

*Who next ...? A guide to children's authors.* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.

Ed. by Viv Warren and Mary Yardley

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Since they believe reading to be fun and a wonderful privilege and opportunity to enter new and different worlds, parents, teachers and public librarians all strive to promote reading. They want kids to enjoy reading, and widen their horizons in the ongoing search for new and exciting authors. Often this is difficult, because kids claim to have read everything of interest, and the promoters' recommendations are limited by their own reading experiences and knowledge of authors a particular kid may like. Their only alternative is then to rely on what other parents, teachers and librarians recommend certainly a shortcoming in a world marked by a booming publishing industry and strong competition from the Internet and interactive computer games. Like the previous two editions, the latest edition of *Who next...?* can help them to address this challenge by offering a ready reference work on children's fiction and authoritative recommendations on authors who write alike. What better way than a colourful, glossy, easy to handle publication to stimulate a child's reading interests and to widen his/her reading experiences and to save face in not admitting that you are at wits end in making a good recommendation?

*Who next...?* intends to guide young children to new authors they may find interesting, by recommending authors who write in a similar style. It also offers advice on authors writing in a particular genre. It is admitted that no two authors will write in exactly the same style. Children may not agree with the editors' recommendations, but as has been proven by the previous two editions as well as the accompanying publication for adults (*Who else writes like...?* which is now in its fifth edition), the recommendations are often extremely useful and on target.

The editors, Viv Warren and Mary Yardley, are experienced children's librarians, and, to refine their selections, have drawn on a team of expert advisers with first hand knowledge of children's reading. The 3rd edition of *Who next...?* lists 537 authors of children's fiction. With each name, other authors who write in a similar way are suggested. The idea is that you can look up your favourite author and then be guided to other authors. If you like these authors, you can follow up their entries, which might lead you to authors of interest. If you like the work of JK Rowling, author of the Harry Potter series for example, the following authors may also be of interest: Theresa Breslin, Stephen Elboz, Cornelia Funke, and Diana Hendry (more alternatives are listed). For each author entry, the following are included: a few of the author's most important titles, the genre or type of book the author writes such as adventure or humour, the age group(s) for which the author is writing and a list of author's writing in a similar style. Where applicable, series titles are included. An effort was also made to point out titles aimed at young people with lower than average reading ages. These are in the main text and are indicated by "BS" after the title. These are publications produced by Barrington Stoke (<http://www.barringtonstoke.co.uk>) for children who have dyslexia or who are struggling or reluctant readers.

The structure of the book includes the following: acknowledgements, an introduction, guidelines on how to use the guide, an author list of ages 5-7, 8-11 and 12-14 years, a section on graphic novels (which seems to be useful to promote reading amongst teenage boys) and titles for dyslexic or struggling readers, a section on different genres and themes, authors whose titles are sometimes available as talking books, a list of prize-winning children's books, books and websites for further exploration, as an alphabetical author index indicating the age group and page numbers where alternatives for each author can be found. The following genres are covered: adventure; animals; ballet, computers; crime, death, detective mystery, diaries; disability, environment, fairy/folk; family; fantasy; friends; ghosts/supernatural; historical; horror, humour; illness, letters; magic, mystery; mythology, other cultures; other lands, pony/horse, romance, school; science fiction, sea boats; social issues; space, sport, stage, thrillers; traditional, transport, war. A number of useful website addresses for further information are also included.

As for my review of the previous edition, this third edition of *Who next...?* is highly recommended as a must-have publication for all public librarians, English language and media teachers. It is an essential companion for parents visiting the local library or bookstore ... and it would do no harm to drop a hint to grandparents ... who always seem to have more time to promote "reading". As I remarked in my review of the previous edition: I am looking forward to the next edition of *Who next...?* and that it will continue to go from strength to strength so that by the time I may be a grandparent I may use it to be the coolest, brightest granny always having the perfect answer to "I have read everything who next?" In the meantime I will lend my review copy to friends and colleagues with young children, and encourage the local bookshop (with national branches) to purchase copies of *Who next...?*

It can be ordered directly from LISU, Loughborough University, Loughborough, LE11 3TU. Tel: +44(0)01509 635680; Fax: +44(0)01509 635699; Email: [lisu@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:lisu@lboro.ac.uk); Website: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/dis/lisu>.

In addition to the guide to children's literature, LISU also publish a guide for adults, namely, *Who else writes like: a readers' guide to fiction*. (5th edition, 2005).

**Reviewed by:** Professor Ina Fourie, Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria, South Africa

Tel.: +27 (12) 420 5216

Email: [fouriei@postino.up.ac.za](mailto:fouriei@postino.up.ac.za)