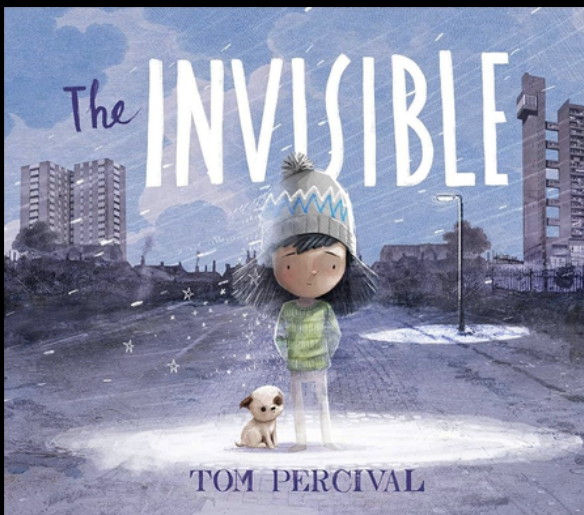




TANIA FINDLAY'S

TRANSFORMING YOUR SCHOOL'S
READING CULTURE BOOK PR



THE INVISIBLE

TOM PERCIVAL

I always share this one in the picture book PR because, sadly, poverty can impact the lives of children whatever their background and will affect many of the pupils in our schools.

In this book, Isabel's family don't have enough money for the rent and bills and must move to the other side of the city. Isabel feels invisible, until she starts to notice different things about her community, and she doesn't feel so invisible after all.

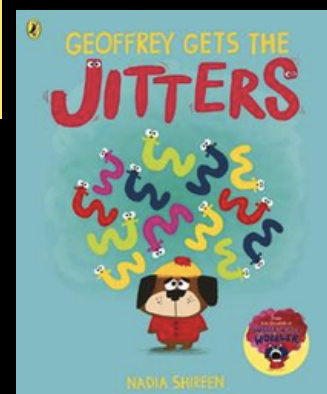
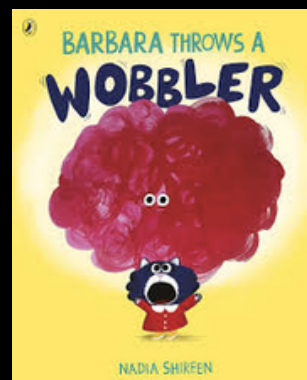
Beautifully illustrated with a powerful story showing how we all belong.

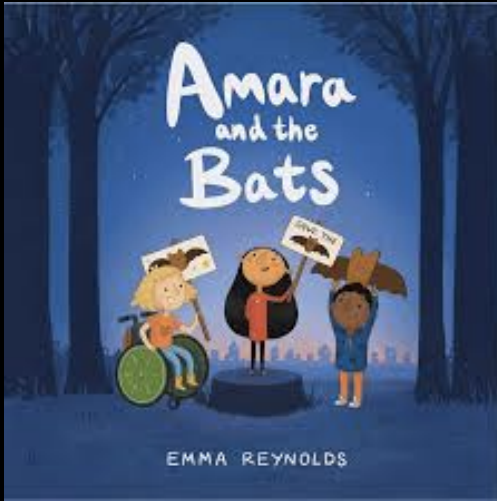
BARBARA THROWS A WOBLER & GEOFFREY GETS THE JITTERS

NADIA SHIREEN

Both books are perfect for PSHE discussion. In Barbara Throws a Wobbler, Barbara has some very intense feelings starting with a sock, then a strange pea and even when she is with her friends it all starts to spiral. Luckily, her Wobbler helps her make sense of it all, so that she can feel more like herself again.

Geoffrey, when he feels uncertain of situations, starts to get the jitters. Similar to Barbara, Geoffrey begins to understand his anxieties and manage to get rid of those jitters one small step at a time.





AMARA AND THE BATS

EMMA REYNOLDS

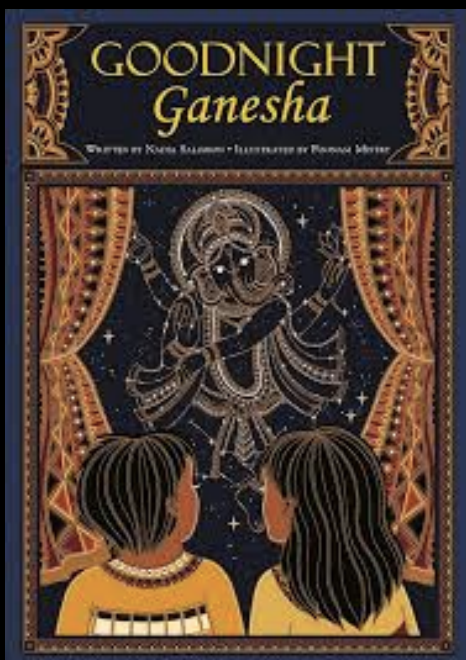
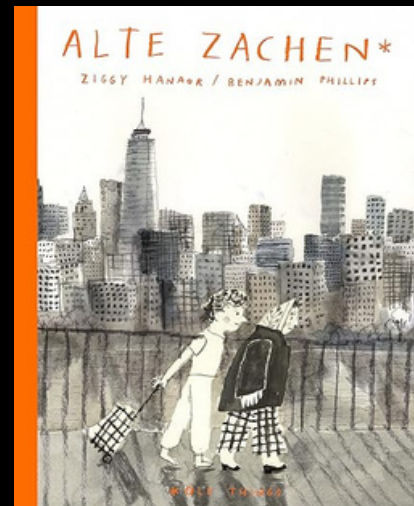
There are lots of books around which combine fiction and non-fiction at the moment. This is one example about bats.

Amara loves them and when she moves house, she discovers that the bats have all moved away because their habitat has been destroyed. She sets about trying to change that. Beautifully illustrated and packed full of information about bats and how we can help them, it is perfect for environmentalists everywhere.

ALTE ZACHEN/OLD THINGS

ZIGGY HANOAR AND BENJAMIN PHILLIPS

This is a powerful, affecting and deceptively simple story of Jewish identity and of generational divides. It follows 11-year-old Benji and his grandmother, Bubbe Rosa, as they travel through Brooklyn and Manhattan, gathering the ingredients for a Friday night dinner. The story is on two levels, each from the perspective of the two characters and embedded within is Bubbe Rosa's own love story and explanation of her current dismay at the world today. I love the Yiddish glossary, which is included too, which gives yet another dimension to this wonderful graphic novel.



GOODNIGHT GANESHA

NADIA SALOMON & POONAM MISTRY

Two children visit their grandparents in India and this story explores what happens as they get ready for bed. There are stories and rituals in the Puja room and what I love is that all children can relate to the bedtime routine, but this book gives an insight into how they can be similar but can differ from culture to culture. Poonam Mistry's illustrations are utterly divine.

WHEN THE SKY FALLS

PHILL EARLE

Despite this being a few years old now, it remains a firm choice in our guided reading curriculum for Yr.6 class as the pupils learn about WWII.

Inspired by true events, it tells the story of a young boy, Joseph, and his relationship with a silverback gorilla in London during the Blitz.

Wartime London is vividly brought to life as Joseph's story is uncovered; he is evacuated and lives with Mrs. F, a friend of his mother's. They barely tolerate each other and, initially under sufferance, he helps her to maintain what is left of her family run zoo: this is where he first encounters Adonis, a gigantic, wild gorilla and in caring for the caged creature, they strike up an unusual friendship.

Joseph struggles at school, particularly with dyslexia and is labelled as 'lazy' by his headteacher, in a strange place away from his mother he feels very alone.

Adonis helps him to fill that void. The foreshadowing and inevitability of what happens seems obvious, but Phil Earle's magnificent story-telling keeps the reader engaged until the very last moment.

Fast paced, with excellent characterisation this book is sublime.



MRS. F'S WILDCARD!

SKANDAR SERIES - A.F. STEADMAN

Whilst there is always a book PR theme, I like to throw in a few of the recent books I have read which may be of interest to you.

This session it is going to be The Skandar Series by A.F. Steadman.

I think of these books as Harry Potter for a new generation. Skandar Smith longs to be a Chaos Cup Rider and when he gets the opportunity to hatch his own unicorn, Scoundrel's Luck, he has to embark on a five-year training programme in order for him to achieve his dreams. However, the unicorns are not like any we have read about in books before, they are certainly not made of stardust and rainbows and Skandar's journey is not a simple one. What Annabel does in these books is write fantastic plots coupled with exceptional characterisation: the subtlety of the ethnic and diverse characters doesn't feel forced or tokenistic and is an absolute masterclass in inclusivity!

