

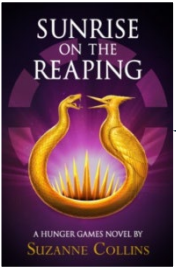
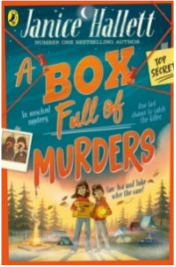

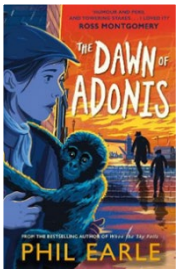

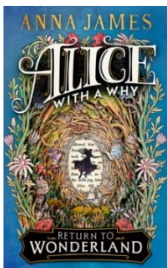
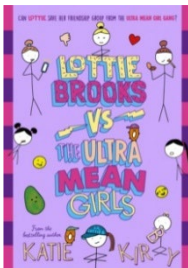






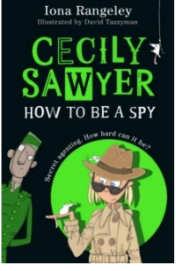
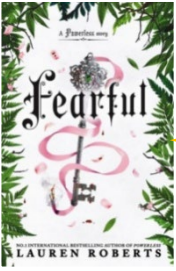



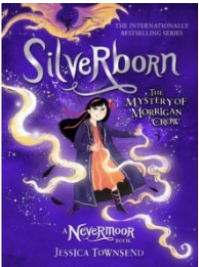

The Berkshire Book Awards 2026

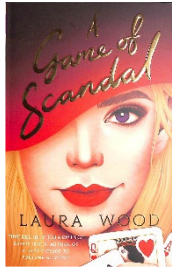
LOONGLIST SUMMARIES

	<p>It's Gabriel's fifth and final year at Crookhaven School for Thieves, and the crew have only one thing on their minds. This year, they must take down Gabriel's parents - the infamous leaders of the criminal organisation, the Nameless - once and for all. How will the crew balance this goal alongside their last year of studies, which includes a new class called Groundwork, and the most difficult Break-in to date: infiltrating Crookhaven itself?</p>
	<p>Welcome to the Grandest Game, a life-changing competition run by billionaire heiress Avery Grambs and the four infamous Hawthorne brothers, whose family fortune she inherited. Seven mystery players are swept away to a luxury private island. Some of the players are in it for money, some for power, some for reasons all their own. But as sparks fly and tensions rise it soon becomes clear that everyone has secrets, and those seven players will do whatever it takes to win.</p>
	<p>As the day dawns on the fiftieth annual Hunger Games, fear grips the districts of Panem. This year, in honour of the Quarter Quell, twice as many tributes will be taken from their homes. Back in District 12, Haymitch Abernathy is trying not to think too hard about his chances. All he cares about is making it through the day and being with the girl he loves. When Haymitch's name is called, he can feel all his dreams break. But there's something in him that wants to fight, and have that fight reverberate far beyond the deadly arena.</p>
	<p>When Ava and Luke discover a mysterious box of papers in their attic, they are instantly curious about secrets it might hold. As they read through letters, diary entries, newspaper cuttings and listen to secret recordings, they realise that a decades-old, still unsolved, murder mystery is unfolding right in front of them. Ava and Luke decide to try and crack the case themselves. But as they work through the clues, it soon becomes clear that the mystery isn't something left in the past: the killer is still be out there - and might be closer than they think.</p>
	<p>Nate's eleven and has just finished Primary School. After a challenging final year, life is looking up. His brother has recovered from a life-threatening heart condition, he's got the love of his mum, brothers and Auntie San, and he's off to Secondary School with his two best mates. But while he's making new friends and avoiding the fists of Turner, his old nemesis, and struggling to come to terms with a strict new teacher and a sense of isolation from his brothers, a sudden</p>

	<p>surprise appearance in Nate's life threatens to throw him completely off course. And The Beast - the anger he tries so hard to control - reappears.</p>
	<p>In 1911, before the start of World War One, London's docks thrum with underhand deals, none so great as the arrival of a valuable, rare and exotic animal – a baby silverback gorilla. The baby gorilla stands to make one man very, very rich. Heaven help anyone who gets in his way. But then one night a twelve-year-old girl is unwittingly drawn into his criminal underworld.</p>
	<p>Seventeen-year-old Kay left her sleepy hometown after the devastating death of her friend, Ivy. But when Kay is forced to come back, she receives an anonymous letter that turns her life upside down. The letter tells her that there will be a thrill on Tuesday, a wreckage on Wednesday, treachery on Thursday, a fire on Friday, sabotage on Saturday, a stabbing on Sunday - and her murder on Monday. And if Kay can't figure out who is behind the threats, the worst day of the week is about to get deadly.</p>
	<p>Alyce – with a Y – lives with her grandmother, the original Alice, having lost her father during the Great War. When a mysterious invitation to a tea party hits her square in the face, Alyce realises her grandmother's strange stories of a place called Wonderland might have some truth to them after all. But the land Alyce finds herself in feels different from the Wonderland of her grandmother's stories – for it is trapped in its own war.</p>
	<p>Just when Lottie thought life might be going back to normal, everything goes wrong again! Amber's hanging out with the Ultra Mean Girl Gang at school and is completely ignoring the Queens of Eight Green. Mum's gone back to work and expects Lottie to 'help around the house more', Bella keeps biting everyone and Pot Noodle will not stop sniffing every dog's bum. Now Lottie has to come up with a foolproof plan to get Amber back before her friendship group is destroyed forever.</p>
	<p>Sim and his mum never live anywhere long. When dangerous strangers appear one night, Sim discovers why. His mum has been keeping secrets: she has the power to open doors in time. Running for their lives, Sim and his friends are determined to outwit the sinister Council of Keys and be the first to find Nefertiti's lost tomb and a powerful door to Ancient Egypt. They must piece together long-hidden clues if they are to solve the mystery of her golden heart scarab. Can they find it before the Council finds them?</p>

	<p>With the Second World War looming, four young people sit on a train waiting to be evacuated to a safer place, but they don't want to go. They climb out of the carriage and head back home to Greenwich, forming an unlikely friendship. They spend their days trying to be useful. Laurence builds a secret machine. Gemmy searches bombed-out homes for things of value - only to find an adorable mutt she can't even give away. Franklin wants to join the Fire Service, although it means lying about his age. Olive looks after her father, who is broken by the deaths of his fellow firefighters. As the Blitz unleashes a barrage of bombs on London, turning the sky ragged with flame, can the friends keep each other safe and survive?</p>
	<p>Life is no fun for Alex Evans. Ever since her dad's death, her overprotective mother has smothered her with unbreakable rules and unspoken fears. When the frustration inside Alex finally gets too big to bear, it rushes to the surface. And flames spill from her mouth. Because Alex is a dragon. One of the many who live among us, unless something awakens their true nature. Led by the mighty Oliphos to the legendary island of Skralla, Alex must now train alongside fierce, frightening dragon children, if she is to unlock the power of her birthright. But other dragons are rising too. Drak Midna, the greatest dragon of all, is preparing a war against the human world, and Alex has to be good enough for this fight, or we all will burn.</p>
	<p>Tundra is the last settlement in a world of ice. Oswin Fields is its only stray, rescued from the Endless Expanse. So, when he's summoned to the school for ice apprentices, he sets out to prove his worth. But all isn't as it seems in this enchanted place. When the beasts begin to strike, Oswin has to risk everything he holds dear. Can he look deep within himself to find the strength to prove that he belongs?</p>
	<p>Cecily Sawyer has spent the evening in the attic, training her pet mouse, Mrs Maple-Syrup – an unusually intelligent mouse, in Cecily's opinion – when her parents disappear. Luckily, Cecily is more than ready to investigate such a thing. She has wanted to be a spy her whole life, and has all the spy handbooks, manuals and code-cracking kits a girl could need. But soon, Cecily discovers several very strange things in her city. She's not the only spy out there – far from it, in fact. And Mrs Maple-Syrup is not the only unusually intelligent mouse...</p>
	<p>Mara never intended to set foot in Ilya again. But when the king makes a life-altering decision, her interest is piqued, and Death is determined to understand Kitt Azer's mind if he is destined to join her in the Mors. Spending time with the king while observing the castle's inhabitants reminds Mara that there is more to life than just death. There is love. But even the purest of intentions spur revenge and the pursuit of power. And fate will have its way</p>

	with all of them – to live, to rule, to love and, most certainly, to die.
	When Christopher Forrester is unexpectedly woken by a miniature dragon chewing on his face, his heart leaps for joy. For months he's dreamed of returning to the Archipelago – the secret islands where all the creatures of myth still live. But he did not know it would involve a rescue mission on the back of a sphinx, or a plan to enter a dragon's lair. Nor did he imagine it would involve a girl with a flock of birds at her side, a new-hatched chick in her pocket and a ravenous hunger for justice...
	It is the summer of 1940. The world is at war. These days, you don't know who you can trust or who might be a secret spy. Maths whizz Jakob Novis has been recruited to the secret codebreaking centre at Bletchley Park. As Jakob works to crack the Nazi's Enigma cipher, his younger sister Lizzie is busy on an undercover mission of her own: to find their mother.
	Skandar is in hiding after the Chaos Cup where Rex Manning revealed a game-changing secret. But as Rex prepares to invade the Mainland, the Islanders are not sure who to trust. With one of Skandar's closest friends now fighting for the enemy, Skandar must build new alliances – including an uneasy truce with Kenna. To defeat Rex, Skandar and his friends will need to look back to the origins of the Island, and harness the full power of their elemental magic.
	In the magical city of Nevermoor, long-buried secrets are coming to light, and Morrigan Crow's life is about to turn upside down. When Morrigan is invited into Nevermoor's wealthy Silver District, she discovers a world of extravagance and a family mystery she's eager to unravel. She could never imagine where it will lead: a white wedding, a golden dragon and a red pool of blood. Embroiled in suspicion and danger, Morrigan leaps headfirst into a murder investigation, while also grappling with her ever-growing Wundersmith powers. And although her friends are there to help, she fears that could change if they learn she's keeping a terrible secret of her own.
	The world is still adjusting to life after the Rippocalypse – and there are plenty who aren't happy with the new status quo. Made public enemy number one, Sel needs to keep a low profile, and make sure his new dangerous abilities stay hidden. But there's an even bigger threat on the horizon, as Frozen Fever is spreading. Join Sel and his friends as they navigate a nail-biting horror story, dodging terrifying adults and even more terrifying beasts.



An all-female detective agency righting wrongs at the end of the nineteenth century; infiltrating a scandalous upper-class world and using their wit and bravery to unmask a villain. Felicity Vane may be a mathematical genius, but getting her family to understand her academic ambition is proving difficult. As her first social season is fast approaching, it might be time to take matters into her own hands. Infiltrating the glamorous world of The Lucky Penny and winning her university fees over a game of cards could be the perfect plan - if only it weren't for the interference of Ash, the piratical and frustratingly handsome owner who accuses her of cheating.



Titles recommended for age 12 and above.



Title recommended for age 14 and above.