

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SF Said believes that every child can be a reader - and he's put together a list to help you find that breakthrough book that will get them hooked...

I believe that EVERYONE can be a reader. I believe there's a book for every single child out there: a book that will get them #HookedOnBooks, and light the spark of literacy.

Some kids haven't yet found that book. But that doesn't mean we should write them off as 'non-readers'. It just means they need help to find it.

I recently asked the children's books community on [Twitter](#) to recommend books they'd seen turn kids into readers. I was flooded with replies and recommendations; you can see them all on the thread below the tweet. But from those suggestions, and from conversations with teachers, librarians and literacy experts, I've put together this crowd-sourced list of children's books.

The list includes fiction, non-fiction, poetry, picture books, illustrated books, and books with no illustration.

The one thing they have in common is that they're all books that have got many kids #HookedOnBooks, across all ages, genders and backgrounds, especially kids who found reading difficult before they found the book that became their favourite.

Finding a book for everyone

I particularly wanted to include books that appealed to children from BAME backgrounds. The [CLPE's research](#) shows that while BAME children now make up over 30% of the UK school-age population, only 1% of children's books published in the UK last year featured main characters from BAME backgrounds, and only 4% featured BAME characters at all.

So it's often especially hard for those kids to find books that appeal to them. But taken together, I think the books on this list have very wide-ranging appeal.

Once I had a list, I asked the brilliant Emer Stamp to create an image that featured these books, and conveyed the idea that everyone can be a reader when they find their favourite book. I love what she's done - and if you do too, please share her image far and wide on social media.



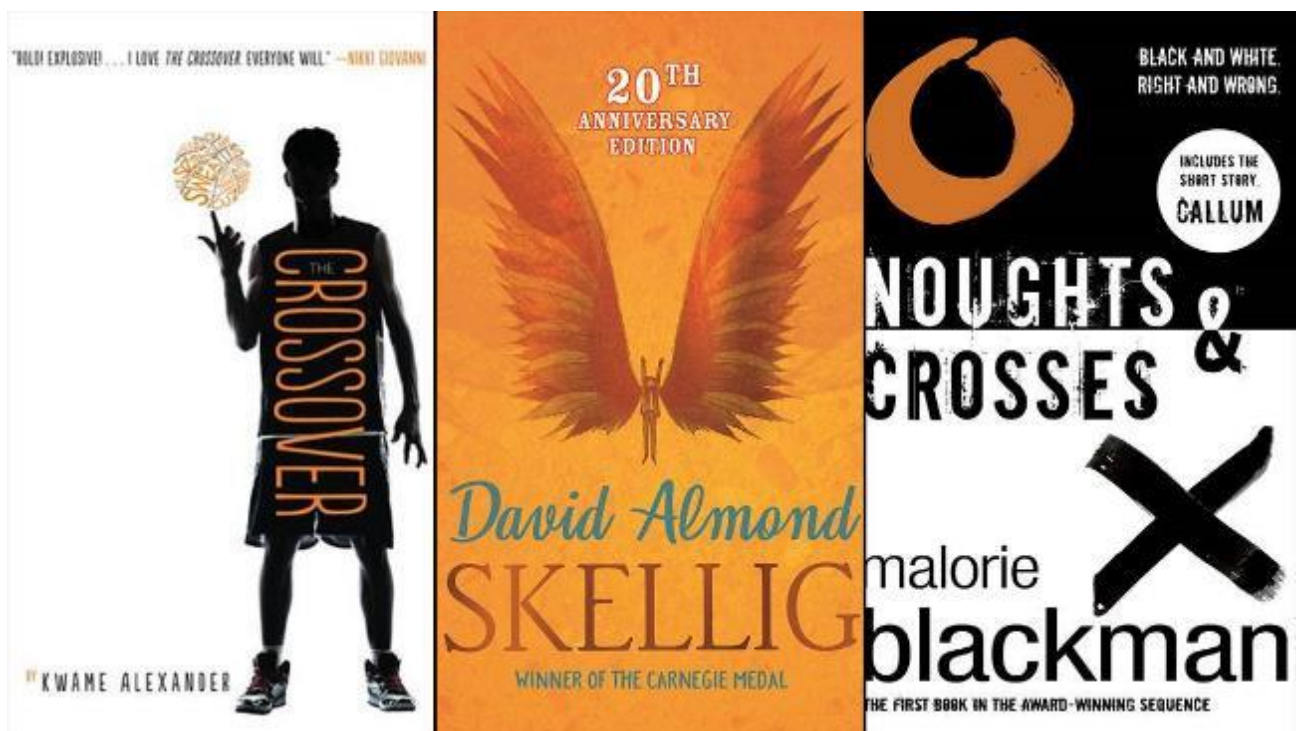
<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/news-and-features/features/2019/january/hookedonbooks-31-great-books-that-could-help-get-your-child-reading/>

And while I hope there's something for everyone on this list, I know it's a limited selection: only 31 books.

So I would love it if other people made their own lists, with their own recommendations, and maybe even illustrated them. It would be wonderful to see the whole country sharing children's books and celebrating their life-changing impact.

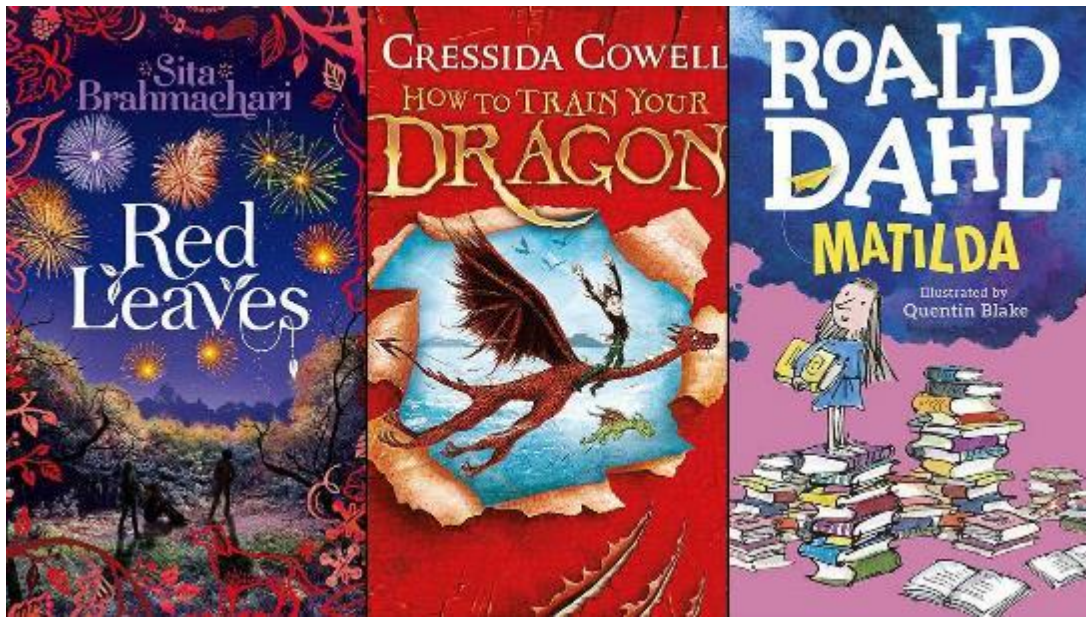
So please get thinking, talking and tweeting about how we can make sure EVERY SINGLE CHILD has the chance to get #HookedOnBooks!

#HookedOnBooks: A crowd-sourced list

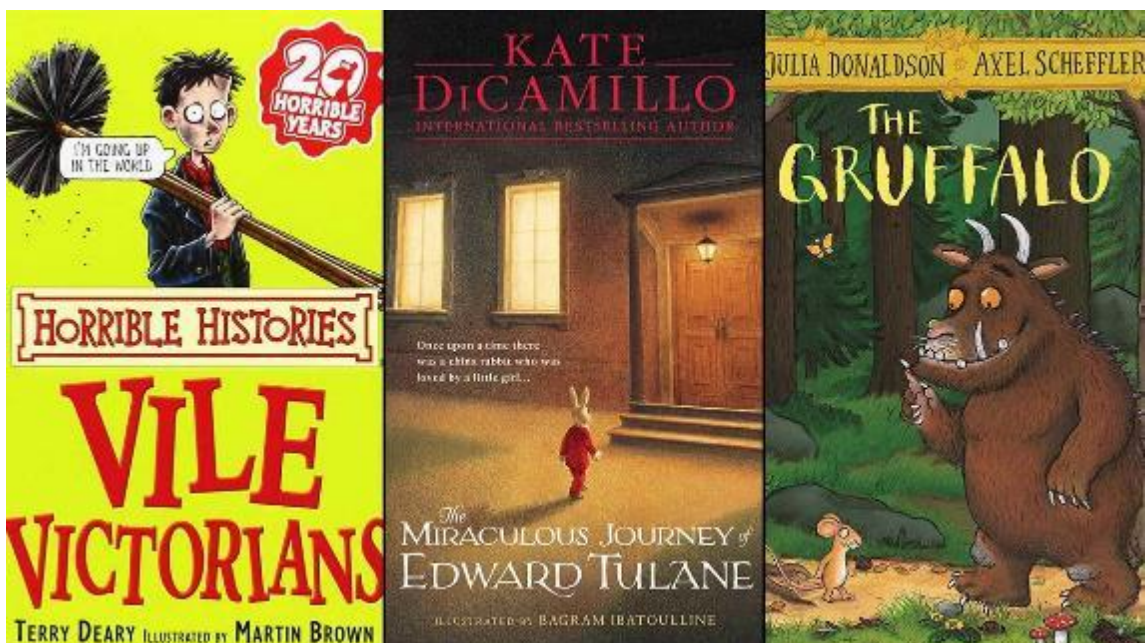


1. ***The Crossover* by Kwame Alexander:** A novel in verse about two brothers who have basketball in their blood - and what happens when their bond is tested.
2. ***Skellig* by David Almond:** Michael discovers a strange, magical creature who needs his help in this contemporary classic.
3. ***Noughts and Crosses* by Malorie Blackman:** A dystopian series about two young people from different worlds with a thought-provoking and insightful look at racism and prejudice.

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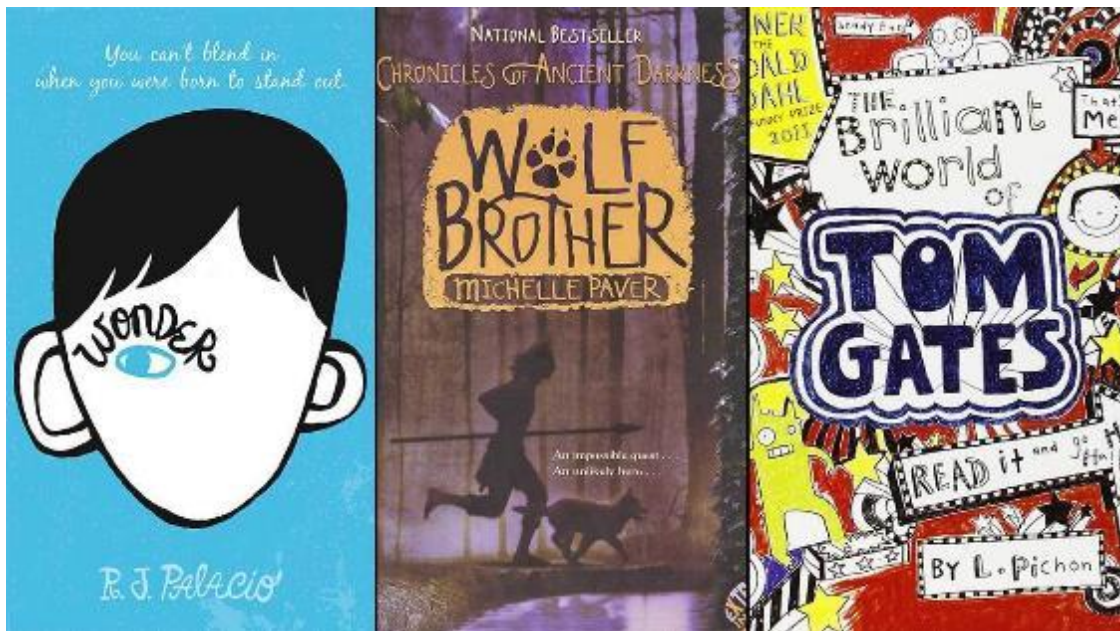
4. ***Red Leaves*** by Sita Brahmachari: A diverse group of characters all feel they have been abandoned by someone they love in this tale of modern multicultural Britain.
5. ***How to Train Your Dragon*** by Cressida Cowell: The first in a series of brilliant, hilarious romps about Hiccup and his journey towards sword-fighting, dragon-whispering heroism.
6. ***Matilda*** by Roald Dahl and Quentin Blake: An inspiring heroine stands up for what's right in one of Roald Dahl's most popular stories.



7. ***Horrible Histories* by Terry Deary and Martin Brown:** A much-loved series of books that aims to get children excited about history with funny (and often disgusting) facts.
8. ***The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* by Kate DiCamillo and Bagram Ibatoulline:** Abigail adores her china rabbit Edward Tulane but he doesn't return her love... will that change when he's separated from her?
9. ***The Gruffalo* by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler:** A beloved picture book about a mouse's journey through the jungle and its attempts to escape from danger.



10. ***The Wheel of Surya* by Jamila Gavin:** Marvinder and Jaspal face a battle for survival when they're separated from their mother during civil war in the Punjab in 1947.
11. ***Once* by Morris Gleitzman:** This ground-breaking book follows natural optimist Felix as he tries to track down his Jewish parents in Nazi-occupied Poland.
12. ***The 13-Storey Treehouse* by Andy Griffiths and Terry Denton:** This metafictional triumph sees the author and illustrator rushing to finish their book in time - if they can actually get to work with all the weird things going on...



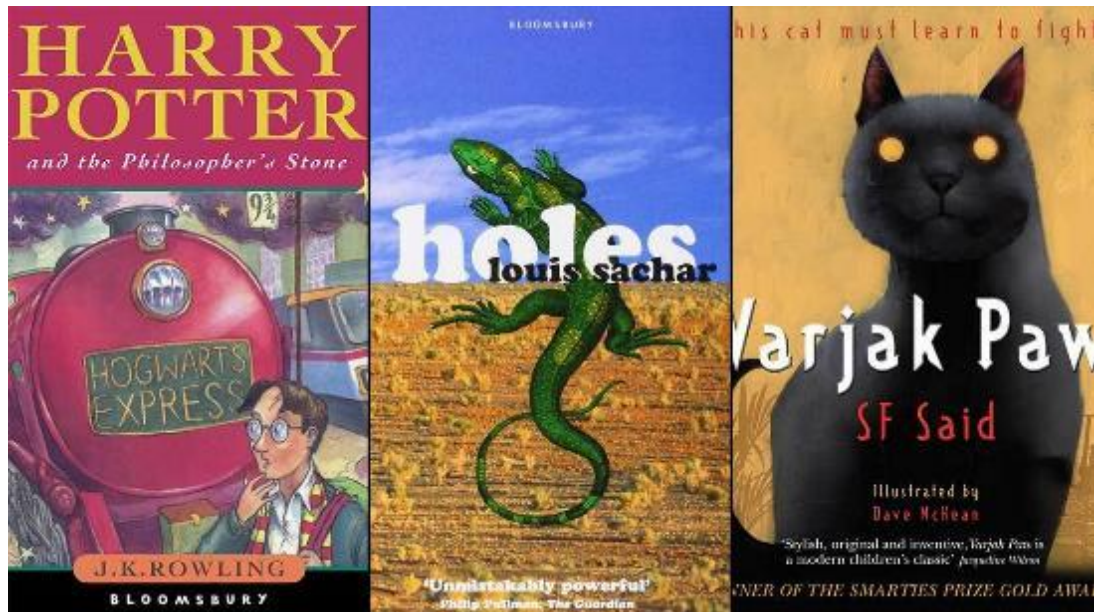
13. **Wonder** by R. J. Palacio: Auggie, who was born with a severe facial deformity, goes to school for the first time in this emotional but uplifting novel.
14. **Wolf Brother** by Michelle Paver: Torak sees his father murdered by a terrible demon in the shape of a bear - will he be able to become a hero and stop it?
15. **The Brilliant World of Tom Gates** by Liz Pichon: The first in a hugely popular series oozing with personality, with hand-written rants, funny stories and brilliant cartoons to catch the eye.



16. **The Adventures of Captain Underpants** by Dav Pilkey: A hilarious series of novels about secret superhero Captain Underpants, who is fighting for truth and justice (with the help of his wedgie-power).

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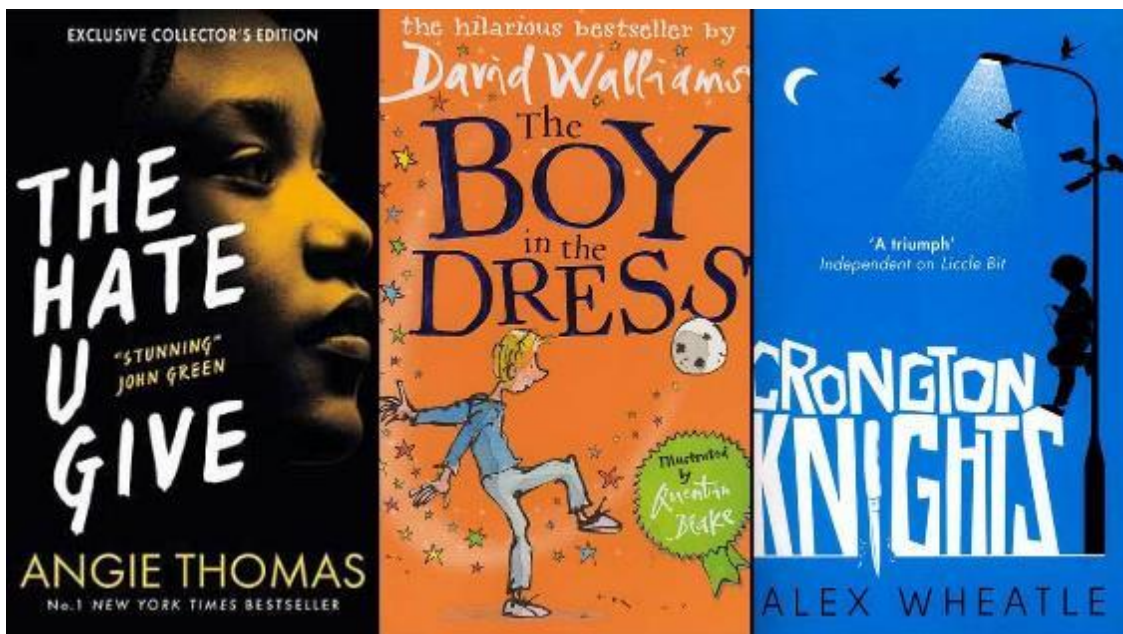
17. **[Oliver and the Seawigs](#)** by Philip Reeve and Sarah McIntyre: A wonderfully wacky nautical tale which sees Oliver venture out to rescue his explorer parents, who have mysteriously disappeared.
18. **[Ottoline and the Yellow Cat](#)** by Chris Riddell: A highly illustrated, quirky book which follows Ottoline's attempts to solve a spate of burglaries in her neighbourhood (with the help of her hairy companion Mr Munroe).



19. **[Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone](#)** by JK Rowling: The first adventure for Harry Potter, an orphan who discovers that not only is he a wizard, but he's a *famous* wizard - and his first year at Hogwarts isn't going to be an easy ride.
20. **[Holes](#)** by Louis Sachar: A miscarriage of justice sees Stanley Yelnats sent to a juvenile detention centre in the middle of the desert in this inventive and utterly compelling story.
21. **[Varjak Paw](#)** by SF Said: Kitten Varjak Paw has never left his home - until his grandfather tells him about the Way, a secret martial art for cats.



22. ***The Unbelievable Top Secret Diary of Pig* by Emer Stamp:** Pig is very happy on the farm... until Duck lets slip that Farmer is secretly fattening him up for his dinner. Will he be able to save himself? A brilliantly silly and surreal story.
23. ***You're a Bad Man, Mr Gum* by Andy Stanton and David Tazzyman:** A daft and extremely funny story about the nasty Mr Gum - and how he reacts when Jake the dog decides that his garden is the perfect place to play.
24. ***Goosebumps* by R. L. Stine:** An enduringly popular series of books that are as funny as they are frightening.



25. **[The Hate U Give](#) by Angie Thomas:** A profound, deeply compelling modern-day classic that explores race and police shootings in America.
26. **[The Boy in the Dress](#) by David Walliams:** Dennis loves football, but he also loves dresses. A sensitive subject that is dealt with humorously - and with a cast of quirky characters.
27. **[Crongton Knights](#) by Alex Wheatle:** McKay tries to avoid trouble, but on one night his attempts to help a girl in need see him getting caught up in a lot of drama in this rollercoaster of a story.



28. **[We're Going on a Bear Hunt](#) by Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury:** A picture book classic following a father and his children on a hunt through the countryside for a bear... but what if they find one?
29. **[The Story of Tracy Beaker](#) by Jacqueline Wilson and Nick Sharratt:** One of Jacqueline Wilson's best-loved tales, about a girl who lives in a children's home but dreams of her mother coming to take her away.
30. **[I Am Malala](#) by Malala Yousafzai:** The incredible true story of one of the world's most inspirational young women.
31. **[Talking Turkeys](#) by Benjamin Zephaniah:** The very first children's collection of poetry from Benjamin Zephaniah.