

Text rationales for Reception

Text	Rationale
Where the Wild Things Are	This classic text is widely considered one of the most important picture books for children and has had many different adaptations since first being published in 1963, including an animation, a live action film and even an opera. Multi-award winning, prolific author and illustrator Maurice Sendak has a distinctive and iconic style and this text is the one he is most known for. This book has links to PSHE, exploring behavioural expectations, coping with strong emotions and the power of the imagination.
Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain	This gorgeous, lyrical text, written in cumulative rhyme, retells the traditional story of a drought which sweeps across the Kapiti Plain, Kenya. K-pat, the herd boy, must find a way to end the drought and the suffering of the animals on the plain. Verna Aardema was an award-winning American author who published retellings of many African traditional tales. This book has strong links to geography (African geography, wildlife and understanding concepts such as drought), history and exposes children to African folktales.
Anansi the Spider	Anansi the Spider, a tale from the Ashanti, is a traditional folktale from Ghana. Anansi is one of the most iconic folktale characters in African culture and was the god that came to symbolise cunning, mischief and knowledge. Gerald McDermott was an expert in mythology and specialised in retelling African folktales from around the world, illustrating these in bold, geometric ways. The text was a Caldecott Honor Book in 1973 and remains an important text, expanding children's knowledge of folk tales from around the world.
Look Up!	This book has been hailed as an important picture book for positive representation of race, gender and culture. Good for children exploring self and others in terms of preferences and interests and works effectively as a starting point for both fiction and non-fiction outcomes, not least due to the links with science and the natural world that can be made.
I am Henry Finch	This text is an excellent story to encourage children to think about thinking, problem solving, identity and mindfulness. Henry Finch learns to quietly listen and become aware of his own thoughts. He learns to overcome feelings of self-doubt and awaken feelings of empathy and courage. Likewise, children can learn the importance of mindfully recognising their own thoughts and learn strategies of self-regulation and care.
Ning and the Night Spirits	This magical tale by author-illustrator Adriana Fong will help children to find their voices and face their fears. Children will empathise with the main character Ning as he navigates the path to confronting the things that frighten him most and there is a strong message about taking action, no matter how small you feel. Beautifully detailed illustrations help to tell the story and provide links to the expressive arts and design curriculum, as well as understanding aspects of other cultures around the world.
Halibut Jackson	From the prolific author and illustrator David Lucas, this book was 'favourite children's book of 2004' on Amazon and picked as one of the top 10 children's books of that year by both Publisher's Weekly and Child magazine in the US. The text has strong PSHE links, allowing space to discuss issues around social anxiety and being/accepting oneself. There are also strong links
The Magic Paintbrush	Julia Donaldson CBE was the Children's Laureate from 2011 – 2013. Her distinctive, lyrical style has become iconic and instantly recognisable for many. The Magic Paintbrush is a traditional Chinese folktale, dealing with themes of justice and integrity. This text will help to expand children's knowledge of traditional tales from around the world. It can also be a springboard to explore Chinese culture and celebrations for children, particularly Chinese New Year and the Chinese Zodiac.
Little Red	Little Red is an important retelling of the traditional tale Little Red Riding Hood, encouraging children to find joy in how the same classic story can be told in different, innovative ways. Lynn Roberts-Maloney has retold many traditional tales in novel ways, including Cinderella, an Art Deco Fairy Tale and Rapunzel, a Groovy 1970s Fairy Tale. David Roberts – her brother – has illustrated many of her texts and is a significant, award-winning illustrator also known for illustrating the Questioners series by Andrea Beaty. Little Red is bursting with historical 18th-Century English detail and has a strong female protagonist.
Super Milly and the Super School Day	This text has strong links to PSHE with a story that shines a light on one of the most important superpowers of all – kindness. This text entertainingly opens up discussions with children about everyday superheroes, roles in the community and how to make a difference in our daily lives. The text and illustrations are lively and colourful. It also features a strong, positive female role model.

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The Tiny Seed	This text is written by multi award-winning author and illustrator Eric Carle and, in his quintessential style, tells the humble but profound journey of a tiny seed. This text has strong links to science as young children learn about important concepts such as seed dispersal and the life cycle of a flower. This text could be read alongside others such as the Very Hungry Caterpillar and the Very Busy Spider among others.
I Will Not Ever Never Eat a Tomato	Lauren Child MBE is well-known for her Charlie and Lola series of books. This is the first book in the series and won the Kate Greenaway Award in 2001. It is an important text in helping parents and teachers discuss healthy eating with children as well as the importance of trying new things. Children can also learn about different food groups and their nutritional value.
The Extraordinary Gardener	This book by the award-winning author and illustrator Sam Broughton is a fantastic way to get children excited about gardening. This text has strong links to science as young children learn about important concepts such as seed dispersal, ecosystems, and the life cycle of a flower. This text also explores the importance of community. It could be read alongside the Sam Broughton lift-the-flap Hello, Mr/Mrs...series which are great early non-fictions texts about animals.
Weirdo	This charming story by two revered authors teaches children to be proud of who they are. With strong PSHE links, the text will open up discussions around individuality and help develop empathy as children recognise differences between themselves and others.
My Shadow is Pink	This is an important book which explores issues around identity and self-acceptance. It is a text that challenges gender stereotypes and is inclusive in terms of representing the LGBTQ+ community. It can also be read in conjunction with My Shadow is Purple which explores non-binary gender.
So Much	When this book was first published in 1994, it won the Smarties Book Prize; the Kurt Maschler Award and the WHSmith and She Magazine Award. The book was voted one of the 100 best children's books by Time Out in 2016. The book also represents authentically the language and cadence of an Afro-Caribbean family. Trish Cooke is a multi-talented writer whose work crosses many disciplines including radio, television and theatre.
The Night Pirates	A fun, lyrical bed-time tale about a pirate adventure. A great book encouraging children to enjoy poetic rhyme and rhythm in language. As there are girl pirates aboard, this book has strong female role models and links to history. A book that would be ideal to explore pirates, maps, boats and treasure with children.
And Tango Makes Three	This is an important text which will allow children to explore all different kinds of families. The main characters challenge traditional stereotypes and the story is inclusive in representing the LGBTQ+ community. The fact that it is a true story also adds authenticity to the tale! Additionally, children can discover concepts relating to the animal kingdom, including habitats, diet and how penguins look after their young.
Hairy Maclary from Donaldson's Dairy	This book is a wonderful start to a series of books by the multi award-winning author and illustrator Lynley Dodd. These books, which are full of adventure, encourage children to enjoy poetic rhyme and rhythm in language. Children can also begin to love and learn about the different dogs they see in the story and in their community as well as talk about pets.
Oi Frog!	From award-winning author Kes Gray and award-winning illustrator Jim Field, this book is part of a series of wonderful books, including Oi Dog! and Oi Puppies! all of which enjoy playing with language, rhyme and phonics in thoroughly silly and entertaining ways. A brilliant book for children to practise their phonics and deepen their understanding of rhyme as well discuss their favourite animals.
Izzy Gizmo	This is an award-winning, lyrical book that highlights the enjoyment that comes from problem solving, inventing and improving on past mistakes. Told through the eyes of Izzy Gizmo, a young, Black girl who loves inventing, this is a tale about perseverance and not giving up when things go wrong. Izzy is a positive female role model who encourages girls into STEM subjects.