



National Science and Engineering Week Booklist

This fiction list of science-related titles for children and teenagers has been compiled by the Children's Library Service of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. It embraces titles which include some elements of the sciences within the fictional framework, and is designed for children and young adults up to 16 years of age.

The booklist is in no respect intended to be exhaustive or all-inclusive. It is rather a selection of some 'classics' and well-established titles, together with some more unusual and less familiar books. The included titles provide a wide range of reading, and are designed to provide something for every taste, to keep youngsters reading, and to tempt children and teens to try new authors and new fiction titles, whilst enjoying a scientific content and milieu. All age indications are for guidance only. In scope, included titles embrace physics, chemistry, biology, physical geography, geology, computer science, the mathematical sciences, robotics, the environmental sciences, and all manner of gadgets and inventions.

Titles may be easily borrowed from your local public library, or purchased from a good book shop.

Any enquiries with regard to this list may be addressed to Tower Hamlets Children's Library Service at childrenslibrary@towerhamlets.gov.uk or tel. 020-7247-9510.

Nursery	2
Nursery/KS1/KS2	4
KS 1	5
KS 1/2	5
KS 2	7
KS 3	18
KS 3/4	19
KS 4	21

Nursery

DODDS, Dayle Ann

THE SHAPE OF THINGS

Walker Books; £4.99; 0744543681

A bright and vibrant book that introduces basic shapes – square, circle, rectangle, oval, diamond – to pre-school children, and showing some of the familiar forms they take in the world around us.

HUGHES, Shirley

ALL SHAPES AND SIZES

Walker Books; £4.99; 0744567408

One of 'the nursery collection' series of titles by this extremely popular children's author, introducing very basic maths and science concepts – colours, shapes and sizes, sounds, numbers – to pre-school children, in an enchanting picture book featuring a lively toddler and her engaging baby brother.

Nursery/KS1

BROWNLOW, Mike

LITTLE ROBOT RABBIT

Ragged Bears; £6.99; 1857142167

Brownlow's second 'Little Robot' title, written in catchy rhyming couplets. Youngsters will love helping Tiny Robot searching for little robot rabbit 'lost' amongst the clever and colourful illustrations. A lift-the-flap format heightens the fascination of the search.

BROWNLOW, Mike

LITTLE ROBOTS

Ragged Bears; £4.99; 1857142578

A highly original picture book with a resonant, rhythmical text, and vivid illustrations. This exciting book is crammed full with robots in all shapes and sizes, each adorned with crazy gadgets and colourful patterns that will fascinate very young children.

DODDS, Dayle Ann

THE GREAT DIVIDE – A MATHEMATICAL MARATHON

Walker Books; £9.99; 0744556244

A marathon race, across land, river and sky, with the starting field of eighty racers halved as they come upon each geographical divide. Bright, bold illustrations with lots of detail and a vibrant rhyming text combine to make this an entertaining book for youngsters, with lots of numbers and counting, but also of simple geographical interest.

GLICKSMAN, Caroline

ERIC AND THE RED PLANET

Bodley Head; £10.99; 0370328256

Eric has won a trip to tour the space base, but his curiosity about numbers and mechanisms leads to him accidentally lifting off in a rocket headed for Mars. Can Eric's love of numbers help him to work out a way to get safely back to Earth? A lively and vibrantly illustrated adventure story that includes lots of visual puzzles and things to count for young children.

GLICKSMAN, Caroline

ERIC THE RED

Red Fox; £4.99; 0099439239

Eric is a very clever bear when it comes to numbers, and he has an important job at the Big Bear Bank. However, when robbers try to break into the bank safe one day, even Eric can do with some help on the numbers front! A charming and brightly illustrated picture book story that highlights the value and importance of maths for young children.

JAMES, Simon

THE WILD WOODS

Walker Books; £4.99; 0744598044

As Grandad and Jess walk together in the woods, a squirrel appears. Jess wants to take the squirrel home for a pet, but when grandad says 'no', and she follows the squirrel deeper into the woods, she discovers more natural wonders, and comes to realise that having respect for nature is important, and that the squirrel is indeed in its proper and natural home- the wild woods.

LASKY, Kathryn

THE SCIENCE PRIZE BUNNIES

Walker Books; £4.99; 0744578906

Substituting a new project on teeth for the School Science Fair at the last minute when their bean plants die, Clyde and his science partner, Rosemary, overcome their worries and problems to triumph in the end.

SHARRATT, Nick

ROCKET COUNTDOWN!

Walker Books; £5.99; 0744578027

A fun introduction to space travel in a novel counting book for very young children. The countdown to takeoff from ten to one introduces a different moving part mechanism for children to operate for each number, with vivid Sharratt illustrations reinforcing the learning and enjoyment.

THOMAS, Valerie

WINNIE'S NEW COMPUTER

O. U. P. ; £4.99; 0192725858

Winnie decides to load all of her spells onto her new computer, Pumpkin X111. However, when she tries out her new cyber spells, things don't go exactly according to plan, and Winnie, inadvertently, sets in motion a hilarious chain of events. Korky Paul's magical illustrations are rich in detail and humour, with gadgets galore, and strange creatures 'concealed' in every corner and crevice.

WHYBROW, Ian

HARRY AND THE ROBOTS

Puffin; £4.99; 0140569820

When Harry's toy robot set has to be sent to hospital to be fixed, Harry and Nan decide to make their own robot to play with. When Nan falls ill and has to go to hospital herself, Harry is determined to finish building the robot on his own – he has just the plan to make Nan get better!

Nursery/KS1/KS2

BAKER, Jeannie

BELONGING

Walker Books; £10.99; 0744592275

This stylish picture book, with its powerful visual images at stages in a girl's life from infancy to motherhood, embraces the subject of urban regeneration. As a town community gradually comes to accept that its resources and space are finite and need to be shared, the pictures evolve from scenes of dire and desolate urban decay to ones with well tended and respected streets, gardens and buildings.

BAKER, Jeannie

THE HIDDEN FOREST

Walker Books; £5.99; 0744578760

A visually striking picture book with a central ecological theme, and featuring the author's luxuriant collage images. Ben, a young boy who holds little regard for sea-life, is taken underwater by his snorkelling friend Sophie when his fish trap becomes tangled up. Under the surface Ben is amazed to discover a beautiful and enchanted hidden forest of golden kelp with its rich variety of fish and sea-life, stunningly portrayed in the book's wonderful colour illustrations.

BAKER, Jeannie

WHERE THE FOREST MEETS THE SEA

Walker Books; £4.99; 0744513057

A beautifully and cleverly illustrated picture book with the preservation of natural areas and environmental concerns as its theme. A boy and his father hike into a tropical rainforest in Australia, admiring the vegetation and wildlife, and imagining how it was centuries ago. Most significantly, both wonder if they return for another visit in the future, whether the forest will look the same, or whether the natural environment will have been destroyed and over-run by building and modern development.

BAKER, Jeannie

WINDOW

Red Fox; £4.99; 0099182114

A thought-provoking, wordless picture book, with beautiful collage illustrations that convey a powerful environmental message. A series of views from the same window over a period of 24 years of a boy's life from birth starkly depict ugly urban life relentlessly crowding out a wonderful wilderness vista in one Australian location.

There are additionally many other titles embracing basic numbers and counting available. Please enquire at your local library for advice and suggestions.

KS 1

BRUNHOFF, Laurent De BABAR AND THE PROFESSOR

Magnet Books; £2.50; 0416118224

When Professor Grifaton, a butterfly collector, and his two children visit King Babar and Queen Celeste, the Professor discovers an underground river running into the Celesteville lake as a result of a child falling down a tunnel from a cave. An excursion steamer to visit the caves – and to view the magnificent stalagmites – is quickly arranged in this charming picture book story.

CHAMBERS, Roland THE ROOFTOP ROCKET PARTY

Andersen Press; £5.99; 1842703781

A warm and lively story with little Finn, who is fascinated by space travel, determined to fly to the moon to meet the man-in-the-moon. If Dr. Gass, the famous rocket scientist, obsessed with Mathematical Certainty and other theories, will not oblige, then the magical Night Thing will!

KS 1/2

CHILD, Lauren WHAT PLANET ARE YOU FROM, CLARICE BEAN?

Orchard; £4.99; 1841211044

In this picture book title, with its distinctively exuberant Lauren Child artwork and story style, Clarice Bean decides to do her bit to save the environment. Clarice and her classmates are busy with a nature project when brother, Kurt, brings the awful news that an old tree in their street is under threat of being chopped down. In an instant Clarice becomes an eco-warrior, and also has a subject for her environment project!

COLE, Joanna THE MAGIC SCHOOL BUS INSIDE A BEEHIVE

Hippo; £7.99; 0590543024

Miss Frizzle's class is learning about insects, when she accidentally knocks a lever on the magic school bus, turning the bus into a beehive, and the children into honey bees. The book uses a combination of fact and fantasy to explore a community of honey bees. One of a series of fascinating and informative 'Magic School Bus' titles covering different aspects of science and nature.

CUNLIFFE, John POSTMAN PAT AND THE ROBOT

Hodder; £3.99; 0340709153

When Ted comes to the aid of an exhausted Postman Pat and builds a robot to help deliver mountains of mail, chaos quickly ensues across Greendale. Ted's inventions rarely work to plan, and this robot is no exception.

HENDERSON, Kathy

AND THE GOOD BROWN EARTH

Walker Books; £10.99; 0744581419

All the fun and satisfaction of gardening 'science' as variously practised by Nan and Charlie on adjacent patches over the course of a year. A lively and colourful picture book with some keen environmental insights.

JARMAN, Julia

GEORGIE AND THE COMPUTER BUGS

Young Lions; £3.99; 0006750052

In this entertaining and fun-filled easy reader story Georgie Bell, the computer whiz kid, cures a computer dragon and his children of a very nasty bug.

JARMAN, Julia

GEORGIE AND THE PLANET RAIDER

Young Lions; £3.99; 0006744958

In this exciting, drama-filled story Georgie has to pit her wits and computer skills against a new and deadly enemy. Crucially, she must rescue her sister from the clutches of evil Planet Raider.

MURPHY, Mary

FOLEY AND JEM

Little Tiger Press; £9.99; 1854309668

Foley is obsessed by the planets and space travel, and decides to build a space rocket to travel to Mars, and to send his best friend, his loyal dog Jem, up on this important mission. This is a colourful and thought-provoking picture book space story which also embraces the themes of friendship, loss, and taking people for granted.

SMITH, Emily

THE SHRIMP

Young Corgi; £3.99; 0552547352

A shy boy gains confidence in his own abilities when his teacher sets the class a wildlife project, and, with his interest in shells, he manages to amass an out-standing collection. An endearing story set in Cornwall.

TZANNES, Robin

PROFESSOR PUFFENDORF'S SECRET POTIONS

O. U. P; £4.99; 0192722611

Enzo, the eccentric professor's greedy assistant, 'steals' his boss's top secret potions, and tests them on the professor's pet guinea-pig, with disastrous results! An entertaining picture book story, with distinctive Korky Paul illustrations which display lots of amazing machines and other scientific wonders.

WARD, Helen

THE TIN FOREST

Templar Publishing; £4.99; 1840111089

The charming story of an old man living alone in a desolate wasteland of other people's rubbish, and his dream of transforming it into a place of beauty. The old man starts to recycle some of the waste materials to make steel trees and tin flowers and creatures. Then the 'Tin Forest' is visited by more and more real birds, and is soon transformed into a living, green forest, a process vividly portrayed in colour and beauty by the book's stunning illustrations.

KS 2

AHMED, Anne

IRON TOWN BOY

Pont Books; £4.99; 1843233371

This novel vividly depicts some of the dramatic social and economic changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution, as seen through the eyes of Gwilym, a young Welsh boy, recently orphaned, who leaves his rural home for the first time to find work in the growing Iron Town. Many of the scientific inventions of the age are given prominent mention in the course of the story.

BARLOW, Steve

VERNON BRIGHT AND THE END OF THE WORLD

Puffin; £3.99; 0141305878

In this highly entertaining fantasy adventure, the science-mad schoolboy Vernon Bright tackles gravity. Vernon invents an anti-gravity machine in response to being challenged to a weight-lifting contest by his PE teacher. Unfortunately, whilst it is switched on, Vernon's new machine is confiscated and locked in the gym, with catastrophic results. The whole district is deluged with antigravitons, and Vernon's dad has to come to the rescue before the Earth is destroyed and everything is sucked into outer space.

BARLOW, Steve

VERNON BRIGHT AND THE FASTER THAN LIGHT SHOW

Puffin; £3.99; 014130586X

The third 'Vernon Bright' title focuses on the science of light. Vernon is banned from doing the lighting for the school play, but is allowed to video it. However, when he starts meddling with the latest hi-tech video recorder, Vernon finds that he can video the future – as well as the past with disastrous results for all around him, and the school play!

BARLOW, Steve

VERNON BRIGHT AND THE MAGNETIC BANANA

Puffin; £3.99; 0141305843

Science-mad Vernon Bright is experimenting with magnetism when he manages to turn himself into a magnet. With numerous mad adventures along the way, it is up to his long-suffering friend – who hates science – John Watt, to rescue him from the striking results of his scientific explorations.

BARNES, Emma

JESSICA HAGGERTHWAITE, MEDIA STAR

Bloomsbury; £4.99; 0747559112

The second magical and extremely funny novel featuring witch's daughter, Jessica Haggerthwaite. Jessica has set her heart on becoming a TV star as presenter of her own science show, and going on to win the Nobel Prize for Science. When Xandra, a rival witch to her mother appears, Jessica sees a way to both get rid of Xandra, and to achieve her dream.

BLACKMAN, Malorie

DANGEROUS REALITY

Corgi; £4.99; 0552551678

Dominic's mum invents the brilliant Virtual Interactive Mobile System (VIMS), but the technological miracle is suddenly transformed into something more sinister when it goes berserk and attacks her. An adventure unfolds as Dominic races to discover what is happening before the damage escalates. An enjoyable and fast-paced thriller.

BLACKMAN, Malorie

HACKER

Corgi; £4.99; 0552551643

Computer-wiz Vicky needs to break into a bank's computer files when her dad, who works at the bank, is accused of stealing over a million pounds from his employer. Can Vicky uncover and find the real thief before they find her in this gripping thriller?

BLACKMAN, Malorie

OPERATION GADGETMAN!

Corgi; £4.99; 0440863074

Beans calls her dad 'Gadgetman' on account of all the wonderful and weird gadgets he makes. When, however, he accidentally invents a device that can be used to steal millions of pounds, Gadgetman is promptly kidnapped. With the help of her Gadgetman spy kit, Beans sets out to find and rescue her dad in this enjoyable adventure story.

BOWKETT, Steve

THE PLANET MACHINE

A & C Black; £7.99; 071365399X

When the space police detect a movement on their monitors, they realise it is a machine. This machine, though, is as large as a planet, and what are its intentions towards them? An enjoyable and fast-paced science fiction story related in comic strip format.

BYARS, Betsy

THE COMPUTER NUT

Red Fox; £3.99; 0099425912

Kate's art teacher asks the class to do a self-portrait for homework, and Kate decides to do hers – 'Self-Portrait of a Computer Nut' – on her father's computer. Then the real fun begins as a message appears on the screen, claiming to be from BB-9, an alien from outer space – and he's coming to earth soon! A humorous roller-coaster of a story, with some great characters.

CARPENTER, Humphrey MR. MAJEIKA ON THE INTERNET

Puffin; £3.99; 0141310103

Whilst exploring the new computer given to Class Three, Mr. Majeika manages, in typical fashion, to get the whole class trapped in the school website. Their 'journey' brings them into contact with a host of bizarre characters, but how will they get out of this weird predicament?

CURTIS, Philip MR. BROWSER AND THE COMET CRISIS

Andersen Press; £4.95; 0862640040

One of a series of highly entertaining 'Mr. Browser' science fiction titles, this very funny and fast moving story finds hard-pressed teacher Mr. Browser and the children of class 8 at Chivy Chase School in the grip of a real space crisis – but not too great for them to overcome in the end!

DEARY, Terry THE NUCLEAR WINTER MAN

Kingfisher Books; £3.99; 0753410230

When a popular and outspoken Russian scientist disappears at an international conference, it seems that his theories about nuclear winter might be too close to top-secret reality for the comfort of some powerful organizations and governments. A riveting story based on fact.

ELBOZ, Stephen THE TOWER AT MOONVILLE

O.U.P. ; £5.99; 0192718061

Two orphans, Nathan and Sam, swap places in this fast-paced fantasy set in Victorian England. Sam runs off with a circus, whilst Nathan finds himself at Moonville, a strange, chaotic school, where he befriends an odd scientist in the tower, who enlists his help in contacting life from outer space. The real drama begins when Nathan's evil Uncle Jago catches up with him, and a fantastic escape ensues.

FOX, Helen EAGER

Hodder; £5.99; 0340875836

A fast-paced futuristic 'conspiracy theory' adventure mystery. Set in the late 21st century, the Bell family's new experimental robot, Eager, helps the family uncover the secret and sinister inequalities of their society where a global company, Lifecorp, regulates everything, robots do most of society's work, and all Earth's resources are rationed.

GATES, Susan DR. FELL'S CABINET OF SMELLS

Puffin; £4.99; 0141315156

Juniper and Kit come across an E-nose gadget – the very latest in smell technology – and find that, when switched on, the machine duplicates actual people, including a gladiator, a pig woman and an evil doctor, whose essences were in an old cabinet of smells, which once belonged to Dr. Fell, back in the Elizabethan age. An entertaining adventure story.

GLOVER, Sandra

e-(t) MAIL

Andersen Press; £3.99; 1842700952

When nine-year old Jason tries to do his homework project about the solar system on his computer, strange e-mails coming from an alien herald the start of a scary episode in which the alien hacks into his computer and overwrites his science project. A humorous and lively read.

HENDRY, Diana

HARVEY ANGELL

Red Fox; £4.99; 0099451042

When he moves into Aunt Agatha's boarding house, full of unhappy, elderly lodgers, Harvey Angell certainly stands out as different – and mysterious! He claims he is an electrician, and that his job is to research energy fields. Henry, who lives with his dull aunt, believes that Harvey, with all his unusual gadgets, is much more than an electrician, and more a magician, when the sad lives of people around him start to change for the better, and Henry is determined to find out just who Harvey Angell is in this entertaining story that is full of atmosphere and invention.

HENDRY, Diana

HARVEY ANGELL AND THE GHOST CHILD

Red Fox; £4.99; 0099451034

When Henry finds that their rented holiday home in Fife is haunted he calls in Harvey Angell. With the aid of his Connecting Kit of curious gadgets and his 'electric' current, Harvey is able to piece together from the townspeople the tragic tale of the past and the unhappy ghost. A spooky tale awash with eccentric characters and mystery, and related with humour and pace.

HENDRY, Diana

HARVEY ANGELL BEATS TIME

Red Fox; £4.99; 0099451050

When, after a gigantic thunderstorm, Henry finds a strange baby child from the 23rd century in Aunt Agatha's hollyhocks, complete with two blinking antennae and mysterious alien visitors, it is high time to call for the help of Harvey Angell! Harvey is required to journey into the future to return the child to her mother, but even for him it proves to be a spectacularly hazardous journey.

HUNTER, Norman

THE INCREDIBLE ADVENTURES OF PROFESSOR BRANESTAWM

Puffin; £4.99; 0140367764

The highly entertaining adventures of absentminded and eccentric inventor Professor Branestawm, with his wonderfully bizarre inventions and mind-boggling experiments combining to create a hilarious merry-go-round of spectacular scrapes and astounding near disasters in this classic story. One of a series of 'Professor Branestawm' titles.

JARMAN, Julia

THE TIME-TRAVELLING CAT AND THE TUDOR TREASURE

Collins; £3.99; 0007119658

One of the author's 'Time-travelling Cat' series of titles, this is an exciting time-slip fantasy adventure in which Tophy and his cat Ka travel to Tudor times, and find themselves in the household of Dr. Dee, scientist, geographer, inventor, astrologer, and trusted advisor to Queen Elizabeth.

LISLE, Rebecca

DOGS DON'T DO DISHES

Andersen Press; £4.99; 1842703145

When junior inventor Tom builds Metal-Mutt, a robot dog, he falls foul of the Institute of Inventions, which decrees that the dog robot be destroyed. Tom decides to advertise Metal-Mutt in a newsagent's window to save him. Metal-Mutt ends up with the bone-idle Crumm family who expect their robot to do everything for no love or recognition in return. Metal-Mutt, however, craves some real affection, and when he manages to save someone from drowning, he finally finds happiness.

MERCURIO, Jed

THE PENGUIN EXPEDITION

Walker Books; £5.99; 0744590922

A comical adventure story about penguins and global warming, but also carrying a serious environmental message. In Penguinville in Antarctica a food processing plant is destroying the local environmental balance, and it is left to the youngsters, with their foresight, sense of idealism and adventurous spirit, to save the day.

NOSTLINGER,

CONRAD, THE FACTORY-MADE BOY

Andersen Press; £3.99; 0862649366

When Mrs. Bartolotti receives a factory-made boy – a robot – in the post with a label marked 'Needs affection', she does just that, and sets out to humanise him to make him even happier. An entertaining and imaginative role reversal story that deals obliquely with genetic engineering and morals, and is rich in ideas and inventive detail, and highly amusing.

NOSTLINGER,

MR. BAT'S GREAT INVENTION

Andersen Press; £4.95; 0905478290

An absorbing roller-coaster of an adventure, with eccentric Mr. Bat and the entertaining escapades invoked by his amazing 'Great Invention', and filled with great characters, high fun, and humour.

ORR, Wendy

NIM'S ISLAND

Allen & Unwin; £4.99; 1864488433

A modern Treasure Island fantasy adventure story in which a young girl, Nim, lives with her scientist father on a small tropical island, helping him with his scientific research and learning to live with both the beauty and the wild force of nature. At the end Nim becomes storm girl the hero.

PILKEY, Dav

RICKY RICOTTA'S MIGHTY ROBOT

Young Hippo; £3.99; 0439993539

Evil Dr. Stinky has created a giant flying robot to destroy the city of Squeakyville. However, the robot doesn't want to harm the mice who live there and tries to escape from his creator. He can't do it on his own though. Then he meets mouse Ricky Ricotta, and they team up to save the city.

PILKEY, Dave RICKY RICOTTA'S MIGHTY ROBOT vs THE MUTANT MOSQUITOES FROM MERCURY

Young Hippo; £3.99; 0439993547

When a plague of mutated mosquitoes from Mercury home in to try and take over the Earth, new best friends Ricky Ricotta and the giant flying robot pool their resources and talents to eliminate this new threat. One in a series of fast-paced and entertaining 'Ricky Ricotta's Mighty Robot' science fiction titles for young readers.

SCHLEE, Ann THE VANDAL

Magnet Books; £3.99; 0416286402

A chilling novel set in a future Big Brother society with a pervasive system of conditioning and memory repression. Paul rebels against the system where citizens have to take a daily memory erasing drink, and he is assigned to care for a sick woman as a punishment. Later, the woman, her daughter, Sharon, and Paul are sent into exile to a prison colony, from which Sharon and Paul eventually escape into the uncontrolled unknown.

SMITH, Emily ROBOMUM

Young Corgi; £3.99; 0552547360

James' mum is an ace computer scientist, who designs computers to launch space missions. However, she is not so good at being a housewife and looking after James, so she builds a Robomum to do the job instead. Robomum is great fun, but will the machine prove an adequate replacement for mum in all situations?

STANNARD, Russell BLACK HOLES AND UNCLE ALBERT

Faber & Faber; £4.99; 0571144535

A thoroughly enjoyable fantasy story woven around the mysteries of time and space, as embraced by Einstein's General Theory of Relativity. Entering the world of the 'Thought Bubble' this entertaining adventure explores the exploring universe, blackholes, speeded-up time and other mysteries of the universe.

STANNARD, Russell DR. DYER'S ACADEMY

Faber and Faber; £4.99; 0571214045

Jamie finds that his new school's science teacher appears to know little about his subject. Then headmaster Dr. Dyer reveals that the Academy's secret purpose is to train selected pupils to infiltrate industry and the media to delay scientific progress to prevent harm to both humans and the environment. However, is this Dr. Dyer's real motive? An exciting story that raises fundamental questions about the use and misuse of science.

STANNARD, Russell THE TIME AND SPACE OF UNCLE ALBERT

Faber& Faber; £4.99; 0571142826

Physicist Stannard's first science fiction fantasy title exploring important scientific theories within an exciting fictional framework. This story demystifies the theory of relativity and, via the 'Thought Bubble' and spaceship journeys, shows that all things are relative, with only the speed of light being constant.

STANNARD, Russell

UNCLE ALBERT AND THE QUANTUM QUEST

Faber and Faber; £4.99; 0571173446

In this third 'Uncle Albert' title, quantum physics is the focus of a fun and highly entertaining magical story for children. Wanting to know what goes on inside an atom, Uncle Albert transports Gedanken via the Thought Bubble into a quantum wonderland, filled with some vivid and endearing characters. An enjoyable adventure exploring the physics of the Very Small.

STRONG, Jeremy

I'M TELLING YOU THEY'RE ALIENS

Puffin; £3.99; 0141306858

Rob worries about literally everything, even his new neighbours, the Vorks, across the road, whom he is convinced are aliens. How can he save the world? The only person he can think of who can help is Marsha, who may be weird, but who is interested in astronomy.

SWINDELLS, Robert

TIMESNATCH

Corgi; £4.99; 0440864666

In this gripping thriller, two children, Kizzy and Frazer, plan to use a time machine that their physicist mother has invented to transport live specimens of extinct plants and animals from the past to the present. Things go disastrously wrong though, and the two children find themselves caught up in a tense adventure to save the present, and to keep the machine safe. This absorbing novel deals perceptively with the important issues of the proper and moral use of scientific inventions, extinction and the environment.

THOMPSON, Colin

THE LAST ALCHEMIST

Red Fox; £4.99; 0099408996

Spinifex, the King's alchemist, is tirelessly trying to create a machine that will produce an endless supply of gold. His assistant tries to convince him that there are more precious and beautiful things in life than gold, but greedy Spinifex will not listen. A beautifully illustrated picture book story written around machines and the quasi-science of alchemy for children.

WOOLFE, Angela

AVRIL CRUMP...AND HER AMAZING CLONES

Egmont Books; £4.99; 1405207477

A wacky, riotous story, with eccentric scientist Avril Crump creating a group of clones in a laboratory accident. Awash with wonderful characters, humour and fun, this book will certainly get youngsters thinking about the wonder and possibilities of Science.

KS 2/3

ARBUTHNOTT, Gill

THE CHAOS CLOCK

Floris Books; £4.99; 0863154220

A dynamic, tightly-plotted timeslip fantasy novel. Kate and David are two 11 year old best friends living in Edinburgh, doing their Museum project together. However, time is becoming unstuck, with the past breaking loose, and the two children are 'recruited' to help in the breaking war between the Lords of Chaos and the Guardians of Time, centred around the mysterious Millennium Clock at the Royal Museum.

BLACKER, Terence

THE ANGEL FACTORY

Macmillan; £4.99; 0330480243

An unusual and absorbing story that ranges across the mystery thriller, science fiction and fantasy genres. Hacking into his father's computer, 12 year old Thomas Wisdom makes a stark discovery that leads him into a strange and frightening adventure involving the Project, an initiative instigated by the Presence, a force for goodness from a distant galaxy bent on preventing humans from causing their own destruction.

BLACKER, Terence

THE TRANSFER

Macmillan; £4.99; 0330397869

Football-mad Stanley's City team is staring relegation in the face, so he turns to his computer scientist mother for a solution to the crisis. The answer is the creation of Lazio – Stanley transformed by a delicate process of mental and electronic energy – a genius striker who can save City. However, the jubilation turns into a nightmare when Stanley finds he can't get back into his own body again. A very readable computer generated football fantasy story.

BLACKMAN, Malorie

PIG-HEART BOY

Corgi; £4.99; 055255166X

Accepting a pig's heart could save Cameron's life, but when he is offered the chance to have this highly experimental operation, it immediately places Cameron at the centre of a storm of controversy. A well-crafted and thought-provoking story that embraces the issues of medical ethics, medical risk and animal rights, amongst others, head-on.

COLFER, Eoin

THE SUPERNATURALIST

Puffin; £5.99; 0141317418

Set in Satellite City, a vast satellite-controlled metropolis, in the third millennium, this is a fast-moving, plot-twisting science fiction fantasy adventure featuring, among other things, supernatural creatures and an abundance of futuristic James Bond type technology, gadgets and weapons. 14 year old Cosmo Hill escapes from the Clarissa Frayne Institute, a 'human lab-test orphanage', and joins the Supernaturalists in a dangerous adventure in a sinister and corrupt world in this highly imaginative and witty story.

DeFELICE, Cynthia

LUCAS WHITAKER

Floris Books; £4.99; 0863153402

In 1849 Lucas Whitaker watched the last of his family die from consumption (tuberculosis). When he hears about an unorthodox cure for the disease which involves digging up the body of the first family victim, he does not hesitate. Based on historical fact, this is a riveting and graphic account of a true practice, driven by superstition, carried out by people in the 1800s at a time when a new scientific approach was struggling against the old super-stations.

FARDELL, John

THE SEVEN PROFESSORS OF THE FAR NORTH

Faber and Faber; £5.99; 0571221556

Seven Professors are involved in a project to establish a university on Nordbergen island off the coast of Norway and Russia. Dissention and violence within their little group, a dark secret that lies deep within the island, and an array of amazing inventions power this enthralling and fast-paced adventure mystery.

FISK, Nicholas

MONSTER MAKER

Hodder; £3.99; 034074992X

Mechanically-minded teen, Matt, has landed what to him is a dream – an unpaid summer job working on lifesize mechanical monsters for Hollywood blockbusters at the British film studios of his hero, monster maker Chancey Balogh. The real drama, however, starts when a gang targets Matt, harassing him, and finally giving him a good beating. Then the gang break into the studios and get much more than they bargained for!

FISK, Nicholas

RAG, A BONE AND A HANK OF HAIR

O.U.P. ;£3.99; 019275047X

An exciting science fiction story set at the end of the 22nd century. The government is cloning new people, and has manufactured a 1940s wartime family who are totally unaware that nothing they know is real. The hero of the story is sent to monitor these 'Reborns' and gradually uncovers a terrible underlying secret. The thrilling plot embraces a brilliant twist at the end of the drama.

FRENCH, Jackie

DARK WIND BLOWING

Collins; £4.99; 0007140177

A tense thriller, with Lance Loosley, a 'loser', desperate for some respect and attention at school, suddenly pushed over the brink when he threatens to release a deadly virus in a test-tube into the school. No one believes him until the test-tube gets smashed in the classroom, and the teacher and some students have seizures. When Lance runs off, Mike, one of his classmates, goes after him and saves the day by establishing that the offending potion is rat poison, rather than a killer disease. A chilling and thought-provoking novel about the nature of friendship, and the potential consequences of peer group pressures.

HIAASEN, Carl

HOOT

Macmillan; £4.99; 0330415298

A really entertaining and wildly funny thriller. Roy Eberhardt has just moved to Florida from Montana, and soon finds himself integrally involved in a local campaign, along with a mysterious barefoot running boy, to prevent Mother Paula's Pancake House chain from building its latest outlet on land dwelt on by some rare burrowing owls. A masterfully crafted story with many amusing twists and quirky characters.

HOROWITZ, Anthony

STORMBREAKER

Walker Books; £4.99; 074455943X

A gripping thriller, jam-packed with suspense, action and comedy. When 14 year old Alex's uncle and guardian are murdered on active intelligence service, Alex is blackmailed by M16 into taking over his dangerous assignment and investigates the suspect philanthropic activities of tycoon Herod Sayle. Sayle has donated a top of the range computer called the Stormbreaker to every school in Britain, but Alex discovers that each is implanted with a deadly bio-logical virus. Armed with an array of ingenious technological gadgets, Alex manages to thwart and then to finally defeat the mad tycoon in a spectacular finale at the Science Museum. One of a series of 'Alex Rider' titles.

MANNS, Nick

FALLOUT

Hodder & Stoughton: £5.99; 0340855673

When Greg returns to school after illness, he is teamed, reluctantly, for a Maths project with Inderjit, a new girl in the class. As research for their project progresses, they come across a Government nuclear cover-up. This secret draws the two students closer together, but Greg finds himself in more and more danger..... A gripping, fast-paced thriller.

MATTHEWS, L. S.

THE OUTCASTS

Hodder & Stoughton; £5.99; 0340882123

A gripping adventure story. Five 'misfit' children from a city school are excited to be going on a week's field study trip in the West Country. However, the trip will change them as persons, and take them further than they could ever have imagined. A clever fantasy drama woven around the concepts of time and space in physics, and a 'networking' technique.

MOON, Pat

NATHAN'S SWITCH

Orchard; £4.99; 1843622033

A lively and reflective time travel story set in the context of contemporary social and family problems and the strains of growing up, with 12 year old Nathan Beazer dividing his time between the family home with his father and the small flat his mother has moved to since the break-up of their marriage. When Nathan unearths a time switch gadget in a skip, he finds that he is able to move from the present to the past, and into other personalities. This produces great results for his history marks, but, sadly, despite his fervent efforts, cannot conjure up a reconciliation between his parents.

OPPEL, Kenneth

AIRBORN

Hodder & Stoughton; \$10.99; 034087855X

Fifteen year old Matt works as a cabin boy on the Aurora, a two million pound airship kept aloft by gas cells filled with hydrium, the lightest gas in the world, in this exciting and entrancing fantasy adventure. Set on an 'earth', with the same geography as our own planet, but with a different technology, Matt and the airship crew help a passenger on a scientific mission to search for mysterious flying sky mammals mentioned in an old journal, but find themselves pitched into a desperate battle with brutal pirates.

PRUE, Sally

RYLAND'S FOOTSTEPS

O. U. P. ; £4.99; 0192753398

A powerful and thought-provoking story, embracing a wide field of interesting and comical characters, and cloning. When Rye's father is appointed as Governor of a new island penal colony, he unwittingly destroys the island's landscape in his bid to modernise, and Rye and the two other island children are forced to form an uneasy alliance to ward off major disaster.

REID, Kate

OPERATION TIMEWARP

Dolphin; £4.99; 1842552031

In 2099 genetic selection ensures that young people do not step out of line and cause any threat to evil President Rigg. So youngsters Adam, Elliot and Tara are co-opted to travel to the future to overthrow Rigg. A fast-paced adventure story with some strong characters and plentiful humour, where the three children discover that someone is out to get them, and that their assignment and life in the future are more dangerous than they had been led to believe.

SLEATOR, William

MARCO'S MILLIONS

Hodder & Stoughton; £4.99; 0340787678

When his younger sister, Lilly, discovers an invisible tunnel in their basement, Marco can't resist exploring, and he enters a world inhabited by strange insect-like creatures. To save their – and his - world from destruction, Marco is given a mysterious box to take to 'The Unknowable', a singularity that acts as a gateway between millions of other universes. Marco then finds a second box, and with it gains the power to control time and gravity in this riveting science fiction fantasy adventure, master-fully related, and full of inventiveness and humour.

SLEATOR, William

THE BOXES

Hodder & Stoughton; £3.99; 034078766X

In this science fiction story Annie's Uncle Marco leaves two sealed boxes in her care, with instructions not to open them. Annie, though, opens both, finding an asexually reproducing crab-like creature in one, and a clock-like device that can slow the flow of time in the second box. The evil Crutchley Development Corporation manages to steal the clock device, and when Annie recovers it, she escapes through a vortex created by the crab creatures.

TOMLINSON, Theresa

BENEATH THE BURNING MOUNTAIN

Red Fox; £3.99; 0099409127

An excellent historical novel centred upon the alum mining off the Whitby coast in the 18th century. The Langtoft family live and work in the shadow of the smouldering fires formed in the creation of the alum crystals, and it is Anne and Polly's job to go out each day to collect the urine needed to add ammonia to the mixture of alum and shale that eventually turns into crystals used for softening leather and fixing dyes. When a landslide leaves them homeless and other calamities threaten, the brutal hardships of life at the time are vividly portrayed in this moving story of personal courage and community spirit.

WILLIS, Jeanne

ROCKET SCIENCE

Faber and Faber; £4.99; 0571212751

When Adam finds an alien on the beach near his home, he is delighted to have a new friend. However in order to protect the alien from the 'cruelty' of others, he soon finds he has to devise a plan to return him to his own planet by building a rocket. There is a mysterious twist in the plot when the true identity of Adam's friend is revealed. An unusual and entertaining story, which includes both considerable technical data about rocket building, and an exploration of the nature of family relationships and friendship.

KS 3

BRESLIN, Theresa

SASKIA'S JOURNEY

Doubleday; £10.99; 0385604823

Visiting her great-aunt on the coast of north east Scotland, Saskia gradually unravels family secrets of the past, and re-discovers her love of the sea, leading her to decide to try for a new career in marine biology.

HUGHES, Monica

THE KEEPER OF THE ISIS LIGHT

Floris Books; £4.99; 0863153860

When colonists from overcrowded and polluted Earth arrive on Isis, conflicts arise as the newcomers start to repeat the mistakes of the past. A classic work of science fiction, this is also a fantasy and a moving story of love and prejudice which skilfully tackles environmental issues.

MANNS, Nick

CONTROL-SHIFT

Hodder & Stoughton; £5.99; 0340765119

A gripping thriller which moves through time shifts, and with a computer-guided state-of-the-art weapons system at the heart of the story. Bleak and terrifying secrets lurk in their new home in an old country house, and when Graham decides to delve into the past, what he discovers shakes the very foundations of his family.

SHEARER, Alex THE SPEED OF THE DARK

Macmillan; £4.99; 0330415387

In this gripping thriller Chris Mallan is a scientist with a mysterious past and an obsession for miniature sculptures, especially those in Ernst Eckmann's art gallery. Chris is striving to invent a 'decelerator' that can slow the speed of light to a point where it turns to darkness, and to a point where matter is made miniature. Then Chris suddenly disappears –leaving behind just a tiny snow dome, and a manuscript relating the extraordinary story of his life. A haunting, atmospheric, even sinister, story that unfolds as a bizarre nightmare.

SLEATOR, William THE DUPLICATE

Mammoth; £3.99; 0749708786

David comes across a strange machine that can make copies of living things, and decides to duplicate himself so that he can fit more into his life. However, David and his duplicate become enemies from the start, and as David discovers that his duplicate is not identical in every way, but has a vicious, mad streak, the drama accelerates with a fight to the finish.

STANNARD, Russell VIRTUTOPIA

Faber and Faber; £4.99; 0571217001

VirtuCorp have invented Virtutopia, a virtual perfect world device, for anyone to create any world they choose, and one that can be fully experienced in terms of thoughts, feeling, tastes, textures etc. In this brilliantly exciting and sinister virtual-reality science fiction adventure, two children, Scott and Lucie, are chosen by the Corporation's scientists to test Virtutopia, and they quickly discover that worlds are vastly more complicated to construct than they ever could have believed.

KS 3/4

ALLEN-GRAY, Alison UNIQUE

O. U. P. ; £4.99; 0192753355

A gripping mystery thriller, with a dash of science fiction, embracing the subjects of cloning, scientific and moral ethics, friendship, loyalty, trust and self-discovery. Set around 2016, with the story progressing from Cambridge to the Scottish Highlands, 15 year old Dominic makes the startling discovery that he is a clone, and embarks on a perilous journey of discovery, which builds towards a dramatic climax.

ARKSEY, Neil AS GOOD AS DEAD IN DOWNTOWN

Puffin; £4.99; 0141310529

A roller-coaster science fiction thriller, with two cities at war, and the rich dominating the poor. An action-packed plot prominently features scientists, genetically modified humans, and 'Brave New World'-style technology.

BERTAGNA, Julie

EXODUS

Macmillan; £5.99; 033039908X

It is 2099 in this sweeping fantasy of survival against all the odds, with the world slowly drowning as the Arctic ice pack melts, and the land disappears under rising, storm-tossed seas. 15 year old Mara's family and community have to flee their small island. Packed into small boats, there ensues a terrifying journey to a bizarre city that rises into the sky, where they find themselves treated as asylum seekers in a frightening new world divided between high-tech wizardry and primitive injustice. An epic story of the courage and determination of Mara, whilst also a stark message about environmental damage and destruction, and the possible consequences.

CASWELL, Brian

DEUCALION

Floris Books; £4.99; 0863153755

A fascinating and challenging science fiction mystery encompassing space neo-colonialism, time travel, genetic experimentation, political intrigue and revolution, with a brilliant, sweeping plot and strong characterisation. Frozen in cryogenic sleep, inhabitants of the Old Earth have travelled across time and space to start a new life on the planet Deucalion. What will happen when they arrive, and what will happen to Deucalion's present peoples?

CAVE, Patrick

SHARP NORTH

Simon & Schuster; £12.99; 0689872763

A chilling, thought-provoking and highly imaginative science fiction cum fantasy thriller novel, with clones and a 'forbidden technology' at the heart of this densely written story. Set in a miserable post-flood, freezing Britain of the future, Mira, who has lived her life quietly in a small rural community in Scotland, learns that she is a clone, a discovery that takes her into a labyrinth of intrigue, plotting, and close escapes, woven through a complex plot.

MAHY, Margaret

ALCHEMY

Flamingo; £4.99; 0007131356

A stirring novel of self-discovery, in which the Dewey Decimal Classification chemistry grouping of 540.1 plays a central role. 17 year old Roland finds himself slowly drawn towards the mysterious world of school misfit, Jess Ferret, who is involved in the quasi-science of alchemy. Meanwhile, Roland becomes the pawn in a 'game' of wills and powers, initiated by Quando, a vampiric magician. This game comes to threaten the very lives of Roland and Jess, who combine to hold off Quando and to make something new of their lives in this gripping novel which is heavily driven by supernatural presence, and the themes of transformation and change.

ROSE, Malcolm

CLONE

Scholastic; £5.99; 0439981646

The debate on the ethics of cloning underlies the length of this thought-provoking novel, which also embraces time travel in the plot. Jordan Finch's dad is a leading scientist in the field of human cloning, and is striving to be the first to clone a viable human being. Jordan is less sure about the merits of this research, and a host of other characters and interest groups get embroiled in the drama, including Maynard, a boy from a grim future where cloning has resulted in an underclass of mutants.

ROSE, Malcolm

TRANSPLANT

Scholastic; £5.99; 0439982057

A doctor at a private clinic offers to perform a revolutionary new operation on Cassie when her face is badly disfigured in an acid attack. The treatment involves a difficult transplant. Cassie gets a new face.... but there is something sinister about the clinic, and Cassie's past still manages to catch up with her.

WELLS, H. G.

THE TIME MACHINE

Everyman; £4.99; 0460882252

Wells' classic science fiction work, the chilling story of a scientist living in the late Victorian period who invents a machine that enables him to visit the future. The scientist shows dinner guests his Time Machine, and a week later when the group re-convenes, he makes a dramatic entrance, having travelled to the year 802701 and back, and shares at length an amazing tale, tinged with astonishment, curiosity, fear and terror, with the assembled group.

WESTALL, Robert

FUTURETRACK 5

Collins; £4.99; 0007126913

Stirring science fiction story with Britain divided into Zones and castes. However, all inhabitants are ultimately pawns of the computer that governs every aspect of life. One boy manages to penetrate the conspiracy that governs the country.

KS 4

FIENBERG, Anna

BORROWED LIGHT

Allen & Unwin; £4.99; 1864489316

Callisto is highly intelligent, and is fascinated by, and very knowledgeable about the stars and planets. She enjoys in-depth discussions with her astronomer Grandmother, but feels emotionally detached from her immediate family, and very alone. Thus, when she discovers she is pregnant at 16, she has no idea where to turn for help. A well written and moving teen novel.