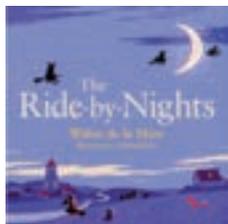


The Ride-by-Nights

Written by Walter de la Mare Illustrated by Carolina Rabei
Faber & Faber £12.99 ISBN 978-0571324224



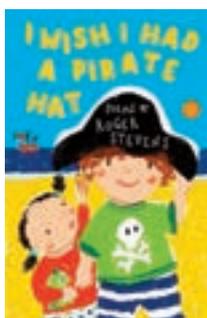
This is Carolina Rabei's second illustrated picture book based on a Walter de la Mare poem. Just as *Snow* captured the essence of a landscape encompassed by wintry weather, this gorgeous interpretation of the celebration of All Hallow's Eve is a beautiful realisation of the poem's vivid description of a coven of witches streaming across the night sky. What is particularly appealing is how the poem has

been brought up to date with the depiction of a family of children out trick-or-treating amidst a magical autumn landscape. The evocative sound effects of the poem, including the wonderful lines, "With a whoop and a flutter they swing and sway/And surge pell-mell down the Milky Way", are sumptuously imagined in double page spreads of silhouetted figures set against a sky full of stars. Meanwhile below, the children are busy having fun, decked out in costumes and bearing their tricks and treats. This is cleverly replicated by the witches performing some tricks of their own. A truly magical book and a must-have for any Halloween themed story time.

I Wish I Had A Pirate's Hat

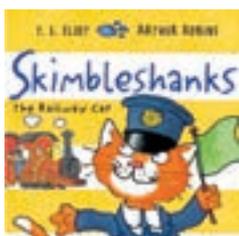
Written by Roger Stevens Illustrated by Lorna Scobie
Frances Lincoln £6.99 ISBN 978-1847806185

A cheerful collection of forty-five short, inviting poems ideally suited to younger children who are ready to take a step up from nursery rhymes. Getting the collection off to a buoyant start are three pirate poems – always a popular choice, with the collection widening out to other topics which are arranged in three sections: 'Fun Time', 'School Time' and 'Home Time'. Most of the poems are illustrated with simple, busy drawings that often create the impression of doodling along in response to the subject of the poem. The poems provide plenty of opportunity to share the joy of having fun with words and playing with sounds and rhythm. Roger Stevens runs the award-winning children's poetry site, *The Poetry Zone* where youngsters are encouraged to send their own pirate poems.



Skimbleshanks The Railway Cat

Written by TS Eliot Illustrated by Arthur Robins
Faber & Faber £6.99 ISBN 978-0571324835



Skimbleshanks is the third of the *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* to receive the Arthur Robins treatment, and it's a very smart, capable and slightly bossy, station master he has conjured up from this entertaining poem. Skimble is depicted keeping an eye on the goings on of the night mail train and foiling a potential robbery whilst gallantly tending to the needs of his

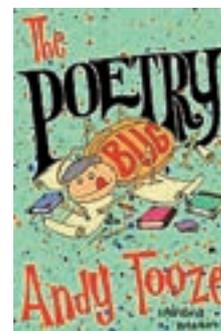
passengers – cleverly weaving little stories through the pictures, each inspired by Eliot's lively narrative. The colourful pictures are packed full of detail authentic to the world of the poem but with features that make it

recognisable for a fresh young audience of today. Please Mr. Robins, can we have another 'Eliot cat' poem soon?

The Poetry Bug

Written by Andy Tooze Illustrated by Martin Olsson
Matador £8.99 ISBN 978-1784625450

School teacher-turned performance poet, Andy Tooze, states that he is on a mission for children to "catch the poetry bug" with his first collection of poems for primary school pupils. The poetry is lively and upbeat with a range of subject matter that will interest and entertain a young audience. Following a short introductory set of poems enticingly headed as 'A Few to Get You Going', the collection branches out to examine various topics described as feelings and fads, and also includes poems 'For fans of Maths and Tongue Twisters!' Each poem is accompanied by a pertinent illustration which ensures this a very attractive title to dip into. A number of poems strike a more philosophical tone making this a well-rounded collection.



Spooky Poems

Written by James Carter and Brian Moses
Illustrated by Chris Garbutt
Macmillan £4.99 ISBN 978-1447272588

It doesn't matter what time of year it is, poems about ghosts and strange goings-on are sure to be a hit. This spooky collection from two of our most accomplished children's poets is suitably creepy and guaranteed to haunt the minds of its young readers. From 'An Abandoned Theme Park at Midnight' to 'Can Ghosts Kiss?' the moods deftly

change to explore the silly and the sinister side of the supernatural. Narrative poems sneak alongside rhythmic verses to provide a cauldron of tasty horror. The excellent cover design conjures up a sense of what lies within and there are some suitable "troubled" illustrations to accompany the poetry.

Poetry Pie

Written and illustrated by Roger McGough
Puffin £6.99 ISBN 978-0141356860

Once in a while a collection of poems for children comes along which deftly illustrates the unique way in which poetry can connect with its young readers. Here Roger McGough has assembled an eclectic and so very accessible group of poems that skilfully play with words, provide some laugh aloud moments and gently probe some meaty topics. His gift is the ability to compose a playful verse or entertaining riddle and transpose this into a thoughtful, observational poem which ponders on an aspect of everyday life. This quality can be found in the witty 'The Bigger the Clog', a reflection on current environmental dilemmas, and 'Alternative Santa' which questions some aspects of new technologies. The titular poem entices you to indulge yourself in the poetry with the refrain, "There's nothing as nice as Poetry Pie". It's an invitation you shouldn't resist!

