Reading and activity ideas for your Chatterbooks group
Here is a new Chatterbooks activity pack from The Reading Agency with ideas for Chatterbooks reading group activities and discussion inspired by this year’s Summer Reading Challenge, Mischief Makers.

**Chatterbooks** is a reading group programme for children aged 4 to 12 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 them to have a really good time reading and talking about books. Find out more at [www.readinggroups.org/chatterbooks](http://www.readinggroups.org/chatterbooks)

The **Summer Reading Challenge** encourages children aged 4 to 11 to read six books during the long summer holiday. There is a different theme each year. Children can read whatever they like - fiction, fact books, joke books, picture books, audio books - just as long as they are borrowed from the library. Children receive special rewards each time they finish a book and there’s a certificate for everyone who completes the Challenge.

The theme for the Summer Reading Challenge 2018 is Mischief Makers, inspired by the much-loved children's title Beano, which celebrates its 80th anniversary. During the Challenge, children will explore a map of Beanotown to find the mysterious buried treasure and become ultimate mischief makers! Dennis, Gnasher and friends will help them solve clues and collect stickers, having lots of fun and adventures along the way.

The books featured in this pack have been chosen by children and librarians as recommended reads for this year’s Challenge. To see the full list of Mischief Makers books, visit [www.summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/mischief-makers-2018-booklist1](http://www.summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/mischief-makers-2018-booklist1)

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. Find out more at [www.readingagency.org.uk](http://www.readingagency.org.uk)

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**THE BOOKS**

Nigel Auchterlounie  *Dennis and the Chamber of Mischief*

*Studio Press  978-1787412781*

Beanotown - for the first time in Dennis's life - has become boring. All Dennis's pranks are backfiring and he seems to have lost his awesomeness. Even his faithful hound, Gnasher, seems fed up with him these days. If only there was some way to bring the fun back to Beanotown...

When Dennis hears about the legendary Golden Pea-shooter of Everlasting Fun, it sounds like the only thing that can solve his problems and return his hometown to its former glory. With the help of his cousin, Minnie, and Gnasher, Dennis must go on a quest, discovering the mysterious Chamber of Mischief in his bid to find the Golden Pea-shooter; but a series of tricky challenges (and Dennis's nemesis, Walter) stand in his way. Can YOU help Dennis solve the fiendish mystery and save Beanotown from eternal boringness?

*Nigel Auchterlounie* is a writer and comic book artist. Most notably he writes the scripts for the weekly Dennis and Gnasher strip in the Beano. Which he maintains is a proper job. He is good at carpentry but never ask him to do any plumbing. Not after what happened that time.

Alex T. Smith  *Mr Penguin and the Lost Treasure*

*Hodder Children’s Books  978-1444932065*

It has been weeks since Mr Penguin's last adventure and he's been stuck at his desk, twiddling his flippers ever since. That is until the phone rings!

Mr Penguin and Colin (a spider and Mr Penguin’s silent right-hand man) are called in to find the missing treasure somewhere in the Museum of Extraordinary Objects. The quest finds them solving secret codes, fighting ferocious beasts, eating fish finger sandwiches and travelling deep below the museum to a lost jungle...

Author-illustrator *Alex T. Smith* is the award-winning creator of the bestselling Claude series, which is published in 16 languages worldwide, and begins airing as a TV show on Disney Junior this summer. Alex’s quirky, witty writing and illustrations are instantly recognisable, critically acclaimed and as popular with adults as children. Alex has won the UKLA Picture Book Award and the Sainsbury’s Children’s Book Award, and been shortlisted for the Waterstones Children’s Book Award.
Izzy Gizmo, a girl who LOVED to invent, carried her tool bag wherever she went in case she discovered a thing to be mended, or a gadget to tweak to make it more splendid.

Izabelle Gizmo just loves to invent, but her inventions never seem to work the way she wants them to. And that makes her really CROSS! When she finds a crow with a broken wing she just has to help, but will she be able to put her frustrations to one side and help her new friend to fly again?

Pip Jones is an award-winning children’s author, feature writer, columnist and editor, most often found writing or herding children. Her works include the Ruby Roo picture book series and the Squishy McFluff series, about a seriously mischievous invisible kitten. Pip’s latest picture book, Izzy Gizmo is an inspiring tale about a little girl inventor, written in rhyme.

Sara Ogilvie is an award-winning illustrator and printmaker who won the 2011 BookTrust Best New Illustrator Award. The first picture book that she illustrated, Dogs Don’t Do Ballet, was also shortlisted for the Roald Dahl Funny Prize. In addition to working on her picture books, Sara lectures in Illustration and Graphic Design at Northumbria University and continues to create work that is exhibited worldwide. She is inspired by many things including second-hand bookshops, old wives’ tales and trying to spell sounds. Sara lives in Newcastle upon Tyne.

**ACTIVITY ALERT!**

Izzy Gizmo loves to create all sorts of new gadgets!

Can you design a new gadget for your library?

What does it look like? What can it do?

Draw a picture and label it, or write a description and share it with the group.
Catching the school's runaway guinea pigs is not giving Alex job satisfaction, but how can he find a bigger test for his and Jess’s awkward superpowers? Jess is more worried about the bullied new boy, whose Mum runs the animal sanctuary. She volunteers at the sanctuary, but soon realises that something is very wrong; the animals are terrified. People report strange events: things missing, property destroyed, and the local squirrels have turned mean. The police have no suspects. It looks more and more like a job for Agent Alex...

Jennifer Killick has always wanted to be a writer, but really started when she applied for a Creative Writing MA at Brunel University, which is where she first got the idea for her first book, Alex Sparrow and the Really Big Stink. She lives in Uxbridge, in a house full of children, animals and Lego. Jennifer's favourite things are books, trees and fluffy slippers, and her favourite place in the world is her home, where she can sit in her pyjamas with tea and cake, coming up with story ideas.

Wigglesbottom Primary is the school where anything can happen! Is that a superhero dog on the school roof? YES! Is the lunchtime mashed potato really, really weird? YES! Does Susie Keys own an alien egg? YES! So what are Class 2R going to do about it all? Have a lot of fun!

Pamela Butchart was lucky enough to grow up in a house full of pets, have a mum and dad who were bonkers, and go to The Best Most Awesome Primary School in the World™. Now, Pamela teaches philosophy to teenagers and spends all day pondering questions such as, 'Is time travel possible?' and 'How do I know I'm not really a robot?' The stories write themselves really. Pamela lives in Dundee with her husband, Andy and their two cats, Bear & Carlos. Carlos only has one eye and is Pamela's hero.

Becka Moor is a children's book illustrator and storyteller living in Manchester. She studied illustration for children's publishing at Glyndwr University, graduating in 2012. Since then, she has worked on a variety of fiction books and series as well as picture books.
Omar is fiercely competitive and very impatient about anything that holds him back...especially other people. Activity camp is brilliant because he's the best at all the challenges, it's just so annoying that not all his teammates are as quick or brave or strong as he is. It would be much easier just to ditch them and go it alone.

But when he's given a mysterious compass it transports him to a thick jungle that is impossible to get through quickly - he has to learn to move with the rhythm of the environment around him with the help of his guide, adventurer Bear Grylls. Can his time in the rainforest change his mind about what makes someone successful? And who will he give the compass to next?

Bear Grylls got the taste for adventure at a young age from his father, a former Royal Marine. Amongst other adventures he has led expeditions to the Arctic and the Antarctic, crossed oceans and set world records in skydiving and paragliding. Bear is also a bestselling author and the host of television programmes such as Survival School and The Island. He is Chief Scout to the UK Scouting Association, encouraging young people to have great adventures, follow their dreams and to look after their friends.

Emma McCann lives near the sea in Cornwall, working from her home studio in the attic where her ideas are scribbled, inked, painted and scanned into existence. Emma has illustrated titles for a wide variety of publishers and her work has been long-listed for the Kate Greenaway Medal.

**ACTIVITY ALERT!**

Can you unscramble these jumbled-up jungle words?

- GULJEN
- REGTI
- ERDEVATUN
- DRICOCOLE
- TORRAP
- LIDW
- DRIPES
- SAKEN
Erika McGann & Vince Reid  *Making Millions*

The O’Brien Press  978-1847179210

Cass and her best friends, Lex and Nicholas, are the Bubble Street Gang! They investigate crimes, solve mysteries and have brilliant adventures. They’ve even got their own secret clubhouse. The gang need money and quick, and they have some super-genius ideas on how to make it! Like Operation Start a Company, Make Loads of Money for Nicholas’s Project and Probably Also Become Millionaires! But Cass also has a mystery to solve. Who is the invisible boy? And why can’t anyone else see him?

**Erika McGann** grew up in Drogheda and now lives in Dublin. In 2014 Erika won the Waverton Good Read Children’s Prize for *The Demon Notebook*.

**Vince Reid** is an illustrator and cartoonist, originally from Liverpool and currently based in Ireland. He aspires to give any narrative strong characters, humour and colour.

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Cas Lester  *Do You Speak Chocolate?*

Piccadilly Press  978-1471405037

Jaz is outgoing, rebellious, gumptious and a little bit bolshy - but it doesn’t stop her from finding it hard that she doesn’t have a best friend at school any more. Not since Lily went off with Kara ... She’s not one to get down about things, though - and things start to look up when Nadima comes into their classroom.

Before long the girls are firm friends, even when Nadima, recently arrived from Syria, can’t speak much English. The path of true friendship doesn’t run smooth, though ... Jaz, ever the entrepreneur, cooks up a plan to sell Turkish Delight at school, with disastrous results. A drama project with Nadima about family history proves impossible to manage, and Charity Challenge Week puts the icing on the cake as Jaz puts every foot wrong possible. Can she find a way to put things right, and restore the wonderful and unique friendship that she has with Nadima?

**Cas Lester** spent many years at CBBC having a fabulous time making award winning programmes including Jackanory, Big Kids, Kerching! and the Story of Tracy Beaker. Now she’s having a fabulous time writing children’s books. Her stories are inspired by children (usually her own). Her writing is powered by chocolate (not always her own).
Welcome to The Nothing to See Here Hotel! A hotel for magical creatures, where weird is normal for Frankie Banister and his parents who run the hotel. When a goblin messenger arrives at The Nothing to See Here Hotel, announcing the imminent arrival of the goblin prince Grogbah, Frankie and his family rush into action to get ready for their important guest. But it soon becomes obvious that the Banister family are going to have their work cut out with the demanding prince and his never-ending entourage, especially when it turns out the rude little prince is hiding a secret...

**Steven Butler** grew up in Kent, but now lives in London. He is the author of the bestselling The Diary Of Dennis The Menace and The Wrong Pong fiction series, and the regular host of World Book Day's The Biggest Book Show on Earth. He is also a successful performer and voice artist.

**Steven Lenton** hails from Cheshire and now works from his studio in Brighton, creating an array of charming characters for his books. Best known for illustrating Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam, written by Tracey Corderoy, he has illustrated many lovely books. Steven also loves to visit schools, festivals and bookshops, encouraging and inspiring his audience to draw, giggle and create! He is also a children's book blogger – just search for his name on YouTube.

**ACTIVITY ALERT!**

Imagine you are throwing a party fit for royalty…

Who would you invite? What music would you dance to? What delicious treats would you eat?
In 2016, Dion Leonard, an ultramarathon runner, stumbled across a little stray dog while competing in a gruelling 155 mile race across the Gobi Desert. The pup earned the name ‘Gobi’, as she went step for step with Dion, keeping pace with him for nearly 80 miles. What Gobi lacked in size, she made up for in heart.

Dion had always focused on winning, but as he witnessed the incredible determination of this small animal, he felt something inside him change. This is a story of a life changing friendship between one man and a little stray dog called Gobi.

Dion Leonard has competed in some of the world’s toughest ultra-marathons across the planet’s most inhospitable landscapes, including the Moroccan Sahara Desert and South Africa’s Kalahari Desert. Dion's latest race across the Gobi Desert in China turned out to be a completely different race where he fell in love with a stray dog (later named Gobi) that followed him during the week, and who would change both of their lives forever.

It's Maisie's birthday and she can't wait to open her presents. She's hoping for the things she needs to build her own nuclear reactor. But she wakes to an empty house and outside the front door is nothing but a terrifying, all-consuming blackness. Trapped in an ever-shifting reality, Maisie knows that she will have to use the laws of the universe and the love of her family to survive. And even that might not be enough...

Christopher Edge is an award-winning children’s author whose books have been translated into more than 20 languages. His novel The Many Worlds of Albie Bright won several children's book awards including the Brilliant Book Award and was also nominated for the CILIP Carnegie Medal, as was his novel The Jamie Drake Equation, which was also selected by The Times as one of the best children's books of 2017.
Gazing at the stars from five storeys up, smelling the bins from five storeys below. Overheard arguments, overheard laughter. A disappearing father and a Mermaid-Queen mother; statues that sing for flesh and blood; bullies who kick you under the table; perfect red trainers - and the things that lurk in the library...

Award-winning poet Joseph Coelho’s astonishing new collection is a powerful and moving poetic narrative about growing up in the city.

**Joseph Coelho** is a performance poet and playwright. His plays have received special note from The Verity Bargate Award and The Bruntwood Playwriting Competition. He has written plays for young people for Theatre Royal York, Pied Piper, Polka and The Unicorn Theatres. Joseph has been a guest poet on Radio 4’s Front Row and performed poems for Channel 4 and CBeebies Radio. His debut poetry collection Werewolf Club Rules is published by Frances Lincoln and won the CLPE CLiPPA Poetry Award 2015.

**Kate Milner** studied illustration at Central St Martin’s, and is an MA student in Children’s Book Illustration at Anglia Ruskin. Her illustrations and prints have been shown in London galleries and national touring exhibitions.

**ACTIVITY ALERT!**

Try out these tongue twisters – how quickly can you recite them?

- Three free throws
- A big bug bit the little beetle but the little beetle bit the big bug back
- If two witches were watching two watches, which witch would watch which watch?
- Any noise annoys an oyster but a noisy noise annoys an oyster more
Garth Jennings & Sarah Ogilvie  The Wildest Cowboy

Macmillan Children’s Books  978-1447231479

When cheerful salesman, Bingo B Brown, rolls his wagon full of Wild West goodies into town, he’s met with a stony silence. This is clearly no place for novelty bow ties and elastic lassos. Not even Bingo’s dancing dog can raise a smile! But this town is not just joyless, it’s dangerous. And as Bingo soon discovers, the people of the town are not just scary, they’re also scared.

It isn’t long before Bingo and his dog discover why, as they come face to face with the Wildest Cowboy in the West! The Wildest Cowboy is a funny and uplifting adventure story in which fun wins out over fear. Featuring a dramatic train chase, rattlesnake socks and a dancing dog.

Garth Jennings has directed many music videos and commercials and is the director of two feature films - The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy (2005) and Son of Rambow (2007) - for which he also wrote the screenplay. He directed the Golden Globe nominated Sing, a feature-length animated film with an all-star cast, from the studio that created Despicable Me. He has also written The Deadly 7 for Macmillan Children’s Books.

Sara Ogilvie is an award-winning illustrator and printmaker who won the 2011 BookTrust Best New Illustrator Award. The first picture book that she illustrated, Dogs Don’t Do Ballet, was also shortlisted for the Roald Dahl Funny Prize. In addition to working on her picture books, Sara lectures in Illustration and Graphic Design at Northumbria University and continues to create work that is exhibited worldwide. She is inspired by many things including second-hand bookshops, old wives’ tales and trying to spell sounds. Sara lives in Newcastle upon Tyne.

John Briggs & Nicola Slater  Don’t Leap, Larry!

Pavilion Children’s  978-1843653387

Lemmings look alike, sound alike and act alike, right? So if one jumps off a cliff, the others follow... all except Larry. Larry's a lemming with a mind of his own. Unlike the rest of the crew, he goes sledding with the puffins, eats pepperoni pizza, and likes to wear a top hat. But can Larry teach his fellow lemmings to finally think for themselves?

John Briggs is a long-time reporter and editor who once spent three years as a children's TV critic. Today, he happily writes books for children. John lives in upstate New York, USA, where he has never, ever jumped off a cliff.

Nicola Slater studied illustration at Buckinghamshire Chilterns University before moving to London. She has illustrated numerous books including The Little Old Lady Who Cried Wolf!, Best Friends and Spot A Lot Animal Escape.
This summer, Matilda is going on holiday with her friends, the Jolley-Rogers. Their destination is the island of Scurvy Sands - a favourite holiday destination for pirates.

When Matilda arrives, the swashbuckling residents are not too impressed with her. She has clean teeth, tidy clothes and doesn’t smell like she’s been at sea for six months without washing - she’s definitely no pirate. But when Matilda discovers the secret of the legendary treasure of Scurvy Sands, the pirates decide that maybe some lubbers aren’t so bad.

Jonny Duddle spends most of his time drawing and busily creating worlds, sprawled across his studio floor, with paper everywhere. When he’s not drawing, he likes exploring forests, riding his bike for miles and miles, scrumping apples, fixing old cars and building garden sheds. Jonny overheard the story of his first book The Pirate Cruncher while sailing on a square-rigger. Since then he has written even stranger tales including The Pirates Next Door (which won the 2012 Waterstones Children’s Book Prize), Gigantosaurus and The King of Space.

**ACTIVITY ALERT!**

Imagine you’re about to set sail on a pirate ship for an adventure on the high seas...

Where will your voyage take you? Can you describe the mysterious lands you encounter? What are the five things you absolutely have to take with you?
Have you ever wondered what exactly does go bump in the night? From mysteries like Shackleton’s ghostly companion to the Loch Ness Monster and friends, read the amazing evidence about these mysterious cases and make up your own mind. Quench your curiosity with this new myth-busting (and sometimes, myth-confirming!) fascinating case study book. Things are not always what they seem - until they are, then you might wish you had never asked!

**Susan Martineau** is an author, editor and first-class fact finder who writes creative and educational books for children. Fascinated by strange and weird information, Susan’s books always shine a light into the most unusual corners of the world around us, sparking a passion for discovery and curiosity in her readers. Real Life Mysteries is the Blue Peter Book Award 2018 winner for Best Book with Facts.

**Vicky Barker** is an award-winning illustrator and designer, whose humorous, energetic artwork and clear, clever layouts have been bringing children’s books to life for over 10 years. A graduate of Liverpool John Moores University, Vicky lives between Worthing, London and Los Angeles and has worked for a number of publishers over a broad range of books.

**ACTIVITY ALERT!**

Can you match these mysterious words with their definitions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<td>Means something that does not have an obvious scientific explanation.</td>
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<td>The study of animals that remain hidden. They may or may not exist!</td>
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**WARM UP ACTIVITY**

Can you find these words hidden in the wordsearch below?

Words can run forwards, backwards, up, down or diagonally.

- treasure
- adventure
- discovery
- friends
- map
- explorer
- plan
- mischief
- hero
- riddle
- solve
- fun

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    p  y  m  i  s  c  h  i  e  f
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LONGER ACTIVITIES

CRACK THE CODE

The Mischief Makers have their own secret code they use to plan their adventures without adults catching on!

Can you crack the code and work out these book titles?

You could even use the code to create your own secret message – swap your message with someone else in your group and see if you can crack theirs too!

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3) +%£2%  %@;  +~
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5) ☀+%^2#%*  *2!~
6) £>☀+~  #£2+~
X MARKS THE SPOT

This summer the Mischief Makers are running all over Beanotown looking for buried treasure. Can you think of your own secret location where you would hide treasure?

Draw a picture or describe it in words.

The Mischief Makers are searching for a chest full of pranks – what would you love to find hidden away?

An unlimited supply of your favourite ice cream? A huge stack of video games?

Share your ideas with the group.

QUESTION TIME

Get to know your fellow mischief makers! Split into pairs, then ask your partner these 5 questions. Write down their answers as you go.

Put everyone’s answers in a box, then pick them out and guess who said what!

1. If you were an animal, what animal would you be and why?
2. What do you want to be when you grow up?
3. If you could have any super power, what would it be?
4. What is one food you just can’t stand?
5. What was the last book you read? Can you review it 3 words?

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT

- Think about what makes a good adventure story. Many adventures are set in an interesting location and send their heroes on a quest or to complete a challenge. Can you think of some famous adventurers in real life or in books, films or TV?

- Have a look at the Mischief Makers characters – this could be on the website (mischief-makers.org.uk), Summer Reading Challenge materials or a copy of the Beano! Discuss which characters are your favourites.
ANSWERS

BEAR GRYLLS JUNGLE WORD SCRAMBLE

GULJEN  JUNGLE  TORRAP  PARROT
REGTI    TIGER    LIDW    WILD
ERDEVATUN  ADVENTURE  DRIPES  SPIDER
DRICOCOLE  CROCODILE  SAKEN  SNAKE

REAL LIFE MYSTERIES MATCH-UP

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WARM UP WORDSEARCH

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CRACK THE CODE

1)  $5>9$ *$\Rightarrow$ = $\Rightarrow$ ^9; $6 \times 97=$ Who Let The Gods Out
2)  $=>^~$ 52*; £9<9= The Wild Robot
3)  +%£2%  %@@; +$=>^~$ Maria and Me
4)  $=>^~$ ;$>^~%+$%6=+$£ The Demon Headmaster
5)  +$\otimes$ +%$^2#%*$ $*2!^~$ My Magical Life
6)  £$>\otimes^+~$ #£2+^~ Rhyme Crime