Faced with competition from electronic platforms for entertainment and education as well as reading, writers of children’s literature must ensure their output remains a capable rival. However, it is not only the fast-paced world of technology which remains a constant threat. Children’s authors are also faced with the deluge of books written for their target audience every year and which are now fighting for space in the ever-decreasing shelves of many bookshops. With space and competition acting as hurdles for children’s authors to overcome there must equally be obstacles in the way of readers too. For many it is the choice, for having decided upon the traditional form of reading a book in print rather than resorting to an electronic form of entertainment, they are then faced with a possibly bewildering array of literature. The first question they must ask themselves is how does one make an informed choice? Librarians and booksellers can help but in their absence and on the occasion where an idea may have passed them by the invaluable Who Next...? fills the gap.

*Who Next...?* is the creation of a Viv Warren and Mary Yardley assisted by a team of experts with their own knowledge and experience of guiding children’s reading habits. It does what it states on the cover – it acts as a guide to children’s authors. It also does more than this, it acts as a guide to the books that children’s authors have written and attempts to help guide readers to a book they will enjoy once they have exhausted the series, sequence or just output of their favourite author. Setting out on a task as huge as this was never going to be easy but this is its fourth edition since 1999 and it has gone from strength-to-strength in that time. With new editions published so regularly it is possible to ensure that there will always be a great deal of currency in the content and whilst it is not, nor ever could be comprehensive there are 759 main entries each of which guide the user to suggestions for other authors.

The key to the success and usability of this book is the way in which links are made. Firstly, authors have been grouped into age relevant sections which correspond to the key stages of teaching in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. These are ages 5-7 or key stage 1, 8-11 or key stage 2, 12-14 or key stage 3 and 14+ or key stage 4, respectively. Within each of these categories authors are then listed alphabetically by surnames although the entries read FirstName, LastName. The author’s name is placed in a text box and accompanied by a list of the genres that are covered by their books. Underneath is a selection of alternative authors who write books in similar genre. Furthermore, underneath this there is a selection of titles written by the main author. In some entries this selection is accompanied by the letters BS for Barrington Stoke or GN for graphic novel and SS for short story allowing for dyslexic, struggling or reluctant readers too. If a book is also available as an audio CD or download a speech bubble can be seen next to the main author’s name. The same applies to the circled letter E which indicates e-books by the author.

This straightforward and accessible layout is easily searchable by those who know which author they have been reading and would like suggestions for similar authors. There will always be readers, however, who would like to read more books in the same genre as that which they are about to finish and to aid them there is a genre list. Organised alphabetically it lists authors who write in a particular genre by age group allowing for cross-referencing and quick access. Yet more accessibility is gained through the list of graphic novel authors, again arranged by age group,
although here there is a note reminding adults to be aware that graphic novels are a very different category and where they exist in series they may have different authors and illustrators, so the content of each title may not always be suitable for the reader. Lists of short stories, by age group and author are then followed by a very helpful list of children’s book prizes. A proviso has been added here informing the reader that this list in not likely to be exhaustive. As many in the intended audience for this book will be aware there are now a very wide range of prizes available. Some of the entries list the title and author for previous winners, which is helpful for anyone who wants to read an award winning book or even use the information for a display or other purpose. Finally the exploring further section takes the world of children’s literature onto the internet with links to a selection of helpful sites for reviews, awards, book stores and more. This is followed by an index, arranged by author, including the age range category and as usual, page number.

Whilst this book may not provide an exhaustive insight into the range of children’s books and authors available to read, it certainly goes a very long way to doing so and is an invaluable resource for anyone working, in any capacity, with children and books.

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