



Kirjakori 2023

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The annual Kirjakori statistics published by the Finnish Institute for Children's Literature records the number of children's and youth literature in Finland. There are a total of 1322 books in Kirjakori 2023. The number has stayed roughly the same compared to last year's 1313. The biggest change was in the number of children's books (including children's novels, and collections of fairy tales and stories), which continued to increase. There were 353 children's books, which is the most in the entire 20 year history of Kirjakori.

Kirjakori includes all of the new children's and youth literature published in 2023, that the Institute has acquired for its collection. In addition, Kirjakori includes new editions, if there has been a significant change, for example new cover, illustrations or translation. For the seventh year in a row, there are more domestic books than translations. This year 51 % of the books are domestic.

There are books from 129 different domestic and international publishers. 68% of all books in Kirjakori 2023 were published by the ten biggest publishers in children's and youth fiction.

One of the big themes in children's and youth novels was moving between different stages in young people's lives, such as the end of childhood play, or starting secondary school, seen from the point of view of both girls and boys. The children in these books have to face strong emotions caused by the changes, and seek help with handling them, especially from friends, but also family. The stories highlight individuality and the desire to make one's own choices, though in a way that does not jeopardize being accepted by friends. In picture books emotional skills are still a common theme, and especially dealing with negative emotions get a lot of attention.

Other themes that have strong presence in children's and youth literature in 2023 are history and time travel, diversity and acceptance, environment, and stories based on myths or folk tradition.

The popularity of audio books has not diminished the relevance of printed children's and youth literature according to publishing numbers. Some books are only published in audio format. Kirjakori statistics do not include audiobooks. For example, the *Lemuetsivät* series by Roope Lipasti has been published in audio format since 2022, and in 2023 the first three installments of the series were published in print as well as *Lemuetsivät ja kauhea paukuttelija* (WSOY).

According to the statistics from the Finnish Publishers Association, the best selling domestic children's book in print, with 32 000 copies sold, was *Kis, kis kissanpentu: silittelysanoja vauvoille* by Sirpa Sironen-Hänninen (Sanoma Pro). This book was included in the maternity package in 2022 and 2023. The second best selling book was *Tatun ja Patun fantasiaseikkailu* by Aino Havukainen and Sami Toivonen (Otava), with 20 200 copies sold. Of translations, the best selling book was *Neropatin päiväkirja. 18, Helppo nakki* by Jeff Kinney (WSOY, tr. Marja Helanen, original *The Diary of a Wimpy Kid. 18, No Brainer*), which sold 19 000 copies. In audio books, the best seller was again *Kani joka tahtoi nukahtaa* by Carl-Johan Forssén (Otava, ill. Irina Maununen, tr. Ulla Lempinen, original *Kaninen som så gärna ville somna*) with 87 700 copies sold. *Hurjan hulluja satuja* by Paula Noronen and Minna Kivelä (Tammi, ill. Aiju Salminen) sold 50 000 copies, making it the best selling domestic audio book.

The Finlandia prize for children's or youth literature was awarded to *Sarvijumala*, a youth novel by Magdalena Hai (Otava). A novel with horror elements, tells the story of Lauri, a 17-year-old young man, who has to move to live with his aunt in a small city, after he survives a car accident, which kills his mother and leaves his father severely injured.

The Topelius prize for a high quality youth book was awarded to *Ihmepoika Leon* by Jukka Behm (Tammi). It tells the the story of a young football player, who is discovered by talent hunters of a big team, thanks to a trick video. Arvid Lydecken Prize for a high quality children's book was awarded to *Saapastalon Aurora ja pelkojen pelko* by Taru Viinikainen (WSOY, ill. Silja-Maria Wihersaari).

Runeberg Junior Prize was awarded to *Mitt idiotiska liv*, a children's novel by Petra Lillsund Botéus (Schildts & Söderströms, ill. Herta Donner). This book is written in a diary form, and depicts the life of an 11 year old girl, whose sister falls ill with leukemia. A jury of children picked the book out of eight works nominated.

Categories

Picture books

There are a total of 439 picture books in Kirjakori 2023. The number is similar to that of previous years'. 180 of the books are domestic, and 259 translations.

As usual, picture books deal with many mundane and everyday things that are significant for children. Losing teeth is the theme in three picture books. In *Jag tappade min tand* by Nils Andersson and Sanna Mander (Schildts & Söderströms) a loose baby tooth won't come off. In *Valpuri ja hirmuinen hammashässäkkä* by Saara Kekäläinen and Reetta Niemensivu (Tammi) Valpuri has a loose tooth. *Hampaat* by Raili Mikkanen and Harri Tarkka (Kvaliti) provides information about baby and adult teeth, and dental health. Many picture books also offer knowledge, and the difference between a picture book with a factual emphasis, and a nonfiction picture book with a story is not always big. *Vaapero ja Taapero pukevat* by Kerttu Rahikka and Henna Ryyänen (Mäkelä), is a depiction of a family setting off for a train ride. It is important to wear right clothes, and, in addition to the story, the book includes a fact section about getting dressed.

Ollaanko nyt perillä? A picture book by Heidi Viherjuuri and Henna Ryyänen (Mäkelä) depicts a child's long journey to grandma's. In *Hirveä Hoppu* by Vuokko Hurme and Noora Katto (Into) Hirveä Hoppu (Horrible Haste) comes in from a family's mail slot and starts to hang around the parents and lures them into hurrying. The reader will learn about insects in *Kastehelmi Virtanen ja ötökät* by Anneli Kanto and Noora Katto (Karisto). Kastehelmi is scared of all kinds of insects, even though her big sister tries to explain to her how important they are.

There are exciting adventures in Kopterijengi picture book series by Roope Lipasti and Emiel Inkeri Nikula, three parts of which were published in 2023: *Aaltojen armoilla*, *Vaara vuorilla* and *Kaaos kaupungissa* (WSOY). The books feature the animal pilot and crew of a rescue helicopter, who fly to the rescue when animals are in distress. Underwater adventures are found in *Syväjärven salaisuus* by Jonna Björnstjerna, a picture book translated from Swedish (WSOY, tr. Outi Menna, original *Sagan om den underbara familjen Kanin och Djupsjöns hemlighet*). The little brother of a bunny family doesn't like swimming, but when the older siblings do not come back from a dive, he has to go underwater. The illustrations let the reader dive through exciting environments underwater.

Konkkaronkka by Laura Ruohonen and Linda Bondestam (Otava, in Swedish published as *Hela Konkarongen* by Förlaget, tr. Annika Sandelin) plays with the form of picture book. The book is written in verse, and its pages and the cover have holes of different sizes in them. In *Huippuhyvä päivä*, written by Lithuanian Kotryna Zylė and illustrated by Inga Dagilė (Hertta Kustannus, tr. Urtė Liepuoniūtė, original Geriausia diena) the illustrations lead the reader to rotate the book while reading. The book shows the day of two inhabitants of an apartment block, Elsa from the 8th floor, and Titus from the 4th floor. *Veikko tahtoo ulos* by Anja Erämaja and Hanna Erämaja (Enostone) plays with both the form of the book and the narrator. The main character, and the first person narrator, is a dog named Veikko, who has been trapped inside the book, and is explaining how this happened.

The themes in picture books are diverse. *Festarimysteeri* by Tuomas Kärkkäinen (S&S) follows a manager running around a festival area, trying to find a popular singer who should be performing next. In *Hattu* by Anne Vasko (Etana Editions) a hat has appeared in the middle of nature, that different insects admire one after another. In *Harold Snipperpotin kaikkien aikojen katastrofi* by Beatrice Alemagna (Tammi, tr. Saara Pääkkönen, original *Le fabuleux désastre d'Harold Snipperpott*) 7-year-old Harold's birthday goes wrong in every way. The parents, who do not like birthday celebrations, ask help from Mr. Ponzio, who brings animals to the party. The animals, acting like animals, mess up and destroy the beautiful and valuable house.

The unicorn craze, that took over the children's literature all over the world a couple years ago, can still be seen in translations in particular. Unicorns are still popular in picture books, for example, in *Ottaisin yhden yksisarvisen, kiitos!* By Mark Janssen (Kumma, tr. Sanna van Leeuwen, original *Eén eenhoorn, alsjeblieft!*) Dani is planning to buy a unicorn with the money he has saved up. His friends don't believe there is a unicorn, but the pet shop does have one. *101 yksisarvista ja kaikki mitä olet ikinä halunnut niistä tietää* by Alexandra Helm and Ruby van der Bogen (Lasten Keskus, tr. Sanna Hytti, original *101 Einhörner und alles, was du über sie wissen musst!*) offers a presentation about, among other things, unicorns' home land, where they came from, and the different types of horns.

An example of a silent, or wordless, picture book is *Lentokala* by Sanni Tervo (Mäkelä). It follows a dragon, whose pet gold fish grows wings. *Reetu jättilintu* is a wordless picture book by Slovenian Andreja Peklar (Onnenlääntti, tr. Julija Potrč Šavli, original *Ferdo, veliki ptič*). In the book a giant bird helps people, but also angers them by drinking an entire pond empty.

Children's books

There are 353 books in total, which is the highest number in the history of Kirjakori. The number of domestic children's books is also the highest in the history of Kirjakori, with 213 titles. The number of domestic children's books has doubled in ten years, from the 101 titles in Kirjakori 2013. This year there are 140 translations. Children's books include both novels and short stories for children, as well as fairy tales. In children's novels there are both short and long books, and the stories range from realistic to adventures and fantasy, suspense, and even horror.

Saapastalon Aurora ja pelkojen pelko by Taru Viinikainen (WSOY, ill. Silja-Maria Wihersaari) is an adventure story about a small animal. Aurora is a piiskuhäntä, a chipmunk-like small animal, who lives with her grandmother and wants to meticulously follow the rules of her community. When her grandmother falls ill, Aurora finds out that the piiskuhäntä community on the other side of the river lives by different rules, which is eye-opening for her.

Examples of long fantasy novels for children are *Sumupuiden kirja* by Anja Portin (S&S, ill. Paula Mela) and *Mustan kuun majakka* by Reetta Niemelä (Lasten keskus, ill. Katri Kirkkopelto). *Sumupuiden kirja* follows 12-year-old Magda, who hikes up a mountain alone, and gets lost in the fog. Hidden in the fog, she finds a place called Rihmala. *Mustan kuun majakka* continues the story of Saimi, who offers asylum to fantastic creatures invisible to normal people, such as gnomes and unicorns. An example of horror for younger readers is the Hirviöhoitola series written by J.S.Meresmaa and illustrated by Emma Rautala, which is published as a part of WSOY's easy-to-read collection Lukupalat. There were two parts published in the series, *Kartanon kummajaiset* and *Loistava luurankoinen*.

Some hobbies that appear in children's books are mountain biking in easy-to-read book *Kimurantti kisakeikka* by Lauri Hirvonen (Mäkelä), BMX in *Mustan unikon tapaus* by Merja Jalo (Kvaliti, ill. Reija Kiiski), and skateboarding in *Kolme kaverusta ja skeittiparkki* by Maria Kuutti and Mirjami Manninen (Karisto).

There are several translated children's novels about mermaids. There were two parts published in the Alea Aquarius series by Tanya Stewner: *Meren kutsu* and *Meren värit* (Sitruuna, tr. Sari-Anne Ahvonen, original *Der Ruf des Wassers* and *Die Farben des Meeres*). For her entire life Alea has believed herself allergic to water. However, when she gets thrown into water, surprisingly she feels at home. *Tyrskymimmit* and *Tyrskymimmit: Noitavoimia* by British Sibél Pounder (Otava, tr. Susanna Sjöman, original *Bad mermaids* and *Bad mermaids: on the Rocks*) give a humorous look into the underwater world of mermaids. For new readers there is *Merenneitotarinoita* by Nana Kurtenbach and Naeko Ishida, published as a part of the easy-to-read collection Lukupiraatti (Mäkelä, tr. Seija Kallinen, original *Meermädchengeschichten*).

Children's excessive use of mobile phones is in the spotlight in, for example, *Supertavis laittaa vanhemmat kiertoon*, a novel by Sari Kaarniranta (Aurinko Kustannus, ill. Terese Bast) and *Kiilusilmät* by Mervi Heikkilä (Kuukettu kustannus, ill. Broci), in which Joona's mother confiscates his phone and computer's power cord. A phone also plays a significant part in *Savuna ilmaan* by Timo Parvela

(WSOY, ill. Mari Luoma). It is the second part in the *Melkein mahdoton tehtävä* series, in which Elias's mysterious phone sends him on missions to solve mysteries. *Some soikoon!* By Satu Varjonen (Minerva, ill. Mari Luoma), follows a witch girl Telma, as she learns about smart phones and social media with the help of her human friends. The attention from social media followers surprises Telma, and not only in a good way.

Huuhuvuoren satuja is a new collection of fairy tales by Hannele Huovi illustrated by Virpi Penna (Tammi). *Isosien iltasadut* (Otava) is a collection of fairy tales illustrated by Väinö Hirvonen, the tales for which were chosen by famous Finnish grandfathers such as Mikko Alatalo, Kalervo Kummola, Esko Salminen and Jari Sinkkonen.

Youth books

Note on translation: while young adult books is commonly used in English for the books in this category, for clarity we use youth books here to denote books for the audiences ranging from Middle Grade to the younger end of New Adult. The direct translation of "young adult books", "nuorten aikuisten kirjat" is closer to what is in English referred to as New Adult literature.

There are altogether 246 youth books in Kirjakori, 116 of which are domestic and 130 translations. The number of translations is increased by the 51 new editions of *Soturikissat* (original *Warriors*) series by Erin Hunter after the series moving to a new publisher (WSOY).

Falling in love and having a crush are popular themes in youth books, depicted from the point of view of both girls and boys. In *Jättiloikka Jan Valkoselle* by Mikko Koironen (Myllylahti) the 16-year-old main character has a crush on a girl named Nita and wants to talk to her in a party. The teens end up witnessing strange events as they follow a woman from another planet, Ihmenainen. In *Huppu sieskalla* by Jani Kiiskilä (Otava) the main character's goal is to get to slow dance during 7th grade. The youth novel *Sutinasuodatin* by Heidi Silvan (Myllylahti) follows three girls, who want to lose their virginity during the summer after graduating secondary school. In *Mikä tää juttu on?* By Marjaana Laivamaa (SRK) Salla has a crush on Niko, who is in the same grade but a different class at school. The crush, however, becomes impossible because of the Laestadian idea, that it is improper to date someone who doesn't share the faith.

Multiple love stories were published for youths in the new Love series from Otava. *Pitkä ja komee* by Tuula Kallioniemi follows Vennu, who has to move to a new city and leave his first girlfriend behind. In *Tämä liukasteleva sydän* by Siri Kolu Didi, an eight grade student, is suddenly approached at school by Dome, the cool king of the school.

Freestyle by Dess Terentjeva (WSOY) is a verse novel about high school dancers. Kai processes his asexuality, and Mandi, a lesbian, tries to find courage to approach girls.

In addition to realistic fiction, there are fantasy, sci-fi and horror in youth books. *Puhdas valhe* by Juha-Pekka Koskinen (Aviador) is a sci-fi book that takes place in Mars. Four youths get trained as

astronauts to fly to explore Mars. The Martians in the story don't know the human history. *Tulen ja tuhkan tyttäret* by Anniina Mikama (WSOY) is a fantasy story set in the 16th century Ireland. When a mythical dragon threatens the people, young women defying traditional gender roles get into action.

Soita minulle karusellin kelloa by Ella Paija (Tammi) is a suspense story, in which the amusement park that serves as the setting of the story, is also one of its narrators. Three youths who have a summer job in the amusement park are swept in the middle of strange events. *Bengtskär itä kahdeksan* by Leena Paasio (WSOY) is the final installment in the two-part suspense series, in which high schoolers Rasmus ja Eetu are trying to solve the mystery around disappearance of Eetu's mother and Rasmus's father's company. Combining suspense and horses, *Mysteriet på Prästön* by Wilma Möller (Schildts & Söderstöms) follows two boys, who go on a riding camp in the Finnish archipelago. Arvid and Zacke spend the night in an attic room, soon finding out it is haunted. They begin investigating how the night-time events are connected with the history of the island and the fate of a priest's daughter that lived there in 1914.

Most of the translated youth books are parts of well known series, or books that have gained international attention, most often originally published in English. For example *Atlas: valitut* by Olivie Blake (Aula & Co, tr. Sarianna Silvonen, original *The Atlas Six*) is a fantasy novel about magicians, that has become an Internet phenomenon. *Päivänvalolla ei näe*, the first part of Kerstin Gier's new fantasy series, was translated from German (Gummerus, tr. Heli Naski, original *Was man bei Licht nicht sehen kann*). In it 17-year-old Quinn faces strange powers.

Books in plain language (Selko)

Note on translation: the plain language books can also be called easy-to-read books, but easy-to-read is used of other books as well. The books in this section have been approved by Selkokeskus and been awarded the official easy-to-read status marked by the Selkokirja -logo on the book. For clarity plain language books is used here to denote the books with the official status.

There were 23 plain language books published, which is fewer than last year. One of them is a children's book that was originally written in plain language, and four were plain language adaptations of children's books. There were ten youth books written in plain language, and five plain language adaptations of youth books and adult books suitable for younger audiences. There are three plain language nonfiction titles.

An example of a book written originally in plain language is the youth book *Kovan tuulen varoitus* by Pauliina Isomäki (Oppian), in which two families go on a sailing trip together.

The first part of the series about Agnes by Tuutikki Tolonen, *Agnes ja unien avain*, was adapted to plain language by Riikka Tuohimetsä (Avain).

Salaperäisiä tarinoita, edited by Satu Leisko (Avain), is a collection of short stories for youths about supernatural creatures and events, written by youth literature authors.

Nonfiction books for youths in plain language are for example *Anne Frank elämä ja päiväkirja* by Laura Saari (Oppian) and *Toinen maailmansota selkokielellä* by Jan Lund (Oppian).

The new Klara prize for a plain language book for children and youth was awarded to the youth novel *Kuinka saavutetaan zanshin* by Päivi Lukkarila (Nokkahiiri), which was adapted by the author herself. The winner of the audience vote was the youth novel *Gangsterin poika* by Marja-Leena Tiainen (Avain), which was written originally in plain language.

Poetry

There are 25 poetry books in Kirjakori, and all of them are domestic.

Yksisarvinen potkii palloa by Reetta Niemelä (Sammakko, ill. Anna Seppälä) is an atmospheric poetry collection, that observes nature and animals. In *Ljusligheter: poesi som skiner* by Hanna Lundström and Maija Hurme (Schildts & Söderströms) the poems travel through seasons from the increasing light in springtime to darkening autumn.

Suuri Urheilujuhla by Mika Wickström (Art House, ill. Anton Lipasti) is a collection of poems with sports theme, whose main cast includes both Finnish athletes and animals. *Tähtitossu* (Otava, ed. Sanna Jaatinen) is a picture book illustrated by Johanna Lumme, that includes poems by Kaarina Helakisa, Jukka Itkonen, Inkeri Karvonen and Laura Ruohonen.

Comics

There are 36 comic books and graphic novels in Kirjakori. 15 of them are domestic and 21 translations.

Comics-Finlandia prize was awarded to Emilia Laatikainen for *Ei ois susta uskonu* (Suuri kurpitsa). The comic is based on a true story of a young alcoholic.

Domestic comics for children are still few. *Loputon talvi*, a children's graphic novel by Miila Westin (S&S) is a fantasy adventure in winter, in which Eevi ventures to a nearby forest from her grandmother's house after the death of her grandfather. She meets elves and gnomes, and together they go on a trip to find Tuonela. *Oravalaakson tarinat: Ossi ja Titityy* by Johanna Witick (Otava) is a humorous story of a squirrel named Ossi.

There are also some non-fiction comics. *Polkimilla: nyt, ennen ja tulevaisuudessa* by Tiitu Takalo and Tiina Männistö-Funk (Suuri kurpitsa) presents both history and future of bicycles, and *Hevosien mieli: tiedettä sarjakuvana* by Helena Telkänranta, Maija Karala and Ville Sinkkonen (Arador Publishing) concentrates on horses.

In translations, 2023 saw the beginning of a new series as there were two installments published in Sorceline by Sylvia Doyè and Paola Antistan (Egmont, tr. Kirsi Kinnunen), namely *Kryptoeläintieteen alkeet* and *Lasipatsaiden salaisuus* (original *Un jour, je serai fantasticologue!* and *La fille qui aimait les animonstres*). Sorceline studies cryptozoology, which includes for example unicorns and dragons.

Non-fiction

There are altogether 206 non-fiction books in Kirjakori 2023. 112 of them are domestic, and 94 translations.

The non-fiction for children includes many works on natural world and animals. *Lapsen oma retki kasvien salaisuuksiin* by Anne Hakulinen and Olga Veselovskaya (Minerva) follows Onni and Oona, as they observe plants in botanical gardens, forest, and their grandma's house. The story is enhanced with facts about plant life. *Kasvien keksinnöt* by Clive Gifford and Gosia Herba (Mäkelä, tr. Terhi Leskinen, original *Powered by Plants*) is a presentation of different features of plants, that have helped humans. *Me Lintuset* by Hannu Laakso (Into) depicts the life of goldeneye chicks, illustrated with photographs.

Non-fiction for younger children is for example *Romua!* By Salla Savolainen (WSOY), which shows how things are sorted in a waste plant. *Vallattoman laivan laulut* by Liisa Kallio, Soili Perkiö and Piia Säpyskä (WSOY), includes lyrics and notes for songs, instructions for crafts, as well as ideas for musical and physical play for children.

Yleisurheilua kiekosta kolmiloikkaan by Mikko Kalajoki and Kaisu Sandberg was published as a part of the easy-to-read collection Tietopalat (WSOY). It explains different sports of athletics and their rules. *Kaverimme koira* by Laura Kytölä and Sini Kuparinen (WSOY) shares information on dogs and dog breeds.

In *Uteliaat oppijat tutkivat syöpää* by Henna Auno and Piia Keto (Etana Editions) Aisha and Eino learn what cancer is. They want to help their friend Utu, whose mother has breast cancer. In addition to the story, the book has information on different cancer treatments and their effects.

Creative writing is taught in *Lentävä leivänpaahdin: scifikirjoitusopas* by Mervi Heikkilä and Anne Leinonen (Haamu, ill. Broci), which concentrates on sci-fi, and *Houkuttava sanasaalis ja 260 muuta luovan kirjoittamisen harjoitusta* by Johanne Salmenkivi (PS-kustannus, ill. Matti Laine), which is a broader scope writing guide. Guides for drawing in manga style are *Näin piirret mangahahmoja 15 minuutissa* (Mäkelä, tr. Auli Hurme-Keränen, original *Die kunst des Zeichnens Manga - 15 minuten*) and *Piirretään söpöä mangaa* by Arunyi (Kirjapaja, tr. Senja Mannila, original *Draw your own manga world*). *Lasten oma makramee* by Inge Walz (Mäkelä, tr. Seija Kallinen, original *Makramee kids*) is a guide to easy macramé knotting.

There are also some biographies for young readers in Kirjakori. For example, *Kapteeni: Shawn Huffin tarina*, a story of a basketball star by Tommi Aitio (Minerva) and *Valokeilan Vankina* by Elliot Page

(Bazar, tr. Pasi Rakas Jääskeläinen, original *Pageboy*), in which Elliot Page writes about his life after the movie role in *Juno* made him a star. There was a new book published in Suomen supernaisia series by Leena Virtanen and Sanna Pelliccioni: *Tove! Tove Janssonen matka vapauteen ja maailman ääriin* (Teos), a story of Tove Jansson's life.

Translations and books in different languages

There are 27 domestic Swedish language books. Six of them were published simultaneously in Finnish. *Finns här snälla barn? Onko täällä kilttejä lapsia?* By Anders T. Peedu and Kristina Elo (Kristina Elo) includes four Christmas stories in Finnish and Swedish. There is also Nordic collaboration to be found in the Swedish language books, for example the book *Vad bestämmer jag* (Förlaget) is written by a Danish author Jesper Wung-Sung, and illustrated by Finnish Jenny Lucander. In this philosophical book a child and a father are considering what are the things a child can decide on their own.

There are some Samí language books in Kirjakori. *Ella ja kaverit 1* collection by Timo Parvela, which includes the first three Ella stories, was translated into Skolt Samí, *Ella da taaurõõžž 1* (Sámediggi, tr. Raija Lehtola). *Myrsky ja Saana metsässä; retkietikettisatuja* by Ninka Reittu (Metsähallitus) was published in Finnish, Swedish, Inari Samí, Skolt Samí and Northern Samí. The five stories in the book depict Myrsky and Saana's trips to the forest, and guide the reader into being respectful towards nature and other travelers on hikes. *O'lssee o'dinakai pei'vv* by Maria Porsanger and Anna Illikainen (Sää'mkulttuurifond) is a picture book in Skolt Samí, that depicts the day of a Samí boy O'ls living in an apartment building.

Valosia öitä by Lina Stoltz (Barents) is a youth novel written in Meänkieli, that tells the story of Sami, who flees from Syria to Northern Sweden.

Miljoonia kissoja, a picture book by Wanda Gág (Oppian) has text in both Ukrainian written by Olena Bahrjantseva and the Finnish translation by Tuomas Kilpi. *101 majakkaa* by Oksana Luštševska and Dzmitryi Bandarenka (S&S, ill. Oksana Dratškovska, tr. Santul Kosmo) was published both as a Finnish edition, and one with both Finnish and Ukrainian text.

Translations from different languages

At 49% almost half of the children's and youth literature are translations. Most translations were from English: 483 books, or 75% of all translations in Kirjakori 2023. There were 61 books translated from Swedish, 40 from German, 19 from French, 12 from Norwegian, six from Danish, and five from Lithuanian. Most of the translations from German are easy-to-read children's books. The translations from French are mostly comics. Books were also translated from Spanish, Dutch, Italian, Japanese, Latvian, Polish, Slovenian, Czech, Ukrainian, and Estonian.

New translations of classics were for example *Bambi* by Felix Salten, which was published both as a new translation by Kaisa Ranta (Art House) and a plain language adaptation by Tuomas Kilpi (Oppian). *Liisan seikkailut Ihmemaassa* (original Alice's Adventures in Wonderland) was also published as a new translation by Nana Sironen (Hertta).

Themes

Milestones and growing pains

Some of the most important themes in children's and youth literature are the life of young people, and the milestones and growing pains they face. In the 2023 children's and youth novels, the different changes in the lives of young people are depicted from the point of view of both girls and boys. Often they deal with the beginning of puberty and leaving childhood behind.

Books depicting girls of different ages illustrate how friendship and friend groups, social media, and beauty standards all put pressure on girls. The stories highlight the importance of finding friends, with whom you can be yourself. The books depict the hurt caused by being left out, and how the fear of getting bullied leads to conforming to a group. In *Laske salaa kymmeneen*, a children's novel by Laura Lähteenmäki (WSOY), Myy is about to turn 11 and is on the verge of leaving children's play behind and growing up. It's hard to keep up with a group of five girls, and Myy feels like she is left out, when the girls redefine what are the acceptable interests and forms of play.

Growing up from a child to a youth is also depicted in *Olivia online* by Erika Vik (S&S). Olivia is in the sixth grade, and even she herself notices that her behavior is beginning to change. Social media plays an important role in her life. She uploads dance videos online, and talks to new people through different apps. When Olivia finally meets her online crush, it turns out she has been talking to an adult man.

In *Huppu seiskalla*, a novel for youth by Jani Kiiskilä (Otava), Huppu starts the seventh grade and contemplates on what is childish. It is still okay to use winter trousers and play with Legos? Huppu is anxious about whether his friends will be in the same class at the new school. Additional pressure comes from his father, who is extremely excited about ice-hockey, and difficult to please.

Outo lintu ystäväksi, a children's novel by Nadja Sumanen (Otava), centers family relations. Hilla's life has been divided between two homes, and now as she's turning 12, she has to decide whether she wants to live with her mother or father. Bubo, an observant new friend notices, that Hilla changes the way she dresses and behaves depending on which parent she's staying with.

The main character in *Rumuuspäiväkirjat* by Mari Kujanpää (Otava), 14-year-old Malva, thinks she's ugly. This idea is reinforced by the mean comments from the boys at school, who also pinch her when nobody can see. Fortunately Malva gets makes new friends. The school nurse notices how

distorted her self image is, and is able to help her. When Malva starts to see good in herself, she also finds courage to talk about the bullying both at school and home.

Loneliness, the lack of like-minded friends, and bullying are themes that can be found in many novels for children and youth. In *Metallinetsijät ja aarre maan alla* by Jyri Paretskoi (Karisto) Joel is on his way to the beach to try his metal detector, when bullies who call him Löllykkä (Fatty), push him, making him fall. On the beach Joel meets Julle, who is nice to talk to, and who encourages Joel to report the bullies to the police. *Seelanti* by Kirsti Kuronen (Karisto) follows six youths, who travel to the dreary island of Seelanti for filming of a reality show. The filming is not at all what they expected, and it soon turns out it is actually a revenge plan of a girl that was bullied at school. The short story collection *Vaarallinen keli* by Terhi Rannela (Otava) includes 18 short stories, in which young people face violence. The stories in the collection are related, and depict a violent boyfriend, a robbery that is filmed and posted on social media, and a terrorist attack on a gay bar before a pride march.

In texts that depict boys, puberty and related things are often approached through humor. *Jasu: uhka vai mahdottomuus* by Markus Ikola (Karisto) depicts the life of Jasu, who starts secondary school. He tries to, among other things, get rid of pimples with sand paper, and gets eight-graders to become his body guards after he says he has won in a lottery. *Roope, Make ja kiusalliset kiekaisut* by Maria Kuutti (Myllylahti, ill. Anne Muhonen) depicts the school life, crushes, and dreams about mopeds of two friends in the sixth grade.

Time travel and history

Children's literature approaches history in many ways, for example through time travel to different periods, the characters meeting historical figures, using a time period as the setting of the story, or basing a story on real historical figures or events. In the children's novel *Matka yli aikojen* by Marketta Pyysalo (Lasten Keskus, ill. Teemu Juhani) time travel between different periods happens by a train that literally travels through time. Toivo visits different European cities throughout history, and meets famous historical figures.

Traveling between time periods also happens in *Saara ja naakka: aikamatka vuoteen 1779* by Riikka-Maria Rosenberg (Tammi, ill. Kati Vuorento). Saara dreams of becoming a vet and travels through time to year 1779 via a magical jackdaw nest. The visit to past gives her a chance to learn about changes that have happened in people's lives. It is difficult for her to understand that in the past it isn't possible for girls to get an education like in her own time.

Characters can meet people from the past, who have a message for those in the present. In *Kuun lapsi* by Maami Snellman (Kvaliti) twins Otava and Tylli travel North. They get acquainted with the Samí culture and meet a girl with dark eyes. It soon turns out the girl is a visitor from more than a hundred years in the past, and wants to protect her ancestral lands and culture.

Some adventures in children's books happen entirely in the past. *Martta ja pihan lapset* by Jenni Skyttä-Forsell and Giannetta Porta (Kvaliti) is about Martta's 8th birthday in Finland in the early

1950s. *Rauniokaupungin lapset* by Roope Lipasti (WSOY) takes place in historical Turku after the fire of 1827.

Poika joka ei halunnut palata Suomeen by Maija Louhio (Suuri Kurpitsa) is a comic book that takes place in the past. The main character is a boy, who lives in Helsinki during the Continuation War. He's only 1,5 years old, when a shadow shows up in an imaging of his lung and he is sent to Sweden to recover in a better environment. After the war returning to Finland is hard for him, even though he is allowed to speak Swedish at school.

Kerro minulle, Antonio by Sanna Pelliccioni (S&S) was inspired by the life story of Alfonso Padilla, who fled to Finland during the 1973 Chilean coup d'état. The book features a grandfather, who lived his childhood in Chile, but was imprisoned as a young man and exiled to Finland.

Stories based on lives of historical figures are for example *Valpuri Kyni: pako* by Esko Holm (Aurinko Kustannus) and *Haluan näytellä! Tuusulanjärven Ruth Sibelius* by Raili Mikkanen (Tammi). Holm's novel follows a 13-year-old witch girl, who travels to Turku with her mother. The story is based on that of a 17th century Finnish woman, who lived around Tyrvää and was convicted of witchcraft. Mikkanen's historical novel depicts the life of Ruth Sibelius, the second oldest daughter of Jean and Aino Sibelius, on the shores of Tuusulanjärvi and in Helsinki.

Paperikengät: lapset sota-ajan Suomessa by Karoliina Suoniemi (Avain, ill. Emmi Kyytsönen) is a non-fiction book about the life of children and their families in Finland during the war between 1939-1945.

Differences and diversity

Prejudices toward other people are depicted in *Luca luo maailmoja*, a picture book by Matt de la Peña and Christian Robinson (Kumma, tr. Raija Rintamäki, original *Milo imagines the world*), which follows Luca on a subway trip. During the journey Luca observes other passengers and imagines what they will do when they get off the train. Luca draws the ideas in a sketchbook, but soon realizes one can't make deductions from how someone looks. A little boy in neat clothes is headed for the same destination as Luca, who is going to visit his mother in a place where one has to go through metal detectors.

Kaksi tättiä nimeltä Veera is a picture book by Anna Elina Isoaro and Mira Mallius (WSOY) in which twins spend a night first with one aunt whose name is Veera, and then another. The kids ask both Veeras why they do not have children of their own, and find out that adults can have different kinds of lives, and that not everyone's life is similar to their family's. An unconventional relative is also in the spotlight in *Knyckarna* by Malin Klingenberg and Ida Wikström (Schildts & Söderströms), where grandma Helga turns out to be quite wild. While being baby sat by Helga, a child gets to spy on apple thieves and make a cunning plan to scare them.

Myrsky ja Valo, a picture book by Ilja Karsikas (S&S), is a story about different choices in life. Myrsky hungers for an adventure, while Valo builds a safe house, where they can read books. When Myrsky returns to Valo, they bring with them tastes from the world to enhance the familiar recipes.

Kuinka halata siliä by Jana Bauer and Peter Škerl (Onnenläntti, tr. Julija Potr Šavli, original *Kako objeti ježa*), is a story of a hedgehog that needs a hug. However, other animals do not want to hug a spiny hedgehog. When the hedgehog finally hugs a fox, the animals see that their prejudices were wrong and the hedgehog's spines do not prick when hugging.

Some picture books feature children that have noticed they are different from others, but find something or someone they can identify with in the story. In *Lolan suuri salaisuus* by Lola Odusoga (WSOY, ill. Saara Obele) the main character is a girl, who has willful, talking hair. Lola goes on a trip with her hair, and makes it into a work of art. For once she thinks her hair looks good left open. When she sees someone on the cover of a magazine with similar hair to hers, she is amazed. In *Poika ja rohkeusloikka* by Jani Toivola and Saara Obele (Otava) Roni finds the courage to join a circus school, and gets excited when he sees a child that looks like him.

The main character in *Ai niin, minä olen muuten Lee* by Eveliina Talvitie (Enostone, ill. Jani Ikonen) is a sensitive child, who often feels left out. He finds it hard to make friends with his classmates. Finally he makes friends with another kid who is different from others, a girl who doesn't talk. In *Satakieltä etsimässä* by Sarah Ann Juckes (Sitruuna, ill. Sharon King-Chai, tr. Jaakko Kankaanpää, original *The Hunt for the Nightingale*) the 9-year-old Jasper is interested in birds. One day both a nightingale and Jasper's big sister Rosie disappear. Jasper, a special needs child, who suffers from panic disorder, sets out to find his sister.

Hullut aikuiset: selviytymisopas lapsille, a non-fiction book by Jussi Sudenlehti (Enostone, ill. Jussi Jääskeläinen) explains mental health problems such as anxiety, personality disorders, and OCD through the stories of real people. *Nuoren ADHD-opas* by Hanna Suikkanen (PS-kustannus) is a guide for young people who struggle with ADHD. It includes basic knowledge about ADHD, as well as instructions and exercises for managing daily life.

Racism and fighting against it are in the focus in *Kysy ja kurkista! Mitä rasismi on?* By Jordan Akpojaro and Ashley Evans (Tammi, tr. Sari Kumpulainen, original *Lift-the-flap: questions and answers about racism*) and *Mun väri, sun väri* by Laura Henry-Allan (MBE) and Onyinye Iwu (Otava, tr. Tarja Kontro, original *My Skin, Your Skin*).

Humor and mishaps

Humor has a big role in both picture books and children's novels. Often the humor is born from exaggeration, high energy action, and through interplay of picture and text. In the originally Danish Salli books by Thomas Brunstrøm and Thorbjørn Christoffersen (Kvaliti, tr. Sirpa Alkunen) Salli and Eetu's father exaggerates often. In *Kun Sallin isä oli lapsi* (original *Dengang Sallys far var dreng*) the father says that in his childhood children were fed snot balls and cold sand. Salli asks her

grandmother if the story is true. She then accuses her father of lying, and he promises to tell the truth in future. However, soon Salli realizes his stories were more fun when he was exaggerating. In *Sallin isä kiroilee ... (niin penteleesti)* (original *Sallys far bander (- ad helvede til)*) Salli starts to collect money for a trip to an amusement park with a swear jar, because her dad has a habit of swearing a lot.

In *liro ja Peräkarhu*, picture book by Sam Copeland and Pippa Curnick (Mäkelä, tr. Raija Rintamäki, original *The bear behind*), on liro's first day at preschool a giant blue bear appears behind him. liro is terrified, when he hears the bear plans to follow him all day. However, the bear appears when liro doesn't know what to do, and helps in difficult situations by being silly. In *Hämeenlinnan kokoinen kana* by Ville Hytönen (Kovasana kustannus, ill. Minna Mäkipää) Rohtori Riemu has invented super fodder, that can feed a chicken the size of the city of Hämeenlinna.

In both domestic and translated children's novels, there are humorist works with abundant illustrations, and a lot of bathroom humor. In *Opejahti*, the first installation in the Höpersankarit series by Ernest Lawson (WSOY, ill. Maria Makkonen) ordinary Taavi goes to a new school. In the school of Höpersankarit (Silly Heroes) everybody else has a useless super power, like contagious laughter. In *Agenttimummo ja lentävät tekarit* by Ilkka Olavi and Kai Vaalio (Into) Alex has to change his weekend plans from Fortnite with friends, to looking after grandma in a small town. At grandma's, strange things are revealed, and the weekend becomes much more exciting than expected. High energy and mishaps are even more common in translations than domestic books. *Karsein viikko ikinä* (original *Worst Week Ever!*), a series by Eva Amores and Matt Cosgrove, had its first two installments published in 2023, namely *Maanantai* and *Tiistai* (Otava, tr. Anssi Alanen, original *Monday* and *Tuesday*). The series has comic book like illustrations.

Emotional education: stupid days

Emotional education is still an important theme in picture books. In 2023 picture books handling negative emotions in particular was highlighted.

In *Main kamalan tyhmä päivä* by Sanna Sofia Vuori and Nadja Sumanen (Tammi) Mai's day starts awfully, because it is raining outside and she cannot wear her new coat. Mum and dad are in a bad mood and have a fight first thing in the morning. Mai feels as if she has a tiger in her stomach. Emotions and emotional regulation are discussed through illustrations of an animal character also in *Villikissareppu* by Maria Vilja (Karisto). Rosali carries an invisible backpack, that is filled with different emotions she feels throughout the day. After Rosali moves to a new place with her dad, the backpack becomes villikissareppu (Wild Cat Backpack). The connection between children and animals can also be seen in *Poika joka uneksi lohikäärmeitä* by Lewis Caryl and Carmen Saldaña (Mäkelä, tr. Raija Rintamäki, original *The boy who dreamed dragons*). Aarni dreams of dragons, but finds it difficult to play with other kids, because they cannot see the dragons.

In *Sulo-sorsan huono päivä* by Kaye Umansky and Ben Mantle (Mäkelä, tr. Raija Rintamäki, original *Dick the delightful duck*) a duck gets out of the bed on the wrong side and becomes so grumpy his

friends can't believe their eyes. Molli also gets out of the bed on the wrong side in *Molli ja väärä jalka* by Katri Kirkkopelto (Lasten Keskus).

In *Kiukkuinen apina juhlassa* by Suzanne Lang and Max Lang (Hertta, tr. Riina Behl, original *Grumpy monkey: party time!*) a monkey cannot and doesn't want to dance. This doesn't ruin everyone's party, however, because the other animals realize there are other things to be done in a party than just dancing. *Ärjyli ja kauhean kammottava joulu* by Alex T. Smith (Otava, tr. Maria Lyytinen, original *The Grampus and his dastardly, dreadful Christmas plan*) follows Ärjyli (Grampus) who doesn't like Christmas, and wants to ruin it for everyone else as well.

Voi Viivi! By Sari Airola (Etana Editions) focuses on lying. Viivi tells lies, some smaller and some bigger, to get attention from both adults and friends. In the kindergarten she finds out, that lies can be put away for the future and that there are games, in which they can be used. Her dad also realizes Viivi is lying, because she needs his attention.

In *Vilhon pikku valheet*, a picture book by Tom Percival (Kumma, tr. Raija Rintamäki, original Finn's little fibs) Vilho accidentally breaks his grandma's clock, and lies that it was his sister's fault. One lie leads to more lies, and they weigh on Vilho's mind so much that he cannot focus on playing.

Work, money, and society

Both non-fiction and picture books take on societal themes, such as money and work, and fiction uses societal allegories to tackle, for example, the effects that inequality and war have on the lives of children and young people.

Rahan jäljillä by Elina Lappalainen (Tammi, ill. Mitja Mikael Malin) is a non-fiction book about money, in the form of a children's novel. A group of friends have to think about money related issues, when one of them orders an expensive phone in the Internet, even though he knows that his single-mum can't afford it. The group ponders about the value of money, taxes, investments, and also the inequality related to money.

Mitä on raha? (Nemo, by Eddie Reynolds, Matthew Oldham, Lara Bryan, ill. Marco Bonatti, tr. Mika Siimes, original *Money for beginners*) is a practical non-fiction book about money.

Työ: miksi siellä käydään ja mitä siellä tehdään by Natalia Salmela and Jasmid Hamid (WSOY, ill. Alla Salmisalo) is a non-fiction book for children, in which kindergartners discuss going to work, different professions, and think about their own dream jobs.

Ihan hyvä: pärjääilyä suoritusyhteskunnassa by Tuija Siltamäki (WSOY, ill. Saara Helkala) is a non-fiction book for the youth, who don't know what they want to do when they grow up. It discusses studying, working, entrepreneurship and life.

Noora saa syytteen, written by Olavi Hölttä and illustrated by Henna Pohjavirta (Art House) is a non-fiction about criminal responsibility written in the form of a youth novel. 16-year-old Noora, provoked by her boyfriend and his friend, steals beer from a shop. Through Noora's crime and its consequences, the book shows the work of lawyers, court trial and judgement.

Hugo ja hirmuinen ihmisbakteeri by J. P. Koskinen and Pasi Leinonen (Icasos) is its own kind of commentary on the importance of money and working. A dog named Hugo catches a Human Bacterium, which makes him workaholic and uninterested in play. Soon Hugo walks the streets of the city, obsessively selling and buying, with a case and cane in paw, and a hat on his head.

In *Jos olisin pääministeri*, an originally Norwegian picture book by Trygve Skaug and Ella Okstad (Art House, tr. Iira Halttunen, original *Hvis jeg var statsminister*) the child main character ponders what he would do if he were the prime minister. His thoughts about where change is needed range from traffic to environmental protection and smaller every day things around him.

Ihmiksi by Hanna Niittymäki and Minerva Martinoff (Finnish Peace Committee) is a non-fiction book with exercises, that encourages the reader to think about equality, advocacy, and values.

Novels for children may describe societal themes through depiction of imaginary societies. *Rafsa Vildpäls* by Lena Frölander-Ulf (Förlaget, in Finnish published as *Rapsu Huiskahäntä* by Teos & Förlaget, tr. Jaana Nikula) is the first installment in a novel series for children. It follows the life in a tight knit marmot society, the rules of which are given by the snakes that inhabit the same rocky ground. Young Rafsa starts to question the rules, because he suspects they have been unilaterally decided by the snakes.

In *Almus: Vinhavuorten vanki*, a children's novel by Mikko Kalajoki (WSOY, ill. Jani Ikonen) the troll Almus accidentally wanders to the neighbour country Kurina, and gets to see what it is like to live under the rule of an impulsive tyrant.

Societal inequality is put to the spotlight in Tiffany D. Jackson's youth novel *Minne katosit, Monday?* (Karisto, tr. Susanna Sjöman, original *Monday's not coming*). Monday, the best friend of 13-year-old Claudia, has disappeared after the summer holidays. However, because she is a brown girl living in a rough neighbourhood, in a difficult family situation, nobody takes Claudia's worries seriously. Claudia has learning difficulties, and has managed school with the help of Monday. School is also difficult for her without her friend because she is bullied.

War and how it affects the lives of children and youth are brought up in fictional works based on real conflicts. *Sitruunapuiden aika* by Zoulfa Katouh (Tammi, tr. Helene Bützow, original *As long as the lemon trees grow*) follows the life of 18-year-old Salama in Syria after the revolution. Living in a city under siege, Salama is a student of pharmacy, but works in a hospital helping doctors with difficult operations.

Ilmahälytysten lapset by Ukrainian Larysa Denysenko (Tammi, ill. Olena London, tr. Eero Balk, original *Dity povitrynyh' tryvoh*) depicts the lives of Ukrainian children, who live in the middle of a war, and

have to escape air alarms to bunkers, metro tunnels, or out of their home cities. The children have to face the terrors of war, but they also find strength in their loved ones.

Environmental themes: the rights of animals and biodiversity loss

Environmental and climate themes have been popular in children's books for several years. The 2023 books with environmental themes discuss the same topics that have been present in the larger societal discussion, for example the loss of biodiversity and rights of animals.

Mikä mahti! Lotta ja Kasper Luonnon puolella by Laura Ertimo and Mari Ahokoivu (Into) is a non-fiction book about the use of power and advocacy. Lotta and Kasper, who are starting seventh grade, together with the group Happiklubi (Oxygen club), want to advocate for preservation of the nearby woods. When a demonstration doesn't seem to be enough, they have to study the mechanics and history of wielding power.

In *Hiilellä piirretty*, a novel by Eveliina Hokkanen (Aikamedia), Varpu has climatorexia. She regulates her consuming and eating habits strictly in order to not burden the environment. Varpu moves into her first own apartment and starts working in a cafe. Her parents wonder whether living alone will help her heal, or make her anxiety worse.

Tollo pallon tallo: vetisiä riimejä kestävästä kehityksestä, a poetry collection by Aija Salovaara and Janne Salovaara (Enostone, ill. Tuomas Kärkkäinen), includes poems that discuss, for example, the importance of water. In *Sanni ja Joonas matkalla* by Kalle Hakkola and Mari Ahokoivu (Kumiorava) Sanni catches a flu right before a trip she has looked forward to. Joonas entertains her with a map book, and the children realize that with a book of maps and imagination it is possible to travel in an environmentally friendly way. *Rai Vaahtera ja kadonneet jääpuikot* by Sakari Oka and Niina Inkiläinen (Kaarna) is a picture book about small changes noticed by a child, that point to the impacts of climate change.

In *Metsä muuttaa* by Henna Ryyänen (Tammi), a forest gets fed up with people leaving trash around and decides to move to Turku. Accidentally it travels past Turku and ends up much farther away, on a desert, only to realize that maybe things aren't better elsewhere. In *Muuhalainen löytää uuden kodin*, a picture book by Anja Hatva (Basam Books), the home forest of Repale the slime mold is cut down. It is difficult for Repale to move to a new place, but its animal friends help it. *Metsän lumo: lasten oma tietokirja puista, luonnosta ja vuodenajoista* by Sinikka Piippo (Sitruuna, ill. Anu-Riikka Lampinen) is a non-fiction book for children about trees and the many ways they are important for the wellbeing of people and Earth.

Parhaat ystävät: koiralähtöinen tietokirja koko perheelle by Reetta Niemelä and Anni Nykänen (Sammakko) is an animal centered non-fiction book about dogs. It explains dog body language and needs, such as the stimuli they need, and dog centered care and training. *Onnekkaiden eläinten talo: tarinoita Tuulispäästä* by Suvi Auvinen and Anni Nykänen (WSOY) tells stories of animals that have lived in the animal shelter Tuulispää. In Tuulispää animals get to live natural lives without having to

be profitable for humans. *Hevosien mieli: tiedettä sarjakuvana* by Helena Telkänranta, Maija Karala and Ville Sinkkonen (Arador Publishing) is a non-fiction comic book about horses. It helps the reader understand how horses experience the world based on proven knowledge.

In *Freja och huggormen*, a picture book by Frederik Sonck and Jenny Lucander (Förlaget, in Finnish published as *Fiia ja kyy* by Etana Editions, tr. Johannes Ekholm), there is a snake at Freja's family's summer cottage. The parents want to protect the children and the father tries to catch the snake to move it to a different place. The snake won't be trapped, and the father ends up killing it. Freja has grown an interest in the snake and named it. She gets angry at her father.

Young writers

Totuus Nuoruudesta by Matilda Levoranta (Reuna Publishing House) is a novel by a young author (born in 2009). The novel's main character is Usva, who is on the 7th grade and feels like she's too ordinary. She does well enough at school and sprint running, even though she doesn't always get a medal. Constant self scrutiny leads to her OCD getting worse. The writer wants to highlight the mental health problems of the youth and how school contributes to them, and wishes to dismantle the shame associated with them.

Aprillipäivä 2052: nuorten kirjoituskilapilun parhaat (Reuna Publishing House) is a collection of writings from a writing competition for 13-16-year-olds held by Writers' Association Palta. The assignment was to depict the world on the April Fools' Day in 30 years. The themes in the texts range from the advancement of technology to war and climate change.

In *Pinnan alla* by Vilja Kainulainen, born in 2010, (Kustannus Z), the twin brother of 4th grader Aila has died. Through a pond Aila travels to a different dimension, where she meets Akseli, and has a chance to process grief.

In *Pelon hetket* by Sofia Lilja, born in 2010, (Kustannus Z) siblings accidentally catch on camera the robbery of a jewelry store, and as a result have to deal with the criminals.

Pieniä tarinoita lapsille / Pieniä tarinoita nuorille is a double sided book published collaboratively by three Finnish publishing houses (Otava, Tammi, WSOY) and Unicef. It includes stories by book authors and Ukrainian children's writings on their dreams. The illustrations of the book are drawings by the children.

Folk tradition and the power of stories

Many stories are based on folk legends and tradition. *Paha kurki*, a picture book by Elina Kuorelahti and Nunu Halmetoja (Nemo), is a retelling of the poem *Avullinen kurki* from *Kanteletar*. In the story an evil crane gets settled on the roof of a sauna and steals a valuable ring.

Loputon talvi by Miila Westin (S&S) is a graphic novel that follows Eevi, who after her grandfather's death, meets elves and gnomes in the forest and goes on a search for Tuonela with them. The book is based on Baltic-Finnic mythology.

Kirjokansi by Karoliina Tervonen (Haamu) takes place in the end of the 19th century. It follows miss Holmberg, who has gotten into the high society in Kurjenpahka, and who doesn't believe in the folk stories before she meets house elves and other elves on the way to the kingdom of North.

In *Olipa kerran*, a youth novel by Kiyash Monsef (WSOY, tr. Riitta Vuokko, original *Once there was*) Marjan Dastani finds out after her father's death, that he wasn't an ordinary vet, but rather has been caring for mythological creatures from all around the world. His patients include everything from a house elf to griffin and unicorn.

The myths are also played with in the Zeus mahtava book series (original *Zeus the Mighty*) by Crispin Boyer. The second part of the series, *Synkän sarvipään sokkelo* (Tammi, ill. Andy Elkerton, tr. Jenni Rapelo, original *The Maze of the Menacing Minotaur*) was published in 2023. The book takes place in the animal shelter on Mount Olympus, and features the deities and names from Greek mythology.