

SUMMER BOOK CLUB •  
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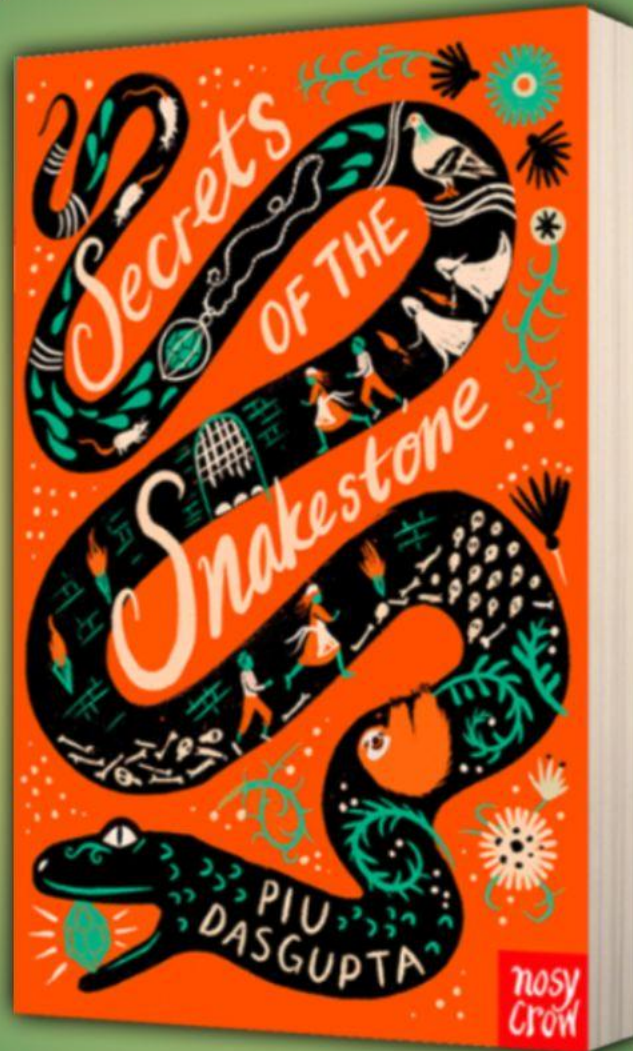


BOOK CLUBS  
IN SCHOOLS

# Welcome to your Summer Book Club

## Secrets of the Snakestone

By Piu DasGupta



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# What is Summer Book Club?

- It is where you all read the same book over the summer as part of a Summer Book Club
- Lots of schools around the country are doing this at the same time
- Everyone will be reading *Secrets of the Snakestone* by Piu DasGupta
- You have all summer to read the book
- You will receive an activities pack with questions and activities to complete



# What happens in September?

- We will all discuss the book in the first weeks of school
- You can share which activities you have done over the summer
- We will take part in an online author question and answer session with Piu DasGupta
- There will be an opportunity to ask the author questions and hear more about the book



# Why read?

- It can be fun and relaxing
- Young people who read for pleasure report better well-being and mental health
- You learn about lots of things while you read – places, ideas, feelings, problem solving, friendships
- The more you read, the better you get at it and the easier it becomes
- Pupils who read a lot, not only find English easier but do better in all their other subjects too



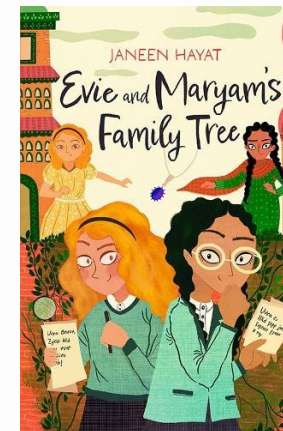
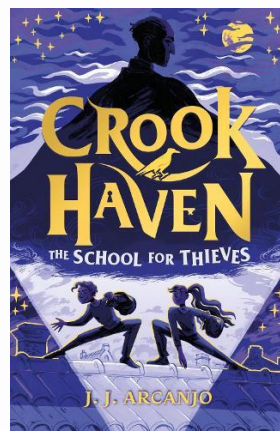
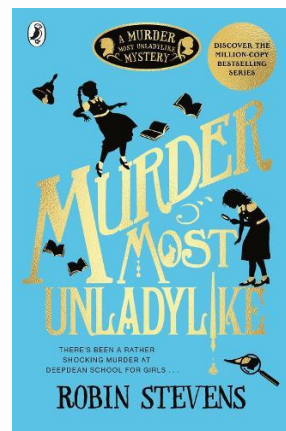
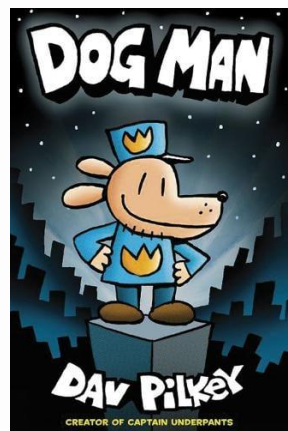
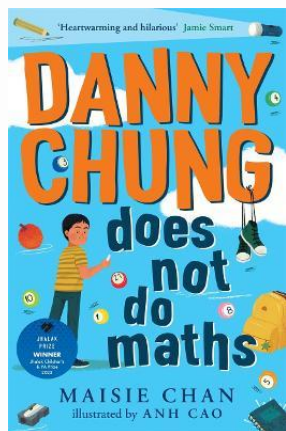
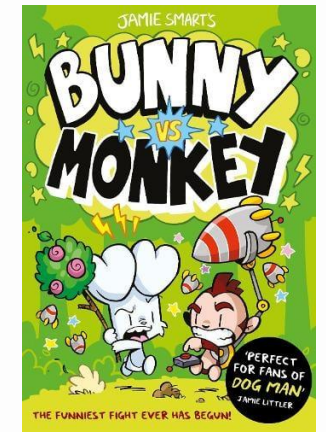
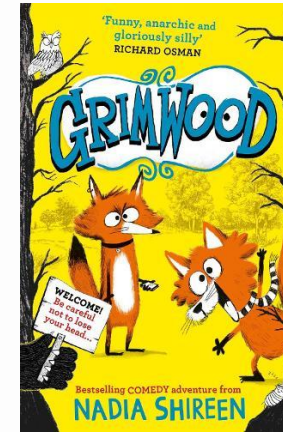
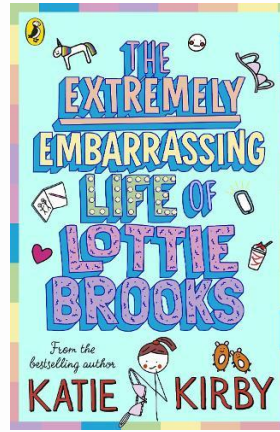
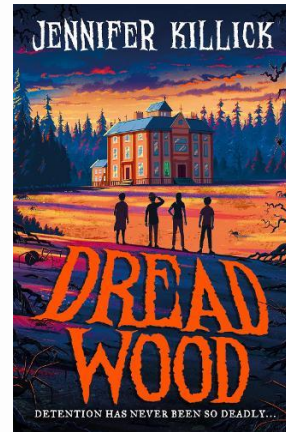
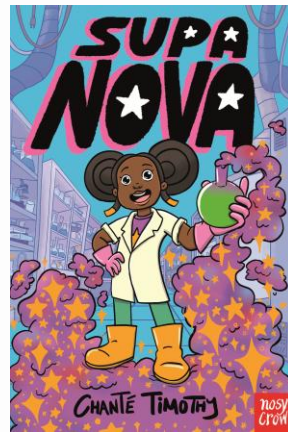
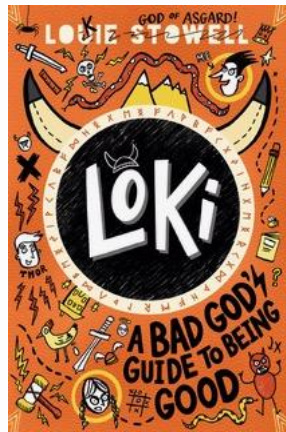
# Prepare for secondary school – read!

- Try to read every day
- Read whatever you enjoy - magazines, comics, fiction, non-fiction, poetry, song lyrics
- If you have a younger brother, sister or a pet read to them
- Visit your local library – with a library card you can borrow e-books and audio books too
- Read the book for Summer Book Club!



# Do you recognize any of these books

Have you read any of them?



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# What type books do you like?

- Best book you read in primary school?
- A genre (type of book) that you particularly enjoy (e.g. adventure, mystery, sport, romance)?
- Which book would you recommend to a friend?
- A favourite book which you re-read?
- A book you think would make a great film or TV programme?
- What would you most like to write a book about?



# Secrets of the Snakestone – front cover

What does the cover tell you about the book?

What can you see?

Have a look inside at the map – what does it tell you?

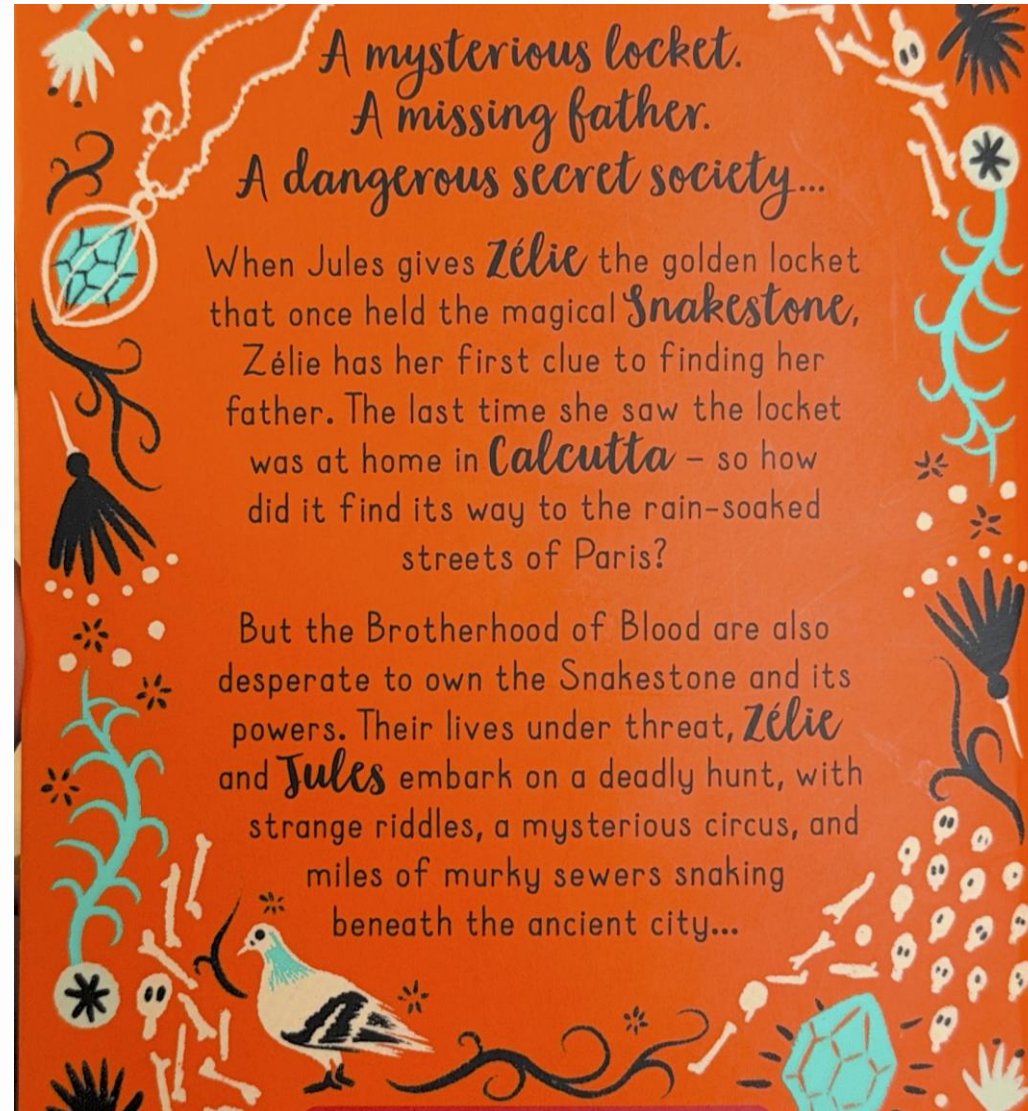
What type of story do you think it is?



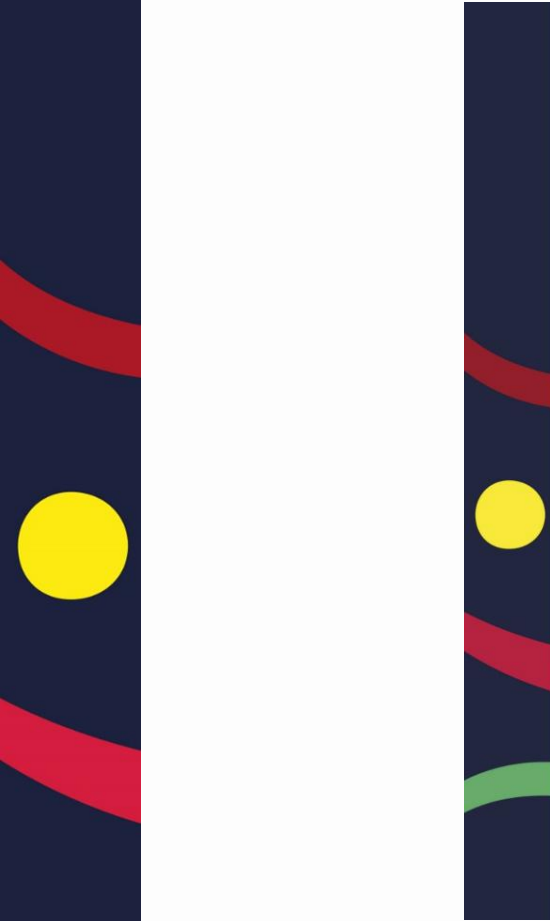
# Secrets of the Snakestone - the blurb

Read the blurb on the back of the book.

What extra information does it give about what the book is about?



# Welcome from Piu DasGupta



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# Meet the main characters

Full Name:

Zélie Dutta

Appearance:

Brown skin

Freckles,

Curly black hair

Different colour eyes

Special Skill:

Kickboxing

Surprising Skill:

Can lick her elbow

Full Name:

Jules Dubois

Appearance:

Pale skin

Freckles

Ginger hair

Covered in dirt

Special Skill:

Underground navigation

Surprising Skill:

Reads classic books



# Meet the main characters

Full Name:

Brother Ombre

Appearance:

Thin foxy face

Sunken eyes

Thin lips

Special Skill:

Being evil

Surprising Skill:

Taxidermy

Full Name:

Madame Malaise

Appearance:

Tall

Skinny

Bony fingers

Special Skill:

Punishing her maids

Surprising Skill:

Wearing very large hats



# What would your description be?

Using the same headings, what would your description be?

Full Name:

Appearance:

Special Skill:

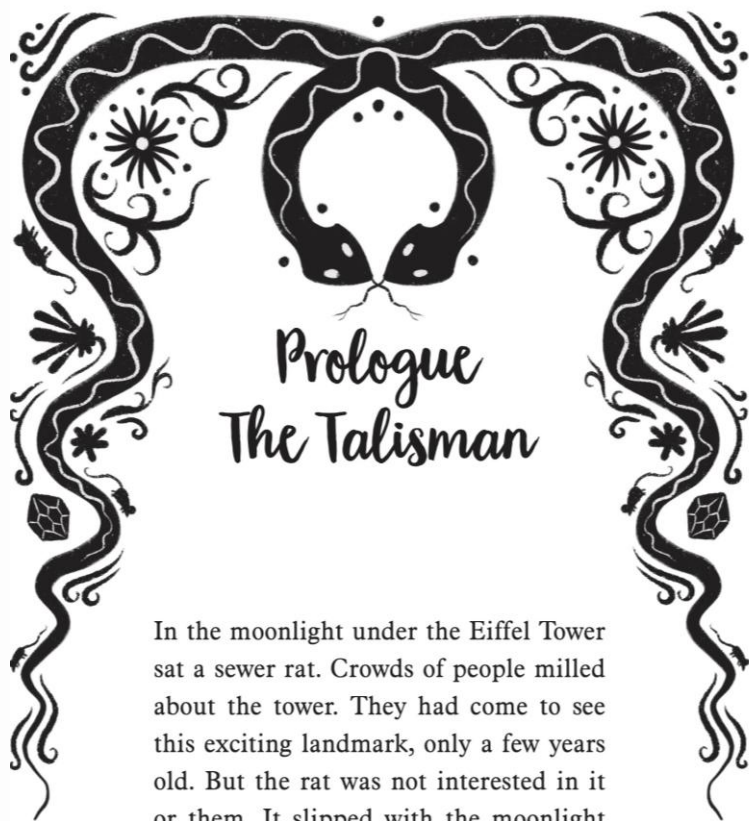
Surprising Skill:



# Read the prologue

- What is a prologue?
- Which character is it about?
- What does it tell you about what might happen?
- Why does the author start with this perspective?





## Prologue The Talisman

In the moonlight under the Eiffel Tower sat a sewer rat. Crowds of people milled about the tower. They had come to see this exciting landmark, only a few years old. But the rat was not interested in it or them. It slipped with the moonlight through a grating in the pavement and disappeared from sight.

The rat scurried into a drain and down, down, down into the bowels of the city. It ran along the channels where the Romans had collected urine to use as mouthwash.

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It ran through the old, disused private latrine of the guillotined king. It ran under the toilets of the Opera House. It ran and it ran until it reached a spot in the north of the city, where a man and a boy were busy working underground, trying to unblock a sewer.

The rat plopped into the river of black water rushing through the sewer. Through its beady eyes it spotted a small gold object winking and glistening on the riverbank. Waves of vibration flowed from the object through the water. The rat paddled hard to get away, sensing something deep and slow and older than the city or the earth upon which it was built.

The boy spotted the glistening gold object too. He picked it up curiously. It resembled two halves of a walnut shell, opening on a hinge and shutting with a small clasp. Some sort of locket perhaps. Carved into the surface were letters in a strange spidery script. The boy bit the metal expertly. It was solid gold. As he held the thing in his hand, it seemed to heat up and vibrate, throbbing in his palm with a powerful energy. The boy was used to finding strange things at work in the sewers: snakes, watches, wallets, guns, a baby, an alligator, a twenty-carat diamond (which the Paris authorities had confiscated). Once even a human torso. But this thing seemed to have a life of

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its own. It twitched in his palm like a living organ, giving off a halo of sickly greenish-yellow light.

The boy looked at the blue metal plaque on the sewer wall that identified the name of the street above. Rue Morgue. One of those streets with swanky houses, some even equipped with the latest flushing toilets. The object must have come from one of those. He slipped it into his pocket. It might be valuable. Perhaps he would get some money for returning it. He decided to try to find the house the next day.

Far above the boy's head, in one of the tall houses on Rue Morgue, a toilet finished flushing. A figure shut the door of the marble-tiled water closet and crept stealthily away. Only the old night owl that slept in the rafters of the Sacré-Coeur heard and saw.

On flew the night owl, skimming over the rooftops of Rue Morgue, swooping over a skylight to a small attic room where a girl tossed in uneasy sleep. The wind whined through a crack in the skylight and the girl's bed was crooked, hard and unyielding. But it was not for that reason she tossed and turned.

The owl flew back to its perch in the eaves of the cathedral. And the girl slept on fitfully, fretting and muttering, until dawn broke, and the city awoke.



# How will Summer Book Club work?

- You will now find out about getting your copy of the book and the activity pack
- You have 6 weeks to read the book, so you should get through it
- Try and do at least one activity from each week – ideally more!
- Come back in September ready to share what you have done
- Think up some questions for the author



# How to purchase the book

[To use if your school is asking children to buy their own book]

- A paper copy of book can be bought in a bookshop or ordered online.
- A less expensive option is to buy the e-book for 99p - available on Amazon, Apple Books and Kobo
- Need to download the right app (depending on where you buy it) to the device you are going to read it on
- Don't forget you need to be signed into the app with the same account as the one used to buy the e-book

