

# Chatterbooks *Fantastic Creatures* 2016 Activity Pack



## ***Fantastic Creatures***

### **About this pack**

Here you'll find stories – and facts – about all kinds of amazing and fantastic creatures: beautiful or monstrous, loveable or scary, all of them inspiring your imagination.

Most of the creatures belong to story, but some of them are real, and equally fantastic.

As well as lots of reading ideas this Chatterbooks pack has discussion and activity ideas to enjoy with your group.

The pack is brought to you by The Reading Agency and their Children's Reading Partner publisher partners.

**Chatterbooks** [ [www.readinggroups.org/chatterbooks](http://www.readinggroups.org/chatterbooks) ] is a reading group programme for children aged 4 to 14 years. It is coordinated by The Reading Agency and its patron is author Dame Jacqueline Wilson. Chatterbooks groups run in libraries and schools, supporting and inspiring children's literacy development by encouraging [g them to have a really good time reading and talking about books.

**The Reading Agency** is an independent charity working to inspire more people to read more through programmes for adults, young people and Children – including the Summer Reading Challenge, and Chatterbooks. See [www.readingagency.org.uk](http://www.readingagency.org.uk)

**Children's Reading Partners** is a national partnership of children's publishers and libraries working together to bring reading promotions and author events to as many young people as possible.

### **Contents**

- 3 Ideas for discussion and activities – Warm Up
- 8 Longer activities
- 11 Fantastic reading and more activity ideas
- 21 More books...
- 22 Answers to wordsearch, quizzes, and colouring game

## Ideas for discussion and activities

From your own library or school stock, get together a collection of books about fantastic creatures, real and imaginary, to use with your group's discussion and finding-out activities.

### Warm Up

#### Fantastic Creatures Wordsearch

All the Fantastic Creatures below appear in the books which are highlighted in this pack.

Look for them in the squares - across, down, up, and from right to left.

Then talk about what each of these creatures is like – if some are from books you haven't read yet, imagine what the creature could be!

The Wordsearch solution is at the end of this pack

**ANGEL**                      **BLOBFISH**                      **BUGABOO**                      **DEADLY 7**                      **DRAGON**  
**FLEA**                        **FROGS**                        **GHOUL**                        **HYENA**                        **LEOPARD**  
**LION**                        **MINOTAUR**                      **PATHFINDER**                      **SERPENT**                      **SNOW BEAST**  
**UNICORN**                      **WEREWOLF**                      **WHITE BEAR**                      **YELLOW CAT**

Q	W	B	L	O	B	F	I	S	H	X	Z	B	K	X	R
Y	P	U	X	V	N	M	B	C	Y	A	S	F	Q	G	U
Z	V	G	L	O	X	T	E	L	E	G	N	A	O	P	A
B	M	A	B	N	R	O	C	I	N	U	B	V	S	K	T
S	F	B	D	G	V	A	M	V	A	X	Z	W	G	G	O
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7	X	Q	K	Y	R	T	E	R	J	A	S	X	C	H	J
Y	Q	Z	V	R	E	D	N	I	F	H	T	A	P	G	W
L	I	O	N	D	W	L	S	Q	L	T	U	X	Z	K	G
D	V	X	Z	Z	O	A	D	F	E	Q	W	F	G	J	H
A	P	B	V	J	L	E	O	P	A	R	D	X	B	G	O
E	E	T	K	U	F	L	J	G	D	S	Z	W	J	V	U
D	R	A	G	O	N	Q	Z	V	X	Q	M	P	V	Z	L
W	J	Z	V	B	M	Y	E	L	L	O	W	C	A	T	Q

## Fantastic Creatures Quiz (Answers at the end of the pack)

Which is the correct fact for each of these creatures?

And which of them do you think are real-life creatures and which are creatures which are mythical and (probably!) don't exist.

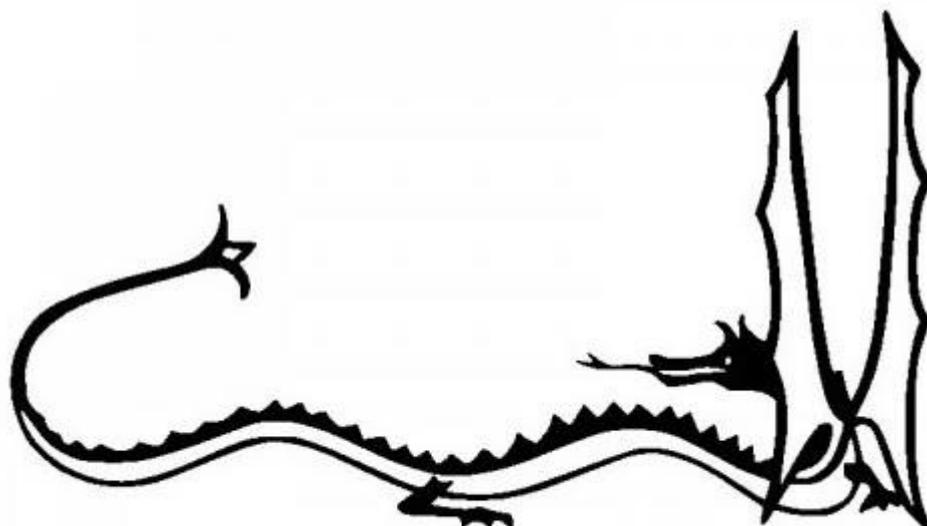
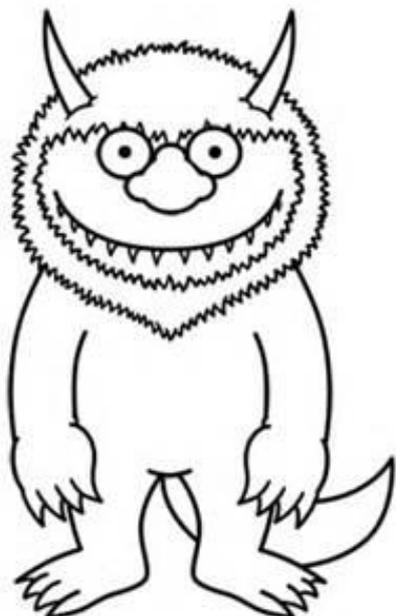
*You may want to make a shorter quiz by selecting from the questions below – and then spend time together finding out more about these creatures.*

1. An **axolotl** is
  - a. A creature with an axe-shaped head
  - b. A salamander that can re-grow its body parts when they are damaged
  - c. An animal that can carry a lot of axes on its back
  
2. A **basilisk** is
  - a. A creature that lives in large buildings
  - b. A lizard who could kill you with its stare
  - c. A creature that feeds on the herb basil
  
3. A **blue-footed booby** is
  - a. A clown wearing blue shoes
  - b. An animal that's got its feet covered in blue paint
  - c. A long-winged sea bird with magnificent webbed blue feet
  
4. A **centaur** is
  - a. A creature that's a hundred years old
  - b. Half man, half horse
  - c. An American animal you pay a cent to ride
  
5. A **gorgon** is
  - a. A snake-haired creature whose gaze turns people to stone
  - b. A gorgeous monster
  - c. A cheese-gobbling creature
  
6. A **kraken** is
  - a. A creature which makes croaking noises
  - b. A giant sea monster
  - c. A giant with cracked skin

7. A **mermaid** is
  - a. A servant
  - b. A female monster with permed curly hair
  - c. A sea creature with the head and body of a woman and a fish's tail
  
8. The **Minotaur** is
  - a. A creature with a bull's head and a man's body
  - b. A small bull
  - c. A creature living in a mine
  
9. A **mothman** is
  - a. Someone who collects moths
  - b. A winged creature with red eyes, in the shape of a man
  - c. A creature that eats moths
  
10. A **platypus** is
  - a. A creature with a duck bill, beaver tail and otter feet
  - b. A creature which squashes flat its enemies
  - c. A flat-footed cat
  
11. A **shapeshifter** is
  - a. Someone who turns circles into triangles
  - b. Someone who keeps moving things around
  - c. A human who can take on the form of an animal
  
12. A **sphinx** is
  - a. A monster with strong muscles
  - b. A creature that is half man, half lion, and asks riddles
  - c. A creature that says 'sphink sphink'
  
13. A **unicorn** is
  - a. A flying horse
  - b. A creature which eats corn
  - c. A horse with a single horn in its forehead
  
14. A **wombat** is
  - a. A kind of Womble
  - b. A kind of bat
  - c. A short-legged creature that looks like the combination of a pig and a bear

**Who are these favourite storybook creatures?** Answers at the end of the pack

Name them, and look at the books which they come from – and have fun colouring them in!





## Longer activities

### Create your own fantastic creature

In your group write down a list of fantastic creatures. They can be your favourite creatures or just ones you find funny or fascinating.

Next to each, write down their most interesting body parts and features.

Once you have a list, choose four of the creatures to work with.

You could do this in your group, or individually or in pairs.

E.g.

**Cat:** long tail, whiskers, green eyes

**Snake:** long slithery, patterned body; forked tongue

**Parrot:** Bright coloured feathers, clawed feet, sharp curved beak

**Shark:** Shining fin on its back; wide 'smiling' mouth

Now look at the features and pick the ones you like the *most* from each creature. If you feel uncertain of what the features look like exactly, you can find pictures and use them for reference for your drawing.

Then combine the different features into a brand new creature!

Write a short description of your creature: What can it do? How does it behave?

What noise does it make? Is it scary? Magical? Helpful? Funny?

### Role play: Be a fantastic creature

Give your group a list of creatures and ask them each to choose a different one to act out – or they could draw a creature's name from a hat. (Some suggestions below.)

Then ask each person to act out or mime their creature, for the rest of the group to guess who it is.

They could also sketch on a flip chart, to give clues about their creature.

E.g.

Dragon

Mermaid

Unicorn

Minotaur

Centaur

Flea

Lion

Serpent

Wild Thing

Vampire

## Is Truth Stranger than Fiction?    Answers at the end of the pack

Here are some descriptions of real animals which get you realising what fantastic creatures there are in the world! Read out or look at each description, then ask everyone to say or write down what the creature is.

1. A small furry animal which walks on its toes. It has dozens of moveable whiskers, especially on its face, to aid with navigation. When it overpowers its prey it delivers a lethal neck bite with its two long canine teeth.

2. A small plump bird, brown-grey, with a short tail and stubby powerful beak. It has an extra bone in its tongue which helps to stiffen the tongue when holding seeds. It enjoys dust bathing, and also bathing in shallow water.

3. A large animal with thick skin, tusks and a very long nose, made from its upper lip. It 'talks' to other animals with very low sounds, which people cannot hear.

4. An animal with a muscular body, powerful forelimbs, a large head and long tail. Each has a unique pattern on its fur, and the stripes are also found on the skin, so that if it were to be shaved, its distinctive coat pattern would still be visible. It is a strong swimmer, and often makes a harsh 'coughing' roar with its mouth open and teeth exposed.

5. There are many varieties of this animal, differing in size, colour and shape. They have powerful muscles, and teeth for catching and tearing. They have advanced memory skills and have acquired the ability to understand and communicate with humans.

6. A warm-blooded air-breathing animal living in the sea. When it breathes it spouts or blows out air as water vapour, which shoots up to 40 feet above the sea's surface. One species of this animal has lungs the size of a small car. It is a keen communicator, often through patterns of clicking sounds.

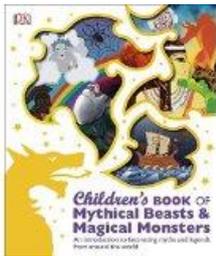
7. A small creature with a very small brain and a soft body which is protected by a shell with a top part and an underside. It can live for more than 150 years.

8. Quite a large and powerful animal which has cloven hooves and a stomach with four compartments. It regurgitates and re-chews its food. It likes to be part of a group and can get stressed when it's isolated. It sleeps four hours a day.

9. An elongated and legless creature, with no eyelids or external ears. It has highly mobile jaws and fangs which inject venom. It is usually brown-grey in colour, and is distinguished by a dark zig-zag line in its back. It is shy and timid and bites people only when it is cornered or alarmed – its bite is painful but seldom fatal.

10. An animal with crimped hair and sometimes with spiralled horns. It can see behind itself without turning its head, and it has scent glands just in front of its eyes and on its feet. It likes to follow the crowd.

## Fantastic Creatures: some fantastic reading, and more activity ideas

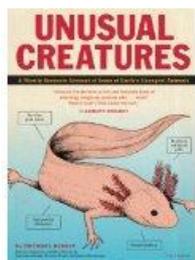


### ***Children's Book of Mythical Beasts and Magical Monsters*** **Dorling Kindersley 978-0241189412**

The *Children's Book of Mythical Beasts and Magical Monsters* reveals a world of mythology and magic. Discover the fantastical tales and amazing worlds that these beasts and monsters inhabit, from Grendel's attack on Beowulf to Aztec legends and the fall of Atlantis.

Classic myths and lesser-known legends are retold through eye-catching images, character exploration and family trees, while also exploring their origins, hidden meanings and similarities. With epic tales of brave heroes and evil deeds this book unravels the mythical world.

**Tell us a story! At the end of this book is a page encouraging you to discover the ancient stories and become a storyteller yourself: explore libraries, museums, galleries to find inspiration, and using all you've seen and read, have a go at recreating your favourite myth in your own words, using your own pictures and things you have made.**



### ***Unusual Creatures*** Hearst, Noordeman, Wright & **Noordeman Chronicle Books 978-1452136455**

A mostly accurate account of some of earth's strangest animals! With humour and flair, Michael Hearst introduces the reader to a wealth of extraordinary life-forms. Which animal can be found at the top of Mount Everest, 10,000 feet under the sea and in your backyard? Which animal poops cubes? *Unusual Creatures* includes these answers plus lovely clear drawings and hundreds

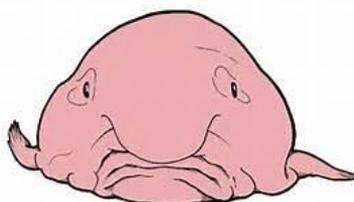
more fascinating facts for curious minds. Find out all about the aye-aye, the blobfish, and the pink fairy armadillo!

**Michael Hearst** is a composer, multi-instrumentalist and writer. His solo works include *Songs for Ice Cream Trucks* and *Songs for Unusual Creatures*.

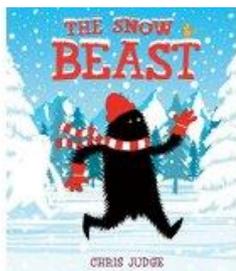
**Arjen Noordeman** and **Christie Wright** together make up the multi-disciplinary design company Elasticbrand, based in Amsterdam.

**Jelmer Noordeman** is an illustrator living and working in the Netherlands.

**Choose your favourite creature in the book and then make up a brief presentation about it. Let each member of the group do their presentation, then vote for which you think is the most unusual creature. Or people could draw their creature and annotate their drawing, using the facts in the book and anything else they find out**



## Picture books

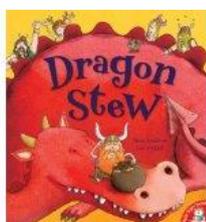


### ***The Snow Beast* Chris Judge Andersen 978-1783441143**

Beast has been robbed! And so has the whole village. Without tools the villagers can't put on their legendary Winter Festival, so Beast sets off to solve the mystery. Discovering that a stranded Snow Beast is behind the robbery, Beast has to decide whether to help this odd-looking stranger.

**Chris Judge** is an illustrator and children's picture book author based in Dublin, Ireland. His work has appeared in advertising, newspapers, magazines, and several other media. Chris's picture book, *The Lonely Beast* won the Specsavers Irish Children's Book of the Year.

**See if you can find out about another snow beast – the legendary Yeti or 'Abominable Snowman'.**



### ***Dragon Stew* Steve Smallman & Lee Wildish Little Tiger 978-1848951006**

Five bored Vikings set off looking for adventure...they meet a killer whale and a squelchy squid, but when they come across a dragon, they are in for a BIG surprise...

**Steve Smallman** has taken up writing his own stories after illustrating children's books for over 30 years. He also teaches illustration and mural-painting workshops in schools. **Lee Wildish** lives in Lancashire. He loves illustrating children's books and thinks there's nothing better than seeing people laughing at a book he's illustrated.

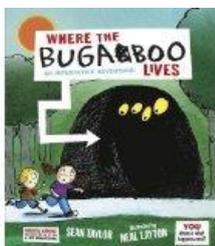
*Five happy Vikings went out hiking*

*On a fearless quest to catch a dragon for their stew.*

*They tiptoed over logs and they splashed through squelchy bogs,*

*Till they came across a gleaming, steaming pile of...DRAGON POO!*

**It would be fun for your group to recite this together and act it out – maybe learn it off by heart!**



### ***Where the Bugaboo Lives* Sean Taylor & Neal Layton Walker Books 978-1406324143**

Here is a wonderfully interactive, which-way adventure story for 6-10 year olds. It follows Floyd and his sister into the dark, shadowy valley behind their house - a valley full of all kinds of creepy, freaky, weaselly creatures, and the scariest of them all - THE BUGABOO! In this hilarious, ghoulish story, you can choose Floyd and Ruby's path (and which monster they meet next!) at the end of each page.

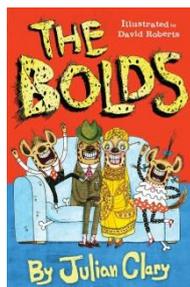
**Sean Taylor** is an award-winning author.. His picture books include *Hoot Owl*, *Master of Disguise* and *It's A Groovy World, Alfredo*. He lives in England and Brazil.

**Neal Layton** lives in Portsmouth. His book *Oscar and Arabella* was awarded a Bronze Smarties Award in 2002.

**“AND YOU CAN CHOOSE.**

**IF YOU DON'T WANT TO GO DOWN INTO THE VALLEY WITH FLOYD AND RUBY... THEN SHUT THE BOOK NOW. IF YOU WANT TO GO WITH THEM... TURN THE PAGE. (BUT REMEMBER, YOU MIGHT NOT GO TO SLEEP EVER AGAIN.)”**

## Fiction



***The Bolds* Julian Clary & David Roberts Andersen 978-1783443055**

Mr and Mrs Bold are just like you and me: they live in a nice house (in Teddington), they have jobs (like writing Christmas cracker jokes) and they love to have a bit of a giggle. One slight difference: they're hyenas.

Yes, that's right - they're covered in fur, have tails tucked into their trousers, and they really, really like to laugh. So far, the Bolds have managed to keep things

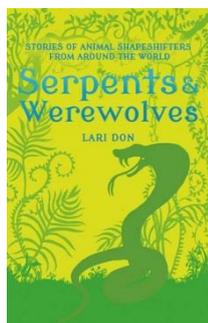
under wraps. But the nosy man next door smells a rat (or a hyena) - a trip to the local wildlife park, and the brilliantly wacky heist that results, could be the end of Teddington's best-kept secret.

**Julian Clary** is a comedian and novelist, and a popular entertainer. He lives in Kent.

**David Roberts** is an award-winning illustrator who has earned great acclaim for his distinctive style. He is the creator of the popular *Dirty Bertie* books and he lives in London.

*...the more she looked around her, the more she was convinced that the Bolds were not the only animals living secretly as humans... '...I'm not one to tell tales, but there are a couple of giraffes living in Richmond. Shelf-fillers at Waitrose...the perfect job for them... Have you ever noticed that some people look a little foxy? Or owlsh?...'*

**Think of some more animals or birds which we compare people to – and talk about why: e.g. sheep – following the herd; parrot - mimicking; monkey – cheeky.**



***Serpents and Werewolves* Lari Don Bloomsbury 978-1472916334**

This is a brilliant collection of folk tales: from the girl whose stepmother turned her into a dragon, to the werewolf's bride, and the god who became a fish but was caught in his own net...

Stories from the Americas, Asia, Scandinavia and Europe make this a wonderfully inclusive anthology, stunningly illustrated in papercut style.

**Lari Don** is a children's author and storyteller, who lives in Edinburgh. She has worked in politics and broadcasting, but says retelling myths and writing for children is the best job in the world.

Lari is a **Chatterbooks Champion** – have a look at her **Invent a Monster** activity in our [Chatterbooks Champions' pack](#).



***The Girl with the Broken Wing* Heather Dyer & Peter Bailey  
Chicken House 978-1908435842**

The twins are in bed when it happens: they hear a sound like a wet cabbage hitting the wall, a clattering on the roof tiles, then a tapping at the window. It's a girl with a broken wing. Who is she? Where has she come from? What does she want? The twins have no idea. Perhaps she's their guardian angel ... but would an angel snore and have filthy feet? A story for younger children.

**Heather Dyer** lives in Wales. She has been a cherry picker, a chambermaid, a teacher, a house painter, a sweet shop assistant - and now, best of all, a writer. She writes books about ordinary children to whom extraordinary things happen.

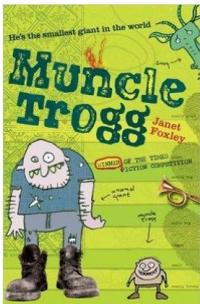
**Peter Bailey** has been illustrating books for many of today's best known authors, including Philip Pullman and Joan Aiken. He lives near Liverpool.

*'She doesn't look like much of an angel to me.'*

*'How do you know? You've never seen one.'*

*'I've read about them,' said James. 'They wear long robes and their heads are all lit up like light bulbs.' 'That's not their heads, that's their halos.'*

**Have a look at some more stories about winged beings – there's David Almond's *Skellig*, Laney in *Red Moon Rising* by Paula Harrison, and *Nightbird* by Alice Hoffman. Can you think of others?**



***Muncle Trogg* Janet Foxley Chicken House  
978-1906427030**

Giants live on top of Mount Grumble, hidden from humans below. But not all of them are big. Muncle Trogg is so small that he's laughed at by the others for being human-sized. Fed up, he decides to take a look at the 'Smallings' that he's meant to look like. But what he discovers is very surprising indeed...

**Janet Foxley** was an administrator at the University of London before making writing her 'day job'. She lives in Cumbria.

*He wasn't bad-looking though. He had beautiful skin – grey and dotted with hairy warts – Pa's bushy eyebrows and fleshy nose, and Na's bulging eyes and wonky yellow teeth. It was just Muncle's size that was wrong. He was simply too small to be a giant.*

**What other stories do you know about small creatures – e.g. The fairytale *Tomb Thumb*, *The Borrowers* by Mary Norton, and the people of Lilliput in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*?**



***Young Werewolf* Cornelia Funke Barrington Stoke 978-1781122686**

This is a fun supernatural tale. Matt is returning home from the cinema when a yellow-eyed monster bites his hand and his whole world - and body - changes. Helped by his best friend Lisa and teacher Mrs Ruskin, they have just two days to find a cure before the curse takes hold forever!

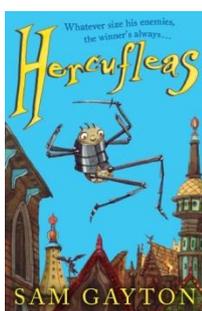
This book is particularly suitable for struggling and dyslexic readers of 8+

**Cornelia Funke** is the author of the *Inkheart Trilogy*, *The Thief Lord* and many other popular children's novels and picture books.

**David Roberts** is an award-winning illustrator who has earned great acclaim for his distinctive style. He is the creator of the popular *Dirty Bertie* books and he lives in London.

*With shaky knees, Matt pushed himself up from the rim of the bath and stood in front of the mirror again. The only thing that hadn't changed was his nose. His eyebrows were bushier. His cheek and chin were covered in fine grey hairs. And as he tried a smile, two pointy fangs pushed out over his lower lip. The eyes were the worst. Wild, yellow and glowing.*

**For more werewolf stories see Lari Don's *Serpents and Werewolves*, and Dorling Kindersley's *Children's Book of Mythical Beasts and Magical Monsters*, both featured in this pack.**



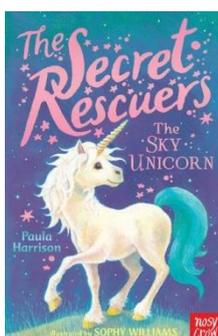
***Hercufleas* Sam Gayton & Peter Cottrill Andersen  
978-1849396363**

Greta is a girl on a mission: to venture to Avalon and bring back a hero to save her home from destruction by the giant Yuk. Many heroes have tried before – and failed. Greta needs a hero with courage and self-belief. She needs *Hercufleas*. The only problem: he is a flea, no bigger than a raisin. But the smallest person might just have the biggest effect . . .

Here is another imaginative and fascinating adventure from **Sam Gayton**, the author of *Lilliput* and *The Snow Merchant*. He lives in South London.

*There were twelve of them in all: the biggest, rarest fleas in the world. They looked just like raisins – raisins with extra-long folded-up legs, and squashed little heads with twinkling eyes, and mouths filled with pointy teeth.*

**At the end of the book there is a section called Super Fleas with amazing true facts about fleas – get your group to create a special 'Fleas' fact file! And why is our flea hero called Hercufleas?**



***The Secret Rescuers: The Sky Unicorn* Paula Harrison & Sophie Williams Nosy Crow 978-0857634962**

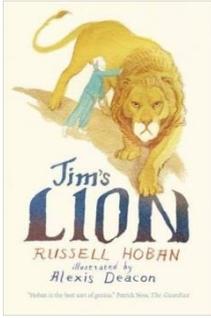
Ava is a dancer with a travelling troupe of entertainers. When Clover, a little unicorn, is trapped by Sir Fitzroy and used to lure the other unicorns into danger, Ava makes a plan. She and Sophy will disguise themselves and foil Sir Fitzroy's plot, and the unicorns will be safe! For younger readers.

**Paula Harrison's** books include the *Red Moon Rising* series, and *The Rescue Princesses*. Before being a writer she was a primary school teacher.

**Sophy Williams** lives in Wiltshire. Some of Sophy's childhood was spent living in Singapore, Hong Kong, and the Middle East, and her illustrations are often influenced by these locations.

*It was a sky unicorn. As Maya watched, more unicorns trotted over the brow of the hill, their snowy manes flowing in the breeze. With their white coats, golden horns and brightly coloured tails, they looked like the most beautiful creatures in the whole kingdom!*

**To enjoy more unicorns, see Michael Morpurgo's books *I Believe in Unicorns* (featured below), and *Why the Whales Came* – and *The Little White Horse* by Elizabeth Goudge.**



**Jim's Lion Russell Hoban Walker Books  
978-1406360714**

A moving, unflinching tale of a boy who finds bravery during illness, beautifully re-imagined as a graphic-novel. Asleep in his hospital bed, Jim dreams of a great lion with white teeth and amber eyes. This lion is Jim's finder. According to Nurse Bami, everyone has a finder, a creature who comes looking for us when we are lost. But when the time comes for Jim's operation, will his lion be able to find him and bring him safely home? Here are powerful dream sequences, and a

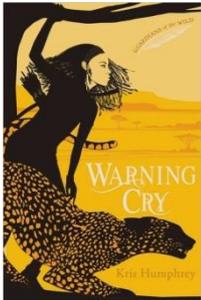
triumphant message of facing one's fears.

**Russell Hoban** (1925-2011) was the author of the novels *Turtle Diary*, and *Riddley Walker* as well as classic books for children including *The Mouse and his Child* and the *Frances* books.

**Alexis Deacon** is a Book Trust Best New Illustrator, and *Beegu* was a New York Times Book Review Best Illustrated Book of the Year, shortlisted for the Kate Greenaway Medal. He lives in London.

*That night in his dream...the lion was still coming towards him. Jim wanted to climb up the cliffs but he has the don't-run stone in his hand and he didn't. "The real thing is always more than you're ready for," he said... "Maybe," said Jim, "everything else was a dream and this is the only thing that's real." Closer and closer came the lion. It opened its mouth and roared.*

**Talk together about what this story means to you. Do people agree that 'The real thing is always more than you're ready for'? Even if it is, how do you deal with 'the real thing'? As Jim does or in a way of your own?**



**Warning Cry Kris Humphrey & Chellie Carroll Stripes 978-1847156051**

This is the second book in the *Guardians of the Wild* series. When a raven drops a white feather at the doorstep on the day of your birth, it is a symbol of your destiny. You are a Whisperer - a guardian of the wild. The kingdom of Meridina is under threat. When Nara and her leopard companion, Flame, receive the call to attend a Whisperers' council of war, they begin the long journey north. But signs of the shape-shifting Narlaw are everywhere. Can Nara and Flame make it to the palace? The future of the natural world is resting on their shoulders...

**Kris Humphrey** has been a cinema projectionist, and worked at an animal sanctuary in the Guatemalan jungle. He won Distinction the MA in Writing for Young People at Bath Spa University.

**Chellie Carroll** has illustrated the *Guardians of the Wild* series – [check out her blog](#).

*Flame prowled alongside Nara, ears twitching, tail low to the ground. It's as if they've never seen a leopard before, she said. Well, whispered Nara. Never one like you.*

**For more about the *Guardians of the Wild* series, and for discussion and activity ideas, see our [Whisper of Wolves Chatterbooks activity pack](#).**



***The Moon-Faced Ghoul-Thing* Barry Hutchison & Chris Mould Nosy Crow 978-0857635235**

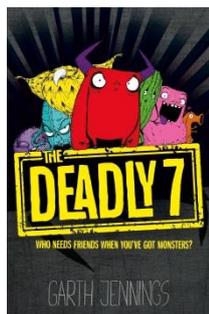
In an alternate 15th century, where dragons roam, sailing ships transform into submarines, and blacksmiths build steampunk robots, ten-year-old orphan Benjamin Blank loves a scary story as much as a good adventure. *The Moon-Faced Ghoul Thing* is his favourite. The hollow eyes, the scratchy legs, the razor-sharp claws... But when it actually turns up in his bedroom, Ben decides he doesn't like the story any more...

**Barry Hutchison** has written over fifty books for children, including *Invisible Fiends: Mr Mumbles* and *The 13<sup>th</sup> Horseman*. Barry lives in the Highlands of Scotland

**Chris Mould** has won the Nottingham Children's Book Award and been commended for the Sheffield. He lives in Yorkshire.

*Ben fell, flapped his arms for a bit, then thudded against a solid stone floor. He looked up and saw the Moon-Faced Ghoul Thing clinging to the ceiling with its spider-like legs. There came a short scream from within its cape, and the dark fabric billowed open.*

**Is the Ghoul Thing real or imagined? What is everyone's favourite scary story? What frightening creatures can your group imagine?**



***The Deadly 7* Garth Jennings Macmillan 978-1447251712**

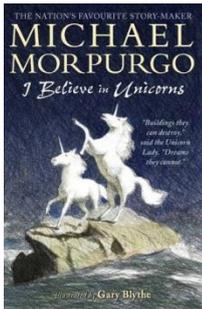
When Nelson's beloved big sister goes missing on a school trip, Nelson is devastated. His parents join the search party and leave Nelson in the care of his mad uncle Pogo who is the caretaker of St Paul's Cathedral where Nelson stumbles across a machine, invented by Christopher Wren and buried for hundreds of years. Designed to extract the 7 deadly sins, the machine had a fault - once extracted, the sins became living, breathing monsters who would then

follow the sinner around for eternity. Nelson accidentally extracts 7 deadly monsters from his own little soul. Ugly, cantankerous, smelly and often the cause of much embarrassment, Nelson's monsters are the last thing he needed in his life, but at least they're fairly harmless (he's a pretty good kid, on the whole). He realises the monsters can be put to good use, and together they set out to find and rescue his big sister. And he finds he now has friends, even if they are smelly, lazy and like smashing stuff up!

**Garth Jennings'** work includes videos for Blur, Radiohead, and Fatboy Slim. He is the director of two feature films including *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*.

*...the smallest monster of the group rushed forward. This one had a ginger-coloured body shaped like a puppy and a foghorn. It bounded towards Nelson on round feet that looked as if they belonged to a miniature elephant. Its eyes were wide, it had big, floppy ears like a springer spaniel, four little arms and a mouth like the bell of a trumpet.*

**For discussion and activity ideas inspired by *The Deadly 7*, have a look at our [Chatterbooks Gobstoppers activity pack](#).**



## ***I Believe in Unicorns* Michael Morpurgo & Gary Blythe Walker Books 978-1406366402**

This is a moving story about unity and inspiration in the face of destruction. Tomas hates school, hates books and hates stories. Forced to visit the library, he stops to listen to magical tales that the Unicorn Lady spins. These tales draw him in and are about to change the course of his life for ever... Set against the backdrop of war-torn Europe, *I Believe in Unicorns* explores the power of stories to transform lives.

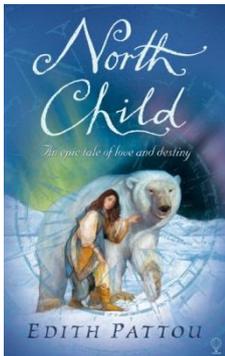
**Michael Morpurgo** has won many prizes, including the Smarties Prize, The Writers Guild Award and the Blue Peter Book Award. From 2003 to 2005 he was the Children's Laureate promoting literacy and reading across the UK, as he continues to do.

**Gary Blythe's** first children's picture book, *The Whales' Song*, written by Dyan Sheldon, won the Kate Greenaway Medal in 1990. He lives in the Wirral, near Liverpool.

*And if from time to time I lose the thread of my story, I just go and sit on the magical unicorn in the library, and my story flows again.*

*So I believe in unicorns. I believe in them absolutely.*

**See Paula Harrison's *The Secret Rescuers: The Sky Unicorn*, featured above in this pack, together with more unicorn stories**



## ***North Child* Edith Pattou Usborne 978-0746068373**

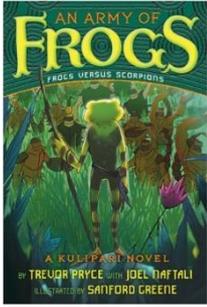
This is a beguiling epic of magic, love, loss and betrayal based on the traditional fairy tale *East of the Sun, West of the Moon*. The lyrical writing and bold sweep of the story as Rose travels north will cast a spell over every reader. Rose was born into the world facing north, and as a north child, superstition says that she will be a wanderer, travelling far from home. This prophecy is fulfilled when she is taken by a white bear to a mysterious empty castle, where a silent stranger appears to her. She loses her heart, and must journey to a land east of the sun and west of the moon to reclaim it.

**Edith Pattou** is the author of *Hero's Song*, an International Reading Association Young Adult's Choice, and *Fire Arrow*, a Booklist Top Ten Fantasy Novel of the Year.

*Despite his enormous speed, the white bear's gait was surprisingly smooth and his back so broad that as long as I kept a firm hold in his thick fur, I was in no danger of falling off.*

*The white bear's fur was extraordinary. It was as soft as rabbit's fur, yet much thicker and longer ....And the fur was so warm.*

**For a lovely telling of the story which inspired *North Child*, have a look at the picture book *East of the Sun, West of the Moon* by Jackie Morris and published by Frances Lincoln.**



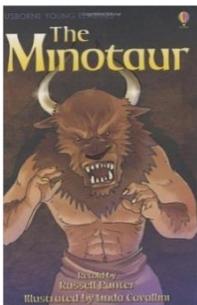
***An Army of Frogs – a Kulipari novel* Trevor Pryce  
Amulet/Abrams 978-1419713811**

For years the frogs of the Amphibilands have lived in safety, protected by an elite group of poisonous frogs named the **Kulipari** and by the dreamcasting spell of the turtle king. Now the spell is threatened by the Spider Queen, and by Lord Marmoo, leader of the scorpions. With the Kulipari off training in secret, the Amphibilands have never been so vulnerable. Enter Darel, a young frog who dreams of joining the Kulipari, despite his utter lack of poison and limited fighting skills. With the help of a motley crew of friends, Darel gets the chance to be the warrior of his dreams.

**Trevor W. Pryce** is a former American football defensive end for the New York Jets in the National Football League and has played in the NFL for fourteen years.

*'That's where the Kulipari's power comes from – poison. When they tap into their poison, their eyes turn black and their skin glows, and they can do impossible things. At least that's what the stories say.'*

**To meet another great frog hero read *The Legend of Frog* series by Chatterbooks champion Guy Bass, published by Stripes. See our [Chatterbooks champions pack](#).**



***The Minotaur* Russell Punter (retell.) & Linda Cavallini  
Usborne 978-0746096963**

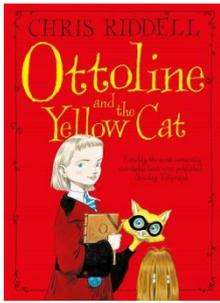
Theseus is determined to slay the monster, half-man, half-bull, that lives at the heart of the Labyrinth. But even if he succeeds, will he make it back home to Athens in one piece?

This book is based on a Greek myth and part of the Usborne Young Reading Programme for beginner readers, to help build confidence and ability.

**Russell Punter** joined Usborne Publishing as a designer in 1987 but since discovering his literary side in 2003, he has written over twenty books for the company. **Linda Cavallini** lives in Florence. She taught arts subjects in primary schools and since 2007 she has been creating illustrations for children for publishers including Usborne and Hachette.

*The Minotaur gave a loud snort. Clouds of smelly breath shot from its nostrils. With an ear-splitting roar it charged. The young prince swung his sword at the terrifying monster.*

**The Labyrinth where the Minotaur was said to have lived was a maze-like construction in Knossos, in the palace of Minos, king of Crete. Find out more about this palace and this myth about the Minotaur – how do you think this story about a monster and a maze might have arisen?**



***Ottoline and the Yellow Cat* Chris Riddell Macmillan 978-0330450287**

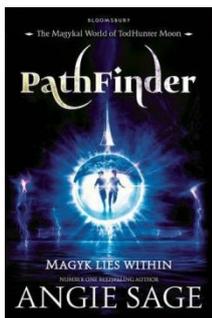
A quirky mystery adventure story introducing Miss Ottoline Brown, an exceptionally inquisitive Mistress of Disguise, and her partner in crime, Mr. Munroe. No puzzle is ever too tricky for the two of them to solve. Ottoline lives in a stylish apartment in Big City with a small hairy creature called Mr. Munroe. Together they look after the Brown family's eclectic collections – and dabble in a spot of detective work. They are the first to the scene of the crime when a string of high-society dog-nappings and jewel thefts hits Big City. They go undercover – and expose an ingenious scam masterminded by furry feline crook, the Yellow Cat.

**Chris Riddell** has twice won the Kate Greenaway medal and has been shortlisted for the Kurt Maschler Award. He is also a political cartoonist for the Guardian and the Observer. His books include the *Goth Girl* series and the *Far Flung Adventures* (with Paul Stewart.)

*She lived in Apartment 241 with Mr Munroe, who was small and hairy and didn't like the rain or having his hair brushed.*



**What else do you learn about Mr Munroe through the story? Where does he come from? What kind of creature is he? Why is he called Mr Munroe?**



***Pathfinder* Angie Sage Bloomsbury 978-1408858172**

Todhunter has grown up a PathFinder, one of an ancient seafaring tribe, some of whom possess gills so that they can move underwater. Her mother, who died when Tod was young, was from a mysterious magykal desert-dwelling family. When Tod's father disappears she finds herself swept into the path of an evil sorcerer. She must choose which of her pasts will help her most: PathFinder or Magician. Magyk will allow her to fight like with like, but her PathFinder heritage gives Tod something special – the edge.

**Angie Sage** has written toddler books, chapter books and then the Septimus Heap books. She lives overlooking a creek in Cornwall.

*“These people were different from those they left behind...in here-” Dan placed his fingers on either side of the bridge of his nose – “they had the things that fishes have. Gills.”*

**Now enjoy *Sandrider* (Bloomsbury 978-1408865194), the next book in this series about Todhunter.**

## More Books .....

AUTHOR	TITLE	PUBLISHER	ISBN
<b>Picture books</b>			
Ana & Thiago de Moraes	<i>The Zoomers' Handbook</i>	Andersen	978-1783442140
Naomi Howarth	<i>The Crow's Tale</i>	Frances Lincoln	978-1847806147
David McKee	<i>Elmer and the Monster</i>	Andersen	978-1783441594
Catherine Rayner	<i>Sylvia and Bird</i>	Little Tiger	978-1845068578
Jeanne Willis & Jenni Desmond	<i>The First Slodge</i>	Little Tiger	978-1848690394
<b>Fiction</b>			
Lloyd Alexander	<i>The Book of Three</i>	Usborne	978-1409515050
Guy Bass	<i>Stitch Head</i>	Little Tiger	978-1847151834
Guy Bass	<i>The Mighty Frog</i> Link to pack	Stripes	978-1847155115
Veronica Cosanteli	<i>The Extincts</i>	Chicken House	978-1908435453
Tommy Donbavand	<i>Fangs, Vampire Spy: Operation Golden Bum</i>	Walker Books	978-1406331585
Tommy Donbavand	<i>Scream Street: Fang of the Vampire</i>	Walker Books	978-1406320602
Polly Faber & Clara Vulliamy	<i>Mango and Bambang: The Not-a-Pig</i> Do link	Walker Books	978-1406361438
Cornelia Funke	<i>Dragon Rider</i>	Chicken House	978-1910002056
Sheila Grau & Joe Sutphin	<i>Dr. Critchlow's School for Minions</i>	Amulet/Abrams	978-1419713705
Paula Harrison	<i>Dark Tree Shining</i>	Nosy Crow	978-0857634955
Anthony Horowitz	<i>Raven's Gate</i>	Walker Books	978-1406338881
Josh Lacey & Garry Parsons	<i>The Dragonsitter to the Rescue</i>	Andersen	978-1783443291
Jon Mayhew	<i>The Curse of the Ice Serpent</i>	Bloomsbury	978-1408854235
Jon Mayhew	<i>The Eye of Neptune</i>	Bloomsbury	978-1408826300
Jon Mayhew	<i>The Wrath of the Lizard Lord</i>	Bloomsbury	978-1408826324
Michael Morpurgo (retell.) Michael Foreman (ill.)	<i>Beowulf</i>	Walker Books	978-1406305975
Jackie Morris	<i>The Wild Swans</i>	Frances Lincoln	978-1847805362
Chris Riddell	<i>Goth Girl and the Ghost of a Mouse</i>	Macmillan	978-0230759800
Jonathan Swift (Martin Jenkins (retell.) & Chris Riddell (ill.))	<i>Gulliver's Travels: Voyage to Lilliput</i>	Walker Books	978-1406368659
Pat Walsh	<i>The Crowfield Demon</i>	Chicken House	978-1906427634
Marcia Williams (retell. & illustr.)	<i>King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table</i>	Walker Books	978-1406318661
Marcia Williams (retell. & illustr.)	<i>The Iliad and the Odyssey</i>	Walker Books	978-1406303483

## Fantastic Creatures Wordsearch Answer

Q	W	B	L	O	B	F	I	S	H	X	Z	B	K	X	R
Y	P	U	X	V	N	M	B	C	Y	A	S	F	Q	G	U
Z	V	G	L	O	X	T	E	L	E	G	N	A	O	P	A
B	M	A	B	N	R	O	C	I	N	U	B	V	S	K	T
S	F	B	D	G	V	A	M	V	A	X	Z	W	G	G	O
S	N	O	W	B	E	A	S	T	X	Z	B	K	O	J	N
V	M	O	G	H	W	H	I	T	E	B	E	A	R	B	I
T	N	E	P	R	E	S	V	X	Z	K	J	W	F	X	M
7	X	Q	K	Y	R	T	E	R	J	A	S	X	C	H	J
Y	Q	Z	V	R	E	D	N	I	F	H	T	A	P	G	W
L	I	O	N	D	W	L	S	Q	L	T	U	X	Z	K	G
D	V	X	Z	Z	O	A	D	F	E	Q	W	F	G	J	H
A	P	B	V	J	L	E	O	P	A	R	D	X	B	G	O
E	E	T	K	U	F	L	J	G	D	S	Z	W	J	V	U
D	R	A	G	O	N	Q	Z	V	X	Q	M	P	V	Z	L
W	J	Z	V	B	M	Y	E	L	L	O	W	C	A	T	Q

## Fantastic Creatures Quiz Answers

1 b, 2 b, 3 c, 4 b, 5 a, 6 b, 7 c, 8 a, 9 b, 10 a, 11 c, 12 b, 13 c, 14 c

## Storybook Creatures

A Wild Thing

Maurice Sendack

*Where the Wild Things Are*

The Grinch

Dr Seuss

*How the Grinch Stole Christmas*

Smaug the dragon

J R Tolkien/Pauline Baynes

*The Hobbit*

(or you could have any other storybook dragon)

The Gruffalo

Julia Donaldson/Axel Schleffer

*The Gruffalo*

Shrek

William Steig

*Shrek* (also the film!)

## Truth Stranger than Fiction?

1 Cat, 2 Sparrow, 3 Elephant, 4 Tiger, 5 Dog, 6 Whale, 7 Tortoise, 8 Cow, 9 Adder, 10 Sheep