

The Rivermead Reading Newsletter

Autumn Term 2023

Author Spotlight Joshua Seigal

Joshua Seigal is an award winning professional poet, performer and educator who uses poetry to develop literacy skills and inspire confidence and creativity in communication. Visit Josh's website to read some of his poetry.

<https://www.joshuaseigal.co.uk/my-poems> He very kindly wrote us a letter to wish you all a brilliant start to the new school year!



Hello Rivermead Primary School!

My name is Joshua Seigal, and I am a poet. I live in London, with my wife Carrie and a cat called Bluebell. Bluebell isn't very clever; she likes to fall out of the window, which means we're not allowed to open our windows, even in the summer.

I like to write poems about Bluebell. In fact, I like to write poems about all sorts of things that interest me, such as cats, dogs, my family and, erm, other things too. I always say that it's a good idea to write poems about things you care about. That way, other people will be more likely to care about what you write.

Why do I write poems? Basically, I think it's fun. I like trying to put words together in all sorts of interesting ways. Poems are usually shorter than stories, which suits me well, as I have a short attention span. Poems are also really fun to perform, and they can be a great way of making people laugh. I think laughter is a very important thing.

What else can I tell you? I have published about ten books, and I have a website where you can watch videos and read lots of poems for free. This is my website - www.joshuaseigal.co.uk. You can even see the first poem I ever wrote. It's about otters, and I wrote it when I was five years old. It's not very good, but everyone has to start somewhere.

If I could give you one piece of advice, it's to do lots of reading. You can read anything: comics, books, magazines, newspapers, cereal packets...just try and find something you enjoy. Also, if you ever meet Bluebell, please remember to keep the window closed!!

*Yours sincerely,
Joshua Seigal (Josh, for short)*



Woodley Library

Headley Road
RG5 4JA

Opening Hours:

Mon 9.00- 13.00

Tues 9.00- 17.00

Wed 9.00- 17.00

Thurs 9.00-19.00

Fri 9.00-17.00

Sat 9.30-16.00

Sun 10.30am - 4pm

Book shops in Woodley

Oxfam Bookshop

105 Crockhamwell Rd
(0118 944 2724), closed
Sundays

The Works

67 Crockhamwell Rd
(0118 927 2038), open
everyday

Websites for Book Recommendations

Book Trust Book Finder:

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/>

Love Reading 4 Kids:

<https://www.lovereadings4kids.co.uk/>

The Reader Teacher:

<https://www.thereaderteacher.com/>

Books For Topics:

<https://www.booksfortopics.com/>

Adults: Reading With Your Child

Your child will bring home two books. One is for your child to read to you. It has been carefully chosen so that they can work out all the words. The other book has words your child may not be able to read yet. It is for you to read to your child and talk about together.

How to read a story to your child:

If you can find the time beforehand, read the read-aloud book to yourself first, so you can think about how you're going to read it to your child.

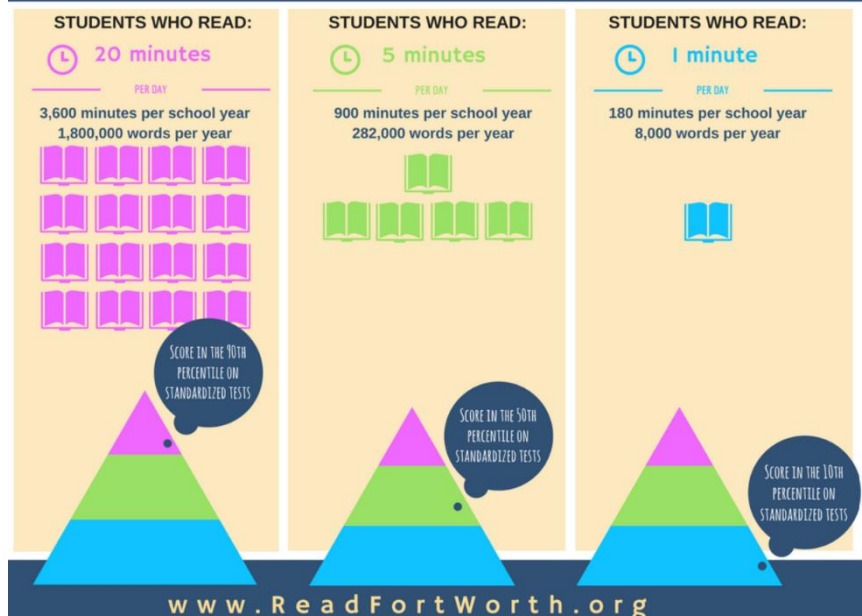
On the first reading:

- Make reading aloud feel like a treat. Make it a special quiet time and cuddle up so you can both see the book.
- Show curiosity about what you're going to read: 'This book looks interesting. It's about an angry child. I wonder how angry he gets...'
- Read through the whole story the first time without stopping too much. Let the story weave its own magic.
- Read with enjoyment. If you're not enjoying it, your child won't. **Read favourite stories over and over again.**

On later readings:

- Let your child pause, think about and comment on the pictures.
- If you think your child did not understand something, try to explain: 'Oh! I think what's happening here is that...'
- Chat about the story and pictures: 'I wonder why she did that?'; 'Oh no, I hope she's not going to...'; 'I wouldn't have done that, would you?'
- Link the stories to your own family experiences: 'This reminds me of when ...'
- Link stories to others that your child knows: 'Ah! Do you remember the dragon in? Do you remember what happened to him?'
- Encourage your child to join in with the bits they know.
- Avoid asking questions to test what your child remembers.
- Avoid telling children that reading stories is good for them.

Why read 20 minutes at home?



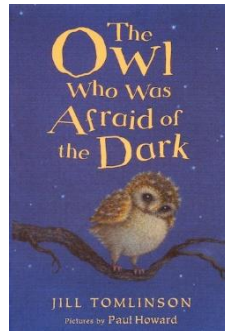
What we are reading in Master Readers at Rivermead this term

Autumn 1

Year 2: Read Write Inc books to support the children's transition from phonics to Master Readers.



Year 3: The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark by Jill Tomlinson



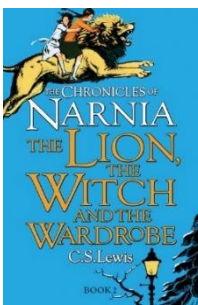
Poor Plop! Baby owls are meant to love darkness – but he's terrified of it. How can he overcome his nerves and become a true night owl? Slowly, with the help of the other night creatures, he learns that dark is exciting, dark is gentle, dark is mysterious and dark is kind...

Year 4: Great People Who Reached for the Stars by Louise Page



This book tells the "stories of 26 incredible people, experiencing disability and long-term illness, who have achieved sky-high success".

Year 5: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe by C.S.Lewis



When Lucy, Peter, Edmund and Susan step through a hidden wardrobe door, they walk into a winter world of beauty and menace. It's a place of dazzling snow and fabulous creatures: centaurs, fauns, nymphs and talking animals. But as the children marvel at Narnia's wonders, they are caught up in a terrifying battle for survival...

Year 6: Wonder by R.J.Palacio



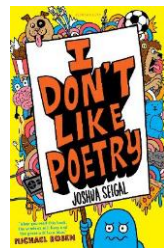
The heart-twisting tale of being different. Auggie likes doing normal stuff like eating ice cream and playing on his Xbox. He feels normal – inside. But being normal doesn't make little kids run away screaming. Right? Born with a serious facial abnormality, Auggie has been taught at home all his life. But now he's going to school – exposing his face to the world. Will anyone see past it?

Autumn 2

Year 2: Read Write Inc books to support the children's transition from phonics to Master Readers.

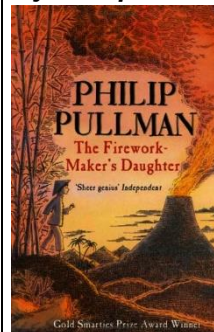


Year 3: I don't like poetry by Joshua Seigal

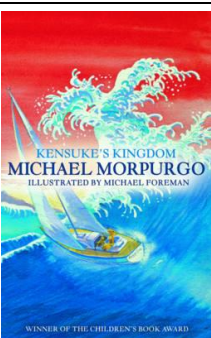


A brilliant collection of poems, this book is perfect, whether you like poetry or not! If you like poetry, you'll like this book. And if you don't like poetry you'll LOVE it! With poems on every topic from the power of books to the joys of fried chicken, this collection is a fabulous mix of Joshua Seigal's subversive humour and insight into the world of children.

Year 4: The Firework-Maker's Daughter by Phillip Pullman

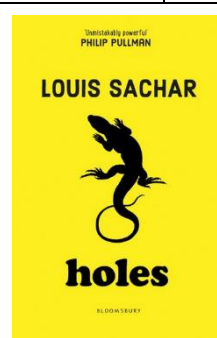


Lila doesn't just want to be a Firework-Maker's daughter, she wants to be a Firework Maker herself. But although she's learned a lot she still must get through the most difficult and dangerous part of her apprenticeship – and her father won't tell her what it is. In search of this final Firework-Making secret, Lila heads off alone on a journey. It is a journey filled with dangers and more.



Year 5: Kensuke's Kingdom by Michael Morpurgo
Washed up on an island in the Pacific, Michael struggles to survive on his own. With no food and no water, he curls up and closes his eyes ready for the end. When he wakes, there is a plate beside him of fish, of fruit, and a bowl of fresh water. He is not alone ...

Kensuke's Kingdom is a gripping adventure of survival and true friendship from the author of War Horse.



Year 6: Holes by Louis Sachar
Stanley Yelnats' family has a history of bad luck, so when a miscarriage of justice sends him to Camp Green Lake Juvenile Detention Centre (which isn't green and doesn't have a lake) he is not surprised. Every day he and the other inmates are told to dig a hole, five foot wide by five foot deep, reporting anything they find. Why? The evil warden claims that it's character building, but this is a lie. It's up to Stanley to dig up the truth.

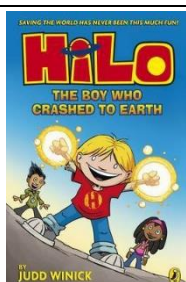
Reading for Pleasure: Considered trying a graphic novel?

Graphic novels and cartoons are not just for superhero fans! They are a brilliant thing that deserves to be celebrated. But it's important to remember that comics aren't just for one kind of reader.

Comics are a fantastic, vibrant, complex and diverse art form in their own right. They combine all the power and potential of written language with all the joys and immediacy of visual art. They are their own language, their own medium and like any medium they can be used to convey a potentially infinite range of ideas and experiences.

Comics can be hilarious or terrifying, thrilling or ridiculous, or all of those things all at once.

They can be an incredibly effective way of communicating complex information, they can deliver action scenes to make Hollywood producers weep with envy, they can break your heart or give you an absolutely killer fart joke. Truly, comics have it all. Read below for some recommendations that you may want to try.



Hilo: The Boy Who Crashed to Earth
by Judd Winick

Age: 6+

Daniel Jackson Lim, or DJ, doesn't think he's good at anything – his brothers and sisters are all busy being high achievers. The only thing he's good at is being friends with his best friend Gina. But when Gina moves away, DJ doesn't have anything that will make him special anymore. That is, until, one day, HILO crashes down to earth next to DJ's house wearing only a pair of pretty outstanding silver underpants.

Who is this alien boy and why has he crash-landed in Berke County? And who is the threatening Razorwark that haunts HILO's dreams?

Brownstone's Mythical



Collection:
Arthur and the Golden Rope
by Joe Todd-Stanton

Age: 7+

Arthur, a small boy fascinated by the magical tales of the town's wise woman, is out exploring one day when he's startled by a terrible howl. Too late, he watches as a huge wolf, Fenrir, puts out the village's great fire, meaning that the village faces being frozen solid in a week - unless a Viking god relights the fire.

Arthur decides to make the journey to the great hall and help Thor catch the wicked Fenrir. There, he is set the almost impossible task of sourcing magical elements to make a Golden Rope. In an exciting battle, it seems as if all is lost, until Arthur proves that even a small boy can be the most unlikely of heroes.



Looshkin
by Jamie Smart

Age: 7+

Mrs Johnson gets a cat in the hope of making her family a bit more normal, but little does she know that she's just brought home Looshkin, who is anything but...

Looshkin is named 'the maddest cat in the world' for good reason – this kitty is absolutely bonkers and random. Anything that could possibly go wrong all comes down to Looshkin: from bringing home a shark and insisting it's an otter to opening a portal to hell, Looshkin leaves a trail of destruction wherever he goes. Not to forget that time he turned the house into an igloo to play with a penguin who ran away from the zoo...



Electricgirl
by Jo Cotterill

Age: 8+

Part conventional novel and part comic/graphic novel, this is the first in a series about the adventures of Electricgirl, aka Holly Sparkes.

When CyberSky, a new mobile phone company, builds its mysterious headquarters in Bluehaven, Holly's mum is determined to stop it, fearing the dangerous effects of the mast on the hillside. Holly's best friend becomes obsessed with her free phone, and Holly is deeply unhappy. However she acquires astonishing (and rather dangerous) new super powers when she goes off for a walk and suffers a lightning strike near the phone mast.

	<p>Roller Girl by Victoria Jamieson</p> <p>Age 9+</p>	<p>It's really exciting to be starting at Roller Derby summer camp, but less so when Astrid finds herself doing it alone; her best friend, who has been hanging out with other more popular girls, wants to do ballet instead.</p> <p>But Astrid loves Roller Derby: she wants to be just like Rainbow Bite, the best and most awesome jammer she's ever seen. So, despite being exhausted, bruised and terrible at even being able to skate in a straight line, Astrid keeps going. Her perseverance pays off, and Astrid finds friendship and recognition as part of the Rose Bud Rollers.</p>
	<p>Alex Rider: Storm- breaker by Anthony Horowitz</p> <p>Age: 9+</p>	<p>14-year-old Alex Rider finds his life turned upside down on discovering that his late uncle wasn't a mild-mannered banker, but instead a field agent for MI6. Alex is then dragged into the world of espionage and intrigue himself.</p> <p>The graphic novel adaptation of this well-written and action-packed story of a teenage spy works really well - conserving the key storyline and characters and making the book even more accessible.</p>
	<p>Calamity Jack by Dean and Shannon Hale</p> <p>Age: 10+</p>	<p>The book relocates the classic tale of Jack and the Beanstalk to a Wild West populated by Native Americans, giants, ogres and a devilish creature called the Jabberwock and turns it into a breathless crime caper full of action and suspense in the process.</p> <p>Jack sees himself as a bit of a schemer and criminal mastermind, when in reality he's nothing more than a scammer and trickster with varying degrees of success. One day, Blunderboar, a local rich gangster, wrongs Jack and his mother and he sets out on a caper, one last job, so she never has to work again and to show Blunderboar up.</p> <p>With help with a cast of eccentric friends including Rapunzel and her deadly long plait and a fairy called Prudence, Jack sets out to out-swindle and outwit the giants and give his city back to its people, sort his mother's problems out and show her once and for all he's a good son.</p>
	<p>Nightlights by Lorena Alvarez</p> <p>Age 10+</p>	<p>Sandy loves drawing - she'd far rather draw and imagine than listen to Sister Dolores drone on about maths in class. And when she meets the otherworldly Morfie in the playground, who admires her drawings, she's happy to have found a friend. But as time goes on, Sandy realises that Morfie is not a normal girl, and she wants Sandy for her own dark purposes. Luckily, Sandy is able to outwit the strange girl using the very thing she once found so dull.</p> <p>A remarkable, haunting and beautiful graphic novel for younger readers, Nightlights is a magical fable about creativity and believing in yourself.</p>

Important Reading Dates

8 th September	International Literacy Day
13 th September	Roald Dahl Day
Early September	UKLA Nominations published
5 th October	National Poetry Day
25 th October	The Diverse Book Award Winner Announced
14 th November	School Reading Fair
Early November	Yoto Carnegie 2024 Nominations published.

