

## Recommended Reading books for Year 5

### The Kingdom Over the Sea by Zohra Nabi

After her mother's death, Yara follows a mysterious letter to the faraway kingdom of Zehaira, a place where magic is outlawed, and danger lurks in the Sultan's city. There she uncovers a world of jinn, secret sorcerers, and hidden rebellions. As Yara learns who to trust, she begins to understand her own power and the meaning of courage. The Kingdom Over the Sea offers 9+ year olds a richly imagined adventure about justice, identity, and belonging.

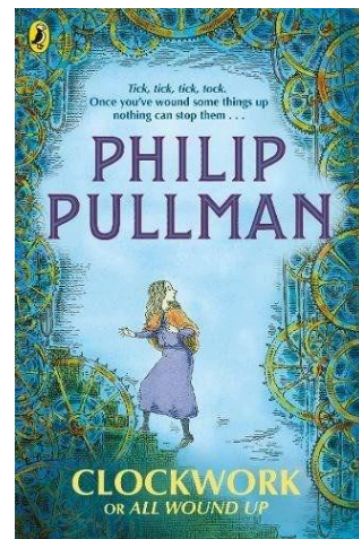
**Adventure**



### Clockwork by Philip Pullman

Set in a small German town, this spellbinding story weaves together the lives of Karl the apprentice clockmaker, Gretl the innkeeper's daughter, Dr Kalmenius, and a young prince with a fragile clockwork heart. Inside the inn, Fritz starts telling a tale that gradually becomes real, pulling folklore, invention, and the weight of time into its pages. A great modern fairy tale, this short chapter book contains sparkling writing, rich figurative language and evocative descriptions. It's a gift for creative writing teachers looking to develop storytelling skills in Year 5.

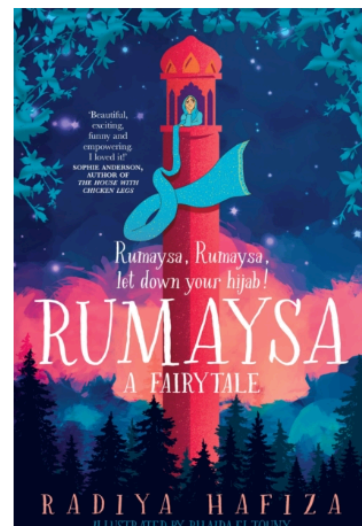
**Fantasy**



### Rumaysa: A Fairytale by Radiya Hafiza, illustrated by Rhaida El Touny

The worlds of Rapunzel, Cinderella, and Sleeping Beauty are thrown together in this uniquely imaginative story about Rumaysa, who uses her hijab to escape captivity and embark on adventures with characters from classic fairytales. Using South Asian cultural elements and Islamic references, this chapter book, with illustrations by Rhaida El Touny and Areeba Siddique, offers a diverse perspective on traditional stories. Highly recommended.

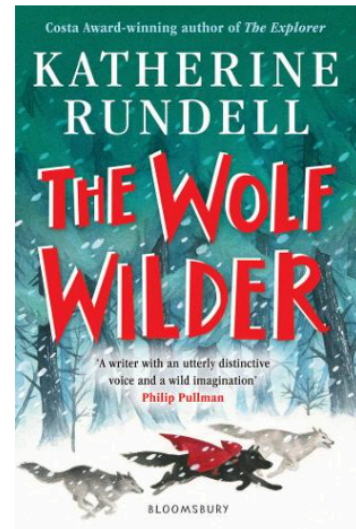
**Diverse**



## The Wolf Wilder by Katherine Rundell

Set in revolution-era Russia, a snowbound mother and daughter live in fear of the encroaching Red Army. But Feodora and her mother have a unique talent – they can turn tame wolves into suspicious and wild beasts fit to fend for themselves. With sparkling prose and rich in figurative language, this is a memorable story for freedom and independence that will keep a class of year five children entranced.

**Historical**



## The Shark Caller by Zillah Bethell

In Papua New Guinea, Blue Wing longs to be a shark caller but must learn to make friends with newcomer Maple. Initially rivals, they discover that there is something they all have in common: grief. The girls set out to take on a ferocious shark. With themes of cultural traditions and personal growth woven into richly described island life and authentic Papuan Pidgin English, this mesmerising story tackles friendship, loss, and forgiveness. A rewarding read.

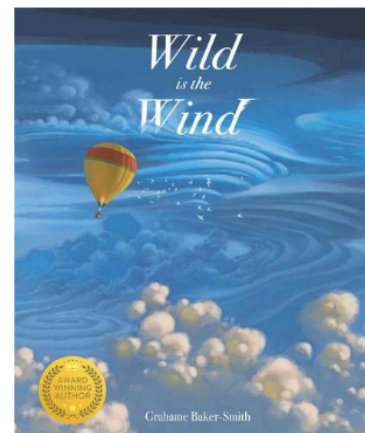
**Diverse**



## Wild is the Wind by Grahame Baker-Smith

A truly mesmerising picture book that takes the reader on a journey over the ocean in a hot air balloon with Cassi and the swift that she has nursed back to health. The reader experiences spectacular and diverse illustrated landscapes along the route, in this migration story with a distinctly human element. Ideal to incorporate into topics about seasons and weather, the poetic commentary also lends itself to use as an impetus for teaching similes and metaphors in Year 5 English lessons.

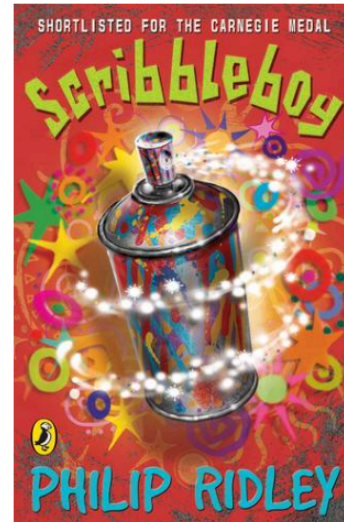
**Picture book**



### **Scribbleboy by Philip Ridley**

Bailey arrives in a new neighbourhood with his unusual family. He has no friends but receives a strange invitation to join the Scribbleboy Fan Club. With exciting vocabulary, wacky, larger-than-life characters, vivid descriptions, lively illustrations and laugh-out-loud moments, this is a great book to encourage reluctant readers in Year 5.

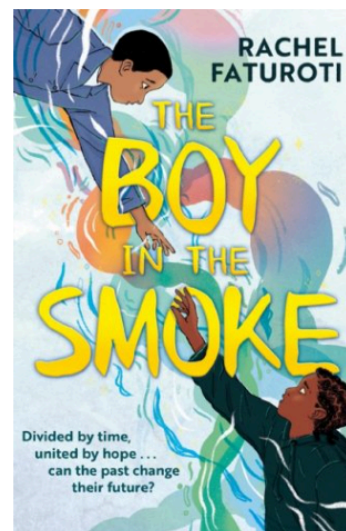
**Family**



### **The Boy in the Smoke by Rachel Faturoti**

Isaiah is struggling with financial hardship and family troubles. When he discovers a time portal in an old fireplace in his tower block, it leads him to Jacob, who lives in a workhouse in the 1830s. Together, Isaiah and Jacob decipher the mystery of Jacob's father and the dark workhouse secrets. An excellent text to explore resilience and friendship, The Boy in the Smoke also tackles poverty, money and hope through relatable characters and a powerful storyline. Highly recommended.

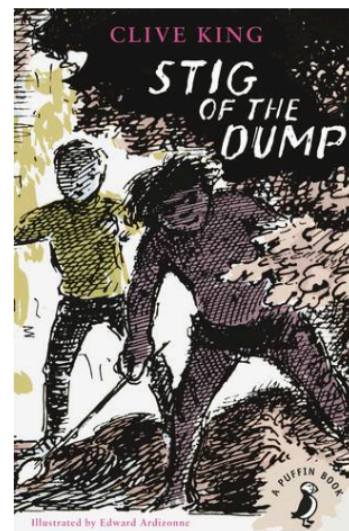
**Historical**



### **Stig of the Dump by Clive King**

Stig is a caveman. He lives at the bottom of a pit close to Barney's grandparents' house. People throw all their old junk in the pit, and Barney decides it would be the perfect place to build a den. An ideal group reader book for Year 5, this classic is a staple for KS2 English teaching as well as being a never-to-be-forgotten independent read.

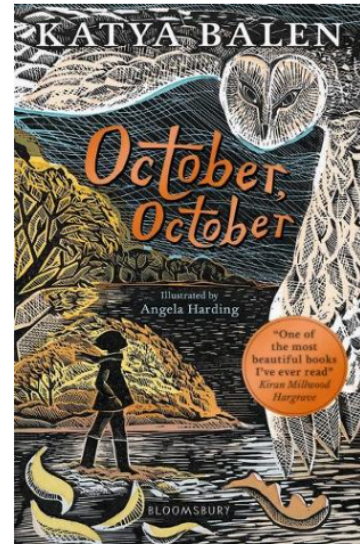
**Classic**



## October, October by Katya Balen

11-year-old October's idyllic world changes suddenly when she has to go and live with her mum in the city. More than anything, she yearns for a return to living in the wild woodland in harmony with nature, and most importantly to her, with her father. With beautifully written and atmospheric prose, this memorable book will appeal to Year 5 English teachers as a text to use for modelling creative writing and discussing as a class text.

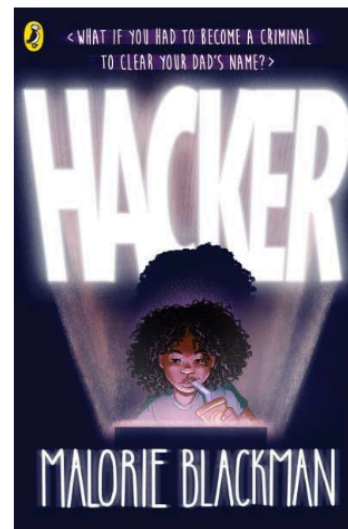
**Family | Nature**



## Hacker by Malorie Blackman

Vicky's father is accused of stealing over a million pounds from the bank where he works. How can she prove his innocence? A more mature independent reading book for Year 5 pupils, this novel will appeal to children who have a strong sense of right and wrong, or who are interested in computers and coding.

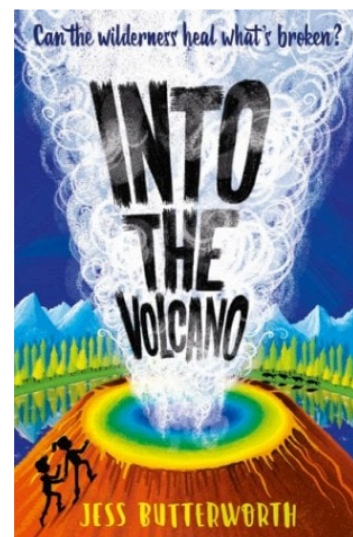
**Mystery | Diverse**



## Into the Volcano by Jess Butterworth

When a tragic event brings Seb and Vivi together, they embark on a hazardous journey across the vast expanse of Yellowstone Park. Seb is searching for a mythical rainbow pool to help heal his injured friend, Clay, while Vivi is trying to honour the memory of her grandmother. Their journey across a dangerous volcanic landscape encompasses themes of grief, hope, and the power of friendship. With heart-stopping survival moments and highly believable and empathetic characters, this is a cracking novel to read with and to KS2 classes.

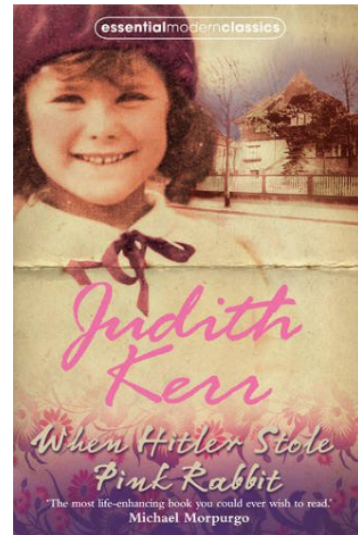
**Adventure | Friendship**



## When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit by Judith Kerr

The powerful story of a young Jewish girl who is forced to flee her home in Germany in 1933. A masterpiece of historical fiction, this is a moving novel that is ideal for both year five book clubs and for teaching as a whole class text as part of a WW2 topic.

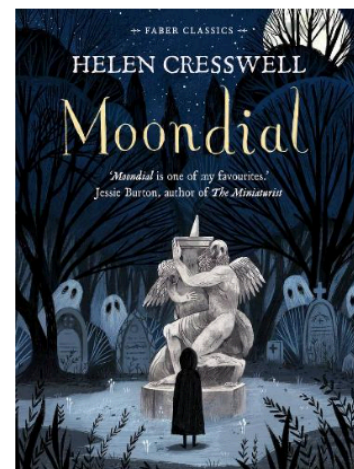
**Historical**



## Moondial by Helen Cresswell

A girl discovers a tunnel through time and tries to help two children from the past, in this story of ghosts, friendship and trying to right wrongs. A vividly told story, this classic children's novel is filled with evocative and atmospheric descriptions, rich characterisation and complex sentences – making it a useful teaching resource for more able students working at greater depth in Year 5.

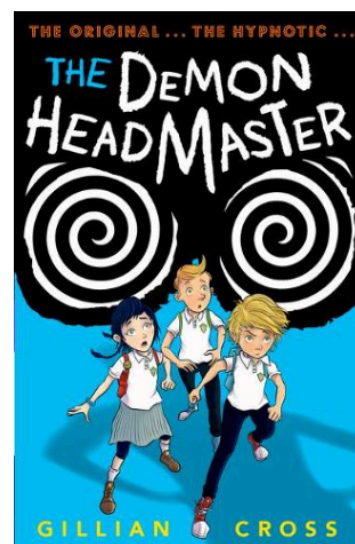
**Classic**



## The Demon Headmaster by Gillian Cross

Dinah Glass discovers that her new school's Headmaster is very strange. It's almost as if he's controlling what all the children say and think. Something is very wrong, and Dinah wants to know what it is. A fast-paced school-based dystopia for nine-year-olds, this is a thought-provoking read that will linger in the imagination.

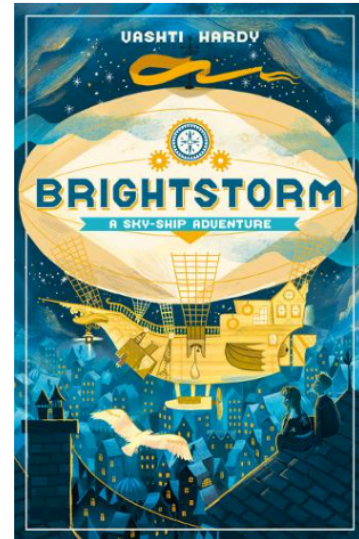
**Realistic fiction**



## Brightstorm: A Sky-Ship Adventure by Vashti Hardy

A gripping fantasy story that is perfectly suited for class reading. Arthur and Maudie Brightstorm set off on a dangerous voyage to find their father and save the family's reputation. The first of a stunning series and an ideal Year 5 book to inspire readers.

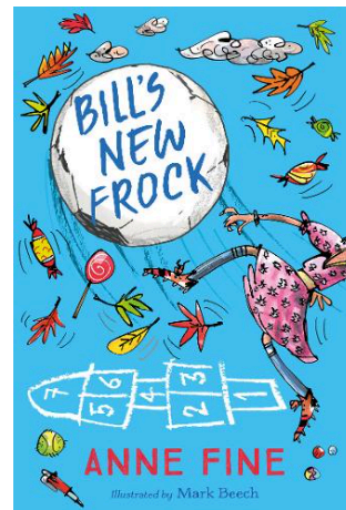
**Fantasy**



## Bill's New Frock by Anne Fine

Bill is forced to go to school in a dress – a frilly pink dress. One of the worst days of his life is about to begin in this very funny story. A fun storybook to read around the class and perform in Year 5, this is also an interesting book to spark discussion in PSHE lessons.

**Funny**



## The Phoenix and the Carpet by E. Nesbit

A group of children find out their new carpet is magical. An egg in the carpet hatches into a talking Phoenix, which explains that the carpet is magical and will grant them three wishes every day. This classic of children's literature is a more challenging book for Year 5 readers.

**Classic**

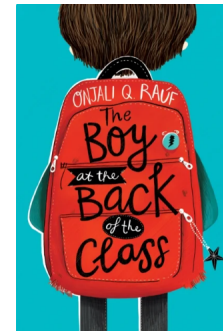


## **The Boy at the Back of the Class by Onjali Q. Rauf**

'There used to be an empty chair at the back of my class, but now a new boy called Ahmet is sitting in it. He's a refugee who's run away from a War. A real one. With bombs and fires and bullies that hurt people. And the more I find out about him, the more I want to help ...

That's where my best friends Josie, Michael and Tom come in. Because you see, together we've come up with a plan...'

Told with heart and humour, *The Boy at the Back of the Class* is a child's perspective on the refugee crisis, highlighting the importance of friendship and kindness in a world that doesn't always make sense.

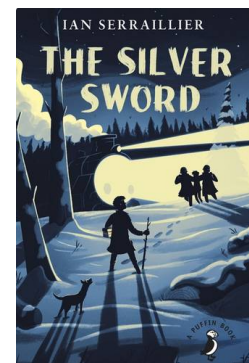


## **The Silver Sword by Ian Serrailier**

THE SILVER SWORD is an unforgettable World War II survival story.

The silver sword became the symbol of hope and courage which kept the Balicki children and their orphan friend Jan alive through the four years of occupation when they had to fend for themselves. And afterwards it inspired them to keep going on the exhausting and dangerous journey from war-torn Poland to Switzerland, where they hoped to find their parents.

Based on true accounts, this is a moving story of life during and after the Second World War.



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

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.

Perfect for boys and girls who love fantasy adventure...

**Winner of the *Blue Peter* Book Award**



## **Rooftops by Kathine Rundell**

Everyone tells Sophie that she was orphaned in a shipwreck – found floating in a cello case on the English Channel on her first birthday. But Sophie is convinced her mother also survived.

Hopeful, inspiring and thrilling in equal measure, this is a classic adventure story about pursuing your dreams and never ignoring a possibility.



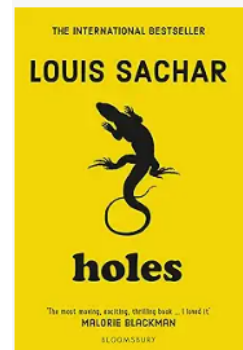
## WINNER OF THE WATERSTONE'S CHILDREN'S BOOK PRIZE

### **Holes by Louis Sachar**

Stanley Yelnats' family has a history of bad luck, so when a miscarriage of justice sends him to Camp Green Lake Juvenile Detention Centre (which isn't green and doesn't have a lake), it's not exactly a surprise.

Every day he and the other inmates are told to dig a hole each, five foot wide by five foot deep, reporting anything they find. Why? The evil warden claims that it builds character, but this is a lie. It's up to Stanley to dig up the truth.

**The iconic, multi-million bestselling novel. An unmissable modern classic.**



### **The Indian in the Cupboard by Lynne Reid Banks**

The Indian in the Cupboard is the first of five gripping books about Omri and his plastic North American Indian – Little Bull – who comes alive when Omri puts him in a cupboard.

For Omri, it is a dream come true when the plastic American Indian he locks into the old cupboard comes to life. Little Bull is everything an Indian brave should be – proud, fearless and defiant.

But being in charge of a real, live, human being is a heavy responsibility, as Omri soon discovers. And when his best friend, Patrick, is let in on the secret, he soon realises that life-changing decisions lie ahead.



### **Skellig by David Almond**

**The bestselling story about love, loss and hope that launched David Almond as one of the best children's writers of today. Winner of the Carnegie Medal and the Whitbread children's book of the Year Award.**

When a move to a new house coincides with his baby sister's illness, Michael's world seems suddenly lonely and uncertain.

Then, one Sunday afternoon, he stumbles into the old, ramshackle garage of his new home, and finds something magical. A strange creature - part owl, part angel, a being who needs Michael's help if he is to survive. With his new friend Mina, Michael nourishes Skellig back to health, while his baby sister languishes in the hospital.

