

The Golden Tower

By Belinda Murrell
Publisher: Puffin / Penguin
ISBN 9781760897093 SCIS: 1999388
\$16.99

**PRIMARY FICTION
BOOK OF THE
MONTH**

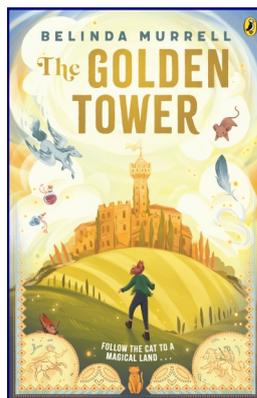
Blurb:

In her wildest dreams, Sophie never thought she might be kidnapped by a cat and taken to a world of flying horses and wonder – but also magic, mystery and danger!

Transported to the land of Tuscia, Sophie accidentally saves the daughter of a wealthy family and is swept along on their journey to the Golden Tower.

Now she is the only one standing between sisters Isabella and Bia and the terrible fate their stepmother has planned.

Sophie doesn't think she is brave enough, but with the help of a talking cat, a stableboy and some very tiny mischief-makers, she might be able to save the day.



Lamont Review:

Thirteen-year-old Sydneysider Sophie has dyslexia and is bullied at school. When Sophie goes to spend a few weeks at her Nanna's in England, the last thing she expects is magic and mystery!

With her Nanna's encouragement to go off on an adventure, and a mysterious cat showing her the way, Sophie suddenly finds herself in Roman times in the land of Tuscia.

She is soon caught up with the daughters of the wealthiest man in the land, as they are called by their stepmother to leave their Nonna and join their father in his Palazzo.

The stepmother is evil and has enchantments and magic potions to make everything go the way she desires. But the stepmother goes too far when she demands that her stepdaughter, Isabella, must marry.

Isabella is only a girl, and when Sophie sees what is happening, she must act quickly and bravely to stop the evil stepmother in her tracks...

This is an inspirational story of a girl finding her way and realising that she has inner power to face her fears and do what she knows is right.

It is best suited to readers 10—14.

Reviewed by Rob

Teacher Notes prepared by the publisher are available for this title on our website.

School of Monsters: Mary Has the Best Pet

By Sally Rippin & Illustrated by Chris Kennett
Publisher: Hardie Grant Children's Publishing
ISBN 9781760507329 SCIS: 5354322
\$8.99

Blurb:

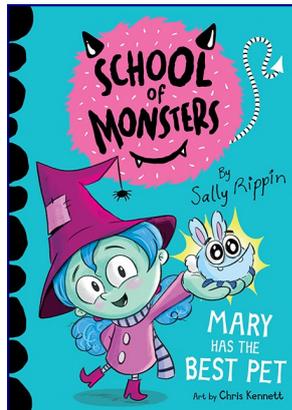
You shouldn't bring a pet to school.

But Mary's pet is super cool!

You're not supposed to bring your pet to the School of Monsters if you haven't fed them yet. But Mary LOVES her little pet! Surely it will be OK to sneak him inside her hat just for the morning...

Welcome to the School of Monsters: the funniest, silliest and most accessible series for first readers!

Start by reading only the last word on every line and work your way up to reading the whole story. With tumbling rhymes and an infectious sense of humour, the weird and wonderful students at the School of Monsters are guaranteed to spark a love of reading!



Lamont Review:

This is a fabulous new series that is squarely aimed at students who are just starting out on their reading journey.

In this first book, we follow the adventures of Mary and her pet at Monster School. What will happen when Mary breaks the rules and lets her pet into the classroom without being fed?

Combining the talents of Sally Rippin and Chris Kennett, the book has tips for adults about reading with children at the back of the book. It also includes instructions for readers on how to easily draw our Monster Mary, as well as a list of new rhyming words to learn.

We are sure that this new junior series will be loved by new readers, as well as being a wonderful book for adults helping children to learn to read.

Reviewed by Sam

Super Geeks 1: Fish and Chips

By James Hart

Publisher: Puffin / Penguin

ISBN 9781760895129 SCIS: 1999613

\$14.99

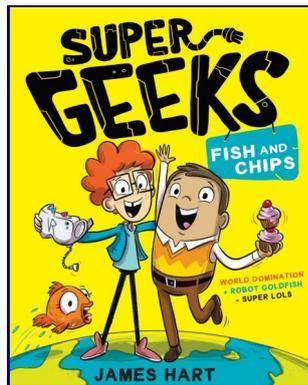
Blurb:

Illustrator James Hart makes his authorial debut in this hilarious, action-packed graphic novel series! Perfect for fans of *Real Pigeons*, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* and *Dog Man*.

Zeek and Arnie are best friends. They do everything together. They love solving problems, inventing, playing video games, coding, reading comics, cooking (mostly Arnie) and planning WORLD DOMINATION (mostly Zeek).

But when Zeek puts a microchip in Arnie's pet fish, Eleanor, things go horribly wrong... A super-intelligent Eleanor decides she's going to become the supreme ruler of the world.

How will Zeek and Arnie stop Eleanor's fish-bot army and prevent this power-hungry fish from achieving WORLD DOMINATION?



Lamont Review:

A great read about two best friends who love inventing and making things, and one power-hungry goldfish.

What could possibly go wrong when you put a microchip in a goldfish to make it super intelligent? If that goldfish is Eleanor it seems they might just decide to take over the world!

This is a laugh-out-loud, action-packed story that readers will love. This is a graphic novel that will appeal to those who enjoyed *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*.

Filled with crazy inventions and two lovable characters, with friendship the underlying theme, it will be perfect for readers in Year 4 and up.

Reviewed by Michelle

Pet Sitters Ready for Anything #1: Gus Makes A Fuss

By Ella Shine & Illustrated by Lisa Flanagan

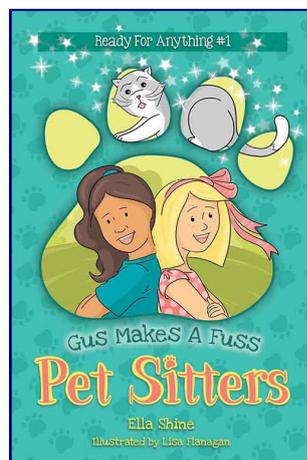
Publisher: Puddle Dog Press

ISBN 9780648943006 SCIS:1998937

\$12.99

Blurb:

Two pet sitters. One talking cat. What could possibly go wrong? Best friends Cassie and Lina would love to take a pet to the Pet Parade. There's one problem: neither girl has a pet... until they're asked to pet sit Gus the cat. The girls might be ready for anything, but Gus isn't quite the cat they were expecting.



Lamont Review:

This is a wonderful new series for emerging readers that centres on friendship, responsibility, family and community.

Best friends Lina and Cassie both desperately want a pet, especially with the Pet Parade coming up at school, and they will be the only ones who cannot enter!

So when they get the chance to pet sit a neighbour's cat called Gus, they see this as their way to prove to their families that they are responsible enough to have their own pet!

But Gus has more than a few surprises for them, and not all goes to plan... Can they work together to turn the situation around?

With an easy to read format, that also features delightful illustrations by Lisa Flanagan, I am sure that readers aged 6 - 10 will thoroughly enjoy this title and be keen to read others in the series.

Reviewed by Sam

Teacher Notes prepared by the publisher are available for this series on our website.

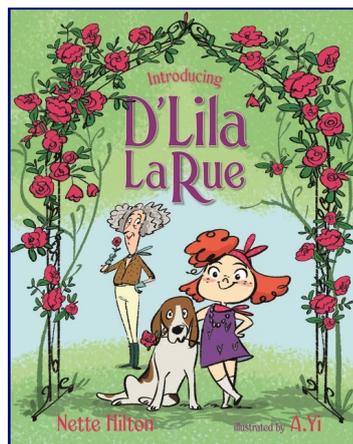
Introducing D'Lila LaRue

By Nette Hilton & Illustrated by A. Yi
Publisher: Walker Books
ISBN 9781760652562 SCIS: 1999341
\$14.99

Blurb:

Meet D'Lila LaRue, whose charm and pizzazz will leave readers wanting more!

D'Lila LaRue lives in the smallest house with the neatest fence and the rosiest garden in the street with her trusty sidekick, Nanny-Anny (who is probably very old but it doesn't matter). This trilogy of stories features D'Lila and Nanny-Anny sharing many fun-filled adventures, whether it's by building an award-winning rose garden, becoming an artist, or attending a favourite play. Even if things don't go exactly to plan...



Lamont Review:

This is a beautiful little early chapter book that follows the adventures of D'Lila Wichita Brigitta LaRue and her Nanny-Anny.

Her parents are Very Important People and are always away, but Nanny-Anny is a wonderful substitute.

With three individual short stories in the book, it is easily broken down into small reading bites.

The characters are delightful and the three stories will have young readers enthralled. This is set to be an ongoing series, so the next instalment will be something for many emerging readers to eagerly await!

Reviewed by Rob

The Detective's Guide to Ocean Travel

By Nicki Greenberg

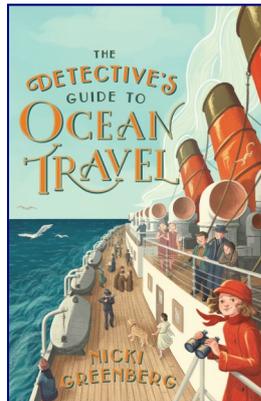
Publisher: Affirm Press

ISBN 9781922400673 SCIS: 1999442

\$17.99

Blurb:

The first middle-grade novel from award-winning author Nicki Greenberg, this book is a classic whodunnit mystery set aboard a grand ocean liner in the 1920s. With first-class glitz and glamour and a deliciously plotted intrigue featuring an uppity stage star, a missing diamond, a leopard and a loveable cast of child sleuths, *The Detective's Guide to Ocean Travel* is an exciting romp on the high seas, perfect for fans of *Murder Most Unladylike* and *The Good Thieves*.



Lamont Review:

Pepper Stark's Dad is Captain of the luxurious ocean liner Aquitania, and so he is only home for a week at a time.

Pepper recklessly decides to try to stow away, and when her father finds out just before the ship sails he is furious.

Eventually, her father relents and takes Pepper on the voyage to New York with him.

Adventure and mystery follow, as a famous diamond is stolen and Pepper and her new friends from the ship decide to investigate for themselves. Can they figure out who stole it?

This is a wonderful 'whodunnit' mystery that will keep readers thoroughly engaged. It's fun, fast-paced and full of amazing characters, including a trained monkey!

Will suit readers in Year 5 and up, especially those who love a good mystery.

Reviewed by Michelle

Teacher Notes prepared by the publisher are available for this title on our website.

My Australian Story: Six Seconds The Newcastle Earthquake

By Alan Sunderland

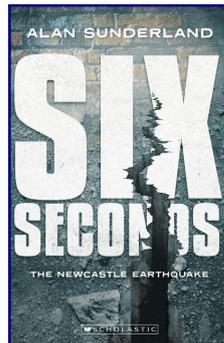
Publisher: Omnibus Books / Scholastic

ISBN 9781743838235 SCIS: 1993734

\$17.99

Blurb:

I could hardly see. There was dust and smoke everywhere. I was falling, sliding down into a gap that had opened up between parts of the collapsed building. It was dark and silent. All I could hear was the sound of my own breathing, and my beating heart thumping in my ears. Then I heard the cry again: the cry for help. Growing up by the beach in Newcastle in 1989 means footy, sandcastle competitions and school. Michael's dad's a journalist and his small world gets bigger as he starts to pay attention to the news. His interest turns into anxiety and obsession as Michael begins to see the world as a dangerous place that is fast collapsing around him. When the Berlin Wall comes down, most see it as a sign of change and freedom but Michael isn't convinced. But when an earthquake hits his home town, Michael discovers that the worst that can happen is not always as bad as your fears.



Lamont Review:

Michael and his family live in Newcastle and Michael spends his time going to the beach, school and following the new rugby league team. Michael starts to follow stories in the news, but he only remembers the bad ones. He starts to become anxious, and worried about everything being dangerous.

When the earthquake hits and Michael realises his Grandma is in danger, his fears are forgotten as he rushes to help her.

Set in 1989, Michael is a wonderful character, and this story gives readers a glimpse into a different time in Australia, and the fears that existed back then.

The six seconds of the earthquake seem to last forever, but Michael shows amazing resilience to help rescue his Grandma, despite the danger to himself. It proves that our fears for those we love will inspire us to do more than we thought we could.

A great story about overcoming your fears, and the love of family and friends. This will be perfect for readers in Year 6 and above.

Reviewed by Michelle