



Call for submissions

2024 *Read for Empathy* collection

EmpathyLab is a social enterprise with a mission to raise an empathy-educated generation, using literature. We're inspired by scientific evidence that empathy is a learnable skill, and that reading builds real-life empathy. Troubling world events highlight the need for empathy now more than ever.

Our annual *Read for Empathy* collection features books for 3-16 year olds. In February 2024, we will publish two *Read for Empathy Guides* to be used by schools and libraries in the run up to Empathy Day in June, one highlighting titles appropriate for 3-11 year olds and the other for 12-16 year olds. The guides are aimed at educators, librarians, parents and carers as well as the children and young people themselves.

We invite publishers to submit titles for the 2024 *Read for Empathy* collection - by 4 May 2023.

Number of books you can submit

You can submit up to two titles. The categories are:

- One picture book or novel (including verse novels)
- One other – poetry, graphic novel, non-fiction, short chapter books/early readers

What we're looking for

We are looking for around 60 books across all genres - picture books, early readers, chapter books, poetry, non-fiction, novels, graphic and verse novels. **Please read the guidance and judging criteria before submitting your books.**

You may also wish to watch [this short video](#) from founder, Miranda McKearney, about this year's submissions process.

Guidance

- **Please complete one form for each title submitted by 04 May 2023 using this link** <https://peters.co.uk/empathylabsubmissions-2024>
- We are mainly looking for books published in the last three years. The book must be available in hardback or paperback by November 2023 at the latest, with a physical proof at least available from May 2023
- Diversity – in its widest sense - will be a particularly important consideration
- We reserve the right to suggest submissions and to do a call out if there are major gaps
- We often have difficulty finding enough poetry books, graphic novels and early readers for 4-7 year olds. Your submission will have a better chance if it's in one of these categories.
- Self-published books are not eligible. All must have an ISBN.
- Books must be published in the UK

Judging criteria

- **We only include books that meet one or more of these criteria**
 - General/overall: scientific research shows that identifying with characters' emotions helps build real-life empathy. Book must have high quality writing/illustrations with

expertly crafted characters which readers care about. Book allows children's empathy to grow as they get to know the characters' feelings and motivations

- Challenges tribal thinking: book explores themes about building understanding between individuals and communities
- Supports development of key empathy skills: perspective-taking (e.g. through different characters' points of view); emotion recognition/vocabulary; active listening; ability to put empathy into action
- Tackles key empathy issues of the day: e.g. refugees, homelessness, food poverty
- Provides insight into other challenging life circumstance: e.g. bereavement; mental illness, disability
- Offers insights through the authenticity of the writing: e.g through lived experience or particularly in-depth research

Notes on the subsequent judging process:

We will ask you to send 4-6 copies to a supplied address list in early May, and if the title is successful at the July shortlisting stage, we will need copies for the rest of the primary or secondary judges.

There is an inclusion fee of £145.00 per title for the books included in the final collections.

We will select books for two separate Guides, one for 3-11 year olds; one for 11-16 year olds. Please only submit books which fit within these age ranges. We will not publish age ranges, but are looking for balanced coverage of 3-7, 8-11 and 12-16 year olds. We will choose a balance of in-print books in a wide range of formats.

In developing the *Read for Empathy* collection, we often encounter some major gaps in the submissions. Please consider how you might reflect these in your submission choices;

Diversity of all kinds is key

Books created by writers and illustrators of colour

Early readers and chapter books for 4-7 year olds

Graphic novels

Titles for 12-16 year olds, especially ones which are not too dark

If you have any queries, please contact Emily@empathylab.uk