



Younger Readers Category (8-11)

## Scottish Children's Book Awards 2016

Activities to get your pupils  
excited about this year's  
shortlist

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## Who are these resources for?

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These resources are designed to be of use to any primary teacher looking to create a buzz about the shortlisted titles and also to make the Younger Readers category books a part of the curriculum. They can also be used by community librarians who want to find some fun activity suggestions for the books.

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## Get your pupils excited about the books

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There are plenty of ways for your group of pupils to create a buzz about the awards. Here are a few!

### Setting up different types of book groups

Lit 2-11a, Lit 2-02a, Lit 2-09a

- A **parents and young people** book group: you could ask the pupils to read the shortlisted titles along with their parents, and then ask pupils and parents to email book reviews to the school. You could then collate the reviews into a booklet. See our guide on page 13 to writing a great review!
- A **teacher-pupil** book group: have a look at our free Teachers as Readers e-book (particularly chapter 12) for more info on modelling yourself as a reader: [scottishbooktrust.com/learning/learning-resources/resource/teachers-as-readers-how-to-be-a-reading-role-model](http://scottishbooktrust.com/learning/learning-resources/resource/teachers-as-readers-how-to-be-a-reading-role-model)
- A **transition** book group: why not invite some of the P7s from cluster primaries to come in and discuss the 8-11 titles with secondary pupils? You could get seniors to introduce the P7 pupils to the secondary library.

## **Get them talking about the books – comparing and contrasting**

Lit 2-04a, Lit 2-16a

You can use our worksheet as a starting point for comparing and contrasting – see Appendix 1 on page 12.

Alternatively, ask your pupils to compare the opening pages of each book. You could do this through the following activities:

- Ask them to mindmap all the questions raised by each opening section;
- Ask them to write down all the impressions of character;
- Ask them which book they would be most likely to read, and why;
- Ask the pupils to compare the openings with the openings of other books they have read.

## **Get them talking about the books –reviewing**

Lit 2-02a, Lit 2-09a

The following activity is a good way to get pupils talking about the books. You may want to enter the SCBA review competition with pupils before doing this activity, as they may have a stronger idea of what they liked and disliked about each book after reviewing. You'll find out more about the competition on the SCBA homepage: [bit.ly/SCBAhome](http://bit.ly/SCBAhome)

- First of all, divide your classroom into three 'stations', one for each of the three books;
- Ask pupils to go to the station representing the book they liked best;
- After this, there are different options – you could ask pupils to discuss their reasons with each other and feed back to the class, or take different pupils from each station and put them together into debating groups of three or four to make their case for their favourite book. You can use our worksheet in Appendix 1 on page 12 to support pupils with comparing and contrasting the books, and you can modify the table to include different points of comparison – for instance, character, plot, setting, beginning and ending, etc.

## **Create a marketing campaign for each book**

Eng 2-27a, Exa 2-14a

Rival pupils try to persuade others that their book is the best. Put a ballot box in every classroom and get pupils (and other teachers) to cast their votes too!

- Ask pupils to write their own blurbs for the books, and get them to present these to an audience;
- Ask pupils to make a book trailer for each book (see the book trailer section on page 10);
- Ask pupils to create a dramatic sketch introducing the books and act it out.

## **Create posters with taglines**

Eng 2-27a, Exa 2-02a

Ask your pupils to create posters for the books. They'll need to think carefully about taglines. For instance, how much of the plot should be revealed in the tagline? How long should a tagline be? Ask your pupils to have a look at the examples below and think about the taglines. How effectively do they create questions in the reader's mind?

- *Ghosts of the Forest* – [bit.ly/ghostscover](http://bit.ly/ghostscover)
- *Skulduggery Pleasant* – [bit.ly/skulduggerycover](http://bit.ly/skulduggerycover)
- *Out of the Depths* – [bit.ly/outofthedepthscovers](http://bit.ly/outofthedepthscovers)
- *George's Cosmic Treasure Hunt* – [bit.ly/georgecover](http://bit.ly/georgecover)

## **Draw in potential readers Lit 2-11a**

Pupils can choose a section from the book which they feel will draw readers in, make a copy of the page(s) and display this in the library.

## **Further ideas**

For some more ideas about getting the whole school excited about books, check out our guide to creating a reading culture in your school, with lots of practical ideas: [www.scottishbooktrust.com/learning/learning-resources/resource/creating-a-reading-culture-get-your-whole-school-reading](http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/learning/learning-resources/resource/creating-a-reading-culture-get-your-whole-school-reading)

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# **Get your pupils excited about voting**

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For some great ideas to make the voting process lively and fun for your pupils, take a look at this blog: [bit.ly/scbavoting](http://bit.ly/scbavoting)

## **Celebrating the announcement**

You can find out the results live through SBT's Twitter feed. Why not set up a school account for teacher use only, and then display SBT's Twitter feed live on your whiteboard? [twitter.com/scottishbktrust](https://twitter.com/scottishbktrust) Getting started with Twitter is easy – see this guide: [bit.ly/TwitterforBeginners](http://bit.ly/TwitterforBeginners).

Every year SBT commissions an artist to design trophies for the awards. Ask your pupils to design a trophy for the winning author. The design should reflect one or more of the main features of the awards: the fact that they are voted for entirely by children and the fact that schools and libraries all over Scotland take part. They will also have to think about how to make it clear that the awards celebrate books and writers.

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## Activities for *The Nowhere Emporium* by Ross MacKenzie

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### Create your own Book of Wonders

Exa 2-02a, Exa 2-03a, Eng 2-27a

“When I have a new wonder, and I’ve thought it through carefully and decided that it is suitable, I begin to write it down. The pages are enchanted and entwined with the shop. When I have finished writing, a Wonder will appear somewhere in the corridors.”

Have a day at the library. Research book jackets and identify the many styles of book covers; images, calligraphy, typography. Discuss what makes a book alluring or special. Have your pupils issue one book, ask them to read this and at a later time discuss with their peers whether they thought that the book jacket effectively reflected the story. They can upload your findings on Padlet [padlet.com/](http://padlet.com/)

Now, ask your pupils to decorate a note book of their own to make their own personal Book of Wonders. Using arts and crafts they can make it look mysterious and ancient like the magic book in the story or they can put a modern twist on it.

Once your pupils have finished decorating their Book of Wonders ask them to imagine a room and write a description in their book. What style would it be? What characters would live there? What does this room mean to them?

### Bring the room to life

Tch 2-12a, Tch 2-14a, Exa 2-02a, Scn 2-09a

When your pupils have finished their entry in their Book of Wonders, ask them to create their imagined room by using a shoe box, arts and crafts and recycled goods.

- Ask them to measure the dimensions of their room. What size will the furniture be? What size will the characters be? What tools will you need to measure these things?
- Will it have lights? Can they make a circuit? It’s easy and all they need is 1-2 D batteries, aluminium foil, electrical tape, a small light bulb from a flashlight and enthusiastic scientists!  
[www.whatdowedoallday.com/2015/03/simple-circuit-science-project.html](http://www.whatdowedoallday.com/2015/03/simple-circuit-science-project.html)
- What fabrics and textiles can they use? Where are these sourced?

Here are some helpful tips:

- [www.firstpalette.com/Craft\\_themes/People/Miniature\\_Bedroom/Miniature\\_Bedroom.html](http://www.firstpalette.com/Craft_themes/People/Miniature_Bedroom/Miniature_Bedroom.html)
- [downloads.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/bluepeter/makes/furniture.pdf](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/bluepeter/makes/furniture.pdf)

## Research a city

Lit 2-14a

“We’re lucky. We can see New York, Cairo, and Paris... watch Kings and queen and governments come and go. We get to see everything Ellie, the whole of history---”

Have your pupils research one of the cities mentioned in the book:

- What century will they research?
- Has the city landscape changed over the years?
- What’s the population?
- Are there any famous locations?
- What is the city culture?
- How does it look different during seasons?

## Make a city snow globe

Exa 2-02a

The first entry that Daniel creates in the Book of Wonders is a room filled with empty snow globes. People often collect them on their travels as they usually depict a city scene and make great souvenirs.

When your children have finished researching their chosen city, have them make a snow globe. It’s simple and fun and you can use a jam jar. This site has some helpful tips: [crafts.tutsplus.com/tutorials/create-a-wondrous-winter-wonderland-in-a-jam-jar--craft-710](https://crafts.tutsplus.com/tutorials/create-a-wondrous-winter-wonderland-in-a-jam-jar--craft-710)

## If you loved *The Nowhere Emporium*

Lit 2-11a

Check out our list of ten fantasy adventure stories:

[scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists/fantastic-adventures-8-11](https://scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists/fantastic-adventures-8-11)

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## Activities for *Mysteries of Ravenstorm Island: The Lost Children* by Gillian Philip

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### Research gargoyles

Lit 2-14a, Exa 2-07a

“They were rather beautiful, carved in careful detail. Some were the shape of fierce giant ravens and some were almost human shaped, hunched and glowering...”

Ravenstorm Hall is gothic and adorned with Gargoyles. Have your pupils research the gothic tradition of architecture:

- What is the grotesque and why was this appealing to medieval audiences?
- What is the purpose of gargoyles?
- Are there any legends around gargoyles?
- Are there any famous gargoyles in Scotland? For example, Rosslyn Chapel in Scotland is a gothic treasure. You could ask your pupils to research stonemasonry in Scotland and compare with other European styles such as French or Italian. Is there any symbolism that makes them distinctly Scottish or do they reflect Scottish history in any way?  
[www.educationscotland.gov.uk/scotlandshistory/medievallife/rosslynchapel/](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/scotlandshistory/medievallife/rosslynchapel/)
- Are there modern gargoyles? Compare and contrast modern styles against that of medieval. For example, in 1990, stonemasons created a gargoyle that resembles a certain famous pop culture *Alien* from Ridley Scott’s film and it now adorns Paisley Abbey in Renfrewshire:  
[www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-23810979](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-23810979)

### Make a gargoyle

Exa 2-02a

Once your pupils have finished researching, ask them to create their own gargoyle faces. You can use Plasticine or clay. Clay is quite a good method as you can mould and then spend the afternoon painting once it is dry.

They can make it in a traditional style or you may wish to ask them to think of things from modern culture that they find grotesque. What is hideous or frightening to them in modern society? Can they turn this into a gargoyle?

A fun thing to do would be to perch your gargoyles around the school – get people talking and it’s a great way to introduce the book and your work to the rest of the school.

Tips on how to make clay gargoyles:

- [www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjZSRtOsmRo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjZSRtOsmRo)
- [www.kinderart.com/sculpture/gargoyles.shtml](http://www.kinderart.com/sculpture/gargoyles.shtml)

## Write spell poems

Eng 2-31a

“We shall furthermore provide the human girl with a cure for the stone spell.”

In the book, the children on the island are turned into stone statues by the fairy queen. Create a classroom spell book by asking each of your pupils to write a spell poem. Once these have been completed, collect them and compile them into a fun and decorative spell book, display this in your library.

## Create a survival kit, shelter and learn about fire building

Tch 2-12a, Tch 2-14a, HWB 2-30a

Molly and Arthur are left alone on the island on an adventure. How would your pupils survive on adventure? Get them to think about the following and try out some activities:

- Where would they find food? Learn about foods that sustain energy.
- Can they create some tools that would help them on their travels?
- A magnetic compass? [www.bbc.co.uk/science/0/23033112](http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/0/23033112)
- A map? [www.teachingideas.co.uk/geography/contents\\_maps.htm](http://www.teachingideas.co.uk/geography/contents_maps.htm)
- A flashlight? [www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Homemade-Flashlight](http://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Homemade-Flashlight)
- If they were on a strange island, where would they sleep? Ask your pupils to construct a shelter from recycled materials.
- Research different safe methods of fire building and try them out. If you have access to a Forest School Leader, request some sessions where you can experience a range of outdoor activities/survival skills.
- Back in the classroom produce the manual/recipe book in written or video form to help others to learn too. Test out the quality of your instructions by inviting another class to use them to ‘have a go’, or contact a local primary and find out if they would like to have you share both the information and the activities with some of their pupils. Always ensure full risk assessments have been made before carrying out this type of activity. [www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/Practical-guide/public/Lighting-fires](http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/Practical-guide/public/Lighting-fires)

## If you loved *The Mysteries of Ravenstorm Island*

Lit 2-11a

Check out our list of nine survival stories:

[scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists/9-books-about-survival-8-11](http://scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists/9-books-about-survival-8-11)

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# Activities for *The Fastest Boy in the World* by Elizabeth Laird

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## School Olympics

Lit 2-14a, Exa 2-02a, HWB 2-25a

Team up with your PE department and encourage another class to take part also!

- Research and discuss the origins of the Olympics Games from its beginning in Olympia, Greece over 2,700 years ago. How has it changed today?
- Assign a country: divide your pupils into assigned country teams and have each team learn more about their assigned country. Have participants conduct research on their country's language(s), culture, traditions, cuisine and clothing.
- Go to [www.london2012.com](http://www.london2012.com) to have your pupils learn more about each sport: what are the rules, how many countries compete in this sport, which are the top ranked countries (previous medallists), how do teams or athletes qualify for the Olympics Games in a particular sport?
- Hold an opening ceremony: have a Parade of Nations, cultural performances, sing national anthems and don't forget the torch! Use this opening ceremony for the children to display their research and findings in the first two research activities.
- Have your pupils create medals and prizes.
- Now your pupils can take part in different sporting events; relay, shot put, gymnastics, cycling, swimming etc. and award prizes to all taking part. Invite parents and guardians along for the whole event.

## Show and Tell Quilt

Exa 2-02a

“Grandfather had a father?”

In the book, Solomon realises that there is a lot of his family's history that he is unaware of. Most children have limited information about their family ancestries, and it's meaningful for children to make connections with the past and share stories with those that they are close to.

1. Ask your pupils to match up with an older family member in order to share stories of their childhood. Like an interview, they can bring it into school along with one artefact that is attached to the story. They will need this at a later time.
2. Make a quilt. Every pupils should be given the same sized square of fabric and with pens, glue and other art tools – ask them to decorate their square of fabric so that it represents the story that the older family member shared. (Note: if you do not wish to use fabric, that's okay, you can make paper quilts. Here is a handy guide on how to make paper quilts: [www.freekidscrafts.com/friendship-quilt/](http://www.freekidscrafts.com/friendship-quilt/) and other

quilt ideas that you can use as template

[www.artistshelpingchildren.org/paperquiltsartscraftsideaskids.html](http://www.artistshelpingchildren.org/paperquiltsartscraftsideaskids.html))

3. When everyone has finished their individual squares join them together to form one whole fabric or paper quilt and display this in the classroom or library.
4. Now you can spend the afternoon sharing stories. Your pupils can invite their older family member into the classroom or library to spend the afternoon sharing their stories and showing off their quilt. Your pupils can read the stories that they collected and show the artefacts that inspired their creative quilt patch. Make it a fun affair, have juice biscuits and comfy seats.

### **If you loved *The Fastest Boy in the World***

Lit 2-11a

Check out our list of seven books set in Africa

[scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists/7-books-set-in-africa-8-11](http://scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists/7-books-set-in-africa-8-11)

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## **Enter our competitions**

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Every year we run two competitions connected to SCBA: a review competition, and a book trailer competition. You'll find details on the SCBA homepage at: [bit.ly/SCBAhome](http://bit.ly/SCBAhome).

### **How to get started with book trailers**

Book trailers are a fantastic way to get pupils engaging with books: they encourage meaningful use of ICT and challenging pupils' critical understanding of what they read.

Scottish Book Trust has made a series of videos available which explain how to construct a book trailer. You'll also find links to a wealth of further resources on the same page, including a full unit of work and a link to some example book trailers: [scottishbooktrust.com/learning/learning-resources/resource/how-to-create-book-trailers-video-series](http://scottishbooktrust.com/learning/learning-resources/resource/how-to-create-book-trailers-video-series)

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## Further tasks

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### **Shared reading**

Shared reading is a wonderful project which involves older pupils reading to younger ones. You can set up a project where secondary pupils read to P1s or nursery children, using the three books shortlisted in the Bookbug Readers Category (3-7 yrs) (every P1 child in Scotland receives these around November). For more information, including video case studies and suggested activities, check out this page:

[scottishbooktrust.com/learning/learning-resources/resource/shared-reading](http://scottishbooktrust.com/learning/learning-resources/resource/shared-reading)

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## Appendix 1 – comparing and contrasting the books

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Book	Front cover	Blurb	Opening line

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## Appendix 2 – Writing a great book review

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Writing a book review need not be a difficult task. A good place to start is to look for some examples of book reviews. Magazines or local newspaper may be a good source; some newspapers even include reviews by younger readers. Spend the afternoon in class discussing their different styles and techniques.

To help your young readers write a five-star review, we've got some tips for you to consider before submitting their reviews for the Book Review competition.

### **Find their own way of making notes**

Firstly, encourage your pupils to find their own method of prep. It might be worthwhile to do chapter reviews or character reviews along the way. This could help them shape their ultimate verdict on the book. If they prefer to be fully immersed in the text and then capture their thoughts at the very end, that's fine too! Whatever works best for them and for your class.

### **Have a chat with a friend**

A good tip is to have them imagine that they are discussing the book with a best friend. Before writing their reviews, pair your pupils up and ask them to take turns discussing what they liked about the book that they will soon review. Whilst one describes the book, the other should scribe.

Can they use these scribed notes as the back bone of their review? By speaking uninhibitedly and freely with a friend, the collection of scribed notes should reflect some honest, catchy, memorable points and should provide them with some material for their final reviews.

### **Get to the point**

Before they write their complete review, it's best to start with writing a couple of sentences describing what the book is about. It can be quite tricky to write concisely about a book without giving spoilers or revealing any twists in the plot.

The job of the reviewer is to give a balanced overview of the book whilst holding back enough information so that there's still plenty for the new reader to discover themselves. As this is often quite a difficult thing to do, have them practise before writing the review. Can they describe the book in one line or can they manage a Haiku? For something fun to practise with, check 'out book a minute', a fun website that condenses plots into one sentence: [www.rinkworks.com/bookaminute/b/alexander.bear.shtml](http://www.rinkworks.com/bookaminute/b/alexander.bear.shtml)

### **Stay balanced and find a suitable tone**

A valued critic's opinions can sometimes make or break a book, which is why it is important to offer a fair, interesting, and succinct judgement. It is

important to give a balanced account and yet hold back enough information so that there's still plenty for the reader to discover themselves. With this in mind, remind your pupils to find balance in their reviews by measuring the books pros and the cons. Have your pupils write up a pros and cons list so that they can refer to this when writing their final reviews.

### **Find their individual style**

A book review is a personal piece. Often when you have a template to follow, personal flair can be overshadowed by a generic or formulaic style of writing. The best reviews are ones that have a personal, lively and unique tone and style. Encourage your pupils to bring their own personality to it; show off their flair and individual style.

### **What to include in their review**

A book review should not simply be a compilation of plot, character and scene. Here are some aspects of the book your pupils should include in their final review:

- A very brief synopsis of the **plot**.
- What is the book's **genre**?
- How strong or weak are the **characters**?
- What does the story's **setting** bring to the narrative?
- What are key **plot devices**? What is driving the story?
- How successful is the novel's **ending**? Does it leave you wanting more? Was it disappointing?
- Perhaps they should write an interesting starting sentence for their review. Some people like to start with a question. Other reviewers like to start with the book facts - something to grab the reader's interest is always best.
- Ask your pupils to summarise some of their thoughts on the book by suggesting the type of reader that they would recommend the book to. For example: younger readers, fans of relationship drama/mystery stories/comedy. Are there any books or series that they would compare it to? Can they give the book a rating?
- What are its key **themes**?
- Who is the intended **audience**?
- Is the author's **style** suitable for the intended audience? Does he author's style in more detail focus on rich descriptions of setting, or are they more focused on a pacy plot?

### **Read it out loud – share it with the class**

Ask your pupils to read their book review aloud. to jog their memory should they have forgotten to include anything vital. Sharing them aloud in class could be a fun Friday afternoon activity and a great way for everyone to share their different techniques and thoughts on the shortlisted books.

### **And finally...**

Don't forget to submit the reviews by Friday 5 February by 5pm!