

### **Books for pupils whose reading age is significantly below their actual age**

Many of these titles are published by [Barrington Stoke](#), the experts on engaging less able and dyslexic readers.

Their books are often written by the best children's authors and use a dyslexia friendly font and paper colour.

#### **[The Vampire of Croglin \(Reloaded\)](#)**

**By Terry Deary**

Interest Age 11+ Reading Age 8+. The villagers live in fear of noises in the night. The new tenants at the Grange have been attacked. What is the truth behind the legend of the vampire? Both comic and sinister.

#### **[The Ghost Box](#)**

**By Catherine Fisher**

Interest Age 11+ Reading Age 8+. A tale of suspense with a girl, her step-brother, a ghost and an old gnarled oak tree, with a surprising twist at the end.

#### **[Diary of an \(Un\) Teenager](#)**

**By Pete Johnson**

Interest Age 11+ Reading Age 8+. Hilarious, award-winning bestseller with a sequel: Return of the (Un) Teenager.

#### **[Seriously Silly Stories – series](#)**

**By Laurence Anholt and Arthur Robins**

Twisted takes on favourite fairy tales. Aimed at primary school age but funny enough for year 7 or even 8 to enjoy. Including:

- *Rumple Crumple Stinky Pin*
- *Eco-wolf and the Three Pigs*
- *Ghostyshocks and the Three Scares*

#### **[Desirable](#)**

**By Frank Cottrell Boyce**

When misfit George's grandfather gives him an old bottle of aftershave for his birthday, George finds his status at school suddenly altered. Laugh-out-loud comedy from a Carnegie Medalist writer.

### **FYI: Fiction with Stacks of Facts Series**

#### **Various authors**

Reading age 8+. Interest age 11+. Great series for less able readers who think they only like non-fiction, from Barrington Stoke. Gripping narratives with plenty of illustrations, interspersed with interesting facts. Including:

- *The Doomsday Virus* by Steve Barlow and Steve Skidmore
- *The Last Viking* by Terry Deary
- *The Greatest* by Alan Gibbons

### **Timepiece series**

#### **By Anne Perry**

Reading age 8+. Interest age: 11+. From Barrington Stoke comes this series aimed particularly at girls. Rosie is the feisty protagonist who travels back in time. The first three books are:

- *Tudor Rose*
- *Rose of No Man's Land*
- *Blood Red Rose*

### **Deadline**

#### **By John Townsend**

Barney uncovers a terrorist plot, but nobody will believe him. Can he stop the killers in time? A former teacher, John Townsend has written several very popular titles for Barrington Stoke.

### **Ninja: First Mission (Ninja Trilogy)**

#### **By Chris Bradford**

Taka's desperate to prove that he has what it takes to become a ninja. He has failed the Grandmaster's test twice already. But when the clan's scrolls are stolen by an enemy samurai he has a chance to prove himself. Chris Bradford is the author of the popular Young Samuri series, devoured by many a KS2 pupil and now has books for older teens – the Bodyguard series (see below) so this trilogy might also help less able readers feel part of the crowd.

### **Books for bridging the gap**

These books are a little more challenging, but may encourage those who up to now have been reading specialist titles for struggling readers, are ready to move on, but perhaps lack the confidence or enthusiasm.

### **Raven's Gate (Power of Five) Graphic Novel**

## **By Anthony Horowitz**

Graphic-novel adaptation of the No. 1 bestseller *Raven's Gate*, from the creator of *Alex Rider*, Anthony Horowitz. A slightly more demanding read than the others in this section, but the graphic novel format and atmospheric story will carry less able readers along.

### **Bodyguard: Hostage**

#### **By Chris Bradford**

With the rise of teen stars, the intense media focus on celeb families and a new wave of billionaires, adults are no longer the only target for hostage-taking, blackmail and assassination – kids are too. That's why they need a young bodyguard like 14 year old Connor Reeves to protect them. Pupils who enjoyed Bradford's *Ninja* trilogy (see above) might be persuaded to try this more challenging, but still page-turning book, the start of a new series.

### **Knightley and Son**

#### **By Rohan Gavin**

Comedy thriller which delivers big laughs and big adventures. The [Knightley and Son quest pack](#) which accompanies the book, full of puzzles to solve and codes to crack (downloadable from <http://www.lovereading4kids.co.uk/book/9423/Knightley-and-Son-by-Rohan-Gavin.html>) is the kind of extra that can hook a less enthusiastic reader and the spy/detective genre is bang on trend for both boys and girls.

### **Books for average ability pupils who don't have the reading habit**

### **The Saga of Darren Shan – series**

#### **By Darren Shan**

Darren Shan is an ordinary schoolboy plunged into the vampire world. Atmospheric, funny, realistic, moving and terrifying, these books are easy to read but well-written. Many a reluctant reader has got hooked on Shan, although it can sometimes be a struggle to get them to read books by anyone else as he is a prolific author. Other extremely popular series by Shan include the *Demonata* series and the *Saga of Larten Crepsley*. The first book of the Darren Shan saga is *Cirque du Freak*.

### **The Cherub Series**

#### **By Robert Muchamore**

**Action packed stories about** a group of orphaned teenage spies. The first three are:

- [The Recruit](#)
- *Class A*
- *Maximum Security*

### **The Bindi Babes Series**

#### **By Narinder Dharmi**

Three feisty, fun-loving Anglo-Asian sisters rule the roost over their dad since their mum died. Particularly good for girls who say they don't like reading, from the author of *Bend It Like Beckham* (another goodie). The first three books are:

- *Bindi Babes*
- *Bollywood Babes*
- *Bhangra Babes*

### [Socks Are Not Enough](#)

**By Mark Lowery**

Mike Swarbrick's life couldn't get any worse. His pervy best friend gets him embroiled in a scandal involving the girls' changing rooms, his idiot of an older brother is snogging the girl of his dreams and he's just come home early from school to discover his parents are secret nudists . . . but they're ready to go public!

### **The [Alex Rider](#) Series**

**By Anthony Horowitz**

There are 9 novels in the series with series a number of spinoff short-story collections; a film; and a video game. The series has introduced any number of reluctant boys to the joys of reading. The first three books are:

- *Stormbreaker*
- *Point Blanc*
- *Skeleton Key*

### [Love Ya Babe](#)

**By Chris Higgins**

Chris Higgins is a popular and prolific author with the knack of tapping into what it means to be a tween girl. The covers may lead you to expect a saccharin tale, but the stories are often poignant and moving with complex female characters. Other popular titles from Higgins include *It's a 50:50 Thing* and *Would You Rather?*

### [The Young Bond Series](#)

**By Charlie Higson**

Before the name became a legend. Before the boy became a man. Meet Bond. James Bond. The first three in the series are:

- *Silverfin*

- *Blood Fever*
- *Double or Die*

### [The Giver Quartet](#)

**By Lois Lowry**

Great sci-fi classics for those not yet old enough for *The Hunger Games*. The four books are:

- *The Giver*
- *Gathering Blue*
- *Messenger*
- *Son*

### [The Graveyard Book](#)

**By Neil Gaiman**

After the grisly murder of his entire family, a toddler wanders into a graveyard where the ghosts and other supernatural residents agree to raise him as one of their own.

### [Refugee Boy](#)

**By Benjamin Zephaniah**

Haunting, tragic and distressing in what it reveals about man's inhumanity to man, *Refugee Boy* is also an affirming story of one boy's amazing courage and several other individuals' goodness and integrity.

### [Set In Stone](#)

**By Linda Newbery**

Winner of the Costa Children's Book Award 2006. Set at the end of the 19th century, Linda Newbery has cleverly carved out an incredible mystery that's full of clever twists and entwined with drama.

### [Skin Deep](#)

**By Malaika Rose Stanley**

When 13-year-old Brummie babe, Destiny enters the Bright Sparks beauty contest behind her (ex-model) mum's back, she is determined to prove she has talent and brains – and that she is not just a pretty face. This book hooks the reader with a girl-friendly storyline, but deals with some tough issues along the way. Good to see girls from different racial groups as the main characters, without race being the main issue.

### [A.N.T.I.D.O.T.E](#)

[Thief](#)

**By Malorie Blackman**

It's just your average Friday night. Then the police show up. Your mum's been caught on CCTV, breaking into a giant chemical company. They say she's working undercover for A.N.T.I.D.O.T.E, a group against animal testing – but how is that possible? She's not a spy – is she? Now she's on the

run – and only you can uncover the truth. And you’ve got to crack a code to do

it. <http://www.amazon.co.uk/N-T-I-D-T-Malorie-Blackman/dp/0552551686>

Pretty much anything by this author is a winner for reluctant readers. **Thief** is another tense thriller, and one which might appeal particularly to girls.

### [The Garbage King](#)

**By Elizabeth Laird**

When Mamo’s mother dies, he is abandoned in the shanties of Addis Ababa. Stolen by a child-trafficker and sold to a farmer, he is cruelly treated. Escaping back to the city, he meets another, very different runaway. Dani is rich, educated – and fleeing his tyrannical father. Together they join a gang of homeless street boys who survive only by mutual bonds of trust and total dependence on each other. Inspired by a true story.

### [Grass](#)

**By Cathy Macphail**

Winner of the Scottish Book Award 2010 (Older Readers category). Tension mounts and there is no escape in this gripping thriller about gang violence.

## **Books for pupils whose reading age is above their actual age**

### [Cold Fusion Series](#)

Cold fusion is a new series from Ransom aimed at those with an actual age of 9-12 and a reading age of 12+ including:

[Never Odd or Even](#) **By John Townsend**: A detective story with a difference.

[Paupers](#) **By Mary Chapman**: Gripping account of life as one of the Victorian poor.

[Among the Hidden](#) **By Margaret Peterson Haddix**

Government regulations limit families to two children each, so Luke, an illegal third-born, must live his life in secret. When a new housing development is built on land bordering his backyard, Luke discovers Jen, another “shadow child” and they must decide how far they are prepared to go against the rules in order to have their freedom. This is not a super-challenging read, but deals with some very thought-provoking issues.

### [The Abhorsen Trilogy](#)

**By Garth Nix**

Gripping sci-fi tales with strong female characters. Another prolific author. The books in the trilogy are:

- *Sabriel*
- *Lirael*
- *Abhorsen*

**Revolver and  
She is Not Invisible**

**By Marcus Sedgwick**

*Revolver*: 1910. A cabin north of the Arctic Circle. Fifteen-year-old Sig Andersson is alone. Alone, except for the corpse of his father, who died earlier that day after falling through a weak spot on the ice-covered lake. Then comes a knock at the door. It's a man, the flash of a revolver's butt at his hip, and a mean glare in his eyes.

*She is Not Invisible*: when Laureth's father, Jack is supposed to be in Switzerland doing research for his latest book, his notebook shows up in Queen's, New York. Worried sick, the intrepid (and blind) Laureth, decides to take her seven-year-old brother Benjamin to America to track him down.

**The Adventure of Huckleberry Finn**

**By Mark Twain**

The classic tale of youthful adventure.

**Liar and Spy**

**By Rebecca Stead**

When Georges moves into a new apartment block he meets Safer, a twelve-year-old self-appointed spy. Soon Georges has become his spy recruit. His first assignment? To track the mysterious Mr X, who lives in the flat upstairs. But as Safer becomes more demanding, Georges starts to wonder: what is a game and what is a lie? How far is too far to go for your only friend?

Winner of the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize and a good one to challenge an able year 7 reader.

**Call of the Wild**

**By Jack London**

Half St. Bernard, half sheepdog, Buck is stolen away from his comfortable life as a pet in California and sold to dog traders. He soon finds himself aboard a ship, on its way to Northern Canada. Surrounded by cruelty, Buck's natural instincts and behaviour begin to emerge as he works as a mail carrying sled dog, scavenging for food, protecting himself against other dogs and sleeping out in the cold snow.

### [A Fall of Moondust](#)

**By Arthur C Clarke**

Time is running out for the passengers and crew of the tourist cruiser Selene, incarcerated in a sea of choking lunar dust. On the surface, her rescuers find their resources stretched to the limit by the mercilessly unpredictable conditions of a totally alien environment. The technology has dated slightly, but the suspense carries the story. A challenging read but not too long, and plenty more Arthur C Clarke to read if they enjoy this one!

### [The Hobbit](#)

**By J.R.R Tolkein**

Now a major motion picture, as they say...

### [The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy](#)

**By Douglas Adams**

Douglas Adams's mega-selling cult classic is a good one for hooking able but reluctant readers. Rumour has it Artemis Fowl author Eoin Colfer is going to write a sixth book for the 'Hitchiker's Guide' series.