Recommended Reads

YEAR 4 • AGES 8–9

A menu of possibilities

Help children broaden their reading diet without turning reading into a chore. Offer choice, keep reading aloud and make space to abandon a book that is not working. Series, graphic novels, poetry and factual books can all create lasting reading habits. These suggestions are not a reading test or a list to finish, and there is no need to buy the books.

Stories to get lost in

The Boy at the Back of the Class — Onjali Q. Raúf
A warm and thought-provoking story about friendship, welcome and courage.

The Firework-Maker's Daughter — Philip Pullman
A lively quest about courage, craft and earning the right to follow a dream.

The Girl Who Stole an Elephant — Nizrana Farook
A fast-paced Sri Lankan adventure involving a jewel, an elephant and a daring escape.

The Butterfly Lion — Michael Morpurgo
A moving story of friendship between a boy and a white lion.

Loki: A Bad God's Guide to Being Good — Louie Stowell
Norse mythology meets a very funny illustrated diary.

The Undefeateds — K. P. Kojo
A spirited football story about teamwork, confidence and finding your place.

The Land of Roar — Jenny McLachlan & Ben Mantle
An imaginary childhood world becomes the setting for a thrilling rescue.

The House at the Edge of Magic — Amy Sparkes & Ben Mantle
A funny, inventive fantasy involving a moving house and a collection of unusual residents.

The Great Chocoplot — Chris Callaghan
A comic mystery begins when chocolate is predicted to disappear forever.

The Wild Way Home — Sophie Kirtley
A Stone Age time-slip adventure about fear, family and courage.

The Train to Impossible Places — P. G. Bell & Flavia Sorrentino
A magical postal train carries a determined girl into an impossible adventure.

The Miraculous Sweetmakers: The Frost Fair — Natasha Hastings
A wintry historical fantasy filled with secrets, danger and magic.

Family tip: Visit the library, read a first page together and let your child decide what they would like to try.

More ways into reading

Pictures, facts, poetry, audio and shorter texts all help children build knowledge, language and a positive reading identity.

Graphic novels & visual storytelling

The Dam — David Almond & Levi Pinfold
A lyrical picture book about music, memory and a landscape about to change.

The Aquanaut — Dan Santat
A cinematic graphic novel about family, grief and an extraordinary underwater discovery.

Amulet: The Stonekeeper — Kazu Kibuishi
An atmospheric fantasy graphic novel with danger, puzzles and a strange new world.

The Wonder Garden — Jenny Broom & Kristjana S. Williams
Travel through five extraordinary habitats in lavishly detailed illustrations.

Poetry & verse

The Lost Words — Robert Macfarlane & Jackie Morris
Acrostic spell-poems celebrate words from the natural world.

Matt Goodfellow: Bright Bursts of Colour — Matt Goodfellow
Accessible, vivid poems about feelings, family and everyday life.

Macavity: The Mystery Cat — T. S. Eliot & Arthur Robins
A playful classic poem presented as a richly illustrated picture book.

Cosmic Disco — Grace Nichols & Alice Wright
Warm, imaginative poems travel through space, nature and human life.

Fascinating non-fiction

A World Full of Animal Stories — Angela McAllister & Aitch
Traditional animal tales from many cultures, beautifully retold and illustrated.

Women in Science — Rachel Ignotofsky
Illustrated profiles celebrate scientists and their discoveries.

The Story of Tutankhamun — Patricia Cleveland-Peck & Isabel Greenberg
A graphic, accessible account of the pharaoh and the discovery of his tomb.

Survivors — David Long & Kerry Hyndman
True stories of extraordinary survival told with pace and striking illustration.

Shorter and super-readable

The Dog That Saved Christmas — Nicola Davies & Mike Byrne
A warm Barrington Stoke story about anxiety, family and an unexpected friendship.

Grimwood — Nadia Shireen
A mischievous, highly illustrated woodland adventure with bold humour.

The Boy Who Biked the World — Alastair Humphreys & Tom Morgan-Jones
An accessible travel adventure inspired by a real journey around the world.

Race to the Frozen North — Catherine Johnson & Katie Hickey
The true story of Arctic explorer Matthew Henson, retold for confident access.

More ideas online

The Reader Teacher – Year 4 • a longer, regularly updated list
BookTrust – Great Books Guide • recommendations grouped by age

HELP YOUR CHILD CHOOSE

- Browse together
- Try audio or read aloud
- Talk about the book
- Stop if it is not working

External websites are offered for further ideas. Great Leighs Primary School is not responsible for their commercial links or changing content.