



BBA Longlist 2025

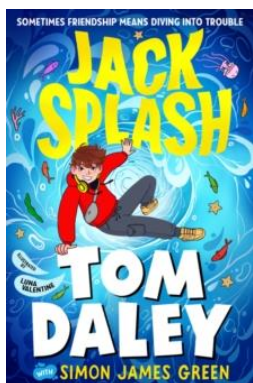
SUMMARIES



A magical adventure about a boy and his dog - or a dog and her boy - and a forest of wonders hidden in plain sight. Clay has had enough of home life. A global plague has brought the world to a screeching halt, and with only a summer of video-calling friends and bickering with his sisters ahead, he's only too happy to retreat to the woods. From the moment the little dog with the ornate collar appears like a spirit among the trees, Clay sees something otherworldly in her. With this mysterious hound, Elphinore, as guide, he glimpses ancient secrets folded into the forest and wanders paths deep into the unknown. But there are traps and terrors in the woods, too, and if Clay isn't careful, he might lose his way for ever.



In a country beset by civil war, New London defends itself behind a giant wall. Inside the city, children are forced to work from an early age, except for the lucky few who train to be leaders in the re-purposed Palace of Westminster. 12-year-old orphaned Pax is brilliant at recycling old tech. He enjoys working on the verti-farms and just wants a bit of peace and quiet. But when that is taken away from him, his only hope is to pass a near-impossible exam and join the other students in Scholastic Parliament. There he'll make new friends and new enemies. He'll get tested like never before. And he'll discover that not everything is quite what it seems under the mayor's harsh leadership.



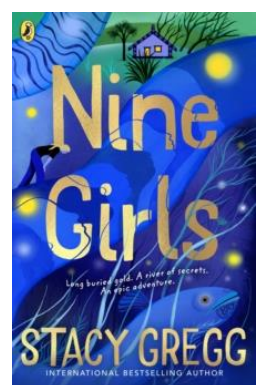
Jack really wants to impress his diving coach dad ... there's just one problem. Jack is the worst diver in the worst diving team in Damp Bottom, England. But when a new kid starts at school with magic swimming skills and an eagerness to share tips, Jack's luck might be about to change. But when Jack's new friend gets into trouble - and the fate of a secret world hangs in the balance - it's up to Jack and the rest of his diving crew to save the day. Sometimes it's not about winning, it's about helping your friends when they need it the most, it's about team work...



Escaping war is only half the battle as the Kovalenko family swap Ukrainian dangers for life with a British family. 15-year-old Kateryno and her family live in Kharkiv. Their lives are shattered when on February 24th 2022 the Russian army invades. Their apartment block is struck by a missile. After weeks living in their basement, Kateryno, her mother, and brother, decide to leave, joining seven million Ukrainian refugees. They come to England and meet their host family, the Hawkins. But their new beginning brings a whole new set of problems. *



Civil unrest in London has reached an all-time high after years of a growing authoritarian regime, and it's no longer safe for Clem and her half-sister Billie in the city. Clem tells of their treacherous journey to Scotland, by road and then by sea, fleeing with nothing but a notebook filled with stories and memories of home. But is there something Clem's not saying? And how will this journey – and the sisters' story – end? With the start of a new life? Or a mirror held up to the past?



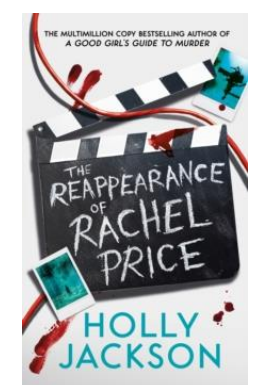
They dug a hole right there on our farm on the bank of the Mangawara and they put the box filled with gold inside it and covered it with dirt. And to keep the gold safe until they could return one of them placed a tapu on it. A tapu so that anyone who tried to touch the gold before they could come back for it would die. Titch is determined to find the gold hidden somewhere on her family's farm. It might be tapu but that won't put her off. Her dad has gone bankrupt, and she has had to leave her home in the city and move back with her family to smalltown Ngaruawahia, start a new school and find new friends. Could the hidden gold be the way to fix her family's money problems? But an unexpected encounter with a creature from the nearby river sees Titch learn about her own Maori heritage and the dangers of messing with tapu.



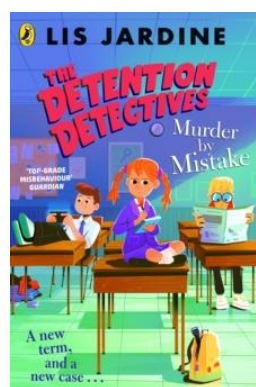
Howell. Alice and Sonny are excited for their summer trip, sailing on the luxurious yacht the Lady Rose. They're even more excited when they find out the King of England is going to be onboard too! There's also a precious jewel on the boat - a rare opal, kept in a tank protected by a poisonous octopus. Until one morning, Alice discovers that the opal and octopus are both missing. The search is on to retrieve the priceless gem, before the ship reaches its destination, and everyone on board finds themselves in serious trouble. As Alice and Sonny's investigations take them closer to the truth, they realise that everyone on the Lady Rose seems to have a secret, maybe even the king himself



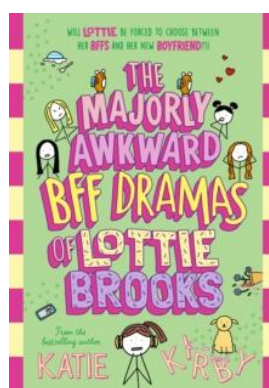
Jasper was just diagnosed with cancer. His treatment starts in a week, and in the meantime his parents want him to carry on as normal. Jasper knows that's impossible. His friends help to organize a weekend trip to get away from everything that's happened and clear his mind. It'll be like running away for beginners, they joke. On the journey, they come to understand each other better as everyone's secrets come out. Except Jasper doesn't tell his friends his own secret: that when the return journey begins, he won't be going with them.



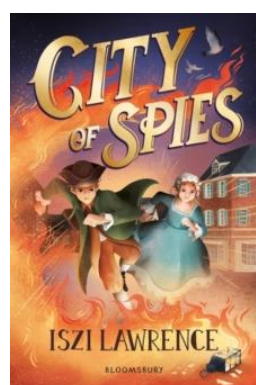
Eighteen-year-old Bel has lived her whole life in the shadow of her mom's mysterious disappearance. Sixteen years ago, Rachel Price vanished, and young Bel was the only witness. Rachel is gone, presumed dead. The case is dragged up from the past when the Price family agree to a true crime documentary. Bel can't wait for filming to end, for life to go back to normal. But then Rachel Price reappears, and life will never be normal again. *



The detention detectives are back! And there's been another murder! Headstrong Lydia leads the new case. As a school reporter, she's great at getting the facts. But when someone unexpected arrives at Gran's, it's clear she's missing some clues. Sensitive Daniel is convinced this case is linked to their first. As a young carer he's got a lot on his plate, so he needs the trio to work on this together. He just needs to persuade... Not-so-new-boy Jonno, who's settled in at Hanbridge High. But he's so distracted by his new band – maybe solving crimes just isn't cool anymore? Or maybe he's scared of finding out the truth.



At long last Lottie and Daniel are an official couple and everything seems to be going brilliantly (except for Amber being increasingly mean and jealous, but what's new there?) Meanwhile Toby's new year's resolution is to get a dog, and for once Lottie and him see eye to eye. Pot Noodle, the cockapoo, becomes the newest member of the Brooks family. He's VERY cute but also not toilet trained AT ALL. Lottie soon finds having a new boyfriend and a new dog means she has little time for anyone else, leaving her best friends pretty upset. How is Lottie meant to keep everybody happy and stop Pot Noodle from pooing on the carpet?



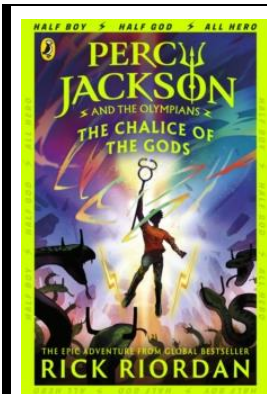
It's 1780 and the struggle for American independence is raging. In New York, twelve-year-old Aiden Blaise is sure that the British will win soon. How can a few rebel colonies hold out against the might of the British crown? And anyway, he's more concerned with somehow managing to rise above his lot in life and make his fortune. But New York is a powder keg of soldiers and spies, and soon Aiden will be drawn into the fight for freedom in a way he could never have predicted.



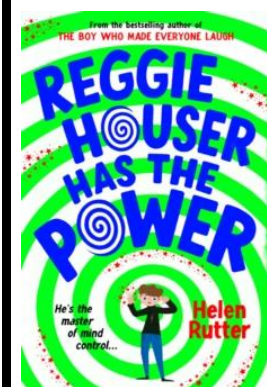
The day of her high school graduation, Riley realizes that she has spent the last four years trying so hard to be a Good Kid for her mum that she has no idea who she really is anymore. The solution? Pack her bags and move to New York for the summer to stay with her best friend Tom and do everything on The Getaway List. Riley isn't sure what to expect from Tom, who has been distant since he moved away. But when she arrives in the city, their reconnection is effortless. As she, Tom, and their newfound friends work their way through the delightfully chaotic items on The Getaway List, Riley learns that sometimes the biggest adventure is not one you take, but one you feel in your heart. *



Boys become friends. Boys fall in love. They've finally said those three little words, and Charlie has almost persuaded his mum to let him sleep over at Nick's house ... But with Nick going off to university next year, is everything about to change? Heartstopper encompasses all the small moments of Nick and Charlie's lives that together make up something larger, which speaks to all of us. *



Percy Jackson has saved the world multiple times - battling monsters, Titans, even giants - but these days the modern-day son of Poseidon is hoping for a regular final year at school. Too bad the Greek gods have other plans, and three new quests for Percy to complete. First up: the cupbearer of the gods, Ganymede, is missing his golden chalice. Not only is this embarrassing (why do the gods keep losing their magical items?), it's also potentially disastrous. One sip from the cup will turn any mortal into a powerful god. And the old gods do not take kindly to newbies. Can Percy and his friends Annabeth and Grover find the chalice before it falls into the wrong hands? And even if they do, will they be able to resist its awesome power?



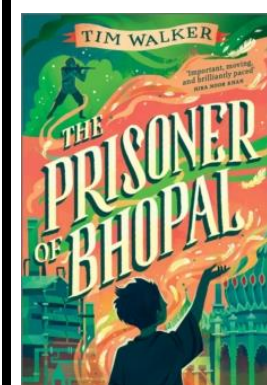
Reggie Houser has ADHD and struggles to make friends at school, plus his mum and teachers seem constantly weary about his erratic, high-energy ways. But when he sees a hypnotist perform on stage at the holiday park he visits, Reggie becomes obsessed with learning the skills of mind control - and he discovers he has an incredible talent for it! First of all, he hypnotises the dog to think he's a frog, then makes his headmaster cluck like a chicken in assembly in front of the whole school. But then a group of mean kids supposedly take him under their wing and make him use his hypnosis talents for bad: stealing a chocolate bar from a shop and escalating to a bigger theft. Reggie must decide to use his skills for good only and come to trust his own brain to make decisions.



Skandar and his sister Kenna are finally both at the Eyrie, but tensions are high. To survive their third year of training, Skandar and his friends must complete a series of terrifying trials across the Island's elemental zones. Friendships, allegiances and rider-unicorn bonds will be pushed to the limit – only the strongest will make it. Meanwhile Kenna's forged bond to a wild unicorn has left her alienated and alone. And when a terrible discovery puts the future of the Island in peril, all fingers point in one direction. As dark forces assemble, Skandar must decide how far he is willing to go – for Kenna, and for the Eyrie.



Cory dreads Sunday evenings. It's school the next day, where a bully is picking on him and he's struggling to keep up in class. The night before a Monday that will include a maths test and another lonely lunch break, Cory wishes that the weekend would never end. And when he wakes up the next day, time has reset itself to Sunday morning. This is amazing! He can lounge about all day watching TV, have pizza for dinner over and over again and play the lottery knowing which numbers will win big! But Cory soon longs for life to move on - can he break the time loop and bring the forever weekend to a close?



Amil has always dreamed of working at the modern, space-age pesticide plant in Bhopal, India, where he lives. Instead, on his tenth birthday, he is torn from his family and taken to work for Mr Kumar and his cruel son, Jalesh, in their dilapidated printing factory. There, hidden in a trunk, he finds a secret First World War journal. As its pages come to life, they reveal not only why Amil is there, but that he and the journal's author – his great-grandfather, Sanjiv - share a magical gift: they can read the wind. Its purpose remains a mystery until, one terrible night, the pesticide plant leaks poison gas into the air above Bhopal.



When Marigold Bloom finds her family business in trouble a chance encounter with the devastatingly handsome and extremely bad-tempered Oliver Lockhart leads her to the Aviary - a secret agency of women who specialise in blackmailing troublesome men. Soon, Mari is the agency's newest recruit, sent to investigate the mysterious return of Oliver's long-lost sister. Forced to masquerade as a newly engaged couple, it is up to Mari and Oliver to determine if there is an imposter in their midst. But what happens when the line between truth and fiction starts to blur? And what do you do when a pretend romance starts to feel all too real? *

****Titles recommended for year 9 and above***