



BUILDING COMMUNITIES

A READING LIST FOR KIDS AGES 0 TO 12, DESIGNED TO INSPIRE
BUILDING THE HOMES, PLACES AND COMMUNITIES OF TOMORROW

SEVEN MILLS 22

Seven
Mills

children's
books
ireland
every child a reader

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Children's Books Ireland is the national charity and arts organisation that champions every child's right to develop a love of reading. Their mission is to inspire a love of reading in children and young people in Ireland, to share our expertise and enthusiasm with the adults who guide and influence them, to champion every child's right to excellent books and live literature events and support the artists who make that goal possible across the island of Ireland.

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Cairn has been leading the way in the Irish housing market since 2015, building homes and creating places where people love to live. In that time, we have delivered thousands of new homes and today there are over 20,000 people living in Cairn built communities. Our vision is to lead the future of homebuilding in Ireland by valuing people, building responsibly and creating vibrant, sustainable places where communities can thrive.

cairnhomes.com

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Denotes an Irish author/illustrator/
publisher/údar/maisitheoir/foilsitheoir
as Éirinn

Introduction



The *Building Communities* reading list is inspired by the creation of Dublin's newest town Seven Mills in Dublin 22. Cairn is building Seven Mills and we're all about building green living places and connected communities, and that's exactly what we hope to nurture through our reading list.

At Cairn, we believe that everyone can play a part in creating a better future. That's why we've partnered with our friends at Children's Books Ireland to bring you books that encourage creativity and inspire ideas for caring for our planet, homes, places, and communities. The thirty-two titles in our reading list are carefully chosen to help kids like you see how you can make a difference, no matter your age.

Located on the Grand Canal, the town of Seven Mills, is a special place with sprawling parks, canals, cycleways, and walkways. But it's not just about having fun – it's also about finding ways to protect the environment and welcome everyone in our community. That's a big job, and we need your help!

With *Building Communities*, we want you to see how creativity and imagination can make a big difference. From boardbooks to books for older kids, each one is reviewed by an expert, and we're sure you'll find something that sparks your interest. So join us in Seven Mills and let's work together to build a better tomorrow!





CHILD'S PLAY illustrated by COCORETTO
WHEELS AT WORK: CONSTRUCTION

CHILD'S PLAY 2017 (BOARD) 12PP £5.99 ISBN 9781846439841

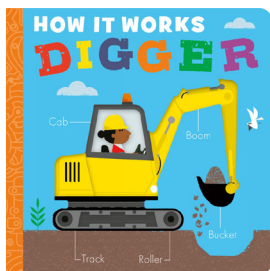
The Wheels at Work series is a refreshing and vibrant look at modern working life with all sorts of people behind the wheel, countering stereotypes of gender, race and ability. With the engaging lift-the-flap design, little tots will have great fun guessing what tasks drivers are up to. Simple but effective illustrations, with bold shapes and bright colours, are sure to entice readers. A different vehicle is depicted on every spread alongside a different driver, ensuring something for everyone! (Non-fiction, Age 0–4)



XAVIER DENEUX
BUILD!

CHRONICLE BOOKS 2020 (BOARD) 14PP £12.99 ISBN 9781452178714

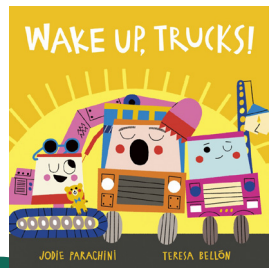
A gorgeously chunky boardbook with moveable parts, *Build!* will keep little hands busy putting on hard hats, shovelling soil or setting bricks in place. Why? Because, bit by bit, we're building a house, of course! The bright illustrations and tactile approach are perfect for toddlers who have a fascination for big machines, and it's great for practising those fine motor skills too. The text is cheerful and simple, yet it makes a point of using technical vocabulary, which will delight young construction aficionados. A sure winner! (Non-fiction, Age 0–4)



MOLLY LITTLEBOY illustrated by DAVID SEMPLE
HOW IT WORKS: DIGGER

LITTLE TIGER 2023 (BOARD) 12PP £7.99 ISBN 9781801044875

We're invited to look inside to discover how a digger works, as we follow its journey from the builders' yard to the building site, and watch it build a new house. The text is clear and informative, and names parts of the digger explaining how it works enhanced by vividly coloured illustrations. But that's not all, as each double-page spread contains peep-through pages, a little cat to spot, and a well-informed mouse which gives 'Did You Know?' facts. Lots to learn for readers of all ages. (Non-Fiction, Age 0–4, 5–7)



JODIE PARACHINI illustrated by TERESA BELLÓN
WAKE UP, TRUCKS!

LITTLE TIGER 2023 (HKB) 32PP £12.99 ISBN 9781801044196

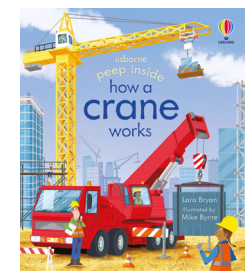
Every day the trusty truck crew wakes up with lots of work to do. There are roads to roll, homes to make and cities to build. Everything is go, go, go and the crew won't stop until the work is done. At the core of this story is friendship, teaching children the value of relationships with others, and how teamwork can enrich our lives. With a simple rhyming scheme, fast pace and stand out art, this is the perfect book for readers who want to have fun while reading. (Age 0–4, 5–7)



CATHERINE ARD illustrated by BEN WHITEHOUSE
LITTLE EXPLORERS: LET'S GO BUILDING SITE

TEMPLAR BOOKS 2023 (BOARD) 16PP £10.99 ISBN 9781800782181

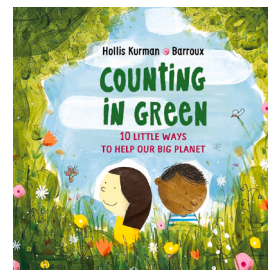
A fun, engaging story about workers on a building site introducing ideas such as health and safety at an appropriate level. Readers will learn all about the different jobs, machines and materials that are used on a building site, while the diversity of the characters will give readers a broad perspective of who works there. Cleverly laid out, the story is enhanced with more than thirty flaps that readers can open, explore, and learn from in more detail. A real attention grabber and a go to for multiple readings. (Non-Fiction, 2–4, 5–7)



LAURA BRYAN illustrated by MIKE BYRNE
USBORNE PEEP INSIDE: HOW A CRANE WORKS

USBORNE 2023 (BOARD) 14PP £8.99 ISBN 9781803707556

This highly engaging book invites the reader to peep inside the world of crawler cranes, crane trucks, spider cranes and much more. Readers will learn how the crane works, lifting heavy loads up and down and, most excitingly, how the crane truck builds the tallest cranes that are so familiar along the skylines of cities and towns. Diverse and inclusive illustrations demonstrate different types of people who work with cranes, while interactive tabs, flaps and cut-aways add an extra layer of fun to this informative read. (Non-Fiction, Age 2–4, 5–7)



HOLLIS KURMAN illustrated by BARROUX
COUNTING IN GREEN: 10 LITTLE WAYS TO HELP OUR BIG PLANET

OTTER-BARRY BOOKS (HKB) 32PP £12.99 ISBN 9781913074166

Sometimes helping our planet can feel like an overwhelming task. This gentle story helps to break down small actions that readers can take which will cumulatively help to keep our planet safe and green. With tasks like planting trees, doing a beach pick-up, and bringing our own bags to the supermarket, these ten tasks are achievable and rewarding. Colourful and soft illustrations remind the reader of the beauty of the natural world we live in and our duty to keep it that way. (Age 2–4, 5–7)



CHARLIE MOYLER illustrated by MARTIN STANEV
THE TREE NEXT DOOR

LITTLE TIGER 2023 (HKB) 32PP £12.99 ISBN 9781788956239

The long garden with the large tree is the centrepiece of the neighbourhood providing blossoms in spring, vegetables and fruits during the harvest and a home for buzzing bees and chirping birds. When a little girl moves in next door, she is captivated by the beautiful garden forming a friendship with her neighbour that strengthens through the seasons. A cosy palette and retro-style illustrations will warm the heart of readers in this story of intergenerational friendship and the importance of the kindness of a supportive community. (Age 2–4, 5–7)



LINDA NEWBERY illustrated by KATIE REWSE
RUBBISH? DON'T THROW IT AWAY!

OTTER-BARRY BOOKS 2023 (HBK) 40PP £12.99 ISBN 9781913074197

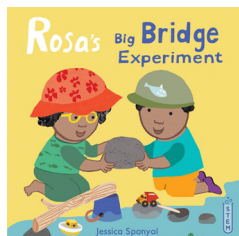
An old sink becomes a pond for tadpoles, a huge box becomes a castle and odd socks become puppets in this engaging story that seeks to inspire innovation and creativity in readers. Recycling and community building are at the heart of this story, as the children of Dragonfly Class work together to creatively transform rubbish into treasure. With diverse and inclusive illustrations, everyone plays their part and simple instructions are included at the back of the book to encourage readers to tackle their own recycling projects. (Age 2–4, 5–7)



GILLIAN HIBBS
ERROL'S GARDEN

CHILD'S PLAY 2018 (PBK) 32PP £7.99 ISBN 9781786280848

Errol is really good at growing things, but his inner-city apartment block isn't the ideal place for his green endeavours ... or is it? With the help of all his neighbours and their combined hard work, patience and enthusiasm, Errol creates a haven for both plants and people, showing that nature and communities can flourish anywhere, even on roofs! This lovely, diverse, and inclusive book is rich in bright colours and fun details to spot throughout. Trowels and watering cans at the ready! (Age 3–6)



JESSICA SPANYOL
ROSA'S BIG BRIDGE EXPERIMENT

CHILD'S PLAY 2020 (HBK) 20PP £5.99 ISBN 9781786283627

Rosa and her friends are building bridges at the beach. The gang spend a lot of time investigating materials, such as sand, branches and planks, and considering scientific concepts, such as weight, width, balance and suspension, but must eventually apply their knowledge when Snowy Dog is stranded! Part of the wonderful Rosa's Big Experiment series, which shows Rosa and her diverse friends experimenting with everything from bridges and boats to sunflowers and pizza. With simple text and colourful illustrations, this STEM inspired series celebrates teamwork, inclusivity, and creativity. (Age 3–6)



KATE BAKER illustrated by REBECCA GREEN
**A PLACE CALLED HOME:
LOOK INSIDE HOUSES AROUND THE WORLD**

LONELY PLANET KIDS 2020 (HBK) 16PP £9.99 ISBN 9781788689335

This book looks at different kinds of landscapes and the different kinds of homes best suited to them, from the compact apartment blocks of New York City to the raised houses of vines and wood in the Amazon jungle in Brazil. The warm, friendly illustrations (and the forty-plus flaps to lift) depict people and animals, as well as architecture, technology, and culture, for a whistlestop tour of how many people live around the world ... and even on the space station! (Non-fiction, Age 3–7)



MELISSA CASTRILLÓN
THE BALCONY

SIMON & SCHUSTER 2019 (HBK) 48PP £12.99 ISBN 9781534405882

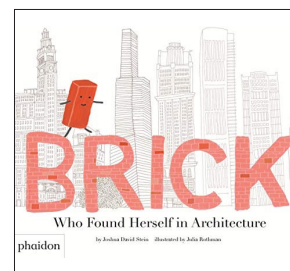
A kid moves from her home in an idyllic countryside to an austere and sterile city, but the soil and seeds she's taken with her manage to grow in her new apartment, and as they grow and spread, they begin to connect all the block's inhabitants, the nearby streets even, eventually revitalising the whole town. Stunning illustrations with rich, mesmerising colours tell most of the story in this practically wordless book of community, friendship and hope. A beautiful object to be inspired by and to read again and again. (Age 4–7)



POLLY FABER illustrated by KLAS FAHLÉN
BUILDING A HOME

NOSY CROW 2022 (PBK) 32PP £6.99 ISBN 9781788007030

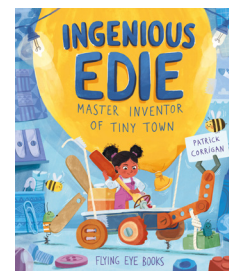
An old building in town is being refurbished and we're invited to peek behind the scenes for the whole project, from the architect's design to the foreman gathering their team, the assembly of the tower crane, the plumbing, wiring and more. In this busy, fascinating book, we meet many professions, encounter many tools, materials and equipment, and find out tons about hard work, teamwork and building works! Diverse and specific in both text and illustrations, this is an exciting and informative read. Brilliant! (Age 4–7)



JOSHUA DAVID STEIN illustrated by JULIA ROTHMAN
BRICK: WHO FOUND HERSELF IN ARCHITECTURE

PHAIDON PRESS 2018 (HBK) 40PP £12.95 ISBN 9780714876313

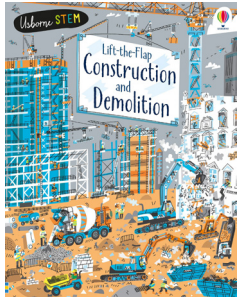
Brick is awed by the great brick structures around her and she longs to find her place in the world. Will she become part of a castle? A mosque? An apartment block? As she travels, Brick realises that purpose and intention are as important as skill and grandeur. Beautiful illustrations in multiple shades of red give us breathtaking views of real-life brick structures. A quick presentation of each at the back of the book helps situate them in time and space. An unusual, clever and comforting book. (Age 4–7)



PATRICK CORRIGAN
**INGENIOUS EDIE,
MASTER INVENTOR OF TINY TOWN**

FLYING EYE BOOKS 2023 (PBK) 32PP £8.99 ISBN 9781838741051

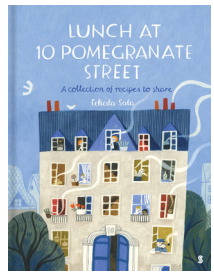
Edie is the best top-secret inventor in Tiny Town, but is infuriated when a mischievous magpie is constantly stealing shiny gizmos and gadgets from her friends. As each of her brilliant plans and sneaky inventions fail to capture the magpie, Edie learns the power of teamwork, together with friends they tackle the problem. A STEM-based adventure with plenty of creativity and ingenuity, the world of Tiny Town and Edie's inventions are beautifully realised in intricate illustrations. A great reminder of the power of friendship and collaboration. (Age 5–7)



JEROME MARTIN illustrated by PETER ALLEN
LIFT-THE-FLAP: CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION

USBORNE 2020 (BOARD) 12PP £9.99 ISBN 9781474942966

From the architect's to-do list to the finishing touches and grand opening ceremony, *Construction and Demolition* follows the long process of building a new skyscraper. Clever use of flaps means that both new construction enthusiasts and seasoned experts will find lots to enjoy. The engaging design is well thought-out and will keep those pages turning (and those flaps lifting!). The amount of detail in both text and pictures is fascinating, but never overwhelming, and there's a good dose of humour as well. Brilliant stuff! (Non-fiction, Age 5–8)



FELICITA SALA
LUNCH AT 10 POMEGRANATE STREET

SCRIBBLE UK 2019 (HBK) 40PP £12.99 ISBN 9781911617983

Go on a culinary journey with the residents of 10 Pomegranate Street. Take a peek inside each apartment as they prepare wonderful dishes from each of their cultures. Learn recipes for oyako don from Miss Ishida, black bean soup from Señora Flores, baba ganoush from Mister Ibrahim and many more. Each of the diverse cast of characters is brought to life in cheerful watercolour and pencil illustrations. A wonderful book about building communities and the great power of a shared meal. (Age 5–8)



MARIA ISABEL SÁNCHEZ VEGARA illustrated by ASUN AMAR
LITTLE PEOPLE, BIG DREAMS: ZAHA HADID

FRANCES LINCOLN CHILDREN'S BOOKS 2019 (HBK) 32PP £9.99 ISBN 9781786037442

This book follows the life and career of architecture superstar Iraqi-born Zaha Hadid. Tracing her originality and independent thinking back to her childhood days, it depicts the exciting trajectory of a woman carving her own path and forming and imposing her unconventional ideas in a male dominated and very 'Western' field. With accessible text and clear, clean illustrations, there is lots to inspire all kids, especially those who might feel a particular career path isn't for them because of their gender, religion or ethnic background. (Non-fiction, Age 5–8)



NOËLLE SMIT
IN THE GARDEN 🌱

LITTLE ISLAND BOOKS 2020 (HBK) 32PP €19.99 ISBN 781912417490

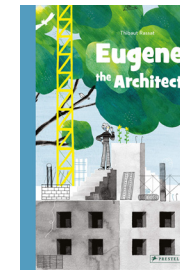
The cyclical nature of the gardener's year is depicted using very bright contrasting blocks of colour as each turn of the page depicts a month in the garden. Ecology, green living, clean eating and growing your own food have all become important topics for a variety of reasons, not least of which is climate change. This book might show children that by gardening they can take action and do something very beneficial to help the environment; it might well entice parents and guardians, teachers and children to begin gardens of their own! (Age 5–8)



CARTER HIGGINS illustrated by EMILY HUGHES
EVERYTHING YOU NEED FOR A TREEHOUSE

CHRONICLE BOOKS 2021 (PBK) 40PP £6.99 ISBN 9781797211855

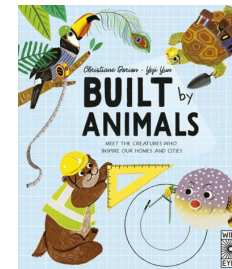
'Everything you need for a tree house is time and looking up.' Also a tree, a hard hat, tools, snacks and a sleeping bag for staying the night. And friends. This poetic, whimsical text and the gorgeous illustrations wonderfully blur the line between practical advice and glorious fantasy, showing kids dreaming, building and adventuring together in the most unexpected treehouses. With no grown-ups in sight, this is an empowering, exhilarating book about the excitement and hope that come with building a safe space, working together and crafting dreams. (Age 5–10)



THIBAUT RASSAT
EUGENE THE ARCHITECT

PRESTEL PUBLISHING 2021 (HBK) 40PP £11.99 ISBN 9783791374581

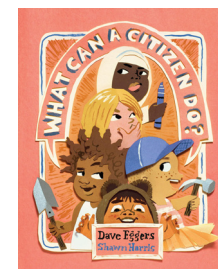
Sometimes it's good to bend, if not break, the rules, as fussy architect Eugene learns in this delightful book about how the natural environment and the built environment can work together to celebrate the imperfect perfection of nature. The author's playful illustrations are designed to introduce young readers to basic architectural and geometric principles, while at the same time amusing them with Eugene's prickly personality and joyful discovery. A modern fable illustrating that we can all grow and learn something new every day. (Age 5–10)



CHRISTIANE DORION illustrated by YEJI YUN
BUILT BY ANIMALS: MEET THE CREATURES WHO INSPIRE OUR HOMES AND CITIES

WIDE EYED EDITIONS 2022 (HBK) 80PP £11.99 ISBN 9780711265684

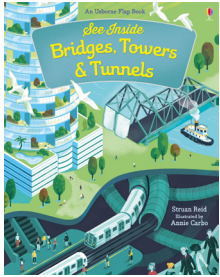
A colourful, witty, and fact-filled book that informs and entertains in equal measure. Children will be amazed at the skill and artistry as they learn about some of the best architects, designers and builders of the animal and plant world. Each double-page spread is devoted to one animal, plant or skill with a large, amusingly attired animal explaining about its unique adaptation and how this has inspired humans in architecture, engineering, and construction from the diabolical ironclad beetle to the white-spotted puffer fish. STEM made fun! (Non-Fiction, 5–7, 8–10)



DAVE EGGERS illustrated by SHAWN HARRIS
WHAT CAN A CITIZEN DO?

CHRONICLE BOOKS 2018 (HBK) 40PP £12.99 ISBN 9781452173139

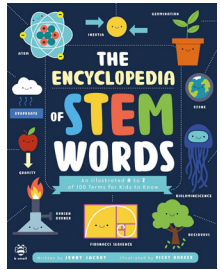
Follow the pictures to piece together the story of a group of kids coming together to reclaim and revitalise an unused urban space and build their den. Read along to hear how this is one way of being a good citizen, one that makes a change for the better. This book is as much about building a safe space and taking care of the natural environment as it is about building a community with the most precious materials of respect, understanding and empathy. Lots to admire and talk about. (Age 6–10)



STRUAN REID illustrated by ANNIE CARBO
SEE INSIDE: BRIDGES, TOWERS & TUNNELS

USBORNE 2019 (BOARD) 16PP £9.99 ISBN 9781474922500

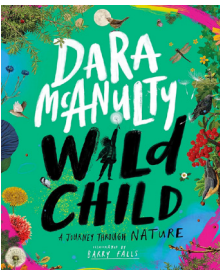
Do you understand how bridges and towers stay up or how a tunnel doesn't fill with water? The information here is distilled to the most interesting bits about this trio of engineering feats. Infographics, illustrations, flaps and large fold-outs make reading this book engaging. Clear explanations of how these bridges, towers and tunnels are built and function are offered along with groundbreaking and famous examples of each from around the world. It is the perfect book for a future engineer. (Non-fiction, Age 7–10)



JENNY JACOBY illustrated by VICKY BARKER
THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF STEM WORDS

B SMALL PUBLISHING 2022 (PBK) 112PP £12.99 ISBN 9781913918286

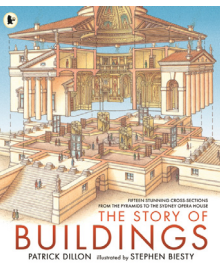
Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics or STEM, are topics that are endlessly fascinating to children. This book describes one hundred STEM facts in a visually interesting and easy-to-read way, one per page, in alphabetical order, it can be easily dipped into and flicked through. One of the book's great strengths is that proper scientific terminology is used throughout the book, teaching readers words like bioluminescence and echolocation. Accompanied by exceptional bright, bold, easy to understand, illustrations, this is an excellent read to make STEM subjects seem less daunting. (Non-fiction, Age 8–10, 10–12)



DARA McANULTY illustrated by BARRY FALLS
WILD CHILD 🌿

MACMILLAN 2021 (HBK) 64PP £14.99 ISBN 9781529045321

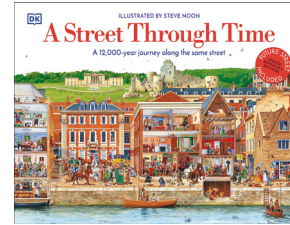
Wild Child encourages young people to venture into the natural world. Divided into five sections, this book blends poetry with fantastic facts, guiding the young reader through common wildlife. Each section of this beautifully illustrated book has a discovery element that allows the reader to understand complex but common natural phenomena, with activities to do at home to bring their learning to life, such as planting wildflowers, making bird feeders, and building their own terrarium. (Non-fiction, 8–10, 10–12)



PATRICK DILLON illustrated by STEPHEN BIESTY
THE STORY OF BUILDINGS

WALKER BOOKS 2018 (PBK) 96PP £10.99 ISBN 9781406381689

Engineering meets architecture and history in this mesmerising book. Retracing the long story of humanity's ingenuity in shelter-finding, house-building and the construction of grander monuments (think the Parthenon or the Pompidou Centre), Dillon imparts a wealth of information in a very accessible way, while Biesty's intricate illustrations are a work of art in themselves. The balance between sweeping history and technical nitty-gritty is perfectly judged, and detail-hungry kids will love exploring the cross-sections of iconic buildings and pondering on the different types of brickwork. Brilliant! (Non-fiction, Age 8–12)



DK illustrated by STEVE NOON
A STREET THROUGH TIME: A 12,000 YEAR JOURNEY ALONG THE SAME STREET

DK CHILDREN 2020 (HBK) £10.99 32PP ISBN 9780241411544

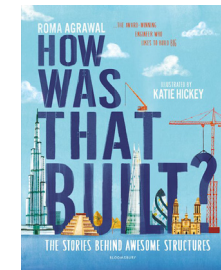
Set somewhere in Britain, this book follows the history of a single spot throughout 12,000 years of human occupation, from a fishing camp to a bustling modern-day city, via all the ups and downs caused by invasions, new technologies and new concerns. With detailed and lively illustrations, it features elements of search-and-find for extra interactivity. A brilliant book to help readers grasp concepts of change and continuity in history and urban development, it also contains a handy timeline of events in the wider world. (Non-fiction, Age 8–12)



LOUISE O'BRIEN illustrated by DÀLIA ADILLON and LEANNE DAPHNE
100 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT ARCHITECTURE

HAPPY YAK 2023 (HBK) 112PP £12.99 ISBN 9780711272668

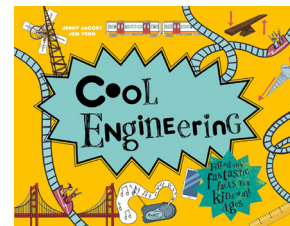
Readers will be amazed by the breadth of knowledge shared in this whistlestop tour of 100 carefully selected words that sum up architecture. Vibrant illustrations paired with a 100-word description of each entry selected inform readers on the complexity and imagination involved in architecture. Covering styles of architecture like art deco and modernism, famous architectural landmarks like the Sydney Opera House and the Guggenheim Museum, architects such as Zaha Hadid and Frank Gehry, this well-paced compendium whizzes from Lego bricks to 3D printing and everything in between. (Age 9–11, 12–14)



ROMA AGRAWAL illustrated by KATIE HICKEY
HOW WAS THAT BUILT?

BLOOMSBURY CHILDREN'S BOOKS 2021 (HBK) 80PP £14.99 ISBN 9781526603654

Award-winning engineer Agrawal looks at the techniques, tools, materials and people behind some of the world's most ingenious structures, from the Shard in London ('How to build tall') to the Katse dam in Lesotho ('How to build watertight') and all the way to Antarctica's Halley VI research station ('How to build on ice'). Picturebook veteran Katie Hickey brings concepts and structures to fascinating life. With ancient and contemporary examples, and an eye on the future too, this book has it all! (Non-fiction, Age 9–12)



JENNY JACOBY illustrated by JEM VENN
COOL ENGINEERING: FILLED WITH FANTASTIC FACTS FOR KIDS OF ALL AGES

PAVILION CHILDREN'S 2021 (HBK) 112PP £9.99 ISBN 9781843654728

There's a world of engineering and technology at our fingertips nowadays, but can you explain how a touchscreen works, if robots can think and why diversity in engineering makes our world safer? The latest book in the Cool series does not disappoint in answering these questions and many more and is packed with fantastic facts and exciting experiments. Knowing the positive impact engineering can have on our future for health, clean energy and saving the planet will leave readers empowered and in no doubt about how cool engineering is. (Age 10–12)



children's
books
ireland
every child a reader

CAIRN

Built For Good