

## From Life Lessons to simple **FUN**

### Learning about life

Books for even the youngest of children can help them to learn about the ups and downs of life, but this becomes particularly true as they head towards their teens.

Here you'll find stories that look at all kinds of issues, from being bullied (or just finding it tough to cope with peer pressure) to things on a bigger scale like the impact of war. Whilst these stories may cover serious subjects, the writing is not unrelentingly grim and good authors recognise the need for levity and humour when covering difficult subjects.

### It's not all serious

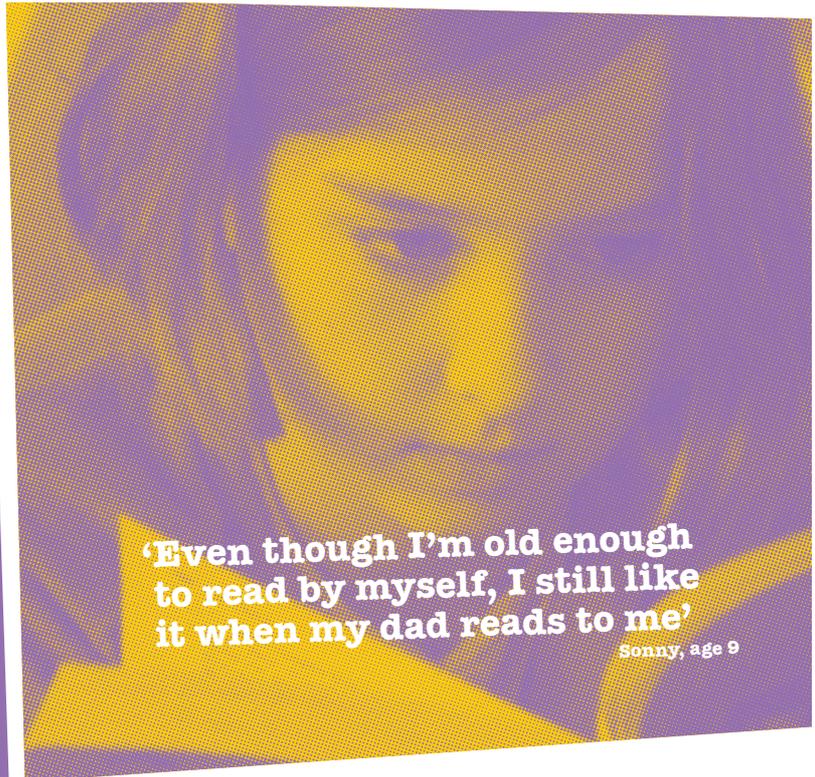
Of course, there are also plenty of page-turning adventure books for this age group with the likes of the *Charlie Bone* series and the *Cat Royal* books. Just like most adults don't want to read the same genre all the time, children want to try different things – one day they'll be in the mood for something light-hearted and irreverent, the next they'll want to get their teeth into something more gritty and substantial.

### Let them choose their own books

It might be tempting to try to carefully pick and choose books that are suitable for each child. Although this has some merit, children in this age group are more likely to want to choose the books they read, rather than having titles suggested to them. You have to trust them to make their own choices.

Children can understand and cope with a wide variety of information and emotions. Generally speaking, if they start to read a book that is a bit old for them they will simply move on to something else if they find it too hard.

You might feel their reading material isn't challenging enough, especially if they are choosing to read magazines over books, but it's the fact that they are reading which is the important bit!



**'Even though I'm old enough to read by myself, I still like it when my dad reads to me'**

Sonny, age 9

## The Rise of Fantasy Books

**Although there's nothing new about fantasy books (even *Lord of the Rings* wasn't the first), there's little doubt that they are now more popular than ever, largely thanks to the likes of *Harry Potter* and *Twilight*.**

Books like *Midnight for Charlie Bone* and *The Wind Singer* take children (and adults too) into engrossing worlds far removed from daily life. These books offer pure escapism and a chance to take a bit of a breather from thoughts of homework and school!