

Reading list for able readers in key stage 2

Introduction

The books in this list have won, or been shortlisted or longlisted for the following awards in 2021 and 2022:

The Carnegie Greenaway Awards	www.carnegiegreenaway.org.uk
The Blue Peter Awards	www.booktrust.org.uk
The School Library Association Awards	www.sla.org.uk
The Costa Children's Book Award	www.lovereadings4kids.co.uk
The UKLA Book Awards	www.ukla.org
The Brandford Boase Award	www.brandfordboaseaward.org.uk
The Lollies Awards	www.readingzone.com

There are so many wonderful books available for young people that inevitably there will be some books/themes which you may think should have been included and vice versa. This list will be kept under review and we welcome any suggestions to enrich and encourage reading.

To share your suggestions for this list, or for able readers in other key stages, please email communications@nace.co.uk

Fiction books

- **The Last Bear – Hannah Gold and Levi Pinfold**
A poignant story of friendship between an 11-year-old girl and a polar bear. Michael Morpurgo said: "The Last Bear is deeply moving, beautifully told, quite unforgettable."
Blue Peter Shortlist 2022 and UKLA Longlist 2022
- **The Valley of Lost Secrets – Lesley Parr**
September 1939. When Jimmy is evacuated to a small village in Wales, it couldn't be more different from London. Green, quiet and full of strangers, he instantly feels out of place. But then he finds a skull hidden in a tree, suddenly the valley is more frightening than the war. Who can Jimmy trust?
Carnegie Greenaway Longlist 2022
- **October October – Katya Balen and Angela Harding**
Eleven-year-old October lives in the forest with her dad. She doesn't go to school and prefers to live as wild as she can, learning about nature and doing things the old-fashioned way with her dad. When he is injured in an accident October has to go to London to live with her estranged mum.
UKLA and Blue Peter Longlists 2022
- **Voyage of the Sparrowhawk – Natasha Farrant**
Lotti and Ben, two orphans living in the aftermath of World War 1, become each other's best friends and staunch allies in their respective quests for family and a safe haven.
Costa Winner 2020 and UKLA Longlist 2022

- **Lori and Max and the Book Thieves – Catherine O’Flynn**
 Schoolgirl turned private investigator Lori must use all her detecting skills if she is to solve the mystery of her best friend’s disappearance.
UKLA Longlist 2022
- **The Barnabus Project – Eric Fan, Terry Fan and Devin Fan**
 Barnabus is a genetically engineered half-mouse and half-elephant, the product of a failed laboratory experiment to create and sell ‘the perfect pet’. Barnabus dreams of freedom and makes plans to escape.
UKLA Longlist 2022
- **Starboard – Nicola Skinner**
 A hugely inventive novel of epic adventure, friendship and bravery. This is the story of Kirsten, an 11-year-old YouTube star who meets a ship that comes alive...
UKLA Longlist 2022
- **A Clock of Stars: The Shadow Moth – Francesca Gibbons and Chris Riddell**
 Imogen should be nice to her little sister Marie. She should be nice to her Mum’s boyfriend too. And she certainly should not follow a strange silver moth through a door in a tree...
UKLA Longlist 2022
- **A Kind of Spark – Elle McNicoll**
 When 11-year-old Addie, who is autistic, learns about the 16th century women who were persecuted for witchcraft, she starts to lobby for a local memorial in her small village.
Blue Peter Winner 2021, Branford Boase Shortlist 2021 and UKLA Longlist 2022
- **Noah’s Gold – Frank Cottrell Boyce and Steven Lenton**
 Eleven-year-old Noah sneaks along on his big sister’s field trip. Everything goes wrong and they are marooned on an uninhabited island. Their teacher has vanished, they are hungry and their phones don’t work. Disaster – until Noah discovers a treasure map and goes in search of gold.
UKLA Longlist 2022
- **When Life Gives You Mangoes – Kereen Getten**
 Gripping Jamaica-set mystery about friendship, community and recovery after storms.
Branford Boase Shortlist and UKLA Longlist 2022
- **Me, My Dad and the End of the Rainbow – Benjamin Dean and Sandhya Prabhat**
 Archie Albright and his best friends embark on a determined quest to understand his parents’ separation, following a revelation from his father that he is gay.
UKLA Longlist 2022
- **The Incredible Record Smashers – Jenny Pearson and Erica Salcedo**
 Lucy is a fixer of broken things. But there is one thing she can’t fix and that is her unhappy mum. So she comes up with an incredible plan...
UKLA Longlist 2022
- **Brand New Boy – David Almond and Marta Altes**
 When new boy George joins the class, everyone thinks he is a bit strange, but he is brilliant at football and loves crisps and that is all that matters to Dan and Maxie. However, the truth about George is stranger than anyone could have imagined.
UKLA Longlist 2022

- **How to Save the World with a Chicken and an Egg – Emma Shevah**
Ivy believes she can talk to animals, while Nathaniel is obsessed with animal facts. They come together unexpectedly on a cold English beach with the arrival of a rare and wondrous giant leatherback turtle who lays her eggs in front of the world's media.
UKLA Longlist 2022
- **Across the Risen Sea – Bren MacDibble**
Set in a near future where rising sea levels have decimated the land. Neoma and her best friend Jaguar live in a close-knit community on the Ockery Islands. They live simple lives fishing and scavenging. But when strangers arrive and install some strange tech on the hillside everything changes.
UKLA Longlist 2022
- **The Soup Movement – Ben Davies**
To aid his recovery from a life-threatening illness, Jordan and his family move out of the city for a healthy new start. Jordan is getting enough funny looks as the new boy at school as it is, without his mum giving him homemade soup for lunch every day. But when Jordan meets a homeless man called Harry and gives him the soup, it is the start of an unlikely friendship.
UKLA Longlist 2022
- **The Elephant – Peter Carnavas**
A big elephant is following Olive's father around. It leaves with him for work and trails behind him when he comes home, keeping him heavy and sad. Teaming up with her cheery grandad and best friend Arthur, Olive sets out to chase the elephant away.
UKLA Longlist 2022
- **The Midnight Guardians – Ross Montgomery**
Accompanied by his guardians – a six-foot tiger, a badger in a waistcoat and a miniature knight – Col must race to Blitz-bombed London to save his sister. But there are darker forces at work. Soon Col is pursued by the terrifying Midwinter King who is determined to bring an eternal darkness down over everything.
Costa Shortlist 2021
- **Orphans of the Tide – Struan Murray and Manual Sumberac**
A whale washes up and is caught on the rooftops of a partly submerged city. As crowds gather to stare, young inventor Ellie realises the danger they are in. Cutting into the whale's stomach to avert a build-up of gas, the incredible happens and a boy falls out.
Branford Boase Winner 2021
- **The Super Miraculous Journey of Freddie Yates – Jenny Pearson**
Freddie sets off on a secret journey that will take him halfway across the country with his two best friends – a very funny, heart-warming adventure.
Costa, UKLA and Branford Boase 2021 Shortlists
- **Danny Chung Does Not Do Maths – Maisie Chan**
Eleven-year-old Danny Chung loves drawing more than anything – certainly more than maths, which, according to his dad is what he is 'supposed' to be good at. His life is turned upside-down by his little, wrinkly, ex-maths champion grandmother from China.
Blue Peter Shortlist 2022

- **The Girl Who Speaks Bear – Sophie Anderson and Elisa Paganelli**
Yanka is an orphan who has grown up with her foster-mother, who found her in the wild as a baby. She feels at home and happy in their village. All that changes after an accident when Yanka wakes up to find she has the legs of a bear.
Carnegie Shortlist 2021, UKLA Longlist 2021 and Blue Peter Shortlist 2022
- **When the Sky Falls – Phil Earle**
As the Second World War escalates and bombs start to fall, Joseph is charged with protecting Adonis, a huge silverback gorilla. A tense thriller based on a true story.
Carnegie Greenaway Longlist 2022
- **The Wanderer – Peter van den Ende**
Without a word, van den Ende presents one little paper boat's journey across the ocean, past reefs and between icebergs, through schools of fish and terrifying sea monsters. The little boat is all alone and it must save itself when it storms.
Carnegie Greenaway Longlist 2022
- **The Boy Who Made Everyone Laugh – Helen Rutter**
Billy is starting secondary school. He has a stammer and he is determined that it isn't going to dictate how he is viewed at his new school. He has a list of ways he plans to get rid of the stammer before anyone even notices it.
Blue Peter Shortlist 2022
- **Zombierella: Fairy Tales Gone Bad – Joseph Coelho**
A yellow moon hangs in a satin sky the night Cinderella, barefoot and in hand-me-downs, slips at the top of the stairs... and dies. The Shadow of Death arrives to breathe life back into her bones and Cinderella goes forth as Zombierella.
The Lollies Shortlist 2022
- **Little Badman and the Invasion of the Killer Aunties – Humza Arshad and Henry White**
Eleven-year-old Humza's great ambition is to be a super-cool rapper and he devotes most of his time and energy on pursuing this goal. Something weird is happening at school though: teachers are disappearing and being replaced by food-obsessed Aunties intent on fattening everyone up.
The Lollies Shortlist 2022
- **Dragon Mountain – Katie and Kevin Tsang**
Billy Chan would rather spend his summer surfing than travelling to China for summer camp. But when he makes a new group of friends, they discover that nothing is as it seems. The gang soon become embroiled in a world of magic and adventure as they discover four warrior dragons hidden in a nearby mountain.
Blue Peter Longlist 2022
- **The Shark Caller – Zillah Bethell**
Set in a rural village on the shores of Papua New Guinea, this is a tale of love, loss and friendship. Following the death of her parents, Blue Wing moves in with Siringen, who becomes her guardian. When an American professor arrives to study coral, Blue Wing is asked to show his daughter Maple around the island. They form a sisterly bond.
Blue Peter Longlist 2022

- **The Amazing Edie Eckhart – Rosie Jones**
Eleven-year-old Edie and her best friend Oscar are excited to be starting secondary school together. Edie is feisty and funny. She has cerebral palsy affecting her speech and sometimes she falls over. Oscar was always on hand to help her, but now Edie has to learn not to lean on Oscar, as they are put into separate classes.
Blue Peter Longlist 2022
- **The Wizard in My Shed – Simon Farnaby**
Back in the dark ages, Merdyn the Wild has been a badly behaved warlock sentenced to spend seven years in the Rivers of Purgatory. Unfortunately for him, the wizard tasked with sending him there turns to the wrong page in his spell book and Merdyn ends up in the middle of a busy 21st century shopping centre.
Blue Peter Longlist 2022

Non-fiction books

- **How Many Mice Make an Elephant? – Tracey Turner**
Full of fascinating facts, ranging from skyscrapers to space stations and oceans to football stadiums.
SLA Winner 2021
- **I Am Not a Label – Cerrie Burnell**
This book makes a brilliant presentation of people who have refused to let disability limit themselves. The selection of subjects covered is a mix of well-known people with those who will fire the curiosity of readers. The range of disabilities is broad and challenges common misconceptions of what a disability is.
SLA Children's Choice 2021
- **Big Ideas for Young Thinkers – Jamia Wilson**
"The book for inquisitive children with big ideas and busy brains." Related to real-life experiences and exploring big ideas from a range of thinkers.
SLA Shortlist 2021
- **Youthquake – Tom Adams**
The book features 50 amazing children and young children who have made an outstanding contribution to our world. Presented in an informative, accessible and engaging way.
SLA Shortlist 2021
- **Good News – Rashmi Sirdeshpande**
This book highlights amazing news stories from around the world. The introduction discusses how to spot disinformation and fake news. Readers are encouraged to fact-check and confirm information, ensuring it is from a reputable source. Each chapter explores a different topic.
Blue Peter Shortlist 2022
- **Inventors – Robert Winston**
This book celebrates more than 50 incredible inventors from across the globe and throughout history. The importance of imagination and persistence when developing new ideas is emphasised, as well as understanding that failure is part of innovation, as it leads to improvement.
Blue Peter Shortlist 2021

- **Kay's Anatomy – Adam Kay**
A guide to the human body which is both extraordinary and fascinating. Packed with facts, entertaining and highly informative.
The Lollies Shortlist 2022 and Blue Peter Longlist 2022
- **A Different Sort of Normal – Abigail Balfe**
This is the true story of Abigail, who spent most of her life not knowing she was autistic – she just thought she was weird. This is an honest, funny, touching and sometimes sad account of her childhood.
Blue Peter Longlist 2022
- **A Year Full of Celebrations and Festivals – Claire Grace**
This richly illustrated non-fiction book showcases an entire year of festivals from across the globe, with each of the four sections focusing on a different season. The selection features ancient customs to modern day festivities.
Blue Peter Longlist 2022
- **Climate Action – Georgina Stevens**
This illustrated book is packed full of information about the causes and effects of climate change, along with ideas about what we can do to help. The book highlights innovative ideas, actions and campaigns from around the world.
Blue Peter Longlist 2022
- **Wild Child – Dara McAnulty**
Teenager Dara shows you how to explore habitats and use all your senses to identify plants, animals and insects. Beautiful illustrations by Barry Falls.
Carnegie Greenaway Longlist 2022
- **Drawn Across Borders: True Stories of Migration – George Butler**
Through striking illustrations, award-winning artist George Butler captures stories of leaving home, refugee camps, travelling into the unknown and trying to make a new life.
Carnegie Greenaway Longlist 2022

Useful websites

- www.lovereadings4kids.co.uk and www.lovereadings4schools.co.uk – useful reading lists
- www.booksforkeeps.co.uk – produces an excellent free monthly magazine with lots of information about new books
- www.booktrust.org.uk – useful book lists
- www.schoolreadinglist.co.uk – useful book lists
- www.carnegiegreenaway.org – activities to support the books nominated for the CILIP Carnegie and Kate Greenaway awards
- www.ukla.org – useful links to other book sites and awards
- www.literacytrust.org.uk – lots of information, including research
- www.readingzone.com – supports teachers and librarians with book recommendations
- www.sla.org.uk – information and support for school librarians

Note on diversity

For guidance on the importance of diversity in reading and how schools can support this, take a look at this [blog post](#) from Alison Tarrant, Chief Executive of the School Library Association (SLA).

What would you add?

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Compiled by NACE Trustee Sue Mordecai for use by NACE member schools, February 2022.