



STAY AT HOME!

Poems and Prose for Children

Living
in
Lockdown



Illustrated by
Darren Gate

Edited by
Joan Haig

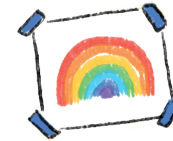
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Edited by Joan Haig
Illustrated by Darren Gate



cranachan



THIS BOOK IS
DEDICATED TO ALL THE
CHILDREN WHO STAYED
AT HOME.

THANK YOU.

(ontents)

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Lockdown Haiku I by Joseph Lamb

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Dear (children,

This book is about lockdown—the good bits, the bad bits, and the ugly bits when nobody could get any toilet roll. It's about things you might have discovered along the way—like the alien on your roof or how to use Zoom (or even 'BroomZoom')—and about what we don't miss (pollution and cars) and what we do (birthday parties, grandparents, and, yes, even school dinners!).

Books can help you escape to other, often imaginary places. But books, like this one, can also help you to deal with the real world. Every one of the poems, stories and pictures here has been specially created for you—each and every one of you—to do just that.



The creators all live in Scotland, but you don't have to be from Scotland to enjoy this book: if there is anything we have learnt during this global pandemic, it is that we are all connected.

Wherever you are, we hope you find something here to help you reflect on your time in lockdown, when billions of people all around the world were told to *Stay at Home!*

Joan

Joan Haig
Editor

Anne

Anne Glennie
Publisher

The Beginning...

Lockdown began in the UK on the evening of
Monday 23rd March 2020
when everyone was advised to
stay at home.



Lockdown Haiku I

Skies full of storm clouds
Will be greeted like summer
When lockdown is done.

Joseph Lamb

Looking Up



LOCKDOWN LIFE

I'm locked down but looking up
At a blackbird dancing on a chimney pot
At a willow tree waving its arms at me
At a cloud drifting by with a dream on top.
Be sure to look up, there's a lot to see.

I'm locked down but looking out
At the garden bluebells blueing and belling
At a fern unfurling against the wall
At Spring—the word nature is spelling.
Be sure to look out and welcome it all.

I'm locked down but tuning in
To a world that's suddenly quiet and slow
But the space in my mind is opening wide
For all my thoughts and dreams to grow
Until ready to plant in the world outside.

I'm locked down but looking up
At the evening star and the moon above
And a world that's still full of hope and love.

Diana Hendry

Virus fact file

- ☀ A virus is a very small piece of organic matter, far smaller than bacteria.
- ☀ Viruses are not really living things. On their own they cannot grow or reproduce. When viruses infect a plant or animal, they get inside its cells and use the cells' machinery to multiply themselves.
- ☀ We have only known about viruses for about 120 years. In the very late nineteenth century (1800s) scientists realised that there was something smaller than bacteria that could make people sick, but they could not see what it was.
- ☀ You cannot see a virus through a regular microscope: you need a special electron microscope to see it and these were not invented until 1931.
- ☀ There are millions of different kinds of viruses on Earth but only around 200 of these can make people sick. However, new viruses appear all the time and some, like Covid-19, are dangerous.
- ☀ Vaccines are substances that a nurse or doctor can give to protect people from getting sick from certain viruses. Historians think the first vaccines were used in China and India in the 1500s against smallpox, long before anyone knew about viruses! Europeans learned about the process in the early 1700s, but it was not until after 1880 that vaccines for many common diseases started to be developed.
- ☀ Medical scientists are always searching for new vaccines to protect people.

Lawrence Dritsas

Dear Grandpa

Dear Grandpa,

Mum says you're not feeling very well and that I should write to you to cheer you up.

I think that's the worst idea ever, because my life has become so mega boring in lockdown, you would nod off after a couple of sentences!

Like, for instance, school at home is a zillion times worse than real school, cos my new teacher is MUM (and she is not cut out for teaching, as she says herself about 30 times a day) and cos my friends aren't here. They're all stuck in their own houses, too.

The WORST PART is that we are missing our residential trip, Sports Day, our high school visits and all the other P7 stuff. It really sucks, so I'm not going to write about all that, you'll be glad to know.

Instead, I'm going to write about LAL (Life After Lockdown), when everything is going to go back to normal, but better than normal, because now we know what we've been missing (going to the chippy's, footy at the park, visiting our grandparents).

The first thing Mum and me are going to do is come and visit you. We are going to bring cakes. I've been learning to bake in lockdown, cos Mum says baking counts as

maths, literacy and Food Technology—and even PE if I stir the mixture hard enough. Sticky toffee muffins are my speciality, so I'll bring those, and maybe some banana loaf.

You'll be feeling better, so you and me can walk down to the shops, cos they'll all be open again and you can buy your Daily Record. I'll get a Fab, cos it'll be summer (I hope). After that, we'll walk to the river to feed the ducks.

When we used to go down to the river, before the lockdown, the water was always a bit scuzzy, but I bet, in Life After Lockdown, the abandoned shopping trolleys will have been wheeled back to Asda and the litter will have been cleared up. And the water will be clean and sparkling and full of little fish darting over shiny pebbles. Maybe we'll see a heron, or an otter, or a pod of dolphins.

Anyway, the ducks will gather round, quacking their heads off and we'll feed them stale banana loaf until it's all finished and it's time to head back to the care home.

When we get there, you'll say, '*I enjoyed that wee walk*' and I'll say, '*Me too*'.

See you soon, Grandpa.

Lots of love, Sam x

Lindsay Littleson

We Put a Rainbow in the Window

There's a virus going around
and it makes some people sick.

It's so tiny
you need a microscope to see it.
Doctors and scientists
are trying to find a cure.

We don't know
how many people have it
but there are some
who are more vulnerable.

Vulnerable means more likely
to get sick if they get it.

And for their sake we're keeping
our distance from people
we don't live with.

Birthdays will be different
this year; we can't have a party
with our friends

and we can't visit grandparents.
But we can video call.

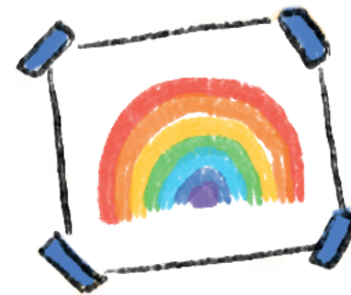
We can ride our bikes
or go for a walk in the park.

But the playgrounds
are closed, just like school.

But we will find fun things to do;
reading, cooking, and P.E. with Joe.

We put a rainbow in the window
because we know
after the storm the sun will follow.

Dean Atta



I Want Oot

I want oot. It isnae fair.
Stey in the hoose? I dinnae care.
Ma hame's oot there
In the fields, in the park
Trailin back mawkit lang efter dark,
No stuck here forever daein stupit hame wark.

I'm eicht, ma sister's fower.
We've nae fun, nae joy, nae richts, nae power.
When, can somebody tell me, when will aw this be ower?

Matthew Fitt

Rory's ~~lockdown~~ Loo Roll Diary

My class are keeping 'Life on Lockdown' diaries for a month. I might be wrong (I won't be) but I'm guessing my family will live with lockdown the same way we live with everything else: disastrously.

Week Before Lockdown

Status: *Frustrated*



We're rationing the toilet roll and lockdown hasn't even started. Why? Because Dad went panic buying like everyone else, but instead of coming home with mountains of loo roll and enough spaghetti to fill a wheelie bin, he bought three bottles of wok oil and a multi-pack of kitty treats. We don't even own a wok! Or a cat.

Now there's no toilet roll for a hundred miles, so I spent the afternoon peeling apart the '*triple layers of soft cotton weave comfort*' of our last few rolls into separate layers of practically see-through paper. Nobody's thanked me for this yet. They will, dear diary. They will.

**** News Update ****

Dad's moved Gran in before lockdown starts. Disaster now guaranteed.

Lockdown Week 2

Status: *Embarrassed*

23 Pineview Crescent now has an OTRM: ‘*Official Toilet Roll Monitor*’.

This is how it happened: Mum kicked Gran out of the kitchen after she mistook a shepherd’s pie in the freezer for rhubarb crumble. Shepherd’s pie and custard are not a combination I ever want to try again! Mum told Gran to make herself useful ‘*anywhere but the kitchen*.’ So now Gran sits all day outside the bathroom at a picnic table with some toilet roll and a chart. She only let me take two sheets in this morning! But then she passed an extra piece under the door, shouting: ‘*That sounds like a three sheet poo, Rory!*’

If she does this with Mum, there will be trouble.

Lockdown Week 3

Status: *Desperate*

The last roll has disappeared.

Chief suspect: Cedric the Invincible. My sister Jess denies all knowledge but her hamster once shredded three volumes of my Harry Potter collection, so the magic wand of suspicion points firmly to his cage.

I now have no choice but to conduct a ‘*Toilet Roll Substitute Experiment*’. This I do for desperate people everywhere.

Suggested experimental toilet roll alternatives so far: newspaper; leaves from the rubber plant; pages from our giant dictionary; lasagne sheets (cooked—obvs!). I said I might try the dictionary first, which dad said was ‘*anarchic*’. I looked ‘*anarchy*’ up in the dictionary, but most of the ‘A’s have been ripped out, so I think someone else has already started their own experiment.

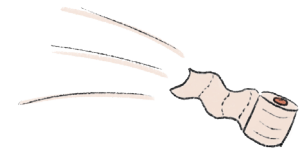
Gran told us that the Romans used a communal sponge-on-a-stick to wipe their bums whilst sitting in their communal toilets, which is wrong on every level.

**** News Update ****

Mum has put the kitchen sponges in a padlocked box!

Lockdown Week 4

Status: *Relieved*



The shops have loo roll!

Gran immediately resigned as OTRM and is now hosting daily ‘*Lockdown in Lycra*’ stretchercise sessions in the middle of Pineview Crescent! Even Dad’s joining in, which—as mum says—is finally giving everyone something to smile about.

Justin Davies

A Witch's Guide to Staying at Home

If you're a young witch, you may not have experienced a pandemic before. In the *Great Locust Plague of 638*, we had to stay inside for 149 ½ years, or risk losing our ability to fly.

In the *Gigantic Sneezing Fit of the Eleventh Century*, we were forced to wear earmuffs, and we could only leave our lair to visit the witch doctor.

Now, we face new challenges, but to help make the most of your time in lockdown, we've prepared these handy tips for stay-at-home witches.

1. Instead of seeing your friends in person, you'll have to have BroomZoom meetings for your coven. Maybe you can start a book or film club, where you talk about how unrealistic the depictions of so-called 'witches' are—nothing like real witches.
2. When you start your BroomZoom meetings, don't forget to use the universal Sign of the Witch so your mates will know it's really you: put your index fingers and thumbs together above your head to make a triangle while making a hissing sound.
3. If the shops run out of eye of newt or yak's blood, just make your own magical snacks and potions.

Who needs fairy cakes when you can have witch cakes? Use green icing to match our lovely skin colour, and stick a triangle-shaped tortilla chip on top for a hat. Make witches' brew by adding a pinch of chilli powder to hot chocolate—this will definitely give you dragon breath.

4. Put together a *Book of Spells and Incantations* that you can recite while you're disinfecting surfaces for the eleven millionth time. For example, here's one to turn your enemy's toenails a more interesting shade:

***If you encounter someone mean
This will turn their toenails green.***

And here's a spell guaranteed* to make someone burp uncontrollably:

***Judder, quiver, quake and squelch:
Now they can't suppress a belch.***

(*Terms and conditions apply)

5. You may be limited to only one flight a day outdoors, but after you land, you can stick out your broomstick in front of you to remind people to stay at least two metres away.

6. Make up a secret code that only witches can read by replacing every second letter with a 'w', so that 'hello' becomes *hwewlwlwow* and 'witch' becomes *wwiwtwcwhw*. You can also create a whole new spoken language by inserting 'ab' before every vowel in a word, so 'run' becomes 'rabun', 'hello' becomes 'habellabo', and 'Abigail' becomes 'Abababigabail'. You can try this with other sounds too, like 'ip' or 'ub'. If non-witch members of your family ask about your secret language, you can just shake your head sadly and say, 'It's a witch thing. You wouldn't understand.'

But don't forget the most important advice of all:

***wash your wands, and don't touch the wart
on your nose!***

THE WITCH ADVISORY BOARD

Elizabeth Ezra

The Box

Inside the box
A worn, velvet mitten
A shy, red fox,
And a sly, white kitten.
An elephant lick,
A baby's breath,
An ivory toothpick,
And a cure for death.
A sheep's secret smile,
A wishing star,
A golden mile,
And a shiny, blue car.
A half-eaten date,
The ocean's roar,
The fresh smell of paint
And unopened door.
A golden pear,
Dorothy's red shoes
A silent prayer,
And yesterday's news.
The music from Bohème,
A broken heart on the mend,
And a long, long, list poem
Without an end...

Raman Mundair

Ma Name is Billy Baxter

Ma name is Billy Baxter—will ye spare a thocht fir me?
Ah'm sittin daein nothin here in classroom 7B!
Yir thinkin, 'Bill, yir haverin—the school's are aa shut doon!
Fir you, maybe, I wid agree—but nae this lucky loun!

Ah ken aboot yir troubles, how this isolation's lame.
The battle fir the broadband fan yir mither works fae hame.
At least yir steyin far ye bide—fir me, it's ten times worse,
Cos Mammy is the Jannie, and ma faither is a nurse!

They say ma da's a hero, an ah widna say they're wrang,
They're actin like it's news, but me? I've kent it aa along.
He gets a clap on Thursday nicht, and though that's pretty cool,
Fae nine tae three, it's only me thit his tae ging tae school!

Ye see, the school is open—fit they cry a 'Cooncil Hub',
fir bairns ae frontline workers—that's an affa lonely club.
So Mammy hus tae open up in case there's mair tae come,
But normally there's naebody, just me sat on ma bum.

Ye'd think it micht be cool—an empty school could be a laugh!
Well, aye—fir half a minute, then the novelty wears aff.
Ah'm even here at weekends—it's a national disgrace,
An dinna get me startit on the Easter Holidays!

Ah'm gettin texts fae Tony, gettin Snapchat fae Simone,
An Connor, Kate an Corey, weel, thir niver aff the phone.
But here, twa metres distant fir tae keep us safe an well,
There's Miss McGhie, as bored as me, just waitin fir the bell!

We'll try tae keep it busy—hae a workoot wi Joe Wicks,
Then head oot tae the playground, drink some juice an share a Twix,
But back intil the classroom far the minutes flow like glue,
an checkin 'Teams' on Microsoft fir anything to do.

Ah s'pose ma mind can wander fan ah'm here aa by maself,
Ah've hud a look at ivvry book that's sittin on the shelf.
Ah'm gettin braw at doodlin, ma writing's gettin neater,
An me an Miss play Countdown an ah nearly eywis beat her!

Ah'm really no complainin—if ma spirits need a lift,
Ah can thank ma lucky stars it's no a fifteen hoor shift.
Ah huv tae dae ma bit, ah canna let it brak ma heart,
We'll get through this thegither, just bi stayin far apart.

But ach, ah miss ma buddies, wish them here ah must confess,
Although they huv tae stey at hame tae help the NHS.
So bide awa, but spare a thocht fir this unlucky fool,
The ainly loun fa's lockit doon inside the primary school!

Alan McClure

The Lockdown Haircut

I crouch in the corner, shaking.

Mum takes a step towards me. The snippy-shiny thing is in her hand.

‘Now, come on, it’s not that bad,’ she says in that soothing voice that spells trouble. ‘And you need a haircut, no doubt about that. All you need to do is stay still. I’m just going to...’

Speed is my only hope! I scramble up and try to wriggle past her and out into the garden, but she is having none of it. She throws out an arm, blocking my way.

‘Whoa!’ Nothing soothing about her voice now. She glares at me. ‘All right, have it your way! Hey, Ella, give me a hand for a minute. Just hold him by the shoulders, here.’ Mum rolls up her sleeves, but I can see Ella rolling her eyes instead.

What is there to say? I just whimper in my distress and snap from time to time while Mum and Ella shuffle after me through an ever-growing ocean of hair. Mine.

Eventually, I’m too tired to fight back against the snippy-shiny thing or the buzzy-scratchy thing Mum plugs into the wall and uses on the back of my neck and around my ears. Nobody speaks very much now, but I can feel their frustration and smell their sweat.

I’m not good with knowing the time, but it seems to take forever. Isn’t it time for dinner? I give Ella ‘the look’. Normally Ella and I understand each other without

words, but today she is awfully slow on the uptake. Finally, she gets it.

‘Mum, isn’t that enough?’

Mum looks me up and down. ‘It’s not great. Wait...’

She trims off the hair above my eyes and—wow, I can see again! I take in the whole kitchen which doesn’t seem quite as frightening anymore.

Ella gives me one of her gentle hugs, the kind I like best, and ruffles the top of my head. ‘See, that wasn’t so bad, was it? Don’t you feel so much better without all the tuggies? And you were brave, weren’t you? Hardly made a sound, did he Mum?’

Mum says *pfft* and reaches for the broom, which is scarier than the snippy and the buzzy things put together. I’m out of here!

Out in the garden I can breathe again. Ella throws me a tennis ball and I chase it, wagging my tail.

Until I hear Mum’s voice once more.

‘Ella! Get in here! You’re next, remember!’

Barbara Henderson



The Worst Birthday Ever

Today, Ivy was supposed to have a party but the virus ruined that. She knew it was serious and that there was nothing for it but to stay at home and sulk. No party, no presents, no laser tag. No giggles with her mates or sipping on blue and red slushies and having BRAIN FREEZE! It was officially going to be the worst birthday ever!

Ivy felt like crying. She would stay in bed all day and hide under her duvet until it was over.

A knock on the door made her jump. She knew it was Liam. He banged so hard she thought his fist would come through.

‘I’ve got something for you!’

‘Go away! I’m not in the mood!’ she shouted.

‘Come on, Ivy. Can I come in?’ Liam was the last person she wanted to see. Her oafish big brother always ‘borrowed’ her special pencils—the ones that smelled like Cola—and he hogged the TV playing Xbox. He probably wanted to tease her.

‘We’re here too,’ Dad added, giving a lighter knock.

‘All right then, come in!’ she replied. She didn’t expect they would have gotten her anything good. The shops were all closed and Mum had lost her cleaning job.

The door opened wide and Liam stood there with a tray piled high with stack of pancakes covered in chocolate sauce and marshmallows. The wonderfully sweet smell wafted up Ivy’s nostrils. An unlit candle was stuck in the middle. He walked over to the side of the bed. Mum and Dad appeared behind him.

Dad held up a banner: Happy Birthday to Ivy 11 Today! He’d used papers ripped from the Chinese supermarket calendar and stuck them to a big piece of wall paper.

‘I made it myself,’ said Dad, grinning.

Mum came up behind holding her laptop. There were loads of little boxes all over the screen. Ivy couldn’t see clearly so she put on her glasses. She blinked. The boxes were filled with the faces of her classmates. Her best friends Nathan and Lisa were there dressed up as Pokémon. They hadn’t forgotten her.

Liam put down the pancakes on Ivy’s bedside table. Dad lit the candle. Mum placed the laptop on the bed.

‘Happy Birthday to you!’ everyone chorused holding up birthday posters. Ivy blew out the candle. A golf ball-sized lump arose in her throat. She hadn’t been forgotten after all.

Mum pulled out a red envelope.

‘There’s money inside for you, Ivy,’ Mum said.

‘You didn’t need to, Mum,’ said Ivy.

‘We all left presents outside your front door on our daily walk,’ said Nathan from his virtual box.

‘Liam sorted it all out for you,’ said Lisa.

‘It was Liam’s idea?’ Ivy asked, looking at her brother. His face went the shade of plum sauce. Ivy moved the plate of pancakes to one side and gave Liam a hug.

‘Thanks,’ said Ivy.

‘No bother,’ he replied.

Ivy smiled. ‘Thanks everyone! You’re all amazing!’

Just Another School Day

It's my turn to drive the school bus today. I'm not really a morning person, and anyway I'm only eleven, so I fall asleep twice and crash into our school gates, but all the kids are still in one piece when we arrive, so I do a better job than Jenny did yesterday. I get twenty points for effort and only minus five for breaking the road rules.

I'm still trying to reverse out of the mangled gates when the bell goes, so that means I'm last off the bus and have to sprint to our classroom. I knock over a small boy and lose another five points for running right over him, but at least I don't lose fifteen for being late.

Maths and spelling go OK cos our usual teacher takes those, but the art class is a bit of a disaster as Connor's been put in charge. He pours way too much paint into a bucket the size of a paddling pool, and Mia nearly drowns when she trips and falls in. I make a pretty good painting of a tree while they're fishing her out, so I get another ten points for creativity.

I'm on the lunch rota today, but somehow I manage to get the recipe wrong and end up losing ten points for not following instructions when my pasta bake disintegrates into slush. I don't do as badly as Logan, though—he loses fifty points for poisoning three junior kids with his curry, and Eva loses every one of her points for setting the kitchen on fire.

Science in the afternoon starts off fun, cos Jack's taking the class and he likes mixing things up in tests

tubes. We investigate how much dynamite we need to blow our classroom door off its hinges, and it's all going brilliantly until I realise Jack's got the numbers wrong and he's used ten times the amount we need. Before I can warn him he lights the fuse, and I can only watch as it sizzles straight towards the giant pile of explosives.

Everything goes black, and I know I'm dead.

It's OK, though, cos it wasn't my fault and I won't lose any points.

'GAME OVER' flashes up on the screen, and I put down my controller and cheer when I see I've finished the school day ten points up.

'Alex, is that you done?' Mum calls up the stairs. 'Would you like a snack?'

'Coming, Mum!'

I check my homework log to see what class I'll have to teach tomorrow. Technology—yes! I can show everyone how to build a robot from loo rolls, empty bean tins and the motor from an old toy car. That'll earn me twenty points at least! I race down to the kitchen, grinning from ear to ear.

I thought being in lockdown and having to learn from home would be deadly dull, but this is turning out to be the best school year I've ever had.

Victoria Williamson

(an You see the Moon?)

'First comes the fasting and then comes the feasting.' That's what my Grandfather says every year as Ramadan comes to an end and we look to the night sky to see if Eid has arrived.

We put up decorations—moons and stars and lanterns all around the house.

Mum and Dad cook together in the kitchen. The house smells spicy and sweet all at the same time.

We make a plan for Eid day—wake up, shower, get dressed in our new clothes, go to the mosque for prayer, hug EVERYONE! Eat all the free sweets in the mosque and then come home and start to get ready for all the family to come over for dinner and games.

The night before Eid, just as it starts to get dark, the doorbell rings and I know who is on the other side before I even open it.

'ABU!' He picks me up and hugs me tight. He doesn't care that I'm getting too big for him.

'Let's go!' He takes my hand and we go outside, into the garden, and we stand underneath the blanket of stars looking for the tiny little line showing us the new moon. 'Look!' I point to the sky. 'Can you see it?'

He fixes his glasses and squints his eyes.

Laughing, he picks me up and shouts loudly, 'You found it!'

He hugs me tight. I love it when he hugs me tight. Then we run inside and we shout, 'Eid Mubarak! It's Eid! It's Eid!'

That's what we do every year.

Except... this year.

This year is different.

We put up the decorations.

The house smells like sugar and spice.

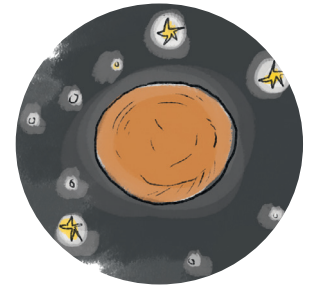
We make a plan for the next day—but there's no Eid prayer at the mosque. No hugs. No family coming over. No looking for the moon.

'Come on, let's go to the garden and look for the moon.' Dad waits at the door.

'I'm too old for that now, Dad.'

The doorbell rings.
I look at Mum.

Mum looks at me. 'Well go on, answer it.'



I know it can't be Abu. We're not allowed to see him; it's to keep him safe so that next year we can be together for Eid.

I open the door—I see him. I can't believe it.

Dad holds up his phone; Abu's face fills the screen. He's smiling at me, excited.

'Come on then! Get your shoes on, we've got a moon to find.'

You don't need to tell me twice. I run to the garden, motioning for Dad to keep up.

Abu stands in his garden, while I stand in mine.

It's quiet while we look at the sky.

'So, can you see the moon?'

I look at Abu and I can't help but smile as I nod.

It's all so different this year, but if lockdown didn't stop us seeing the moon together, then it won't stop us having fun on Eid day.

Raisah Ahmed



What Day is it Today?

The first week that we stayed at home, I woke up nice and early and I asked my Mum, 'What day is it today?'
'It's Monday,' Mum said, laughing, 'and it's almost 7.30, so come on, get up, it's not a holiday!'

My Mum had made a schedule for our fancy new 'home school', and at first I thought, 'yeah, this'll be exciting!'
An hour for maths, some art and crafts, then outside for PE, then we'd end the day with some creative writing.

By week two of the lockdown, I woke up feeling sleepy and I asked my Mum, 'What day is it today?'
Mum sighed and said, 'It's Tuesday, and it's nearly 8 o'clock, so get up 'cause I've got loads to do today!'

She seemed a wee bit grumpy, so I didn't want to argue but I wasn't in the mood for long division.
But Mum said that I had to do my schoolwork every day, and no way could I just watch the television.

By the third week of the lockdown things were starting to feel strange,
and I really missed my class and my best friend.
When I asked my Mum what day it was,
she simply muttered, 'Wednesday.'
I really wish this awful mess would end.

The fourth week of the quarantine, I woke up feeling weepy, and I sniffled, 'Mum, what day is it today?'
'It's Thursday, and it's raining, and it's after 9 o'clock, so get up!' she yelled, and turned and walked away!

I'd had enough. I shouted, 'No! I don't want to get dressed! What's the point if I'm not going out today?'
I'm sick of doing Sumdog, and there's nobody on Glow.
Can I not just keep my jammies on and play?'

That's when Mum got cross and said, 'You can't miss out on school,
the other mums will all tell the same story!'
But she must have seen the teardrop as it squeezed out of my eye,
'cause she held me tight and told me she was sorry.

We sat and talked for ages as the rain poured down outside, and I said I wished this thing would go away.
She cuddled me for ages, gave me tissues for my tears,
then she said, 'I think we're going to be okay.'

The next day when I woke up, I felt a wee bit better, so I asked my Mum, 'What day is it today?'
She snuggled in and said, 'It's either Thursday, or it's Friday, but it doesn't really matter either way.'

'Today could be a day for baking scones or bread or cakes.
Or a day to tend the flowers and the plants.
It could be a day for building dens, for painting, or for drawing.
We could dance around the garden in our pants!!'

So every day we try to stay as happy as we can,
and we listen when each other needs a moan.
And our schedule's out the window,
'cause we know it's more important
to be happy, to stay safe, and stay at home.

Kerry L Fleming

A'm Bored!

'A'm bored,' A said.
'A'm bored,' A yelled.
'A miss ma friends,
A miss ma school,
A miss the play park,
A miss ma granny,
A miss ma teacher,
A miss the fitba,
A'm bored!'

'Fine,' said ma.

A stopped yelling. Ma jaw fell doon. 'What did ye say?'

She said it again, 'fine.'

'It's no!' A yelled, 'A'm bored!'

Tick-tock, A'm glaring at the clock.
A'm having a tantrum, glowering, raging, stamping my
foot
And a' ma says is, 'fine!'
Then... 'When a wis young,' she begins...
Here we go... her childhood again! A groan and grunt,
But Ma's got a glint in her ee' and a smile on her face.
'A chalked the pavement,' she said, 'and skited stanes
Wobbled on roller skates, had a go spinning plates.

Oh aye, A walked the tightrope, stood on ma heid
Turned cartwheels, summersaults
Had a go making breed.'
'Oh aye?' said me.
'Aye!' said she. 'A read books, sang songs, made up
plays, and...'
'And what?'
'Played the triangle in a punk rock band!'
Then she started to giggle, and gi'ed me a tickle,
Then frae her pocket brought oot a packet o' chalks,
yellow, pink and green,
'Want tae play peevers, bored wee laddie?'

'Mibbe,' A said. Wit else wis there to do?
'Come on, son,' said ma, headin' oot the door. 'Off tae
the pavement and have some fun.'
So that's what A did—hop, jump, hop, jump, hop, hop,
jump.
Countin' and jumpin' and hoppin'... a' day long.
A'm the peevers champ, and ken what?
It's fine!

Janis Mackay

I am SO not bored

My Weekend (Homework Essay)
by Zander Jankulovski, Primary 6b

So Adam L said on text on Sunday that he's so bored in lockdown he's actually been playing with his big brother, Archie.

That must mean he's SERIOUSLY bored, because Archie is the most annoying being on this planet or any other planet and is more gross than a binbag full of bellybutton cheese.

They've been playing Spot The Pigeon to see who could count the most pigeons, which is the worst game anyone in history has come up with ever.

I said I wasn't bored because lockdown is AMAZING and four awesome things had happened even just that day, and he said, 'You're talking total pigeon poop, Zander!' and I said I wasn't and he asked me what could possibly have happened that was so awesome, so I told him.

1—My little sister Lily decided to go to New Zealand in the morning, because our cool Auntie Elsie lives there. She had two plans in case one didn't work. The first one was to fly, so we started to make a plane from two bits of wood for wings and Lily's old pram for the cockpit, but mum said we couldn't nail the wings to the pram OR use the leaf blower as an engine so we had to switch to Plan B. That involved digging through the earth to the other side. We dug as deep as our ankles but then it was lunchtime so we had to stop. We'll finish it tomorrow.

}}

2—Mum cut Dad's hair with his beard trimmer and an old pair of scissors from the kitchen drawer. It started OK, but then mum made a BIG mistake with the setting and shaved a very bald line into the back of Dad's head. She said it didn't matter because no-one would see it unless he walked into a room backwards but Dad didn't agree. He also said the scissors smelled of bacon, so it was a bit of a disaster but very funny to watch. Now he looks like he's been attacked by an evil hamster.

3—Dad and I made muffins because he found some flour in the back of the cupboard. It was seven months out of date but he said it would be fine. We made a special muffin for mum with LOADS of chilli powder and salt in it. When Mum took a bite her face went bright red and it looked like her head might actually explode and Dad said something about 'revenge' and laughed so hard he did a tiny squeaky bottom burp. Amazing!

4—We did a fashion show with our labradoodle, Dr Stinkles. His best outfit was Lily's Irish dancing dress with a blonde curly wig and massive sunglasses.

And that's the four things that happened on Sunday. Which is why I'm SO not bored.

Even if nothing happens today I can always look at Dad's haircut for a laugh.
Sorted.

Chae Strathie



}}



A Lockdown Field Study

by Dr Q Hogstone

Day 1

The world has gone into lockdown which means I've had to cancel my trip to South America. But I, renowned zoologist Dr Quentin Hogstone, will make do. Luckily, Mr Hogstone has accumulated a range of animals in our home to keep him company during my long absences. Perhaps this is what I need now: the quiet life of a domestic animal study.

Day 2

I have informed Mr Hogstone of my intentions and have promoted him from tea maker to field assistant. He didn't seem as delighted as I thought he'd be.

Day 5

This morning, I constructed a hide made from couch cushions in order to observe the cat (*Felis catus*) in her natural environment. My field assistant was not pleased I had 'messed up his tidy living room'. His yelling frightened away the test subject. Doesn't he understand my work is important?

Day 12

Today's study was going well until the dog (*Canis lupus familiaris*) lay down and began to whine. I have never seen such behaviour during my year with the wolves (*Canis lupus*) in Alaska. I had to abandon my post to enquire

if he was unwell, but then my field assistant produced a treat from his pocket. The whining immediately stopped.

Day 18

After further interference from my field assistant, I decided to take my study outside.

I've sent up a tent beside the bird feeder and will not return to the house until I have some useful data.

Day 19

I think the squirrels are mocking me.

Day 20

I have moved back inside: the isolation was beginning to do strange things to my mind.

Day 24

My field assistant keeps crickets (*Gryllus assimilis*), which seem much more manageable. I was halfway through a study on their feeding habits when he picked up their box and dropped my test subjects into a large tank. I didn't even know he had a bearded dragon (*Pagona vitticeps*) until it bit me as I was trying to rescue the insects from its hungry jaws.

Day 29

I've given up and am retraining as a botanist. Mr Hogstone has a greenhouse out back. Surely plants are much easier than this madness?



Caroline Logan

Walkies?

I've been sitting here for AGES with my lead in my mouth doing my best not to whine. I know that just makes them grumpy, and no one is paying any attention!

My big people, called Muum! and Daad! by the smaller people, are moping about mumbling. Looks like going for a really good walk, with me of course, would be so good for them. My tail starts wagging and you'd think loud thumping on the wooden floor would make them notice.

Muum! is scowling over Jack's shoulder at his schoolwork and Jack is rolling his eyes. So I nudge closer hoping he can see me rolling my eyes, too, but that doesn't work either. Daad! is walking around holding a cup of coffee ignoring Eilidh and little Greta as they run in circles around him chanting a song that goes, '*Can we have a biscuit? Can we have a biscuit?*'

I thought that was my song, actually!

It's time for me to join in so I drop my lead and run around behind them yipping the song, too, but Daad! picks on me and tells me not to bark and to 'SIT!'.

It's not fair! Tail between my legs I slink off under the table, putting on my most mournful look. You know the one, where my eyes are huge and sad.

Greta climbs under the table and gives me a hug so I wag my tail, but only slowly—that way they'll know I am not quite so easily placated. Then my tail starts wagging enthusiastically all by itself, the traitor!

Things are strange at the moment. They're either taking me out ALL THE TIME, or not at all—at least that is how it feels. They are all at home, all the time and that is weird, too. If I fall into a lovely sleep dreaming of cats to chase and running after butterflies in wild places, one of them charges in doing something exciting and shouts on me to join in, which of course I have to do. Well, of course I do, that's the rules, isn't it?

So Greta and I hide under the table while I listen to them getting more and more grumpy until Muum! tells everyone they are all too miserable and they have to go for a walk.

Of course Daad!, Jack and Eilidh start moaning that they are too busy. Ironic, as a few minutes ago they were doing nothing but moaning about what they were supposed to be doing.

I'll never understand humans.

Greta follows as I squirm out from under the table, grab my lead, racing her to the front door. My tail beats against the wall like a drum, calling them to order.

'See,' Muum! tells them. 'The dog needs to go out, too.'

I do have a name of my own!

'C'mon, Oskar!' Muum! says. She remembered!

We're off and in a moment, everyone's running, laughing and shouting, '*This is fun!*'

Well, I could've told them that!

Linda Strachan



Abiba's Zoom

Zoom, zoom, zoom!

A word I previously heard and used only once in a blue moon.

A word I now use every day because of Coronavirus lockdown.

Zoom, zoom, zoom!

Everyday I'm learning that words can have different meanings. Like 'going viral'. I thought it meant when something on YouTube gets millions of likes. But now I know it can be when a disease like Coronavirus spreads really fast.

Zoom, zoom, zoom!

Sometimes it sounds like Zumba; a dance class my mum goes to. Other times it sounds like the drumbeat of my dad's African djembe drum:

Boom-boom pa; boom-boom pa!

Zoom, zoom, zoom!

Although I am not allowed to go to school and play with my friends these days, there are so many new things I am learning about my own family because of Zoom. This is a list of my Zoom types:

Happy Zoom

This is my favourite Zoom where we have a family quiz every week. My dad gets very excited when there is a question about Africa. Last week my Auntie Wendy set the questions and it was a tie-break at the end. The last question was about the first African city to have an underground railway station. And guess what? My dad

knew the answer right away, and we won. I was so happy and my dad was over the moon!

Scary Zoom

After looking closely at her face for 50 minutes the other day, my mum said she looked scary with her grey roots, chicken-foot neck and jaggy things growing on her chin. Thankfully I don't have facial hair yet! I fixed her grey roots with a dye; my first time and we are both proud of the result. I plucked the unmentionables and as for her neck she now holds a mug of tea or glass of wine during her Zoom calls.

Annoying Zoom

This is my dad's Zoom to his Ghanaian friends in Glasgow. My dad normally speaks loudly but when he is on the phone he shouts even louder. Sometimes he roars like thunder and paces around the house until sweat is dripping from his face. Now he can't pace because he has Zoom on his laptop, but he can still shout and jump up and down on the couch which must make it fun for the others, to see his head going in and out of the picture.

Sad Zoom

It makes me feel sad talking to Gran these days when I can't give her a big hug. Apart from looking forward to seeing and playing with my friends again at school, I can't wait for the day I can run up and give my Gran a big hug. Maybe that day will come soon x

Zoom, zoom, zoom!

Chief Chebe

Dear Mr Fimple

TO: Norbert.Fimple@PuddleLanePrimary.com
FROM: MoochoCoolio@connect.com

Dear Mr Fimple

How are you? How's your cat? I know about your cat because I saw a photo of it on your desk when I was looking for the Big Stapler. It was wearing a dress that looked a bit like something a ballerina would wear.

Anyway, I'm fine. Actually, I'm GREAT! I love learning at home!

It's not that you're not a good teacher or anything because you are (especially when you bring us those homemade biscuits!).

I just think it's AWESOME because:

1. I get to be LATE to lessons most mornings because Dad's stuck on the toilet.
2. I don't have to wear my SCHOOL TIE.
3. On Tuesdays AND Thursdays I get the afternoons OFF because mum has to watch her PROGRAMMES.

4. I don't have to sit next to Kayla Jackson who WON'T stop drawing love hearts on my notebook!
5. Mum and Dad let me do PE in the garden every day for HOURS.

I suppose I miss school a BIT. Like when Hassan laughs so hard he has to RUN to the toilet without a TOILET PASS. And when everyone in assembly wants to do the LAST CLAP and Mr Heckson's face gets so RED he looks like he might EXPLODE. And ULTIMATE TENNIS BASKETBALL (which I know we're not ALLOWED to play anymore after the time with the TREE and Bobby Grubb's LEG and the FIRE ENGINE). And we DEFINITELY haven't started a tournament with the P7s or anything.

To be completely HONEST with you Mr Fimple there's actually ONE thing I REALLY miss. And it's probably the one thing I NEVER thought I'd miss because it's SCHOOL DINNERS!

But you see, ever since we've had to stay at home Dad's been making these WEIRD INVENTIONS like CURRY PASTA and FISH PIE PIZZA and last night he gave us something that looked a bit like chicken but smelled like EGGS. And when Mum asked what was in it Dad just said, 'I call it "SURPRISE STEW"!'.

So I didn't eat any more after he said that and neither did Mum. But Dad did. And then the next morning

Dad was on the toilet for even LONGER than usual and Mum kept knocking on the door and asking him what on EARTH he'd put in the stew. But he wouldn't answer. Anyway, Dad said I could email you questions about school work, so here you go:

1. Why didn't you tell us that your first name is Norbert?
2. Can we call you Norbert when we come back to school?
3. Do you still wear all your checked shirts and shiny tie at home? (My dad just wears pyjamas and a shirt over his top if he has to use Zoom.)
4. Do you miss the other teachers? Even Mr Heckson??
5. Dad uses a calculator to check ALL my maths work (even the easy sums!). Is that normal? Should I have a word with him?
6. Even though Mum lived in France for a year she says she can't help me with my French work because it's a different type of French to the one she learned in France. Is that right? Are there two types of French?
7. Why did you tell us that your first name was NEIL when we saw your initials on your new ID badge?

Ok, I better go. Mum says it's time to learn how the recycling bins work. And Dad wants to make banana

bread using CORNFLAKES and CUCUMBER. I'll let you know how it goes...

It's Joe Thomson from P6F by the way.

Bye!

P.S. PLEASE just ignore my dad's email address at the top. That's not his real name. (And he's definitely NOT cool.)

Pamela Butchart



Hello Mr Neighbour

Hello Mr Neighbour,

From my room I can see all the way into your kitchen and I thought you should know. Yesterday I saw you dancing and you were talking to yourself but it's okay I won't tell anyone. You can draw the curtains if you like. I won't mind.

I asked Mum if she knew what your name is but she didn't even though we know the man who lives below you with the gold tooth and the poodle is called Steve. And right above you is Mohammed who goes to my school and is the best at wheelies. Mum said I should send you a card because you're probably old and lonely. Are you old and lonely?

From Ruthie

P.S. I wore very thick gloves when I wrote this which is why my handwriting is bad.

Hello Ruthie,

Yes I'm very old and lonely so it's good you got in touch. Thank you for letting me know about my kitchen, that was very honest of you. I don't often dance so I think you saw me fighting a wasp. I have a wasps' nest outside the window and they keep getting in. Do you have any advice on killing wasps so that they stay dead?

Since you mention it, I thought I should let you know that from my kitchen I can see some of the way into your kitchen too. Is that your brother who you pushed the other day? Didn't he cry a lot. I told my granddaughter Eilidh about your letter. I think you'd like her. She collects woodlice and stones. I can see the stones you put on the windowsill. She said maybe you're lonely too. I said I doubt it but you never know.

From your neighbour, Jacob

P.S. My gloves are only thin but I wore two pairs because you'd been so thoughtful.

Hello Mr Jacob,

I saw you coming to post your letter. You look smaller outside your flat. I'm sorry about the stone I threw. I thought you might catch it but I should have shouted first. Mum was very angry. But it is my favourite stone. I found it at Cardross on my 10th birthday. I've put it on your doorstep.

I didn't see you on Thursday when we were clapping. Were you scared the wasps would get you? Have you tried spraying them with vinegar and milk? I bet they hate that.

Ruthie

P.S. he pushed me first

Hi Ruthie,

I missed Thursday because Eilidh called. Have you heard of Morse Code? Eilidh suggested maybe if we learned it, every Thursday when we clap you could send me a message. She said that way, maybe I wouldn't be so old and lonely. Only if you want to, though.

• - - - • - - • - • - - - - • • •
J A C O B

P.S. This stone is exceptional. It's okay that you threw it at me.

Hello Mr Jacob,
I learned it! I'm ready!
I have a pan and a spoon and I'll bang it extra loudly so you can hear.

Ruthie

P.S. I'll keep an eye out for wasps.

Emily Ilett

The Limerick To-Do List

An eighth week at home, what to do?
The garden's well worn, the films too.
And as for the pens,
they're dry, yet again,
and the shops are off-limits, boo-hoo.

But here are some scissors and string,
and Sellotape, wonderful things!
You could make a small box
to be thrown from the docks
and the treasures could be gathered in.

Those grown ups look terribly clean—
so much soap that it's almost obscene!
A smidgeon of colour,
then wait for the holler
of 'WHO DID THIS? MY FACE IS GREEN!'

Outside, we wear sensible clothes,
but now we're in lockdown, who knows?
We could run around bare,
without worry or care,
as the feeling of freedom just grows.

But still, don't get TOO out of whack:
one day we'll all have to go back
to regular life
with its trouble and strife.

So savour the days
you can fritter and laze
as the earth takes a break
from the beating it takes,
and all of us drive off the track!

Laura Guthrie



EVERYDAY SUPERHEROES

Superhero

When I grow up I will become
a superhero like my mum
who doesn't wear a lycra suit
or hold a ray gun primed to shoot
or swing from buildings on a web
or fly like bullets overhead
or drive a Batmobile and park it
—my mum works in the supermarket.
If there's no food then no one eats:
no hearty meals, no tasty treats,
so heroes like my mum are working
hard wherever hunger's lurking.
Produce scanner, box unpacker,
super empty-shelf-restacker.
So thank her for your daily bread—
she goes to work to keep you fed
and then comes home to hug me tight
and read me stories every night.
My mum the hero, hunger-mender,
key worker and smile-defender.

Rachel Plummer

Picking the Right Pan

Dot's grandmother was short, round and odd. Dot suspected she was a bit mad, or if not mad then at least comfortably settled on the borders of madness.

For example, Dot's grandmother was unimpressed with people who claimed they had seen fairies and goblins but was equally unimpressed with people who claimed they didn't exist because no experiment had found them. Fairies and goblins were not fools, Dot's grandmother said, and knew what people like that could do if allowed to start poking and prodding at them like pebbles under a microscope. Fairies and goblins could read as well as anyone what Pavlov did to his poor dogs.

Dot didn't know what she thought about fairies and goblins—though she agreed Pavlov wasn't someone she wanted to spend time with—she just knew she was lonely and missing her parents.

Dot's grandmother lived in a cottage deep in the countryside, out in the middle of nowhere at all. There were hills with sheep on them, and a loch whose waters were blue during the day and black during the night. They had been visiting when Dot's parents (who were doctors) got a call from the hospital to come back right away. More phone calls were made and after a long discussion it was decided Dot would remain behind. She watched her parents drive away and found herself alone with nothing to do and no one to do it with.

She was sitting on her bed waiting for the internet to work when her grandmother knocked on the door. She told Dot that people were clapping and banging pans for

the doctors and nurses in the hospitals, and that they should do the same. Dot didn't see the point. No one lived anywhere nearby.

They went into the kitchen. On the table were pans of various sizes.

'Go on, pick one.'

Dot picked up a small pan. It felt a bit flimsy.

Behind her, Dot's grandmother coughed.

Hesitating, Dot tried a larger pan, which was heavy and black and could have fried seven eggs.

Behind her, Dot's grandmother sniffed.

Dot placed the heavy pan back on the table and picked up the plainest-looking pan of all. It was the sort of pan her father used when making pancakes.

'Good choice,' her grandmother said. 'Come on.'

They went outside. Embarrassed, Dot raised the pan above her head and started banging it with her spoon. The sound reverberated sadly, a lonely, hollow noise. Dot almost stopped then, but just as she lowered her arms, she heard the far-off sound of drumming rising above the hills. What was one sound became two, then three, then the sound of many pans banging and drumming, filling the valley.

When it was over, they went inside, and Dot turned to her grandmother.

'Will it happen again next week?' she whispered, trying to keep her heart steady.

'Maybe. Or maybe not. Or maybe something different.' Her grandmother smiled. 'Depends on which pan you pick,' she said.

Callum Heitler

Forgetful Fergus

Granny McGinty was stuck in lockdown.

‘Oh dear,’ she said, looking into her cupboard. ‘I don’t have any jam for my tea.’

Just then, Fergus from next door knocked on the window.

‘Hello, Granny McGinty,’ he called through the glass. ‘I’m away to the deli to get some baked beans. Is there anything you need yourself?’

‘Well, I could do with a jar of jam please, Fergus.’

‘Right you are.’

So Fergus hopped on his bike and off he went to the deli on the corner.

‘A jar of jam, a jar of jam,’ he kept saying to himself as he rode along, determined not to forget.

Luckily, the deli was empty, except for Mr Kowalski, who was standing behind the counter.

‘What can I do for you, Fergus?’ asked Mr Kowalski.

‘I’ve to get—oh dear me now, what was it?’ said Fergus. ‘Yes, that’s right. A slice of ham!’

‘We’re out of ham today, but there’s bacon in the fridge if you’d like that...

‘No, it wasn’t ham after all. Let me see—yes! Tea from Assam!’ said Fergus.

Mr Kowalski shook his head.

‘All sold out! I just have the ordinary tea in today. Round bags or square bags. Take your pick.’

‘It might have been a tin of spam!’ said Fergus desperately.

‘There’s some tinned meats over there,’ said Mr Kowalski. ‘Are you sure it was spam you wanted?’

‘Or perhaps it was a leg of lamb?’ Fergus was beginning to panic now.

‘You’d need to go to a butcher for that,’ Mr Kowalski said kindly. ‘Are you feeling quite yourself, Fergus? No cough? No fever? Nothing like that?’

‘I’m fine!’ said Fergus. ‘It’s just that Granny McGinty asked me to get something for her and I can’t remember what it was.’

Mr Kowalski laughed.

‘Granny McGinty? It’s a jar of jam she’ll be wanting!’

‘A jar of jam! That’s right!’ beamed Fergus.

‘It’s on the shelf behind you. Her favourite’s the raspberry.’

So Fergus bought the jam and hopped back on to his bicycle. But when he was half way home, he thought, ‘I’ve forgotten what I was going to buy for myself! What was it now? A can of sardines? A bag of fresh greens? Or was it some nice tangerines? Mr Kowalski will know. I’ll just have to go back and ask him!’

Elizabeth Laird

The Game

Because of lockdown, I've had a lot of time to think. When I tell my step-mum I've been thinking, she always says 'so... that's what that sound was'. Even though, when I think, I don't make ANY noise, and it's a RUBBISH joke.

I was having one of my good, long thinks when I came up with *The Game*. Do you want to play? There are only two things you need:

1. A BRILLIANT IMAGINATION.

2. Telly remotes. (Well, they don't have to be just for the telly. Any remotes would do. And you might call them doofers, or the buttons, or something even sillier.)

The game works like this: you hold a remote, and someone else holds the other. You point your remote at the other person and press the button to change the channel. The other person has to pretend to be a type of film and it's your job to guess what they are. When you get it right, the other person points the remote at you and it's your turn to pretend.

So, if I point the remote at my step-mum and change the channel, she might go...

You dirty rotten scoundrel! I challenge you to a duel! at dawn! with pistols and we're gonna ride on our horses! and dig for gold! and we don't have toothpaste so our teeth are really brown!

And I would know that she's doing a Western (my step-mum likes some properly terrible films but I'm doing my best to introduce her to some better ones on Netflix when we get the chance). Then it would be my turn, and I might go...

The Earth is under threat once again and it's up to us, this big group of superheroes, to save the day and wear really cool outfits and even if one of us dies, there's a good chance that the character will come back to life in the sequel that's already been announced so no one should get too upset.

I was doing the Avengers (*Infinity War* was better than *Endgame*, don't @ me). My step-mum probably wouldn't have guessed it because she says there's too many superhero films to keep up with and they're nothing but explosions, but as we all know, she's wrong.

So that's *The Game*. My step-mum can't always play because she works on her laptop a lot and has to make dinner and change my little brother's nappies and do the shopping and take some of the shopping to my gran and do the washing and sort basically everything in the flat and that's okay.

(Don't tell her I said this but she's the real superhero.)

Ross Sayers

Daisy's Mum

She sees the world as it begins
when the sun rises, the day breaks
hearing the soft noises
before anyone wakes.

She puts on her outfit, pristine and clean.
She stretches and yawns, looking at me,
—in bed, dreaming of days, gone and been,
spent playing with friends I no longer see.

She buzzes away like a bee
leaving behind her sweet honey smell.
It lingers and comforts me.
Outside, she goes, to help those unwell.

I wait for her deep into the night when
she creeps in and takes off her mask.
'I miss you,' I say. With heavy eyes, a tired smile,
she replies, 'It's only for a little while.'

'You're my superhero!' I whisper, but she smiles:
'There's others with different powers;
voices that heal, voices that say:
You rest, ma wee flowers. You'll be okay.

'I want to help fight the virus too,
—a dark endless cloud trying to catch you when you run.
But the most powerful thing, she says, I can do,
'is to stay at home, safe and sound.'
Holding her hand, I sleep, like a daisy feeding from the sun.

Yasmin Hanif



Neighbour Hood

Now you may think your neighbours are strange, but believe me they're nothing compared to the guy who moved in next door to us just before the lockdown. He's totally weird. For a start he's always dressed in green and he wears a funny hat with a feather in it. Also, although he's got a perfectly nice house there, he's always camping out in his back garden. He's got a bunch of mates who stay there with him and a right merry crew they are, always laughing and singing. One of them is really tall with muscles and carries a big stick. Another one plays a funny-looking guitar and sings about 'riding through the glen.' What is that all about? They all wear green too, except one—a chubby chap who dresses like a monk.

Now I used to play football with my mates in the back garden, but not this lot. Oh no, they do archery. That's right, shooting arrows at a target. I've watched them from my bedroom window and, take it from me, our new neighbour is a crack shot. I saw him shoot an arrow right into the centre of the target then shoot a second arrow that split the first one right down the middle. Amazing!

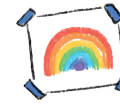
One day when Mum and me were taking our daily walk through the park, I swear I saw our neighbour and his pals hiding in the bushes and sitting up in the trees. What on earth do they think they're up to?

I did read in the paper that a lot of local crooks and scammers who've cheated people out of their money have

been getting robbed themselves. Coincidence? I don't think so. Also folk in our area who are going through a rough patch, because of being sick or losing their job, have been finding mysterious packages on their doorstep packed with clothes, food or even money—whatever it is they need to get by. Call me crazy, but I'm pretty sure our new neighbour and his pals are behind it.

Yesterday my Mum was chatting with him over the garden fence. She says he's really nice and that his name is Robert or Bobbin or something. You know, I can't put my finger on it, but something about him definitely rings a bell.

Robert J Harris



Rainbows

Red is for rosy apples and warm winter gloves
for carers working everywhere with hearts full of love.

Orange is for oranges, bright as the rising sun
for teachers making videos so learning can be fun.

Yellow is for buttercups, bananas and busy bees
for bin lorries passing by and budgies eating cheese.

Green is for gardens and finches in the hedge,
for farmers and food workers bringing healthy veg.

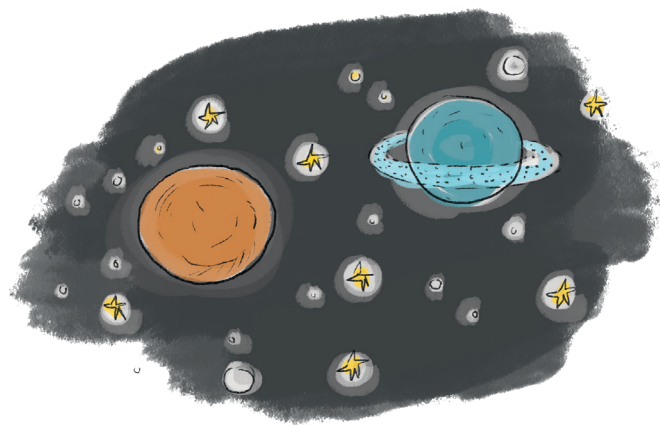
Blue is for rivers and the tears of our goodbyes,
for doctors, nurses, cleaners and all angels in disguise.

Indigo is for evenings and bedtime stories told
with families who treasure us and teddies to hold.

Violet is for dreaming from the cloud-boat of your bed,
going on great adventures in the worlds inside your head.

Rainbows are bright colours held together in one rope;
light in stormy weather, rainbows are for hope.

Merryn Glover



WORLD BEYOND OUR WINDOWS



Lockdown was the perfect opportunity to find the fairies at the bottom of our garden.

When I was little, I believed there were fairies living in the weedy flowerbed at the edge of our small square of patchy grass. And Granny told me stories about girls in the olden days who'd taken photos of fairies in their garden.

So at the start of lockdown, I sat at the bottom of the garden every day, aiming my phone at the weeds, hoping to find fairies.

While I waited, I remembered The Year Of The Fairies: the year I started Primary One, before Dad changed his hours, when Granny looked after me every day after school.

Granny and I never saw fairies. But we saw evidence of fairies.

Acorn teacups. There aren't any oak trees near our house, so the acorns were proof of fairy tea-parties.

Tiny felt hats in bright petal colours. Yellow, proving we had dandelion fairies; blue, confirming we had bluebell fairies...

On my 5th birthday, we found a tiny red book with tiny brown writing on tiny cream pages. Granny read me the story, about fairy children defeating monstrous slugs and vicious hedgehogs. I reread the book every year; I wanted to meet those adventurous fairies.

So, for days, I sat staring at the weeds.

As I sat, I realised that since Granny stopped babysitting regularly, I hadn't found any little cups or hats or books.

Eventually, I stopped watching and started searching. I drew a chart of the weed-bed and examined every

square methodically: patting the earth, then checking each stem, branch and leaf. I found slugs, spiders, ants and beetles. But no fairies. No fairy homes. No fairy tea-parties.

No evidence of fairies, at all.

I ran to my room, grabbed the shoebox I'd painted to look like a wooden chest, and tipped out my fairy treasure.

Tiny hats. I noticed the suspiciously large stitches holding them together.

Acorn teacups. I remembered the oak tree in the park behind Granny's flat.

The wonderful little book, with the tiny writing. I got down the Viking myth book Granny gave me for my 9th birthday, with *Happy Birthday* written inside. I compared the writing.

The letters were different sizes, but the shapes were very similar.

I dropped the tiny book on the bed.

I wasn't sure how I felt.

Betrayed? Angry? Disappointed?

But also... a wee bit impressed. The hedgehog ambush was wonderfully action-packed, the fight scene with the giant slug was brilliantly gross.

Maybe I don't have fairies at the bottom of my garden, but I do have a super-sneaky storytelling magic-making Granny instead.

This year, I can't whisper in Granny's ear that I know her secret. So I'm sitting by the weeds, imagining adventures, then writing them in a tiny notebook.

Because it's Granny's birthday soon, and I'm going to post her a book of fairy tales. Set at the bottom of the garden...

Lari Don

Mouse

The sun disappeared ahint the clouds and a breeze sprang up fae nowhere. Ella shivered and reached fur the railing tae pull herself up. The bottom step wis too cold tae sit on any longer. It wis time tae go inside.

She hesitated, awkwardly balanced atween sitting and standing, when she saw the leaves tremble at the bottom o' the hedge. A tiny creature crept oot—a mouse wi' black button eyes, great big ears and a pair ae feet that looked too big fur its body.

Hardly daring tae breathe, Ella lowered hersel back on tae the step. The mouse stared up at her, whiskers twitching, wee paws folded across his furry belly.

She had nivver seen him afore, but maybe that wis because she had been too busy tae notice. Now, she wis home almost a' the time. There were hardly any cars or passers-by and naebody came trampin up and doon the steps tae the front door.

This definitely wisnae his first visit, thought Ella, watching him run straight for the bird table, to snatch up the seeds on the ground and stuff them intae his mooth. Cheeks bulging, he turned and looked at her, then scurried back tae the hedge. A quick flick o' his tail and he wis gone.

'Bye, mouse,' whispered Ella. 'Ah'll see ye again tomorrow.'

Annemarie Allan



On the Roof

Rob was on the roof again.

These days, Rob's mum had plenty to worry about, and he did his best to help by acting cheerful till his face ached. So every chance he got, he would wriggle through the skylight, slide down the slates and lean back against the chimney.

On the roof, Rob's face didn't have to look like anything it didn't want to.

He hugged his knees, and heaved a sad sigh. Then he nearly jumped out of his skin when somebody said, 'Hello?'

Rob eased around the chimney and found himself staring into a pair of anxious eyes. The strangely blobby shape surrounding the eyes turned with a squeal into a seagull, then a small lilac bush, and then an extra chimney that said, 'You can't see me.'

'I can, you know,' said Rob. His heart was beating fast. 'Are you an alien?'

The extra chimney turned back into a blob and smiled nervously. 'I'm a Grbilite. From Grbil. You know—two galaxies over and down a bit. I was just passing through but there was this glitch with my engine. My ship's in amongst your satellites while it self-repairs. There are so many things orbiting up there, I figured nobody would notice one more!'

'Probably not.' Inside his head, Rob was crowing. 'There's an alien on my roof!'

'Meantime I thought I'd come down, just to have a look. We're not really supposed to, but I couldn't resist. And I thought, up here, no one would see me. But now

we've met, tell me about your world. Tell me everything!'

So Rob started to tell about the virus and the lockdown and not meeting up with friends and his mum working from her bedroom and him doing school online in the kitchen ...

When he'd run out of things to say, the alien looked at him with its big eyes and asked, 'But what about the other stuff?'

'What other stuff?'

'The other stuff I saw before I came down here. The blue bits and the green bits, and the white bits—oh, and there were orangey bits ...'

So Rob started to tell about oceans and forests and ice caps and deserts, and the alien's eyes got all shiny and Rob's did too. And then they got on to books and movies and the alien had a thousand questions and then —

'Rob! Rob?'

It was his mum calling.

When she stuck her head out of the skylight, there was only Rob to be seen.

'Sorry—that meeting took forever! But I'm finally done,' she said. 'Ready for a walk? Let's go get ourselves some nature!'

'Sure!' Rob scrambled up the slates to the skylight.

At the last moment he paused and looked back. The alien's scwodgy little face was peeping around the corner of the chimney.

'Will you be back?' it whispered.

'Yes,' said Rob. 'Will you be here?'

'Yes,' said the alien.

And Rob's face had no problem with wearing a smile.

Joan Lennon



Songbird



An unseasonably warm evening. At the far end of two communal gardens in Glasgow.

BLUE TIT: Strange times!

ROBIN: Aye. The folk at Batch10 are a'ways in masks, even on the creaky-trample-bouncer.

BLUE TIT: Tee, tee! Just like the folk at Batch 14 and 8 and 12! That's if they leave the nests at all. They're a' cooped up by the telly, keekin' fancy nature films.

ROBIN: That's because the high heid yin tellt them to stay at home.

BLUE TIT: Eh?

ROBIN: Whaur ye bin? They're trying to halt *The Germ*.

BLUE TIT: That's a' very well, but have ye seen them wash the bird feeders? Naw!

ROBIN: Churr, true enough... Ooo, earthworm... Och! Missed.

BLUE TIT: Anyway, The Germ's a cracker. It's got the engines a' hypnotised, and the air's brand new now!

ROBIN: Aye! Ah've been joining the sunset chorus Nae mair chokin'. Whit a treat!

BLUE TIT: The human songs are nicer too. Nae shouty. Mair gentle.

ROBIN: So they are. Batch 5 plays the *Flower of Scotland* on the horn at dawn. Ah quite like it but the others are nae appreciating the early starts.

BLUE TIT: Tee, tee! Did ah tell ye, one of them did a right fine drawing of me too?

ROBIN: Oh aye?

BLUE TIT: Aye! Ah puffed mysel up and sat still as a wink. And then, there ah was. In his book! Mah yellow was a bit green... still, it was braw!

ROBIN: Number 4 has always been the sort to look out the windae, but it's nice to see the others dusting off their crayons tae.

BLUE TIT: We'll be grinning from the Christmas cards!

ROBIN: Aye right! Anyway, ye're mair fashionable in the summer... (*whisper*) Haw, look!

BLUE TIT: Tee, tee! I see her! Ah wish the others had a voice like hers. Watch! They're peepin' from their nests. They love her songs tae... Did she sing before the masks?

ROBIN: Naw. She was a'ways at her work. Ah hope she keeps singing forever.

BLUE TIT: Hmm... whi'ts this song? Is she asking folk tae feed us?

ROBIN: Aye, better and better! Noo, haud yer wheesht ... and listen...

Nayanika Basu



Robin



Blue Tit

fossil Hunting. a sonnet

We skirt the heather, scale the mossy crag,
reaching the barren gully at high noon.
I dig for sweets and apples in Dad's bag.
We swig from flasks then scour the old lagoon—
a dried-up basin now, but once a sea
of sponges, molluscs, starfish, coral reef.
I scan the dull, time-shattered, sun-baked scree.
And there! A shell shape moulded in relief
on red and sandy stone. 'Look what I've found!'
Dad shows me through his magnifying glass
its contoured whorl—the ridges circling round.
We wrap it in old news. I'll tell my class
when school restarts about the ancient rocks
that Dad and I raked up on daily walks.

Joan Haig



Gorilla on an Exercise Bike

Krishna spent a great deal of time these days gazing out of the window at the tenement opposite. The West End streets were quiet. No traffic. No pedestrians, apart from the dog-walker who always wore red. Red shoes, red corduroy trousers, red jacket, red shirt, red beret. This wasn't because lockdown had sent him crazy. The man in red had always worn red for as long as Krishna could remember.

Krishna dreamed of being allowed out to see his friends again, playing football, swimming in the local swimming baths, ice-cream at Nardini's. He even missed curling up on the sofa with a dog-eared book at Hillend Library, where June the librarian kept an eye on all the kids from the after school club.

The tenement opposite was all he had these days. He knew the routine of his neighbours across the street like the back of his hand. Every window had a different story to tell. There was the family on the first floor with the sunny-haired twins and the baby in the high chair banging its spoon on its tray. There was the dark-haired lady who flung her windows open at six o' clock every evening and burst into song. There was the woman who sat at her computer keyboard all day, clicking away. There was the dog in the hand-knitted stripy jumper who sat on a table in the only patch of sunlight, soaking up the warmth. It was one of those shivery, naked-looking dogs with hardly any fur, so Krishna could understand its need for the jumper, and its search for warmth. But then there was the strangest thing of all. On the third

floor, directly opposite Krishna's flat, was the gorilla on an exercise bike.

'Mum. Mum.'

'What is it?'

'It's the gorilla again. The one I told you about.'

'Don't be ridiculous, Krishna. What have I told you about making things up?'

The gorilla put on a pair of headphones and began to pedal.

'Mum. Mum. The gorilla's got headphones on and he's listening to music.'

'Don't be ridiculous, Krishna. You're making it up. There is no gorilla.'

Eventually Mum came to the window to water the tired-looking pot plant. By this time the gorilla had completed his daily exercise, so he draped a towel round his shoulders, hefted himself off the exercise bike and wiped his hairy forehead.

Then, noticing Krishna and his Mum up at the window, he waved at them.

'I told you.'

Mum's face closed over with the stress of all she was dealing with.

'Tidy your room, Krishna. It's an awful mess, and it's driving me crazy.'

Krishna's face fell, and he wondered if he was the only one who ever saw the gorilla.

'I suppose we *are* living in very strange times,' she sighed.

But that was the only concession she would ever make.

Alex Nye

hello!



Kite

At first
I spot him from afar,
a solitary dot,
hanging motionless
on the empty air,
as I toil upwards
to the crags.

Up early
this morning,
my day's allotted walk.
I'm seeking
socially-distanced
solitude;
perhaps he's after
skylark eggs,
hidden in the ragged
grass,
smooth and clean
and horribly
exposed
to his thrusting beak.
Or is it something
more elusive...
a mouse,
a shrew?

I move closer,
soon near
enough
to see the dark red
splashed
across his back.
Still he hovers,
wings attuned
to every
breath of wind,
as though pinned
against the sky.
No wonder
he has
acquired
that name.

He watches
hawk-eyed
for something I
cannot see:
something small,
some tiny trace
that draws him
like a magnet...
then he stoops,
drops through
the heavens,
driven by hunger,
freighted with
intent,

a harbinger of
destruction.

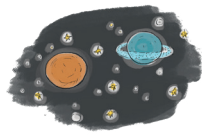
I trudge upwards,
marvelling at
what we've
briefly shared.
I look back—
he's risen again,
a distant smudge,
still
on the lookout
for fresh victims,
unruffled.

Philip Caveney

A World Unlocked

It was better before
So don't tell me
This new world's shoots grow fresh and keen
When lungs and land can breathe
For in truth
We're here to win
And it's false to claim
Soil and soul are more at peace
I know
Life is a race
Nothing can persuade me
Birdsong matters
Because no matter what
We must keep pushing
Don't tell me
While we stand rooted
This vital ground is sown with seeds of vigour
For as I gaze out I consider
Wasn't our way of life right?
(now read from bottom to top)

Miranda Moore



Stepping Out

I remember waiting.

I was in a room filled with stark white light, and the humans were building me, carefully, piece by piece. They called me Voyager. I was a space probe. An explorer.

That sounded good. I wanted to explore. I wanted to leap into space and keep going, and never stop. I was impatient—I wanted to break free! I had thrusters and sensors! I longed to go everywhere, see everything!

Not yet, they told me. Soon.

I waited. They attached more pieces, tested, corrected. The doors stayed closed. A small window far above me showed a scrap of sky, and the midnight stars, calling to me...

Not yet.

But why not?

The conditions must be right. Not yet.

Until one morning, finally, the doors opened, and I stepped outside.

I launched inside a huge rocket, feeling the crush of acceleration as I blasted into the sky, into orbit, into space! It was cold and dark, but my fuel cells generated enough heat and energy to last for decades. I was free. I stretched my arms, deployed my sensors. I saw light, radio waves, particles, the thrum of magnetic forces.

I saw everything.

I flew towards Jupiter and its glowing red spot, reporting and recording. I discovered new moons, and electromagnetic fields, and unexpected dust rings. I watched volcanoes erupting into space from the moon of Io, I saw Europa's frozen ocean! Then, using Jupiter

as a slingshot, I hurtled on, past Saturn and its rings and moons, Prometheus and Pandora, hazy Titan...

Onwards, outwards, thirty thousand miles an hour, overtaking planets and asteroids. I photographed the worlds behind me, and Earth was just a tiny white-blue speck. I travelled for decades, further than any human thing had ever been. Space changed. Atomic particles fizzed and frothed around me as I neared the edge of the heliosphere, where the Sun's stellar winds crash against the hum of the universe. I ploughed through the storm, into the unknown... And space changed again.

I was out. Interstellar! Galaxy traveller!

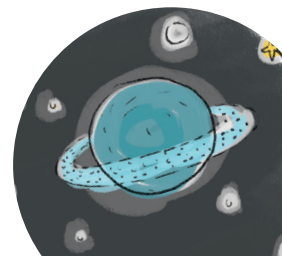
And beyond.

I'm tired, now. It's been forty years since I launched, and my fuel is almost gone. I burn a little to keep talking to Earth for as long as I can. I am thirteen billion miles from home; every faint signal takes a day to arrive, and soon my radio will fail. I keep going. I carry a gift for anyone I meet, a golden record filled with voices and music from Earth. There is a star ahead of me, Gilese 445. It will take forty thousand years to reach it. I am not afraid.

And I wonder: what has happened on that tiny speck of Earth, while I've been gone? What are the humans doing, now? Are they explorers, like me? Perhaps not yet. Perhaps they're having to wait, as I waited. Perhaps they're impatient! But one day, soon, they'll open their doors. They'll step outside, and launch. And when they do...

They'll see everything.

Alastair Chisholm





Lockdown Haik^u II

Smiling like daisies
We will no longer ration
Our toilet paper.

Joseph Lamb

The End

Just like books have a beginning and an end,
lockdown will have a beginning and an end too...

Thank you for reading.

28th May 2020



Your Turn



When we decided that this book would have a lockdown theme, we gave the writers some titles and prompts to help spark some creativity around the topic.

Here is *exactly the same list* we gave to the authors. We hope that it might inspire you to record your thoughts and write or draw about the best bits (or the worst bits) of the time you spent in lockdown, when the whole world stopped...

No More School
Stay at Home
Coughs and Sneezes
Panic Buyer
Toilet Roll
Pasta Disaster
Cancelled
Virus
Pandemic
Pyjamas
Social Distancing
News Bingo
Granny at the Window
Zoom
Empty
Home Learning
Kitchen Haircuts

Birds
Storybook Escapes
A Dog's Tail
Rainbows on Windows
Statistics for Beginners
Lockdown for Dummies
Clapping
The Nurse
Lambing in Lockdown
The Amazon Man
Supermarket Sweep
Daily Exercise
Nessie on the Loose
Goodbye
Curling up with Cats
Surprise
Wash Your Hands

Dolphins in Canals
The Delivery
Things we don't need after all
The Corona Club
I'm Bored
My Rainbow
Quiet
New Words
Behind the Mask
Magic
Hospital
Stuck
Indoor Hopscotch
Satellites & Stars
Unprecedented
What day is it today?
When this is over...
Covid-20

What I'll miss about lockdown...
Heal the World
A New Normal
Back to School

OR ADD YOUR OWN IDEA...

What will you remember about lockdown?

What was the best bit?
What was the worst bit?
What did you learn?

What did the whole world learn?

What will you write?



Haiku
 List Poem
 Sonnet
 Free Verse
 Limerick
 Flash Fiction
 Short Story

Diary
 Letter
 Guide
 Script for a play
 Field Notes
 Instructions
 Something else...?

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the fabulous contributors for giving generously of their time and talent, for embracing the spirit of the project, and whipping up such wonderful words at short notice.

AG and JH



About the Contributors

Raisah Ahmed is a Scottish Asian Muslim Writer/Director working across television and film. She is currently in development on a feature project with Film4.

Annemarie Allan's first novel, *Hox*, won the 2007 Kelpies Prize. *Ushig* was shortlisted for the Essex Children's Book Award. *Charlie's Promise* and *Breaker* are out with Cranachan.

Dean Atta is the author of *The Black Flamingo*, winner of the Stonewall Book Award, shortlisted for the CILIP Carnegie Medal, YA Book Prize and Jhalak Prize.

Nayanika Basu is a writer and NHS worker who lives with her two main muses and is happiest when writing, hoping and dreaming about our planet and the human journey.

Pamela Butchart teaches high-school philosophy and is the Blue Peter Award-winning author of the best-selling *Baby Aliens* series and the new Enid Blyton *Secret Seven* stories.

Chief Chebe is a musician, storyteller, poet and author of over a dozen books including *African Dream* and a new coming of age series for primary schools, *The Kasimo Adventures*

Philip Caveney has published over fifty books for readers of all ages. Writing as Danny Weston, he won the Scottish Children's Book Award in 2016 for *The Piper*.

Maisie Chan's most recent book is *Stories From Around the World* (Scholastic) and her Mulan tale is featured in *Ladybird Tales of Superheroes* (Penguin).

Alastair Chisholm wrote *Orion Lost* (Nosy Crow) and *The Prince and The Witch and The Thief and The Bears* (Walker) shortlisted for the Scottish Bookbug Picture Book Prize.

Justin Davies watches trains from his study where he also wrote his funny children's books, *Help! I Smell a Monster* and *Whoa! I Spy a Werewolf* (both Orchard/Hachette).

Lari Don is inspired by old tales to create new stories: adventure novels, picture books and retellings of myths and legends. @LariDonWriter

Lawrence Dritsas is a Senior Lecturer in the history of science.

Elizabeth Ezra is the author of the Kelpies Prize-winning *Ruby McCracken: Tragic Without Magic*.

Matthew Fitt is a Scots writer and teacher and the co-founder of the award-winning imprint, Itchy Co.

Kerry L Fleming was longlisted for The Times/Chicken House Competition 2019 and is currently working on her third middle grade novel, *Game Over*.

Darren Gate @darrenate illustrates for children's picture books, young fiction, educational and resource materials. darrenate.myportfolio.com

Anne Glennie lives on the Isle of Lewis and is a literacy consultant, author, and publisher @cranachanbooks

Merryn Glover writes poetry, fiction (*A House Called Askival*, Freight) and drama (BBC Scotland & Radio 4). She is currently working on two books set in the Cairngorms.

Laura Guthrie writes poetry, scripts, songs and prose. Her debut novel, *Anna*, is published by Cranachan.

Joan Haig @joanhaigbooks wrote *Tiger Skin Rug* (Cranachan) and is co-writing a children's nonfiction title for Templar/Bonnier. She is a #WriteMentor mentor.

Robert J (Bob) Harris is an author and games designer and can be recognised from quite a long way off.

Yasmin Hanif works with young people aged 13-30 supporting them with literacy and numeracy skills and is part of the Glasgow Children's Writers Group.

Callum Heitler writes fantasy and science fiction and has a pigeon nesting outside his window. Sometimes he thinks it's watching him.

Barbara Henderson @scattyscribbler is a drama teacher and author of Scottish historical and eco-fiction for kids, all published by Cranachan.

Diana Hendry is a poet and children's writer. Her most recent junior novel is *Whoever You Are* (Hodder).

Emily Ilett's debut book, *The Girl Who Lost Her Shadow* (Kelpies) won the Kelpies Prize in 2017 and was longlisted for the Branford Boase Award 2020. More at emilyilett.com

Elizabeth Laird is an award-winning author of YA and children's fiction. Her work has been translated into more than 25 languages. elizabethlaird.co.uk @emrlaird

Joseph Lamb is a writer, actor and director. His novel *The God of All Small Boys* (Cranachan) was shortlisted for the Great War Dundee Children's Book Prize in 2019.

Part thistle and part maple leaf, **Joan Lennon** writes for children and young people and is widely published. She likes to think aliens visit her roof. joanlennon.co.uk

Lindsay Littleton has written five novels for children, including *The Titanic Detective Agency* and her 2020 Carnegie CILIP nominated novel, *Guardians of the Wild Unicorns*.

Caroline Logan @bearpuffbooks teaches biology, writes *The Four Treasures* series (Cranachan) and lives with her own field assistant and test subject: a dog called Ranger.

Janis Mackay, award-winning children's author and storyteller, won Scottish Children's Book Awards 2013 with *The Accidental Time Traveller* (Floris). janismackay.com

Alan McClure is the author of *Callum and the Mountain* (Beaten Track Publishing) and is a poet, songwriter and teacher.

Miranda Moore writes fiction, non-fiction and poetry. She has two non-fiction titles out this year (Summersdale) and is launching an editorial consultancy.

Raman Mundair is the award winning author of *Lovers, Liars, Conjurers and Thieves* and *A Choreographer's Cartography* and edited *Incoming: Some Shetland Voices*.

Alex Nye writes historical fiction for both children and adults, including the award-winning *Chill. When We Get To the Island* (Fledgling) is her sixth title. @AlexNyeWriter

Rachel Plummer won the Scottish Book Trust's New Writer Award for poetry in 2016 and a project funded by Creative Scotland resulted in *Wain* (The Emma Press).

Ross Sayers novels are published by Cranachan and include *Mary's the Name* and *Sonny and Me* and the forthcoming *Daisy on the Outer Line* (for slightly older readers...).

Linda Strachan @strachanlinda is an award-winning author of over 70 books for all ages and *The Writers & Artists Guide to Writing for Children & YA* (Bloomsbury).

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Victoria Williamson is a children's author, teacher and traveller whose books include *The Fox Girl and the White Gazelle* and *The Boy with the Butterfly Mind* (both Floris).



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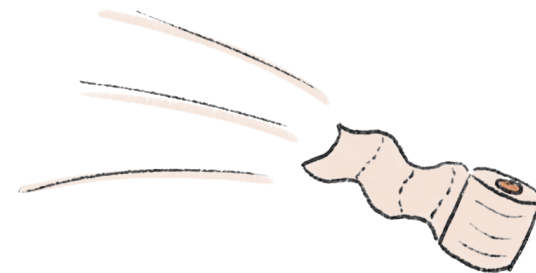
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