

# Top 10 books for reluctant and dyslexic readers

I was a reluctant reader when I was at school. I think if most of these books this top 10 had been given to me at the right time they would have helped me become a more confident reader. And also to enjoy reading more. Perhaps not Rainbow Fairies. But the rest, certainly.

All these books are all great for encouraging a lifelong love of reading to a child, if introduced at the right time. It is knowing when to read what that is the trick. So I hope you enjoy his list!

## 1. [Ruby the Red Fairy](#) by Daisy Meadows

There is a lot of snobbishness about the Rainbow Fairy series and other series like it, such as [Beast Quest](#). Yes, they are formulaic, but when I read aloud 10 of them to my daughter and she went on to read 40 more by herself, she took to them with real pleasure and joy. They were brilliant for building her reading-for-pleasure stamina. Second only to Enid Blyton in that regard.

## 2. [Horrid Henry Robs the Bank](#) by Francesca Simon

When I do school and library events I ask most of the children what their favourite book is. Horrid Henry is always in the top five. That is partly down to the endearingly corrupting character, Henry, who is horrid indeed. Therefore extremely funny. But, also, that each book has not one medium length, but three shorter and heavily-illustrated stories in them. To finish a story like this gives struggling readers real sense of pride. They did it. They can read a book. They didn't fail to finish it.

## 3. [Diary of a Wimpy Kid](#) by Jeff Kinney

I think the Wimpy Kid books have had a huge impact on engaging children to read. They are written in a chunked-up diary style. Lots illustrations that aren't that far off what we could draw ourselves. Funny. Modern. Almost comic book style. These books tear down many of the barriers that put children off reading. And ultra-confident readers love them just as much as

struggling readers. Ask a hall full of 120 kids who has read *Wimpy Kid* and 110 hands will go up. With smiling faces on the end of them.

#### 4. [Dork Diaries](#) by Rachel Renee Russell

Dork Diaries are written in the style of *Wimpy Kid*, but they feature an older, more sophisticated girl character. I've read two of these. My daughter has read them all. Several times. They work because they are accessible, but also because they are not for younger children. Some of the issues – about friends and boys and parents – are pretty close to the bone. Great from 9+ right up to age 14 or 15 from what older girls in schools and librarians tell me.

#### 5. [Goth Girl](#) by Chris Riddell

Chris Riddell's books are something else. Before the *Goth Girl* books it was the [Ottoline](#) series. Beautiful, quite haunting novels, that have been illustrated as beautifully as any picture book. The stories are outstanding, but, in addition, the way the pictures break up the text make the *Goth Girl* books one of the few series that successfully break the taboo that 9+ kids' books shouldn't have pictures in them. They should.

#### 6. [Stormbreaker](#) by Anthony Horowitz

When I started writing my [Foul Play](#) books (about a boy who solves crimes in the world of contemporary football) I wanted to read the best fast-paced thrillers for children. To learn from the masters. In Anthony Horowitz I found the master. The Alex Rider series – of which *Stormbreaker* is the first of 10 – are relentlessly what-happens-next plot driven. Skilfully drawn characters and not too much description or emotional depth, these books are fantastic for children who are not comfortable solo-reading the richer flavours and stronger feelings in books by other legendary authors, like Michael Morpurgo.

#### 7. [Brck](#) by Anthony McGowan

Anthony McGowan is one of the best children's authors writing today. His range and skill are off the scale. Brock is a beautiful story about two boys who take on a gang of badger baiters. It's funny, disturbing and sad. The perfect short novel for older children who may struggle to read, but need a stronger storyline. Published by [Barrington Stoke](#) who edit and design their books to help overcome some of the problems dyslexic children face when reading a book.

### **8. [Percy Jackson & the Lightning Thief](#) by Rick Riordan**

The Percy Jackson books are fantastic, but you need a bit of stamina to read them. They are long for reluctant readers, but perfect for when someone who has not been a big reader until now, but is ready to have a go at longer books. The storylines – weaving modern children with Greek Myths – are awesome. A brilliant idea, brilliantly written. Lots of action. The eponymous hero is dyslexic.

### **9. [The Recruit](#) by Robert Muchamore**

I have read and enjoyed several of, this, the Cherub series. They are pacey action stories that often feature more violence and boy-girl references than some adults want children to read. That is one of the things that makes children like them so much. They see them as honest, not redacted. Publishers in the past have edited out of my books things that Muchamore is allowed to do. Boys and girls over the age of 11 recommend them to me more than any other author. Solid storylines about children recruited into a secret training camp to fight villains on behalf of the UK.

### **10. [The Enemy](#) by Charlie Higson**

These books in this series are very dark. They are about zombies and death: a frightening world where, for instance, a boy's undead parents might try to break into his room and eat him. But... they are hugely popular and superbly conceived and written. The Enemy is the first in the series.

**The books in this top 10 are highlighted in [Dive In, a book guide for reluctant and dyslexic](#)**

**readers by Dyslexia Action so do check out the others too! Happy reading!**