



Good Reads: Cockermouth School Kids Lit Quiz team

Article Author:

[Cockermouth School](#) [1]

[187](#) [2]

Article Category:

Good Reads

Byline:

Reviews from **Cockermouth School Kids Lit Quiz team.**

Chosen by Year 7/8 (11-13 year-old) members of the Cockermouth School Kids Lit Quiz team, UK champions of the Kids Lit Quiz (www.kidslitquiz.com) [3]

Thanks to Helen Farrar, Librarian.

Leviathan

Scott Westerfeld, Simon & Schuster, 978 1 84738 674 8, £6.99 pbk

Leviathan: you just can't put it down. It's full of dramatic adventure and life changing experiences.

The genre is 'steam punk' meaning it's set at a certain time in history (here, World War I) but with material from the future. Alek is a young boy, son of Emperor Franz Ferdinand and a threat to the throne. He is a Clanker, meaning he uses lots of machinery including machines that walk like humans. Deryn is a young girl who finds herself aboard the Leviathan (a huge flying whale!). She is a Darwinist. Darwinists use evolutionary ideas to fabricate new creatures for use in war. Their paths are about to collide.

After reading, I thought about it for weeks, pondering, 'What would life be like if we did have these creatures and machines?'

What is great about the book is that it's real history 'but made different by things that haven't been invented even now.
Daniel Beresford (Year 8)

Hazel's Phantasmagoria

Leander Deeny, Quercus, 978 1 84724 783 4, £6.99 pbk

Hazel's Phantasmagoria is a brilliant book by Leander Deeny. It tells the tale of Hazel's trip to her aunt's house, where she is faced with all kinds of oddities. It is a page-turning thriller of a book!

When Hazel arrives at her aunt's house she is expecting dullness, boredom, and more than a few nasty comments. Instead, she gets three mutant animals, a dog with a wooden head, conjoined pigs, a revenge-hungry cousin, and a herd of smoking ducks! There is a gorrileepord called Geoff, a frogstrich called Francis, and a pythupine called Noel. I think my favourite characters are Noel and Francis. They are like a comedy duo and are always arguing.

I think it is a brilliant book, with all the things needed to make a bestselling novel. It's got heroes and villains, excitement and cliffhangers, treachery and smoking ducks.

I strongly recommend it to someone who likes quirky, mysterious books with unexpected twists. At the end you will probably be wondering, 'Who are the real monsters?? I know I did.

Imogen Cowper (Year 7)

Dragonfly

Julia Golding, Oxford, 978 0 19 272760 2, £6.99 pbk

Dragonfly is a classic adventure story with the contrast between the two main characters: Taoshira, an island princess steeped in rigid customs and a structured life, and Prince Ramil, prejudging, impulsive and arrogant. Brought together for reasons of the future security of their lands, the two heroes clash in the confusion of their different customs. They have little time to get to know each other before they are brutally captured during a catastrophic riding lesson. The real adventure then begins with circus folk, nomadic horse traders, rebel leaders, spymasters and demonic female warriors leaping in to join the fray. Skirmishes and battles abound. Slave traders seem to spell doom for the rebels but the heroes prevail, as do their growing feelings for one another, but then disaster strikes as Taoshira is taken by her own people in an attempt to warn them of the coming invasion.

If you like adventures in the face of unconquerable odds, this book is for you!

Solomon White (Year 8)

Time Riders

Alex Scarrow, Puffin, 978 0 14 132692 4, £6.99 pbk

When the twin towers fell, they were there. When Robin Hood took from the rich, they were there. When dinosaurs roamed the earth, they were there. **Time Riders** is about a group of time travelling young people, and it is their duty to make sure time flows the right way e.g. Germany loses both world wars, not just one. Great if you love sci-fi and history but worth reading for the laughs and also the feeling of being stranded in time. Three are currently in the series which, I think, will go to twelve books.

Will change your view of history. A must for any respectable bookworm.

Alistair Simpson (Year 8)

Page Number:

19

Source URL (retrieved on Jan '20): <http://savfikn.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/187/childrens-books/articles/good-reads/good-reads-cockermouth-school-kids-lit-quiz-team>

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