



Universal Verse: Poetry for Children

Books Reviewed:

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Issue:

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Reviewer:

[Clive Barnes](#) [3]

~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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I can't think of another guide to poetry written for children and young people like this. There are, I guess, over 200 individual collections and anthologies reviewed in depth. As well as the usual suspects, the editors have picked up titles that perhaps we don't see through mainstream channels and have also included poetry in translation. The reviews themselves are sandwiched between, at the front, a foreword by Michael Rosen and short essays by other contributors talking about the publishing and promotion of poetry for children; and, at the back, a Resource Guide to the children's poetry world, which lists publishers and prizes, introduces organisations and websites, and reviews educational resources for teaching poetry in schools. The reviews themselves are organised in four age groups corresponding to Key Stages: under 5, 6-8, 9-11 and 12+. Individual collections are listed separately from anthologies in each age group. The whole is supported by a title index and an author and illustrator index. It's handsomely produced with a colour cover image for each entry. There are two things, I think, that are missing. In their introduction, the editors say that they have sought an eclectic mix of classic and contemporary, but give no further guidance to the criteria for inclusion in a list which, despite its heartening length, is still partial. The other possible, and related, omission is a critical survey of the contemporary scene which might offer some insight into its strengths or weaknesses; much like **Signal** used to offer in announcing its Poetry Award.

Running Order:

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