

GRTS History Month June 2025

June is Gypsy, Roma, Traveller, and Showman History month and was established in 2008 to raise awareness of these communities and their contributions to society and to offset negative stereotyping and prejudices.

To celebrate this, we have prepared an author focus on Richard O'Neill, Storyteller, Author, and Playwright.

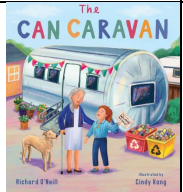

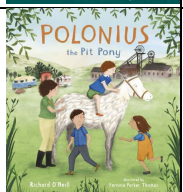


Richard O'Neill was born and brought up in a large traditional, fully nomadic Romani Gypsy family, travelling throughout the North of England and Scotland. His roots are also to be found in the coal mining communities of the Northeast having family members who worked down the pits. This co-cultural upbringing is reflected in his creative work. As Richard says, 'Gypsy in my heart and coal dust in my veins'. Storytelling has been a constant in Richard's life for as long as he can remember. Learning his craft sat round campfires at the feet of some of the best Travelling and North Country storytellers, he developed a passion for story.

Richard has had several children's storybooks published, winning literary, cultural and diversity awards in the UK, Europe and USA, including being awarded National Literacy Hero status for his work with excluded communities.

Please see below the lists of Richard's titles (some of these have been co-written with others, please see individual books for further details).

- The books on this list can be purchased from the School Library Service
- Individual titles can be purchased at a saving of 25% off RRP
- Please contact us at schoollibraryservice@devon.gov.uk or 01392 287244

	ISBN	Title	Description	RRP
	9781786286147 Younger Picture Books	The Can Caravan	A wonderful tale of how the Traveller community help each other out highlighting the benefits of recycling as well.	£7.99
	9781846439247 Older Picture Books AR 3.9 LY	Ossiri and the Bala Mengro	A young Traveller girl makes her own musical instrument and the music she makes with it tames a fierce ogre. (Co-writer Katherine Quarmby)	£7.99
	9781786281852 Younger Picture Books AR 4 LY	Polonius the Pit Pony	A pit pony escapes and goes to live with a family of Travellers where he saves the day by helping them deliver their handmade furniture to the docks through thick fog.	£7.99

	9781786283450 Younger Picture Books AR 3.9 LY	The Lost Homework	A Traveller boy worries that he has lost his homework book but discovers that his busy weekend incorporated many different aspects of his schoolwork.	£7.99
	9781846439261 Older Picture Books AR 3.9 LY	Yokki and the Parno Gry	When they fall on hard times, an imaginative Traveller boy keeps his family's hopes up with the story of a magical horse who will lead them to a better life. (Co-writer Katherine Quarmby)	£7.99
	9781801990455 Bloomsbury Young Reader Lime	Halle had a Hammer	An inspiring story about a Romani Traveller family. (Co-writer Michelle Russell)	£5.99
	9781407199580 JF Dark Red	A Romani Story	A young Romany boy harbours a secret desire to become a professional football player but knows that his dad is set against it as he doesn't think it is a fit profession for Romany people.	£6.99
	9780008541774 Short Chapter Books Grey	Parade of the Pipers	When a group of Travelling recyclers agree to tidy up a town, their methods of working, their music and stories have a huge impact on the residents making them examine their lives.	£7.75
	9781292372419 (Bug Club) Independent Reading Year 2 Lime	The Show Must Go On	No description available (Co-writer Michelle Russell)	£7.50

For more information about the support available for schools please contact:

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Website: Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showmen - Support for schools and settings
(devon.gov.uk)