

BooksForTopics Review Panel Guidance Sheet



What is the review panel?

The review panel is a **group of 50 people from across the primary education community**, including teachers, librarians, headteachers, English advisers and education lecturers. Picked out from hundreds of applications, we have selected a panel that have a clear passion for and working knowledge of children's literature and those who are active in sharing information and expertise with others to help them select the best children's books to read.

How do I know which book I need to review?

Panel members will be asked to review at least **one new book each term**. Within each term, we will allocate each member a 'review month' by email. When it is your turn, you will receive an email **inviting you to select which book(s) you would like to review**, using an exclusive area of the BooksForTopics website.

Log into the Member Area of the website to select between 1 and 4 books, depending on how many you would like to review. We will then email you within a few days to let you know that your books have been posted.

How much time do I have to read and review each book?

You need to submit your review **within 30 days of receiving the book**. Once you have submitted the review, it will join a queue to be published on the blog, so it may take a few weeks before it appears online. You can track your published reviews in the Member Area of the website. If you think you will not be able to meet the 30 day deadline, please drop us an email at reviews@booksfortopics.com to let us know and we can agree an extended date for you.

Do I need to send the book back to you?

No – **the books are yours to keep** in exchange for your review.

How do I submit my review?

On the members' area of the website you will find an **online review submission form**. The form is structured into different sections to make sure we have all the information we need about your book. Once you have finished writing your review on the form, please proof-read your review before submitting.

How long should my review be?

The submission form will help you to structure your review into sections. The 'review' section should be **around 100-200 words**.

What sort of things should I write about in my review section?

Please bear in mind that the reviews are most likely to be read **by primary school teachers and librarians**. With this in mind, your review should be written to help explain how the book might be of interest to readers in primary school settings.

We are interested in a summary of what you liked about the book and what you think other teachers would like to know. Try to mention any **major themes** that would be of interest to readers.

You should also mention elements of the book **that appealed the most to you** or that you think readers would enjoy – for example humour, use of language, illustrations, a particular theme or value that was explored.

Sometimes it is also useful to mention how schools might use the book in the classroom or if there are **particular groups of readers** that would find it appealing.

For previous examples, please visit <https://www.booksfortopics.com/booklists/books-of-the-month-2022/> and browse through the different reviews to get a sense of the usual style of our book reviews.

What if I did not like the book you sent me to review?

At BooksForTopics we love celebrating reading and **our ethos is to review books in a positive way**. This means that our reviews tend to draw out the elements of the books that would appeal the most to readers.

However, we are also looking to find honest opinions about each book and sometimes books just do not meet the standard to be featured on the website. We do not wish to feature any titles on the website that include content inappropriate for use in a primary school or that are poorly written or produced.

If you did not like the book, please let us know **whether this was because of personal taste** (perhaps you did not enjoy the storyline but you can see how other readers would) or because there was a more objective reasons that you would not recommend the book, **such as offensive language, inappropriate content or simply poor quality**.

If it comes down to a matter of personal taste, **please review the book by drawing out the elements that you can see might appeal to other readers**. You may like to mention which groups of readers would be most interested in the book.

If you think the book is inappropriate or below the standard that you would recommend for use in a primary school, please drop us an email at reviews@booksfortopics.com to let us know your thoughts. In this case, we may choose not to feature the book on the website, or to seek the opinion of a second reviewer. If we are able we will offer you a different book to review instead.

Can I include comments from my class in the review?

If you have tested out the book in the classroom please feel free to include comments from your pupils. **Other teachers love to know which books are most popular with pupils** in the classroom. However, please avoid using pupils' names or personal details and make sure that you have sought the correct permissions according to your school's policy.

Will you edit my review before it is published?

Yes. We want to maintain a level of consistency in the style of the reviews we publish. We will proof read each review and we may also choose to amend particular words or phrases to make sure each review matches the editorial style of the rest of the website. We will only make minor editorial changes in these cases.

In the rare case that we find that there are large parts of your review that are unsuitable for publication on the site, we will either ask you to resubmit it with guidance or we may choose not to feature it on the blog.

By submitting your review, **you give us permission to edit it before we publish**. However, if you see your review published on the blog and believe that a mistake has been made or something does not look right, please get in touch and we will take another look.

Am I allowed to publish a copy of my review on my own blog or website?

If you have your own reviewing site, you are allowed to cross-post the review for the books we send you under the following conditions:

- **You wait** until it has already been published on the BooksForTopics website first
- You state on your review that **the book was provided for review by BooksForTopics**
- You **provide a link** on your post to your BooksForTopics review or to the BooksForTopics website.

IMPORTANT: Please note that because we are a member of the Amazon Affiliate program, you are not allowed to cross-post reviews from BooksForTopics onto Amazon because it is against their terms.

When will I be able to see my published review?

Once your review is ready, it will join a queue to be published on the website over the next few weeks. You can track your submitted reviews in the Member Area of the website, and here you will be able to see when your review changes from 'Pending' to 'Published'. We may share the link to your review on our social media channels and it may also feature in our email newsletter, which goes out to thousands of schools.

What if I no longer want to be part of the panel?

We know that education professionals are very busy people and we appreciate your time and expertise in contributing to the panel. If you choose to no longer participate in the panel, please let us know as soon as possible by emailing reviews@booksfortopics.com, as we have a waiting list of people interested in joining the panel.

Terms and Conditions

By being part of the panel you agree to the following terms and conditions:

- When you receive a book from BooksForTopics you agree to read and review the book within 30 days.
- By submitting your review you give us permission to edit and publish your review on the booksfortopics website.
- You have read the information about cross-posting reviews on other websites and agree to follow the guidelines set out in this document.

Thank you for being part of the review panel. We are looking forward to sending you your first books to review!

Still got questions? Drop us a line at reviews@booksfortopics.com.