



Michael Rosen



Hans Christian Andersen Award 2026



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Biography

Poet, writer, performer, broadcaster, academic, political columnist, Michael Rosen's 50-year career has earned him an international profile and a place at the heart of children's literature in the UK.

Michael was born in 1946 in Harrow, Middlesex into a leftwing Jewish family, to parents who were pioneering educationalists on children's literacy. He describes his childhood as full of laughter and words, English and Yiddish. This childhood, and his family's experiences of migration, remain a rich source of subject matter in his writing for children and adults.

Michael studied English at Oxford University, then had a brief career as a BBC trainee, followed by time as a 'writer / teacher' in schools. His first poetry collection, *Mind Your Own Business*, illustrated by Quentin Blake, was published in 1974. He has now written over 200 books for children as well as books for adults. His output has in no way diminished as he has produced an astonishing 15 books in the last two years.

In 1974 Michael's voice marked a change in writing poetry for children. He used his life experiences in a unique way that speaks to them directly, as Morag Styles says:

'He was one of the first poets of his generation writing for the young to draw closely on his own childhood experiences (the child in him) and to 'tell it as it was' in the ordinary language children actually use...the advent of writers like Rosen has added another dimension and, in so doing, has changed the face of children's poetry.'¹

This playfulness with language has become a hallmark of his writing. Michael's interest in drama and performance started at university and has been key to his public profile. He performs in schools around the world, at literary festivals, and other events, performances that revel in the joy of the spoken word and demonstrate his belief that poetry must be heard as well as read. As the 5th UK Children's Laureate (2007–2009), he said:

'Teachers sometimes ask me, "What's the best way to get children writing poems?" One of the first things I suggest is to create a poetry-friendly classroom. It's about making a classroom a place where poems are welcome. It's about pleasure, stimulation, feeling, curiosity, wonder and fun and children finding their own voice.'²

His You Tube channel has over 700,000 subscribers and has had over 122 million views.

His writing can be serious too, as can be seen in his response to personal tragedies. The impact of the sudden death of his 18 year old son Eddie is explored in the powerful *Michael Rosen's Sad Book*, illustrated by Quentin Blake (2004), a picture book which confronts feelings of loss and grief. His experience of being in intensive care with very serious Covid has resulted in a number of books, including for children *Sticky McStickstick, the friend who helped me walk again*, illustrated by Tony Ross (2021). Nicolette Jones interviewed him after his recovery:

‘Suddenly we are discussing the healing power of tragedy and comedy, as a way of exploring the human condition ... Although tragedy is reputed to be the cathartic one, Rosen finds comedy ‘more portable and more comforting’.³

After completing his PhD, Michael has worked, since the 1990s, as a children’s literature academic and is currently the Professor of Children’s Literature at Goldsmiths University, London.

He has a regular radio programme on the BBC looking at language, *Word of Mouth*, and writes regular columns for newspapers and journals. He has received many awards and honours. The establishment of a ‘Michael Rosen Day’ (12 November 2024) indicates the significance of his contribution to poetry for children.

Pam Dix

www.michaelrosen.co.uk

www.michaelrosen.co.uk/michaelrosenday

www.youtube.com/MichaelRosenOfficial



1. Styles, Morag Authorgraph no 51: Michael Rosen in *Books For Keeps*, No 51, July 1988

2. www.booktrust.org.uk/what-we-do/childrens-laureate/former-laureates/michael-rosen

3. Jones, Nicolette *Coming Home: an interview with Michael Rosen in Books for Keeps* No 269, November 2024

■ Michael Rosen – A Critical Appreciation

In 2023 the children's writer, poet, broadcaster, performer and scholar, Michael Rosen, was awarded the PEN Pinter Prize. The prize celebrates writers who cast an “unflinching, unswerving” gaze upon the world, and who show a “fierce intellectual determination ... to define the real truth of our lives and our societies”¹ The judges praised Rosen for being a “fearless” writer whose work delights in and validates the everyday world and language of children and childhood but also introduces serious and sometimes emotionally challenging issues and experiences as, for example, in *The Sad Book* (2004, illustrated by Quentin Blake). This powerful picture book gives expression to the ongoing effects of grief following the death of his 18-year-old son Eddie, familiar to many readers through Rosen's poems, from meningococcal septicemia.

The fearlessness celebrated by the PEN Pinter judges arises from Rosen's unswerving commitment to liberal left-wing politics. Born into a communist North London household in the aftermath of WWII, his parents were both teachers and his father, Harold, an influential educationalist. Rosen grew up reading works from around the world that exposed the wrongdoings of tyrannous regimes, critiqued the status quo and promoted more equitable

a “fearless” writer whose work delights in and validates the everyday world and language of children and childhood but also introduces serious and sometimes emotionally challenging issues and experiences

ways of organising society. His interest in these works and how reading in childhood can permanently shape world views is evident in his contributions to *Reading and Rebellion: An Anthology of Radical Writing for Children 1900–1960* (2018). This collection also represents Rosen's lifetime commitment to teaching and studying writing for children as well as producing original material himself.

Whether creating original poems and stories, retelling classics, or introducing information and ideas through his non-fiction works, Rosen champions the importance of children's literature and reading.² His 140+ books, his visits and performances in schools, his years of teaching and research in the field (he is Professor of Children's Literature at Goldsmiths, University of London) and his longstanding role as a broadcaster have given him a unique platform from which to promote the cultural significance of children's literature. In 2007, the impact of his work was recognised when he was appointed the UK's fifth Children's Laureate. Although he has declined all offers of a national award on political grounds, Rosen was happy to accept an honorary fellowship from the Royal College of Nursing, citing his experience, patient advocacy, and work in raising public awareness of COVID-19. His poem “These are the Hands”, which is also the title of an anthology of verse he edited to raise funds for the UK's National Health Service, was read on national radio during the early days of the pandemic.

1. From Harold Pinter's 2005 Nobel Prize in Literature acceptance speech (see www.englishpen.org/prizes/pinter-prize).

2. A breakdown by genre and a complete bibliography can be found on Rosen's homepage at www.michaelrosen.co.uk/books.

The radical side of Rosen's writing extends beyond overt politics. From his first collection of poems, *Mind Your Own Business* (1974) to the present, he has celebrated children's use of language and imagination, not least for the way they refuse to conform to rules and norms. His poems too refuse standard definitions of "the poetic": they eschew the traditional

From his first collection of poems, *Mind Your Own Business* (1974) to the present, he has celebrated children's use of language and imagination, not least for the way they refuse to conform to rules and norms.

topics, themes, forms and language of poetry for children. Rosen's work was immediately credited with introducing "a new and influential voice" into British children's literature.³ That voice was fresh, informal, anecdotal and irreverent. Where traditional poetry tended to feature white, middle-class children in nature, Rosen's work is deliberately urban and diverse; and yet, as Morag Styles has demonstrated, it is poetically knowledgeable and shares similarities with the work of Robert Louis Stevenson. Both, she says, "were radicals of a kind who had mixed feelings about the 'literary establishment' of their own time".

Both also write in the everyday voice of a child and put play at the centre of their work.⁴ Rosen's work soon began to garner critical praise and prizes, including the *Signal* Poetry Award for his 1981 collection, *You Can't Catch Me*.

Rosen's poems may at first appear to be inconsequential and nonsensical; certainly the wordplay, odd juxtapositions, and peculiar logic that are defining features of literary nonsense verse are key components of his writing. This is seen in collections such as *Hard-Boiled Legs* (1987) and *Spollyollydiddlytiddlyitis* (1987). But this 'nonsense is always on the side of children against the potentially crushing forces of adulthood and institutions. In these times when young people's mental health is of concern, Rosen's work also stands out for its humanity and optimism. He is reassuring about ordinary fears such as going to bed in the dark and getting into trouble with parents or teachers, and about more existential fears and topical problems such as death (*The Sad Book*), anger (*I am Angry*, 2021) and the refugee crisis (*Who are Refugees and Migrants? What Makes People Leave their Homes?*, co-authored with Annemarie Young, 2016). In *Sticky McStickstick: The Friend that Helped Me Walk Again* (2021), written after a nearly fatal case of COVID 19, he explains what it is like to recover from a debilitating illness.

Rosen's deep knowledge of writing for children and his radical upbringing come together in some of his collections and retellings of tales from other parts of the world such as, from Germany, *The Wicked Tricks of Till Owlyglass* (1989). One retelling of a traditional tale he learned when on camping trips organised by some of the left-wing organisations to which he belonged as a boy has become a multi-award-winning picture book. *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, illustrated by Helen Oxenbury won the 1989 Nestlé Smarties Book Prize. In the same year it was also the *School Library Journal* 'Best Book of the Year', the 'Mainichi Newspapers Japanese Picture Book Award's 'Outstanding Picture Book from Abroad' and was an 'Honor

3. Humphrey Carpenter and Mari Prichard, *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press), 615

4. Morag Styles, *From the Garden to the Street: An Introduction to 300 Years of Poetry for Children* (London: Cassell, 1998), 177–8.

Book' in the *Boston Globe-Horn Book Awards*. In 2014 Walker Books organised an attempt for a Guinness World Record for "Largest Reading Lesson" with a book-reading attended by 1,500 children, and an additional 30,000 listeners online.⁵ Oxenbury is just one of many illustrators with whom Rosen has had successful collaborations, another important aspect of his overall contribution to children's literature in the UK.

From 1989–1997 he also increased public understanding of the past and present of writing for the young by presenting the BBC radio programme dedicated to children's books,

Michael Rosen has been entertaining, educating, promoting and expanding writing for the children in the UK in original, radical ways for half a century.

Treasure Islands as well as several mini-series and stand-alone programmes about children's books and authors. His extensive output includes a complementary set of books that help young readers develop knowledge and appreciation of language (Rosen's *Almanac: Weird and Wonderful Words for Every Day of the Year*, 2024) and literary culture (*What's so Special about Shakespeare?*, 2007 *What's so Special about Dickens?*, 2007).

Michael Rosen has been entertaining, educating, promoting and expanding writing for the children in the UK in original, radical ways for half a century. To witness his unique way of engaging with a live young audience, making them laugh and laugh again is like watching an entirely benevolent version of the Pied Piper once again casting his spell.

Kimberley Reynolds

5. See en.wikipedia.org/wiki/We%27re_Going_on_a_Bear_Hunt

Awards

Writing

- 1982 **Signal Poetry Award**
You Can't Catch Me
- 1983 **Children's Rights Workshop 'Other Award'**
Everybody Here
- 1990 **Smarties Best Children's Book of the Year Award**
We're Going on a Bear Hunt
- 1990 **Boston Globe-Horn Book Honor Award (USA)**
We're Going on a Bear Hunt
- 1990 **School Library Journal Best Book of the Year (USA)**
We're Going on a Bear Hunt
- 1990 **Horn Book Fanfare Title (USA)**
We're Going on a Bear Hunt
- 1991 **Japanese Picture Book Award sponsored by Mainichi Newspapers, Outstanding Picture Book from Abroad**
We're Going on a Bear Hunt
- 1992 **Publishers Weekly Cuffies Award: Best Anthology or Collection (USA)**
Walking the Bridge of Your Nose
- 1993 **National Association of Parenting Publications Best Book Award (USA)**
Poems For The Very Young
- 1997 **Eleanor Farjeon Award for distinguished services to children's literature**
- 1998 **Parent magazine's Play and Learn Award**
Snore
- 1998 **Talkies Award for the Best Poetry Audio Tape of the year**
You Wait Till I'm Older Than You
- 1999 **An International Reading Association Teachers' Choices Award Winner (USA)**
Classic Poetry
- 1997 **Eleanor Farjeon Award for distinguished services to children's literature**
- 1998 **Parent magazine's Play and Learn Award**
Snore
- 1998 **Talkies Award for the Best Poetry Audio Tape of the year**
You Wait Till I'm Older Than You
- 1999 **An International Reading Association Teachers' Choices Award Winner (USA)**
Classic Poetry

- 2005 **National Literacy WOW Award**
Alphabet Poem
- Boston Globe-Horn Book Honor ‘Commended’ Award**
Sad Book
- English Association ‘Exceptional’ Award**
Sad Book
- Chevalier de l’ordre des arts et des lettres**
Awarded by the French Government
- 2007–9 **Waterstone’s Children’s Laureate**
- 2009 **US junior Library Guild Selection**
Red Ted and the Lost Things
- 2009 **Oxfordshire Book Award**
Dear Mother Goose
- 2016 **Sheffield Children’s Book Award**
Uncle Gobb and the Dread Shed
- 2016 **CLiPPA Award**
A Great Big Cuddle
- 2021 **J.M. Barrie Lifetime Achievement Award. Action for the Arts**
- 2021 **CLiPPA Award**
On the Move: Poems about Migration
- 2023 **PEN Pinter Prize**

Performance and Broadcasting

- 1968 **Sunday Times National Union of Students Drama Festival Award**
Backbone
- 1996 **Glennfiddich Award for the Best Radio Programme on the subject of food**
Treasure Islands Special: Lashings of Ginger Beer
- 2001 **Sony Radio Academy Silver Award**
Radio feature: *Dr Seuss: Who Put The Cat In The Hat?*
- 2003 **Sony Radio Academy Gold Award**
Radio short form: *On Saying Goodbye*

Academic

Professor of Children's Literature

Goldsmiths University of London

Honorary Doctorates

Open University 2005

Nottingham Trent University 2010

Institute of Education, University of London 2011

University of the West of England 2011

Honorary Degrees

Exeter University 2007

University of East London in conjunction with the Tavistock Trust 2008

Worcester University 2008

Visiting Professorships

Middlesex University 2005

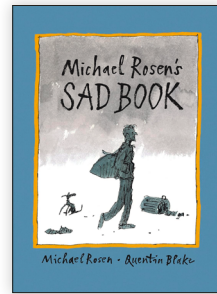
London Metropolitan University [2004]

Birkbeck College [2010]

Ten Important Titles

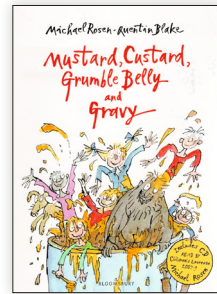
Michael Rosen's Sad Book

Illustrated by Quentin Blake
London: Walker Books 2004



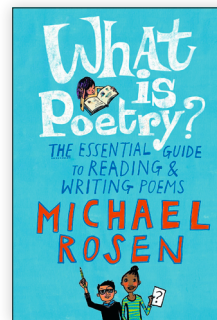
Mustard, Custard, Grumble Belly and Gravy

Illustrated by Quentin Blake
London: Bloomsbury 2006



What is Poetry? The Essential Guide to Reading and Writing Poems

Illustrated by Jill Calder
London: Walker Books 2016

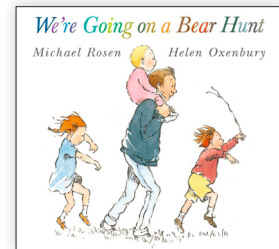


The Missing: The True Story of My Family in World War II

London: Walker Books 2019

On the Move: Poems About Migration

Illustrated by Quentin Blake
London: Walker Books 2020

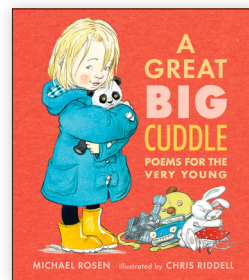


We're Going on a Bear Hunt

Illustrated by Helen Oxenbury
London: Walker Books 1989

Sticky McStickstick: The Friend Who Helped Me Walk Again

Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Walker Books 2021

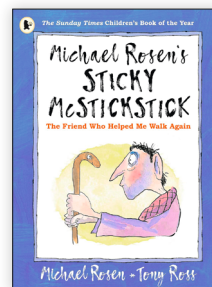


A Great Big Cuddle: Poems for the Very Young

Illustrated by Chris Riddell
London: Walker Books 2015

Michael Rosen's Big Book of Bad Things

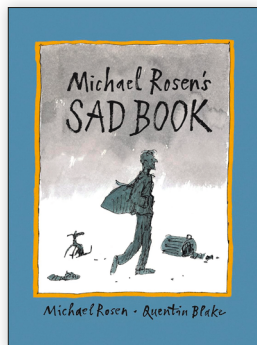
London: Puffin 2010



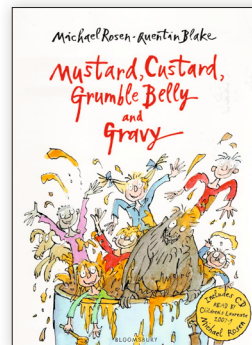
One Day: A True Story of Courage and Survival in the Holocaust

Illustrated by Benjamin Phillips
London: Walker Books 2025

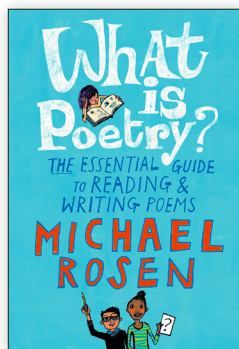
■ Five Representative Titles Sent to the Jurors



Michael Rosen's Sad Book
Illustrated by Quentin Blake
London: Walker Books 2004



Mustard, Custard, Grumble Belly and Gravy
Illustrated by Quentin Blake
London: Bloomsbury 2006



What is Poetry? The Essential Guide to Reading and Writing Poems
Illustrated by Jill Calder
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The Missing: The True Story of My Family in World War II
London: Walker Books 2019

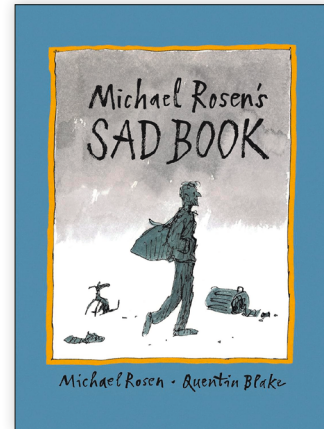


On the Move: Poems About Migration
Illustrated by Quentin Blake
London: Walker Books 2020

Michael Rosen's Sad Book

BfK 150, January, 2005. Rosemary Stones

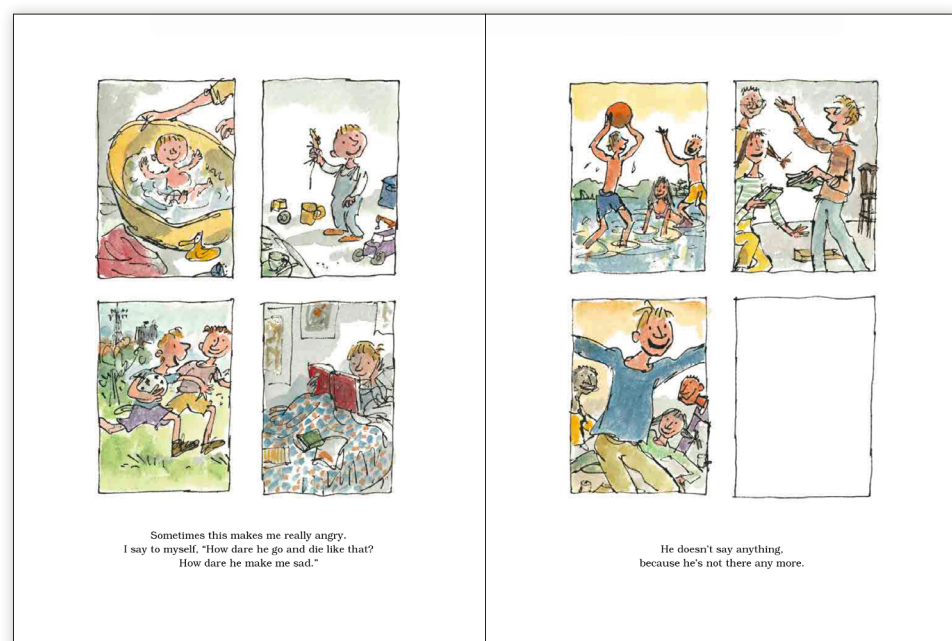
'A children's book about the nature of grief seems unlikely but Rosen and Blake's words and pictures work consummately together to express the various states of mind that we call sadness. Sometimes sadness can be overwhelming and Blake uses a grey wash to express the inner heaviness. Sometimes sadness comes upon us and in a sequence of drawings of Rosen walking along a street, Blake shows how inner feelings of greyness can transform the outside world from a vibrant place full of colour to a barren, grey wilderness.



Sad is anyone.
It comes along
and finds you.

This book is a communication about the continuing impact of his son Eddie's death on Rosen. Children who have experienced the death of someone important will be grateful to Rosen for having the courage to acknowledge that he sometimes feels angry with Eddie for dying: 'I say to myself, "How dare he go and die like that? How dare he make me sad."' He doesn't say anything because he's not there any more.' Death can invoke previous losses and Rosen's mother is affectionately remembered as well as good times with Eddie, a young man so full of life and promise. But, as Rosen says, 'sad is anyone. It comes along and finds you.' That Rosen has found a way to put sadness into words and talk about it in this intensely moving and accessible book will help readers of all ages struggling with their own experiences of loss to find a way to express their feelings.

booksforkeeps.co.uk/review/michael-rosens-sad-book



Text © Michael Rosen | Illustrations © Quentin Blake

Kirkus Reviews Issue, January 15, 2005

Where is sad? Sad is anywhere. It comes along and finds you. When is sad? Sad is any time. It comes along and finds you.” Impelled by the sudden death of his teenage son, Rosen offers a personal meditation on living with loss, to which Blake’s accompanying watercolors give

Impelled by the sudden death of his teenage son, Rosen offers a personal meditation on living with loss

poignant visual dimension. Addressing readers in simple, unaffected language, the author describes ups and downs; how he sometimes wants to share his feelings, but other times wants to be alone; the small acts that make him feel worse or better; how memory can hurt or help. His changeable inner landscape is reflected in the scribbly, emotionally exact art, as subdued color alternates with washes of gray, facial expressions of the author and those around him change—and other signs, from body language to outdoor scenes and the weather itself—evoke each moment’s mood. Rosen

offers no easy solutions here—but he and Blake close with the image of a candle shedding a small, hopeful light. Readers burdened by similar loss will be touched by the honesty and perception here. (*Picture book. 6–10*)

Review Posted Online: May 19, 2010

www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/michael-rosen/michael-rosens-sad-book



Text © Michael Rosen | Illustrations © Quentin Blake

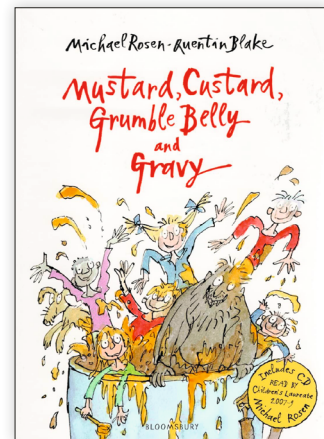
■ Mustard, Custard, Grumble Belly and Gravy

BfK 163, March, 2007. Jill Bennett

This volume combines two titles from the 1980s: *You Can't Catch Me* and *Don't Put Mustard in the Custard* together with a CD of the author reading the poems. Having heard and seen Mike Rosen perform many of his poems both live and on TV, I always have his voice in my head whenever I open one of his books; and perform

Both as a writer
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simple, nevertheless
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is truly what he does. Both as a writer and reader Rosen has that seemingly simple, nevertheless amazing skill, of turning such ordinary everyday incidents as putting on one's shoes, asking questions or turning off the bedroom light into full blown dramas. As of course, that's what they really are – at least to the child at the time.



On many occasions as a young teacher back in the eighties I found myself giving silent thanks to the visionary Pam Royds (who first published these titles), when in those heady days of having time to indulge the children and myself in – dare I say it – unplanned sessions of sharing poetry for its own sake, we would allow ourselves ‘just one more’ and another ... I recently met a young man who approached me saying, ‘Remember me? I was in your class and you used to read us those funny poems about dogs and dustbins and shoelaces and

stuff like that’, so what the author says in his introduction about ‘looking at the poems and pictures as if they’ve had 25 years of life’ is most certainly true. Here’s to the next 25 and a lot more pleasure in poetry for its own sake.

booksforkeeps.co.uk/review/mustard-custard-grumble-belly-and-gravy

BookTrust

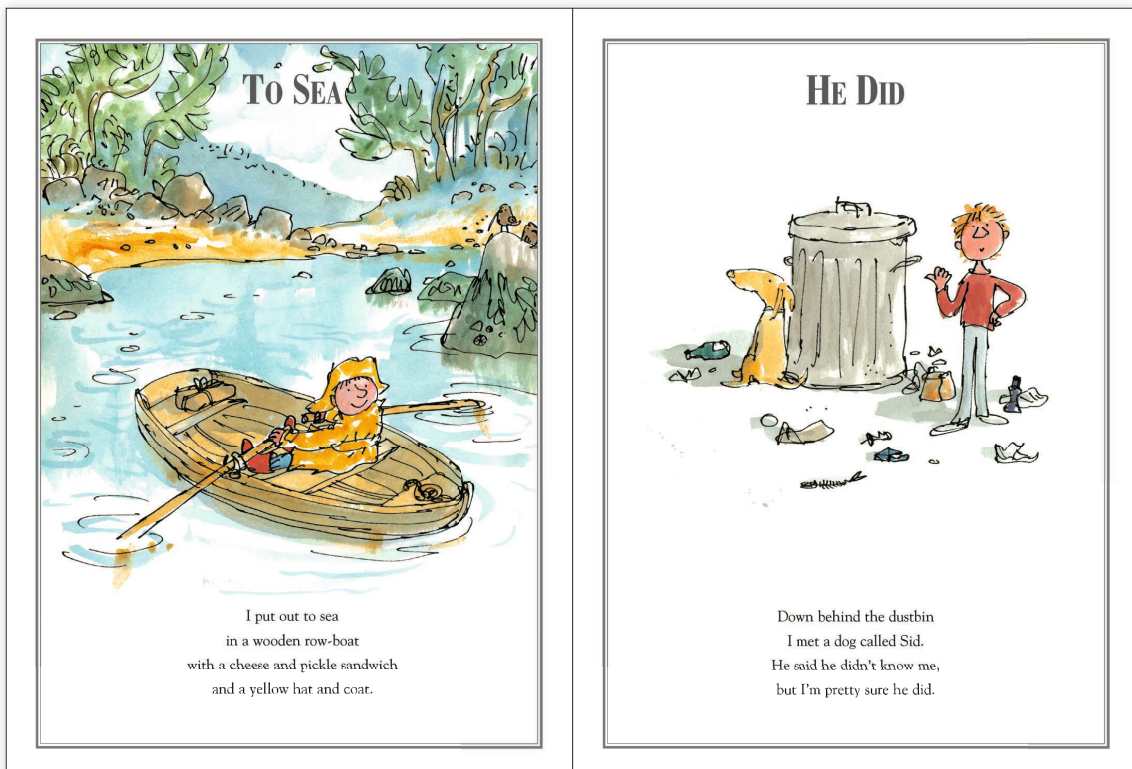
Rosen breaks down barriers with his poems for children...

Funny poems are a great way to share a quick read with a child. Michael Rosen breaks down barriers with his poems for children, creating an infectious informality and irreverence

that brilliantly captures the funny moments of everyday life. Quentin Blake's illustrations perfectly complement and bring to life Michael Rosen's poems.

The book also includes a CD with every poem in the book, read by Michael Rosen himself. Michael Rosen, Children's Laureate 2007–2009, has also written a letter specially for the Letterbox Club to accompany this book.

www.booktrust.org.uk/book/m/mustard-custard-grumble-belly-gravy



Text © Michael Rosen | Illustrations © Quentin Blake

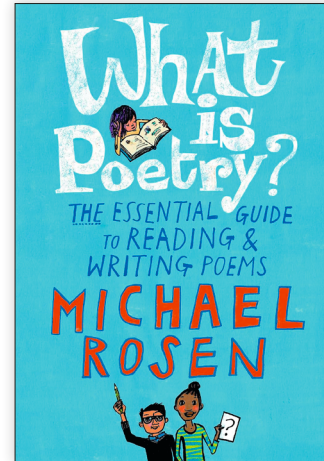
What is Poetry? The Essential Guide to Reading and Writing Poems

Bookey

Exploring the Heartbeat of Words and Rhymes

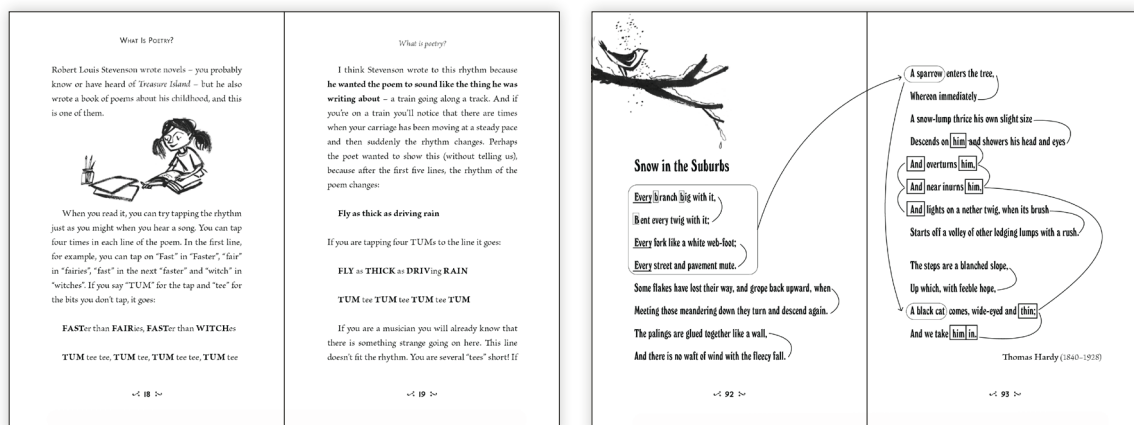
Delve into the enchanting world of words with Michael Rosen's *"What Is Poetry?"*, a captivating exploration that transforms the seemingly simple act of writing into an extraordinary journey of discovery and creativity. With

Rosen's insightful guidance, readers are invited to unlock the magic woven into every verse, seeing beyond the surface to appreciate the nuances and rhythms that breathe life into poetry. This book isn't just a primer on poetic forms and structures; it's a heartfelt invitation to experience poetry's power to reflect our innermost thoughts, emotions, and the beauty of the everyday. Perfect for both budding poets and seasoned wordsmiths, *"What Is Poetry?"* offers a fresh perspective that demystifies poetry while celebrating its profound impact on the human spirit. Embark on this literary adventure and let Rosen illuminate the path to a deeper, more meaningful connection with the art of poetry.



The best line in the whole book is something about children being smarter than we give them credit for. Rosen also says it's not important to memorize poems. Many a school child will be happy to hear this. Rosen also says, "A poem is a conversation between the writer and the reader."

www.bookey.app/book/what-is-poetry%3F



Text © Michael Rosen | Illustrations © Jill Calder

Lady in Read Writes

Celebrated poet and critic Michael Rosen takes readers on a whirlwind tour exploring what poems are, what they can do, and the joys of reading and writing them.

Michael Rosen starts with posing the question in the book's title – 'What is Poetry?' and proceeds to explain what poetry can do to help answer that question. It has the power to suggest, to capture a moment forever, to play with words, make sense of nonsense and other-sense, and lots more.

'A poem is a poem if the writer and the reader agree it's a poem.' – Michael Rosen

He moves to explain what readers can do with a poem, so much more than just reading it (and reading it in so many ways too!). I loved this fun chapter!

Using his own poems as examples, he explores the poet's thoughts and goes behind the scenes of poems. This will definitely help a new poet of any age look at reading, and writing poetry with (renewed) confidence. He says –

'Poems are a midway point between poets and readers. The poet pours in one set of meanings. The reader picks up the poem and puts in another set of meanings, and the two meet somewhere in the middle. That's what reading a poem is all about. It's a conversation between two sets of thoughts: the poet's and the reader's.'

The next two chapters introduce the reader to many ideas that will help get the creative juices flowing, and then writing the poem itself. He encourages the reader to find ideas in the familiar and in the nonsensical among other avenues to explore, letting us know that ideas are everywhere.

Teaching the technicalities of poetry, as well as tips and tricks to get the actual poem written is something Rosen does with the ease of an experienced poet-educator. What can you do once you have written a poem? Well, Rosen gives you ideas for that as well.

(I especially loved the idea of having a 'volcano page' – similar to having an earthquake kit in the Bay Area – one kit where you have all the essentials in case of disaster. So in addition to those things you would really want for survival – not just the practical things, put down also those most precious memories, hopes, fears, dreams, et al.)

Also included all across the book are a variety of poems by poets from Thomas Hardy to Lewis Carroll. Michael Rosen uses these poems as examples to illustrate points he makes in each chapter. I was truly glad to read these poems as I have now discovered more wonderful poems and poets. Thomas Hardy was always a favorite writer but I had never read his poems until now:

This book is an excellent, accessible, fun introduction to reading, writing, and understanding poetry for all ages.

www.ladyinreadwrites.com/book-review-what-is-poetry-by-michael-rosen

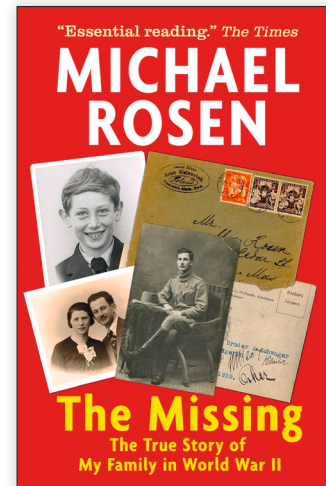
■ The Missing: The True Story of My Family in World War II

BookTrust

When Michael Rosen was a child, there were family stories about great aunts and great uncles in France and Poland who were there before the war and not there afterwards. When the young Michael asked what happened, his family would reply that they didn't know. How could it be that people could just disappear?

As an adult, Michael spent many years tracing his missing great uncles and aunts, and this book is the result.

A fascinating family memoir and a very personal story about terrible loss, *The Missing* describes the impact of the Holocaust on one family, and in doing so, shows children that what happened to the Rosens – the missing great uncles and aunts, but also the displacement of the rest of the family, and their grief for the missing – also happened to millions of others.



A fascinating family memoir and a very personal story about terrible loss...

There is heartbreaking and horrifying detail here, when Rosen describes the packed trains of Jews being taken to Auschwitz, the air thick with children crying, and gives us the plain facts about how few of those people survived until the liberation of the camp in 1945. Yet, Rosen handles the difficult topic as sensitively and thoughtfully as you would expect, always writing in a straightforward and accessible way for children, interspersed with his own poetry.

The fact that this is a personal story means that it provides a relatable pathway into the overwhelming event of the Holocaust for young readers (and for adults, too). It's important that children and adults understand and empathise with the real people and their stories underneath the sometimes incomprehensible numbers and scale that history presents us when talking about the Holocaust.

The Missing also contains an excellent selection of recommended fiction, picture book and non-fiction reading about World War Two and the Holocaust, as well as books with themes of refugees and displacement more widely.

www.booktrust.org.uk/book/t/the-missing-the-true-story-of-my-family-in-world-war-ii/#:~:text=A%20fascinating%20family%20memoir

Kirkus Reviews Issue, June 1, 2020

Born in England just after World War II, young Rosen grew up hearing references about relatives who existed before the war but had disappeared by the time it ended.

There were great-aunts and great-uncles and their families who had lived in France and Poland. His dad knew their names and a bit about them. He assumed they died “in the camps.” At first the child Michael didn’t understand what that meant. As he learned more about the Holocaust, he became determined to find out about his lost relatives. He did

An important work
that is immensely
personal, powerful,
and heart-wrenching

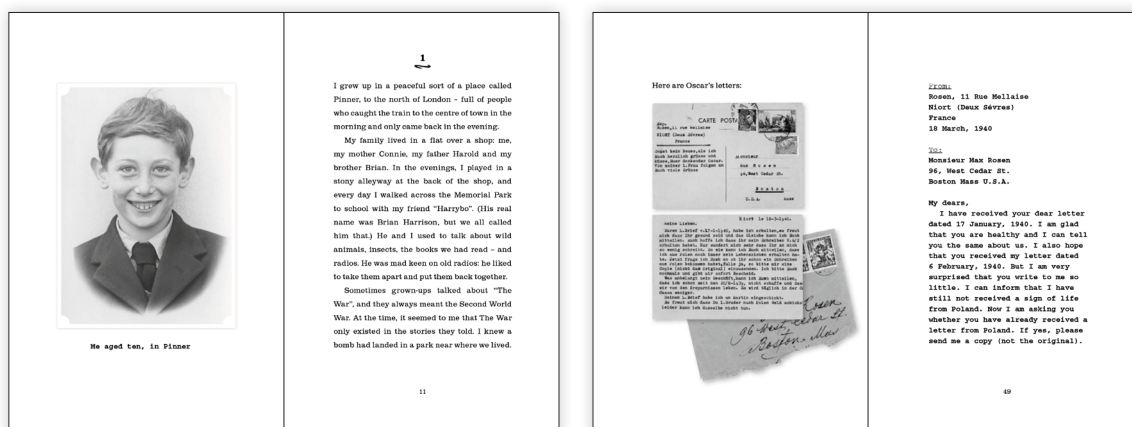
extensive research, gathered small clues, and began to dig deeper, becoming consumed by the quest throughout his life. His account includes lots of disappointments and dead ends as well as some remarkable finds that led to information and some answers about missing relatives from both France and Poland. He provides photos and letters that bring these lost souls to life. Speaking in the first person, directly to readers, Rosen explains the unexplainable in simple

but not simplistic language, presenting facts without sugarcoating them or underestimating children’s ability to comprehend. He includes poems, some written over many years and some written for this book, expressing his deeper feelings regarding his long search and its mostly devastating results. He links history to modern-day hatreds and reminds his readers of the exhortation “Never again.” “Today; One Day,” a poem of pain and hope, makes a poignant close.

An important work that is immensely personal, powerful, and heart-wrenching.
(foreword, family tree, photos, documents, bibliography, index, acknowledgements)
(Memoir/history. 10–adult)

Review Posted Online: May 16, 2020

www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/michael-rosen/the-missing-rosen



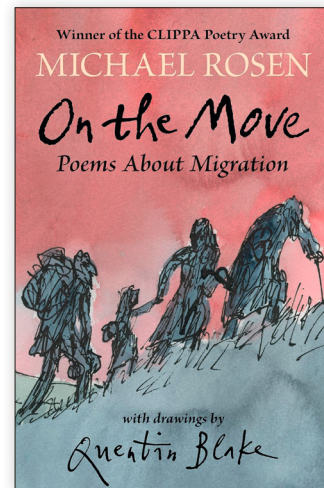
Text © Michael Rosen

■ On the Move: Poems About Migration

BookTrust

...a deeply moving,
enduring poetry
collection...

This emotive poetry anthology from former Children's Laureate, Michael Rosen, is divided into four sections, each exploring a different aspect of migration. It opens with *Family and Friends*, a series of heartfelt, and sometimes amusing, ruminations on Rosen's childhood as part of a Polish-Jewish family in post-war London. The next group of poems, entitled *The War*, are inspired by his parents' and grandparents' memories of the Second World War. *The Migrants in Me* section explores the fate of his 'missing' Jewish relatives who disappeared in Nazi Germany. Finally, *On the Move Again* draws together Rosen's thoughts about migration today, in particular the plight of refugees who flee the hardships of their homelands to begin anew elsewhere.



Enhanced by timeless pen and ink drawings from fellow former Children's Laureate, Quentin Blake, this is a deeply moving, enduring poetry collection. In an insightful introduction, Rosen describes migration as an intrinsic part of human history, which has led to the development of richly diverse societies around the world. For readers who wish to further explore the issues raised, there are suggestions of organisations which support refugees, as well as sources of information on the Holocaust, at the end of the book.

www.booktrust.org.uk/book/o/on-the-move-poems-about-migration

<p>Where Do We Come From?</p> <p>I come from when houses were ruined, the skies had stopped exploding, my father in Germany meeting the skeleton of a dinosaur in the snow in the wrecked Berlin Natural History Museum, my mother holding on to my brother, having just lost a living, walking, just talking toddler to a never-ending cough. my parents who grew up when you could buy a live chicken in Fessel Street, my father sharing his bedroom with his Uncle Sam but never talking to him because one day Sam had grabbed the cap my father had bought down Petticoat Lane, and turned it inside out. "Who switched the light off, Father?" "Neither of us. We didn't have lights. We had a candle." My mother having to bring flowers to school for Harvest Festival but she had no garden, so she walked down Globe Road looking for a flower to pick.</p> <p>— 18</p>	<p>but there were none, and there were Mosley's Men out too, looking for Jews like them to give a beating to for being Jews, and the uncles who never came back from camps in Poland, just vanished, gone, but I was here, made from all this, all this, it goes on, it hadn't stopped, there was my father swearing in Yiddish: "Cholera zolte nehmen." "Don't say that, Harold!" my mum says to him. And now I can say it too. And now I can say it too.</p> <p>— 19</p>	<p>Two Languages</p> <p>Mum can speak two languages and sometimes mixes them up. She doesn't say, "Don't mean!" She says, "Don't kvetch!" She doesn't say, "Don't slurp your soup!" She says, "Don't chup!"</p> <p>She doesn't say, "Don't burp!" She says, "Don't graps!" She doesn't say, "Don't fart!" She says, "Don't fote!"</p> <p>When I have wrinkles in my socks she says it looks like I've put my feet through a pile of bagels, so, she says: "Take the bagels out of your sock!"</p> <p>— 20</p>	<p>So I sing it all back to her:</p> <p>Don't kvetch, don't chup, don't graps, don't fote. Take the bagels out of your socks.</p> <p>We all sing it:</p> <p>Don't kvetch, don't chup, don't graps, don't fote. Take the bagels out of your socks.</p> <p>* You say "chup" so it nearly rhymes with "soup".</p> <p>— 21</p>
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Text © Michael Rosen

Kirkus Reviews Issue, December 1, 2021

Former U.K. Children's Laureate Michael Rosen illuminates issues of human migration by attempting to fill the gaps in his Jewish family history.

A graceful tapestry weaving together personal and global perspectives and a heart-rending memoir of human endurance.

His introduction explains the distinctions between *migrant* and *refugee* and divides the collection of mostly free-verse poems into four thematic sections. In the first section,

"Family and Friends," Rosen explores his immigrant roots by reflecting on significant experiences and people from his childhood. In one deceptively simple poem, "The Songs My Father Sings," he ponders his paternal ancestry: "Where has my father been? / Who sang the songs that he now sings / and what do the songs mean?" Two poems recall antisemitic slights by Rosen's childhood classmates. The second section, "The War," pieces together parental reminiscences of World War II and of family travels in postwar Europe. In "The Migrants in Me," the potent third section, Rosen investigates missing family members. His father testifies, "I had two French uncles. / They were

in France / at the beginning of the war. / They weren't there at the end." In the narrative poem "Finding Out," Rosen painstakingly unearths information about these uncles—Oscar and Martin—and discovers old photos of them in a long-hidden box of family memorabilia. A duad of wrenching poems directly address Oscar and his wife, Rachel, imagining their emotions during escape, discovery by Nazis, and shipment to Auschwitz. Yet another poignant elegy, "Cousin Michael," memorializes Rosen's father's cousin, evacuated to safety as a teen by parents he'd never see again. The final section, "On the Move Again," explores the disruptions that uproot people and bring different cultures into contact. In Blake's blue-washed watercolors, faceless figures trek beneath glowering, threatening skies.

Review Posted Online: Nov. 15, 2021

www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/michael-rosen/on-the-move-rosen



Counting

When they do war,
they forget how to count,
and that's how they do it.

They come,
they kill,
they go.

No numbers.
No names.
They disappear them.
They vanish them.
That's how they do it.

They come,
they kill,
they go.

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And it's
"worth it",
they say.
"It's worth it, believe us."
If you forget how to count,
If you forget the numbers,
If you forget the names,
If you forget the faces.

When they do war,
they forget how to count,
They forget how to count,
and that's how they do it.

But we're counting.
Watch us:
we're counting.
Listen.
We're counting.
And
we count.

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Text © Michael Rosen | Illustrations © Quentin Blake

■ Coming Home: An Interview with Michael Rosen

BfK 251, November, 2021. Nicolette Jones

After being admitted to hospital in 2020 with coronavirus, **Michael Rosen** had to learn to walk again. The story is told for children in his new picture book, *Sticky McStickstick: The Friend Who Helped Me Walk Again*. **Nicolette Jones** interviewed Michael about the book for **Books for Keeps**.

The last two public events I chaired before lockdown in 2020 were with Michael Rosen. These were not *his* last events – he went on to take part in more, including school visits, was out and about, and, as we all know, contracted Covid and then spent 40 days in a coma. So the first Zoom event we shared this year, when he was well enough again, involved bunting and a trumpet fanfare. And I am still so delighted to see him on Zoom, after all the dangers he has passed, that I find myself grinning inappropriately even as he talks about the legacy of his illness: the sight he has lost in one eye, the hearing in one ear and the feeling in his toes. And his occasional episodes of feeling ‘weak and feeble’. Though obviously none of this is a smiling matter. But he joins in, by joking about his lapses of memory: some part of his brain has been affected, he says, that houses names of people he knows very well, and extremely famous film stars. Tom Cruise, George Clooney and Meryl Streep have been suddenly irretrievable.

This astonishing capacity to address pain with humour is what gave rise to his new book, *Sticky McStickstick: The Friend Who Helped Me Walk Again*, a picturebook written with levity that nevertheless prompts a lump in the throat. It is about the people (and the personified walking stick) that helped him regain the use of his legs. Tony Ross’s pictures also introduce laughs to this distressing experience, just as Rosen did when he made the physios in the rehabilitation centre smile by naming his walking aid, and then Tweeted about it, to make his wider audience of anxious followers smile too. Some suggested this sounded like material for a book, and the idea was born

Wherever George Clooney has been hiding in his head, Rosen seems as sharp and fluent as ever. Extraordinarily, he is also now back on the live performing circuit. He has given hour-long shows back-to-back for hundreds of children at the **Children’s Book Show**, and signed books at the Muswell Hill Children’s Bookshop. He was in Cheltenham to receive his **CLIPPA** award for *On the Move*, his collection of Poems about Migration, assembled before the pandemic but published in October 2020. He is being given this year’s **J.M. Barrie Award** in person. Besides, he has appeared in the TV documentary **The Story of Us**, and been a vocal presence on social media and in the papers. This interview is the latest of many, for print and online. (He finds sitting and talking to people, he says, easier than going up and down stairs.)

He has also been astonishingly prolific since he came home in June 2020. He wrote a story in his head while he was still in hospital, which comes out in April: *Rigatoni, the Pasta Cat*.

He wrote his bestselling chronicle of having Covid, including the parts he never knew about, pieced together from medics' accounts and the nurses' diary: *Many Different Kinds of Love*. In the pipeline are more picturebooks, as well as a collaboration with Michael Foreman about a correspondence between an English boy and a Polish boy during the Second World War.

But just out is *Sticky*, which, he says, 'breaks the major rule of picturebooks, that the protagonist should be a child or a surrogate child. Walker Books, though, said 'That's alright'. I think they themselves had created the path that made that possible, with *The*

most children's books
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nurture and education

Sad Book, in which Quentin Blake represented adult me.' Rosen has a theory that 'most children's books are in actual fact part of the conversation that we have in society about nurture and education'. And *Sticky McStickstick* has a place in that conversation about how any of us might be cared for.

Once the idea arose out of the joshing of rehab and a few daft Tweets (a picture of Sticky asleep in bed, for instance) that the stick might become a picturebook character, Rosen thought:

'What's the story?' 'And then, of course, I realised. The story is that this grown-up has had to learn how to walk. Which is of itself quite odd, and almost funny. Because we think of two-year-olds learning how to walk, or baby animals. And then I thought well it's got these phases as well: trying to stand up, the frame, the wheelchair, the stick, and there's even the positive ending of coming home. And so it grew.'

In that way that is characteristic of Rosen, his thoughts open out quickly from quite simple to very sophisticated. Suddenly we are discussing the healing power of tragedy and comedy, as a way of exploring the human condition, in Shakespeare in particular. Although tragedy is reputed to be the cathartic one, Rosen finds comedy 'more portable and more comforting'.

I am impressed not only by the humorous approach to Rosen's trauma, but by his positivity, as he has kept out of the story his grief and loss – and rage. Because it is clear from his social media posts that he feels rage at the government for its callous and incompetent handling of the pandemic.

'I think it's because I compartmentalize it. So I've got the rage bit, I've got the grief bit and I've got the compassion bit and I try not to let one affect the other. I don't want the anger to affect how much I feel grateful for the people who did so much to keep me alive. And the grief bit: I don't want to dump on people and say "take my grief from me". My grief is mine and I must own that.'

Grief, Rosen thinks, is best shared with those who have gone through something similar, otherwise 'it's too much for people'. After his son Eddie died, he addressed groups of parents who had lost children. 'They might think "I feel helpless and hopeless and so does Michael Rosen"?' And now he is part of an online group of sufferers of long Covid. 'That's not dumping, it's sharing.'

I wondered if Rosen, who had processed grief before, and written *The Sad Book*, found it helpful now. 'Yes. I think it did help me. The bit about making sure I do something I am proud of every day.'

poems can be
about things that
matter, but that
may not be funny

Unlike Quentin Blake's images in *The Sad Book*, Tony Ross's pictures in *Sticky* are not portraits of Rosen and his family. Did they discuss this? 'My guess is Tony wanted to universalize it. We don't have conversations; Tony gets on and does it. Whereas Quentin did want to make it my personal experience. Tony has widened it out and it's given him leeway to have fun and not be tied to exactly what happened.

'And I suppose the text does tend a bit towards the folkloric, the emblematic. It's not a characterful text. It's more as we tell folk stories: this happened and then this happened.' Rosen universalizes it too by talking in a coda about the general experience of illness and getting better and being helped. 'Maybe you've been ill. Or maybe you know someone who's been ill,' he writes.

We discuss finding 'chiming moments' in books as a way for young people to connect with them. 'Everything I know about good teachers is that they do that,' he says, so literature opens up conversations – 'in your head or in class'.

'One of the images that informed me is the fact that when you have a major illness – and this happens to everybody so it's not just me – is that all the apparatus of everyday life, everything from shopping to family relationships to clothes, all sort of falls away. And you become the thing that Lear talks about, a 'poor forked creature'. Just your body. My world when I came out of the coma was no bigger than my body in the bedclothes.

'In the rehab hospital it got a bit bigger because there is the wheelchair, the stick, the zimmer and these people saying, you could do this, you could do that. But it's so tiny really. It's insulated. I would talk to Emma [his wife] and the kids; Emma was allowed into the rehab hospital a couple of times, but then they disappeared and so even when they said 'we're in the middle of lockdown', I wasn't really listening because I was being busy being a poor forked creature.'

Rosen agrees that there is a connection with *On the Move*, because being just the poor, forked creature is akin to being in exile, stripped of family and home and habits and possessions.

He is hopeful that the **CLiPPA** win will mean the book is used in teaching migration, the Holocaust, the Second World War, family life ... And 'show that poems can be about things that matter, but that may not be funny'. 'In a sense I'm a victim of my own success and of course they want me to be more funny. But no one person is 100% funny. Just as no one person is 100% anything. That's important to pass on to children because they're all going through various forms of labelling. They're being told they are of this ability, they're naughty or they're good. And the kids are all labelling each other. I'm hoping there will also be a sort of Unlabelling. So that that bloke who does 'Chocolate Cake' is also that bloke who has these kinds of experiences in his family.'

booksforkeeps.co.uk/article/coming-home-an-interview-with-michael-rosen

■ Why shouldn't children's writers talk of refugees, persecution and genocide?

The Guardian, 21 October, 2021

The *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* author on how researching his family's fractured history resulted in his latest poetry collection.

There was always the mystery of my father's uncles. My father was an enthusiast, loving jokes – especially Jewish ones – songs, poems, plays, stories and football, but he showed sadness in the face of loss. The way he talked of the uncles was, “You know I had two uncles in France ... they were there at the beginning of the war; they weren't there at the end.” As my brother and I got older we pressed him, and he would say: “They must have died in the camps.” What camps? I asked myself.

Where? What did the word even mean? And why France?

Another mystery about our father was that he was American. Though he was born in the US, he had lived in London since he was two. The story was that his mother and Polish father – the brother of these French uncles – had split in Brockton, Massachusetts, back in 1922, with his mother bringing him and his siblings to London. My father didn't ever see his father again.

The “camps” came into focus when I was a teenager. It came in fits and starts: a relative was pointed out at a cousin's wedding. “His parents put him on a train in Poland and he never saw them again,” we were told. On a trip to Germany our parents came back shaken after a visit to one such “camp” (we weren't allowed to go). It was Buchenwald. In Mum's version of history, related at teatimes, if the Red Army hadn't won in Stalingrad we would have been killed. Why? Because we were Jews. One night, my father and I stayed up late watching Marcel Ophüls' films, *Le Chagrin et la Pitié* (*The Sorrow and the Pity*) and my father slipped in that this must have been how his uncles were taken.

Beside these glimpses, there were two names for the uncles: Oscar and Martin Rosen; two jobs: a dentist and a clock mender, and two possible home towns: Nancy and Metz.

But that was it.

Poetry is particularly good for writing about the unresolved, the unanswered

In the 1980s, I went to the US to try to sew together parts of the wider family (the meshpukhe in Yiddish), meeting my father's cousins. The visits were great but they didn't fill in the gaps. Then came a breakthrough: an even more distant American relative left some papers in which there were letters from one of the French uncles and one of the Polish aunts. They were desperate calls for help in 1940 and 1941. These opened doors to places, names and fates that led to a flight from towns and villages across France, to a near-escape in Nice, from there to Paris and then deported to Auschwitz on “convoys”.

Everything you will have read so far in this article jolted me into writing, sometimes prose accounts, sometimes poems. Poetry is particularly good for writing about the unresolved, the unanswered. Sometimes though, it can let you lay things down according to the pattern of facts, a kind of list. The facts become the bones of a skeleton, holding the body of a story together. As I wrote in these different ways, people started asking me to tell these stories in schools and colleges. Professor Helen Weinstein from History Works invited me to contribute to the Holocaust Remembrance education work she was doing with thousands of school students. In another area, I was doing a talk when a sixth-form student “explained” to me that none of what I was describing had really happened. I was face to face with Holocaust denial: a chilling moment. I need to put this in a book, I thought.

Meanwhile, working in inner city schools, I was frequently made aware that some of the children I was working with were from refugee families. In my head, the world of my relatives was coming into contact with the lives of these children. I looked at myself: I am the son of a

migrant whose uncles and aunts had been persecuted and killed.

As I looked into the French stories, I unpicked government measures, decrees, edicts, lists, arrests, deportations. What did legality and justice mean in those times? What do they mean for these children now? Depending on the age of pupil, I thought my poems could be ways of opening up conversations about refugees, persecution and genocide.

People ask me why write about such things for young people?

One answer in my mind takes me back to the child who was hearing his father say, “They must have died in the camps”.

That child was full of questions with no answers. Another is that

children are not sealed off from migration and refugees. The media tell these stories, why shouldn't a writer for children use his experience of framing things with a young audience in mind to talk of these matters too?

Books for children get into schools. Committed teachers use books like mine alongside films, non-fiction and fiction to help children investigate and understand the Holocaust, persecution and genocide. The tough truth is that all this is part of who we are. There is a personal twist to this in that there are a good few children who know me as the Bear Hunt or Chocolate Cake man. If they do, I am part of the fabric of books that they hear or read. Any such child coming across *On the Move* will get a sense of how the Holocaust or any traumatic persecution bleeds down through generations. The funny performance poet can be one and the same person as one who has spent 40 years researching and writing about a fractured family.

The media tell these stories, why shouldn't a writer for children use his experience of framing things with a young audience in mind to talk of these matters too?

www.theguardian.com/books/2021/oct/21/why-shouldnt-childrens-writers-talk-of-refugees-persecution-and-genocide

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London: Studio Editions 1991

Clever Cakes

Illustrated by Caroline Holden

London: Walker Books 1991

The First Giraffe

Illustrated by John Clementson

London: Studio Editions 1993

Songbird Story

Illustrated by Jill Dow

London: Frances Lincoln 1993

Moving

Illustrated by Sophy Williams

London: Viking 1993

Burping Bertha

Illustrated by Tony Ross

London: Andersen Press 1993

The Old Woman and the Pumpkin

Illustrated by Bob Hewis

London: Learning by Design 1994

The Man with No Shadow

London: Longman 1994

Norma's Notebook

London: Longman 1994

Michael Rosen's Horribly Silly Stories

London: Kingfisher 1994

**Michael Rosen's Arabian
Frights and Other Stories**
Illustrated by Chris Fisher
London: Deutsch 1994

Lisa's Letter
Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Longman 1994

Figgy Roll
Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Longman 1994

Dad
Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Longman 1994

Fantastically Funny Stories
Illustrated by Mik Brown
London: Kingfisher 1994

Michael Rosen's ABC
Illustrated by Bee Willey
London: Macdonald Young Books 1995

Even Stevens F.C.
Illustrated by John Rogan
London: Collins 1995

Crow and Hawk
Illustrated by John Clementson
London: Harcourt Brace 1995

This is Our House
Illustrated by Bob Graham
London: Walker Books 1996

The Zoo at Night
Illustrated by Bee Willey
Vancouver: Tradewind 1996

Snore!
Illustrated by Jonathan Langley
London: HarperCollins 1998

Mission Ziffoid
Illustrated by Arthur Robins
London: Walker Books 1999

Rover
Illustrated by Neal Layton
London: Bloomsbury 1999

Zoomababy
(Series)
Illustrated by Caroline Holden
London: Pearson Educational 2001

A Jewish Tale
Illustrated by Simon Jacob
London: Longman 2001

Two European Tales
Illustrated by Barry Wilkinson and Gwen
Touret
London: Longman 2001

Lovely Old Roly
Illustrated by Priscilla Lamont
London: Frances Lincoln 2002

Oww!
Illustrated by Jonathan Langley
London: HarperCollins 2003

Michael Rosen's Sad Book
Illustrated by Quentin Blake
London: Walker Books 2004

Howler
Illustrated by Neal Layton
London: Bloomsbury 2004

You're Thinking About Doughnuts
(New edition)
London: Barn Owl 2005

You're Thinking About Tomatoes
Illustrated by Quentin Blake
London: Barn Owl 2005

Totally Wonderful Miss Plumberry
Illustrated by Chinlun Lee
London: Walker Books 2006

Michael Rosen's Scrapbook
Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007

Shoo!

Illustrated by Jonathan Langley
London: HarperCollins 2007

Bear in the Cave

Illustrated by Adrian Reynolds
London: Bloomsbury 2007

Dear Mother Goose

Illustrated by Nick Sharratt
London: Walker Books 2008

Red Ted and the Lost Things

Illustrated by Joel Stewart
London: Walker Books 2009

Bear Flies High

Illustrated by Adrian Reynolds
London: Bloomsbury 2009

I'm Number One

Illustrated by Bob Graham
London: Walker Books 2009

All About Me

Illustrated by Tim Archbold
London: Collins Big Cat 2009

Tiny Little Fly

Illustrated by Kevin Waldron
London: Walker Books 2010

Dear Fairy Godmother

Illustrated by Nick Sharratt
London: Walker Books 2011

Happy Harry's Café

Illustrated by Richard Holland
London: Walker Books 2012

Blue

Illustrated by Michael Foreman
London: Walker Books 2012

Bob the Bursting Bear

Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Andersen Press 2012

Aesop's Fables

Illustrated by Talleen Hacikyan
Vancouver: Tradewind 2013

Fluff the Farting Fish

Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Andersen Press 2013

Choosing Crumble

Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Andersen Press 2014

Send for a Superhero!

Illustrated by Katharine McEwen
London: Walker Books 2014

Wolfman

Illustrated by Chris Mould
Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke 2014

Mad in the Back

Illustrated by Richard Watson
Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke 2015

Monster

Illustrated by Neal Layton
London: Bloomsbury 2015

Uncle Gobb and the Dread Shed

Illustrated by Neal Layton
London: Bloomsbury 2015

The Bus is for Us

Illustrated by Gillian Tyler
London: Walker Books 2015

Don't Forget Tiggs!

Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Andersen Press 2015

Bilal's Brilliant Bee

Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Andersen Press 2016

Laugh Out Loud Joke Book

London: Scholastic 2016

Barking at Bagels

Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Andersen Press 2017

Dread Cat

Illustrated by Nicola O’Byrne
Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke 2017

Bah! Humbug! A Christmas Carol

Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Scholastic 2017

An Unexpected Twist

Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Scholastic 2018

Uncle Gobb and the Plot Plot

Illustrated by Neal Layton
London: Bloomsbury 2018

Hampstead the Hamster

Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Andersen Press 2018

A Dog’s Tale: Life Lessons for a Pup

Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Scholastic 2019

Macbeth United: A Football Tragedy

Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Scholastic 2020

I Am Angry

Illustrated by Robert Starling
London: Walker Books 2021

Sticky McStickstick: The Friend Who Helped Me Walk Again

Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Walker Books 2021

I Am Hungry

Illustrated by Robert Starling
London: Walker Books 2022

You’re Thinking About Tomatoes

(Graphic novel)
Illustrated by Cole Henley
London: Unbound 2022

Please Write Soon: An Unforgettable Story of Two Cousins in World War II

Illustrated by Michael Foreman
London: Scholastic 2022

Goldilocks and the Three Crocodiles

Illustrated by David Melling
London: HarperCollins 2022

Rigatoni the Pasta Cat

Illustrated by Tony Ross
London: Andersen Press 2022

I Am Wiggly

Illustrated by Robert Starling
London: Walker Books 2023

I Am Happy

Illustrated by Robert Starling
London: Walker Books 2023

Not-so-little Red Riding Hood

Illustrated by David Melling
London: HarperCollins 2024

The Big Dreaming

Illustrated by Daniel Egnéus
London: Bloomsbury 2023

The Incredible Adventures of Gaston le Dog

Illustrated by Viviane Schwarz
London: Walker Books 2023

Chats with Cats

Illustrated by Rebecca Hodgkinson
London: Seven Arches 2023

Michael Rosen’s Totally True (and totally silly) Bedtime Stories

Illustrated by Emily Fox
London: Wren & Rook 2024

Snow White and the Seven Bears

Illustrated by David Melling
London: HarperCollins 2025

Oh Dear, Look What I Got!

Illustrated by Helen Oxenbury
London: Walker Books 2025

The Big Journey

Illustrated by Daniel Egnéus
London: Bloomsbury 2025

Children's Information Books

Shakespeare: His Work and His World

Illustrated by Robert Ingpen
London: Walker Books 2001

What Is Right and Wrong?

With Annemarie Young
London: Wayland 2018

William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet

Illustrated by Jane Ray
London: Walker Books 2003

**What is Politics? Why Should We Care?
And Other Big Questions**

With Annemarie Young
London: Wayland 2019

Dickens: His Work and His World

Illustrated by Robert Ingpen
London: Walker Books 2005

**The Missing: The True Story
of My Family in World War II**

London: Walker Books 2019

What's So Special About Shakespeare?

Reformatted and adapted edition of
Shakespeare: His Work and His World
London: Walker Books 2007

**Why Do We Need Art? What
Do We Gain By Being Creative?
And Other Big Questions**

London: Wayland 2020

What's So Special About Dickens?

Reformatted and adapted edition of
Dickens: His Work and His World
London: Walker Books 2007

Write to Feel Right

Illustrated by Viviane Schwarz
London: Collins Big Cat 2023

Fantastic Mr Dahl

Illustrated by Quentin Blake
London: Puffin 2012

**One Day: A True Story of Courage
and Survival in the Holocaust**

Illustrated by Benjamin Phillips
London: Walker Books 2025

**What Is Humanism? How Do You
Live Without a God? And Other
Big Questions for Kids**

With Annemarie Young
London: Wayland 2015

Michael Rosen's Pocket Shakespeare

Illustrated by Chris Riddell
London: Walker Books 2025

Who Are Refugees and Migrants?

With Annemarie Young
London: Wayland 2016

Children's Collections and Anthologies

Inky Pinky Ponky

With Susanna Steele
Illustrated by Dan Jones
London: Granada Publishing Ltd 1982

Speaking to You

(Edited)
With David Jackson
London: Macmillan Education 1984

The Kingfisher Book of Children's Poetry

(Editor)

Illustrated by Alice Englander

London: Kingfisher Books 1986

That'd Be Telling!

Compiled with Joan Griffiths

London: Oxford University Press 1986

A Spider Bought a Bicycle

(Compiler)

Illustrated by Inga Moore

London: Kingfisher 1987

The Kingfisher Book of Funny Stories

(Editor)

Illustrated by Tony Blundell

London: Kingfisher Books 1988

Culture Shock

(Editor)

Illustrated by Andrzej Krauze

London: Viking 1990

Mini Beasties

(Selector)

Illustrated by Alan Baker

London: Firefly 1991

Give Me Shelter

(Compiler)

London: Bodley Head 1991

Funny Stories

(Compiler)

London: Kingfisher 1991

A World of Poetry

(Editor)

London: Kingfisher Books 1991

South and North, East and West

London: Walker Books 1992

Round About Six

(Contributor)

London: Frances Lincoln 1992

Poems for the Very Young

(Editor)

Illustrated by Bob Graham

London: Kingfisher Books 1993

Action Replay

(Editor)

Illustrated by Andrzej Krauze

London: Viking 1993

Stories for Five Year Olds

London: Walker Books 1995

Night-Night, Knight, and other poetry

(Editor)

Illustrated by Sue Heap

London: Walker Books 1998

Classic Poetry: An Illustrated Collection

(Editor)

Illustrated by Paul Howard

London: Walker Books 1998

Poems Are...

(Series)

London: Pearson Educational 2001

**Ten of the Best: School Stories
with a Difference**

(Contributor)

London: Collins: 2002

**Michael Rosen's A-Z: The Best Children's
Poetry from Agard to Zephaniah**

(Editor)

London: Puffin 2009

You Tell Me

(New revised edition)

With Roger McGough

Illustrated by Korky Paul

London: Frances Lincoln 2015

Honey for You, Honey for Me:**A First Book of Nursery Rhymes**

Illustrated by Chris Riddell

London: Walker Books 2020

Adult Books

Backbone

(Play)

*London: National Theatre/
Faber & Faber 1978*

Bloody L.I.A.R.S

(Pamphlet)

Illustrated by Alan Gilbey
*London: London Institute of Applied Science
Research 1983*

Did I Hear You Write?

Cartoons by Tony Pinchuck
London: Deutsch 1989

The Chatto Book of Dissent

(Edited with David Widgery)
London: Chatto & Windus 1991

Goodies and Daddies: An A–Z Guide to Fatherhood

Illustrated by Caroline Holden
London: John Murray 1991

You are, aren't you?

(Poetry)
Five Leaves Publications 1993

Treasure Islands 2

With Jill Burridge
London: Walker Books 1993

The Penguin Book of Childhood

London: Penguin Books 1994

A Different Story: Poems from the Past

(Editor)
London: The English and Media Centre 1994

Just Kids

Illustrated by Caroline Holden
London: John Murray 1995

The Skin of Your Back

Nottingham: Fives Leaves Publications 1996

The Secret Life of Schools

(Editor)

Illustrated by Sarah Dempsey
London: Channel 4 Learning 1997

A Year with Poetry: Teachers Write About Teaching Poetry

(Edited with Myra Barrs)
London: CLPE 1997

Carrying the Elephant

London: Penguin 2002

This Is Not My Nose

London: Penguin 2004

William Shakespeare in His Times, For Our Times

London: Redwords 2004

In the Colonie: A Memoir of Separation and Belonging

(Poetry)
London: Penguin 2005

Fighters for Life, Selected Political Poems

London: Bookmarks 2007

Selected Poems

London: Penguin 2007

Alphabetical: How Every Letter Tells a Story

London: John Murray 2013

Poems of Protest by William Morris

Introduction by Michael Rosen
London: Redwords 2013

Good Ideas: How to Be Your Child's (and Your Own) Best Teacher

London: John Murray 2014

Don't Mention the Children

Ripon: Smokestack Books 2015

**The Disappearance of Emile Zola:
Love, Literature and the Dreyfus Case**
London: Faber & Faber 2017

**Poetry and Stories for Primary
and Lower Secondary Schools**
Self-published 2017

So They Call You Pisher! A Memoir
London: Verso Books 2017

Listening to a Pogrom on the Radio
Ripon: Smokestack Books 2017

Why Write? Why Read?
Self-published 2018

Writing for Pleasure
Self-published 2018

How to Make Children Laugh
London: Quercus 2018

**Workers' Tales: Socialist Fairy Tales,
Fables, and Allegories from Great Britain**
*Princeton, NJ, USA: Princeton University
Press 2018*

**The Author: Towards a Marxist
Approach to Authorship**
Self-published 2018

**Reading and Rebellion: An Anthology of
Radical Writing for Children 1900–1960**
With Kimberley Reynolds and Jane Rosen
Oxford: Oxford University Press 2018

Reading for Pleasure
Self-published 2019

Mr Mensh
Ripon: Smokestack Books 2019

Michael Rosen's Book of Play
London: Wellcome Collection 2019

The Pilgrims of Hope by William Morris
Introduction by Michael Rosen
London: Redwords 2020

**Many Different Kinds of Love: A story
of life, death and the NHS**
London: Ebury Press 2021

**Poetry Videos: How to Get Children
Writing and Performing Poems Too**
Self-published 2021

**What Is a Bong Tree? Articles and
Talks 1976–2021**
Edited by John Richmond
Self-published 2022

**St Pancreas Defendat Me: The
Boris Letters**
Illustrated by Zoom Rockman
London: Seven Arches 2022

The Advantages of Nearly Dying
Middlesbrough: Smokestack Books 2023

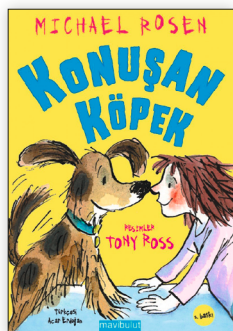
**Getting Better: Life lessons on
going under, getting over it, and
getting through it**
London: Penguin 2023

Farce Majeure: The Boris Letters, Vol II
London: Seven Arches 2023

**Rosen's Almanac: Weird and wonderful
words for every day of the year**
Illustrated by Andrzej Krauze
London: Ebury Press 2024

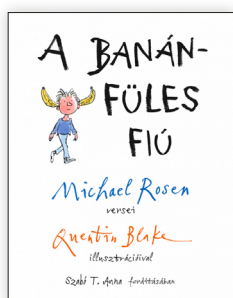
Pebbles, Poetry Tweets
Thirsk: Smokestack Books 2024

Translations



A Great Big Cuddle

Chinese simplified, Italian, Russian



Bananas in My Ears

Chinese, Hungarian, Russian



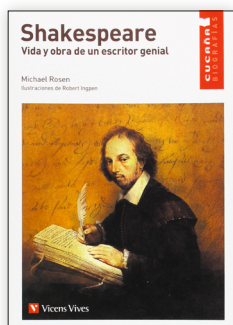
Barking for Bagels

Chinese, Dutch, Italian, Slovene



Bear Flies High

Russian, Ukrainian



Bilal's Brilliant Bees

Chinese, French, Slovene

Bob the Bursting Bear

German

Burping Bertha

Chinese, French, Icelandic, Italian, Slovene, Turkish

Chocolate Cake

Chinese Simplified, Korean

Choosing Crumble

Chinese, French, Icelandic, Italian, Lithuanian, Slovene, Turkish

Don't Forget Tiggs

Chinese, Dutch, Italian, Japanese, Lithuanian, Slovene

Fantastic Mr. Dahl

Chinese Simplified, Korean

Fluff the Farting Fish

Chinese Simplified, Dutch, French, Italian, Japanese, Turkish

Honey for You, Honey for Me: A First Book of Nursery Rhymes

Chinese simplified, Italian, Russian

I Am Angry

Portuguese, Turkish

Little Rabbit Foo Foo

French, Welsh

Michael Rosen's Sad Book

Catalan, Chinese Complex, Chinese Simplified, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Spanish, Welsh

Moving

French

Oh Dear, Look What I Got!

Greek

On the Move: Poems About Migration

French, Italian

One Day: A True Story of Courage and Survival in the Holocaust

Italian

Ouch

Vietnamese

Out of This World

Italian

Red Ted and the Lost Things

French, German

Rigatoni the Pasta Cat

Italian

Rover

Chinese simplified, Korean

Shakespeare

Catalan, Dutch, Lithuanian, Spanish

Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet

Dutch, French



Shoo

Vietnamese

Snore

Vietnamese

The Bear in the Cave

Korean

The Big Dreaming

Catalan, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Lithuanian, Modern Greek, Portuguese, Romanian, Turkish

The Bus Is for Us!

Scottish Gaelic

The Incredible Adventures of

Gaston le Dog

Chinese

The Missing: The True Story of My Family in World War II

Portuguese

US editions

Giggly Wiggly: Playtime Rhymes

Honey For You, Honey For Me: A First Book of Nursery Rhymes

I Am Happy

I Am Hungry

I Am Wiggly

Michael Rosen's Sticky McStick:

The Friend Who Helped Me Walk Again

Missing: The True Story of My Family in World War II

Dramatisations

Unexpected Twist

Adapted for stage by Roy Williams

Sad Book

Adapted by 201 Dance Company

This Is Our House

Chinese, Danish, French, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Swedish

Tiny Little Fly

Chinese Complex, Dutch, French, German,

Totally Wonderful Miss Plumberry

Chinese Complex, Dutch, Japanese

We're Going on a Bear Hunt

Basque, Breton, Catalan, Chinese Complex, Chinese Simplified, Danish, Dutch, Estonian, French, Frisian, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Jerriais, Korean, Maori, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Scots, Scottish Gaelic, Slovenian, Spanish, Welsh, Yiddish

Flights of Fancy: Stories, Pictures and Inspiration from Ten Children's Laureates

Chinese simplified

Oh Dear, Look What I Got!

On the Move: Home Is Where You Find It

One Day: A true Story of Survival in the Holocaust

Ready for Spaghetti: Funny Poems for Funny Kids

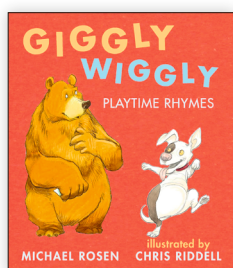
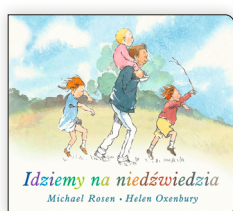
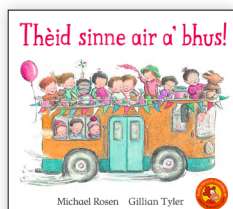
We're Going on a Bear Hunt: Pull, slide and play

We're Going on a Bear Hunt: Book and Toy Gift Set

We're Going on a Bear Hunt

Adapted by Sally Cookson

Music by Benji Bowers



Acknowledgements and Thanks

This dossier was compiled by Ferylith Hordon with Ann Lazim on behalf of IBBY UK. We would like to thank the following for their help: Michael Rosen and his publishers Walker Books, Bloomsbury. Andersen Press and Puffin (Penguin Random House), Olivia Martin (United Agents), Pam Dix, Dr Kimberley Reynolds, Sue Mansfield, Susan Bailes, Rebecca Butler, Isabella Williamson and Rachel Ryabogin for their invaluable research, contributions, hard work and support.

The dossier was designed by Rosamund Bird.

