

Autobiographies for Younger Readers

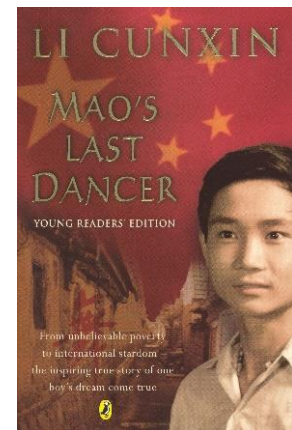
El Deafo by Cece Bell, 2014

In this funny, poignant graphic novel memoir, author/illustrator Cece Bell chronicles her hearing loss at a young age and her subsequent experiences with the Phonic Ear, a very powerful and very awkward hearing aid. The Phonic Ear gives Cece the ability to hear (including some things she wasn't intended to hear), but it also isolates her from her classmates. She really just wants to fit in and find a true friend.



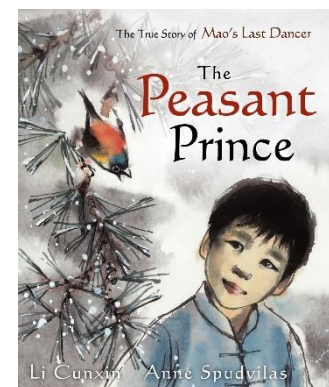
Mao's Last Dancer: Young Readers Edition by Li Cunxin, 2003

The journey for a young, impoverished village boy destined to labour in the fields of China to a world-famous professional ballet dancer. One day he would become a star: Mao's last dancer, the darling of the West and now the Director of the esteemed Queensland Ballet Company. A story of courage, a mother's love, and a young boy's longing for freedom.



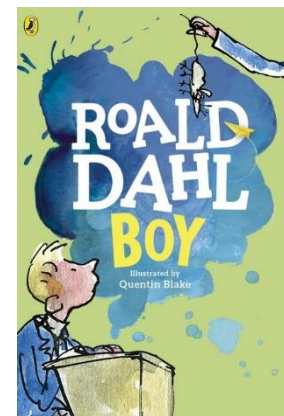
The Peasant Prince by Li Cunxin, Anne Spudvilas (Illustrator), 2012 Picture Book

This is the story of Li Cunxin's extraordinary life. Based upon his internationally best-selling memoir, Mao's Last Dancer. With hauntingly beautiful illustrations by award-winning artist Anne Spudvilas, Li's journey of courage and determination is simply told.



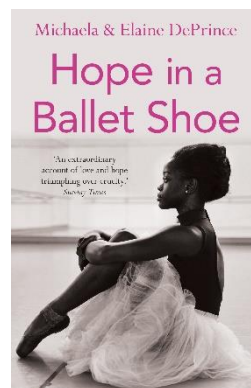
Boy: Tales of Childhood by Roald Dahl, Quentin Blake (Illustrator), 2008

As a boy, all sorts of unusual things happened to Roald Dahl. There was the time he and four school friends got their revenge on beastly Mrs Prachett in her sweet shop. You'll read tales of horrible school bullies and the motor-car accident when Roald's nose was nearly sliced clean off . . . Roald Dahl vividly shares his memories; some are funny. Some are painful. Some are unpleasant. All are true.



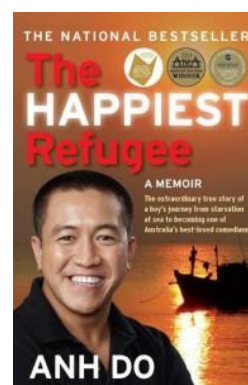
Hope in a Ballet Shoe by Michaela DePrince & Elaine DePrince, 2015

Growing up in war-torn Sierra Leone, Michaela witnessed atrocities that no child ever should. Sent to an orphanage, Michaela was mistreated and saw the brutal murder of her favourite teacher. Then Michaela and her best friend are adopted by an American couple, and Michaela begins to take dance lessons. But Michaela has to fight for a place amongst the ballet elite, hearing the words 'America's not ready for a black girl ballerina.' And yet . . . Today, Michaela DePrince is an international ballet star.



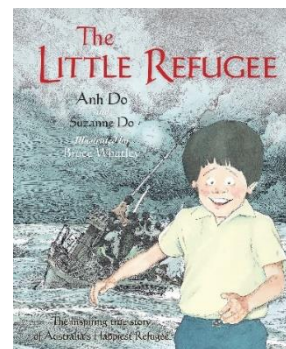
The Happiest Refugee by Anh Do, 2010

This is comedian Anh Do's memoir which begins with his family's escape from war-torn Vietnam. During their journey in a leaky fishing boat, Anh and his family nearly die from disease, starvation, dehydration and pirate attacks. Even when they are rescued and resettled in Australia, there is no simple Happy Ever After.



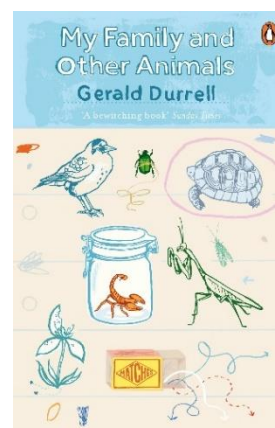
The Little Refugee by Anh Do and Suzanne Do, 2011

The picture book version of The Happiest Refugee. Life in suburban Australia was hard for a small boy with no English and funny lunches. But there was a loving extended family, lots of friends, and always something to laugh about for Anh, his brother Khoa and their sister Tram.



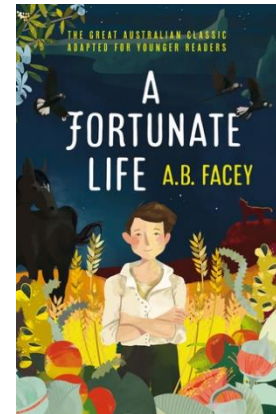
My Family and Other Animals by Gerald Durrell, 1964/2017

Escaping the ills of the British climate, the Durrell family - acne-ridden Margo, gun-toting Leslie, bookworm Lawrence and budding naturalist Gerry, along with their long-suffering mother and Roger the dog - take off for the island of Corfu. Once there the Durrells find that, reluctantly, they must share their various villas with a menagerie of local fauna - among them scorpions, geckos, toads, bats and butterflies. Recounted with immense humour and charm this is a wonderful account of a rare, magical childhood.



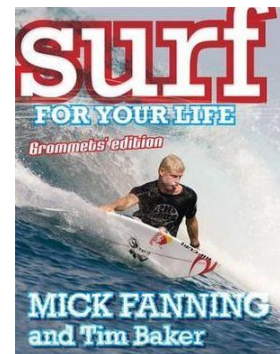
A Fortunate Life by A.B. Facey (Junior Edition), 1981/2018

Bert Facey saw himself as an ordinary man, but his remarkable story reveals an extraordinary life lived to the full. Bert Facey was a battler, ever optimistic and hopeful despite the hardships of his life. A true classic of Australian literature, his simply written autobiography is an inspiration. This edition has been specially adapted for young readers.



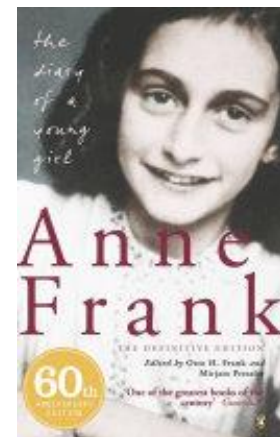
Surf for Your Life by Mick Fanning and Tim Baker, 2011

The Grommets' Edition of Mick Fanning's bestselling biography Surf for Your Life is the ultimate grom's glimpse into the life of a two-time world champion surfer and an unrivalled guide to living and breathing the surf life. In his own words, Mick tells his story of overcoming the odds to become one of the best surfers in the world and drops pearls of wisdom gained from his life on and off the tour.



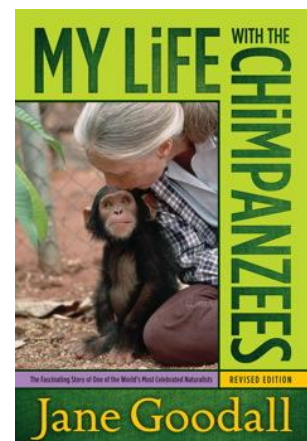
The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank, 1947/2007

This vivid, journalistic story truly brings to life oppression in Europe during the World War II Nazi occupation. Anne Frank was a German-born Jewish girl who wrote a diary between the ages of 13 and 15, until she was apprehended by the Nazis. The courageous story chronicles Anne's life for the two years she was in hiding in Amsterdam. Translated into 60 languages, people from around the world are moved by Anne's fascinating commentary about how the human spirit can transcend even the worst of horrors.



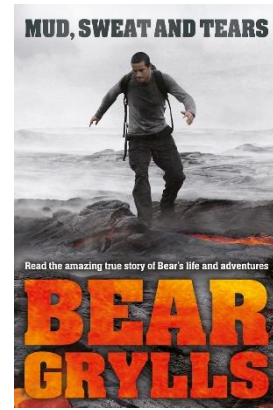
My Life with the Chimpanzees by Jane Goodall, 1996

As a child, Jane Goodall was given a stuffed chimpanzee named Jubilee, and she has said her fondness for this figure started her early love of animals. Jane dreamed of a life spent working with animals, and when she was twenty-six years old, she ventured into the forests of Africa to observe chimpanzees in the wild. Through her work at Gombe Stream National Park in Tanzania and her own Roots and Shoots program she has become a tireless advocate for animals and the planet.



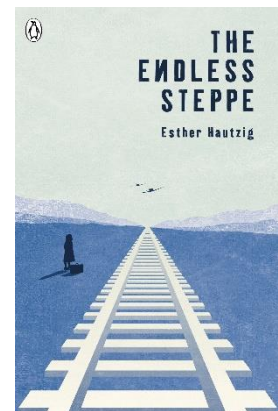
Mud, Sweat and Tears by Bear Grylls, 2012

From his childhood on the Isle of Wight, learning to sail and climb with his father, to teenage mountaineering and martial arts training, he has always sought the ultimate in adventure. Bear became one of the youngest ever climbs to scale Everest, aged only twenty-three. And this was just the beginning of his many adventures...



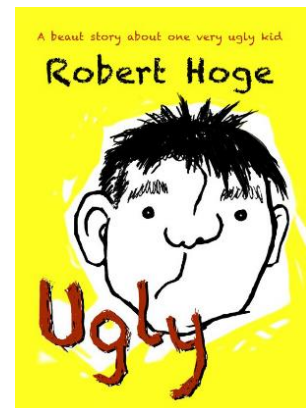
The endless Steppe by Esther Hautzig, 2017

Esther Rudomin was ten years old when, in 1941, she and her family were arrested by the Russians for being 'capitalists' and transported to Siberia. The next five years spent were spent in exile where they went barefoot and hungry until the end of the Second World War. Despite the hardships endured, Esther's story radiates optimism and is a beautiful example of the resilience of the human spirit.



Ugly (Younger Readers Edition) by Robert Hoge, 2015

What makes this story extraordinary is that Robert was born significantly disfigured – a massive tumour distorted his facial features, and his legs were twisted and useless. Despite this, Robert's family is determined to give him an ordinary upbringing. Robert triumphs over his difficult beginnings, and grow up to be a successful journalist, science communicator and political advisor.



Red Scarf Girl by Ji Li Jiang, 1997

It's 1966, and twelve-year-old Ji-li Jiang has everything a girl could want: brains, popularity, and a bright future in Communist China. But it's also the year that China's leader, Mao Ze-dong, launches the Cultural Revolution-and Ji-li's world begins to fall apart. Over the next few years, people who were once her friends and neighbours turn on her and her family, forcing them to live in constant terror of arrest. And when Ji-li's father is finally imprisoned, she faces the most difficult dilemma of her life.



Reaching for the Moon The Autobiography of NASA

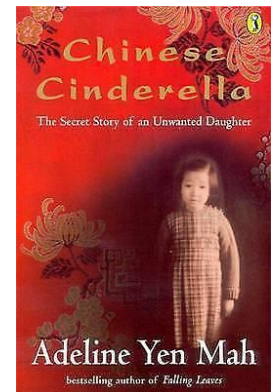
Mathematician Katherine Johnson, 2020

As a young girl, Katherine Johnson showed an exceptional aptitude for math. But ability and opportunity did not always go hand in hand. As an African American she grew up in an era of brutal racism and sexism. She worked on many of NASA's biggest projects including the Apollo 11 mission that landed the first men on the moon.



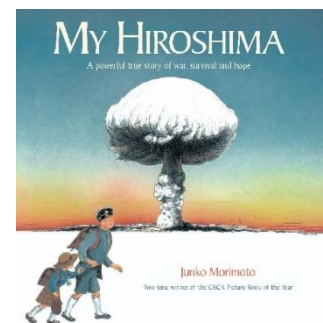
Chinese Cinderella: The Secret Story of an Unwanted Daughter by Adeline Yen Mah, 1999

This book by Chinese American physician and author Adeline Yen Mah describes her experiences growing up in China during the First Opium War. Jung-ling's family considers her bad luck because her mother died giving birth to her. Jung-ling grows up to be an academic child, with a natural ability for writing. Jung-ling blossoms in spite of everything and the story ends as her father agrees to let her study in England.



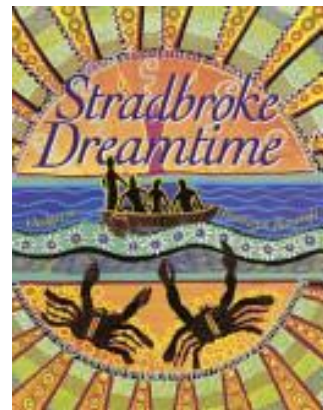
My Hiroshima by Junko Morimoto, 2014

A new edition of a contemporary classic about war, survival and hope - and what happened to one young girl when an atomic bomb was dropped on her city. On 6 August, 1945, 13-year-old Junko Morimoto's life changed forever. That was the day that an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, the Japanese city where she lived. A powerful and deeply moving story of a period in history that should never be forgotten.



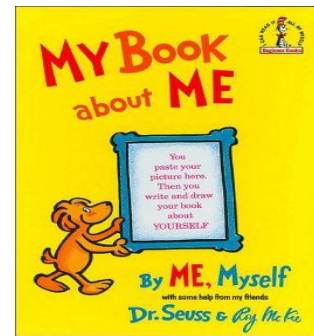
Stradbroke Dreamtime by Oodgeroo Nunukul, Bronwyn Bancroft (illustrator), 1995

A collection of short stories by Oodgeroo Nunukul (previously known as Kath Walker) reflecting on her childhood growing up on Stradbroke Island on the Queensland coast and old and new stories from the Dreamtime. Oodgeroo wrote these stories in 1972 while staying at Tamborine Mountain with her good friend, the well-known Australian poet, Judith Wright. Beautifully illustrated by Aboriginal artist and illustrator Bronwyn Bancroft.



My Book About Me by Me, Myself. I Wrote it, I Drew it, With a Little Help by Dr Seuss, Roy McKie (Illustrator), 1969

This is an activity book. The reader is encouraged to fill in the pages with information about himself (or herself), plus things to draw, and two lined pages on which to write a story. Great for young children starting off on their search for information about self.



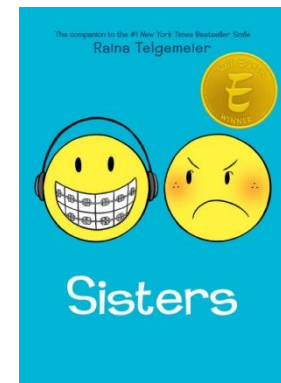
Smile written and illustrated by Raina Telgemeier, 2010

Raina just wants to be a normal sixth grader. But one night after Girl Scouts she trips and falls, severely injuring her two front teeth, and what follows is a long and frustrating journey with on-again, off-again braces, surgery, embarrassing headgear, and even a retainer with fake teeth attached. This coming-of-age true story is sure to resonate with anyone who has ever been in middle school, and especially those who have ever had a bit of their own dental drama.



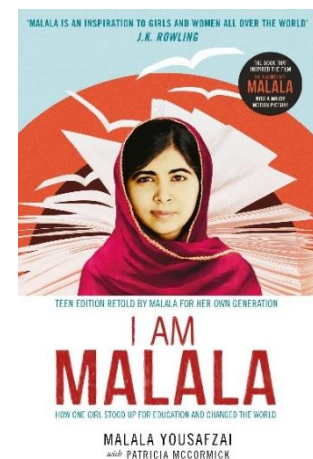
Sisters written and illustrated by Raina Telgemeier, 2014

Raina can't wait to be a big sister. But once Amara is born, things aren't quite how she expected them to be. Amara is cute, but she's also a cranky, grouchy baby, and mostly prefers to play by herself. Their relationship doesn't improve much over the years, but when a baby brother enters the picture and later, something doesn't seem right between their parents, they realize they must figure out how to get along. They are sisters, after all.



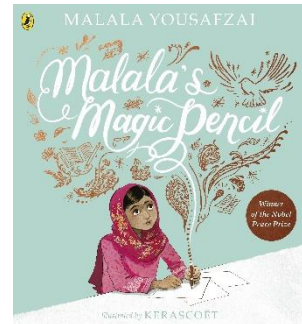
I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World (Children's edition) by Malala Yousafzai and Patricia McCormick, 2014

Raised in a once-peaceful area of Pakistan transformed by terrorism, Malala was taught to stand up for what she believes. So, she fought for her right to be educated and on 9 October 2012, she nearly lost her life for the cause. She was shot point-blank on her way home from school. No one expected her to survive. Now, she is an international symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest-ever Nobel Peace Prize winner.



Malala’s Magic Pencil (Picture Book) by Malala Yousafzai, Kerascoet (illustrator), 2019

This beautifully illustrated picture book tells Malala's story, in her own words, for a younger audience and shows them the worldview that allowed her to hold on to hope and to make her voice heard even in the most difficult of times.



No One Is Too Small to Make a Difference by Greta Thunberg, 2018

Swedish girl, Greta Thunberg, decided not to go to school one day in order to protest the climate crisis. Her actions sparked a global movement, inspiring millions of students to go on strike for our planet, forcing governments to listen, and earning her a Nobel Peace Prize nomination. Her book is a rallying cry for why we must all wake up and fight to protect the living planet, no matter how powerless we feel. Our future depends upon it.



Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson, 2016

Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Touching and powerful, each poem is both accessible and emotionally charged, each line a glimpse into a child’s soul as she searches for her place in the world.

