



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

Books Reviewed:

[Michael Rosen's A to Z: The Best Children's Poetry from Agard to Zephaniah](#) [1]

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New to Choice:

off

BfK Rating:

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In Michael Rosen's recent tenure as children's laureate, he made it his especial concern to promote contemporary poetry for children. This collection is one result of that commitment: an A-Z of living poets, excepting only Adrian Mitchell, who is given special dispensation as the recently dead much revered granddaddy of performance poetry. There's no top of the bill here. Every poet, established and distinguished, or hardly known and up and coming (to me anyway), is given space for two poems, including the editor. Even so, there are some deserving poets who aren't here, and it's best to take the subtitle 'the best children's poetry?' with more than a pinch of salt. So rich is the diet of British poetry for children that even with just over 300 pages to be filled, difficult choices have to be made. That said, the poems have been carefully chosen to show the varied ways that poetry can excite, entertain and intrigue; the way it looks at the world slightly askew; its careful playfulness with language; the way it appeals to the senses and the mind; its music, exuberance and thoughtfulness. It was really good to find poets and poems I hadn't met before, beside some old favourites, some of whom had not had many collections in print recently - an especial mention here for Kit Wright, whose **The Magic Box** (the best of?) is due out soon. It would have been good to have at least one of each poet's collections mentioned at the close of each of their sections to encourage us to discover more, although readers of a bibliographical bent can trawl through the ten pages of acknowledgements. Otherwise, well done Michael - and that goes for the laureateship too.

Running Order:

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