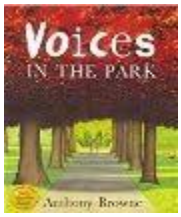
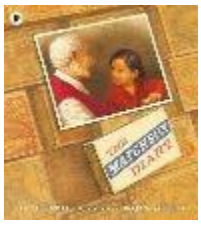
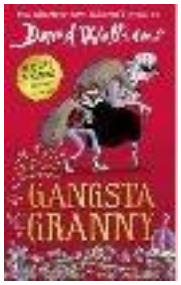
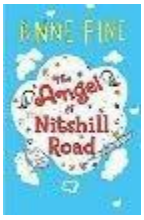
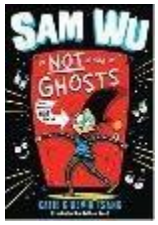
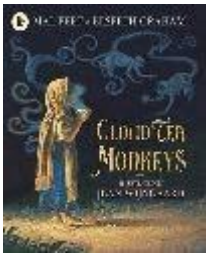
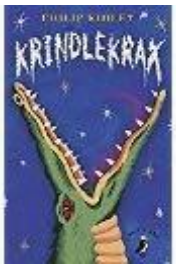
Years 3 and 4

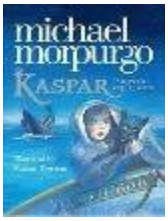
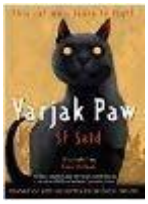
Contemporary Fiction

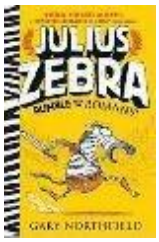
 The Polar Bear Explorer's Club Alex Bell	Join Stella, Starflake, Pearl and her three fellow explorers as they trek across the snowy Iceland's and come face-to-face with frost fairies, snow queens, outlaw hideouts, unicorns, pygmy dinosaurs and carnivorous cabbages . . . When Stella and three other junior explorers get separated from their expedition can they cross the frozen wilderness and live to tell the tale?	• Novel- narrative • An exciting narrative which covers gender issues • Humorous sets of club rules at the end of the text which could be the basis for writing sequels
 **Voices in the Park** Anthony Browne	A charming book beautifully illustrated and told from the perspective of the four main characters; one voice after another retelling a simple encounter in the park. The story is enhanced through beautiful illustrations, which in true Anthony Browne style, contain many hidden meanings. There is plenty of opportunity to discuss many themes throughout.	• Picture book • Viewpoint- great for exploring the Rashamon effect with children • Themes of relationships, family, identity, acceptance and happiness • Superb illustrations
 **The Matchbox Diary** Paul Fleischman	When a little girl visits her great-grandfather at his curio-filled home, she chooses an unusual object to learn about: an old cigar box. What she finds inside surprises her: a collection of matchboxes making up her great-grandfather's diary, containing objects she can hold in her hand, each one evoking a memory. Together they tell of his journey from Italy to a new country,	• Picture book • Great links to the wider curriculum. • A lovely text to develop empathy with characters • Themes of family, journeys, immigration
 You're a Bad Man Mr Gum! Andy Stanton	Mr. Gum may be the nastiest man on Earth, but he has the tidiest, greeniest, floweriest, gardeniest garden in the world…that is, until a giant whopper of a dog named Jake destroys it in a fit of doggy joy. Lots of gross characters to attract children to the story.	• Short novel- with illustrations, wide line spacing and fewer than usual lines on a page. • Exceptionally silly- and brilliant.

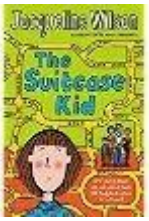
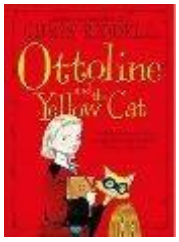
 Dragon Rider Cornelia Funke	A dragon. A boy. A journey. Firedrake, a brave young dragon, his loyal brownie friend Sorrel and a lonely boy called Ben are united as if by destiny. Together, they embark on a magical journey to find the legendary place where silver dragons can live in peace for ever. With only a curious map and the whispered memories of an old dragon to guide them, they fly across moonlit lands and seas to reach the highest mountains in the world. Along the way, they discover extraordinary new friends in unlikely places and a courage they never knew they had.	• Narrative • Part of a series- so encourages further reading • Fantasy adventure • Themes of friendship, magic and trust • Film version available to compare and contrast
 **Gangsta Granny** David Walliams	Our hero Ben is bored beyond belief after he is made to stay at his grandma's house. She's the boringest grandma ever: all she wants to do is to play Scrabble, and eat cabbage soup. But there is two things Ben doesn't know about his grandma. 1. She was once an international jewel thief. 2. All her life, she has been plotting to steal the Crown Jewels, and now she needs Ben's help…	• Novel- narrative • Family, relationships humour and adventure • Encourages readers to challenge their own views of the elderly • Film version available
 **The Angel of Nitshill Road** Anne Fine	A thought-provoking story of friendship and bullying. When a new girl joins the school she manages to change the hearts and minds of all the people in the school and leads them all to stand up collectively to the school bully and change things for the better.	• Short chapter book • Themes of friendship, acceptance, belonging and bullying • Set in a familiar setting of school

 **Sam Wu is NOT Afraid of Ghosts** Kevin Tsang	Sam Wu is NOT a scaredy-cat (except he is). When a trip to the Space Museum goes terrifyingly wrong, Sam begins a mission to prove to the school bully, and all of his friends, that he is a fearless space adventurer. A truly laugh-out-loud, voice-led and madcap story of ghost hunting, snakes and mischievous pet cats called Butterbutt, perfect for fans of Tom Gates, Wilf the Mighty Worrier and Barry Loser, and readers aged six plus.	• Short chapter book • A fun, easy to read, independent reader. • Best suited for Y3 • Themes of friendship and overcoming fears • Presented with lots of fun illustrations tacross the narrative • Great for teaching emphasis and intonation when reading • 1 in a series

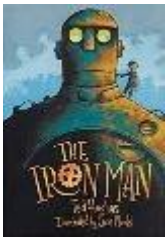
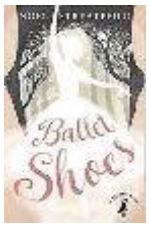
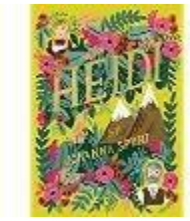
 **Cloud Tea Monkeys** Mal Peet and Elspeth Graham Juan Wijngaard	Tashi lives in a tiny village below the tea plantations where her mother earns a living. One day her mother falls ill, and Tashi must pick tea to earn the money for a doctor. But she is too small to reach the tender shoots and the cruel Overseer sends her away empty-handed. Tashi needs a miracle. Then, on the mountains high above the plantation where only monkeys live, something extraordinary happens that will change her life for ever…	• Picture book- beautiful illustrations • Set in India- tea plantation • Theme of relationships- with her mother and with the monkeys • We also recommend 'The Mysterious Traveller' by the same author
 **Krindlekrax** Philip Ridley	Ruskin Splinter is small and thin, with knock-knees, thick glasses and a squeaky voice, and the idea of him taming a dragon makes the whole class laugh. Big, strong Elvis is stupid but he looks like a hero. So who is more likely to get the big part in the school play? But when the mysterious beast, Krindlekrax, threatens Lizard Street and everyone who lives there, it is Ruskin who saves the day and proves he is the stuff that heroes are made of after all.	• Narrative • Sci-fi Fantasy • Themes of bullying, friendship and self- image • Familiar setting of school • Tale of good overcomes bad

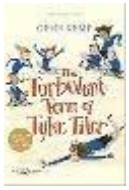
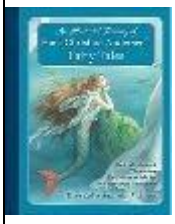
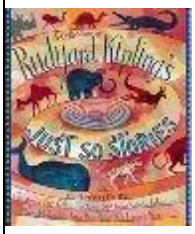
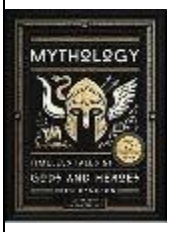
 **Kaspar Prince of Cats** Michael Morpurgo	Johnny Trott is a bellboy at the Savoy and it is his engaging voice that tells us Kaspar's (and his own) story. Kaspar is the cat of a Russian opera-singing Countess. Period detail, especially the contrast between high and low classes of the time, is clearly-drawn and absorbing. The few chapters dealing with the Titanic voyage transported us there with depictions of sounds, smells and sights and a gripping account of the sinking.	• Narrative • Historical adventure set in the times of the Titanic • Injustice based solely on class • Some excellent descriptions throughout
 **Varjak Paw** SF Said	Varjak Paw loves his family, but they're always mean to him. Now their owner is ill and a strange man comes to live with them. He has two black cats and they kill the Elder Paw, head of the family but Varjak escapes to find a dog.	• Narrative • Themes of finding your way in life, friendship and family • Great as an independent reader for more able in Y4 or as a class reader • 'The Outlaw Varjak Paw' is the fantastic sequel

 **Julius Zebra** Gary Northfield	From a smelly watering hole deep in the heart of the Serengeti to the ferocious clamour of the Colosseum, join Julius Zebra and his motley menagerie of friends as they gear up to be ... gladiators! Only if they win the love of the Roman crowds will they win back their freedom. But do Julius and his pals have what it takes to succeed in a world where only the meanest and toughest survive? Madagascar meets Gladiator in this exciting, action-packed and hysterically funny story brimming with entertaining Roman facts.	• A great combination of prose and comic strip • Zany sense of humour will appeal to young readers • Filled with true historical facts • First in a series so great for hooking readers • Great addition to reading area

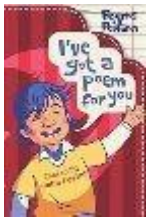
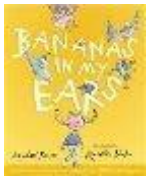
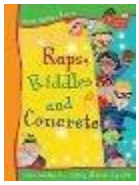
 Zita The Spacegirl Ben Hatke	Zita's life took a cosmic left turn in the blink of an eye. When her best friend is abducted by an alien doomsday cult, Zita leaps to the rescue and finds herself a stranger on a strange planet. Humanoid chickens and neurotic robots are shocking enough as new experiences go, but Zita is even more surprised to find herself taking on the role of intergalactic hero. Before long, aliens in all shapes and sizes don't even phase her. Neither do ancient prophecies, doomed planets, or even a friendly con man who takes a mysterious interest in Zita's quest.	• Bright and attractive sci-fi graphic novel • Adventure story featuring strong female lead • Whimsical and quirky • First in a series so great for hooking readers • Great addition to reading area
 **The Suitcase Kid** Jacqueline Wilson	When my parents split up they didn't know what to do with me . . . My family always lived at Mulberry Cottage. Mum, Dad, me - and Radish, my Sylvanian rabbit. But now Mum lives with Bill the Baboon and his three kids. Dad lives with Carrie and her twins. And where do I live? I live out of a suitcase. One week with Mum's new family, one week with Dad's. It's as easy as A B C. That's what everyone says. But all I want is to go home - back to Mulberry Cottage...	• An accessible read that covers themes of loss, divorce, change and adjustment. • Characters that are easy to identify with • Narrative text
 **Ottoline and the Yellow Cat** Chris Riddell	Introducing Miss Ottoline Brown, an exceptionally inquisitive Mistress of Disguise, and her partner in crime, Mr. Munroe. No puzzle is ever too tricky for the two of them to solve . . . They are the first to the scene of the crime when a string of high-society dog-nappings and jewel thefts hits Big City. Ottoline and Mr. Munroe go undercover - and expose an ingenious scam masterminded by furry feline crook, the Yellow Cat.	• Narrative • Quirky mystery adventure

Literary Heritage

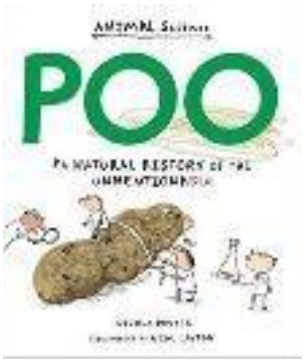
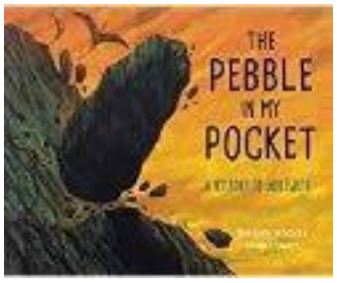
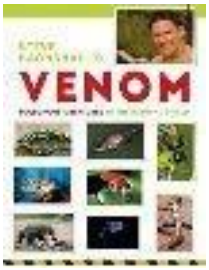
 **The Iron Man** Ted Hughes Chris Mould	*The Iron Man came to the top of the cliff.* *Where had he come from?* *Nobody knows.* *How was he made?* *Nobody knows.* Mankind must put a stop to the dreadful destruction by the Iron Man and set a trap for him, but he cannot be kept down. Then, when a terrible monster from outer space threatens to lay waste to the planet, it is the Iron Man who finds a way to save the world.	• Science-fiction story • Short chapter book- 5 chapters in total • Ideal as a basis to write a prequel or sequel • Great for examining layout and punctuation for impact. Hughes uses one-word paragraphs very well.
 **Ballet Shoes** Noel Streatfeild	Pauline, was rescued from a shipwreck as a baby. She longs to be an actress. Petrova, is a Russian orphan. She is happiest when playing with cars and engines. Polly was handed over with just a pair of ballet shoes to her name. If she could, she would dance all day! But one thing they DO have in common is, that with money running out at home and Great Uncle Matthew missing, the sisters want to stay together. Whatever it takes.	• Exploration of gender roles and expectations of girls • Would make good compare/contrast with other books from that era featuring girls- how are they portrayed? • Will appeal to budding dancers
 **Heidi** Johanna Spyri	At the age of five, little orphan Heidi is sent to live with her grandfather in the Alps. Everyone in the village is afraid of him, but Heidi is fascinated by his long beard and bushy grey eyebrows. She loves her life in the mountains, playing in the sunshine and growing up amongst the goats and birds. But one terrible day, Heidi is collected by her aunt and is made to live with a new family in town. Heidi can't bear to be away from her grandfather; can she find a way back up the mountain, where she belongs	• Narrative • Historical adventure • Relationships • Inference and discussion

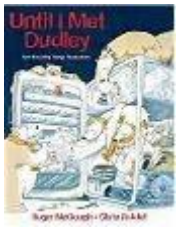
 **The Turbulent Term of Tyke Tyler** Gene Kemp	*The Turbulent Term of Tyke Tiler* is considered one of the children's classics of the twentieth century, and contains one of the most amazing and affirming twists in all of literature. Tyke Tiler and Danny Price are best friends. Wherever the pair go, trouble is never far behind. Mischief and astonishment abound in this hilariously funny classic story from award-winning author Gene Kemp.	• Narrative • Great for examining gender stereotypes • A twist in the tale that will surprise • Perfect to read aloud to children.
 An Illustrated Treasury of Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales Hans Christian Andersen and Anastasiya Archipova	*Hans Christian Andersen's classic tales of foolish emperors, lonely mermaids, icy queens and clever princesses have delighted children and adults alike for nearly two centuries. The stories' unique magic and wonder make them essential reading for any childhood. This beautifully illustrated collection of Andersen's best-loved fairy tales includes The Little Mermaid, The Snow Queen, Thumbelina, The Princess and the Pea and The Emperor's New Clothes.*	• Traditional and original versions- ideal to compare with more modern day alternatives • Beautiful illustrations
 Just So Stories Rudyard Kipling	*How did the rhinoceros get his wrinkly skin? Why won't cats come when they're called? How did one curious elephant with a nose for trouble change the lives of all elephants everywhere?* *These eight well-loved stories give inspired answers to these and other intriguing questions. Each story is illustrated by a major contemporary picture-book artist.*	• Illustrated collection containing eight (of the original twelve) of Kipling's short stories • Good for vocabulary development
 Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes Edith Hamilton	*For 75 years readers have chosen this book above all others to discover the thrilling, enchanting, and fascinating world of Western mythology-from Odysseus's adventure-filled journey to the Norse god Odin's effort to postpone the final day of doom. This version is fully-illustrated throughout.*	• Anthology of myths from a range of places and times

Poetry and Playscripts

 **I've Got a Poem for You (Poems to Perform)** John Foster	This collection features poems by the likes of Roger McGough, Benjamin Zephaniah, Michael Rosen and Rudyard Kipling. All the poems have a great sense of rhythm which makes them perfect for learning by heart, sharing and performing aloud.	• Poetry • Ideal for performance poetry and learning poems by heart
 **Bananas in My Ears** Michael Rosen	From the chaos of breakfast to the calm of bedtime, this whimsical collection, pairing two former British Laureates, is full of delightful moments. Explore the pleasures of acting silly and the pains of feeling ill, the camaraderie of siblings and strange goings-on at the beach All this and a trip on a flying bed, too!	• Poetry • A Collection of Nonsense Stories, Poems, Riddles, and Rhymes • Split into four sections • Humorous and silly
 **Raps, Riddles and Concrete** Pie Corbett	From riddles and shape poems to haiku and nonsense rhymes. It features model poem types followed by detailed instructions on how to achieve the same style of poem.	• Poetry

Non-Fiction

 **Poo** Nicola Davies	Hippos navigate by it, sloths keep in touch through it, rabbits eat it … and most grown- ups prefer not to mention it at all! But however you look at it, poo is probably the most useful stuff on Earth. It comes in all shapes and sizes, and every animal has its own special sort. Find out what it's for, where it goes, what we can learn from it and lots more in this book, one of six in the Animal Science series – the best biology series ever!	• Illustrated non-fiction book. • A disgusting topic that will surely delight! • Digestion
 **The Pebble in my Pocket** Meredith Hooper	This information book does what all information books should do: excite the reader's interest, curiosity and sense of wonder where none may have existed. Meredith Hooper, an award winning science writer, brings her…	• The story of how a pebble came to be • Filled with facts across thousands of years of history
 **Venom** Steve Backshall	From species such as the King Cobra, Lionfish, Fat-tail Scorpion and Poison Dart- frog to the diminutive but lethal Black Widow Spider, the author takes a fascinating look at the different types of natural venoms. On a tour of the world's continents, he looks at over 60 of the most venomous creatures, describing their main characteristics and explaining how they administer their venom and what its effects are.	• Information text full of photographs • Includes some recounts of encounters with deadly animals • Also recommend other texts by the same author

 **Until I Met Dudley…** Roger McGough and Chris Riddell	In this fun-filled book of how things work, Dudley, the techno-wizard dog, provides the answers to how things work. Roger McGough's delightfully ingenious text and Chris Riddell's striking illustrations take children from the furthest realms of fantasy into the fascinating world of technology to discover the workings of familiar machines, making it an exciting book which will delight again and again.	• Comical, non-sensical versions of how things work including toast gnomes and a mini-fiery dragon hidden inside a toaster