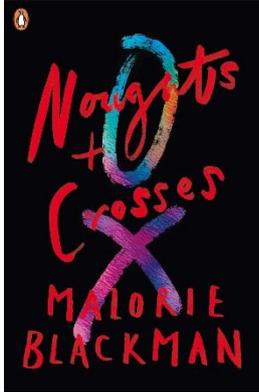


## Reading for Empathy: Ages 11-16

Books marked with a \* can be found in the library stock

### Graphic Novels, Poetry, and Novels:

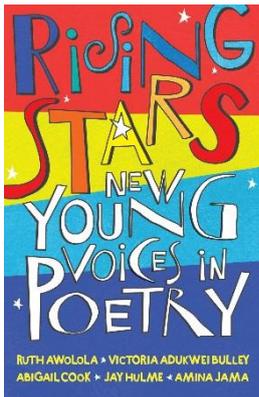
Nine superb stories, three poetry books, two graphic novels and a short story collection, all chosen to help young people develop real-life empathy. Perfect for young people aged 11–16.



Title: Noughts & Crosses

Author: Malorie Blackman

Description: Sephy is a Cross, and Callum a Nought. Their friendship is threatened by mounting racism and violence. A much-loved, gritty classic, exploring the absurdity of our tribal ways of thinking. Now being made into a BBC TV series.



Title: Rising Stars

Author: Ruth Awolola, Victoria Adukwei Bulley, Abigail Cook, Jay Hulme, Amina Jama

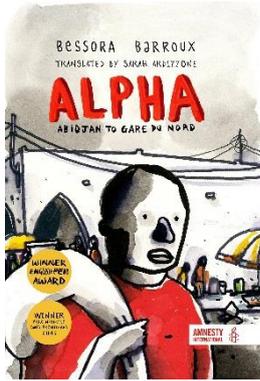
Description: In this vibrant anthology, five young poets share experiences of community, identity, family... Afro hair and parakeets. Deep yet very accessible, with different voices and perspectives illuminating how others feel. Great poems – great new writers – great themes.



Title: Booked

Author: Kwame Alexander

Description: Pacy, funny, moving verse novel, with an emotionally engaging central character. Nick's family is breaking up. To cope, he's drawing on football, friendship and poetry.



Title: Alpha

Author: Bessora & Barroux, Translator: Sarah Ardizzone

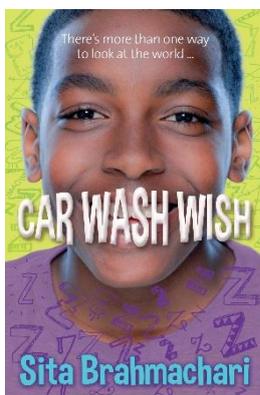
Description: Totally brilliant, troubling graphic novel about a migrant's journey. Alpha is a cabinet maker from Cote d'Ivoire and we viscerally experience his powerlessness as he faces endless horrific situations. A jolting book which triggers a determination to stand up for the displaced of this world.



Title: Everything All at Once

Author: Steven Camden aka Polar Bear

Description: Unmissable poetry collection about life at secondary school, with rhythms of rap running through. Each voice has a different perspective, with sharp insights into anxieties about fitting in, first love, hiding in the loos.



Title: Car Wash Wish\*

Author: Sita Brahmachari

Description: We're inside Hudson's head. He's a 14-year-old with Asperger's Syndrome, trying to make sense of his parents' separation and his grandfather's death. Short book packing a big punch.



Title: A Change is Gonna Come

Author: Mary Bello, Aisha Bushby, Tanya Byrne, Inua Ellams, Catherine Johnson, Patrice Lawrence, Ayisha Malik, Irfan Master, Musa Okwonga, Yasmin Rahman, Phoebe Roy, Nikesh Shukla

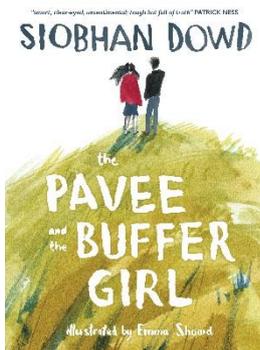
Descriptions: Inspirational short story and poetry collection from 12 Black, Asian and minority ethnic writers. Voices and topics which build understanding and insight – such as bereavement, Islamophobia, sexuality, racism and mental health.



Title: Rosie Loves Jack\*

Author: Mel Darbon

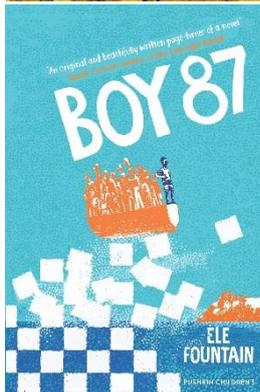
Description: On one level this is a touching story about Rosie and Jack finding love in the face of adversity. On another, it offers a rare, lifeaffirming chance to see through the eyes of a girl with Down's Syndrome, with profound insights into living with a learning disability. Feisty Rosie is an adorable, unforgettable character, who will do anything to be with the boy who makes the sun shine in her head.



Title: The Pavee and the Buffer Girl

Author: Siobhan Dowd, Illustrator: Emma Shoard

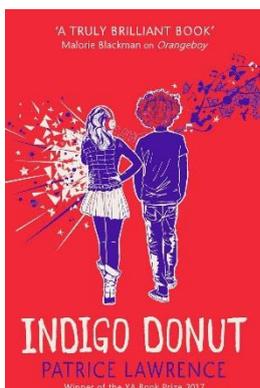
Description: Very few books offer insights into traveller communities and this does it superbly. Through an unfolding boy/girl relationship, we experience the perspectives of both the resident community and the travellers (Pavees), feeling the tensions and prejudice.



Title: Boy 87\*

Author: Ele Fountain

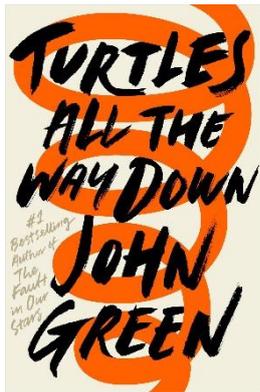
Description: Shif wants to be an engineer, but the soldiers come for him. Heart-stopping as he is imprisoned, escapes, journeys perilously... survives. Fiction can help us understand the refugee experience like nothing else.



Title: Indigo Donut

Author: Patrice Lawrence

Description: Indigo lives with a kind foster mum, but carries almost unbearable emotional pain. Gritty, powerful read – helps us understand how overwhelming emotions can lead us to reject the very people who care most.



Title: Turtles All the Way Down\*

Author: John Green

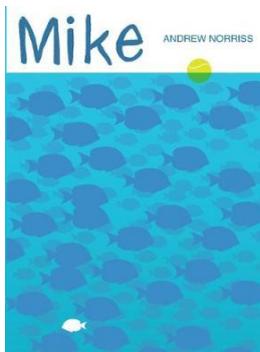
Description: Told from the perspective of an older teenager battling anxiety but not letting this define her. A fascinating mystery story is woven into Aza's journey as she deals with issues of love and friendship. Great insight into debilitating mental-health issues.



Title: No Fixed Address

Author: Susin Nielsen

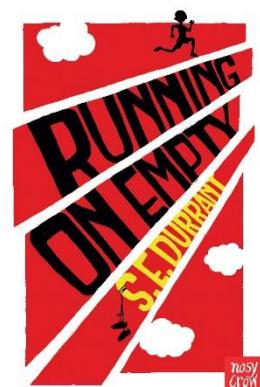
Description: Felix lives with his mum in a van, facing a daily grind of poverty and stigma. Heavy themes are handled with a beautifully light touch, and moving insights into the feelings of the 'hidden homeless'.



Title: Mike\*

Author: Andrew Norriss

Description: Mike's family is convinced he'll become a tennis star. About the emotional challenges in the quest to find out who you truly are, with an exceptionally well-developed central character – to the extent that there are two of him. Magnificent writing.



Title: Running on Empty\*

Author: S. E. Durrant

Description: Narrator AJ is 11, passionate about running but unable to afford the right trainers. He's having to grow up fast as he tries to support his parents, who have learning difficulties. We're right alongside as he finds his way forward. Emotional and life-affirming.