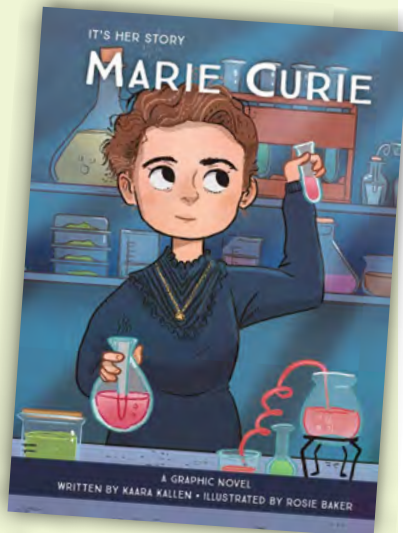


It's her story: Marie Curie – a graphic novel

Kaara Kallen, illustrated by Rosie Baker
London: Sunbird Books, 2021
45 pp. £6.45
ISBN 978 1 5037 5293 1

A beautiful text with stunning illustrations that will engage older primary children

This is a beautifully illustrated, glossy, graphic novel telling the story of one of the most important women in science – Marie Curie. The beauty of this graphic novel is most definitely the illustrations. They bring the story alive and the expressions on the characters' faces will allow all children to understand the different emotions they go through. The speech bubbles are written in language that younger children would understand with support and older children would engage with.



It tells an in-depth story of Marie Curie from her time as a student in her Polish school, her acceptance into a world-famous university, her marriage, children, degrees, Nobel Prizes and her eventual death at the age of 66. It is full of inspirational quotes and stories to show children just how much can be achieved if you believe in your abilities and work hard! *'We must believe that we are gifted for something and that this thing, at whatever cost, must be attained.'*

This would be perfect as a guided-reading text or a reading-for-pleasure novel for children aged 9–11, with a wonderful link to the science curriculum, looking at inspirational scientists. It would have been useful if the book contained a glossary of terms to help younger children access the text, but this could be a lovely post-read activity for children to complete. There are also many terms that children in primary school do not need to know in primary science, for example the elements of the periodic table.

Overall, this is a beautiful text that would engage older primary children, with stunning illustrations, that tells the remarkable and inspiring story of Marie Curie's life.

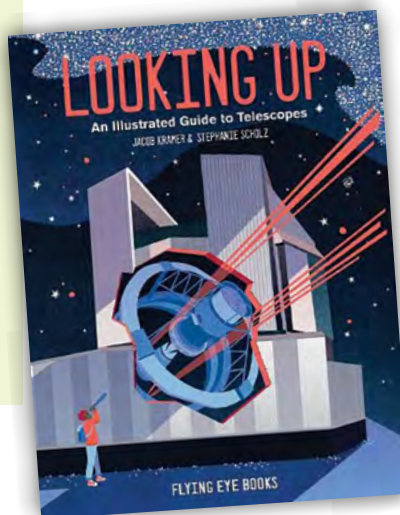
Hayley Collins

KS2 leader, All Saints' CE Primary School

primary classroom, particularly when they studying space. It explains things in an easy-to-understand way and the analogies make it accessible for children. For example: *'light does not pool in the bottom of a mirror like water in the bottom of a bucket. When light touches a mirror, it bounces off again.'* From a literacy point of view there are many further examples of similes so some good cross-curricular links could be made.

The book is awash with colourful illustrations by Stephanie Scholz, which enhance what is already an interesting book. The illustrations support the written text well and this makes it far more accessible for primary-aged children. The fact that each page is not overburdened with information is good too and will appeal to more reluctant readers.

There is a lot of scientific vocabulary, usually explained on the page where it occurs. A glossary would, however, have been beneficial to highlight the more scientific words, such as reflecting, infrared, quasars and pulsars, as getting children to use scientific terminology is a very important and they often love using more unusual scientific words. There is an index, but I feel a glossary would have helped more.



children will love this book, from its fantastic illustrations to the interesting facts; it is a book that can be used for research or just for enjoyment.

Philippa Moore

Year 3 teacher and science coordinator, Seamer and Irton Primary School

The bridge to Sharktooth Island: a Challenge Island STEAM adventure: 1

Sharon Duke Estroff and Joel Ross, illustrated by Mónica de Rivas
Berkeley, Ca: West Margin Press, 2021
128 pp. £13.45
ISBN 978 1 51328 953 3

An engaging context for STEAM and technological 'design and build' problem-solving



Children aged 7–10 years old will enjoy reading this story, which is the first in a series, involving three children aged around 10 who find themselves on Challenge Island surrounded by sharks. They find clues in a treasure chest and work together to plan a way to safety. The story gives a context for problems for children to solve together using creative STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics) and the illustrations help children to follow the story. At the end of the book there is a section with relevant STEAM activities to link to the thrilling adventure story and bring it and STEAM alive; however, to solve the problem you can only use what is in your treasure chest!

Key features include: an engaging storyline that children will love; after-story activities that can be done at home (build your own bridge, mix up a blue slime ocean, design ferocious paper sharks) and a list of shark facts.

Looking up: an illustrated guide to telescopes

Jacob Kramer, illustrated by Stephanie Scholz
London: Flying Eye Books, 2021
56 pp. £14.99
ISBN 978 1 91249724 9

Upper primary level children will love this book, from its

fantastic illustrations to all the interesting facts

Most children love the idea of space and space travel; this non-fiction hardback book looks predominantly at telescopes throughout the years and in different places around the world, but also at sight, colours and even X-rays, and will enhance their curiosity even more. From a teacher's point of view, it is a good resource for a

All in all,

children will love this book, from its fantastic illustrations to the interesting facts; it is a book that can be used for research or just for enjoyment.

Philippa Moore

Year 3 teacher and science coordinator, Seamer and Irton Primary School

This would be useful for forest schools and outdoor learning, for the application of technology and problem solving by building small models of bridges or larger models outside. If the activities are scaled up in size for a whole class, further risk assessment will be necessary, including where supervision is needed.

This book could provide a useful support for teachers and parents to involve children in STEAM and an engaging context for further STEAM and technological 'design and build' problem-solving. (Note, as an American publication, the units of measurement used are inches rather than metric units.)

Mandy Hodgskinson CSciTech
School Improvement Officer, East Riding of Yorkshire Council

Rosie discovers a seashore summer

Madeleine Carroll, illustrated by Nicola Harris
Surrey: Isaiah Books, 2021
36 pp. £7.99
ISBN 978 1 91639635 7

A delightful and valuable resource to use as a basis for learning, not only in science but across the curriculum

This is an engaging and thoughtfully written fiction book for younger primary-aged children. Together with Rosie and her grandad, readers are invited to spend a day at the seashore uncovering the many natural 'treasures' it has to offer. Alongside vibrant illustrations by Nicola Harris, the author uses imagery-rich language to paint a vivid picture of the setting, plants and animals that Rosie discovers on her journey around the beach and harbour. In addition

to the story itself, the book ends with a 'Scavenger Hunt Challenge Chart' and poem, which further encourage readers to go and investigate the seashore for themselves.

Through her effective description and use of the senses, Madeleine Carroll arouses children's curiosity about the world around them as they step into Rosie's shoes. Thus the story begins 'Gulls wheeled and soared in happy Summer song when Rosie woke to a fine, grey drizzle, and the sea's smiling splashes, on the first day of her holiday'. This appeal to the senses is apparent throughout the text and makes it a helpful tool for exploring with children the many ways to observe, investigate and experience natural phenomena, from walking on 'seaweed that crackled and popped underfoot' to dancing in time to the 'rhythm of the waves'. The engaging text is further enhanced through the use of porthole-shaped pictures on each page, with key descriptive phrases picked out and written around the edge, such as 'seashells that sparkled with a myriad of colours'.

As well as evocation of the different senses, there are more explicit references throughout the book that can be used to support and develop children's scientific knowledge and understanding, from the observation of the 'sun ... drying the cobbles' after 'the drizzle had stopped' to Grandad's explanation that 'Starfish are echinoderms which means "spiny skinned"!'. In this way, readers are also introduced to some examples of challenging scientific vocabulary. At one point, Rosie even opens up her 'dog-eared beach guidebook' to find out more information about crabs. Though it is only a minor negative, there was perhaps potential here to include pictures of pages from Rosie's non-fiction book and to interweave labelled drawings of the animals and plants she encounters throughout the story, as a means of further emphasising and enhancing the science elements of the narrative.

In summary, I would recommend this book as a delightful and valuable resource to use as a basis for learning, not only in science

but across the curriculum in subjects such as literacy, geography and art. In terms of the target age-range, while the pictures and excerpts from the story might be used effectively as stimuli for younger children, the range of vocabulary and quantity of text on some pages make this book more appropriate for 6- to 7-year-olds.

Naomi Ward

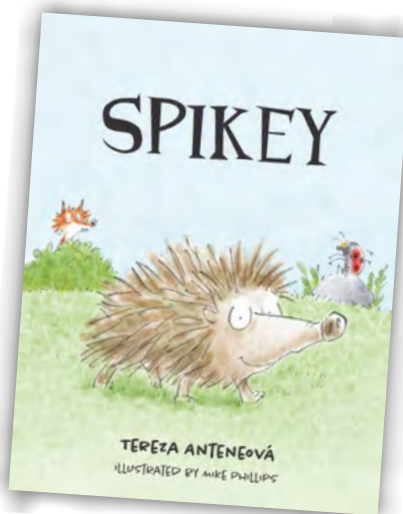
Year 3 Teacher, Science and Languages Leader, Priory Primary School, Hull

Spikey

Tereza Anteneová, illustrated by Mike Phillips
Portsmouth, Hants: Compass-Publishing UK, 2021
72 pp. £9.99
ISBN 978 1 913713 53 9

An engaging and beautifully illustrated story, for young readers about 'Britain's favourite wild mammal'

This fictional story is told by 'Grandma Hedgehog' about her grandson 'Spikey'.



The introduction gives an informative background to the decline in the hedgehog population and the work being carried out by the People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) and the British Hedgehog Preservation Society (BHPS) via the 'Hedgehog Street' campaign.

The story then begins and there is an explanation of the two sets of questions that appear on each page. The left-hand side has questions aimed at younger readers, which could be asked by an adult, with

the right-hand side allowing older readers to, 'answer, think about or discuss'. The delicate and animated pictures by Mike Phillips bring the story alive, and would help children answer the questions. There is a good selection of questions, including easy-retrieval ones such as 'How do you recognise a fox?' and 'What colour are they?', to more thought-provoking ones such as 'When would you help someone who had not helped you?'

The well-written and descriptive story sees Spikey overcoming adversity in his early life and braving the world on his own. Spikey learns about rose plants and aphids and meets a ladybird, a fox and a hound dog. This teaches us about food chains. Spikey has to use his new-found bravery to avoid being eaten, so he can ask for help in returning the ladybird to his family. There is plenty of science to discuss, but the story makes the most of a moral lesson.

Teachers could use this multifaceted story as a cross-curricular learning tool and I could see it being used as a shared-reading text, or a stimulus for some exciting scientific writing. Equally, it could be used in a PSHE lesson on resilience, overcoming adversity and friendship. With a linked website (www.thelittlehedgehog.com), this book is just the start for a huge teaching and learning topic.

Kathryn Jagger

Assistant Headteacher and Science Lead, Spotland Primary School, Rochdale

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