

Author Focus

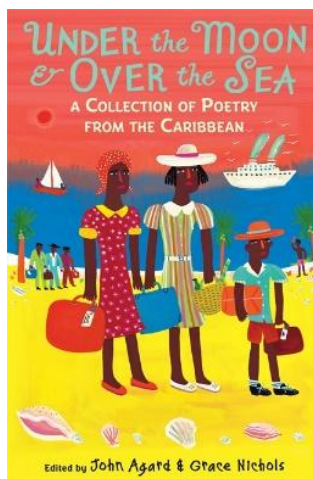
John Agard and Grace Nichols

John Agard and Grace Nichols were the first winners of the first CLPE Poetry Award (now known as the CLIPPA) in 2003 for the collection they edited *Under the Moon and Over the Sea*. They were both born in Guyana and moved to Britain in the 1970s. Both write poetry and fiction for children and adults.

John Agard was awarded the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry in 2012 and the Eleanor Farjeon Award for services to children's literature in 2016. See John performing from his work [here](#)

Grace Nichols won the Commonwealth Poetry Prize of her first adult collection *I is a long-memoried woman* in 1983 and was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 2007. See Grace performing from her work [here](#)

Books written and edited by both poets



Under the Moon and Over the Sea: A Collection of Caribbean Poems illustrated by Cathie Felstead, Christopher Corr, Jane Ray, Satoshi Kitamura and Sara Fanelli.

Walker 9781406334487

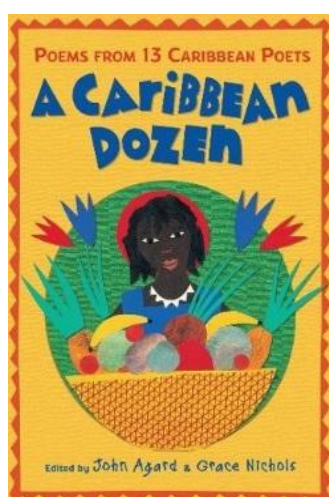
The first winner of the CLPE Poetry Award (now known as the CLIPPA), this anthology encompasses poems from poets living in the Caribbean and those from the Caribbean diaspora and also includes traditional rhyme and song. John Agard and Grace Nichols adopt a thematic approach, beginning with the Caribbean as a homeplace and ending with journeying away from there. Each theme is introduced by the editors, so we run from 'Once the Wind Said to the Sea' through to 'Windrush Child'. On the way we visit 'See Full Moon, Hear Jumbie Story',



‘Listening to the Land’ and ‘Come Taste and Buy’.

Each of the five thematic sections is illustrated by a different artist. Sadly this book is currently only available in a small format paperback with black and white illustrations. If you are fortunate enough to have the original hardback or large format paperback you can enjoy in their full glory: Cathie Felstead’s collages that portray the underwater worlds surrounding the islands; Jane Ray’s illuminations of the vibrant storytelling traditions; Christopher Corr’s bright colours which give life to flora and fauna; Satoshi Kitamura’s use of humour to make a display of Caribbean food. Finally, poems about migration from the Caribbean give flight to Sara Fanelli’s imagination.

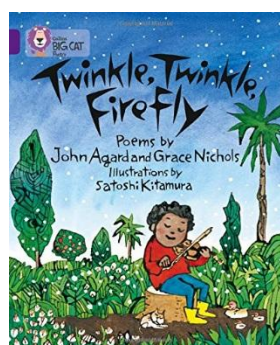
A teaching sequence for this book is available on the [Power of Reading](#). View this book on [Core Books](#).



A Caribbean Dozen illustrated by Cathie Felstead Walker 9781406334593

This rich collection gives voice to thirteen Caribbean poets. Each poet shares a childhood experience as an introduction to their poems. To sample the variety even within one poet’s work, try Pamela Mordecai’s light-hearted ‘Remember’ then turn the page to discover her moving ‘Lament of an Arawak Child’. The other poets represented are Valerie Bloom, Faustin Charles, Telcine Turner, David Campbell, Opal Palmer Adisa, Marc Matthews, Dionne Brand, John Lyons, James Berry, Frank Collymore and the editors themselves.





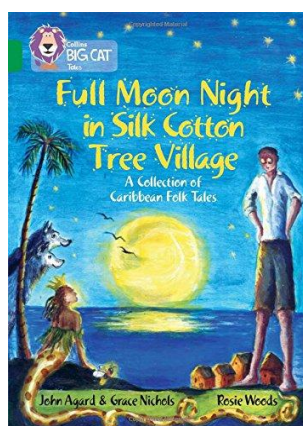
Twinkle, Twinkle, Fire Fly

Collins Big Cat 9780007336142

Fifteen poems gathered from previously published collections, each beautifully framed in a colour illustration by Satoshi Kitamura. Included are popular poems 'Granny, Granny, Please Comb My Hair' by Grace Nichols and 'Where Does Laughter Begin?' by John Agard.

Books by John Agard

Also part of the Collins Big Cat reading programme are two collections of traditional tales

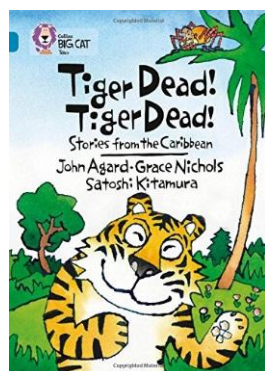


Full Moon Night in Silk Cotton Tree Village illustrated

by Rosie Woods

9780008147242

This includes four stories. They include tales about a lagahoo, similar to a werewolf, the spirit known as Mama Water and one about a candlefly who promises to repay the man who spared his life.

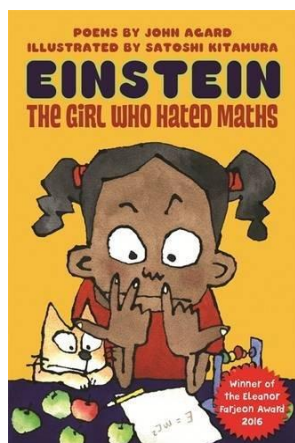


Tiger Dead! Tiger Dead! Stories from the Caribbean

illustrated by Satoshi Kitamura

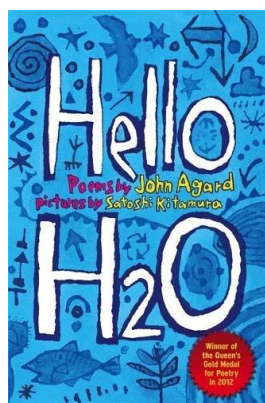
9780007231195

The title story is a tale featuring Anansi the spiderman and the second story is 'Owl and Belle-Belle' about a shy and self-effacing owl.



Einstein the Girl Who Hated Maths illustrated by Satoshi Kitamura
 Hodder 9781444917734

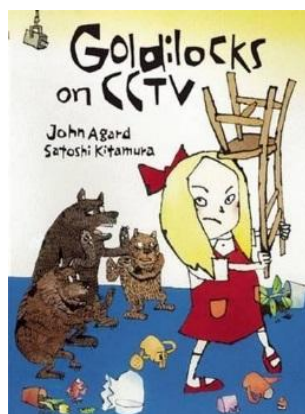
‘Party with pentagons, hobnob with hexagons and spend quality time with quadrilaterals’ in this thematic collection of poems which features multiple mind-expanding methods of exploring maths, revealing it as a fascinating historical and cross-cultural subject. There is plenty of humour added in along the way.



Hello H2O illustrated by Satoshi Kitamura
 Hodder 9781444917727

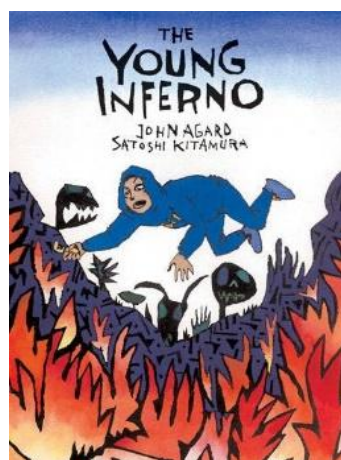
A companion volume to *Einstein* – this time the focus is on science with a terrific mix of the literary, linguistic and scientific. Bo Peep loses her cloned sheep, metals march, quarks quiver and pigeons advise pilots on flight instructions.





Goldilocks on CCTV illustrated by Satoshi Kitamura
 Frances Lincoln 9781847804990

‘It’s no good being streetwise when you’re lost in enchanted woods.’ Goldilocks, Cinderella et al inhabit the urban jungle rather than the fairy tale forest in this poetry volume which blends modern media with familiar tales to invite considerations of contemporary culture and modern life. The illustrations humorously mirror or extend the verbal text. View this book on [Core Books](#)

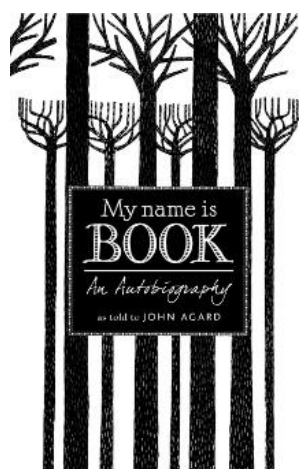


The Young Inferno illustrated by Satoshi Kitamura
 Frances Lincoln 9781847801098

John Agard has reinvented and reinterpreted Dante’s *Inferno* for today’s young people, retaining the use of terza rima in cantos, while using contemporary language and allusions – ‘leaders, like new world orders, come and go.’ He uses classical literary references more widely known in modern times - Aesop replaces Virgil as the storyteller who is the narrator’s guide on his journey into Hell. When our hero re-emerges at last into the Upper World, he finds himself in a library where he meets his Beatrice. Satoshi Kitamura’s black and white illustrations evoking shadows, bones and howling crowds of humanity in hell flow around this powerful poem.

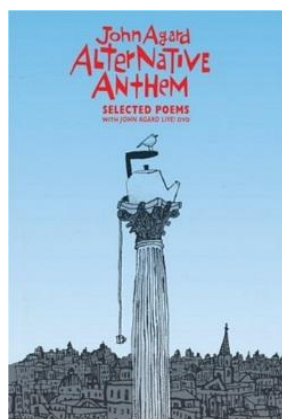
Winner of the 2009 CLIPPA Poetry Award





My Name is Book. An Autobiography illustrated by Neil Packer
Walker 9781406368987

John Agard has personified the book in prose which is lyrical, chatty and informative. Book speaks to us across the ages describing its own history from the birth of writing on clay tablets to a modern day meeting with a young eBook ‘showing off what he called his hypertext’. At the heart of Book is its love affair with the codex form, describing ‘my pages being flipped, a tingle of excitement runs down my spine. Is this person about to read me? I’m thinking. Or are they just flipping and dipping into me?’ The personalised approach allows for eclecticism in what is emphasised, drawing out aspects that appeal such as the aroma of printed books ‘a hint of mature wood pulp tinged with vanilla, as if the forest itself had stamped me with the smell of ancient wisdom.’ As befits the subject matter, this is a compact beautifully designed volume with quotations, poetry and pictures permeating the prose. View this book on [Core Books](#)



Alternative Anthem
Bloodaxe 9781852248239

A selection of poems from several of John Agard’s adult collections that also includes a section of his poems for children. It is accompanied by a DVD filmed at two of his performances.



Books by Grace Nichols



Cosmic Disco illustrated by Alice Wright
Frances Lincoln 9781847803986

This collection whirls us out into the cosmos to dance ‘in the endless El Dorado of stars stars stars’ and back again to ‘that little old blue ball spinning in the corner over yonder’. Nature is personified in many guises. Lady Winter raps out a warning and chastises a cheeky robin. Autumn is a knight with ‘cape of rustling ochre, gold and brown’ and ‘spurs made of sprigs’ and ‘medals made of conkers’. Colours speak, giving persuasive arguments why the artist should choose each one of them. Venus is addressed majestically and a ‘star that time forgot’ given a new name. A teaching sequence for this book is available on the [Power of Reading](#). View this book on [Core Books](#).

Shortlisted for the 2014 CLIPPA (CLPE Poetry Award)

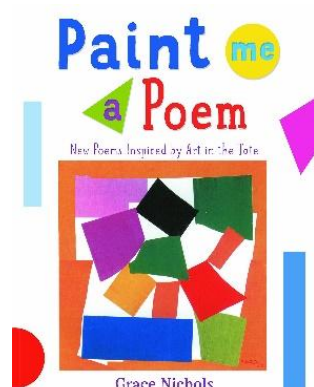


Sun Time Snow Time illustrated by David Dean
Bloomsbury 9781408193006

Grace Nichols’ first two books of poems for children are here combined. Those from *Come On into My Tropical Garden* reflect the landscape, language and folklore of her childhood in Guyana and include favourites such as ‘Wha Me Mudder Too’, ‘Sea Timeless Song’ and ‘For Forest’. A shift in focus from the Caribbean to life in Britain marks those from *Give Yourself a Hug*. As the title suggests, the weather



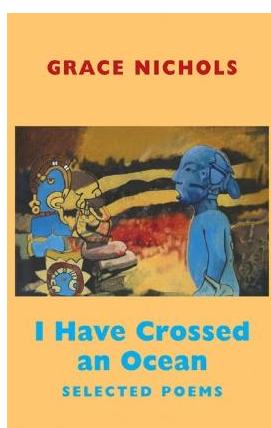
plays a prominent role – ‘How it kyan snow so/How it kyan cold so’ (from ‘Weather-Moan’) and so does the passing of the seasons (see ‘Autumn Song’).



Paint Me a Poem

Bloomsbury 9781472927675

The poems in this collection were inspired by paintings and sculptures in Tate Britain. Grace Nichols wrote these responses to works of art while she was poet in residence there. Also included are poems by children who visited the gallery during this time as part of the Visual Paths programme. Grace Nichols believes that ‘there is a very close relationship between the two art forms. In the compositional balance of a painting, one can almost speak of a certain colour ‘rhyming’ with a similar colour.’ A wide range of artists is represented including Picasso, Degas, Matisse, Warhol and Hepworth. Information about the artists and the work represented is included as well as ideas for writing poetry stimulated by art.



I Have Crossed an Ocean: Selected Poems

Bloodaxe 9781852248581

A selection of poems from several of Grace Nichols’ adult collections that also includes a section of her poems for children.

