10 Translated Books for the 6-8 age group

Selected by Deborah Hallford of Outside In World – the organisation dedicated to promoting and exploring children’s literature from around the world

Azizi and the Little Bird
Laila Koubaa, Illustrated by Mattias de Leeuw
Translated from Flemish by David Colmer
Book Island, 2015

Azizi lives in the land of the Crescent Moon governed by two despotic rulers where free speech is stifled. All the blue birds in the land are captured and locked in a big cage and Azizi knows he must find a way to help them. A timeless, contemporary fairy tale by Laila Koubaa with the traditional elements of good versus evil and a modern-day twist.

Bicycling to the Moon
Timo Parvela, illustrated by Virpi Talvitie
Translated from Finnish by Ruth Urbom
Gecko Press, 2016

A heart-warming series of 20 short stories from one of Finland’s award-winning authors, Timo Parvela. With straightforward prose and wry wit they follow the antics of Barker the dog, Purdy the cat and a funny cast of supporting characters. Virpi Talvitie’s comical full-colour illustrations further enhance the richness of these engaging tales.

Clementine Loves Red
Krystyna Boglar
Translated from Polish by Antonia Lloyd-Jones and Zosia Krasodomska-Jones
Pushkin Children’s Books, 2017

Someone called Clementine has gone missing and she needs to be found. A renowned Polish classic by Krystyna Boglar, it has never been out of print for almost 50 years. With some slap-stick humour and larger-than-life characters the story is accompanied by child-like red pen-and-ink artwork by acclaimed Polish artist and cartoonist Bohdun Butenko.
Findus Rules the Roost
Sven Nordqvist
Translated from Swedish by Nathan Large
Hawthorn Press, 2017

More delightful comedy from Swedish author/illustrator Sven Nordqvist about Farmer Pettson and his talking cat Findus. When a rooster is introduced to the hen house Findus is not happy. As ever the eccentricities in the characterisation, humour in the conversations and the captivating illustrations make this another great ‘Findus’ tale to relish.

Goodnight Mr. Clutterbuck
Mauri Kunnas
Translated from Finnish by Jill Timbers
Elsewhere Editions, 2017

Mr. Clutterbuck is blissfully unaware of his sleepwalking reputation in the town. Shy and mild-mannered when awake, he is completely different by night, often being the accidental instigator of chaos. Finnish author/ illustrator Mauri Kunnas’ hilarious story is accompanied by riotous illustrations – a definite modern classic.

Locomotive
Julian Tuwim, illustrated by Lewitt and Him
Translated from Polish by Bernard Gutteridge and William J Pearce
Thames & Hudson, 2017

Polish author Julian Tuwim’s classic ‘Locomotive’ is a trip full of nostalgia. Just like the 1938 original, this edition includes two additional stories – one a well-loved fold tale ‘The Turnip’ and ‘Birds’ Broadcast’ written in rhyme. The artwork of Lewitt and Him is sublime, combining a mixture of surrealism and cubism with a lovely whimsical humour.
**Soda Pop**  
Barbro Lindgren, illustrated by Lisen Adbåge  
Translated from Swedish by Sarah Death  
Gecko Press, 2017

Reminiscent of the zany offbeat humour of Spike Milligan this Swedish classic by Barbro Lindgren is a story full of nonsensical fun and craziness from start to finish. Soda Pop’s family lead a carefree existence untroubled by the usual social norms. Freshly illustrated with zinging, comic and colourful artwork by Lisen Adbåge.

**Tow-Truck Pluck**  
Annie M. G. Schmidt, illustrated by Fiep Westendorp  
Translated from Dutch by David Colmer  
Pushkin Children’s Books, 2016

Pluck drives his little red tow truck all over town as he searches for a place to live and he is certainly a ‘plucky’ little hero as he helps to solve all kinds of problems with a variety of friends both human and animal. An off-beat, timeless classic from Dutch writer Annie M.G. Schmidt with captivating artwork by Fiep Westendorp.

**Yours Sincerely, Giraffe**  
Megumi Iwasa, illustrated by Jun Takabatake  
Translated from Japanese by Cathy Hirano  
Gecko Press, 2016

Giraffe is bored; he wishes he had a special friend who he could share things with. Soon he finds a pen-pal – Penguin. He knows nothing about penguins so his letters are full of questions. Japanese author Megumi Iwasa’s clever and witty tale is both absurd and endearing. Enhanced simple pen-and-ink line drawings by Jun Takabatake.

**You Can’t Be Too Careful!**  
Roger Mello  
Translated from Spanish by Daniel Hahn  
Elsewhere Editions, 2017

In this nonsense-style story from a Hans Christian Andersen award-winner (2014), Brazilian children’s writer and illustrator Roger Mello explores an idea he had as a child: that one small action can have marvellous consequences. A complex and provocative book that is different, unusual and an absolute delight to read.