

# Sacred Heart Primary School Reading Newsletter

## Autumn 2 2025



Welcome to our second reading newsletter of the year.

This newsletter is a chance to find out about new, high quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry as well as a chance to get tips and up to date information about helping your child with their reading journey.

As always, your support is hugely appreciated. If you have any suggestions or recommendations for future newsletters, please let us know.

## The Importance of Reading for Pleasure

**Supporting Readers at Home**

Open University research suggests there are three important ways to support readers and a love of reading.

**Read Aloud**

Reading aloud to your children shows them reading is a pleasure, not a chore. Older children can read to younger ones too.

**Family Reading Time**

Making time to read alongside one another helps develop children's reading stamina and interest. Let them choose what to read and relax together.

**Book Chat**

Book Chats encourage readers. Invite them to make connections and share their views. Join in with your thoughts too!

Children who read, and are supported as readers, develop strong reading skills and do better at school.

I wonder if...why... what...who...

For more ideas see the OU website:  
<https://www.researchrichpedagogies.org>

# Author Spotlight Nadia Shireen



## An interview with Nadia...

**What was your favourite childhood book and why?**

Probably *The Witches* by Roald Dahl. I especially love the opening chapters, where the grandmother is retelling strange Norwegian folk tales. They are genuinely chilling! And sort of weird and funny at the same time. I'd never read anything like it and I remember feeling utterly thrilled.

**Which of your own books is your favourite and why?**

It's hard to have a favourite, because when I look at them I always notice the mistakes I've made, or things that could be improved. So I don't like to look back too much – I have to keep looking ahead and thinking up the next book.

**Why do you choose to read?**

I love being left alone. Reading is really good for that – people leave you to it! My life can be quite hectic, so I long for peace and quiet. If I was slobbing out in front of the telly – which I do now and then – I'd feel a bit lazy after a while. But if I slob out with a book, it feels different. It never feels like a waste of time. Also I get to have all sorts of adventures and experiences through stories. Another reason is that it makes me feel less lonely. If I'm feeling a bit sad, and then I read a book about someone else feeling a bit sad, it makes me feel less alone.

# Sheffield Libraries

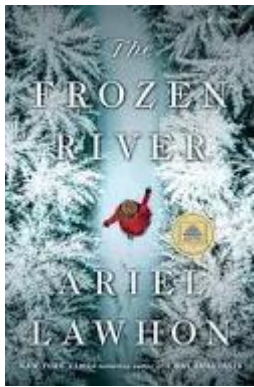
Sheffield Libraries are a wonderful way of accessing a huge range of high quality books absolutely free! Our local libraries can be found in Walkley and Hillsborough or why not try the Children's Library in town.

Like a book on our reading newsletter? Ask them if they have it! If not, they can get it in stock for you to borrow.



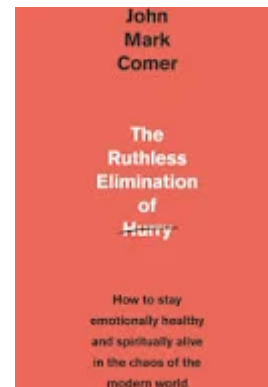
*Chinese Proverb*

## Book Recommendations for Adults



Maine, 1789: When the Kennebec River freezes, entombing a man in the ice, Martha Ballard is summoned to examine the body and determine cause of death. As a midwife and healer, she is privy to much of what goes on behind closed doors in Hallowell. Her diary is a record of every birth and death, crime and debacle that unfolds in the close-knit community. Months earlier, Martha documented the details of an alleged crime committed by two of the town's most respected gentlemen; one of whom has now been found dead in the ice. But when a local physician undermines her conclusion, declaring the death to be an accident, Martha is forced to investigate the shocking murder on her own.

Over the course of one winter, as the trial nears, and whispers and prejudices mount, Martha doggedly pursues the truth. Her diary soon lands at the center of the scandal, implicating those she loves, and compelling Martha to decide where her own loyalties lie..



Who are you becoming? That was the question nagging pastor and author John Mark Comer. By outward metrics, everything appeared successful. But inwardly, things weren't pretty. So he turned to a trusted mentor for guidance and heard these words: 'Ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life. Hurry is the great enemy of the spiritual life.' It wasn't the response he expected, but it continues to be the answer he needs.

Too often we treat the symptoms of toxicity in our modern world instead of trying to pinpoint the cause. A growing number of voices are pointing at hurry, or busyness as a root of much evil. Within the pages of this book, you'll find a compelling emotional and spiritual case against hurry and in favour of a slower, simpler way of life.

## Book Advent: Why not try something different and read a book each week of Advent or pop one of these in a Christmas Eve box

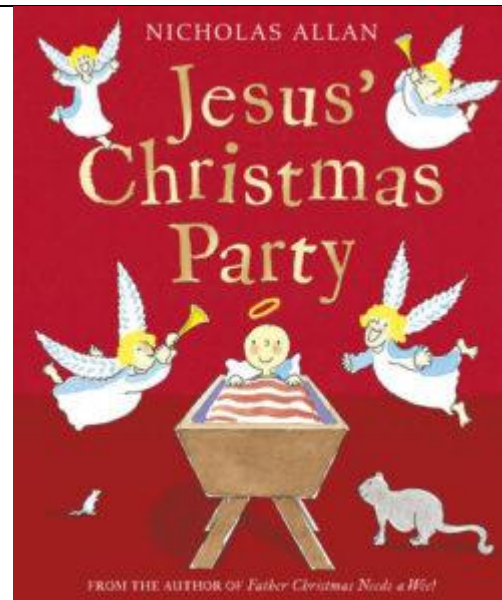


When the ugly little fir tree is taken to the city, no one wants to buy him; they prefer the big tall trees. But a homeless boy asks the shopkeeper if he can take the tree, and down by the river in a cardboard box, decorated with a few candles, the tree finds itself at the centre of a magical Christmas Eve it will never forget. A Christmas tale with a classic feel but a modern theme at its heart.

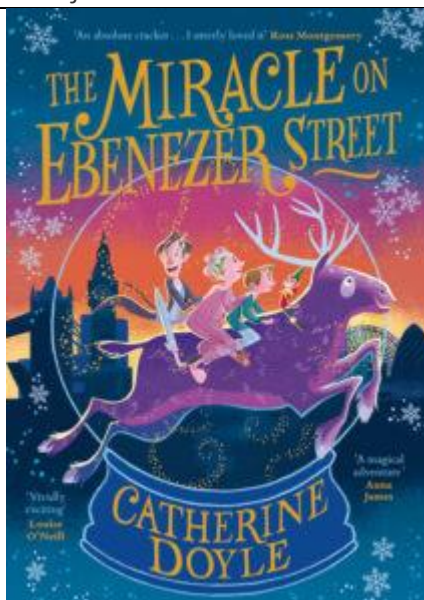
A delightful retelling of the nativity through the eyes of a grumpy innkeeper whose sleep is disturbed by unexpected visitors, a shining light and loud singing in the sky...

The innkeeper and his wife settle down to sleep after a hectic day, but a stream of visitors keep showing up, asking for Mary and Joseph. 'Round the back!' the innkeeper shouts, grumpily!

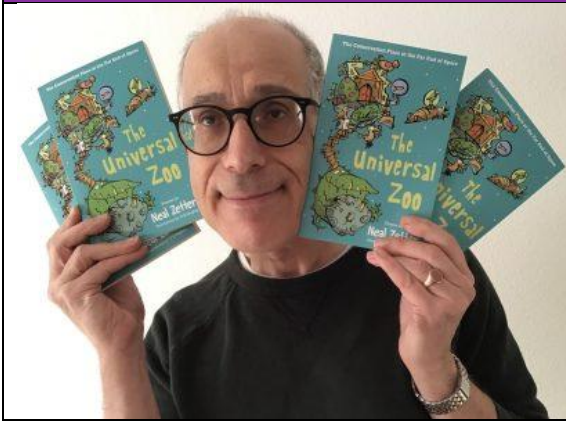
Eventually, desperate for sleep, he flies into a rage and goes to see what all the fuss is about: it sounds like some kind of party out in the stable! But as soon as he sees newborn baby Jesus, the innkeeper softens and joins in the celebration.



This beautifully written re-working of Dickens' A Christmas Carol is destined to become a future classic. It combines huge emotional impact with a sparkingly entertaining story sprinkled with magic and magnificent characters. George and his dad embark upon a soul-searching quest to visit Christmases past, present and future. With the help of an amusing cast of friends from energetic elves to reluctant reindeer, all the magic of Christmas is brought back to the family just in time for Christmas day itself.

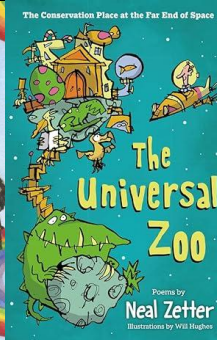
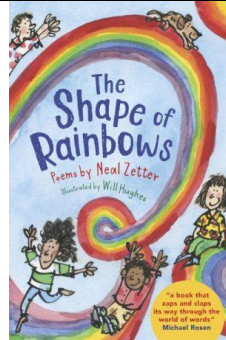


# Poetry Page



**Poet Neal Zetter shares a special message:**

Reading extends your vocabulary, teaches you new facts, develops your imagination, is great fun and relaxing, a fantastic social activity and can be free! So go on as my poem says – get addicted to books



**A Wookiee is not just for Christmas**

He'll want to stick with you forever  
If you pick up one  
On the way to the sun  
You'll always be spotted together

A Wookiee is not just for Christmas  
Han Solo found out from Chewbacca  
He'll groan, growl and howl  
Has breath pretty foul  
But is loyal as a mate or a mucker

A Wookiee is not just for Christmas  
Though stronger than wrestling champions  
A tall furry rug  
He loves to give hugs  
And make you a perfect companion

A Wookiee is not just for Christmas  
He won't depart sooner or later  
Much more than a pet  
He'll baffle the vet  
And help you defeating Darth Vader

A Wookiee is not just for Christmas  
It's true – just check out Wookieepedia  
As Star Wars fans know  
If you take him home  
Once moved in he won't want to leave ya

# Guiding Children's Reading Choice

Does your child always read books by the same author or the same genre of book? Children's choice about what they read is really important, but it's also important that they know what's out there to be able to make an informed choice, with adults guiding them towards quality books wherever possible. Any reading is better than no reading, so it's not worth a battle, but children's series can often contain the same sort of style and vocabulary, making children read more passively (especially if the book has been made into a film that they have seen.)

'Banning' books by certain authors can make the problem worse... so why not offer your child one of these alternatives if they have got stuck on one of the most common series of books? Get in touch if you'd like any further support with this.

**Books for Topics**

REAL PIGEONS  
FIGHT CRIME

SCHOOL SUCKS.  
After you see the video, you'll love this AWESOME ROBOT!

OLIVER AND THE SEAWIGS  
Puffin Books

MECH ROBOGATORS  
POW UP

THE 3-STORY TREEHOUSE

Investi GATORS

GRUWOOD

Barry Loser  
Total winner!

Jim Smith  
Author of the Best Selling Series

STAR CAT

KITTY QUEST  
PHIL CORBETT

If you like...

**Bunny vs Monkey**

...try these!

BUNNY MONKEY BUNNY MONKEY BUNNY MONKEY BUNNY MONKEY

Visit [www.booksfortopics.com](http://www.booksfortopics.com) for more ideas!

# November: Month of Remembrance

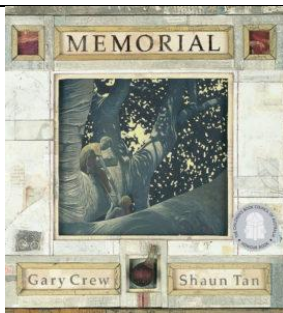
The whole month of November is dedicated to remembrance with All Saints and All Souls Days in the church and Remembrance Sunday. Below are recommended books to support your child's understanding and interest. These books and many others on the theme can be found in our library.



Where the Poppies Now Grow tells the story of best friends Ben and Ray, who swap their simple lives on countryside farms for the raging battlefields of France. This book is rare in its ability to make both the narrative and illustrations poignant and evocative without being too frightening or graphic for young children.



Peace Lily is a rhyming story that celebrates the humanity and compassion that thrive even in the darkest of times. Lily is a nurse at Passchendaele, working in a hospital tent to treat those wounded in battle. This is a moving story that explores the important contribution made by women on the front line during World War One.



The story depicts a fig tree planted in 1918 as a war memorial in Australia. Generations later a local council threatens to cut down the tree when its roots cause problems with the developments in the town. The story leaves plenty of space to discuss what remembrance means and the importance of stories and conversations in keeping memories of the past alive.



This is a lovely story set in the midst of the First World War. Clarry is a wonderful main character who has boundless hope. She shows true determination throughout the story of her, her brother Peter and her cousin Rupert. This is a beautiful story of love and hope in the face of adversity.



This moving World War 2 novel begins with Anna, the grandmother, explaining how she was sent away by her parents, following the events during the night of the ninth of November 1938 in Germany on Kristallnacht. Knowing that, as a Jew, she would no longer be safe, young Anna manages to get a space on the Kindertransport, bringing children to the relative safety of Britain. Following an arduous journey, Anna is taken in by a family in Kent, who live and work on a country estate. During 1940, when the threat of invasion pervades the country, Anna and her foster siblings Molly and Frank find themselves drawn into a dangerous web of deceit and betrayal. This is Anna's opportunity to prove whose side she is on.

## Book Reviews / Recommendations

We would love to add your book reviews to our reading newsletter. If you would like to write one, please give Ms Tuplin a paper copy or email your teacher for it to be passed on. Good book reviews give a brief overview of what the book is about (no spoilers!) and your opinion of the book – how did it make you feel? Perhaps suggest the type of reader you would recommend the book to.

If you would like to recommend a book for the next newsletter, please let Ms. Tuplin know. The next issue will be looking at Christmas and Remembrance / War themed books.

## Reading Challenge

It is not too late to get involved in our 25 in 2025 reading challenge. Read 25 books linked to the challenge to be entered into a prize draw. Challenge sheets have been sent via ParentPay and paper copies are available.

This challenge is a great way to add variety to your child's reading and could be something that you do alongside them too.