



# Ten of the Best Island Stories

By *AndreaMReece*

Created Jul '18

Article Author:

[Tricia Adams](#) [1]

[231](#) [2]

Article Category:

Ten of the Best

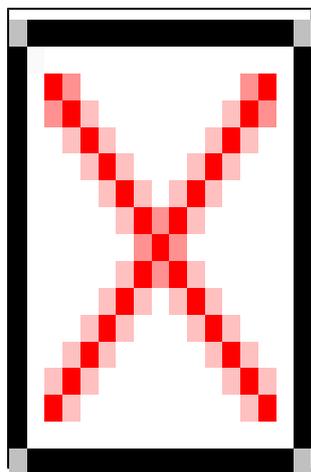
Byline:

Ten of the Best: a summer special on the best books set on islands, chosen by **Tricia Adams**

Islands are an entirety in themselves, they can be a different world allowing either escape or underlining isolation and difference. They may be attractive or, in fact, the exact opposite and be something you need to escape from, giving characters and plots a whole different series of problems and challenges than might be the case on a mainland. In many cases the island is a cypher to place the characters under a different stress.

Personally, I have ambivalent feelings about islands - their isolation appeals to the loner part of my character - though I know I could never live entirely on an island as the gregarious part of my nature needs other places and a large circle of friends and acquaintances to react with. But, as I regularly say, reading is a safe place to expose yourself to other experiences and the following books are some of the best reads about islands.

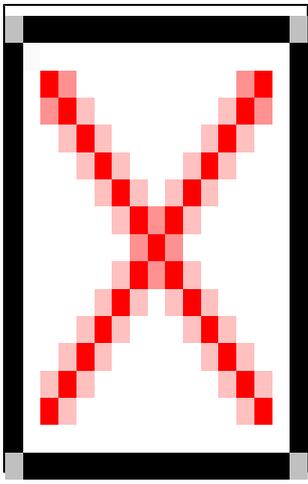
[Where the World Ends](#) [3]



Geraldine McCaughrean Usborne Publishing 9781474943437 £6.99

The **2018 CILIP Carnegie Medal** winner is a powerful story of the young men and boys who every year spend three weeks on the remote sea stac off St Kilda. This is set in the summer of 1727 and the predicament of the group when no one returns to collect them from the stac is explored. This is historical fiction of the highest quality - **Wolf Hall** for young people, if you will. The boys, knowing nothing like this has happened before, assume the world has ended and they are they only survivors - but what can they do to get away? The story explores the depths of their isolation, their strength of character and their resilience in an unforgettable engrossing read.

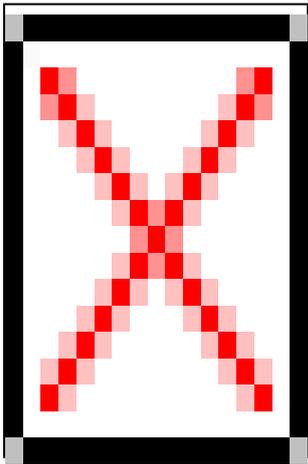
[The Island](#) [4]



Nicky Singer, illustrated by Chris Riddell Caboodle Books, 978 0 9929389 6 3 £6.99

Cameron, who has spent his life in urban settings, arrives on an uninhabited Arctic island whilst his mother is carrying out scientific research there. He thinks he is quite prepared for everything the climate can throw at him and believes his mother's rational explanations for much that he sees. Except when graves start to open and he sees an Inuit girl and a large white bear that no one else is seeing. The book is run through with Inuit legends as the story explores Cameron's arrogance in thinking the rest of the world can plunder the seas and the unexplored lands for their own ends. An exploration of loneliness, legend and man's conscience.

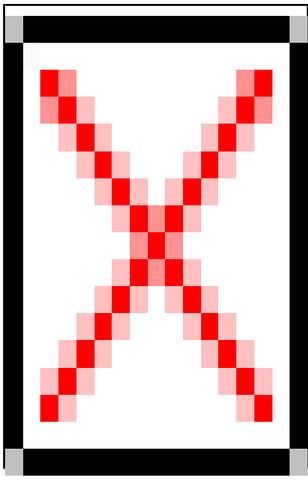
### **Edge Chronicles 1: Curse of the Gloamglozer: First Book of Quint**



Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell. Random House Children's Books 9780552569620 £7.99

Fourteen-year-old Quint Verginix is the only remaining son of a famous sky-pirate. He and his father have journeyed to the city of Sanctaphrax - a great floating rock, bound to the ground below by a chain, an island floating in the sky. Deep inside the great rock of the island something horrible lurks. With his father away, Quint may be the only one who can save Sanctaphrax from the dreaded curse of the gloamglozer. This is the first in an interconnected series of fantasy novels that take readers on a long and rewarding adventure through floating islands and amazing lands, where daring and friendship help overcome apparently insurmountable enemies. A fun read with the darker moments underlining the mystery and adventure elements.

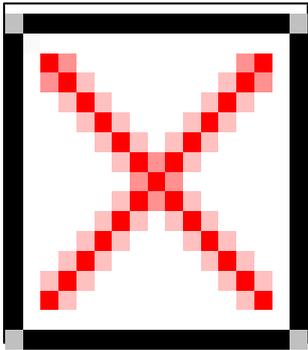
[Kensuke's Kingdom](#) [5]



Michael Morpurgo Egmont 9781405221740 £6.99

Michael is washed up on a pacific island in a storm - by himself. He finds it impossible to survive in such an alien landscape and so curls up to sleep - probably not to wake up. But he does wake up and finds a plate of food beside him... It is some time before he understands that his helper is an old Japanese man who does not want others on his island. Over time a friendship and trust build between the two characters as they face future adversity together. Told in Morpugo's easy to read style this is a great book for younger readers, teaching much with a light touch.

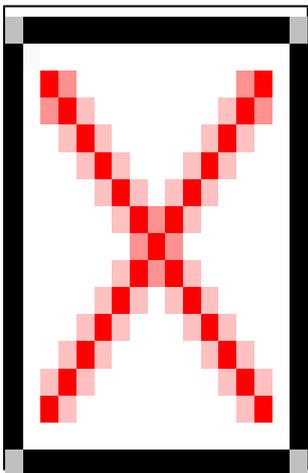
## Welcome



Barroux Egmont 9781405280525 £6.99

A simple but powerful picture book for young readers. Polar Bear and his friends are swept from their icy home so they hope for a new home in a new land. They are turned away from island after island by the inhabitants (panda, giraffe and cows until at last, with their own ice island shrinking all the time, they find an empty island where they can settle. After a while monkeys turn up and want to share the island - after some thought the bears welcome them. A delightful picture book for parents to share with children exploring the plight of refugees from their own homelands.

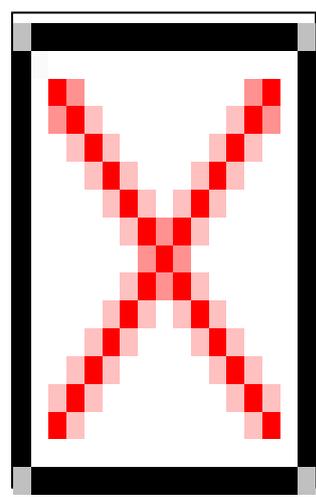
## Beyond the Bright Sea



Lauren Wolk Corgi 978 0 552 57430 3 £6.99

Crow was tied into an old boat and sent out to sea. The boat washed up on a tiny windswept island and the new born baby was seen to have a feather-shaped birthmark, a ruby ring and the remains of a sea soaked letter. Osh found her and in his own way welcomed her into his world and the island. In some time later that Crow starts to wonder where she came from, what her history is, and if it might be somehow connected with the lights she can see burning from across the water around her home. This book has elements of mystery in Crow's past but develops quickly into a story of family and whether the past is more important than the future.

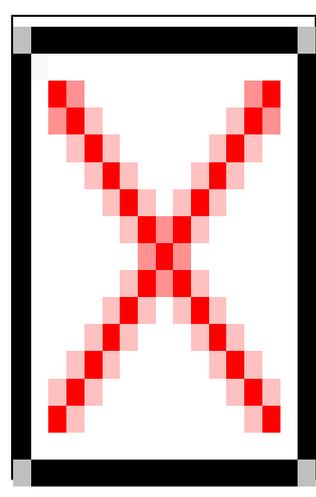
### [The Island at the End of Everything](#) [6]



Kiran Millwood Hargrave. Chicken House 978 1 910002 76 6 £6.99

Ami lives with her sick mother on a beautiful island until the arrival of a cruel government representative - Mr Zamora. The island is to be made into a colony for sufferers of leprosy with all healthy individuals to be moved to an orphanage across the sea on another island. On her enforced travels Ami meets a friend and they try to find a way back home - even though it is forbidden to return there. This is an incredibly difficult journey - enlivened with beauty of the natural landscape, especially the butterflies they see. But it is chiefly about children fighting for what they know to be right and good. A beautifully crafted book, written with a poetic style that lives with you for a long time.

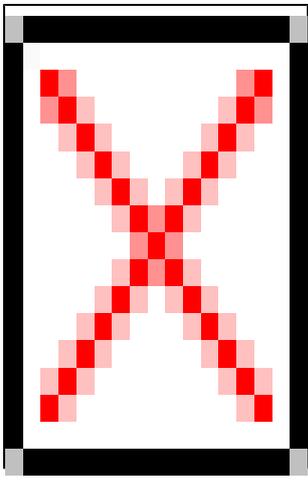
### [We Were Liars](#) [7]



E Lockhart Hot Key Books 781471403989 £7.99

A very privileged family spend their summers on a private island in luxury - until there is a disaster. There are four main characters - the liars - and the story switches between their points of view, giving us a skewed view of the truth in this complex thriller. It will not be to everyone's taste as the writing style is often short phrases with overly dramatic expressions and imagery but I found it compelling. As a reader you are questioning everything all the time in this tragic but beautiful story.

### [The Children of Castle Rock](#) [8]

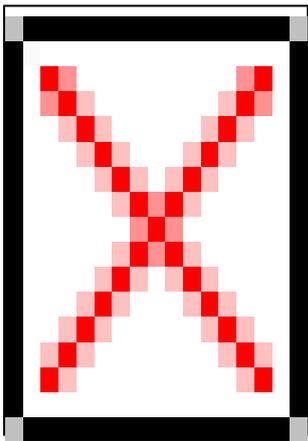


Natasha Farrant Faber and Faber 9780571323562 £6.99

Alice Mistlethwaite is an imaginative child who is shipped off to an unusual boarding school in Scotland - which turns out to be so unlike everything she could imagine she wonders if she will ever fit in. To add to her worries her Dad, Barney, an up and coming actor, disappears - and Alice decides she must try and find him. Can she persuade her two friends at school to help her run away and find him. This is an epic quest in search of the rather ne'er do well Barney and all set in the wonderful countryside of the Scottish Islands with their storms, difficult tides and teeming wildlife - especially sea birds. A truly magnificent island sits at the heart of this wonderful adventure for young readers.

And finally ...

## Swallows and Amazons



Arthur Ransome Vintage Publishing - this edition 2012, originally 1932 ISBN 9780099572794 £7.99

The Walker children - Captain John, Mate Susan, Able-Seaman Titty, and Ship's Boy Roger - set sail on the Swallow and head for Wild Cat Island. There they will camp under open skies, swim in clear water and go fishing for their dinner. But their days are disturbed by the Blackett sisters, the fierce Amazon pirates. The Swallows and Amazons decide to battle it out, and so begins a summer of unforgettable discoveries and incredible adventures. Surely one of the best known and loved island adventure stories ever - a classic to be read at least once by every island lover!

As a professional librarian **Tricia Adams** has worked in several sectors including government libraries and as a self-employed information specialist. For the last 20+ years she has worked with children's books. This included a spell as a primary school librarian, before moving back to public libraries as Head of Children's and Young People's Public Library Services and the manager of the Schools' Library Service ? Learning Resources for Education Northamptonshire. She was director of the School Library Association from 2008 until 2018.

Page Number:

10

---

Source URL (retrieved on Feb '21): <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/231/childrens-books/articles/ten-of-the-best/ten-of-the-best-island-stories>

Links:

[1] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/tricia-adams>

[2] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/231>

[3] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/224/childrens-books/reviews/where-the-world-ends>

[4] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/217/childrens-books/reviews/the-island>

[5] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/129/childrens-books/reviews/kensukes-kingdom>

[6] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/226/childrens-books/reviews/the-island-at-the-end-of-everything>

[7] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/207/childrens-books/reviews/we-were-liars>

[8] <http://cww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/229/childrens-books/reviews/the-children-of-castle-rock>