



BIRCH HILL
PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY
Learn, believe, achieve together

Year 4

Reading list for families

September 2026

Books linked to every Year 4 topic this year, including our guided reading and daily read texts, alongside favourite stories, myths and legends and new books chosen by BookTrust for 2026–27.

How to use this list

Reading together and alone

Books for our topics

One set for each half-term

Year 4 favourites

Chosen by our teachers

New books for 2026–27

From BookTrust's Great Books Guide

Finding more books

Libraries and websites

How to use this list

In Year 4, children read longer books on their own, but sharing books is just as important as ever. Reading aloud to your child lets them enjoy stories and ideas that are a little beyond what they can manage alone.

Reading alone

Chapter books, comics, graphic novels and information books all build independence and stamina. They all count as real reading.

Reading together

Longer or more challenging books are lovely to share. Talk about characters' choices, new words and what might happen next.

Let your child choose

Children read more when they choose books they feel drawn to. Use this list as a starting point, and let your child explore different kinds of books: funny stories, mysteries, poetry and information books.

In the topic lists, **Guided reading** marks the book your child studies in class and **Daily read** marks the book read aloud to the class.

Books for our topics

Each half-term our learning is built around a big question. Reading a book linked to the topic at home helps your child build knowledge and vocabulary, and gives you lots to talk about. Tap a title, where there is a link, to see its cover.

Autumn 1 Where does my food go?

The World's Strangest Food [Guided reading](#) Non-fiction

Our guided reading text: surprising foods from around the world.

The Boy at the Back of the Class [Daily read](#) Onjali Q. Raúf

A group of friends hatch a plan to help Ahmet, a refugee in their class, find his family. Funny, warm and thought-provoking.

Fortunately, the Milk Neil Gaiman and Chris Riddell

Dad pops out for milk and comes back with a story involving aliens, pirates and a time-travelling dinosaur. Brilliant to read aloud.

Feast of Peas Kashmira Sheth

The Great Chocoplot Chris Callaghan

Diagnosis Detectives: Tummy Trouble Ben Elcomb and Terri Po

A team of detectives tours the human body, hunting down viruses and bacteria. Funny, detailed and full of real science. New for 2026–27.

Autumn 2 Where would we be without the Greeks?

The Girl Who Stole an Elephant [Guided reading](#) Nizrana Farook

Chaya, a young thief, flees through the jungle on the King's elephant. A fast-moving adventure.

Who Let the Gods Out? [Daily read](#) Maz Evans

Elliot accidentally releases a demon, and only the (slightly useless) Greek gods can help. Hilarious, and links to our Ancient Greeks topic.

Greek Myths Marcia Williams

Mark of the Cyclops Saviour Pirotta

Hercules Geraldine McCaughrean

Spring 1 What did the Romans do for us? (part 2)

Asha and the Spirit Bird [Guided reading](#) Jasbinder Bilan

Asha sets out across the Himalayas to find her father, guided by a bird she believes is her grandmother's spirit.

Roman Diary Richard Platt and David Parkins

The diary of Iliona, a girl captured by pirates and sold as a slave in Ancient Rome.

Spring 2 How does performance enhance my confidence?

Poems by Joseph Coelho [Guided reading](#) Joseph Coelho

We read a range of Joseph Coelho's poems this half-term. Try Poems Aloud or Werewolf Club Rules at home.

The Accidental Rock Star [Daily read](#) Tom McLaughlin

A boy becomes a pop sensation entirely by accident. Fast and funny.

Fantastic Mr Fox: A Play Roald Dahl

The Bear and the Piano David Litchfield

The Swish of the Curtain Pamela Brown

Hari Kumar: Ultimate Superstar Rashmi Sirdeshpande and Mamta Singh

Hari, who is autistic and has ADHD, dreams of Bollywood stardom. Warm and funny, written as a journal. New for 2026–27.

Summer 1 What happened to the Maya?

The Explorer **Guided reading and daily read** Katherine Rundell

Four children survive a plane crash in the Amazon rainforest and must find their own way home.

Lost in the Amazon Tod Olson

Expedition Diaries: Borneo Rainforest Simon Chapman

Summer 2 How does south-east England compare with the Amalfi Coast?

Wonder **Guided reading** R. J. Palacio

Auggie, who was born with a facial difference, starts school for the first time. A much-loved story about kindness.

Year 4 favourites

High-quality books to read with your child or for them to read on their own. Your local library is a wonderful, free place to find them.

Stories and modern classics

How to Train Your Dragon Cressida Cowell

Hiccup, a small Viking with a very long name, has to train a dragon to prove he is a hero. Very funny, and perfect for our Viking topic. [Series to get hooked on](#)

The Highland Falcon Thief M. G. Leonard and Sam Sedgman

A jewel goes missing on the last journey of a royal steam train, and Hal sets out to solve the mystery. Full of clues to spot. [Mystery](#)

Sputnik's Guide to Life on Earth Frank Cottrell-Boyce and Steven Lenton

Prez, who is living with a foster family, meets an alien who looks like a dog to everyone else. Funny and moving; lovely to share together. [Read it together](#)

Myths, legends and traditional tales

Beowulf Michael Morpurgo and Michael Foreman

The ancient Anglo-Saxon legend of a hero who fights the monster Grendel, retold for young readers. Links to our Vikings topic. [Legend](#)

- King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table – Marcia Williams
- Cinderella of the Nile – Beverley Naidoo

More books to try

- Spooks and Scooters (Marsh Road Mysteries) – Elen Caldecott
- Goth Girl and the Sinister Symphony – Chris Riddell
- The Worst Witch – Jill Murphy
- The Owl Tree – Jenny Nimmo
- Operation Gadgetman! – Malorie Blackman
- The Invisible Dog – Dick King-Smith
- The Legend of Captain Crow's Teeth – Eoin Colfer
- The Last Viking – Terry Deary
- Violet and the Mummy Mystery – Harriet Whitehorn

New books for 2026–27

Recently published books from BookTrust's Great Books Guide 2026–27 for 8 to 9-year-olds. Others from the guide appear in our topic lists above.

Funny books and adventures

Robots Stole My Mum! Alex Kirk and Tim Wesson

Sandy and Arjun suspect the grown-ups are being swapped for robots. Fast, silly and very funny.

Riley Wright is Always Wrong Mel Taylor-Bessent and SR. Sanchez

Riley starts a new school and must keep it secret that her dad is the new headteacher. Written as a diary. **Diary**

The Last Journey Stacy Gregg and Suzie Mason

When pet cats are outlawed, Pusskin must lead his friends to safety. An animal adventure with real tension.

Cobweb Michael Morpurgo and Michael Foreman

A dog tells the story of a long journey across Britain in 1815. A warm historical adventure.

Paddock Grove: A Pony to Own JP Rose

George and her scruffy pony Bear start at a boarding school for the best young riders. One for horse-lovers.

Mysteries and graphic novels

YOU VS The Poison Plot Josh Hicks

You are the detective: choose your own path to solve the mystery at the school talent show.

Korobá: The Case of the Missing Kolo Àlàbá Ònájìn

Korobá and her friends investigate a missing money box in their fishing village. A beautifully drawn graphic novel.

Poetry

The Poetry World of John Agard John Agard and Shirley Hottier

Eighty playful poems gathered from across John Agard's books.

Finding more books

You don't need to buy books to read widely. Joining the library is free, and children can borrow lots of books at once.

Your local library – free to join, with books, audiobooks, eBooks and the Summer Reading Challenge.

BookTrust Great Books Guide 2026–27 – 100 recommended new books across all ages.

booktrust.org.uk/book-recommendations/great-books-guide

BookTrust Bookfinder – search thousands of recommended books by age and interest.

booktrust.org.uk/book-recommendations/bookfinder

BooksForTopics: Year 4 recommended reads – 50 books chosen for 8 and 9 year olds.

booksfortopics.com

Learn, believe, achieve together

Happy reading! If you would like more book ideas for your child, please ask their class teacher.

Birch Hill Primary School and Nursery, part of Maiden Erlegh Trust. September 2026.