

NEWSLETTER

SETTLEBECK READS

Issue 2 | 04/04/2025



Next term, we are highlighting 'The Rules' by Paul Orton. This is a thrilling, fast-paced adventure that follows 13-year-old Ryan Jacobs after he unknowingly hacks into a top-secret computer system. What begins as a harmless curiosity quickly spirals into a life-or-death battle as a sinister organisation seeks to exploit his skills for their own dangerous agenda. With high-stakes action, tense moments, and a rebellious protagonist, The Rules is perfect for readers aged 13-15 who enjoy digital adventures and fighting against oppressive systems. Packed with suspense and attitude, this first book in the Ryan Jacobs series promises an electrifying ride for fans of thrillers and young heroes who aren't afraid to break the rules.

Author Spotlight

JOE SIMPSON

Joe Simpson is a celebrated British mountaineer and author, best known for his harrowing memoir *Touching the Void*. The book recounts his miraculous survival after a near-fatal climbing accident in the Peruvian Andes, where he was left for dead by his climbing partner. With raw honesty and gripping detail, Simpson shares the story of his physical and emotional journey through the extreme conditions of the mountains, and his incredible will to survive.

His work has inspired countless readers and adventurers, blending themes of survival, resilience, and the human spirit. Simpson's ability to recount such a traumatic experience with depth and grace has cemented his place as one of the most influential adventure writers of our time.

Touching the Void is also a key part of the DEAL (Drop Everything And Listen) programme, and Year 9 students will soon be reading it as part of their DEAL curriculum.

The book's powerful themes of perseverance and courage make it a perfect fit for the programme, inspiring students to reflect on the strength of the human spirit in the face of adversity.

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Carnegie Book Town Takeover 2025

This year, the Carnegie Book Town Takeover returned to Sedbergh for the second consecutive year, bringing together book lovers, authors, and students for a truly unforgettable experience. Among the attendees were 50 enthusiastic Settlebeek students who had the incredible opportunity to immerse themselves in the world of literature and participate in various activities surrounding the prestigious Carnegie Medal, the UK's longest-running and most beloved book awards for children and young people.

At the Carnegie Book Town Takeover, authors Danielle Jawando, Margaret McDonald, and C.G. Moore joined host Joseph Coleho for a captivating discussion about their latest works. **Danielle Jawando**, author of "If My Words Had Wings", spoke about using storytelling to explore themes of self-expression, identity, and the struggles of young people finding their voice. **Margaret McDonald**, whose book "Glasgow Boys" delves into historical fiction, shared how she blends art and history to create powerful narratives that reflect the complexities of youth. **C.G. Moore**, author of "Trigger", discussed his gripping tale of resilience, tackling tough subjects like trauma and recovery.

The session offered an engaging look at how each author brings important issues to life through their writing.

Carnegie Book Town Takeover 2025

Book Town Short Story Competition

Student Runner-up



Katherine, (Year 8) was proudly named a runner-up in a short story competition, showcasing her impressive talent and creativity with 'A Spark is all it Takes'.

[Click to read: A Spark Is All It Takes](#)

Adult Winner



Val Young a Settlebeek member of staff and an amazingly talented writer, won the adult short story competition with her heartfelt and evocative tale, "The Silence of the Howgills", capturing the essence of the serene landscape and the squirrels that live within.

[Click to read: The Silence of the Howgills](#)

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Book Review by Tyson (Y8)

I read a book in Year 4 called Varjak Paw, which was enjoyable. The only terrible thing about the book is that it didn't really have much backstory to the characters.

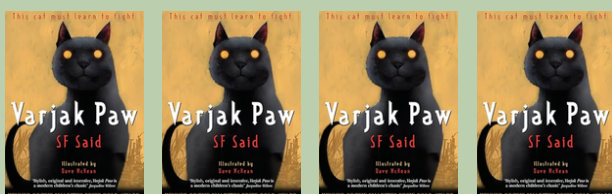
The story is about five cats: two adults, two children, and one grandfather cat called "Elder Paw," along with Jay, Jerome, Varjak, and Jethro. Some unsure owners came to the house and took three cats, leaving only the grandfather and kitten. The grandfather took the kitten and taught it some important lessons in case the owners came back, such as shadow, strength, stealth, and jumping far.

We all had a fun time reading this book and even made a play based on it. The book falls into the fantasy and adventure genres. If you like long books, then this is the one for you, with 255 pages in total. Along the way, you will meet three other cats: "Tam," "Holly," and a stray cat with no name.

In his journey, Varjak meets some people called "Razor," "Ginger," and "Sally Bones," the leader of a cat gang trying to take Varjak down. The world was described as "scary and horrible" to him, and he was never allowed out of the house to see the real world.

So, in the end, Varjak Paw went back... Oh, you thought I was going to tell you? You must read on and find out!

Have a paw-some adventure like Varjak!



Book Review by Katherine (Y8)

Sunrise on the Reaping is a new book by Suzanne Collins which is set during the 50th Hunger Games(24 years before the first novel). When I got this I had high hopes as the other four books of hers were amazing. I can say that this was amazing. This book is in the perspective of Haymitch Abernathy and his story of how he was reaped in the Hunger Games, trying to help his girlfriend from potential danger. I loved how this book portrays Haymitches emotions throughout the story from his happiness, anger and anguish.

Haymitches character is shows definance through the entire novel from him running with a friend that passed during the opening parade, to him attempting to destroy the arena. This book portrays how horrible and unsympathetic President Snow was and how he'd do anything to keep his power. Suzanne expertly builds the world of the Hunger Games giving us new details about the arena and characters. She also gives us hints letting us connect the dots between all five books and create our own theories about the characters. It also gives us an insight as to what Haymitch thought when he first met Katniss Everdeen. Overall this book was spectacular and I would recommend this to anyone who liked the first three books.



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Texts Covered in English

Key Stage	Text	Author	Year
Key Stage 3	Animal Farm	George Orwell	2023/24
	Romeo and Juliet	William Shakespeare	
	Ghost Boys	Jewell Parker Rhodes	
	A Monster Calls	Patrick Ness	2024/25
	Much Ado About Nothing	William Shakespeare	
	Frankenstein	Mary Shelley	
Key Stage 4	A Christmas Carol	Charles Dickens	2023/24
	Macbeth	William Shakespeare	
	Where the Crawdad Sings	Delia Owens	
	The Signal Man	Charles Dickens	2024/25
	An Inspector Calls	J. B. Priestley	
	Boys Don't Cry	Malorie Blackman	

World Book Day 2025

This year, we celebrated World Book Day with a series of fun and engaging activities centered around the theme **"For the Love of Books!"**

Students had the opportunity to enjoy exciting book-themed "dates" with activities like Blind Date, Speed Dating, Book Island, and Take Me Out. To add to the excitement, we hosted a pop-up book swap shop/café during break and lunchtime in Mrs Davies room, where everyone exchanged their favorite reads.

Additionally, students took part in a 'Guess Who' game - our staff had been asked to create a slide with a picture of a book they love and a short sentence about why it was special to them. The students then had to work out which staff had picked that book. It was a great opportunity to share our love of reading and discover new books!

We had a fantastic time celebrating the joy of books together!

Book Review by Paige (Y8)

Over the past couple of weeks, I have been reading the book that I got from Mrs Davies for our Christmas surprise. The book is called *Quiet Storm*, written by Kimberly Whittam. This book has been shortlisted for the Children's Sports Book of the Year.

Isaiah tells her to "just chill" as she is getting stressed out because they are going to be late to school, but he is icing a pile of cupcakes. They're not allowed to walk to school without each other, so Storm starts having a panic attack. They start walking to school and Storm speeds up but Isaiah shouts to ask her to slow down because his tray is going to fall over, and the cupcakes will get ruined. Nevertheless, she puts her headphones on and speeds up even faster.. At school Storm has a best friend, Zarish, they are in the same form room but at the very start of the day she gets taken to the headteacher's office and stays there throughout form time and all of PE. Storm tries to skive from PE she discovers that she is good at running track, but she gets really upset because her best friend isn't there to see her. The coach asks her to join the team, and they win the state championship all thanks to Storm but if the coach hadn't of caught her, they wouldn't have won.

My opinion about this book is very strong as it is a must read. It is a very likeable book for many children my age. I personally think that the moral of the story is that you should never miss opportunities because friends aren't going to be there. You can be independent and believe in yourself. Don't ever give up!



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At Settlebeck School, all students participate in five tutor reading sessions per fortnight as part of our Reading for Pleasure programme. These sessions are designed to foster a love of reading while building vital literacy skills. Regular reading not only enhances fluency but also increases exposure to a wide range of vocabulary, helping students to better understand and express themselves across all subjects. By prioritising reading, we aim to equip students with the skills and confidence they need for academic success and lifelong learning.

This term we have read

Year 7	Wonder	R J Palacio	
Year 8	Virals	Kathy Reichs	
Year 9	Maze Runner	James Dashner	
Year 10	The Woman in Black	Susan Hill	
Year 11	Orangeboy	Patrice Lawrence	

Encourage Reading at Home

Fostering a love for reading at home is key to building your child's confidence and literacy skills. Here are some quick tips:

- Create a Routine: Set aside 15–20 minutes daily for reading to make it a natural part of the day.
- Offer Choice: Let your child pick books they enjoy—fiction, non-fiction, or graphic novels.
- Talk About Books: Discuss what they're reading at school or for fun to spark excitement and deeper understanding.
- Read Together: Share a story or read the same book and chat about your favorite parts.
- Explore Audiobooks: Great for reluctant readers or family car journeys.

A little encouragement can go a long way in nurturing a lifelong love for books!

