

The Best Information Books for Children: 2026 Information Book Award shortlist announced with a new publisher sponsor

Saturday 24 January, 2026

The School Library Association (SLA) has revealed the shortlist for the 2026 Information Book Award (IBA), celebrating inspiring UK-published information books for young people, up to age 16. Children across the country can now read the shortlisted titles and cast their votes in the Award's Children's Choice categories.

All schools who sign up to take part in the Book Club receive free resources, and those who do so before Friday 13th February will have the opportunity to receive a free pack of shortlisted books in one age category, thanks to generous support from the Authors Licensing and Collection Society (ALCS).

The voting period will run until May 2026, giving schools the chance to hold meaningful book club sessions across several weeks. Taking part in the IBA Book Club will help children develop critical thinking skills, develop confidence in communicating their opinions, find new interests and fire up their love of reading.

The SLA has also announced new sponsorship for the IBA, with DK, the UK's number one children's non-fiction publisher, joining the Award as sponsor. This is an exciting new development, which reflects the IBA's growing focus on pupil voice and school engagement.

Sarah Later, Managing Director of DK Children's said: *"At DK, we champion the transformative power of books. In the National Year of Reading, school libraries matter more than ever. As many young readers gravitate toward non-fiction, the Information Book Award is essential, celebrating the remarkable talent that makes our world come alive."*

The 12 books on the IBA shortlist range from picture books to choose your own adventures and encyclopaedias, covering everything from why we sleep, to where we came from:

Under 7 age category shortlist:

- *A Billion Ways to Be*, Chitra Soundar, illustrated by Ana Sanfelippo, Franklin Watts, Hachette Children's Group
- *Frog: A Story of Life on Earth*, Isabel Thomas, illustrated by Daniel Egneus, Bloomsbury Children's Books
- *Recycling Day: What Happens to the Thing We Throw Away*, Poly Faber, illustrated by Klas Fahlén, Nosy Crow
- *Where Did She Go?*, Cariad Lloyd, illustrated by Tom Percival, Hodder, Hachette Children's Group

8 – 12 age category shortlist:

- *About Time*, Rebecca Struthers and Alom Shaha, illustrated by Lucy Rose, DK
- *Choose Your Own Evolution*, Jules Howard, illustrated by Gordy Wright, Nosy Crow
- *Science Detective Agency*, Steve Derrick, illustrated by Miriam Serafin, Wayland, Hachette Children's Group
- *Why Do We Sleep?*, Cathy Evans, illustrated by Polya Plavinskaia, Cicada Books

13– 16 age category shortlist:

- *Explodapedia: The Brain*, Ben Martynoga, illustrated by Moose Allain, David Fickling Books
- *It's a Brave Young World*, Anu Adebogun, illustrated by Soofiya and Lila Cruz, Little Tiger
- *Normal Women*, Philippa Gregory, illustrated by Alexis Snell, Red Shed, Farshore
- *Owning It: Our Disabled Childhoods in Our Own Words*, edited by Jen Campbell, James Catchpole and Lucy Catchpole, illustrated by Sophie Kamlish, Faber and Faber

The shortlist was selected by a panel of judges made up of SLA member librarians, industry representatives and authors, including SLA Patron Smriti Halls.

Chair of judges, Helen Cleaves said: *"From automata to autism, this shortlist is nothing if not diverse,*

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Information Book Awards ::
Children :: School Library
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Scan Me:



offering a wealth of information adventures for children from toddler to teen. What's more, these books have the whole package: stunning artwork and meticulous design combine with engaging text for maximum impact."

Judges' comments about each individual title on the shortlist are available [here](#).

The winners of the IBA and the Children's Choice accolades will be announced in the summer. Four awards will be given by both the judges and the school children shadowing the Award, with each group choosing a winner in each age category and an overall winner. Last year's overall IBA winner was *Black History for Every Day of the Year* by David, Yinka and Kemi Olusoga, while the overall Children's Choice went to *Amazing Asia* by Rashmi Sirdeshpande, illustrated by Jason Lyon.

Victoria Dilly, CEO of the SLA said: *"For librarians, teachers, parents and children, information books can offer a new route into reading, which encourages curiosity about the world around us, and creates an ideal opportunity for a shared experience: whether that's sharing newfound facts, looking at engaging illustrations together, or exploring a freshly discovered interest. This year's IBA shortlist showcases a diverse collection of books that cover a vast range of subjects. I can't wait to hear from all the librarians and pupils who will be exploring these books through the IBA Book Club."*

Book packs of the shortlisted titles will be available to buy from Peters Books at a discount of 20%.

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