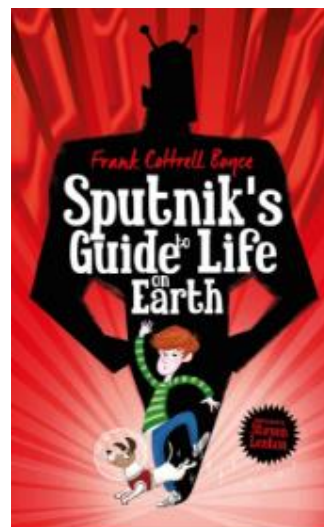


## 2017 Carnegie Medal shortlist Talking Points

Title: **Sputnik's Guide to Life on Earth**

Author: **Frank Cottrell Boyce**

Publisher: **Macmillan**



### PREZ

What is a “Temporary Kid”, and how has Prez ended up as one of these?

How did you like his new family, the Blythes?

How does Prez’s relationship with his grandfather change between the beginning of the book and the end?

### SPUTNIK

Why does Sputnik want to save our planet?

Sputnik can do things that clearly are impossible in our world – but did the author make them seem believable? And which of Sputnik’s powers would you most like to have for yourself?

Why do you think he appears to everybody but Prez as a dog?

### ALIENS

If an alien did come down to earth, what about humans do you think they would find strangest?

And what would want to ask them about *their* lives?

If you had to choose “ten things”, what would be on your list?

### THE STYLE OF THE BOOK

Did you think the illustrations suited the story? Did they change how you read and imagined it?

Did you find this book funny?

But even if you think it’s a funny book, and a fun one to read, do you think it’s trying to say some serious things, too?

## ENDING

Are you glad it ended the way it did?

What has Prez learned by the end of the story?

Among other things, the book is about why home is important – once you'd finished reading it, did it make you think about your home, and this world of ours, differently?

## AND FINALLY...

Does this Carnegie-shortlisted book deserve to win? Why, or why not?



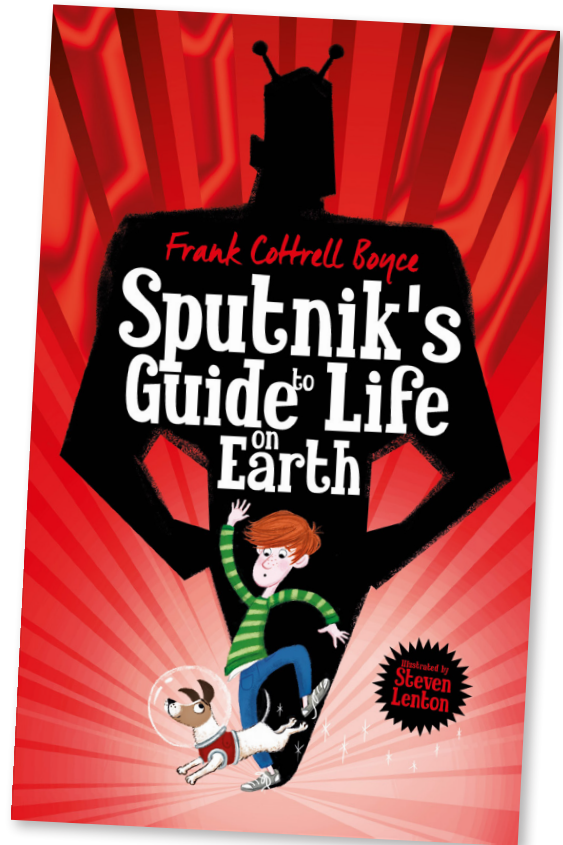
The CILIP Carnegie  
& Kate Greenaway  
Children's Book  
Awards

# SPUTNIK'S GUIDE TO LIFE ON EARTH

by Frank Cottrell Boyce  
Macmillan

Shortlisted for the 2017 Carnegie Medal  
and the Amnesty CILIP Honour

*'This writer is particularly skilled at using fantasy to say something about the world we live in and how we relate to each other and it is the relationships which really matter. Touching and credible'* – Judging panel



**We all have the right to a good life, with enough food, clothing, housing and healthcare.**

Article 25, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

## ABOUT THIS BOOK

Prez has a lot going on. He has been separated from his Grandad and is a Temporary kid, fostered out to the Blythe family for the summer. He's stopped talking. But when there's a knock at the door, the Blythes see a dog, and Prez sees an alien who is searching for 10 things about Earth that make it worth saving. Will Prez help Sputnik find them? A huge adventure which also helps Prez find his way in the world.

**'Home is wherever we're together.'**  
Grandad

## HUMAN RIGHTS THEMES IN THIS STORY

Children's rights; young carers' rights; right to a family; right to rest and leisure; right to housing and healthcare; right to education; duty to the community.

## YOU CAN TALK ABOUT...

### The right to play and be a child

- What challenges does Prez face as a young carer?
- What is the impact on Prez? How does this make you feel?
- How does meeting Sputnik help? Who do you think Sputnik is looking after?

### The right to be listened to and to access information

- Prez thinks his Grandad is in jail, not a care home. How does this affect him?
- Is it right to keep this information from him? What should have been done differently?
- How important is it to be able to access information?

### Sputnik

- What or who do you think Sputnik is? Read the author's note at the end of the book.
- Do you wish you had a Sputnik? Why?

### The importance of friends and a family, and the right to belong

- This is partly a story about the different sorts of family you can gather round you. Discuss.
- What motivates the Blythe family to foster children?
- What causes Grandad to behave the way he does?
- How do you feel when Prez needs to go back to the Temporary and come to terms with his Grandad's dementia?

### Finally...

- Look at the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Which rights have been cast aside at the beginning of the story – and regained by the end?
- Does reading this story make you appreciate what you have on this Earth?

### ACTIVITY

Imagine that Prez was coming to stay with you for the summer with Sputnik. Draw pictures of 10 things you could do in your area. They should be things that Prez would love to do while he is away from the Temporary and that his Grandad will enjoy hearing about. They should probably also be things that Sputnik can put in his guide to help him save the Earth.

### RESEARCH

Find out about what support there is for young carers in your area. Maybe investigate what your school does to help students who are carers and what activities there are to give them a break.

## We are all born free and equal

The atrocities of World War II sparked a determination to protect the rights of all human beings, everywhere. On 10 December 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The preamble says it must be shared, learned by children and be a part of all our lives.

For a simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights go to [www.amnesty.org.uk/udhr](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/udhr)

For more free educational resources from Amnesty International go to [www.amnesty.org.uk/education](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/education)



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