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Happy reading! - Miss Mullins, Miss Walker, and Miss Henry

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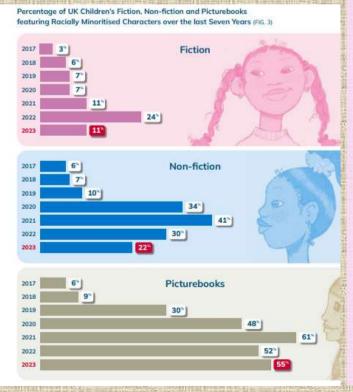
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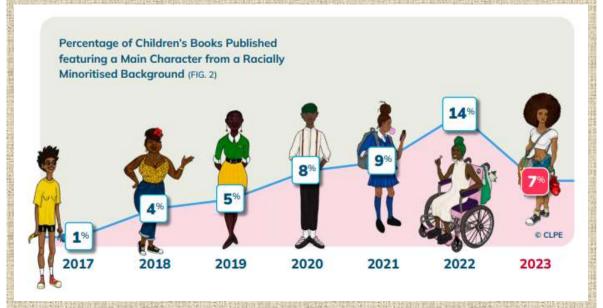
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Countdown to Christmas The Indisputable Existence of Santa Claus by Hannah Fry and Thomas Oléron **Evans** How do you apply game theory to select who should be on your Christmas shopping list? Can you predict Her Majesty's Christmas Message? Will INDISPUTABLE calculations show Santa is getting EXISTENCE. down chimneys for a whole night - or SANTA CLAUS fatter - as he tucks into a mince pie and a glass of sherry in billions of houses across Full of diagrams, sketches and graphs beautiful equations, Markov chains and midwinter with stockingfuls of nathematical marvels. And proves once and for all that maths isn't just for old men with white hair and beards who associate with elves. Maths has never

For the past seven years, CLPE (Centre for Literacy in Primary Education) has published an annual report providing 'insights into the extent and quality of ethnic representation in children's literature published in the UK'. 'These reports seek to provide data and guidance, as well as highlighting exemplary titles and offering constructive critique to support efforts to advance the drive for ensuring that high quality ethnically inclusive literature is a standard feature of bookshelves far and wide.' Each report is released the year after the data is collected, meaning that the most recent report reflects publishing data collated from 2023. Unfortunately, for the first time this year's report shows a significant drop in the presence of racially minoritised characters in



books published for children in the UK. The percentage has dropped from 30% in 2022 to 17% in 2023. There is a corresponding drop in the number of racially minoritised main characters, which has fallen by half to 7% in 2023 compared to 14% in 2022. The 7th CLPE report calls for renewed commitment from the publishing industry in improving the volume and quality of inclusive output, alongside a review of practices and investment. Farrah Serroukh Executive Director of Research and Development at CLPE said: "The ethical imperative should go without saying. However, beyond this the principle of inclusion simply makes books better. Through every annual review of the last seven years, we have had the privilege of being treated to stories, characters. writing and worlds that have elevated the literary landscape, enriched the culture and transformed reading experiences. This can only be a good thing for the publishing industry and with the appropriate investment can have positive commercial and reputational implications. We encourage the industry to take the lessons learned and remain steadfast in their commitment to reflecting realities and serving their readership."



Ready Player One #1: Ready Player One by Ernest Cline

In the year 2044, reality is an ugly place. The only time teenage Wade Watts really feels alive is when he's jacked into the virtual utopia known as the OASIS. Wade's devoted his life to studying the puzzles hidden within this world's digital confines, puzzles that are based on their creator's obsession with the pop culture of decades past and that promise massive power and fortune to whoever can unlock them. But when Wade stumbles upon the first clue, he finds himself beset by players willing to kill to take this ultimate prize. The race is on, and if Wade's going to survive, he'll have to win—and confront the real world he's always been so desperate to escape.

Ready Player One #2: Ready Player Two by Ernest Cline

Days after winning Oasis founder James Halliday's contest, Wade Watts makes a discovery that changes everything. Hidden within Halliday's vaults, waiting for his heir to find, lies a technological advancement that will once again change the world and make the Oasis a thousand times more wondrous—and addictive—than even Wade dreamed possible. With it comes a new riddle, and a new quest—a last Easter egg from Halliday, hinting at a mysterious prize. And an unexpected, impossibly powerful, and dangerous new rival awaits, one who'll kill millions to get what he wants. Wade's life and the future of the Oasis are again at stake, but this time the fate of humanity also hands in the balance.

Chess for Beginners by Michael Basman

Take your first steps towards mastering the world's greatest game - and understand tactics, improve your game and outwit your opponents! From the history of chess and the aim of the game to essential tactics and taking your skills even further in clubs, tournaments, and championships, Chess for Beginners covers it all. Before explaining techniques, this chess guide gives you the lowdown on each piece to boost your understanding of its value, power and importance. Then different chessboard graphics illustrate different scenarios, so you can visualise different moves and their potential outcomes and learn the best move to make in any given situation to get to endgame and checkmate

Foxlight by Katya Balen

Fen and Rey were found curled up small and tight in the fiery fur of the foxes at the very edge of the wildlands. Fen is loud and fierce and free. She feels a connection to foxes and a calling from the wild that she's desperate to return to. Rev is auiet and shy and an expert on nature. She reads about the birds, feeds the lands and nurtures the world around her. They are twin sisters. Different and the same. Separate and connected. They will always have each other, even if they don't have a mother and don't know their beginning. But they do want answers. Answers to who their mother is and where she might be. What their story is and how it began. So, when a fox appears late one night at the house, Fen and Rev see it as a sign - it's here to lead them to their truth, find their real family and fill the missing piece they have felt since they were born. But the wildlands are exactly wild. They are wicked and cruel and brutal and this journey will be harder and more life changing than either Fen or Rey ever imagined...

What We Need to Do Now: For a Zero Carbon Future by Chris Goodall

The UK has declared a 'climate emergency' and pledged to become carbon neutral by 2050. So how do we get there? Drawing on actions, policies and technologies already emerging around the world, Chris Goodall sets out the ways to achieve this. His proposals -Building a huge over-capacity of wind and solar energy, storing the excess as hydrogen. -Using hydrogen to fuel our trains, shipping, boilers and heavy industry, while electrifying buses, trucks and cars. -Farming - and eating - differently, encouraging plant-based alternatives to meat-paying farmers to plant and maintain woodlands. -Making fashion sustainable and aviation pay its way, funding synthetic fuels and genuine offsets. -Using technical solutions to capture CO2 from the air, and biochar to lock carbon in the soil. What We Need To Do Now is an urgent, practical and inspiring book that signals a green new deal for Britain.



Keeper of the Lost Cities #1: Keeper of the Lost Cities by Shannon Messenger

Twelve-year-old Sophie Foster has a secret. She's a Telepath—someone who hears the thoughts of everyone ground her. It's a talent she's never known how to explain. Everything changes the day she meets Fitz, a mysterious boy who appears out of nowhere and also reads minds. She discovers there's a place she does belong, and that staying with her family will place her in grave danger. In the blink of an eye, Sophie is forced to leave behind everything and start a new life in a place that is vastly different from anything she has ever known. Sophie has new rules to learn and new skills to master, and not everyone is thrilled that she has come "home." There are secrets buried deep in Sophie's memory—secrets about who she really is and why she was hidden among humans—that other people desperately want. Would even kill for.

Last Seen Online by Lauren James

When Delilah meets Sawyer Saffitz (son of Anya Saffitz, aka Hollywood royalty), she becomes hooked on a decade-old scandal. In her quest for the truth, Delilah uncovers blogposts written by the mysterious "gottiewrites" and is soon caught up in a world of greed, fandom conspiracy theories ... and murder. And the deeper Delilah digs, the more dangerous it becomes – because someone is willing to kill to hide the truth.



Around the World in 80 Games: A Mathematician Unlocks the Secrets of the Greatest Games by Marcus du Sautoy

Where should you move first in Connect 4? Which property is best in Monopoly? How can pi help you win Rock Paper Scissors? Crossing oceans, continents and millennia, award-winning mathematician Marcus du Sautoy explores how maths and games have always been deeply intertwined. As well as being integral to human psychology and culture throughout the ages, games provided the first opportunities for deep mathematical insight into the world. This grand adventure teaches us how to strategise, play better and win more often.

Some Like it Cold by Elle McNicoll

Jasper Montgomery is heading home for the holidays and keeping secrets. Determined to return to her small town home one last time before leaving for good, Jasper doesn't bank on accidentally ruining her sister's engagement - or bumping into her teen adversary, budding filmmaker Arthur Lancaster. Jasper came back to Lake Pristine for one to say goodbye. But during the holidays, old relationships come to light, small-town tensions rise, and a certain brooding film buff starts to look like a very big reason to stay. Can Jasper decide what she wants from Arthur, and from Lake Pristine, before she leaves them both forever?

NOW

Given: Volume 4 by Natsuki Kizu As the band focuses on creating new songs and preparing for a music

festival tryout, Haruki grows more and more intimidated by the talents of younger members Mafuyu and Uenoyama. Worried that he's holding them back, he accepts his exgirlfriend's request to play in her band. Meanwhile, Akihiko realizes that Haruki has fallen in love with him, setting the stage for a major change in their relationship.

Welcome to Night Vale by Joseph Fink

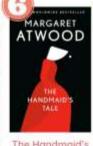
Welcome to Night Vale... a friendly desert community where the sun is hot, the moon is beautiful, and mysterious lights pass overhead while its citizens pretend to sleep. It's a town like your town, with a city hall, a bowling alley, a diner, and a radio station reporting all the news that's allowed to be heard. It might be more like your town than you'd like to admit. In this ordinary town where ghosts, aliens and government conspiracies are parts of everyday life, the lives of two women, with two mysteries, are about to



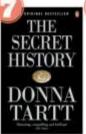


Sea by Molly

Knox Ostertag



Atwood





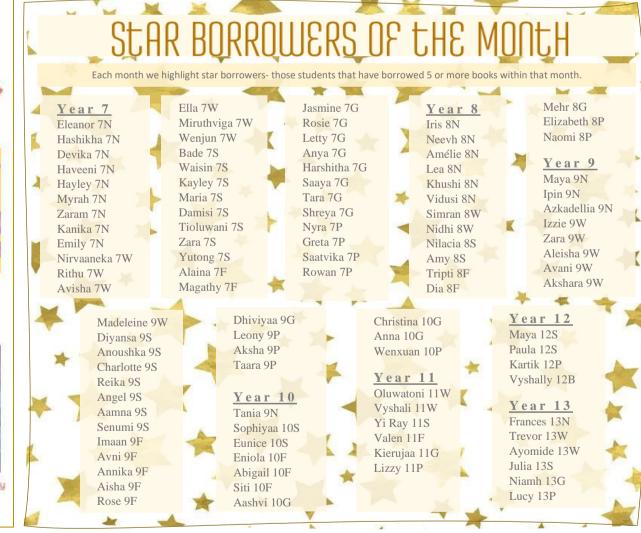
The Secret Tale by Margaret History by Donna Holly Jackson Tartt

Oxford Dictionary Announces Word of the Year

'Brain rot' has been named Oxford University Press' Word of the Year for 2024, reflecting concerns about the negative impact of excessive online content, specifically on social media. The term refers to the perceived mental deterioration caused by consuming insignificant or unchallenging material. It gained attention in 2024 and was chosen after a public vote with over 37,000 participants. The term's first use dates back to 1854, in Henry David Thoreau's Walden. Other shortlisted words (and phrases) this year include 'demure,' 'dynamic pricing,' 'lore,' 'romantasy,' and 'slop.' Oxford's selection continues its tradition of highlighting words reflecting societal trends, following previous winners like 'rizz,' 'goblin mode,' and 'vax'. Oxford Languages president Caspar Grathwol said of the term: "Brain rot speaks to one of the perceived dangers of virtual life, and how we are using our free time. It feels like a rightful next chapter in the cultural conversation about humanity and technology. It's not surprising that so many voters embraced the term, endorsing it as our choice this year... I also find it fascinating that the word brain rot has been adopted by gen Z and gen Alpha, those communities largely responsible for the use and creation of the digital content the term refers to." Last month, Cambridge Dictionary announced their own word of the year which is 'manifest', a 'wellness trend to imagine achieving a goal in the hope it will make it more likely to happen.' Original Guardian article by Harry Taylor here.



The Horologicon by Mark Forsyth Mark Forsyth presents a delightfully eccentric day in the life of unusual,



The Popularity Boom of Japanese Fiction

Japanese fiction has seen a remarkable surge in popularity in the UK recently, making up 43% of the top 40 translated titles in 2024. This boom is attributed to the success of authors like Savaka Murata, with Murata's Convenience Store Woman playing a pivotal role in the trend, the publication of which was described by associate publishing director Jason Arthur as "a watershed moment". Modern Japanese fiction often explores themes of alienation, surrealism, and societal nonconformity, which resonates in our changing social climate. The rise of 'comfort' fiction, a staple of Japanese literature, also appeals to a broad audience. However, this trend has led to a focus on specific genres, with crime fiction and women's literary fiction dominating. while other popular genres in Japan such as sci-fi and historical fiction remain underrepresented. Ultimately, it appears that the appeal of Japanese literature lies in its urban settings, blurred boundaries, and open-ended narratives that experiment with how far we can take literature in a dreamlike or unusual setting. Alison Fincher, who runs the Read Japanese Literature website and podcast, summed up this sentiment saying of Convenience Store Woman: "we're all a little bit weird, and human society is weird, and this is all of us in this story." Original Guardian article by John Self here.

Convenience Store Woman by Sayaka Murata

Keiko has never fit in, neither in her family, nor in school, but when at the age of eighteen she begins working at the Hiiromachi branch of "Smile Mart," she finds peace and purpose in her life. In the store, unlike anywhere else, she understands the rules of social interaction—many are laid out line by line in the store's manual—and she does her best to copy the dress, mannerisms, and speech of her colleagues, playing the part of a "normal" person excellently, more, or less. Keiko is very happy, but the people close to her, from her family to her coworkers, increasingly pressure her to find a husband, and to start a proper career, prompting her to take desperate action.





Days at the Morisaki Bookshop by Satoshi Yagisawa

Hidden in Jimbocho, Tokyo, is a booklover's paradise. On a quiet corner in an old wooden building lies a shop filled with hundreds of second-hand books. Twenty-five-year-old Takako has never liked reading, although the Morisaki bookshop has been in her family for three generations. It is the pride and joy of her uncle Satoru, who has devoted his life to the bookshop since his wife Momoko left him five years earlier. The Morisaki bookshop has something to teach them both about life, love, and the healing power of books.