

## International Women's Day

To celebrate International Women's Day on March 8th, CLPE staff have chosen their favourite books for younger readers featuring independent girl characters.

We have created high quality teaching sequences for many of these books. Subscribe to our Power of Reading site for £300 and receive access to 180 teaching sequences for EYFS to KS2. Subscription is for whole school access and the site also houses 1000's of examples of classroom practice.

Subscribe here: <https://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading>



***What Are You Playing At?* by Marie-Sabine Roger and Anne Sol**

Alanna Books 9781907825026

An ironic and witty picture book that challenges sex stereotypes. Each page makes a statement about what boys or girls conventionally do not do with a photograph of the opposite sex engaged in that activity. The words 'girls do not play football' accompany a picture of a boy delightedly kicking a ball. But then, lift the flap to reveal a picture of a woman footballer tackling another for the ball on the field with the text 'they really don't like all that sweaty stuff!' The words 'boys do not cry' are alongside a photo of girl with furrowed brow rubbing her eyes. Lift the flap to find emotional footballers with tear stained faces embracing, captioned by 'boys never show their feelings...'. The way that the text is not intended to be taken literally and belies what is in the photos, in addition to its conceptual challenges, makes this a book that could be shared with a wide age range. **View this book on**

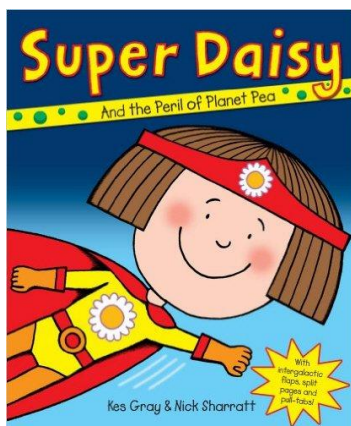
<https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks>.

***Super Daisy and the Peril of Planet Pea* by Kes Gray and Nick Sharratt**

Red Fox 9781862309647

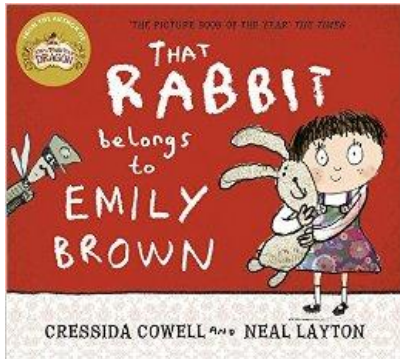
Anyone who has read the first picture book about Daisy (*Daisy: Eat Your Peas* Red Fox 9781862308046) will know that the one food she can't abide is peas. So imagine her horror when she envisages Earth on a collision course with Planet Pea which will mean peas with everything, depicted in a pull tab double page spread. How will the world be saved from this calamity? Of course – with a flip of a flap, our heroine turns into Super Daisy who with a 'Biff!' and a 'Pow!' rescues the situation in time for a pea free tea. Or has she?! **Find more Daisy books on**

<https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks>.



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***That Rabbit Belongs to Emily Brown* by Cressida Cowell and Neal Layton**

Orchard 9781444923414

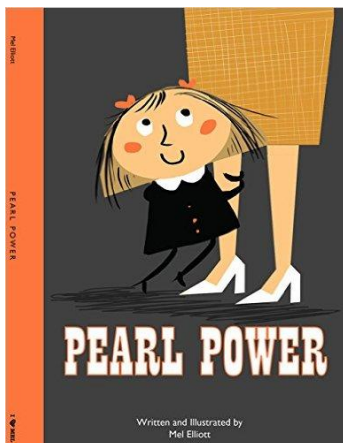
The Queen is determined to have Emily Brown's toy rabbit at any price and when Emily refuses to give in, she has him kidnapped. The redoubtable Emily stomps to the palace to rescue Stanley and is able to show the Queen how to establish a good relationship with her very own toy. The illustrations, which combine collage with childlike drawings, humorously display the imaginative worlds inhabited by Emily and her toy. The first of four picture books about Emily Brown. **A teaching sequence is available for *Emily Brown and the Thing* at**

[www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading](http://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading)

***Pearl Power* by Mel Elliott**

I Love Mel 9780992854416

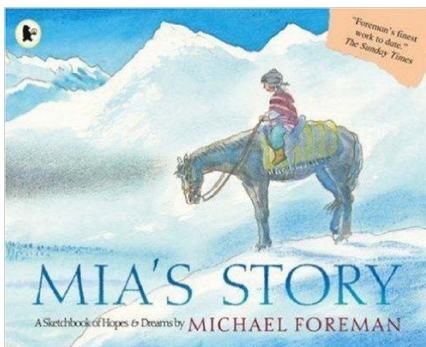
Available from Letterbox Library [www.letterboxlibrary.com](http://www.letterboxlibrary.com)



Pearl has had to move house because her mum has been promoted to 'The Boss'. Pearl's new big school works out fine until she encounters Sebastian, a little boy who is keen to suggest that Pearl goes about everything 'like a girl'. A book about a brave little girl who challenges sexist stereotyping head on. This book was shortlisted for the 2015 Little Rebels Award. Award judge Kim Reynolds said: 'The illustrations in this picture book are terrific. Their clarity and power complement a story about a successful lone mother and her brave and determined daughter Pearl as mum starts a new job and Pearl joins a new school. This story has a strong feminist message that shows girls can be strong, creative – and kind.' Also: *Pearl Power and the Toy Problem* 978992854485

***Mia's Story* by Michael Foreman**

Walker 9781406305333

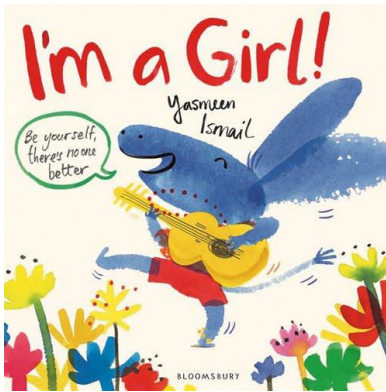


This book is subtitled 'A Sketchbook of Hopes and Dreams' and is based on the landscape and people Michael Foreman met while travelling from Santiago, Chile, into the Andes mountains. The illustrations, many of which look as though they are torn from a sketchbook, depict the houses 'made from odds and ends and bits of rubbish' where Mia and her family live. Searching on horseback for her missing dog, Mia finds some flowers which she replants at home and subsequently establishes a thriving flower selling business which she hope will one day enable her family to build a house of bricks. [Download our free, brilliant Michael Foreman booklist](#)



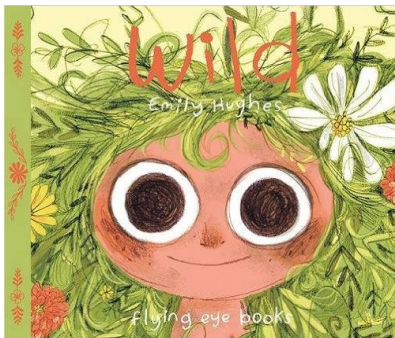
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***I Am a Girl!* by Yasmeen Ismail**  
Bloomsbury 9781408857007

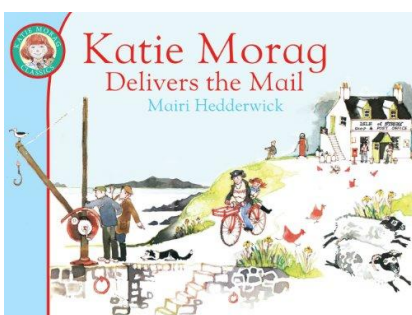
A rabbit rushes through life, confounding gender stereotypes with her boisterous behaviour. When people assume she's a boy, she repeatedly declares 'I'm a girl!' Eventually she makes friends with a boy who is equally at ease with his own individuality. The colourful smudgy illustrations with their unfinished edges reflect the exuberant and whirlwind pace of the story. A picture book which is full of fun and will challenge assumptions and encourage reflection about the negative and positive associations around characteristics considered to be typical of girls and boys. **View this book on <https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks>.**



***Wild* by Emily Hughes**  
Flying Eye 9781909263628

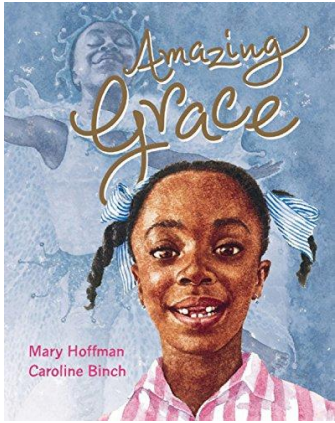
Wild eyed with wonder, a small naked girl stares out from the cover of this picture book, the pupils of her eyes wide and luminous. Turn to the title page and the same child looks grim and cross, her hair trussed into a topknot, a hint of restrictive clothing below her chin.

Thus begins this tale of nature versus nurture, of a child brought up by animals, like Mowgli in *The Jungle Book* and the Wild Boy of Aveyron. Following a blissful early childhood, where she is depicted being taught to speak by a chorus of birds, catch fish to eat by a bear and her cubs, and play roughly by foxes, spinning in a whirl of snapping jaws, the unnamed child is discovered in the forest by 'some new animals.' These miserable creatures take her home and try to force her into their accustomed way of doing things. A newspaper headline indicates that she has been taken in by a psychiatrist and that she is considered to be a feral child. Her unhappiness eventually explodes and she returns to her former serene life, taking with her the family's cat and dog. **A teaching sequence is available for this book on [www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading](http://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading)**



***Katie Morag Delivers the Mail* by Mairi Hedderwick**  
Red Fox 9781849410915

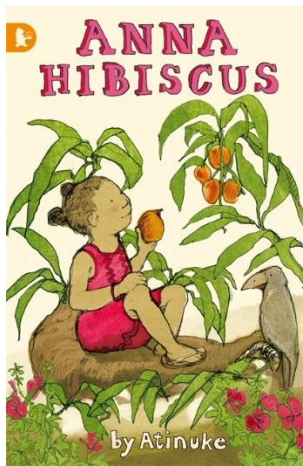
Katie Morag lives on the fictional Isle of Struay, off the Scottish coast and there are a number of stories about her family and community. Here Katie is asked to deliver the parcels which have just arrived from the mainland. However, disaster strikes when she drops the mail bag in a pool and the address labels get smudged. Will she be able to sort out the muddle? **View this book on <https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks>.**



***Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman and Caroline Binch**

Frances Lincoln 9781845077495

A wonderfully affirmative story. Grace ‘a girl who loved stories’ is told that she cannot play Peter Pan in the school pantomime because she is black and female. With the help and support of her grandmother she comes to believe that she can be anything she wants. The excellent illustrations show Grace’s shifting emotions as she copes with disappointment and triumph and her constant joie de vivre. **A Power of Reading teaching sequence is available for *Grace & Family*. Subscribe to [www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading](http://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading) for 180 high quality teaching sequences for EYFS to KS2**



***Anna Hibiscus* by Atinuke, illustrated by Lauren Tobia**

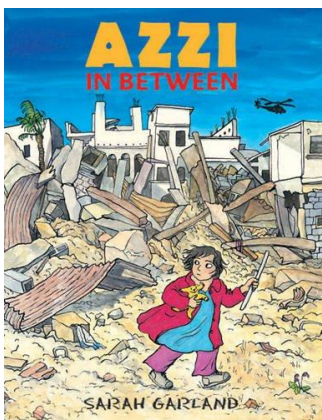
Walker 9781406306552

First in a series of stories about the life of a small girl who lives in Africa with her African dad and Canadian mum and a large extended family. The country is not named but the author has drawn on experiences from her own Nigerian childhood. Modern and traditional aspects of African life are an integral part of the stories. Atinuke maintains a light tone throughout but there are some thought-provoking episodes, particularly when Anna sells oranges and later comes to understand that she has deprived some poorer children of their income. There are also three related picture books. **Subscribe to the Power of Reading for a teaching sequence for this book:**

<https://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading>

***Azzi In Between* by Sarah Garland**

Frances Lincoln 9781847806512



Sarah Garland uses a comic strip format to tell the story of Azzi who has to flee her own country with her parents, leaving her grandmother behind, and settle as a refugee in a new country. At school she shares her knowledge of growing beans by planting and harvesting some brought from her home country and this helps her to grow into her new life. The two countries involved are not specified, enabling identification with the stories of many refugees and migrants. **Download our extensive free Refugee Experience booklist from here**

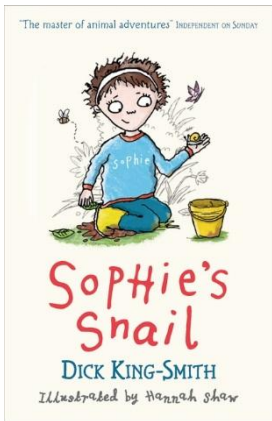
<https://www.clpe.org.uk/clpe/library/booklists>

View this book on <https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks>



***Sophie's Snail*** by Dick King-Smith, illustrated by Hannah Shaw  
Walker 9781406343052

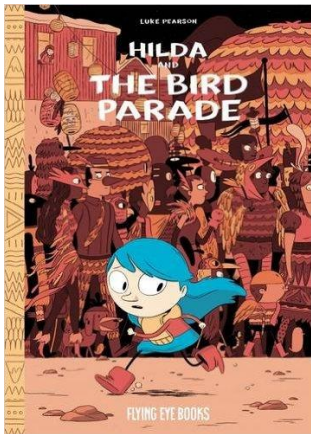
Sophie is a small girl who is determined to be a 'lady farmer' when she grows up. She is already practising, using woodlice, worms and snails as livestock. Sophie is only four years old in this first book in a series of short novels which continues until *Sophie is Seven* (Walker 9781406344349). Children will enjoy growing up with the self-reliant Sophie. **View this book on <https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks>**



***Hilda and the Bird Parade*** by Luke Pearson

Flying Eye 9781909263062

The third book in a series of graphic novels about a small independent girl with blue hair. Hilda has moved away from the countryside where she was able to roam freely and have encounters with the natural and supernatural worlds. Hilda's close relationship with her mother becomes strained as her mother is anxious about letting her daughter out alone in the city. Allowed to go out with a group of children from her school, Hilda becomes separated from them when she stops to take care of an injured bird who has lost his memory. Together they explore the urban environment, discovering that it is much more interesting and varied than they thought at first. Eventually the bird rediscovers his identity and Hilda is reunited with her mother. **View this book on <https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks>**



***Pippi Longstocking*** by Astrid Lindgren, illustrated by Lauren Child,  
translated from Swedish by Tiina Nunnally

Oxford University Press 9780192782410

A modern classic about the strongest girl in the world who lives in Vilekula Cottage with only her horse and the monkey Mr Nelson for company. She soon leads the neighbouring children Tommy and Annika into many adventures. This is a freshly translated edition of this book by one of the world's best loved authors with illustrations that show off Pippi's independent and confident ways. **View this book on <https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks>**

