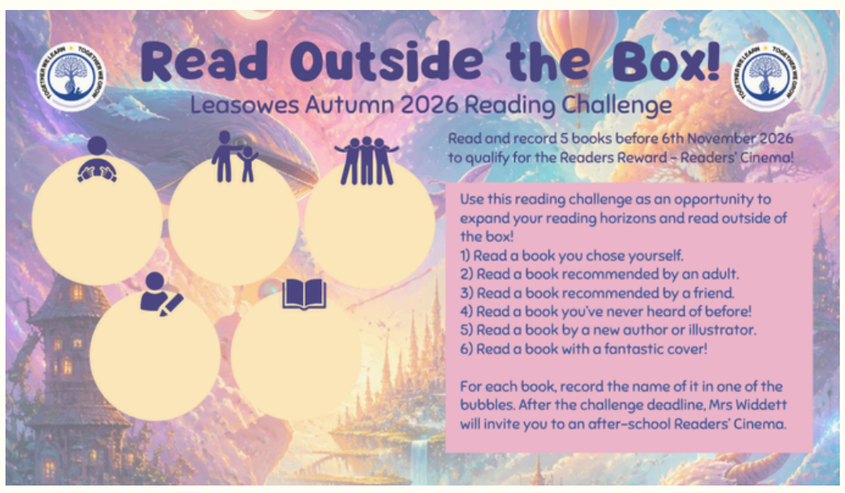
Autumn term 2026

READING NEWSLETTER



Welcome back to the Leasowes Reading Newsletter. Now in our sixth year, I am more excited than ever to bring you recommendations, new releases and topical titles to inspire your reading at home and in school. This term, children at Leasowes have been eagerly getting stuck into the **Read Outside the Box** Reading Challenge. This simple challenge asks children to record 5 titles they read up to the first week in November that have been chosen or recommended in different ways. As an adult reader, so much influences my text choice and I always love it when I land on a gem of a book which I'd have never selected myself! All children who complete the challenge will be invited to an exclusive after-school event, The Readers' Cinema, where we will watch a film inspired by a children's book. Please see me or your child's teacher if you have any questions regarding the challenge. Happy reading!





Mrs Widdett, English Leader



BOOK OF THE YEAR

(according to Mrs W)



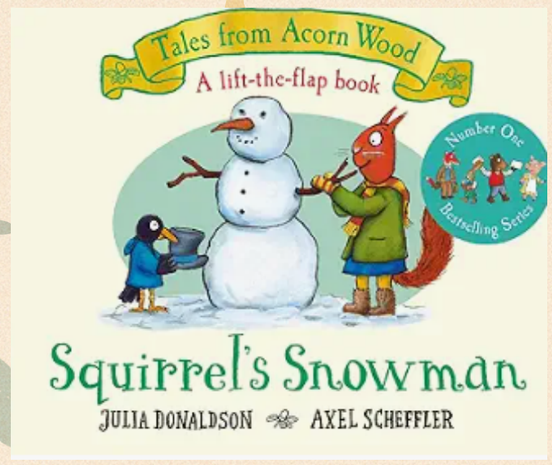
Steve Cole's The Wild Ones is an action-packed journey that will have readers hooked from the very first page. Following a group of endangered animals on a mission to survive in a world that seems determined to wipe them out, this story is bursting with excitement, humour and unforgettable characters. Beneath the fast-paced chases and daring escapes lies a powerful message about friendship, courage and protecting the natural world. Funny, moving and impossible to put down, this is a fantastic read for children in Year 4 onwards. If you give it a try, please come and tell me which member of the Wild Ones was your favourite!

Festive Favourites

It's the most wonderful time... to read!

For younger readers

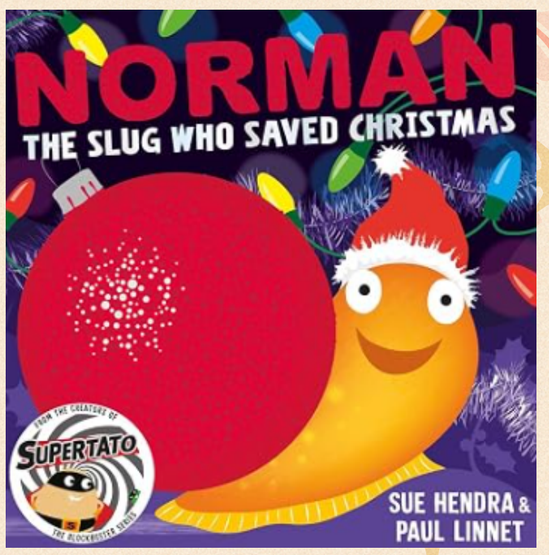
Squirrels' Snowman by J. Donaldson

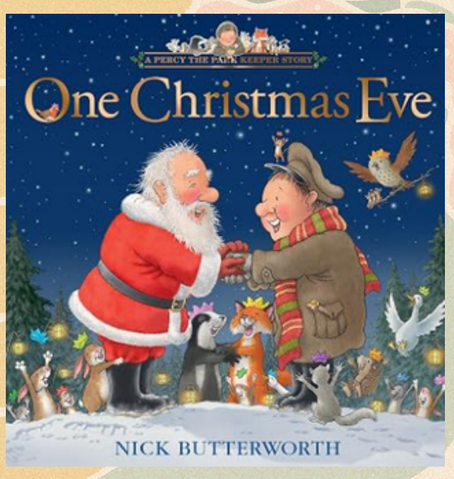


Looking for a cosy winter story to share as the nights draw in? Squirrel's Snowman by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler is a delightful festive tale full of friendship, fun and snowy surprises. As snow falls in Acorn Wood, Squirrel sets out to build the perfect snowman, with help from her woodland friends along the way. Packed with rhyming text, charming illustrations and interactive lift-the-flaps, this heartwarming story is perfect for younger readers and makes a wonderful read-aloud during the festive season.

Norman: The Slug Who Saved Christmas!

When a sack of presents lands - THWACK - right by Norman's stocking he is overcome with excitement. He really must have been a very good slug this year. But after a frenzy of unwrapping he spots a label - and realises that none of the presents were meant for him, but had in fact fallen off Father Christmas's sleigh. Norman knows he has to get the presents to the family they're meant for - but how can he manage it on time? Can one little slug save Christmas?

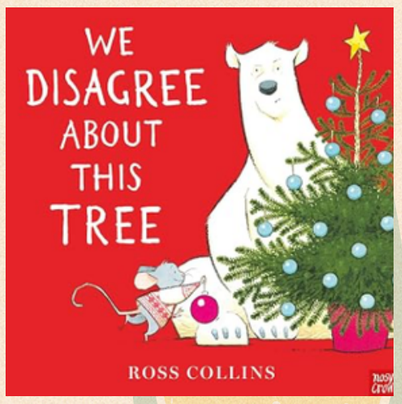




One Christmas Eve by Nick Butterworth

Father Christmas visits Percy's park in this magical new picture book from the bestselling creator of One Snowy Night!
When the mole is late for Percy the park keeper's Christmas Eve party, Percy and his animal friends set out into the snow to look for him. And on their way, they are surprised by the most wonderful sight ... Father Christmas!
Can the search party help Father Christmas find his missing hat? And where is their friend the mole? **This is brand new in 2026.**

We Disagree About This Tree by Ross Collins



Bear and Mouse have finally overcome their differences and are living together in perfect harmony . . . until it's time to decorate the Christmas tree! Bear wants dazzling lights, while Mouse prefers gigantic baubles . . . and, wait a minute, did Mouse just put a MANATEE on the top?! A topsy-turvy tree is definitely THE LAST STRAW and it looks as if Christmas is RUINED. But maybe, just maybe, Bear and Mouse can reach a compromise in time . . . ?



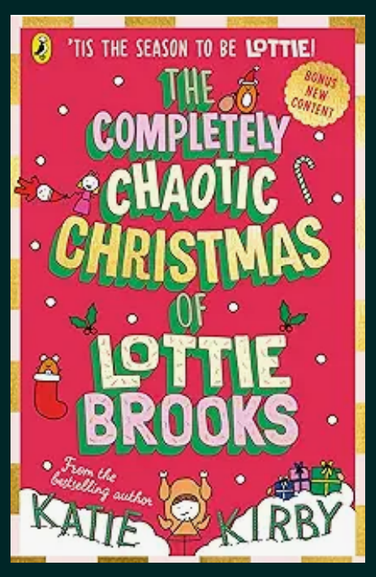
Lola & Larch Make a Winter Wish by Sinead O' Hart

Looking for a heartwarming winter tale filled with kindness and friendship? Lola and Larch: The Winter Wish is a charming story about Lola and her bear friend Larch as they discover that the best wishes aren't always the ones wrapped up with a ribbon. Full of snowy adventures, gentle humour and beautiful illustrations, this cosy read celebrates caring for others and finding joy in the simple things. Perfect for sharing during the festive season, it's a delightful story that will leave young readers feeling warm inside.

Festive Favourites

It's the most wonderful time... to read!

For older readers



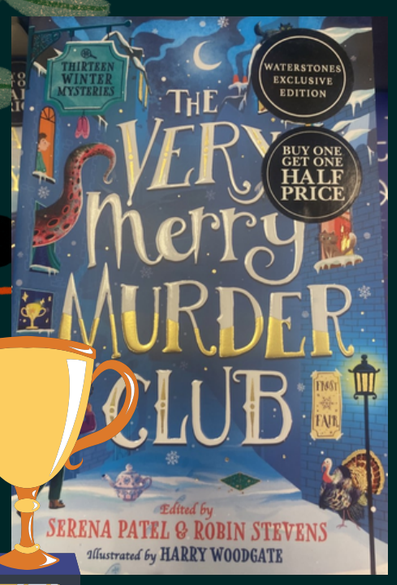
The Completely Chaotic Christmas (Lottie Brooks)

Lottie Brooks LOVES Christmas - there's presents, all the KitKat Chunkys you can eat AND no school for two weeks! But this year, Christmas might be a bit more chaotic than usual. The whole Brooks family are visiting for the festive break (along with some surprise visitors . . .), there's a Secret Santa to organise, and the hammies won't stop attacking Gavin, the Elf on the Shelf!
Will Lottie survive the festivities intact or will she have to hide in the fort of shame until it's all over?
The Lottle Brooks books are hugely popular with our UKS2 children!

The Biggest Christmas Secret Ever by LD Lapinksi



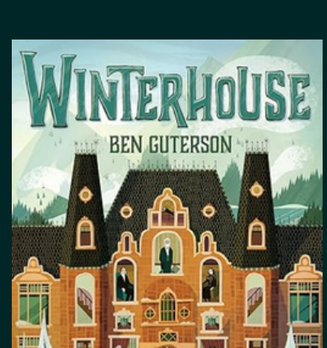
A laugh out loud festive story about a family trying to keep the biggest Christmas secret EVER! With 25 short advent-style chapters, this is the perfect book to read together during the holiday season.
Harper and Will's lives are already full of festive wonder - it's pretty magical when your mum's boyfriend is Father Christmas after all - but new baby sister Yula shows signs of having magic of her own, things are about to get complicated! Indoor snowflakes, naughty gingerbread biscuits and reindeer running wild spell Christmas chaos! And with the Elf and Safety Department on the lookout for any unexplained festive magic, it's up to their family keep the biggest Christmas secret ever . . .



The Very Merry Murder Club by various authors

Perhaps you're too busy over the festive period to get stuck into a longer novel... this collection of stories is just the thing for you! Brimming with festive villainy, this joyous and unputdownable collection of Christmassy crime stories for young readers boasts contributions from the likes of Robin Stevens, Elle McNicoll and Nizrana Farook, authors that are represented in our Upper Key Stage 2 classroom libraries. Full of fast-paced plots, delightfully evil villains and whip-smart protagonists, The Very Merry Murder Club will enthrall fans of mystery and those new to the genre. To top it off, the collection is beautifully illustrated by Harry Woodgate, with a charming illustration accompanying each story.

Winterhouse by Ben Guterson (Book 1 of 3)

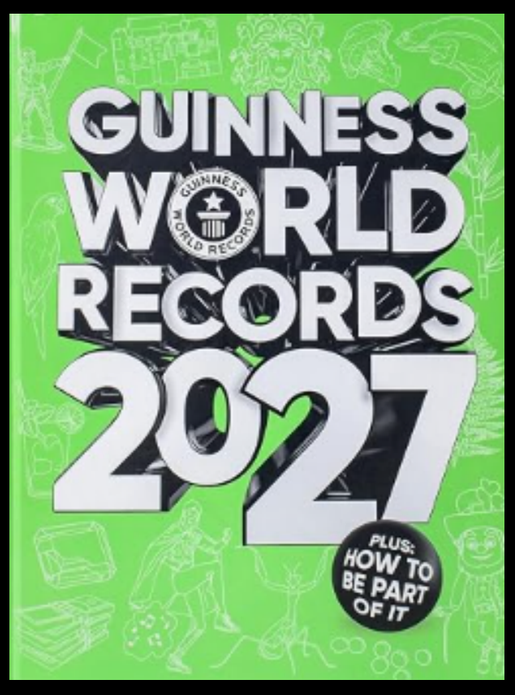


Orphan Elizabeth Somers's malevolent aunt and uncle ship her off to the ominous Winterhouse Hotel, owned by the peculiar Norbridge Falls. Upon arrival, Elizabeth quickly discovers that Winterhouse has many charms—most notably its massive library. It's not long before she locates a magical book of puzzles that will unlock a mystery involving Norbridge and his sinister family. But the deeper she delves into the hotel's secrets, the more Elizabeth starts to realize that she is somehow connected to Winterhouse. As fate would have it, Elizabeth is the only person who can break the hotel's curse and solve the mystery.

The best of...

NON-FICTION

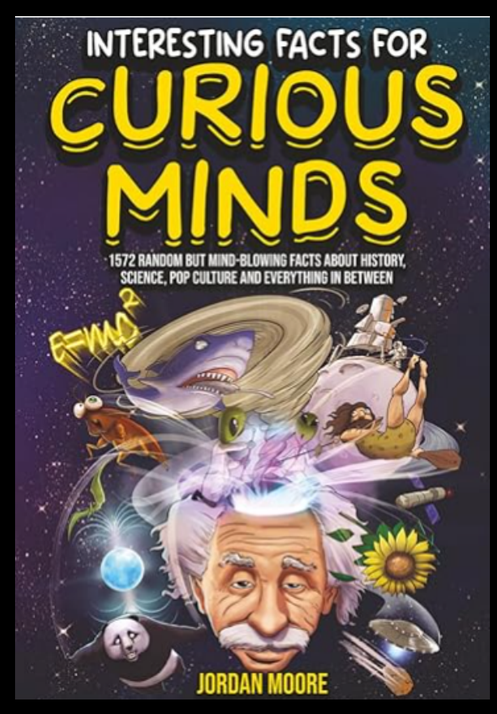
While fiction provides the chance to truly get lost in a book, it isn't everyone's favourite genre. At Leasowes, we recognise the value of non-fiction in enticing young people to read... no matter their interest, there really is a book for everyone. Non-fiction really underscores our mantra of 'learn to read, read to learn'... within the pages of these incredible volumes is endless knowledge waiting to be discovered.



GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS

Put a Guinness World Records book in a classroom and see how fast it disappears! An eternal non-fiction favourite, with engaging images, short digestible chunks of information and pages of inspirational, weird or just downright wild records, this is a no-brainer if you want something non-fiction for your bookshelf. Meet eight more incredible young achievers -under 16s that are defying their age to break remarkable records and explore ‘Guinness Goes Green’ with everything from neon to Yoda to Elphaba!

INTERESTING FACTS FOR CURIOUS MINDS



Want to impress your friends and family with both useful, worthless but undeniably interesting facts?
Then Interesting Facts For Curious Minds: 1572 Random But Mind Blowing Facts About History, Science, Pop Culture and Everything in Between is the book for you!
In this book you’ll find the answers to questions such as:

- When did zero become a number? Who was the inventor of Bitcoin? What did the Big Bang sound like? How have sports changed around the world? What’s a malapropism?



STORY OF THE TITANIC

For some reason, the Titanic has always captured the imagination of young people. It is probably one of the most-requested history topics Mrs Widdett gets from her UKS2 classes. The tragedy of the Titanic is shown in dramatic original illustrations by award-winning artist Steve Noon. This luxurious liner still has the power to capture public imagination more than any other vessel in history and more than a century later. From being built and setting sail to sinking fast and saving lives, the Titanic is explored and explained in fascinating detail with intricate cutaway scenes and cross-sections.

FICTION FOR ALL



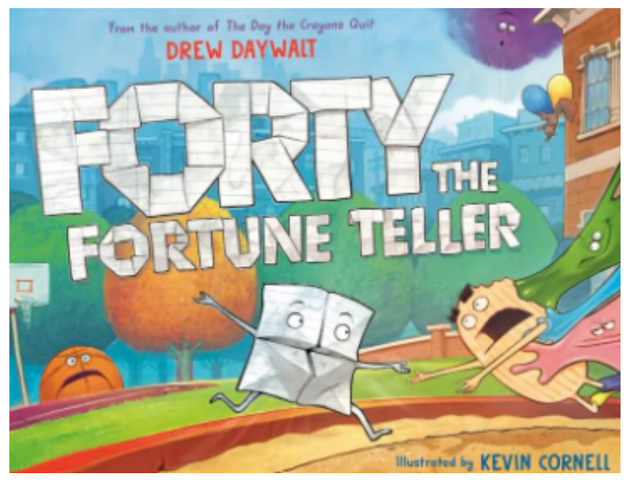
LOOPS BY JASHAR AWAN

This big kid is wearing his first pair of big-kid shoes, the kind with laces! Even though they're a little on the roomy side—shoes to grow into, of course—he knows he can take care of them. Except they keep falling off! Not to worry, he'll just tie them up again, because he knows how to tie those loops! But wait a second, where did that darn shoe go? This is a seriously clever book, told through loops, circles and squiggles with minimal text.

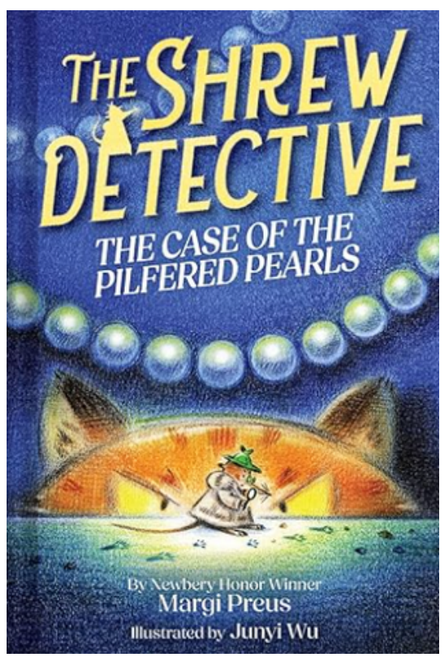
PERFECT FOR EYFS/KS1

FORTY THE FORTUNE TELLER BY DREW DAYWALT

Daywalt, the creator of the Crayons franchise, returns with a standalone picture book about a fortune teller who gives advice that never quite works out the way anyone expects. The humor is classic Daywalt: absurd, kid-friendly and layered with jokes that adults will catch on the second read. Expect this one to become a bedtime favorite that children request on repeat.



PERFECT FOR KS1



THE SHREW DETECTIVE: THE CASE OF THE PILFERED PEARLS BY MARGI PREUS

With a curious mind and a vast vocabulary (thanks to her wallpaper—pages of a discarded human dictionary), tiny Minerva Shrew would love nothing more than to solve the Big Mysteries of Life and the Universe.
Instead, in The Case of the Pilfered Pearls, she's called upon to help her cousin Tenacity solve a mystery in the most dangerous of places: a human house. When a string of pearls goes missing, the human owner is sure a "dreadful rodent" has pilfered them—and now the lives of all Minerva's friends are at risk! Will Minerva find the true culprit before the exterminators arrive? A great early chapter book for children in Y3-5.

PERFECT FOR LKS2

PERFECT FOR UKS2

THE FINAL YEAR BY MATT GOODFELLOW



Life can be tough in your last year of primary school. Tests to take, preparing for the change to high school. Nate is ready for it all, knowing his best friend PS is at his side - they've been inseparable since Nursery. But when they are put in two different classes and PS finds a new friend in Turner, the school bully, Nate's world turns upside-down. As he struggles to make sense of this and forge new friendships, he's dealt another blow when his youngest brother, Dylan is rushed into hospital. His new teacher, Mr Joshua, sees a spark inside of Nate that's lit by his love of reading and writing and shows him how to use this to process what's going on. But with so much working against him, and anger rising inside him, will this be enough? This book is especially interesting as it is told in verse. Follow ups include 'Six Weeks' and 'The First Year' as Goodfellow takes children on the transition journey to secondary school.

