**BookTrust’s new Writer-Illustrator in Residence set to champion under-represented voices and the art of storytelling**

Award-winning illustrator and author Dapo Adeola has today (Monday 6th September) been named the new Writer-Illustrator in Residence at BookTrust – the UK’s largest children’s reading charity.

Adeola, the co-creator of science-mad chatterbox Rocket from the bestselling picture book *Look Up!* with Nathan Bryon and illustrator of *We’re Going To Find The Monster* written by Malorie Blackman, creates vivid and striking children’s book characters and images that prompt and challenge readers’ expectations around race and gender in a fun and upbeat way. As well as running workshops for children, he has risen to prominence in recent years for using his platform and experience to champion and promote careers in illustration to under-represented groups in the creative arts and publishing industries.

With a new strategy that focuses on finding innovative ways to ensure children from disadvantaged families are not left behind, the BookTrust residency provides a platform for writers and illustrators to explore issues they are passionate about, so that every child can be supported to celebrate and find joy through sharing stories and see themselves in the books they read. Adeola aims to use his residency to support emerging illustrators, with a focus on under-represented voices in children’s books.

Speaking about the residency Dapo Adeola said: “I’m super honoured to be the current BookTrust Writer-Illustrator in Residence.

“My theme during this residency will be “The Art of Storytelling”. I’ll be looking at illustration as a form of storytelling: who gets to tell stories, as well as the importance of championing and developing the diverse voices and talents within illustration and storytelling in general. My time will be divided up between both the readers and content creators of children’s literature, with competitions and activities for both groups that give an insight into some of the relevant areas of children’s illustration.

“I’ll also be using my tenure to demystify access into publishing for aspiring illustrators by giving them a glimpse into industry life as well as workshops on navigating social media and building your brand as a beginner in children’s illustration. I’m really looking forward to sharing this next step of my journey with you all.”

Diana Gerald, CEO of BookTrust, said: “Dapo has been an incredible supporter of BookTrust and I’m delighted to welcome him as our newest Writer-Illustrator in Residence. His books and stories and pictures have inspired children to lose themselves in a world of creativity and imagination whilst championing under-represented voices that can encourage children to pick up books, discover the joy of reading and inspire them to tell their own stories.”

The BookTrust Writer-Illustrator in Residence project has been running since March 2009 and has featured several authors and illustrators including Cressida Cowell, Sita Brahmachari, Patrick Ness, Polly Dunbar, Bali Rai, Matt Haig, Laura Dockrill, Chris Riddell, Nicola Davies, Cerrie Burnell, Sarah McIntyre, Philip Ardagh, Taran Matharu, Nadia Shireen, Candy Gourlay, Phil Earle, Ed Vere, Smriti Halls and Onjali Q Raúf.

**ENDS**

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**Media Contact**

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**About BookTrust**

BookTrust is dedicated to getting children reading because we know that children who read are happier, healthier, more empathetic and more creative. Their early language development is supported and they also do better at school. We are the UK’s largest children’s reading charity; each year we reach 3.9 million children across the UK with books, resources and support to help develop a love of reading, because we know that reading can transform lives. We work with a variety of partners to get children excited about books, rhymes and stories, because if reading is fun, children will want to do it. Our books are delivered via health services, libraries, schools and early years practitioners, and are supported with guidance, advice and resources to encourage the reading habit. [booktrust.org.uk](http://www.booktrust.org.uk/)

**About Dapo Adeola**

Dapo Adeola is an award-winning illustrator and designer who creates characters and images that challenge expectations around race and gender in a fun and upbeat way. He is the co-creator and illustrator of bestselling picture book *Look Up!* - winner of the Waterstones Children's Book Prize and the number 1 debut picture book of 2019. London born and bred but of Nigerian heritage, when he's not busy cooking up new characters and adventures you can find Dapo running illustration and character design workshops with children or organising events to help highlight the possibilities of a career in illustration to underrepresented members of the Black diaspora.