Connor's Eco Den; Doomsday Virus, The; Last Viking, The; Space Ace; Stat Man; Traitor's Gate

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Editor's Choice:

New Talent:

off

Media type:

Book

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The publisher Barrington Stoke, set up in 1997 to produce books exclusively for ?dyslexic, reluctant, disenchanted and under-confident readers?, has until now concentrated on fiction. This new series combines fact with fiction though the emphasis is clearly on hooking the reader with an action-packed story. Every manuscript is tested on a panel of up to fifty consultants ? children of the appropriate age group and ability, as well as teachers, parents and reading specialists. Their comments help shape the language level and approach and even the paper on which the books are printed. It seems that many children find that type printed on a cream stock is easier to read than stark black on white. Each title in the series incorporates a factual element ? a detailed glossary, a journal or notebook belonging to one of the characters in the story or, in the case of The Last Viking, the known historical facts on which the fictionalised version is based. Terry Deary is comfortable in both fiction and non-fiction areas, and he includes maps and a section that debunks many of the myths about these sea raiders. In addition to the Viking story there are titles on space travel, Scottish history, environmental issues, an exciting tale of computer hacking and one about a football-mad boy whose knowledge of statistics is not matched by his playing skills. Generously illustrated with line artwork, the layout is spacious, with unjustified type to help the reader follow the meaning of each line, especially in dialogue. These feel like real books, each one an achievable goal, not too long or too daunting for the less confident reader, and written by established authors and illustrators (Michael Morpurgo, Jeremy Strong, Adèle Geras and Tony Ross are among those who have

contributed to the list). A nice touch at the end of each book is the author and illustrator factfile, with information in question and answer form and even a photo. Why don?t all children?s books do this? The Doomsday Virus will also appeal to older readers (10-14). SU

Running Order:
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Links:
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