

# The Reading Agency's February booklist – LGBT+ History Month



LGBT+ History Month takes place every February. Our booklist this month is for librarians and teachers to help them celebrate stories with strong LGBTQ+ representation or that are by LGBTQ+ creators. LGBT+ History Month is an opportunity to discover LGBT+ past and celebrate its present and future. Every year, Schools OUT sets a different theme for the month and provides free resources for education settings, businesses, services and organisations to help them celebrate and 'Usualise' LGBT+ lives in their full diversity.

We would love to hear what books you'd recommend on social media using #booklist and tagging [@readingagency](https://twitter.com/readingagency). You can see our past booklists [here](#).

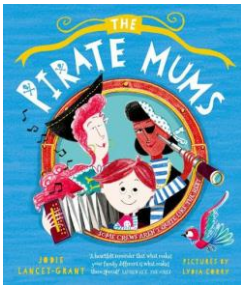
## Younger Children

**Out of the Blue** by Robert Tregoning (author), Stef Murphy (illustrator), Bloomsbury, ISBN: 9781526627964



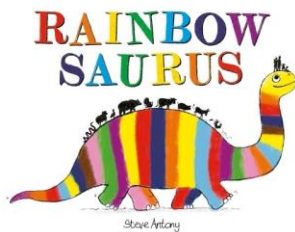
Only blue allowed, by Blue government demand. Anything that isn't blue, by colour law, is banned. In a very blue house on a very blue street, sits a little boy who feels as blue as the world around him. For this little boy has a big secret: he loves the colour yellow. In a world where only one colour is allowed, will he be brave enough to tell his dad? And will they be able to defy the rules and create a world where every colour is welcome?

**The Pirate Mums by Jodie Lancet-Grant (author), Lydia Corry (illustrator), Oxford University Press, ISBN: 9780192777799**



Billy's family is not what you'd call ordinary. His mums won't listen to NORMAL music. They love to sing sea shanties and dance jigs in the lounge. Their clothes are highly unusual, they have a rude parrot for a pet, and their taste in house design is, well ... FISHY. Billy wishes his family could be more like everyone else's. Until a swashbuckling adventure change everything!

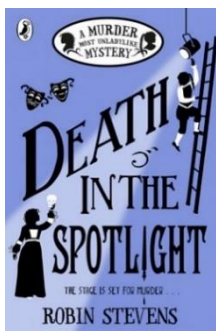
**Rainbowsaurus by Steve Antony, Hachette Children's Group, ISBN: 9781444964523**



Join two dads and their three children as they set off on an adventure to find the Rainbowsaurus. On their way, they meet animals that are all the colours of the rainbow who all want to find the Rainbowsaurus, too. A perfect story to read at bedtime again and again.

**Older Children - you can find suggested age ratings on publisher websites**

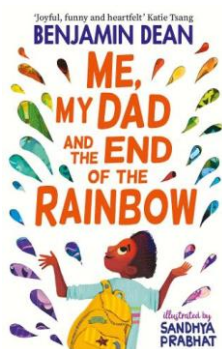
**Death in the Spotlight by Robin Stevens, Penguin Random House Children's, ISBN: 9780141373829**



Fresh from their adventure in Hong Kong, Hazel Wong and Daisy Wells are off to the Rue Theatre in London to face an entirely new challenge: acting. But danger has a nasty habit of catching up with the Detective Society, and it soon becomes clear that there is trouble afoot at the Rue.

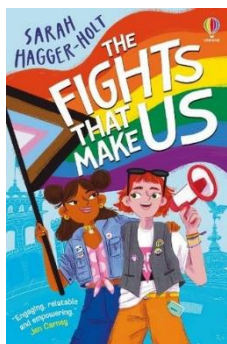
Jealousy, threats and horrible pranks quickly spiral out of control – and then a body is found. Now Hazel and Daisy must take centre stage and solve the crime... before the murderer strikes again.

**Me, My Dad and the End of the Rainbow** by Benjamin Dean (author), Sandhya Prabhat (illustrator), Simons & Schuster UK, ISBN: 9781471199738



Things aren't going great for Archie Albright. His dad's acting weird, his mum too, and all he wants is for everything to go back to normal, to three months before when his parents were happy and still lived together. When Archie sees a colourful, crumpled flyer fall out of Dad's pocket, he thinks he may have found the answer. Only problem? The answer might just lie at the end of the rainbow, an adventure away.

**The Fights That Make Us**, YA by Sarah Hagger-Holt, Usborne, ISBN: 9781801315791



Maybe there was a place in history for people like me, not on the edges of the story, but right in the centre.

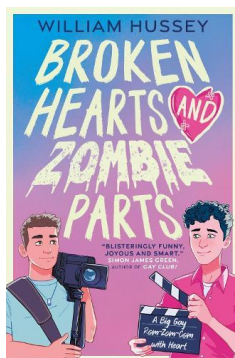
Jesse has recently come out as non-binary, and is struggling to find their place at school, and ideas for their project on lost stories from history.

Thirty-five years earlier, Jesse's cousin Lisa is falling for her best friend, but with new laws being introduced to restrict LGBT people's rights, they'll have to fight for the world to accept who they are.

When Jesse stumbles across Lisa's teenage diary, they are fascinated and horrified by her stories of living a secret life and protesting in the streets. Now it's Jesse's turn to find a way to shine a spotlight on a history that mustn't be forgotten.

**Young People (14+) – please note these may have mature themes and you can find more specific age ratings on publisher websites**

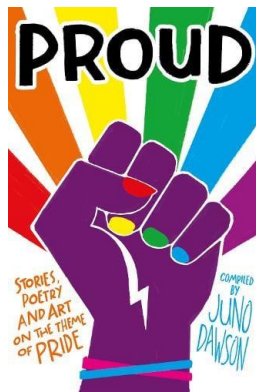
**Broken Hearts & Zombie Parts** by William Hussey, Usborne, ISBN: 9781803700038



Jesse Spark has a broken heart and in a few short weeks he'll require major surgery to repair it - which means he only has a month to accomplish two almost-impossible tasks.

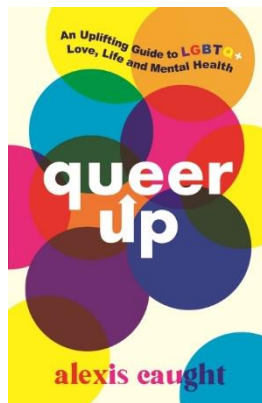
- 1) Shoot his epic zombie movie on a shoestring budget if he has any hope of getting into film school.
- 2) Fall in love before this surgery lands him with a huge scar - because how will anyone ever fancy him after that?

Proud by Juno Dawson (foreword), Various Authors (author), Little Tiger, ISBN: 9781788957021



A stirring, bold and moving anthology of stories and poetry by top LGBTQ+ YA authors and new talent, giving their unique responses to the broad theme of pride. Each story has an illustration by an artist identifying as part of the LGBTQ+ community.

Queer Up: An Uplifting Guide to LGBTQ+ Love, Life and Mental Health by Alexis Caught, Walker Books, ISBN: 9781406399226



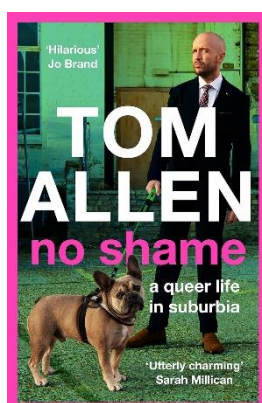
A positive and uplifting book for young people who are queer or questioning – and their allies looking to support them.

In this empowering and uplifting book, award-winning podcaster Alexis Caught sets out to help queer and questioning teenagers explore their LGBTQ+ identity and understanding. Alongside the author's personal experiences are first-hand stories from notable LGBTQ+ figures, providing an inclusive account of what it means to grow up queer. With chapters on questioning, coming out, friends and family, love and relationships, sex, shame, pride, being transgender and/or non-binary and allyship, this helpful, honest and heart-warming book is essential reading for any queer or questioning teen and their allies looking to support them.

*Queer Up* is part of our Reading Well for Teens collection. [Find out more here.](#)

## Adults

No Shame: a queer life in suburbia by Tom Allen, Coronet, ISBN: 978-1529348941



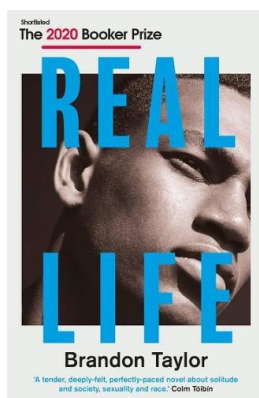
*'When I was 16 I dressed in Victorian clothing in a bid to distract people from the fact that I was gay. It was a flawed plan.'*

No Shame is a very funny, candid and emotional ride of a memoir by one of our most beloved comedians. The working-class son of a coach driver, and the youngest member of the Noel Coward Society, Tom Allen grew up in 90s suburbia as the eternal outsider.

In these hilarious, honest and heart breaking stories Tom recalls observations on childhood, his adolescence, the family he still lives

with, and his attempts to come out and negotiate the gay dating scene. They are written with his trademark caustic wit and warmth, and will entertain, surprise and move you in equal measure.

### **Real Life by Brandon Taylor, Daunt Books, ISBN: 9781911547747**

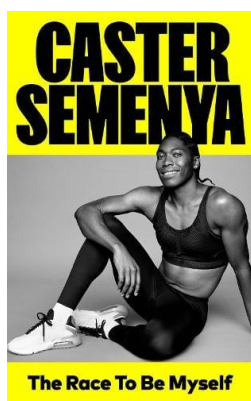


Wallace has spent his summer in the lab breeding a strain of microscopic worms. He is four years into a biochemistry degree at a lakeside Midwestern university, a life that's a world away from his childhood in Alabama. His father died a few weeks ago, but Wallace didn't go back for the funeral, and he hasn't told his friends – Miller, Yngve, Cole and Emma. For reasons of self-preservation, he has become used to keeping a wary distance even from those closest to him.

But, over the course of one blustery end-of-summer weekend, the destruction of his work and a series of intense confrontations force Wallace to grapple with both the trauma of the past, and the question of the future.

Deftly zooming in and out of focus, *Real Life* is a deeply affecting story about the emotional cost of reckoning with desire and overcoming pain.

### **The Race To Be Myself by Caster Semenya, Cornerstone, ISBN: 9781529186369**



Labelled 'different' and banned from the sport she loved, Olympic and World Champion Caster Semenya shares the revealing and blisteringly honest story of how the world came to know her name and place her at the centre of a debate about gender in sports which still continues today.

Told with defiance and speed, *The Race To Be Myself* is a journey through innocence, ambition, obstacles and acceptance. From her rural beginnings running in the dust, to crushing her opponents on the track. To the falsehoods spread about her name, and the many trials she has been forced to endure publicly and privately. This is Caster's time to set the record straight and share her story of how she became a defiant champion.

### **Our monthly booklists**

The monthly themed booklists are co-ordinated in-house by the Reading Partners team. The aim of our booklist themes is to highlight a variety of titles which children, young people and adults will want to read themselves and to encourage reading for pleasure. We aim to create booklists that include titles that are written and illustrated by authentic voices and then include characters that reflect the diverse society of the UK. (Please note our monthly booklists are not part of our Book Selection Framework applied to programme content).