

# *Mick Manning and Brita Granström*

## Chatterbooks activity pack



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**CHATTER  
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## Mick Manning and Brita Granström

Mick Manning and Brita Granström are husband and wife author-illustrators of a wide range of inspirational non-fiction picture books – this Chatterbooks pack introduces you to a selection of their books to enjoy in your reading groups, together with ideas for discussion and activity around these titles.

The pack is brought to you by **The Reading Agency** and Children’s Reading Partners publisher **Frances Lincoln Children’s Books**.

**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 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 children and young people as possible.

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## Mick and Brita...

Mick Manning grew up in Haworth, West Yorkshire, and studied Illustration at the Royal College of Art in London.

Brita Granström grew up on a farm in Sweden and studied Illustration at Konstfack in Stockholm.

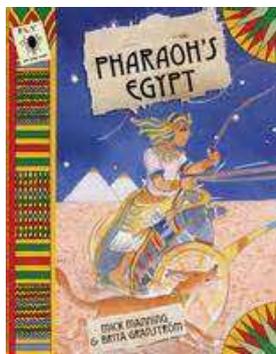
Mick and Brita have four sons and live in the Scottish Borders. Their books for Frances Lincoln include *Taff in the WAAF*\* which won the 4-11 English Association Award for KS2 Non-Fiction in 2011. Mick and Brita are also the author-illustrators of the much-praised 'Fly on the Wall' series: *Roman Fort*, *Viking Longship*, *Pharaoh's Egypt*\* and *Greek Hero*, which won the 2008 KS2 Non-Fiction Award. Other titles include *Charles Dickens: An Extraordinary Life* and *What Mr Darwin Saw*\*, described by the Bookseller magazine as "a must for curious young readers", and *Nature Adventures*, an exciting and inspirational wildlife handbook, encouraging us all to go out and engage with the natural world.

Mick and Brita were elected as Fellows of the English Association in 2011, and in 2013 they were nominated for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, which honours top authors and illustrators throughout the world.

They have a website at [www.mickandbrita.com](http://www.mickandbrita.com)

\*Featured in this Chatterbooks pack

## ...and a selection of their books



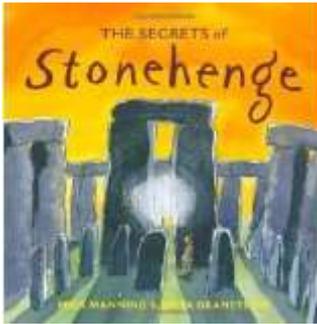
### **Pharaoh's Egypt 978-1845075781**

Learn all about the Egyptian way of life around 1250BC, as we meet the noble and majestic Pharaoh, watch the scribes at work in the palace, delve deep into the tombs and worship at the temples. With flies, sand, bloody fingerprints plastering the pages, this is a book that will have the ancient Egyptians springing from its pages.

Part of the *Fly on the Wall* non-fiction series based on 'fly-on-the-wall' reporting.

*Ramesses II's Egypt is a civilised country and he is a powerful king. Many different people live and have to work hard in the Pharaoh's New Kingdom. Let's look in on some of them as they go about their daily lives...*

	<b>More to read: fiction with an Egyptian theme</b>		
Theresa Breslin	<i>The Dream Master</i>	Corgi	978-0440863823
Julia Jarman	<i>The Time-Travelling Cat and the Egyptian Goddess</i>	Andersen	978-1842705216
Geraldine McCaughrean	<i>Casting the Gods Adrift</i>	A&C Black	978-0713674552
Jacqueline Wilson	<i>The Cat Mummy</i>	Yearling	978-0440868576



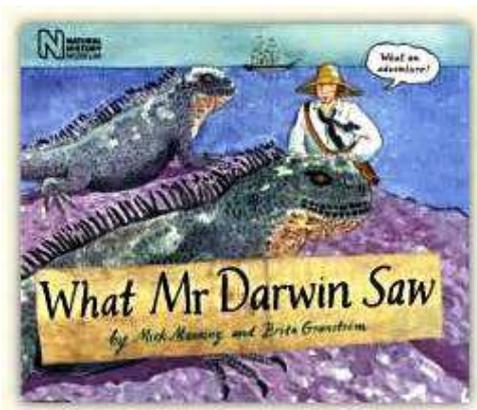
### ***The Secrets of Stonehenge* 978-1847803467**

Why was this amazing monument erected? How did our Stone-Age ancestors bring such massive stones to the site from so far away? How did they raise the enormous stones to their upright positions? What was Stonehenge used for, and who lived around the site?

With captions and pictures, and using up-to-the-minute research discoveries, Mick Manning and Brita Granström tell the incredible true story of this awe-inspiring monument – one of the greatest ancient sites in the world.

*After the Ice Age ended, large areas of Britain became a tangle of trees and undergrowth known as the 'Wildwood'...Some places, such as the chalky uplands of Salisbury Plain, may have been free of trees. We can't be sure, but perhaps humans thought of these open spaces as special or even magical in some way...*

	<b>More to read: fiction about early Britain</b>		
Clive King	<i>Stig of the Dump</i>	Puffin	978-0141329697
Michelle Paver	<i>Wolf Brother</i>	Orion	978-1842551318
Rosemary Sutcliff	<i>Warrior Scarlet</i>	Farrar Strauss & Giroux	978-0374482442
Rosemary Sutcliff	<i>Sun Horse Moon Horse</i> (e book)	RHCP Digital	<b>ASIN:</b> B00CA88L74

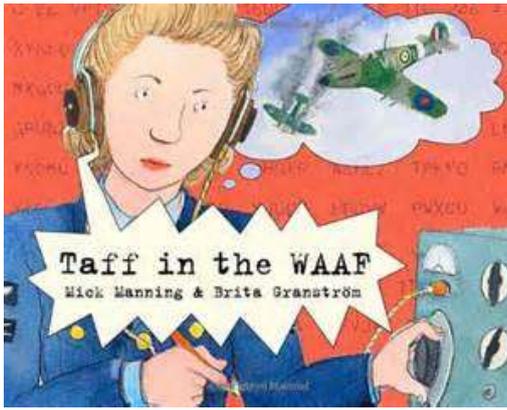


### ***What Mr Darwin Saw* 978-1847801074**

In 1831, at only 22 years old, Darwin was offered the position of Naturalist on HMS Beagle's world voyage.

He was set to become a clergyman but returns after five years at sea an inspired genius. This book follows the journey of HMS Beagle, showing life on-board the ship for Darwin, the captain, crew and the expedition's artist. The reader sees Darwin discovering and observing insect life in Brazil, fossils in Argentina, earthquakes in Chile and turtles in the Galapagos Islands. The reader is therefore able to follow the steps which led to Darwin's inspired theory of evolution, while also showing the adventures and escapades he had during the voyage.

	<b>More to read about Darwin and evolution</b>		
Nick Hunter	<i>Charles Darwin (Science Biographies)</i>	Raintree	978-1406272451
Glenn Murphy	<i>Evolution: the Whole Life on Earth Story</i>	Macmillan	978-1447254607



### **Taff in the WAAF 978-1847804150**

Mick Manning's mother was a young woman in Wales at the outbreak of World War II. This fascinating book, a companion to the very successful Tail-End Charlie about Mick's father's life in the RAF in World War II, tells her story using the same innovative non-fiction narrative style. At the outbreak of war and the start of food rationing, she left school aged 14 to work in a local greengrocer's shop. Later joining the WAAF (the Women's Auxiliary Air Force), she became a wireless operator and eventually a Y service listener for the secret signal decoding operation at Bletchley Park where the famous German Enigma

Code was cracked. The book also looks at other essential women's roles during the war including the ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service), the Wrens (Women's Royal Naval Service), Land Army, Fire Service etc, and a wide range of aspects of life affected by the war effort. Simply written and using speech bubbles and captioned illustration boxes of artefacts and documents from the period, this is a dramatic and engaging introduction to its subject.

**Winner of The English Association 4-11 Book Awards - Key Stage 2 Non-Fiction**



### **Tail-End Charlie 978-1847800756**

As a boy, Mick Manning listened to his father's hair-raising tales about life as an RAF airgunner during the Second World War. Now, years later, he has carefully recreated his father's stories, writing them down as if his dad was speaking the words. In collaboration with Brita, he has illustrated them too. It's for Charlie's grandchildren – and for everyone. Find out what it was really like to: put up with food rationing ... undergo RAF Training... take off in a bomber... face enemy fighters... survive the Battle of the Bulge...

	<b>More to read about WW2</b>		
Nina Bawden	<i>Carrie's War</i>	Puffin	978-0141345185
Louise Borden & Michael Foreman	<i>The Little Ships</i>	Frances Lincoln	978-1847800817
Michael Foreman	<i>War Boy</i>	Pavilion	978-1843650874
Shirley Hughes	<i>The Lion and the Unicorn</i>	Red Fox	978-0099256083
Ian McEwan & Roberto Innocenti	<i>Rose Blanche</i>	Red Fox	978-0099439509
Mick Manning & Brita Granstrom	<i>My Uncle's Dunkirk</i>	Franklin Watts	978-0749693428
Marcia Williams	<i>My Secret War Diary</i>	Walker	978-1406309409

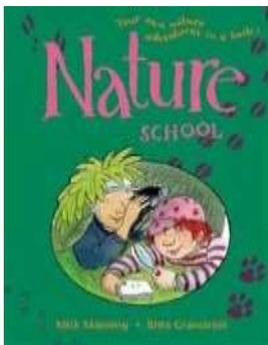


**The Beatles 978-1847804518**

How did four cheeky lads from Liverpool – John, Paul, George and Ringo – become the greatest rock band in the world? Mick Manning and Brita Granström tell the amazing story of The Beatles with captions and strip pictures for fans of all ages.

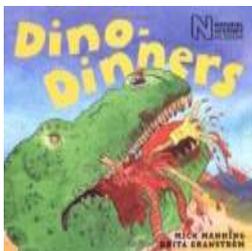
The story begins... John Lennon’s Liverpool childhood, his Auntie Mimi, his school band The Quarrymen; the developing friendships with Paul McCartney and George Harrison and the forming of The Beatles together with Stu Sutcliff and Pete Best. From amusing adventures in Hamburg to the arrival of manager Brian Epstein and record producer George Martin. Then Ringo Starr joins the group; fame and screaming fans; the famous tour to the USA; the making of the albums, key hit songs and early films... then the later years, with the gigantic Sgt Pepper album, their visit to India, the making of Magical Mystery Tour. Finally comes the break-up of the band and the new beginnings of solo careers for the Fab Four.

	<b>More to read: rock music &amp; rock groups</b>		
Michael Burgan	<i>Popular Culture 1960-1979</i>	Raintree	9781406240306
Robert Muchamore	<i>Rock War (for older readers)</i>	Hodder	978-1444914535



**Nature School 978-1845078447**

Your very own nature adventures in a book! Mick Manning and Brita Granström show you how easy it is to become a nature explorer! *Nature School* takes you on an exciting adventure to discover the secrets of nature, learn how to find and preserve wildlife and make you feel closer to the world around you.



**Dino-dinners 978-1845076894**

It's dino-dinnertime but who eats what, and who eats who? How do we know what dinosaurs ate? Who hunted as a team? Who ate with their head in the treetops, and who ate absolutely anything they could find? Discover exactly what is on the menu, as you are invited to attend this dinner party with a difference!

	<b>More to read: dinosaurs</b>		
Jinny Johnson	<i>Clash of the Dinos</i>	Frances Lincoln	978-1781716816
Stella Maidment	<i>Dinosaur on the Island</i>	Frances Lincoln	978-1781716533

## Activity ideas for your reading group

All of Mick and Brita's books use lots of inventive and creative ways to present information visually.

Have a look at as many of their books as possible.

With each book pick out and **make a list of inventive ideas** used to make an effect - eg. comic strip format; speech bubbles; photographs of real documents (letters, forms, postcards, cigarette cards etc); information panels; full-page pictures; different type-faces; collage.

Talk about the effects achieved – do these ideas help to get the information across?

Discuss how you like to learn information. How well do Mick and Brita's books work for you? Do you prefer just text? Or text with pictures?

Look at other non-fiction books and talk about the ways they aim to get information across.

Make your own Chatterbooks group **information book** in the style of Mick and Brita!

**Agree a topic** for your book – eg 'Pets', with each person doing a page on a different pet; or 'Our Favourite Things', with each person doing a page on whatever interests them the most.

### For each page:

- Research and gather together information
- Decide what information you will actually use on your page – what are the main things you want to say?
- What will you say through text, and what will you get across with pictures?
- Look at your list of presentation ideas from Mick and Brita's books and choose which ones you will use – eg. some text in a special information panel; some information via speech bubbles; using photographs.
- Any more presentation ideas of your own?

Talk about what a glossary is – and **do a glossary page** for your book – decide on the key words you'll put in, then each person does a word and an explanation for the glossary list.

**Design a cover** for your book – then put all the pages together to make your book, maybe by sticking the pages in a scrapbook.

Or you could do a big group **information poster using collage.**

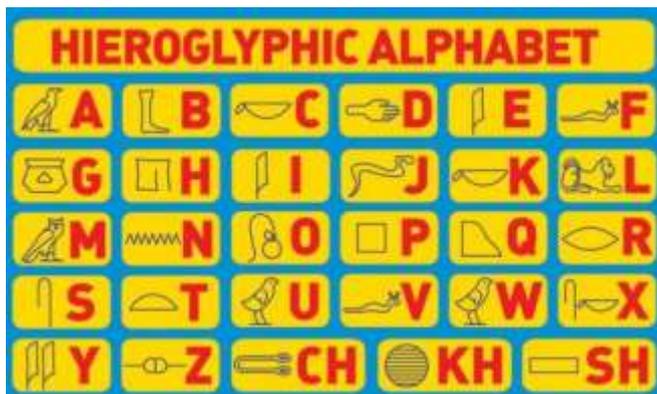
- Agree your subject
- And the main things you want to say on the poster
- Get together lots of old magazines and newspapers
- Cut out pictures, blocks of text, and individual words and letters which will get your message across
- Arrange them and agree the layout, then stick everything down for your poster!
- You could add in speech bubbles – as Mick and Brita do, eg. in *Pharaoh's Day*

## Activities linked to individual titles

### *Pharaoh's Egypt*

Have a look at the **hieroglyphs** on page 14 – the Egyptians used this form of writing, with pictures for individual letters or whole words.

Here's the alphabet in hieroglyphs – have a go at writing a message using these symbols.



### *What Mr Darwin Saw*

Collect on a flip chart all the things Charles Darwin saw on his travels – have two columns: **What he saw** and **Where he saw it** – eg. Soldier ants – Salvador rainforest.

You could then transfer this information to a map, to get a good view of Darwin's travels and findings.

From the fossils and creatures that he saw Darwin developed his theory of evolution – that organisms, including man, change gradually over time, in response to the demands of their environment, and thus all species have developed from earlier forms of life on earth.



## ***Taff in the WAAF and Tail-End Charlie***

In these books Mick and Brita use the framework of original documents such as letters, postcards, telegrams, photographs and log-book pages.

**Talk about:** Imagine that in the future your grandchildren want to write a book about you. What will they have which gives them information about your life? Will there still be any written/paper documentation? Or will it all be contained and preserved digitally - eg. your emails, your Facebook page, Pinterest?

How might they present your biography, and your stories?

Have a go at creating a **Pinterest page** which tells people something about you.

*Taff in the WAAF* tells us a lot about aspects of World War 2. **Find out more about:**

- Evacuees
- Andersen shelters
- Gas masks
- Doodlebugs
- Bletchley Park and the Enigma code-cracking machine

## ***High Flight***

Here is a poem written by a WW2 airman like Charlie. Read it aloud for everyone to hear, then talk about how the poem makes you feel.

How do you think Charlie feels about flying? What does he tell us in *Tail-End Charlie*?

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of earth,  
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;  
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth  
Of sun-split clouds, --and done a hundred things  
You have not dreamed of --Wheeled and soared and swung  
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there  
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung  
My eager craft through footless halls of air...  
Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue  
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace  
Where never lark or even eagle flew --  
And, while with silent lifting mind I've trod  
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,  
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God. **John Gillespie Magee**

## ***The Beatles***

**Talk about:** The Beatles were a new and exciting phenomenon on the pop scene of the 60s – totally thrilling for teenagers of the time.

Has any music, pop group, film or games-playing has been so new and exciting in your life that it's taken your breath away?

**Listen** to some Beatles songs. Get the words for these songs so you can read them and sing along. Which is your favourite song?

## ***Dino-dinners***

Find out the meaning of the names of the dinosaurs in this book – and add in a bit of information about each creature.

<b>Dinosaur name</b>	<b>Meaning of name – plus more information</b>
Oviraptor	
Euoplocephalus	
Tyrannosaurus rex	
Triceratops	
Edmontosaurus	Edmonton lizard: a duck-billed dinosaur
Velociraptor	
Coelophysis	
Iguanodon	
Baryonyx	
Brachiosaurus	

