

Text rationales for Year 1

Text	Rationale
Cave Baby	The text is a lyrical narrative that is set in the Stone Age and follows a mischievous baby who goes on an outdoor adventure and meets a plethora of animals, some of which are extinct. This book has links to PSHE, exploring behavioural expectations, as well as history, introducing children to the stone age. Julia Donaldson is a prolific author with a distinct style and Emily Gravett is a twice Kate Greenaway award-winning illustrator.
Naughty Bus	This is a fast-paced text with lively illustrations and a playful approach to font design. The text has links to toys, transport, the history of toys and provides opportunities for discussions around behavioural expectations. As the Naughty Bus is a typical London double-decker bus, links could also be made to getting to know London or any local area.
Astro Girl	This book has a strong narrative and a message about following your dreams. The main character is a girl with an accomplished working mother and father who is the main caregiver at home. Facts on inclusive astronaut history are included, offering a vision for all children – particularly girls – who dream of pursuing careers in STEM and space travel.
Sidney, Stella and the Moon	This story follows the relationship between twins Sidney and Stella who do not like to share anything. The story illustrates the importance of sharing and teamwork, and treating others with respect. It is also a great chance to pique children's curiosity about the moon and space. Emma Yarlett is an award-winning author and illustrator who has created many gorgeous books.
Stella and the Seagull	Stella and the Seagull carries a powerful message that no-one is too small to make a difference. Stella might be a young child, but her actions have a significant impact on the local community and environment. A brilliant text for introducing children to thinking about how to look after our planet with a particular focus on single-use plastic, it is also an important book for representation of different family types as it features a main character who very happily lives with her grandma by the sea.
I Want My Hat Back	Written and illustrated by the distinctive and award-winning artist Jon Klassen, this charming story follows the fortunes of a bear who is looking for his hat. This tale has a structured plot and repetitive language which children can join in with while reading. It also is the first in a series of books. The sequel This is Not My Hat won both the UK Kate Greenaway Award and the US Caldecott Award in 2012.
Billy and the Beast	This is the first text in a series that follows the adventures of Billy and her trusted sidekick Fat Cat. Billy is a brilliant role model who always meets and overcomes various challenges (encounters with beasts, dragons and pirates) through her problem-solving and quick-thinking. Nadia Shireen is a significant, award-winning author and illustrator.
Send for a Superhero	This is a fun take on the super-hero, comic genre which will engage children with its colourful style and characters. The fast-paced story provides an ideal opportunity to discuss the attributes of a hero and everyday heroes in our communities. Michael Rosen and Katherine McEwen are both award-winning in their respective fields.
Beegu	This is a heart-warming tale of an alien Beegu who crash lands on earth and finds refuge and friendship with the children in a school playground. The story lends itself to discussions about the importance of welcoming, respecting and including others. Alexis Deacon is a significant, award-winning author and illustrator.
The Comet	This beautiful picture book won the 2023 Yoto Carnegie Shadows' Choice Medal for Illustration and will provide a gateway for children into the world of Joe Todd-Stanton. It tells the story of Nyla who is dealing with the confusion of moving house, an experience many children will be able to relate to, and provides a context for discussing themes of belonging, change and finding comfort. Children will enjoy discovering the magical detail within each of the charming illustrations and will develop empathy as they join Nyla on her journey of acceptance.
The Odd Egg	This charming story by award-winning illustrator and author Emily Gravett provides opportunities to talk about different family structures and adoption. Children will engage with a host of endearing animal characters to help them understand the themes woven throughout. Furthermore, links can be made with identifying and naming a variety of common animals including fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals.

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Leo and the Octopus	This story gives thoughtful representation of an autistic child and his friendship with an octopus. The text explores Leo's individual neurodivergence sensitively without making generalisations and provides opportunities for discussions around neurodiversity and autism. With strong PSHE links, the book explores ways children might self-regulate as well as exploring how we can help others feel safe and comfortable. Scientific links also encourage children to be curious and reflect on their relationship with the natural world.
Stanley's Stick	This charming, lyrical tale follows Stanley and his family as they go on vacation. Lead by Stanley and his stick, the story shows children the power of imagination and what can be done with a little creativity and invention. John Hegley is a wonderful poet who has written many books (including many for adults) and uses lyrical prose to bring this story to life and demonstrate the freedom of childhood. Neal Layton is an award-winning illustrator who perfectly complements the narrative with his simple but characterful illustrations.
Dinosaurs and all that Rubbish	This text has a strong moral about greed, looking after things and sharing the planet. The text provides a solid platform to discuss with children issues around environmentalism, conservation and recycling. Michael Foreman OBE is a significant author and illustrator who has written and illustrated many well-known titles.
The Sea Saw	This text has strong PSHE links, exploring themes around how people grow and cope with change and loss. Award-winning author and illustrator Tom Percival has created a plethora of gorgeous books that help children navigate various emotions and challenges in life which they can enjoy on their own after studying this text as a class. Wonderful collage artwork is paired with moving text to create this very special picture book.
Lost and Found	This award-winning book is a beautiful tale of an unlikely friendship. It provides an enchanting space to discuss issues around friendship as well as making links to geography. There is also an animation that can accompany this book to support children's learning. Oliver Jeffers MBE is an important, award-winning author and illustrator who children can continue to explore on their own or with their classmates.
Lubna and Pebble	A beautifully illustrated story of friendship and kindness in uncertain time, Lubna and Pebble subtly addresses the refugee crisis in a manner accessible to young children. A touching and heart-warming tale, it explores the experience of Lubna, arriving in a "World of Tents", missing her family back home in an unnamed, war-torn country and the friendships she forms. This is a story with powerful PSHE links to seeking comfort in uncertainty, generosity of spirit and selfless acts of friendship. Wendy Meddour is an award-winning author and children may enjoy reading some of her other titles which explore the often-confusing world through the eyes of a young child.
Yeti and the Bird	This is a beautiful tale of forming unlikely friendships with others from different worlds. The text has strong PSHE links, exploring friendship and how we form new relationships with others. The book also has solid links to geography as different landscapes are explored. Nadia Shireen is a significant, award-winning author and illustrator and children will enjoy exploring her other titles on their own.
Pig the Pug	This is a hilarious picture book about learning to share. The books has strong PSHE links, providing an engaging space to discuss sharing, collaborating and looking after each other. It can also lead to discussions about pets and taking care of living things.
Dadaji's Paintbrush	This poignant story explores issues around bereavement and the healing powers of creativity. Accompanied by heartfelt illustrations which also help tell the story, children will develop empathy and be able to discuss strategies for getting us through difficult times. This books also authentically represents Indian characters and culture.

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Iggy Peck, Architect	Through this lyrical text children can get to know Iggy and be inspired by his love of architecture. A vital text, not only to ignite passions about design and technology, but to learn about problem solving and perseverance. It is also a super introduction to the Questioners, a group of children who are role models in different fields, from science to illustration to engineering. Andrea Beaty is a significant author with a distinctive poetic style and is supported by David Roberts' technical illustrations.
The Magic Bed	John Burningham is an award-winning illustrator and author whose books and style are an iconic part of many people's childhood. The Magic Bed is a wonderful introduction to his books and explores the power of the imagination and the magic of childhood. Children can use the book to discuss their own imagined scenarios and develop the language of dreams.
Julian is a Mermaid	This award-winning text by Jessica Love is beautifully written and lushly illustrated. It provides a context to discuss creativity, fashion and expression with children and is also a space where gender stereotypes and identity can be sensitively explored. Links to the art and DT curriculums can be made. There is also a sequel, Julian at the Wedding, for children to read on their own.
Dragon Post	This is a brilliant book for inspiring imagination and creativity in play and in writing by award-winning author-illustrator, Emma Yarlett. It combines fantasy with everyday life as the main character deals with the very practical challenges of looking after a dragon in his house. It is also a valuable text for understanding the many different purposes of letter writing and could support a wider conversation around the different ways that we share written correspondence in modern life.