

Stuff
by Jeremy Strong
Puffin
suitable for ages 8 - 12
expect to pay £5.99



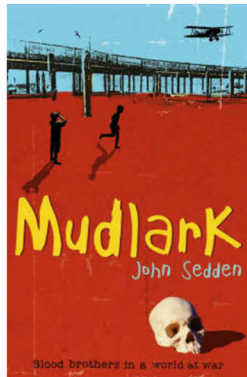
Jeremy Strong's books are always entertaining, and this no exception. Aimed in particular at boys, this is part text and part graphic novel. Stuff (Simon) knows loads of weird stuff. His parents have split up and his dad has a new wife, who Stuff calls the Sherry Trifle. The book is about Stuff's attempts to run away from home, his ambitions to get together with a girl called Sky and dump his girlfriend, without being beaten up by her psycho brother. In essence, it's all about surviving life as a teenage boy – something readers are sure to relate to. RN

Princess Academy
by Shannon Hale
Bloomsbury
suitable for ages 9 - 11
expect to pay £5.99



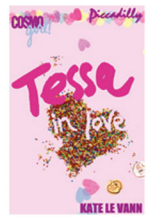
Miri lives on a mountain, where her ancestors have quarried stone and lived in poverty for years. One winter, some visitors arrive with exciting news. The king's priests have decided that her tiny village is the home of the future princess. In a year's time, the prince himself will come and choose his bride from the girls in the village. To prepare the girls for what lies in store, the king sets up a princess academy on the mountainside village, so all the girls can be sent to learn the special skills involved in being a princess. But what will Miri learn and could she have a chance of being a real princess? A modern day fairy tale, with all the usual twists and nasty characters, told with flair and passion. RN

Mudlark
by John Seddon
Puffin
suitable for ages 10 - 14
expect to pay £4.99



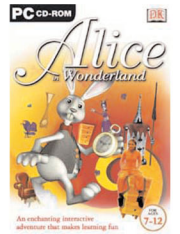
Set in Portsmouth during World War I, this follows the exploits of Reg and Jimmy. The two fatherless boys are mudlarks – they spend their days scavenging for coins in the dirty black mud of Portsmouth harbour. What they find goes to their mothers', to help support their families. One day Reg unearths more than he bargained for – he finds a hidden skull. The discovery changes their lives and sets off a series of events, leading the boys to uncover a terrible secret of murder. This is a thrilling debut novel, which will keep you glued to the action until the end. RN

Tessa in Love
by Kate Le Vann
Piccadilly Press
suitable for ages 12 +
expect to pay £5.99



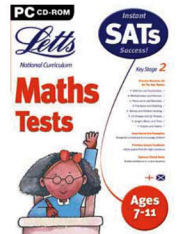
Sixteen-year-old Tessa is shy and lacking in confidence, whereas her best friend, Matty, is outgoing and popular with the boys. She's envious of Matty's confidence and success with boys, but then she meets Wolfie. He's scruffy, kind and helpful and a well-known local activist. She falls in love for the first time and feels like she's finally found her soulmate. Her confidence soars, she begins to speak her mind and everything seems to be going well. But then, out-of-the-blue, tragedy strikes.... Produced in association with CosmoGirl, this is a well-written tale of first love and of coping with life's ups and downs, featuring truly realistic and believable characters. RN

Alice in Wonderland
format PC CDROM (GSP)
suitable for ages 7 - 12
expect to pay £8.49
www.aworldofsoftware.com



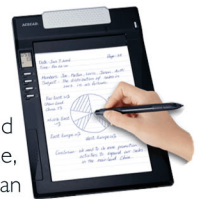
Based on the classic book by Lewis Carroll, this game invites children into the extraordinary adventures of Alice in Wonderland. Alice spots a strange white rabbit and follows him, falling down a large hole. She finds herself in another world with lots to explore. Using excellent graphics and a realistic Alice, the game takes children through 10 magical and theatrical levels, including the Mad Hatter's Tea Party, the Rabbit's House and the Magical Garden. At each stage there are puzzles to solve and mini games to complete. They encourage problem solving, help develop observational skills, improve listening skills and aid logic thinking. There's over 10 hours of play and parents will be pleased to learn the game can be saved at any stage. A well produced and an enchanting game that will keep young minds occupied for hours. RN

Letts Maths Test
format PC CDROM (GSP)
suitable for ages 10 - 11
expect to pay £8.49
www.aworldofsoftware.com



At the end of Key Stage 2, when children are aged 10 or 11 (Year 6), they take a National Test in Maths. This interactive CDROM is designed to help children during years 3, 4, 5, and 6 prepare and revise for their maths SATs test. It offers practice sessions for all the key topics, such as addition and subtraction, multiplication and division, fractions and ordering, graphs and tables, problem solving and shapes. There are excellent examples, which help motivate children and instant feedback on their attempts. The timed tests help build confidence for working to deadlines and the automatic marking facility highlights any weak spots. In addition, it suggests an attainment level prediction. Overall, it's a very useful piece of software to have, offering hours of practice and could well benefit any children needing an extra boost with their maths. RN

DigiMemo - Selwyn Electronics
suitable for all ages
expect to pay £75
www.selwyn.co.uk



The DigiMemo A501 is a clever new product that digitally captures and stores everything you write on ordinary paper. It's a standalone device, about the size of an A4 clipboard, and any A5 size paper or notepads can be attached onto it. Using a special ballpoint pen, you write normally on the paper, jotting down notes, ideas, drawings or sketches and the DigiMemo stores it in digital form. Using special software and a USB cable, all your notes can then be uploaded onto a computer, where you can edit them, add colour or highlight certain aspects. They can even be put into a Word document, made into an E-Book or emailed. The DigiMemo itself is very lightweight and portable, making it ideal for taking notes wherever you are. If you're not near a computer, the notes can be stored on the internal memory until you're ready to upload them plus, of course, you have your usual handwriting notes too. A clever, unique and useful device for school children of all ages. RN