

No Shelf Control

Edition 14: June 2022

Q&A with Tolá Okogwu

The fabulous Onyeka and the Academy of the Sun had to be our Book of the Month for June! This exhilarating fantasy book is simply wonderful! I have been lucky enough to chat to Tolá Okogwu about her new book.

If you could give a superpower to a friend or family member what would you choose?

That's a fantastic question. I'd give my husband the power of superspeed so he can help me keep up with our whirlwind daughters.

Onyeka's hair is where her superpower comes from - which part of you do your superpowers come from?

I think it comes from my love of knowledge and need to understand how things work. It frequently sends me on far flung quests for obscure answers, which often inspires me and sparks my imagination.

You've written books for all ages. Which age do you enjoy writing for the most and why?

I honestly can't answer that because I love each age range for different reasons. Picture books are relatively quick, but incredibly challenging to write. I love the partnership of words and pictures. Chapter books on the other hand allow you to go into more depth and create some really interesting characters, whilst middle grade lets me go wild with worldbuilding and create some amazing action-packed moments.

Both Aziza and Onyeka are fantasy stories. Is fantasy your favourite genre to read/write?

It most definitely is. My favourite book is the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe and I grew up watching Star Trek and movies like the Never-Ending Story. I love the way fantasy books transport you to amazing new worlds and allow you to meet strange and magical characters. As a writer, I can truly go wild, and the only limit is my imagination.

What are the best books for children that you have read recently?

I would have to say I am Nefertiti by Annemarie Anang, The Forest of Secrets by Alake Pilgrim, Sadé and her Shadow Beasts by Rachel Faturoti and Mia and the Lightcasters by Janelle McCurdy.

Onyeka and the Academy of the Sun is out now from Simon and Schuster



Books



Reviews



chats





Fight Back

A.M. Dassu

Scholastic 10+

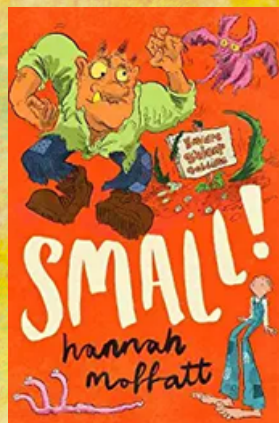
A.M. Dassu is back with another must read! This story is all about standing up and fighting for what you believe in! When racial tensions grow in her community Aaliyah decides to wear her hijab to challenge others' perceptions of her. A brilliant story about identity and bravery. Many children (and adults) will benefit from Aaliyah's story!

Small

Hannah Moffatt

Everything With Words 7+

A brilliant story about Harvey who joins Madame Bogbrush's School for Gifted Giants. There's only one problem... He's not a giant, but a human on stilts. This obviously leads to the hilarity that you can imagine. Heartwarming and funny - always a brilliant recipe for a great book!



Rex: Dinosaur in Disguise

Elys Dolan

Walker 6+

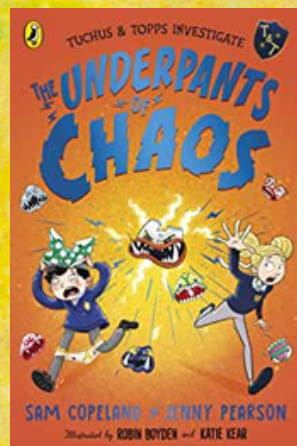
There seems to be a theme this month, books about standing out for being different. In Rex, our T-Rex friend awakens from his frozen sleep and realises that the world has changed in the 65 million years that he has been sleeping. Can he get a job and live a normal life, or will he be discovered and put in a zoo or museum?

The Underpants of Chaos

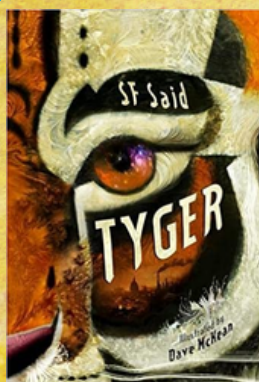
Sam Copeland, Jenny Pearson, Robin Boyden & Katie Kear

Puffin 8+

When two of the funniest authors around come together to write a book, you know that you're in for a treat. The Underpants of Chaos is written from two perspectives, Agatha (by Pearson) and Lenny (by Copeland) and as you can imagine, their accounts do not always align. This is a hilarious mystery that will be loved by readers of all ages! Puntastic giggles throughout!



One To Wait for...



Tyger - S.F. Said & Dave McKean

David Fickling Books - October 22

Fans of S.F. Said have been waiting for 8 years for a new story and it is nearly here. The early copies are out and hype is building! S.F. never fails to please as his huge fan base is well aware.



My Friend the Octopus

Lindsey Galvin

Chicken House 8+

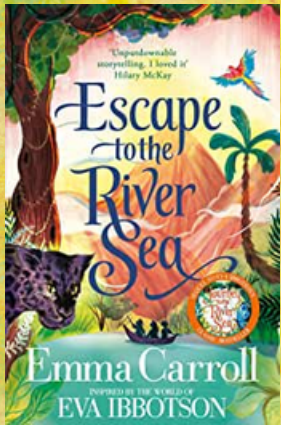
Vinnie Fyfe is whisked away from her life with her mother in London one night. With her mother fleeing to Paris, Vinnie is left in Brighton with her father's cousin. Struggling to adapt to her new life, she begins sketching the new octopus in the aquarium under her aunt's tea shop. The two quickly build a bond and Vinnie starts enjoying her new life. What will happen when her mother returns?

What Do You See When You Look At A Tree

Emma Carlisle

Big Picture Press 4+

A stunningly illustrated book which urges us to reconnect with the nature around us. What are trees? Shelter? Oxygen providers? Homes? Told through the eyes of a child, this story is great for sharing and will lead to rich discussions. I love that at the back there are mindfulness tips and information about trees.



Escape to the River Sea

Emma Carroll

Macmillan Children's 8+

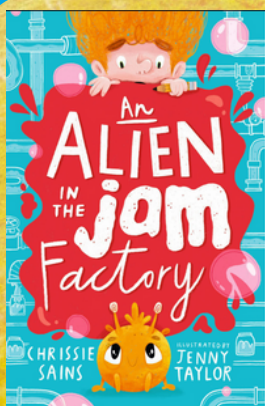
Set in the same world as Eva Ibbotson's classic 'Journey to the River Sea', Carroll reintroduces us to characters and places from the original book. This story focuses on Rosa, a kinder transport girl who is whisked away to the Amazon in search of the legendary giant sloth. Will she also find the family she so desperately yearns for?

The Consequence Girl

Alastair Chilsholm

Nosy Crow 9+

This is the third middle grade book from Chisholm and just like his previous two efforts, it is simply spectacular! His bleak world building is phenomenal. We see Cora, a young girl kept away from society, and her ability to replay events in her head and tweak them. Her hiding place is discovered and a huge game of cat and mouse follows. She must work out who she can and can't trust in order to fix the future.



One You Might Have Missed

An Alien in the Jam Factory - Chrissie Sains & Jenny Taylor
Walker - 7+ April 2021

If you were desperate for a pet and an alien came crashing through the window of your family's jam factory, would you keep it? Scooter befriends the alien and teams up to save the factory from his neighbour, Daffy Dodgy.



9 Books about... Cats

We've been told that our bias towards dogs is unacceptable... Even though we're allergic to cats here at No Shelf Control and they make us sneeze and struggle to breathe, we still love books about them...

1. There Are Cats in this Book

Viviane Schwarz

2. Varjak Paw

S.F. Said

3. Cat Kid Comic Club

Dave Pilkey

4. Toto The Ninja Cat

Dermot O'Leary & Nick East

5. Professor Astro Cat's Solar System

Dr Dominic Walliman & Ben Newman

6. Atticus Claw

Jennifer Gray

7. The Cat and the King

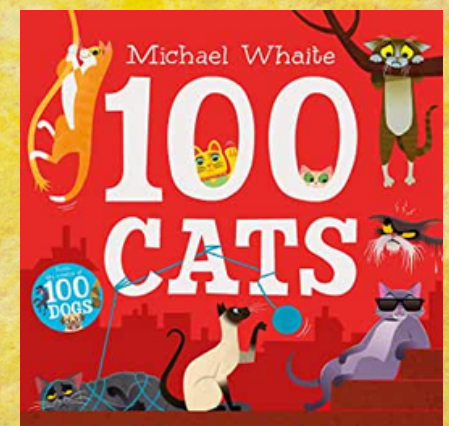
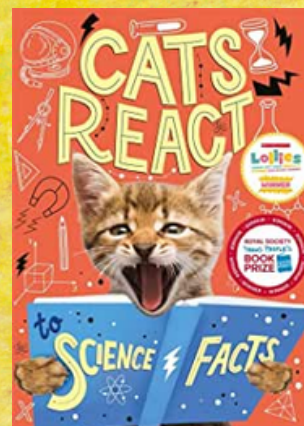
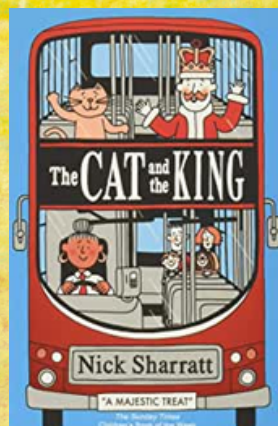
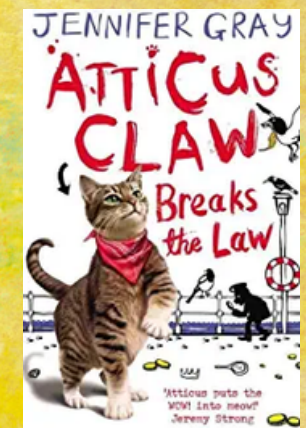
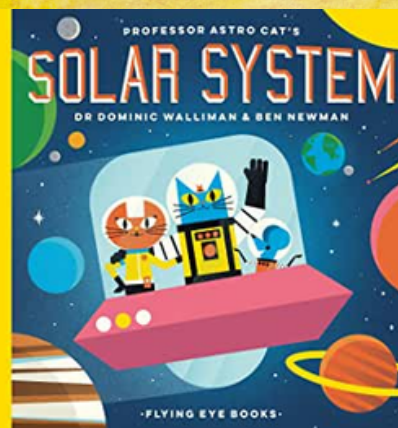
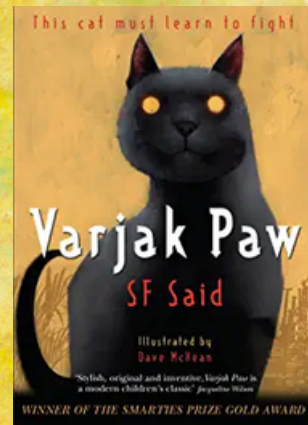
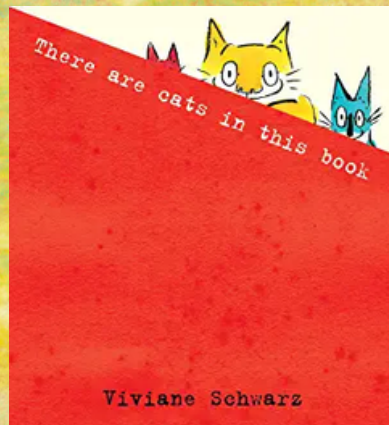
Nick Sharratt

8. Cats React to Science Facts

Izzi Howell

9. 100 Cats

Michael Whaite



If you have any questions or have a book released soon that you feel deserves a place on the newsletter: Email us - MisterBodd@outlook.com