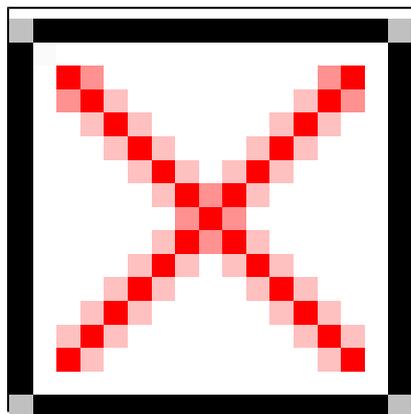




# EMPATHYLAB ANNOUNCES 2020 READ FOR EMPATHY BOOK COLLECTION

*Raising A Generation of Empathic Citizens*



**EmpathyLab** has announced the 50 books chosen by expert judges for the [2020 Read for Empathy](#) [1] collection.

There are two collections (one for primary and one for secondary) consisting of 33 books for 4-11 year-olds, and 17 for 12-16 year-olds. Some illuminate the experience of people from a range of cultures or life circumstances. Others help children explore emotions, so they can understand how other people feel. Several reflect stories of our time, such as the refugee experience, or coping with anxiety (one in eight children in England have a mental health disorder, NHS Digital report, Nov 2018).

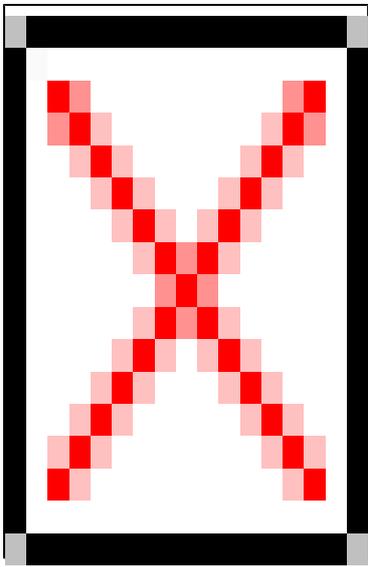
The 12 judges are national experts and grassroots practitioners from schools, public libraries and organisations such as **Amnesty**, the **School Library Association** and the **Centre for Literacy in Primary Education**.

[Miranda McKearney](#) [2], **EmpathyLab's founder** said: "Society faces an empathy crisis. But research shows that 98% of us can improve our empathy skills and that in books we have a hugely practical tool. This collection can play a powerful role in helping raise a generation of empathic citizens, story by story."

Guides to the collection are available as free downloads for parents, teachers and librarians to use as empathy-building tools - with children and young people in the home or learning settings.

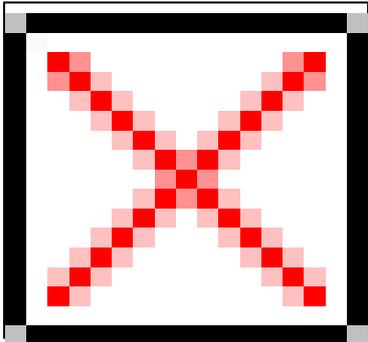
Judge **Paul Harris**, a teacher at the Bethlem-Maudsley Hospital School, says: "Empathy benefits everybody's wellbeing, and we know its constituent skills can be taught and developed. These books will help young people to better understand themselves and their interactions with each other."

Judge **Jon Biddle**, teacher at Moorlands Primary Academy in Great Yarmouth, says "I think teachers will find these books can have an enormous impact, including on children's attitudes towards people from different communities. In our school's empathy work on refugees, I've seen huge changes. One child said it all "I used to think refugees were different from us. Now I don't."



The judges highlighted the quality of submissions helping young people make sense of today's big issues. Chosen titles explore the experience of poverty, prejudice or illness, including [It's a No-Money Day](#) [3] by Kate Milner; **No Ballet Shoes in Syria** by Catherine Bruton; [Lubna and Pebble](#) [4] by Wendy Meddour (illustrator Daniel Egnéus); **Can You See Me?** by Libby Scott and Rebecca Westcott; **Planet Omar** by Zanib Mian (illustrator Nasaya Mafaridik); **A Story about Cancer (with a Happy Ending)** by India Desjardins (illustrator Marianne Ferrer, translator Solange Ouellet).

They also commended the power of books that help children 'read' emotions 'their own and other people's; among these were [When Sadness Comes to Call](#) [5] by Eva Eland; **Ravi's Roar** by Tom Percival; **No Longer Alone** by Joseph Coelho (illustrator Robyn Wilson-Owen).



The list features a range of titles exploring boys' perspectives and emotions, including some tackling LGBT+ perspectives, including **Heartstopper: Volume 1** by Alice Oseman; **The Black Flamingo** by Dean Atta; [Julian is a Mermaid](#) [6] by Jessica Love. The judges welcomed a rise in books reflecting diverse perspectives and experiences. 40% of selected titles feature BAME characters and 30% are created by BAME authors and illustrators. They include [Ghost](#) [7] by Jason Reynolds; **Kick the Moon** by Muhammad Khan (illustrator Amrit Birdi); [Race to the Frozen North](#) [8] by Catherine Johnson (illustrator Katie Hickey) and [Two Sides](#) [9] by Polly Ho-Yen (illustrator Binny Talib).

The publishing industry plus schools, libraries and youth organisations are backing EmpathyLab's campaign to use books to raise an empathic generation 'in the run-up to Empathy Day on 9 June, and beyond. The book collections can be purchased from Peters book suppliers as well as select independent bookshops. **Ray Dyer, Peters' Managing Director**, comments: 'We have been proud supporters of the Read for Empathy Guides for the past three years. Let's get these books into children's hands as a matter of urgency, as part of EmpathyLab's drive to build a more caring and integrated society.'

[EMPATHY DAY 2020 The 2020 Read for Empathy Guides](#) [1] will be used by parents, teachers and librarians in the run up to **Empathy Day** on 9 June and beyond. This annual event focuses on using books 'and talking about them' to build understanding of the importance and practice of empathy. Schools nationwide will run empathy assemblies, host

author visits, make Empathy Awards and more. Libraries will participate nationwide (in 2019 98 library services took part, up from 19 for the first Empathy Day). The Empathy Circle, a group of leading children's publishers, will launch bespoke initiatives to amplify the Day's message and everyone is encouraged to find and start an empathy-boosting book through a social media #ReadForEmpathy campaign.

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**Source URL (retrieved on Jan '21):** <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/news/empathylab-announces-2020-read-for-empathy-book-collection>

**Links:**

- [1] <https://www.empathylab.uk/2020-read-for-empathy-collections>
- [2] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/235/childrens-books/articles/empathylab-2019>
- [3] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/239/childrens-books/reviews/it?s-a-no-money-day>
- [4] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/236/childrens-books/reviews/lubna-and-pebble>
- [5] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/234/childrens-books/reviews/when-sadness-comes-to-call>
- [6] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/236/childrens-books/articles/picturebook-talent-the-2019-klaus-flugge-prize-shortlist>
- [7] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/235/childrens-books/reviews/ghost>
- [8] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/233/childrens-books/reviews/race-to-the-frozen-north-the-matthew-henson-story>
- [9] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/235/childrens-books/reviews/two-sides>