

GREAT READS FOR BOYS

Here are a few suggestions of books to get your son reading over half term and anytime in the year.

Alex Rider which is an Anthony Horowitz's series about a 14-year-old boy recruited by the British secret service has proved phenomenally popular: there are nine novels, from 2000's Stormbreaker to Scorpius Rising. They are suitable for readers aged around 11 and over.

Harry Potter of course which no list would be complete without. JK Rowling's much-loved novels are about a teenage wizard battling the evil Voldemort, while getting to grips with Quidditch, strange spells and first love. Their addictive qualities are likely to have young boys (and girls, of course) wanting to devour all seven in a row, quickly putting them ahead in the competition.

Young Bond is covering similar ground to Alex Rider. Charlie Higson's books are suitable for ages 11 and over and act as a compelling prequel to Ian Fleming's Bond series: here, we meet Bond as a 13-year-old at Eton in the 1930s.

Horrid Henry is Francesca Simon's series about a perpetually naughty young boy and his butter-wouldn't-melt brother, Perfect Peter. Though unpopular in Simon's native US, over here we can be permitted to call them a phenomenon: 20 books, a number of joke books, a series for early readers, a film, a stage show and a CITV cartoon series. These are particularly good for reluctant readers are boys who are struggling with reading levels.

Flat Stanley is a classic children's book, written in 1964 by Jeff Brown, tells the decidedly surreal tale of a boy named Stanley Lambchop who is flattened in the night by a collapsed pin-board. He makes the best of the situation by using his newly flattened state to slide into locked rooms, be used as a kite, and even posted in a letterbox. A lot of boys are still not reading very well. This book is really likely to engage them.

Artemis Fowl is the anti-hero of Irish author Eoin Colfer's seven novels who is like the Blofeld to Higson's Bond: a teenage criminal mastermind named Artemis Fowl II

Diary of a Wimpy Kid Boys aged 11 and up will relate to American author Jeff Kinney's tales about a hopelessly uncool boy named Gregory. There are seven books in the series, which originated on the website FunBrain.com

Captain Underpants is Dav Pilkey's series of amusingly illustrated novels, two primary-school boys accidentally hypnotise their headteacher, turning him into the eponymous superhero. Exuberant fun for reluctant readers.

Holes is Louis Sachar's award-winning 1998 novel about a 13-year-old boy named Stanley Yelnats, sent to the juvenile detention centre Camp Green Lake after being wrongly accused of stealing a pair of shoes, will appeal to boys of 12 and over.

Jamie Johnson's 6 books by Dan Freedman is about a kid who exists & inhales football. He's got astounding ability & the longing to make it to the top. Any boy who loves football will get drawn in by this collection of books.

Goosebumps is a series of children's horror fiction novels written by R. L. Stine. They are a collection of stories that feature semi-homogeneous plot structures, with fictional children being involved in scary situations.