

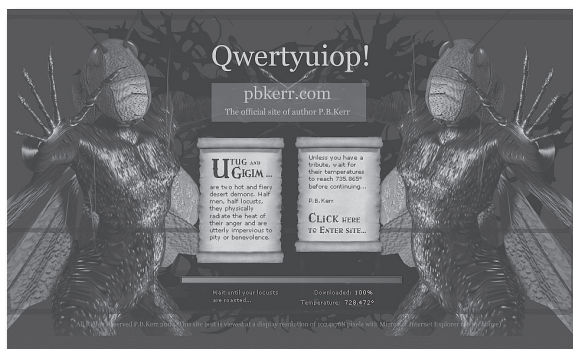
SPECIAL FEATURE

Wow Websites - Book Inspired Web Wonders

Adolescents are more than just readers of fiction, they are fans. Publishers, authors and fans create sites where people can express and explore their enthusiasm for a series, author or book. Readers not only want to read the book, see the movie and buy the T-shirt they want discussion with fellow readers, cool graphics, screensavers and games. The sites in our list below are just some of the terrific young adult fiction websites that use high quality art and web design to create spaces and interfaces that reflect the character of the fiction that they represent. In concept, these and other sites provide spaces for young readers to do what they have always done; play, discuss and imagine; but on a larger canvas with a wider group of enthusiasts and with the addition of some truly impressive design. The sites mentioned in this article have been chosen for interface and design values that evoke the atmosphere of the books they are about. For fans sites such as these are a continuation by other means of the experience of the books.

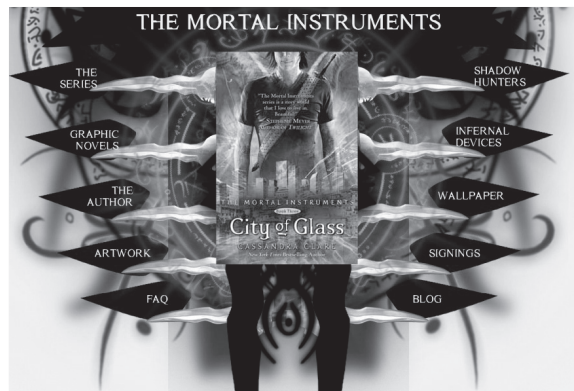
Fantasy

Below is just a small selection of brilliant website design inspired by fantasy series as designers try to bring to life these imaginary worlds. The wood finishes, brass bindings and wreaths of smoke add to the atmosphere of P.B. Kerr's site www.pbkerr.com which includes a study kit, practical writing tips, downloads and interviews.



The hand-drawn-on-vellum look of the map that is the opening page for the site on Angie Sage's

Septimus Heap series www.septimusheap.com effectively evokes the feeling of the books, whilst inviting users to explore Septimus' world through the interactive map and use the MAGYK ring to collect hidden games, cards quizzes and spells. The Australian Rangers' Apprentice site www.rangersapprentice.com.au uses flash animation and the imagery from the new covers as a doorway to invite users to access character profiles, videos, downloads and games.



Cassandra Clare's *Mortal Instruments* series site www.mortalinstruments.com offers wallpaper, artwork, interviews and the book trailer in a site filled with animation, video and backgrounds and interfaces that reflect the character of the books.

Adventure

Sites such as the one for Anthony Horowitz's *Alex Rider* series www.alexrider.com were, for obvious reasons, among the first series websites to capitalise on the interface as a part of the user experience.

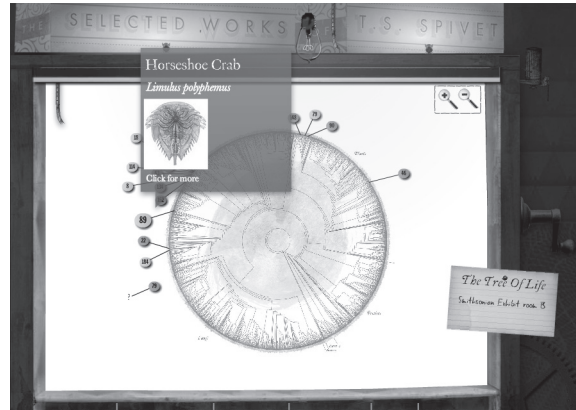
Members only areas, security and downloads are a perfect fit with the young spy theme of *Alex Rider*, Charlie Higson's *Young Bond* series www.youngbond.com and Robert Muchamore's *Cherub* series www.cherubcampus.com. Real-life enthusiasts can enjoy discovering hidden elements of the site just as the fictional heroes discover the hidden elements in their covert worlds.

Picture Books

Authors Shaun Tan [www.shauntan.net] and Matt Ottley [www.mattottley.com] have sites that reflect their unique styles. The sites include information on the authors and their projects as well as many wonderful images.



The Selected Works Of T.S. Spivet by Reif Larsen [<http://tsspivet.com>] is impossible to classify. This site is as intriguing and individual as the book it represents. The interface encourages exploration rather than ordered fact finding.



Creepy Tales



The pencil drawing and cutout animation style of artwork on the Tales of Terror site [<http://talesoferror.co.uk>] gives it the same gothic feel as the books. Corpse fishing certainly adds to the creepiness.



This article mentions just a small selection from the many sophisticated and fun book and author websites available for students to use to enjoy and share their enthusiasm for books and reading. These and many other websites for contemporary young adult fiction are more than just repositories of information. They are, like books, carefully crafted artefacts in themselves.

Alison Spicer-Wensley

At Darren Shan's site [www.darrenshan.com] fans can enjoy downloads and a cool interface that recognise that many readers have a distinct preference for demons or vampires. The site also includes fan art and invites users to contribute. The future can also be a creepy place if you are one of *The Bad Tuesdays*. Layered photographic images, video and 'painted' text all help to evoke a stark and frightening world [www.thebadtuesdays.co.uk].

The CMIS *Fiction Focus* Blog [<http://cmisevalff.edublogs.org>] contains extensive links to the blogs and websites of young adult authors and illustrators. Just click on the YA Authors & Illustrators tab at the top of the blog page.

Steampunk

Scott Westerfeld's site [www.scottwesterfeld.com] has been given a makeover in honour of his new steampunk series *Leviathan* illustrated by Keith Thompson. The site is bursting with artwork. Turning cogs and steam all add to the atmosphere of this site where readers can find the book trailer, information, downloads and a forum where they can participate in discussion.

