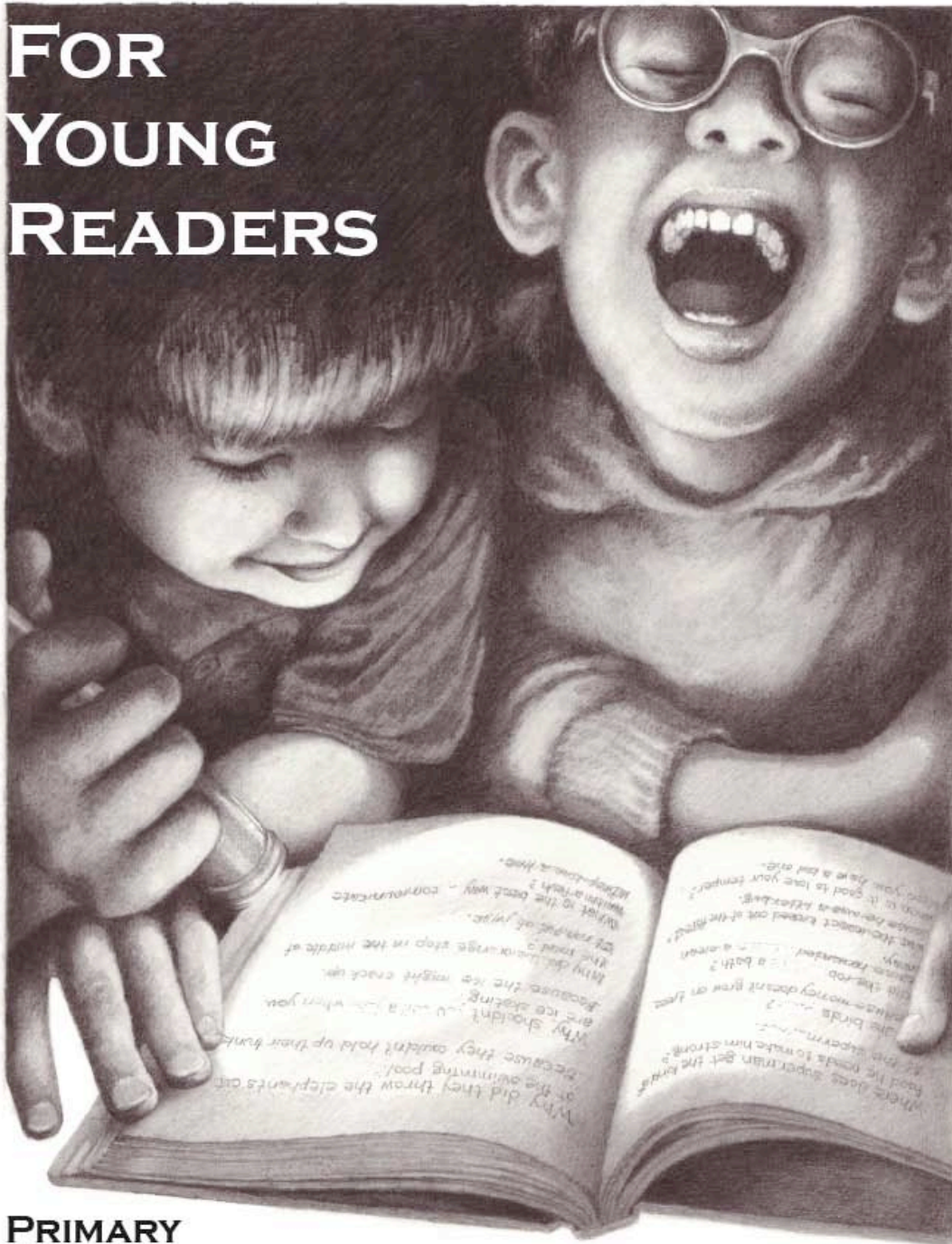


NEW BOOKS

2008

FOR YOUNG READERS



PRIMARY

INTERMEDIATE

ADOLESCENT

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
+ HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Edited by Rebecca Rapport, University of Minnesota

Reviews by:

Liz Becker, Anoka/Hennepin Public Schools, Michael Borka, College of St. Benedict/St. John's University, Beth Brendler, University of Minnesota, Erin Buhr, University of Minnesota, Lee Galda, University of Minnesota, Adele Greenlee, Bethel College, Barbara Hanson, University of Minnesota, Dianne Monson, University of Minnesota, Bevin O'Brien, Stillwater Area Public Schools, Rebecca Rapport, University of Minnesota, Julie Reimer, Mounds View Schools, Maggie Vecchio-Smith, Edina Public Schools,

Special thanks to the reviewers from the College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University:

Anna Philp, Tom Redmond, Laura Suhr, Marita Vievering, Megan Fleegel, Greg Truso, Sarah Labute, Laura Kinowski, Heidi Gollet, Ashley Carlisle, Deanna Waldvogel, Stephanie Degeest, Sarah Havemeier, Clare Barrowman Casey, Andy Pierskalla, Megan Woodruff, Megan Poppler, Kari Hackenmueller, Emily Cook, Jennifer Viaene, Mai Yia Thao, Megan Koerner, Courtney Bystrom, Kelly Peltz, Carlee Charboneau, Kevin Robinson, Jeanna Felling, Stacy Rieland

Cover Design and Illustration by Karen Ritz

The Editor wishes to thank Cathy Zemke for her help with text layout and proofreading.

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Foreword

New Books for Young Readers is an annotated list of new trade books that have been read and evaluated on the basis of their appeal and appropriateness for young people from age three to young adult. The list is arranged by the level for which the book is judged by the reviewers to be most appropriate (primary, intermediate, adolescent) and then alphabetically by author within each level. Genres, cultures, and world settings are indicated. The prices reported are the prices on the books read for review. Reviews are also now available as they are edited at the address below.

New Books for Young Readers is available in searchable electronic format at:
<http://cehd.umn.edu/ci/k12books/>

New Books for Young Readers is supported by the
Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Minnesota;
the Julie M. Jensen Endowment for Language Arts Education
honoring Professors Naomi C. Chase and Robert Dykstra;
and generous contributions from Ms. Ruth Mitchell and other alumni of the
College of Education and Human Development.

April 2008

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
+ HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

2008 Naomi C. Chase Lecture

Tuesday, June 24, 2008

Paul Janeczko will give the annual Chase Lecture at

4:30 pm

120 Andersen Library

The lecture will be held in 120 Andersen Library on the University of Minnesota campus. The program is free and open to the public and will be immediately followed by BookArt 2007, a silent auction of items donated by authors and illustrators to support the preservation of original materials housed in the Kerlan Collection.

Book Week 2008

October 14 – 16

Book Week 2008 will be held
from 1:00 p.m. Tuesday, October 14
to
Thursday, October 16
Andersen Library

The annual Book Week lecture will be given by

Joyce Sidman

on

Tuesday, October 14, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.

Both lectures will be preceded by book sales and autographing.
Contact Rebecca Rapport at 612-624-4533 (rappo001@umn.edu)
or Cathy Zemke (zemke001@umn.edu) for details.

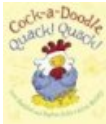
Primary

A Seed is Sleepy by Dianna Hutts Aston, Sylvia Long (Illustrator). Chronicle Books. 40 pages. \$16.99. Informational Science. Primary. 0. 0811855201



Brought to you by the same team that produced **An Egg Is Quiet**, this book celebrates all kinds of seeds on their way to becoming whatever they are destined to be. The text is lucid; the realistic illustrations are beautiful and informative; and the book is great for reading aloud, providing a lesson in science and art.

Cock-a-Doodle Quack! Quack! by Ivor Baddiel, Sophie Jubb, , Ailie Busby (Illustrator). David Fickling Books. 32 pages. \$15.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0385751044



Brightly illustrated pages and repeated phrases make **Cock-a-Doodle Quack! Quack!** a fun read for preschool through early primary classrooms and homes. A young rooster doesn't know what to say to wake everyone up, so he spends many days seeking help from other animals. Attempts such as "Cock-a-Doodle Oink! Oink!" will lead young children to giggle, and repeated phrases such as "nobody woke up" will encourage participation.

New Clothes for New Year's Day by Hyun-Joo Bae. Kane/Miller Book Publishers. 28 pages. \$15.95. Informational Social Studies. Primary. Asia (Far East). 1933605294



It's a New Year's Day, and there are new clothes to wear! But who knew what a process it was to get all dolled up for this special day. Step by step, readers will follow a young girl's exciting procedure of dressing up in strikingly exquisite clothes. The Korean inspired, bold, vivid colors, as well as the detailed Asian design, will certainly draw the readers in and hold their attention. Young readers will see how Korean culture and traditions turn a simple task of putting on clothes into a sparkling adventure.

One Saturday Evening by Barbara Baker, Kate Duke (Illustrator). Dutton Childrens' Books. 48 pages. \$13.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0525458824



Just as the duo did in their previous easy readers about Saturday mornings and afternoons, the six stories in this book each feature one member of the Bear family and their own special reasons for loving Saturday evenings. Cozy illustrations show typical family activities and a very loving family. These stories of what happens between dinner and bedtime will resonate with mothers, fathers and children alike.

Fox by Kate Banks, Georg Hallensleben (Illustrator). Farrar Straus & Giroux. Unpaged. \$16.00. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0-374-39967-0



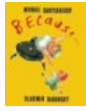
Little fox is born in a snug den in the early spring. His parents watch over him carefully until he is ready to go out with them to explore his new world. The poetic language and lovely paintings capture the beauty of the natural surroundings and the winsome little pup. Finally, when autumn is nearly over, little fox has learned the skills of survival from his parents and is ready to go out alone into the world.

Ivy + Bean Break the Fossil Record by Annie Barrows, Sophie Blackall (Illustrator). Chronicle Books. 117 pages. \$14.95. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. 0. 081186250X



In the third book in the entertaining series, unlikely best friends Ivy and Bean are introduced to the idea of setting records when their 2nd. grade teacher, Ms. Aruba-Tate, gives bored Bean **The Amazing Book of World Records**. After they explore some preposterous ideas that are sure to leave readers laughing, the girls decide on the perfect way to get their names in the record book: they'll become the world's youngest paleontologists.

Because... by Mikhail Baryshnikov, Vladimir Radunsky (Illustrator). Atheneum Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. O. 0-68987-582-7



A young boy spends most of his time with his grandmother, Mrs. Duncan. He really enjoys being with her but she always embarrasses him. Everyone in town knows Mrs. Duncan. Each time she does something out of the ordinary people ask her, "Why are you doing that?" She simply replies, "Because..." The pages are filled with large active illustrations using soft lines and colors. It is a great book for young children who can relate to having a silly and unique family member. Readers will laugh while discovering Mrs. Duncan's secret.

Fiona's Luck by Teresa Bateman, Kelly Murphy (Illustrator). Charlesbridge. Unpaged. \$15.95. Fantasy. Primary. Great Britain. 1570916519



In Ireland, leprechauns swept up all the good luck and hid it from the big folk, making the land fall into hard times. Fiona, who had more luck than most, was captured by the leprechauns who demanded that she tell her secret of good luck. Fiona's quick thinking shows that cleverness can win over the strength of a king. The attractive, dark illustrations in acrylic, watercolor, and gel mediums, contribute to the magical tone.

A Mama for Owen by Marion Dane Bauer, John Butler (Illustrator). Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. Unpaged. \$15.99. Informational Social Studies. Primary. Africa (Eastern). 068985787X



Life for a very young hippo on the Sabaki River in Kenya is idyllic until the 2004 tsunami hits, and he's forever separated from his stubby-tailed, "great grayish brown—or was she brownish gray?" mother. The true, sad story does have a happy ending when Owen finds Mzee, a very old, stubby-tailed male giant tortoise who becomes the baby hippo's new mother. Bauer uses repetition to give a sense of how long it rained and to show similarities in his "mothers" and in what Owen's life was like before and after the tsunami. Butler's softly colored, gentle illustrations show the range of Owen's emotions, particularly his "great pink smile" on the last double-page spread. This is a perfect version of this true story for younger children who will empathize with poor Owen and his loss.

At Night by Jonathan Bean. Farrar Straus & Giroux. Unpaged. \$15.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. O. 0374304467



What child hasn't at one time or another waited and waited for sleep to come? How the young girl solves the problem in this diminutive book may be a surprise to many children. Seeing her vigilant mother, with one hand gently touching her sleeping child, will be a comfort to all. A perfect good night book for young children.

Soupy Saturdays with the Pain and the Great One by Judy Blume, James Stevenson (Illustrator). Delacorte Press. 108 pages. \$12.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. O. 0385733054



Today's young readers may not have read the picture book written over 20 years ago about siblings Abigail and Jake, but they'll be looking for it after reading these episodic, all-too-realistic, humorous stories of the trials and injustice endured when you have an older sister or younger brother. While Blume often switches points of view and focuses on one or the other sibling from story to story, it is the story of Jake's haircut phobia that shows the deep connection that the two actually have for each other. Stevenson's pen and ink sketches of the two add to the hilarity of the often serious situations from the siblings' point of view, even as The Great One chases the Pain right out of the book.

Hurry! Hurry! by Eve Bunting, Jeff Mack (Illustrator). Harcourt Brace & Company. 32 pages. \$16.00. Fantasy. Primary. O. 0152054103



This bright, cheerful picture book is a celebration of birth. The rooster is hurrying all the animals to the barn, and each colorful double page spread shows different farm animals rushing to see what the excitement is about. Finally they all gather to welcome a baby chick into the world. The simple, repetitive text will engage young children. **Hurry! Hurry!** will be a great addition to story time collections.

Dog Diaries: Secret Writings of the Woof Society by Betsy Byars, Betsy Duffey, Laurie Myers, Erik Brooks (Illustrator). Henry Holt & Company. 72 pages. \$15.95. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0805079572



The WOOF Society—whose motto of course is “WOOF! WOOF! WOOF!”—has been formed so that the stories of dogs all over the world and throughout past centuries can be shared. From the story of Abu, the dog who ruled Egypt, to the sweet story of Lucy and her blended family of her own puppies and two motherless kittens, young readers and dog lovers will be thoroughly entertained. Black and white illustrations showcase the action and the special relationships described.

Duck and Company by Kathy Caple. Holiday House. 32 pages. \$14.95. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0823419932



Each short chapter in this beginning reader provides a bit of humor as Rat and Duck face challenges running their bookstore. What should they do when a cat comes in asking how to cook a rat? How should they handle the little animals that come for story time but want more entertainment than a story? Cartoon-style illustrations reflect the humorous and warm tone of the episodes.

I Don't Like to Read! by Nancy Carlson. Viking. Unpaged. \$15.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0670061913



Henry, a first grader, liked hearing stories read to him, but he did not like to read himself, calling it boring and dumb. Eventually he admitted to a kindly teacher that the words and letters were all jumbled up. Henry got extra help from teachers and parents and suddenly discovered the letters coming together into words. The storyline is predictable, but it may be reassuring for beginning readers. Carlson's cartoon-style animals capture the human emotions convincingly with just a few simple lines.

Old MacDonald Drives a Tractor by Don Carter. Roaring Brook Press. 24 pages. \$14.95. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 1-59643-023-0



This almost-familiar story will allow children to help adults tell the story of Old MacDonald's adventures on his tractor. Carter's use of words such as plow, combine, seeds, and cultivator in his rhymes will make this story a fun addition to a unit on farming. Adults will appreciate the comic illustrations made from foam board, drywall compound, and acrylic paint while children will giggle at the image of Old MacDonald running through the sprayer's water in his underwear on a hot day.

Some Dog! by Mary Casanova, Ard Hoyt (Illustrator). Farrar Straus & Giroux. Unpaged. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. 0. 0374371334



Good old, slow-moving George the basset hound has a good life until a rambunctious young stray comes and ruins everything. Aptly named Zippity crazily races from adventure to adventure until he really does need George to save the day. The contrasts between the two dogs are sure to bring smiles to young readers and listeners who know how hard it must be for George to share his owners with this new upstart. Hoyt's endearing portraits of the two dogs make them all the more lovable and make the ending that much more satisfying. George really is “some dog!” A great companion book to read to young dog lovers with their earlier book **One-Dog Canoe**.

Ivan the Terrier by Peter Catalanotto. Atheneum Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 1-4169-1247-9



Ivan, the naughty dog, interrupts as the storyteller begins to relate first The Three Billy Goats Gruff, then The Three Bears, then The Three Pigs, and The Gingerbread Boy. Children will love Ivan's antics and want to continue telling each story to the end, even though Ivan has spoiled the beginning. The humorous illustrations are done in watercolor and gouache.

Cork and Fuzz: Good Sports by Dori Chaconas, Lisa McCue (Illustrator). Viking. Unpaged. \$13.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 067006145X



Cork and Fuzz are friends who love to compete. The trouble is that Fuzz, a tall possum, can always win the contests that Cork, a small muskrat, suggests. To make matters worse, Fuzz likes to brag about winning. Readers will sense Cork's growing frustration as each chapter describes another contest with the same outcome. Eventually, Cork devises a contest he can win, but then decides the friends can do an activity that doesn't require

a winner. While the appealing animals are drawn with convincing human emotions, they are pictured in a natural, detailed setting of real possums and muskrats.

Dogku by Andrew Clements, Tim Bowers (Illustrator). Simon & Schuster. Unpaged. \$16.99. Poetry. Primary. O. 068985823X



Through a series of haiku, and with the help of Bowers' endearing illustrations, Clements tells the story of a little lost dog found and adopted by a loving family. The modern, engaging haiku follow the traditional Japanese form with three, five-seven-five syllable lines and are good models for young poets who may want to try using haiku to tell their own stories.

Why? by Tomie de Paola. Putnam. 87 pages. \$14.99. Biography/Memoir. Primary. O. 0399246924



This installment of the **26 Fairmount Avenue** series begins with Tomie and his family celebrating New Year's Eve, 1942, so soon after the U.S. has entered WWII. While 2nd. grader Tomie is dealing with the many issues common to children of that age group then and now, such as worrying about not losing teeth as quickly as everyone else and struggling with penmanship, Tomie is also faced with issues related to the war such as rationing (no more Fleer bubble gum at the store) and seeing his cousin and uncle leave for military service. The title is actually a poignant reference to the questions Tomie has at the end of the book after the tragic death of his cousin Blackie, whose plane was shot down shortly after the war began.

Mother Goose: Numbers on the Loose Leo & Diane Dillon (Illustrators). Harcourt Children's Books. Unpaged. \$17.00. Folk Literature. Primary. O. 0152056769



Mother Goose chases running numbers across the jacket, gathering those she catches in her basket. Numbers with lanky arms and legs dance across the endpapers and skip their way through this collection of nursery rhymes—some familiar and some less so—that all have numbers in them. From “1, 2,/Buckle my shoe;” to “Sing a song of sixpence,” children will be engrossed by the lively illustrations (that really tell the story behind each rhyme and are filled with an assortment of fascinating nursery characters) and by the jaunty rhymes. There's plenty of counting and chanting to be done by young listeners who will want to hear and see this beautifully designed book again and again.

The Prince Won't Go To Bed by Dayle Anne Dodds, Kyrsten Brooker (Illustrator). Melanie Kroupa Books. Unpaged. \$16.00. Fantasy. Primary. O. 0-374-36108-8



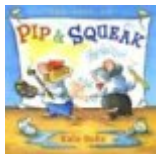
“Waa! Waa! Waa! I will not go to bed! The teeny-tiny, itty-bitty, little Prince said.” With the onset of these words, the story begins as the Prince's castle springs into action to solve this dilemma, similar to that faced by millions of other parents every single night before bed. In this upbeat story, Dodds' rhythmic, repetitive writing style brings young readers and listeners an adorable, relatable, and interactive tale. Brooker's textured, collage-style illustrations full of rich color will be loved by children and adults. This is a perfect story for young readers and parents, especially before that frustrating event called bedtime.

I'd Really Like to Eat a Child by Sylviane Donnio, Dorothee de Monfreid (Illustrator). Random House. 24 pages. \$14.99. Fantasy. Primary. O. 0375837612



In this story translated from the original French, Achilles, a young crocodile, is sick of eating bananas. Today, he would prefer to eat a child. When his parents are unable to distract him with a huge sausage or a chocolate cake, he finds himself at the edge of a river watching a young girl play on the shore. Unfortunately for Achilles, he is quite tiny in comparison to the girl, and, instead of finding him scary, she finds him “awfully cute.” In the end, Achilles returns home to eat enough bananas so he can grow “BIG enough to eat a child.”

The Tale of Pip and Squeak by Kate Duke. Dutton Children's Books. 32 pages. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary. O. 0525477772



With opening pages reminiscent of Peggy Rathman's **10 Minutes Til Bedtime** , Kate Duke welcomes us into the mouse world of brothers Pip and Squeak, artists with zero appreciation for each other's work. Jealousy and sibling rivalry are the norm for these two creative mice. Pip, the painter, is offended by his brother's music. Squeak, the singer, claims that his brother's paints “irritated his delicate throat and made

him cough so much it was a miracle he could utter a note.” While the prima donnas prepare for their annual exhibition, their competitive behaviors nearly ruin the day, until they find a way to work in harmony.

Wag a Tail by Lois Ehlert. Harcourt Children’s Books. Unpaged. \$16.00. Fantasy. Primary. O. 0152058435



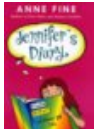
Simple, bold collages (made from paper and fabric scraps in primary colors) of all varieties of button-eyed dog pals, graduates of the Bow Wow School, and their owners travel across the pages to the Farmers Market and Woof Park, where dogs—and the occasional cat or squirrel—are happily allowed to meet and great each other in rhyme. “Wig Wag Zig Zag. Let’s play now!” After seeing all the dogs introduced with their names, breeds, and prominent behavioral characteristics on the endpapers, children will want to create a collage of their own dog, real or imaginary. Ehlert’s dogs are irresistible!

Smile, Principessa by Judith Enderle, Stephanie Gordon, Serena Curmi (Illustrator). Margaret K. McElderry Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. O. 1-4169-1004-2



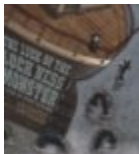
Any person with younger siblings will identify with the classic family conflict described in this story. Enderle & Gordon warmly describe Principessa’s trepidation when she goes from being the center of her parents’ attention, the focus of their world, and the star of all of their photographs to being an older sister. When her brother is born, he becomes their family’s focus. Serena Curmi’s illustrations complement this classic family drama with their warm colors and expressive characters. This is the perfect book for any child or family about to welcome a new member.

Jennifer’s Diary by Anne Fine. Farrar Straus & Giroux. 58 pages. \$15.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. O. 0-374-33673-3



Iola has so many crazy, imaginative ideas, she can’t write them all down. Jennifer can’t think of anything to write, but she has a beautiful rainbow-colored diary that Iola desperately wants. Readers might want to discuss how they feel about Iola’s use of trickery to get the diary. This transitional novel was first published in Great Britain.

The Luck of the Loch Ness Monster: A Tale of Picky Eating by A.W. Flaherty, Scott Magoon (Illustrator). Houghton Mifflin. 32 pages. \$16.00. Fantasy. Primary. Great Britain. 0-618-55644-3



Katerina was a young girl who didn’t like oatmeal, so when it was served to her every morning on an ocean voyage to Scotland, she tossed it overboard. A small worm in the ocean discovered the oatmeal, tasted it once and loved it, so began following that ocean liner every day, eating the oatmeal. Thus begins this creative story of the Loch Ness monster who just kept growing and growing as he ate more and more oatmeal and followed the liner up the River Ness to Loch Ness. Fortunately, there were other children living along the Loch who also threw their oatmeal and other food into the Loch so the monster never went hungry and a legend was born. The muted illustrations are a delight, as the reader watches the worm grow bigger and bigger and attract more and more attention. The author cleverly includes information at the end about “picky eaters” and “Supertasters” but admits there’s not enough space to go into the scientific evidence about the Loch Ness Monster.

Tippy-Tippy-Tippy, Hide! by Candace Fleming, G. Brian Karas (Illustrator). Atheneum Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary. O. 0-689-87479-0



After the busy summer tending his yard and garden, Mr. McGreely is all set for a quiet and restful winter until he hears a knock at his door. Surprise! Those rabbits he fed all summer are back and need a place to stay. Once again he tries to foil the rabbits, but in clever ways, they always manage to outwit him. The story and illustrations are as hilarious and clever as the earlier **MUNCH! MUNCH! MUNCH!** and the surprise ending will have young readers laughing at the joke on Mr. McGreely.

Beetle Bop by Denise Fleming. Harcourt, Inc.. 32 pages. \$16.00. Informational Science. Primary. O. 0152059369



Denise Fleming’s vibrant, handmade paper illustrations are an excellent compliment to the rollicking, rhythmic text in **Beetle Bop**. The author depicts the characteristics of a variety of beetles using onomatopoeia, alliteration, and rhyme. Even squeamish children will love the nonthreatening, bright bugs in this book.

Lightship by Brian Floca. Atheneum Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Informational Social Studies. Primary. 0. 1416924361



Anyone who grew up on the Great Lakes or near ocean ports knows how important lightships once were to the other ships navigating the sometimes dangerous waters. Beginning with endpapers that show a labeled, cutaway view of the lightship featured in this story, and the line, "Here is a ship that holds her place," young readers are introduced to life aboard a lightship, often seen from the viewpoint of the ship's cat. While the crew waits through calm weather, completing mundane tasks, they spring into action when fog hits, shaking the whole ship with the loud "BEEOOH" from the horn, marking the way for other ships so they can cruise safely on. An author's note at the end of the book gives detailed information about lightships throughout history.

Thank You Bear by Greg Foley. Viking. Unpaged. \$15.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0670061654



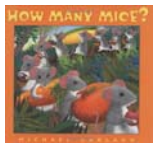
While Bear is at first sure that Mouse will love the box he has found, he has plenty of doubt after hearing the reactions of all the other animals to whom he shows his marvel. Young children will respond to the repetitive format as bear repeatedly shows his box to unimpressed critics, giving the happy ending greater impact. Simple line drawings, with colored text pages matching the colors of each new animal, convey Bear's growing disappointment even to very young children.

Summer Beat by Betsy Franco, Charlotte Middleton (Illustrator). Margaret K. McElderry Books. Unpaged. \$15.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. 0. 1-4169-1237-1



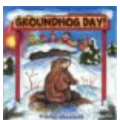
Enjoy summer? Then come along with Em and Joe on their exciting adventure as they experience the delicious sounds of summer. "Sprinkler spritzing" and the "Bizzle-bzz" of the bumblebee are catchy rhythmic alliterations that will delight any child. To make the clever text even more enjoyable, it is integrated into the illustrations. The words "sizzle" along the pages just like the "juicy burgers." This interactive story allows children to not only open their eyes to the joys of summer, but their ears as well.

How Many Mice? by Michael Garland. Dutton Childrens' Books. Unpaged. \$15.99. Informational Math. Primary. 0. 0525478337



Join ten hungry mice on their quest for dinner as they run into trouble along the way. Hidden within each page is a question giving young readers an opportunity to search for objects and practice their counting skills. The beautiful, full page illustrations are vibrant and have a fabric like quality sure to hold the attention of children and adults.

Groundhog Day! by Gail Gibbons. Holiday House. 32 pages. \$16.95. Informational Science. Primary. 0. 0-8234-2003-5



This well-organized book covers everything a young reader might ever want to know about groundhogs and Groundhog Day. Gibbons tells of the origins and history of the holiday, as well as facts about groundhogs, all in an easy-to-understand style. The clearly drawn illustrations enhance the text and add information. This would be a good one to add to a holiday or animal collection.

Half a World Away by Libby Gleeson, Freya Blackwood (Illustrator). Arthur A. Levine Books. 32 pages. \$15.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. Europe (Western). 0439889774



Louie and Amy are always there for each other. A quick call of "Coo-ee, Am-ee!" or "Coo-ee, Lou-ee" initiates flights of fantasy play for these young friends. When Amy's family moves away "to the other side of the world," the best friends are inconsolable. With gentle washes of watercolor, Blackwood sets a soothing, reassuring tone for this story of separation. Bright flashes of red tie the friends together visually, but it is their shared dreams which keep their friendship alive across the miles of ocean.

Meerkat Mail by Emily Gravett. Simon & Schuster. Unpaged. \$17.99. Fantasy. Primary. O. 1416934731



Even though the family motto is “Stay safe, stay together” (as headlined in a newspaper clipping on the scrapbook page endpapers), Sunny the meerkat has “itchy feet.” In a scenario somewhat reminiscent of the wolf stalking the rabbit in last year’s **Wolves**, after leaving home, unwitting Sunny is followed from one place to the next by a lurking jackal. Readers will be fascinated by the lift-the-flap, humorous postcards Sunny sends along the way, informing his family of the delicious food he’s eating—scorpions, termites, and such—and the worsening weather. As the surroundings change from the white hot light of the Kalahari to the dark and murky marshland of his Great-Aunt Flo, the jackal gets closer and closer to poor, lonely Sunny. Sunny soon learns that home is perfect, for more than one important reason! And readers learn quite a bit about meerkats too.

Ain’t Nobody a Stranger to Me by Ann Grifalconi, Jerry Pinkney (Illustrator). Jump at the Sun/Hyperion Books for Children. Unpaged. \$16.99. Historical Fiction. Primary. African-American. 0786818573



In explaining why he waves to everyone he sees as they walk to the family apple orchard, a young girl’s grandfather gently relates how he, her grandmother and their young baby, her mother, escaped from slavery with the help of James Stanton, a white Quaker who was a member of the Underground Railroad. Gran’pa had carried apple seeds in his pocket for a long time, just waiting for the day when he could plant them in his own soil. The story ends with the little girl planting her own “seed of memory” in the orchard too. Pickney’s evocative watercolor paintings which are muted, in soft browns and blues, while depicting their escape, burst into bright pinks and greens once Gran’pa and his granddaughter in her red coat reach the orchard. The story of their escape north is inspired by a slave story recounted for the Federal Writers’ Project in 1937.

When Gorilla Goes Walking by Nikki Grimes, Shane Evans (Illustrator). Orchard Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Poetry. Primary. African-American. 0439317703



Cecilia’s cat, Gorilla, is a most beautiful, ivy attacking, dog chasing, soulfood loving, telephone answering, jealous cat with attitude. Warning! She will not be denied. Short, rhyming poems and child-like illustrations enthusiastically introduce the young girl and her cat in good times and times when they’re in the doghouse. A great read aloud, even for those who are not cat lovers!

The Chicken Chasing Queen of Lamar County by Janice N. Harrington, Shelley Jackson (Illustrator). Farrar Straus & Giroux. Unpaged. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. African-American. 0374312516



Readers will follow the deep orange chicken feathers and prints right into this hilarious, first person story of a young girl who just can’t resist chasing Miss Hen, “plump as a Sunday purse” and as fast “as a mosquito buzzing,” all over the yard even after repeated warnings from Big Mama. She slowly and carefully tracks her favorite chicken through the tall grass until she is ready to grab her from her hiding place. A wonderful surprise ensues. Jackson’s lively, realistic collage illustrations, sometimes thickly painted on lined school paper and legal pads, capture all the action of the young girl and her squawking chicken. Because of the wonderful dialogue, chicken sounds and the funny, repeatedly unsuccessful chases, the book is perfect for reading aloud.

The Wicked Big Toddlah by Kevin Hawkes. Alfred A. Knopf. Unpaged. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. O. 0-37582-427-2



This larger than life story will bring joy to all. Toddie, illustrated as an oversized Paul Bunyan, keeps his family busy each and every day. Hawkes tells a light-hearted story with plenty of playful humor throughout the text and illustrations. The story is a must read for primary aged children with younger siblings who will empathize with the sister who has a towering gigantic Toddlah for a brother.

I’m Going to Grandma’s by Mary Ann Hoberman, Tiphonie Beeke (Illustrator). Harcourt Brace & Company. Unpaged. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. O. 0-15216-592-4



In this book readers tag along on one little girl’s adventure, staying the night at Grandma and Grandpa’s. Like most young children, she’s scared and nervous as the night winds down, but Grandma does what grandmas do best: she comforts the little one who soon dreams sweet dreams. The tale is extremely relatable to youngsters. The flow, rhyme, and rhythm of the text make it a most enjoyable read, as do the soft, warm

illustrations which provide a cozy comfort, much like grandmas and grandpas' houses do. These aspects make this lovely book a perfect bedtime story that will leave young readers dreaming sweet dreams as well.

The Twelve Dancing Princesses by Rachel Isadora. Putnam. Unpaged. \$16.99. Folk Literature. Primary. Africa (Eastern). 0399247440



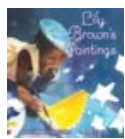
Rachel Isadora has given this familiar tale from the Grimm Brothers a new and charming setting, based on the years she lived in Africa. The vivid illustrations are done with oils, printed paper and palette paper, creating traditional designs of African textiles for the clothing. The sun is hot orange, the water vibrant blue or cool aqua. It is a stunning book.

What Happens on Wednesdays by Emily Jenkins, Lauren Castillo (Illustrator). Frances Foster Books/Farrar Straus Giroux. Unpaged. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. 0. 0-374-38303-0



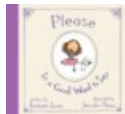
Venture into this story by winding back the clock to your childhood days of excitement and simplicity. Follow a young girl's adventure of **What Happens on Wednesdays**, narrated through her eyes and experiences. Scamper throughout the diverse neighborhood as she reminisces with her father about past memories and future excitements. The book is filled with elaborate illustrations that possess dynamic details that touch your emotions and bring the text to life. Find out for yourself why Wednesdays are not kissing days and learn the importance of one particular day for a very particular girl.

Lily Brown's Paintings by Angela Johnson, E. B. Lewis (Illustrator). Orchard Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary. African-American. 0439782252



When Lily Brown paints her world, the real world becomes wondrous. Gold stars circle primary-colored planets; trees wear fine hats and sip tea; and she sails across red cornfields in a wooden boat. No matter how fantastic her musing and how far her imagination takes her, Lily always returns to her loving family at the end of the day. Lewis's evocative, realistic watercolors of Lily and her family contrast with the child-like painting that she does. His nods to painters such as Van Gogh and Gauguin, so important to him as a child, acknowledge the positive influence of art and artists on children's own imaginations. The soaring spirit of the words and illustrations in the book is sure to have children searching for their own paints so they can create their own stories.

Please Is a Good Word to Say by Barbara Joose, Jennifer Plecas (Illustrator). Philomel Books. Unpaged. \$12.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. 0. 0399242171



Harriet, the irrepressible narrator of this beginning book of etiquette, is certainly anything but prim. She has learned the power of words and phrases like please, thank you and I'm sorry since she has had to use them plenty of times herself! Whether by making Lydia cry by smudging her sparkle polished toes or whining too much or making gross body sounds, Harriet is a girl who speaks to other children who will see themselves in her. Her small and emotive rabbit always appears with her and helps her celebrate her good manners in the end.

Badger's Fancy Meal by Keiko Kasza. G.P. Putnam's Sons. 32 pages. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0399246037



Badger is tired of his typical meal of apples, worms, and roots and seeks more for his palate. A spicy mole taco might make an excellent meal choice, but the mole escapes Badger's grasp just in time, diving into a perfect hiding spot. A rat burger with cheese sauce is Badger's second choice, but the wiggly rat also escapes, jumping into the same hiding spot. When Badger spies a rabbit, he knows a rabbit banana split is just what he wants to eat, but the rabbit bounces into that very same perfect hiding spot. While Badger is complaining and lamenting, a twist of events occurs underground where the mole, rat, and rabbit are having a fancy meal of their own. Readers will appreciate the glimpses into the den that provide information unknown to Badger. The artist's clever use of space makes it appear that the page has blown to the side, revealing the three escapees in Badger's den. A note signed with three paw prints forces Badger to ponder his food supply.

Daddy Hugs by Karen Katz. Simon & Schuster. 30 pages. \$7.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. 0. 1-4169-4120-7



This book celebrates the beauty and importance of a Daddy's love. Through warm, colorful illustrations and simple language, Katz counts out a variety of Daddy hugs. From "teeny, tiny finger hugs" to celebrating baby's first steps, Katz describes the loving interactions of a father and his baby.

My Life as a Chicken by Ellen A. Kelley, Michael Slack (Illustrator). Harcourt Brace & Company. Unpaged. \$16.00. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0-15205-306-9



To avoid becoming the next lunch special at the farmer's Cock-a-doodle-doo Café, Pauline Poulet, the chicken, leads readers on a thrilling adventure through the dark and shadowed forests, past the raging pirate seas, and on a gripping sky ride in a hot-air balloon. Although she is small in such a big world, Pauline remains strong and determined to escape the dangers of her journey and find a safer home. "Pauline Prevail!" she courageously cries. With each turn of the page, vibrant colors and fonts, along with catchy rhymes, captivate readers of virtually any age. Will Pauline prevail? Read on to discover!

Clorinda Takes Flight by Robert Kinerk, Steven Kellogg (Illustrator). Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0-689-86864-2



This is a book full of imagination and dreams. Robert Kinerk & Steven Kellogg, who previously worked together to create Clorinda, have teamed up again to create another book featuring their star cow. This time Clorinda becomes inspired to fly. With her friends, Hop the pig and Lenny the farmer, Clorinda creates a plane, a rocket ship, a helicopter, and finally a hot air balloon to achieve her dream. Kinerk's rhythmic language describes a fast paced, fun journey, and Kellogg's colorful, outrageous illustrations help children better picture the hilarity of the adventure.

The Apple Doll by Elisa Kleven. Farrar Straus & Giroux. Unpaged. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. 0. 0374303800



This touching, old-fashioned looking story with its collage illustrations begins with apple endpapers and the assertion that "Liza loved her apple tree." As a matter of fact, she loves it so much that she spends much of her time in the tree; she loves it so much that she'd much rather stay in her tree than go to the scary first day of school. The perfect apple she picks becomes her best friend through her vivid imagination and eventually garners her many other friends at school. Kleven includes a final section showing readers how to make an apple doll just like Liza's and has illustrations of all sorts of frolicking dolls on the final endpapers. A perfect book to share when school begins in the fall and apples are ready to harvest.

Too Many Leprechauns Or How That Pot o'Gold Got to the End of the Rainbow by Stephen Krensky, Dan Andreasen (Illustrator). Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. Unpaged. \$12.99. Fantasy. Primary. Europe (Western). 0-689-85112-X



One leprechaun in a town isn't so bad, but too many leprechauns can cause undue troubles, and that is just what happens to the town of Dingle. Fortunately, Finn O'Finnegan arrives in town for a visit and is able to cleverly trick the leprechauns into leaving town without making them angry. The leprechauns are actually secretly pleased with the trick, for now they have a secure place for their gold. The stylized illustrations, particularly of the leprechauns, add to the humor of this tale and make it a good one for reading aloud, and not just on St. Patrick's Day.

The Sheep in Wolf's Clothing by Helen Lester, Lynn Munsinger (Illustrator). Houghton Mifflin. Unpaged. \$16.00. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0618868445



Children who know to beware of a wolf in sheep's clothing will enjoy this twist to the old story. Ewetopia (there is plenty of similar wordplay) longs to be noticed, and she certainly is when she shows up at the Woolyones' Costume Ball as a wolf. But a case of mistaken identity saves the day! As in their many other witty books, the author-illustrator team combine to create childlike and very likable characters who face a dangerous situation where no one is harmed (unless you count the wolf's injured pride).

Big Is Big (and little, little): A Book of Contrasts by J. Patrick Lewis, Bob Barner (Illustrator). Holiday House. Unpaged. \$16.95. Informational Concept. Primary. O. 0823419096



Clarity is of prime importance when presenting concepts to young children, and all of these concepts will be easily understood. The funny contrasts include as short and tall, cool and hot, mad and sad, bald and hairy. The cleverly rhyming wordplay intrigues the ear while the double-page spread illustrations engage the reader/viewer/listener with humorous elaboration. The informative illustrations are done with cut and torn paper, pastels, and tempera.

Follow the Line through the House by Laura Ljungkvist. Viking. Unpaged. \$16.99. Informational Concept. Primary. O. 0670062251



After warmly welcoming children to the house, the author-illustrator invites them in rhyme to follow the continuous line from room to room, discovering all that is hidden in each. They can play dress-up in the big closet of the master bedroom; find a favorite toy in the toy box; or climb up the attic stairs to see what treasures are hidden there. Highly patterned, stylized, retro art is enhanced with real photos and even a postcard written in Swedish, a nod to Ljungkvist's background. Children will love answering the many questions asking them to count or search for specifically colored items. And of course, small fingers will trace the never-ending line from the cover, throughout each room of the house, to the "Good Bye" on the back of the book. On the last page, they're also challenged to reread the book to see if they can find the mouse and those items that were in the wrong places. Where do they belong? This is a book that will keep children enthralled time and time again. A worthy sequel to last year's **Follow the Line**.

Pirates Don't Change Diapers by Melinda Long, David Shannon (Illustrator). Harcourt Children's Books. Unpaged. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. O. 0152053530



Actually, pirates do make hilarious attempts at changing diapers while they help Jeremy Jacob babysit ("No sittin' on babies!") his baby sister. There's plenty of energetic caterwaulin' (and other rich pirate language) and pirate hijinks in this sequel to **How I Became a Pirate**, so much so that readers will enthusiastically return to the story over and over again. Shannon's Braid Beard and his motley, comic crew are quite funny since they look just as we'd expect bloodthirsty pirates to look and yet are so benign and bumbling. Of course, Jeremy Jacob solves the problem at the heart of the story like the true boy hero he is. All's well that ends well for pirates and even baby Bonney Anne.

Hello, Bumblebee Bat by Darrin Lunde, Patricia J. Wynne (Illustrator). Charlesbridge. Unpaged. \$15.95. Informational Science. Primary. O. 1570913749



What is a bumblebee bat? Just a tiny, one-inch long bat, the smallest bat in the world. Where do they live? In caves in Thailand. Who would be interested in reading about them? Everyone! Using a simple question and answer format, Lunde shares important bat facts that serve as an introduction to this little known mammal only discovered in 1973. Young readers can also learn a great deal from studying close-up illustrations of their habitat and the bats shown next to insects and plants so that they realize just how small they are.

Meet the Meerkat by Darrin Lunde, Patricia J. Wynne-Jones (Illustrator). Charlesbridge. Unpaged. \$15.95. Informational Science. Primary. O. 1580891101



With a question and answer format and realistic, close-up illustrations similar to their other book, **Hello, Bumblebee Bat**, this author-illustrator team introduces another creature sure to be a favorite of young animal lovers. Beginning with a friendly hello and ending with a gentle good night, readers see what the meerkat and his relatives do in the desert all day.

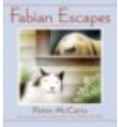
The Bravest Knight by Mercer Mayer. Dial Books for Young Readers. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary. O. 0-80373-206-6



This is a classic tale of a knight slaying dragons, getting the princess, and other daring feats of bravery that brings the reader into the action along with our hero. The brightly colored details of the busy pictures add greatly to the storyline; children will find something new every time they read the exciting story. The

illustrations also add comic relief to balance the daring adventures. Readers of all ages will want to give their services to the king and queen after reading this tale. Hurry and read this book for the kingdom is in danger!

Fabian Escapes by Peter McCarty. Henry Holt & Company. Unpaged. \$16.95. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. O. 0805077138



When Fabian escapes out the window and spends the day adventuring, Hondo finds plenty to do at home. The day each spends is contrasted as the story focus swings from one to the other. McCarty's typical illustrations with fine lines and muted colors capture subtle emotional changes as the two face the day's challenges. Children who have enjoyed their previous stories will like this one just as much.

Someday by Alison McGhee, Peter Reynolds (Illustrator). Atheneum Books. Unpaged. \$14.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. O. 1-4169-2811-1



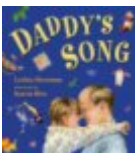
This is a warm and powerful story about a mother's love and the wonderful potential of a new life. As she watches her young daughter sleep, a mom envisions the ups and downs her child might experience in life. She sees the simple joys, bravery, sorrow, and adventures of a full life. Alison McGhee and Peter Reynolds have beautifully captured the dreams of a parent and the great possibilities of life through their simple words and soft illustrations. This is a must have for any new parent.

Little Night by Yuyi Morales. Roaring Brook Press. 32 pages. \$16.95. Fantasy. Primary. O. 1596430885



In this gentle picture book, the colorful illustrations and the playful text follow Little Night as she hides from Mother Sky, takes a bath, eats pancakes, gets dressed and plays ball with the moon. The mother-child relationship is warm and loving. The soft artwork shows Little Night in a dress made of clouds, with sparkling planets decorating her hair. She drinks from the Milky Way and has a milk moustache made of stars. Children will recognize their own routines in Little Night's joyful evening romp. This will be a family favorite.

Daddy's Song by Leslea Newman, Karen Ritz (Illustrator). Henry Holt & Company. Unpaged. \$16.95. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. O. 0805069755



A father's silly, rhyming goodnight song is enhanced by the illustrated imaginings of his young daughter. Pastel "ice cream cones fall from the sky" as similarly colored "cats grow wings and start to fly." Other detailed, realistic animals (who are often based on the girl's toys or are pictured on her bedding), dressed in hats or riding in cars, sloops and bikes, or playing ball, or eating jelly beans, populate the book, compelling young readers to turn the page to see what the girl and her wild friends will be doing next. The story ends as do all goodnight stories, with her cat nestled next to the little girl, both dearly loved and fast asleep.

Junie B., First Grader: Dumb Bunny by Barbara Park, Denise Brunkus (Illustrator). Random House. 119 pages. \$11.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. O. 0375838090



Barbara Park has brought us another installment in the hilarious Junie B. Jones series. In this transitional chapter book, one of Junie B's first grade classmates, Lucille, invites the whole class to her family's estate for a picnic and Easter egg hunt; the winner is awarded a playdate to swim with Lucille in her heated indoor swimming pool. Junie B. is beside herself with anticipation, until she gets stuck wearing a bunny costume that impedes her egg-hunting abilities. First graders will appreciate Junie B.'s take on these exciting and stressful events so accurately and amusingly presented by Park.

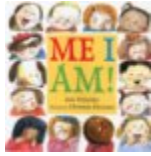
Ginger and Petunia by Patricia Polacco. Philomel Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary. O. 0399245391



Virginia Vincent Folsum, or Ginger, is "a very elegant lady" who lives in a "scrumptious home" where she teaches piano to only the most talented young musicians and who especially loves and pampers her pet pig Petunia. The commonly accepted fact that pets and their owners often look alike is the foundation for this rollicking fantasy where Petunia gets over missing her beloved Ginger, who has been given a last minute invitation to be a soloist in London, and repeatedly saves the day by pretending to be her owner, donning her long flowing dresses, elaborate make-up and headwear. The action-packed paintings of Pertunia breezily driving Ginger's red sports car, swooning in the governor's arms, yearning for her much needed mud baths, daintily

gobbling food and emoting while listening to the piano students will have readers chuckling throughout. The final illustration of both friends wallowing in glorious mud is the perfect ending to a book that is sure to be a class favorite.

Me I Am by Jack Prelutsky , Christine Davenier (Illustrator). Melanie Kroupa Books. Unpaged. \$16.00. Poetry. Primary. Multicultural. 0374349029



Jack Prelutsky, noted children’s poet, has created the perfect poem to celebrate the unique me-ness in each of us. This energetic poem is brought to life by Christine Davenier’s bright, vivacious illustrations. Together they capture the individual curiosities, creativities, and colorfulness of childhood. Each reader sees the special facets that make the “only Me I AM who qualifies to be me; no ME I AM has been before, and none will ever be,” and is furthermore encouraged to embrace their own qualities that create the Me I AM.

Two Sticks by Orel Protopopescu , Anne Wilsdorf (Illustrator). Melanie Kroupa Books. Unpaged. \$16.00. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0-37438-022-8



Protopopescu creatively uses poetic writing with a rhythmic, musical touch to tell the story of Maybelle, who makes music with her “two drum-dee-dum-dee-doo sticks.” The sticks are what get her into trouble in the first place yet also save her in the end. This is a very energetic, get you off your feet, dancing kind of book. The pictures grab young reader’s attention and get them wiggling. This would be a great book for an afternoon read aloud to re-energize the kids.

Maple Syrup Season by Ann Purmell, Jill Weber (Illustrator). Holiday House. Unpaged. \$16.95. Informational Social Studies. Primary. 0. 0-8234-1891-X



The process of collecting maple sap and turning it into syrup and then to sugar on snow is described in some detail. The illustrations bring humor into the telling, as forest animals join the extended family and their pets during these exciting days. A useful glossary and information page about maple sugar lore will appeal to readers who want to know more than is told in the simple text.

Granddad’s Fishing Buddy by Mary Quigley, Stephane Jorisch (Illustrator). Dial Books for Young Readers. 32 pages. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. 0. 0803729421



Reading **Granddad’s Fishing Buddy** brought back memories of learning to fish with my dad. Sara, the main character, gets the chance to go fishing for the first time with her Granddad. Mary Quigley perfectly portrays the quiet of the early morning, the sweet relationship between Sara and her granddad, and the beautiful simplicity of fishing. The story is enriched by the beautiful pen, ink, and watercolor pictures that capture the serenity of the lake and reflect the gentle relationships developed during the fishing trip. This is a wonderful story for any child, especially for those who have had the opportunity to sit quietly in a boat fishing.

The Purple Balloon by Chris Raschka. Random House Children’s Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0375841466



From page one the author tastefully confronts the difficult subject of death with, “nobody likes to talk about dying.” With the use of expressive illustration and tender words, the author helps to coach children and adults alike through the uncomfortable situation of pending death. Raschka begins with the visual portrayal of death by using an elderly balloon as an example and then moves on to talk about the death of a young balloon. The expressively drawn faces, tender watercolor balloons and the simple string bodies fill the pages. Providing an abstract representation of a very real situation, this book has the potential of being a valuable tool for teachers in bringing up a sometimes difficult subject and suggesting ways to deal with critically ill classmates.

The OK Book by Amy Rosenthal, Tom Lichtenheld (Illustrator). HarperCollins. 40 pages. \$12.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. 0. 0061152552



The stick figure artwork in this picture book is deceiving. Take a closer look at that O head and K arms and legs doing all sorts of activities and consider just what things readers might do just okay. Truly, this book

challenges the push for perfection and encourages readers to think about the things they try, the things that offer options, and what they might want to do later in life. Though someone might be okay at flying kites, another person might get that kite stuck in a tree. Both are okay. It is alright to be okay at standing on one's head, climbing, hiding, fishing, and roasting marshmallows. In the exploration of possibilities, a person just might find something worthwhile to do for a lifetime. Written in primary language, the book's content is for all ages.

Alligator Boy by Cynthia Rylant, Diane Goode (Illustrator). Harcourt Children's Books. Unpaged. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. O. 0152060928



After a trip to the natural history museum, a very properly dressed little boy decides he is "tired of being a boy." His auntie solves the problem with an alligator costume that the boy never removes, even when he begins school! He is now an alligator boy, who leads "a good green life." Rylant's humorous rhyming text suits the fantastic acceptance of the child's decision to change; he is still a happy alligator boy when the story ends.

Goode's expressive illustrations with fanciful lines on large expanses of white show his mother's concern (she calls the doctor who tells her to call the vet) and also the boy enjoying "the student life fully." Children will enjoy pondering becoming someone quite different than the regular child they are. A fun book to share with David Small's **Imogene's Antlers**.

Annie and Snowball by Cynthia Rylant, Suec Stevenson (Illustrator). Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 40 pages. \$14.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. O. 1416909389



Annie loved to dress up. When her birthday came, she invited Henry and his family to come dressed up too. The anticipation for a lovely party builds, but when the guests arrive, Annie finds they interpreted dressing up to mean they were to wear Halloween-type costumes. The plot is a bit thin, but the warm sense of family and friendships make a satisfying story for beginning readers.

Dolores Meets her Match by Barbara Samuels. Melanie Kroupa Books. 32 pages. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. O. 0374317585



Dolores was proud of her amazing cat and accepted as the cat expert in her school. Then a new girl, Hillary, arrived with a Siamese kitten from a champion line. The two girls tried to outperform each other with more and more elaborate cat-related school projects. Dolores became discouraged until she and Hillary realized that being friends was better than being competitors. The cartoon-style art tells the story of their competitive relationship with humorous detail.

Vulture View by April Pulley Sayre, Steve Jenkins (Illustrator). Henry Holt & Company. Unpaged. \$21.00. Informational Science. Primary. O. 0-8050-7557-7



A poetic text leads us from page to page as we soar with a vulture looking for food. It is a relief to know that the vulture is not interested in a lovely fox or a bear, or even a snake. No, only the carcass of a dead deer appeals to him. After a meal, as the sun begins to sink, vultures gather in vulture trees where they sleep until the new day dawns. The cut paper collage illustrations capture the black-grey of the vulture against the sky, and in the most striking illustration, the family of vultures gathered on black tree branches

against a red evening sky. A double-page "Get to Know Vultures" section adds interesting information for those who want to know more.

Skippyjon Jones: Color Crazy by Judy Schachner. Dutton Children's Books. 14 pages. \$6.99. Informational Concept. Primary. O. 0525477829



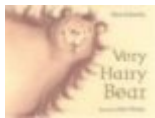
Through Skippyjon Jones, Schachner's crazy color board book reflects the creativity and freedom children often express when coloring. Skippyjon creates an orange tree, pink skies, and more. As his imagination runs wild, young readers are encouraged to learn their colors too. Schachner's soft, simple illustrations and bright-eyed character make this an energetic read, perfect for her young audience.

Dragon Dancing by Carole Lexa Schaefer, Pierr Morgan (Illustrator). Viking. 32 pages. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. Asia (Northern). 0670060844



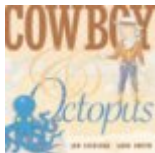
Upon hearing their teacher read a book about dragons, Mei Lin and her classmates make decorations for Mei Lin's birthday. When she starts to make a dragon, the whole group joins in. After the Birthday Dragon is complete, the children "go stomp, bomp-tromping away" through their imaginations. Vivid language such as "slip-sliding across foamy seas" and "creep-crouching through tall forests" will help listeners form their own mental pictures. Though not directly about Chinese culture, this book may be a companion to other texts around the time of the Chinese New Year.

Very Hairy Bear by Alice Schertle, Matt Phelan (Illustrator). Harcourt, Inc.. Unpaged. \$16.00. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0152165681



The "boulder-big" bear with "shaggy, raggy, brownbear hair everywhere" doesn't care about the many indignities he faces that would certainly bother others, except when his "no-hair" nose gets very cold. Schertle's lyrical text and Phelan's humorous illustrations of this endearing, overly large bear that fills the page make this the perfect read aloud for young children, especially those who know a thing or two about icy cold winter days.

Cowboy & Octopus by Jon Scieszka, Lane Smith (Illustrator). Viking. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0670910589



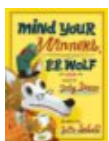
An unlikely pair of best friends you say? Perhaps, but readers who look carefully on the title page will see the safety scissors and missing cut-outs of the two and realize that their meeting has been orchestrated by an imaginative child. The collage illustrations have a retro cartoon look and palette that matches the absurd action and dialogue in each short episode. The duo are sure to entertain the many children who eagerly await each new addition to the growing Scieszka and Smith book collection.

Rabbit's Gift by George Shannon, Laura Dronzer (Illustrator). Harcourt Brace & Company. Unpaged. \$16.00. Folk Literature. Primary. 0. 0152060731



This story is based on a folktale that may have originated in China but has appeared also in Germany, Japan, France and Spain. It is winter and snow covers the ground, making it difficult for the animals to find food. Rabbit discovers not one, but two, turnips in a field. He rolls them home, then wonders whether donkey has found enough to eat that day. Rabbit rolls the turnip to donkey's house and, as the story unfolds, donkey decides to share it with goat, who shares with deer and so on through the story until the turnip arrives back at rabbit's doorstep. The acrylic paintings capture the generosity and beauty of the world of snow and snowflakes.

Mind Your Manners, B.B. Wolf by Judy Sierra, J. Otto Seibold (Illustrator). Alfred A. Knopf. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0375835326



It won't take long for readers who know their wolf stories to guess what B.B. stands for, even though B.B. Wolf is now elderly enough to be living in the Villain Villa Senior Center where he huffs and puffs his way up the hill to get his mail. In this comedy of etiquette, B.B. is invited to the local public library for tea, so he has to brush up on good manners with his friend the crocodile, who admonishes him to smile and not to bite anyone. He sings, apologizes and belches (with a huge, double-page spread BUURRP! that sends everything flying) his way into the hearts of library patrons such as the Three Little Pigs and Little Red Riding Hood. The final illustration of the wolf tossing up a dismayed gingerbread boy cookie as he sings his way home is hilarious. Good manners indeed!

Leaves by David Ezra Stein. G.P. Putnam's Sons. Unpaged. \$15.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0399246363



Never before have I read such a beautiful and creative description of the changing of the seasons. Typically I find the leaves falling and winter approaching a sad time of year, but the way David Ezra Stein explores this simple topic with a child-like curiosity was refreshing. The hero of this tale is a one-year-old bear who experiences his first fall. Confused, and initially concerned, about the falling of his beloved leaves from the trees in his forest, he at first tries to catch them all and put them back. When this turns into an impossible task, the bear settles down for his winter nap only to awaken to the joy and renewal of spring. This is a delightful look at the changing of the seasons that should be shared with all.

The Busy Little Squirrel by Nancy Tafuri. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. Unpaged. \$15.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0689873417



On a fall day, the animals, one by one, asked Squirrel to play but he could not. He was too busy getting ready for fall. This cumulative story is appropriate for preschool children and for beginning readers who can easily catch on to the repetitive text pattern. The attractive illustrations focus on large, realistically drawn animals and include just enough detail to establish the fall setting.

Five Nice Mice by Chisato Tashiro . Penguin Putnam. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0698400585



After being kicked out of the frog concert, the Five Nice Mice form an orchestra of their own. They wholeheartedly gather the utensils needed to make instruments and perform in front of a lively audience with some surprise guests. The double-page illustrations tell much of the story. The lively story of these winsome rodents and their singing frog friends also teaches the lesson of the importance of working together and including others.

If My Dad Were a Dog by Annabel Tellis . Chicken House/Scholastic. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0-439-91387-X



What would you do if your dad was a dog for a day? Imagine the possibilities! The narrator takes her dad for walks in the park, enters him in a dog show, and does many more funny activities with him. This humorous book is filled with rhymes that will keep the reader smiling. It is perfect for children in the early stages of reading, though they may need some help from Dad with a few big words. Tellis uses a very creative and unique style of illustration with real-life photographs of her dog along with boldly colored, simple illustrations on each page. This is a book that will spark a young reader's imagination.

When Turtle Grew Feathers by Tim Tingle, Stacey Schuett (Illustrator). August House, Publishers. Unpaged. \$16.95. Folk Literature. Primary. Native American. 0-87483-777-4



The end pages draw the reader into this Choctaw Indian version of the **Hare and the Tortoise**. There's a whole new cast of characters and some clever twists and turns as Hare sets out to beat Turtle in a race. The illustrations are a delight and complement this version of the story. The faces of the turtle, hare and turkey are sure to be a hit with young readers. This is one to add to a collection of folk tales.

Dog and Bear by Laura Vaccaro Seeger. Roaring Brook Press. 32 pages. \$12.95. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 9781596430532



These three simple stories of friendship are short and sweet, perfect for beginning readers or pre-reading listeners. Told with gentle humor and illustrated in bright primary tones, **Dog and Bear** is a wonderful introduction to classic friendship series like **Frog and Toad** and **George and Martha**. Dog's exuberant optimism balances nicely with Bear's quiet realism in these satisfying adventures.

Amanda Pig, First Grader by Jean Van Leeuwen, Ann Schweninger (Illustrator). Dial Books for Young Readers. 40 pages. \$14.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 0803731817



Amanda Pig was so excited to start first grade, but there were disappointments. She didn't learn to read on the first day. She got lost trying to deliver a note to the principal, and the big kids stole her ball on the playground. This new addition to the **Oliver and Amanda** series will be enjoyed by beginning readers who will be able to identify with Amanda's situations and come to appreciate her optimistic outlook. Cheery, cartoon-style illustrations help new readers follow the action.

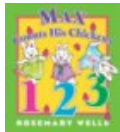
Gizmo by Barry Varela, Ed Briant (Illustrator). Roaring Brook Press. Unpaged. \$16.95. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 1596431156



Professor Ludwig von Glink's walls are full of pictures of famous inventors and thinkers like Benjamin Franklin and Albert Einstein, and he, like those who have preceded him, is excited by his ideas for his complicated perpetual motion contraption. In lengthy, rhyming descriptions filled with wordplay and

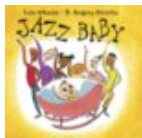
adding more and more gadgets to his experimental gizmo, the creation grows and grows until his entire house, from cellar to roof, is engulfed. What is its purpose? Is it art? Will his “whirring kinetic glory”...soon “go the way of the dinosaur” if the rule-driven government inspector, who “didn’t know what to make of whimsy,” has his way? Ink and wash drawings show the gizmo in all its burgeoning glory, along with the creative professor and his many children. Readers will be gratified to see the surprise visitor being led by his daughter to the new Annex of the City Contemporary Art Museum on the last page.

Max Counts His Chickens by Rosemary Wells. Viking. Unpaged. \$15.99. Informational Concept. Primary. 0. 0670062227



Indefatigable Max and his older sister Ruby are back again in a hilarious counting book. The Easter Bunny, who definitely looks like a relative, hides ten hot-pink marshmallow chicks (not bunnies!) all over the house. Ruby finds each one, as young Max looks in the most ridiculous places. He finds no chicks in the tube of toothpaste that he squirts all over the bathroom and off the page, nor in the coffee can that had been filled with coffee that dribbles from the illustration. Luckily, the Easter Bunny saves the day as Max counts to ten his own way. “One, three, ten, two, six, four, seven, eight, nine, five!” This is a funny read aloud for young children who already know how to count to ten and wouldn’t dream of doing any of the things that Max does.

Jazz Baby by Lisa Wheeler, R. Gregory Christie (Illustrator). Harcourt, Inc.. Unpaged. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. African-American. 0152025227



The rhyming verse of this story of a very jazzy baby and his musical family will have listeners’ toes tapping and hands clapping when they hear the book read aloud...and it begs to be read aloud. Onomatopoeia predominates, from Granpa’s “Toto-Toots” to all the “Snap-Snap-Snaps.” After so much music, the baby can’t help but feel “snoozy-woozy!” Like the text, Christie’s modern, exuberant illustrations dance across the page.

Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identity by Mo Willems. Hyperion Books for Children. Unpaged. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. Multicultural. 1423102991



Trixie and Knuffle Bunny are back, now a few years older, incessantly talking (well, Trixie is anyway) and in Pre-K. When Sonja shows up at school with her own Knuffle Bunny (and they argue about the pronunciation of “knuffle”), Trixie is mortified that hers is not a one-of-a-kind bunny after all. Things go from bad to worse for the girls and their bunnies, until a middle-of-the-night encounter resolves all their problems and yields new first* best friends. Willems’s use of black and white photos as backgrounds for his cartoon-styled characters gives a realistic feel to the setting that will seem so familiar to young readers and listeners of this “love” story.

My Friend is Sad by Mo Willems. Hyperion Books for Children. 57 pages. \$8.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 1423102975



Mo Willems (author of **Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus** and **Knuffle Bunny**) has created a new, funny series for young readers. Meet Elephant Gerald & Piggie, his newest characters! In this story Piggie uses some extravagant means to attempt to cheer up his sad friend, resulting in a heartwarming lesson in friendship. Willems’s straightforward dialogue is accompanied by his trademark simple, yet hilariously expressive illustrations. Mo Willems has created yet another dynamic book for children that they’ll want to read again and again.

Today I Will Fly by Mo Willems. Hyperion Books for Children. 57 pages. \$8.99. Fantasy. Primary. 0. 1423102959



In this installment of the Elephant & Piggie series, Piggie gets the ambitious idea that he is going to learn to fly. Through a series of comical attempts, playfully illustrated by Willems, Piggie tries to prove that he can fly today! This book lives up to the laugh-out-loud comedy we have come to expect from the ever surprising Willems and his silly characters.

Angelina’s Island by Jeanette Winter. Farrar Straus & Giroux. Unpaged. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. Caribbean. 0-37430-349-5



Each morning, Angelina tells her mother she wants to go home. Her “Mama” responds, “We are home, Angelina.” Angelina, now living in New York, dreams of her “Island in the sun; Jamaica.” Winters portrays a

beautifully touching story for primary-aged children adjusting to a new city, country, or even school. The dark, ominous illustrations come to life and brighten as Angelina flashes back to her native land. As Angelina's Mama brings her to a native carnival in Brooklyn, Angelina discovers her "Island in the sun," and now can call New York home.

The Tale of Pale Male: A True Story by Jeanette Winter. Harcourt Children's Books. 32 pages. \$16.00. 0. Primary. 0. 0152059725



When two Red-tailed Hawks made a nest on top of an apartment building on 5th Avenue, New York bird watchers were enthralled. The hawks, Lola and Pale Male, had two chicks that spring. The building residents decided to have the huge nest removed, but bird lovers all over the country were outraged. The hawks were allowed to continue to nest on top of the building and are still there today. Winter begins the book with information about Red-tailed Hawks and ends with factual information about Pale Male and his mates. The simple, colorful illustrations compliment the straightforward text. This book shows children that nature can thrive in even the most unlikely situations.

Every Friday by Dan Yaccarino. Henry Holt & Company. Unpaged. \$16.95. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. 0. 0805077243



No matter what the weather, a young, big city boy and his father ritually walk to the diner for breakfast and talk early every Friday morning. The illustrations seem to place the story in the 1950's, but the author's note states that since his son turned three, they have shared this timeless experience every Friday. A wonderful book—and tradition—to be shared by any father and his child.

Who Likes Rain? by Wong Herbert Yee . Henry Holt & Company. Unpaged. \$14.95. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary. 0. 0-80507-734-0



Who likes rain? The kind where "raindrops hit the awning," and then "gurgle down the gutter out the spout?" Who likes rain? Anyone who reads Yee's story with its lyrical language and brilliantly colored pencil illustrations of a young girl who finds all the creatures that enjoy the April showers. Come along on a joyful adventure and discover why April showers can be a beautiful and delicate celebration of the season.

Primary/Intermediate

Would I Ever Lie to You by Caralyn Buehner, Jack E. Davis (Illustrator). Dial Books for Young Readers. Unpaged. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary/Intermediate. O. 0803727933



“My cousin Ed is such a tease; he says outrageous things with ease. Mostly they’re tales, but sometimes they’re true! And so I’m never quite sure what to do.” This witty yet charming book follows a young boy as he is continually deceived by his cousin Ed. Readers are swept away by the bold colors and immaculate design in the illustrations. Children in primary grades become fully engaged in the flowing tempo of the rhyming lines, and they know how to relate to both the young boy and cousin Ed. **Would I Ever Lie to You?** is a book to be enjoyed by all as it teaches us how, in some cases, revenge can be fun.

Let It Shine: Three Favorite Spirituals Ashley Bryan (Illustrator). Atheneum Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Poetry. Primary/Intermediate. African-American. 0689847327



Bryan’s boldly colored and patterned, joyous cut paper illustrations make these three favorite spirituals—**This Little Light**, **When the Saints**, and **In His Hands**—truly shine. Any reader or singer (the music is included) will know the meaning of these songs just by looking at the illustrations of magical places and celebrating people. His note explains the important reasons for his choices of these three classics.

The Princess and the Pea Rachel Isadora (Reteller). G.P. Putnam’s Sons. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary/Intermediate. Africa (Eastern). 0399246118



Rachel Isadora retells Hans Christian Andersen’s classic tale using an East African setting. The colorful, textured collage illustrations work well with the setting and African characters. The author’s incorporation of Amharic, Somali, and Swahili words and the indigenous dress of Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya into the story adds cultural authenticity. Children will enjoy this fresh variation of a popular fairy tale.

Extra! Extra! Fairy-Tale News from Hidden Forest by Alma Flor Ada, Leslie Tryon (Illustrator). Atheneum Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary/Intermediate. O. 0-689-82582-X



A clever and humorous “newspaper” covers the happenings of a village peopled by characters from familiar childhood stories. Headlines read, “Mysterious Plant Causes Alarm,” and the text of the article quotes Mr. McGregor’s concerns about the giant beanstalk. On the opinion pages, Hetty Henny argues for acceptance of diversity in plant life. A news release from Mexico reports on the travels of Half Chicken. The sports section announces a coming race between the Hare and the Tortoise. An advertisement features Pig Three’s services in bricklaying. Later editions follow new developments in the stories. The newspaper is printed in black and white. Some facing pages have full color art showing the newspaper in the hands of the villagers. Although the color illustrations may appeal to a preschool-K audience, older children with a knowledge of folk tales and familiarity with the style of news writing will most appreciate the humor of the newspaper pages.

Nothing by Jon Agee. Hyperion Books for Children. Unpaged. \$16.99. O. Primary/Intermediate. O. 0786836946



How much is anything—including nothing—worth? Otis soon finds out when his shop is visited by Suzie Gump, the richest lady in town. In this ridiculous look at economic principles gone amuck, Otis proves that “the customer is always right,” even when they’re so very wrong. Agee’s emblematic, humorous illustrations show the amazing frenzy created over nothing.

Anne Hutchinson’s Way by Jeannine Atkins, Michael Dooling (Illustrator). Farrar Straus & Giroux. Unpaged. \$17.00. Biography/Memoir. Primary/Intermediate. O. 0374303657



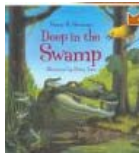
Anne Hutchinson, a Puritan who left England for America in the 1600’s, is known for her courage in ridiculing her minister’s fire and brimstone warnings and asserting her own right to express her religious beliefs. “The Lord blessed us with minds to use and mouths to speak what we see as truth.” Her spirit and determination in the face of terrible penalties are richly dramatized through a well-told narrative and expressive, realistic portraits of Anne and her family and the early American setting. The Afterword shares further information of what happened to the Hutchinsons.

The Day the Stones Walked by T.A. Barron, William Low (Illustrator). Philomel Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary/Intermediate. South America. 0399242635



The moai, the gigantic stone figures of lonely Easter Island, remain one of the world's mysteries. Barron speculates about who carved them and their importance to an ancient civilization in this story of a young boy and his family threatened by a tsunami, and how he is miraculously and magically saved from drowning. The lyrical writing from Pico's point of view—"Some days are small as a rock lizard's eye."—is very well suited to the time and place. Low's glowing, lush, dramatic paintings truly bring the island world and the power of the tsunami and the stone faces to life. An Author's Note discusses Easter Island, the monoliths, tsunamis and the effects of deforestation, theorized as dooming the creative people who once lived on the island. Primary grade children would enjoy hearing the book with its storytelling cadences read aloud.

Deep in the Swamp by Danna Bateman, Brian Lies (Illustrator). Charlesbridge. Unpaged. \$15.95. Informational Math. Primary/Intermediate. 0. 1-57091-506-2



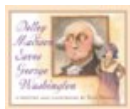
Join in on a colorful adventure and meet the many animals that live near or in this beautiful swamp. From river otters to alligators, Danna Bateman offers creative and song-like rhyming phrases about each animal. The clever use of basic numbering and counting is also involved and adds to the quality of this picture book. This wonderful book has great descriptions along with vibrant colors and elaborate illustrations by Brian Lies. It will be a sure read for classes learning about animals and animal lovers.

The Secret of the Painted House by Marion Dane Bauer, Leonid Gore (Illustrator). Random House. 97 pages. \$11.99. Fantasy. Primary/Intermediate. 0. 0375840796



Emily was exploring the woods around her new home when she discovered an abandoned playhouse. A neighbor told her that the house had been built for a child who had died. Curious, Emily returned and entered the playhouse where she found a painted wall that was an exact replica of the house and woods. A girl, painted in the picture, invited Emily to step into the painting. The girl welcomed Emily in but told her she couldn't get out. Emily was uneasy but became even more frightened when she discovered her young brother had also entered the picture world. The novel is too short to develop character well, but there is plenty of eerie action for the young reader experiencing a first, mysterious ghost story.

Dolley Madison Saves George Washington by Don Brown. Houghton Mifflin. Unpaged. \$16.00. Biography/Memoir. Primary/Intermediate. 0. 0618411992



Well, spunky Dolley Madison, wife of Founding Father and president James Madison, doesn't literally save George Washington the man, but she does command that two servants remove his famous Gilbert Stuart portrait (reproduced in the book, it still is a favorite White House attraction) from the White House and spirits it away right before the British burn the mansion during the War of 1812. This one courageous act shows readers just what kind of woman the first lady was: someone who was much more than a party giver in fancy ball gowns. Delicate watercolor illustrations highlight both the setting and Dolley's indefatigable nature.

600 Black Spots by David A. Carter. Little Simon. Unpaged. \$19.99. Informational Concept. Primary/Intermediate. 0. 1416940928



Whether used as a counting book or appreciated as modern art, this is a pop-up book that will fascinate anyone who opens it. The white "grass" with its 90 spots gently waves on the first double-page spread. Complex shapes in bright primary colors spring out from later spreads, and spots are hidden everywhere. The fauve Kaboom ends the book in spectacular style!

Young Pele: Soccer's First Star by Lesa Cline-Ransome, James E. Ransome (Illustrator). Schwartz and Wade Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Biography/Memoir. Primary/Intermediate. South America. 0375835997



Long before Beckham came on the scene, it was the Brazilian soccer star Pele (who began life as Edson do Nascimento) who sparked American interest in soccer. The focus of this picture book biography is on how Edson became Pele while he was still a young boy thrilling to the sound of "Goooooooooaaal!!!!!" each time he scored. Lush, realistic oil paintings showing the young Pele perfecting his skills and a love of soccer will draw

many young readers, even those who may not have heard of him, to this beautiful book.

Good Enough to Eat by Brock Cole. Farrar Straus & Giroux. Unpaged. \$16.00. Fantasy. Primary/Intermediate. O. 0374327378



A young homeless girl is so poor that she doesn't even have a proper name. The townspeople shun her and call her names like Scraps-and-Smells, Skin-and-Bones, and Sweets-and-Treats, but they soon discover that she is the only one who can save them from a dreadful ogre who keeps snatching and swallowing whole animals and even "a worthy old dame/Saying her prayers." Patterned after old tales with its three trials and unlikely smart and brave hero, the story has a very satisfying ending. Cole's detailed watercolor illustrations set the story in the long ago and provide plenty of action and humor. The girl's transformation—and new name—will be celebrated. This is a great story for reading aloud; be prepared for cries of "read it again!"

The Real Story of Stone Soup by Ying Chang Compestine, Stephane Jorisch (Illustrator). Dutton Childrens' Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Folk Literature. Primary/Intermediate. Asia (Far East). 0525474935



In an appended note the author asserts that the legend of stone soup originated in southeast China. The "real" story is narrated by a lazy fisherman who claims he is the inventor of stone soup while the humorous illustrations showing the three witty Chang Brothers often contradict what he's saying. The brothers' recipe for Egg Drop Stone Soup follows the tale. This is an interesting story to compare with the more familiar European version of the soldiers and their pot of soup.

Playing to Win: The Story Of Althea Gibson by Karen Deans, Elbrite Brown (Illustrator). Holiday House. 32 pages. \$16.95. Biography/Memoir. Primary/Intermediate. African-American. 0823419266



This lucid picture book presents the achievements of a remarkable woman, Althea Gibson, who broke the race, class, and gender barriers in tennis. It is a fitting tribute on the fiftieth anniversary of Gibson's first tennis championship.

The Boy Who Painted Dragons by Demi. Margaret K. McElderry Books. 40 pages. \$21.99. Fantasy. Primary/Intermediate. Asia (Southern). 1-4169-2469-8



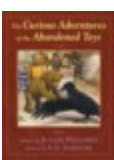
Ping is a young Chinese boy who loves to paint dragons, even though he is secretly terrified of them. When the Heavenly Dragon visits, he gives Ping the opportunity to face his fears and learn the wisdom of the dragons. There are many layers to this book, which could lead to thoughtful discussions for intermediate grade readers, while being enjoyed on a less deep level by younger ones. The lush, Chinese influenced illustrations, with their vibrant golds and reds, are intricately detailed and beg to be studied by the reader.

Jazz on a Saturday Night by Leo & Diane Dillon. Blue Sky Press. Unpaged. \$16.99. Poetry. Primary/Intermediate. African-American. 0590478931



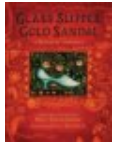
In a jazzy song included on an accompanying CD, the Dillons explore the mesmerizing magic of such African American jazz immortals as John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Charlie Parker, Ella Fitzgerald, and others who didn't ever actually all play together except in the pages of this book. The eager audience dressed in their best focuses on the stage and then claps, swings and sways as the music entralls them. The stylized, boldly patterned art recreates the time period when jazz became the people's music in the 40's and 50's. "Outta sight!"

The Curious Adventures of the Abandoned Toys by Julian Fellowes, S.D. Schindler (Illustrator). Henry Holt & Company. 60 pages. \$17.95. Fantasy. Primary/Intermediate. O. 0805075267



In the tradition of **The Velveteen Rabbit** and other fantasies where toys come to life, many different stuffed animals, and one imperious porcelain doll, all find themselves discarded and unceremoniously left in the garbage dump. The story tells of the power of love and loyalty, and of the importance of belonging. The evocative illustrations realistically portray once lovely and well loved characters and surroundings that may be a bit shabby yet also quite homey and comforting. Young children will love hearing the uplifting survival story again and again.

Glass Slipper, Gold Sandal: A Worldwide Cinderella by Paul Fleischman, Julie Paschkis (Illustrator). Henry Holt & Company. Unpaged. \$16.95. Folk Literature. Primary/Intermediate. Multicultural. 080507953X



As has been done countless times around the world, a mother and her daughter sit on a couch, reading a Cinderella book together. Intermingling cultural and story elements from some of the hundreds of Cinderella stories found throughout the world, Fleischman creates an intriguing tale of the familiar girl with her familiar problem but with some not-as-familiar fairy godmothers, clothing and types of footwear. As each new story element is introduced, Paschkis's intricately patterned illustrations echo the country represented, from China to Indonesia, to Iraq, Korea, Ireland and beyond. A perfect introduction to this very old story that will send students searching for other versions.

Knock, Knock! Saxton Freymann and 14 others (Illustrator). Dial Books for Young Readers. 2007. 32 pages. \$16.99. Informational Concept. Primary/Intermediate. 0. 0-8037-3152-3



Fourteen well known children's book artists, including Tomie de Paola, Chris Raschka, David Small and Jon Muth, illustrate this rollicking collection of knock knock jokes. Each joke uses two pages; the question is asked on the first page, then the reader turns the page to find the answer depicted with both text and a humorous illustration. This book was a great hit with children who had the opportunity to see it, but be prepared to hear many knock knock jokes after children have read it.

Moxy Maxwell Does Not Love Stuart Little by Peggy Gifford. Schwartz and Wade Books. 92 pages. \$12.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary/Intermediate. 0. 0375839151



An endearing almost-4th grader, Moxy Maxwell must finish her summer reading assignment before school begins tomorrow. The problem is that she hasn't even started. **Stuart Little** spent all summer with her but never managed to get read. This narrative is technically written in 3rd person, but astute readers will catch that our narrator is likely Moxy herself. Moxy's big plans for reading **Stuart Little** always seem to come undone by Moxy's other interests and adventures. Third and fourth grade students will laugh at Moxy's misadventures and relate to the threats coming from her mother. This book makes a fun back-to-school read-aloud for upper primary or younger intermediate classrooms.

Catching the Moon by Myla Goldberg, Chris Sheban (Illustrator). Arthur A. Levine Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Folk Literature. Primary/Intermediate. 0. 0-439-57686-5



Myla Goldberg puts an interesting twist on where the moon goes when it's not in the sky. Once a month, the man in the moon enjoys a cup of tea with the crazy old woman who fishes with a mouse at night. When, the old fisherwoman entertains her mysterious guest, the sky is moonless. This delightful story has dazzling, touchable pictures and a storyline that will make any reader chuckle. A perfect story for learning about tides and the moon, **Catching the Moon** will leave "luminous footprints" on your imagination.

Owen & Mzee: The Language of Friendship by Isabella Hatkoff, Craig Hatkoff, Paula Kahumbu, Peter Greste (Illustrator), Peter Greste (Illustrator). Scholastic. 40 pages. \$16.99. Informational Science. Primary/Intermediate. 0. 0439899591



This is the true story of a young hippo, Owen, who was separated from his mother during the 2004 tsunami. Owen was rescued and taken to Haller Park nature preserve in Mombasa where he immediately bonded with Mzee, a very old, male Aldabra tortoise. This unusual friendship is chronicled with full page photographs and interesting narrative that provides many details about Kenya, hippos, Aldabra tortoises, and Haller Park. Children of all ages will fall in love with Owen and Mzee.

Dogs and Cats by Steve Jenkins. Houghton Mifflin. Unpaged. \$16.00. Informational Science. Primary/Intermediate. 0. 0618507671



Are you a dog or cat lover? Or do you have questions about both kinds of domesticated mammals? Jenkins has created the perfect book since you can flip it one way to read about cats or the other way to read about dogs. The history and characteristics of dogs and cats are often compared no matter which way the book is read, with a small gray silhouette and facts about one on the pages that are primarily about the other. While the information provided is quite fascinating, the large and highly realistic torn paper collages of

many types of cats and dogs will draw even young children to the book. The paper itself is sometimes smooth or wrinkled or shaggy but always perfectly suited to the cat or dog that is pictured. The book serves as an intriguing introduction to the animals with whom so many of us happily share our homes.

Living Color by Steve Jenkins. Houghton Mifflin. Unpaged. \$17.00. Informational Science. Primary/Intermediate. O. 0618708979



One look at the brilliant, very colorful cover, and there's no doubt what this book is about! Vivid creatures throughout nature, as well as the purpose for the wide array of color, are explored in this informative text. Each double-page spread introduces a different color—red, blue, green, yellow, pink, purple, orange—and those in the animal kingdom associated with each. Just enough information is given to pique young biologists' curiosity. As in all of Jenkins' books, the realistic cut paper portraits dominate the pages and draw the reader in.

Wind Flyers by Angela Johnson, Loren Long (Illustrator). Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 32 pages. \$16.99. Historical Fiction. Primary/Intermediate. African-American. 068984879X



There are few children's books about the African American participation in World War II, and even fewer that are intended for a younger audience. **Wind Flyers** tells the story of one of the Tuskegee Airmen, the young narrator's uncle, who loved to fly, even as a child when he jumped off the chicken coop. He got the opportunity to fly in the war, and he never wanted to stop. The text is simple yet lyrical. It glosses over the concept of war, but demonstrates the contributions made by the Tuskegee pilots. The illustrations are large, atmospheric and colorful. They give the reader a sense of the joy the young pilot got from flying. They show the proud young African American men in the Tuskegee squadron. The story also touches on the lack of opportunities for African American pilots after the war.

Four Legs Bad, Two Legs Good! by D.B. Johnson. Houghton Mifflin. Unpaged. \$16.00. Fantasy. Primary/Intermediate. O. 0618809090



Are two legs really better than four? They can't be better than 18! Johnson's barnyard revolt against Orvie, the lazy pig who insists he's doing the big work on the animal-run farm, by Duck (who is also two-legged) and her friends shows the value of teamwork and a just leader. Even young children can't miss the message conveyed with the help of cartoon-styled illustrations of the angular, tumbledown farm and its personable occupants. A nod is given to George Orwell's **Animal Farm**.

A Picture for Marc by Eric A. Kimmel, Matthew Trueman (Illustrator). Random House. 101 pages. \$11.99. Biography/Memoir. Primary/Intermediate. Europe (Eastern). 037583253X



Marc Chagall's art is as accessible to children as is this readable story of how he became a painter when his poor, Russian Jewish family was sure there was absolutely no value to be found in "pitchkas." Trueman's fanciful illustrations give life to the artist and town where he lived. Another fine addition to the transitional books in the **Stepping Stone** series.

Walter the Farting Dog: Banned from the Beach by William Kotzwinkle, Glenn Murray, Elizabeth Gundy, Audrey Colman (Illustrator). Dutton Children's Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary/Intermediate. O. 0-52547-812-4



In the fifth installment by the trio, Walter the farting dog takes a family vacation and gets banned from beach for obvious reasons. Using bold, contrasting colors, illustrator Audrey Colman creates a digitally designed, comic masterpiece. Children of all ages will be laughing their way through the pages as Walter captivates the audience with the destruction a simple fart can cause. Readers will definitely be cheering for this unlikely hero.

The End by David LaRochelle, Richard Egelski (Illustrator). Arthur A. Levine Books. 40 pages. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary/Intermediate. O. 0439640113



From the end to the beginning, or from the beginning to the end, this picture book provides a suspenseful, sequential journey for readers. Instead of a title page, the first page features a “The End” sign tacked on the castle door. “And they all lived happily ever after” begins the story of a soggy knight who falls in love with a clever princess whose bowl of homemade lemonade puts out the fire flaming in his red beard, which was caused by a sad, green dragon’s giggling. Add to those characters an angry, hungry giant, an enormous, rolling tomato, and one hundred bunnies, and the stage is set for a madcap, fantastical adventure, all told backwards. The illustrations are perfectly paired with the carefully chosen text, and there are stories-within-the-story on each page. Readers will love trying to read it from back to front, as well as attempting backward story-writing of their own. Look to the end pages for the visual story before and after the actual pages of text.

The Zoo by Suzy Lee. Kane/Miller Book Publishers. Unpaged. \$15.95. Fantasy. Primary/Intermediate. Asia (Far East). 1933605286



Suzy Lee offers a unique, visually complex look at a trip to the zoo in this wonderfully creative picture book set in Korea. She has managed to capture both the colorful, exciting adventure that a zoo offers in a child’s eyes and the chaperoning stresses of parenthood. The illustrations nicely demonstrate the contrast between the bland, mundane zoo the parents see and the bright, colorful zoo experienced by the child, which creatively captures the way a child’s imagination can soar. This is certainly an exciting trip to the zoo for everyone.

Henry’s Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad by Ellen Levine, Kadir Nelson (Illustrator). Scholastic. Unpaged. \$16.99. Biography/Memoir. Primary/Intermediate. African-American. 043977733X



A solemn young boy stares at the reader from the cover, compelling us to open the book and read his story. Henry’s mother had warned him that even though things were good for them in the big house with a good master, leaves are torn from trees “like slave children are torn from their families.” Henry is separated from his family as a child and again as a father and husband. He must be free and eventually has the most ingenious idea for escaping; he allows himself to be nailed into a wooden box and shipped north to Philadelphia. Nelson’s dramatic, realistic paintings set the tone, from the harshness of slavery to the joy of freedom, throughout this true story. The combination of his illustrations and Levine’s evocative text gives readers a true sense of what the Underground Railroad was and what it meant for all those who found their way north by whatever means were available to them.

At Gleason’s Gym by Ted Lewin. Roaring Brook Press. Unpaged. \$17.95. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary/Intermediate. Multicultural. 1596432314



Lewis captures all the sights and sounds of the famous training facility of fighters such as Muhammad Ali while telling the true story of 9-year-old National Silver Gloves Champion Sugar Boy Younan, who like many others, including girls and women, train at the gym. “Bam, bam, BAM! Pop Pop! Smack!” go the gloves; “the air smells like a thousand worn sneakers.” With these kinds of atmospheric descriptions and the detailed, realistic paintings of the place and those who spend so much time there, readers will feel as though they’ve visited too.

Gooney the Fabulous by Lois Lowry, Middy Thomas (Illustrator). Houghton Mifflin. 94 pages. \$15.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary/Intermediate. O. 061876691X



Spunky 2nd grade class leader Gooney Bird Greene, with her original outfits and gungho attitude, is back. This time she has the perfect idea for having the class write their own animal fables just as Aesop did long ago. Children’s creativity is celebrated, and at the same time, Gooney Bird’s classmate Nicholas’s problem with an overabundance of siblings is solved.

Samsara Dog by Helen Manos, Julie Vivas (Illustrator). Kane/Miller Book Publishers. Unpaged. \$17.95. Informational Social Studies. Primary/Intermediate. O. 1933605510



In order to clearly explain the ancient Buddhist beliefs about the wheel of life, birth and rebirth, and Samsara and Nirvana to children, the author tells the story of Dog, who lives a wide variety of lives before he finally gives unconditional love, the greatest gift of all, and reaches Nirvana, never to return again. Vivas’s gentle

watercolor illustrations give life and character to Dog in all his reincarnations, when he is on his own or with all his different owners in the many settings where he lived his lives.

Strong Man: The Story of Charles Atlas by Meghan McCarthy. Alfred A. Knopf. Unpaged. \$15.99. Biography/Memoir. Primary/Intermediate. O. 0375929401



Any Baby Boomer who read comic books growing up probably has seen Charles Atlas ads for how to become strong and fit rather than “soft, frail, skinny or flabby”. Younger readers will be intrigued to learn how a scrawny Italian immigrant, Angelo Siciliano (the 98-pound weakling who had sand kicked into his face at the beach in front of his date), transformed himself into the World’s Most Beautiful Man who was used as the model for 75 statues around the country. McCarthy’s cartoon-styled illustrations feature the body-builder who eventually has muscles as big as his protruding eyes. She also gives a good sense of the historical time period and life in New York 100 years ago. In this time of renewed emphasis on children’s fitness, the exercises featured at the end of the story and philosophy for a healthy, Charles Atlas lifestyle are quite timely.

The Furry-Legged Teapot by Tim Myers, Robert McGuire (Illustrator). Marshall Cavendish. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Primary/Intermediate. Asia (Far East). 0761452958



The story of Yoshi, an impetuous young tanuki (a magical animal similar to a raccoon) who eventually escapes his fate of being half teapot, half tanuki, is based upon the traditional tanuki tales told in Japan but with a much happier ending, reminiscent of that of William Steig’s *Sylvester and the Magic Pebble*. The Japanese influenced illustrations are very important in helping young readers understand the setting and the main character.

Face to Face with Dolphins by Linda Nicklin, Flip Nicklin (Illustrator). National Geographic Society. 32 pages. \$16.95. Informational Science. Primary/Intermediate. O. 1426301413



Have you ever wanted to swim with dolphins? The lucky photographer and author of this book have had the awesome privilege of being face to face with these graceful, intriguing animals. Their book tells a bit about their encounters with dolphins, but it also gives the reader tons of basic facts about these animals—from what they eat and where they live, to how they like to have fun and manage to sleep under water. This is a beautifully photographed and accessibly laid out introduction to the fascinating world of dolphins.

The Lemonade Club by Patricia Polacco. Philomel Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary/Intermediate. O. 0399245405



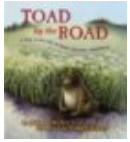
The opening illustration in the book shows best friends Traci and Marilyn hugging Miss Wichelman, their 5th. grade teacher whom they love. There’s a large basket of lemons on her desk which is used by the teacher every day to talk about the old adage “if life hands you a lemon...make lemonade.” In very realistic ways, everyone in her class helps Marilyn face her battle with leukemia. Eventually their teacher reveals her own battle with breast cancer. The foreboding turns to joy with the happy ending. The author shares that the club is based on the real Lemonade Club begun long ago by her daughter, Traci, and her best friend and teacher.

Midsummer Knight by Gregory Rogers. Roaring Brook Press. Unpaged. \$16.95. Fantasy. Primary/Intermediate. O. 1596431830



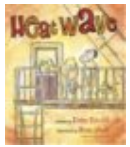
Bear returns for another adventure in this wordless companion book to *The Boy, The Bear, The Baron, The Bard*. He floats dreamily down the Thames River until he reaches a magic land reminiscent of the setting in Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. With his elfin sidekick, he battles with the knights of an evil fairy (who greatly resembles the Bard in the first book) and is imprisoned in the dungeon with the true king and queen of the realm. Bear eventually turns the tables in this fast-paced adventure and subdues the evil pretender to the throne, who is dressed in an outfit that looks like a comical bee costume topped with pink and red polka-dotted boxers. As in all good fantasies, Bear returns to the real world but has a reward to remind him of all he accomplished during his night with the knights. While it is easy to enjoy and follow the story by “reading” the many illustrations on each double-page spread, those familiar with Shakespeare’s play will enjoy Bear’s foray into this mystical world even more.

Toad by the Road: A Year in the Life of These Amazing Amphibians by Joanne Ryder, Maggie Kneen (Illustrator). Henry Holt & Company. 37 pages. \$16.95. Poetry. Primary/Intermediate. O. 080507354X



Everything a young naturalist would want to know about toads throughout the seasons is revealed in this fascinating collection of poems that are often accompanied by brief, fact-filled paragraphs. How are frogs and toads different? Which have teeth? What happens when a toad grows too big for his skin? “I shed it/Like a sweater/I yank it off/Over my head.” And in the following paragraph, Ryder reveals that “toads don’t waste their castoff skin—they eat it!” A fact guaranteed to bring cheerful groans from readers! Realistic, detailed watercolor illustrations in soft browns and greens, with the occasional cloud toad looking on, give careful readers plenty of extra setting and toad information.

Heat Wave by Eileen Spinelli, Betsy Lewin (Illustrator). Harcourt Children’s Books. 32 pages. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary/Intermediate. O. 015216779X



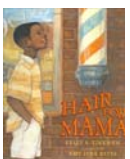
Things in the town of Lumberville are hot, especially since it’s long before the convenience of air conditioning, so hot that residents will do just about anything to beat the heat. Someone takes cold showers and cleans the house in her swim suit. A children’s lemonade stand resorts to selling only ice. Pets and humans alike search for creative ways to find some cool air. When all have a similar dream on a Saturday night, images of water and rain become reality. The rainy celebration brightens moods and creates connections. Rhyming text, accompanied by the artist’s cartoon-like watercolor illustrations, make this book a perfect read-aloud for the hot days of summer or for anytime we want to bring back the memory.

Sugar Cane: A Caribbean Rapunzel by Patricia Storace, Raúl Colón (Illustrator). Hyperion. Unpaged. \$16.99. Folk Literature. Primary/Intermediate. Caribbean. 0-7868-0791-1



Patricia Storace creates a new twist on the traditional Rapunzel. On a Caribbean island a young father sets out to find sugar cane to curb his pregnant wife’s cravings. Little does he know he will have to pay for this sugar cane with his first and only child. This little girl has been dealt a horrible fate before she is even born. Readers can follow along on her adventurous journey as she is locked away in a tower. The Caribbean influenced illustrations featuring waving hair and seas. The exciting story will engage the reader’s curiosity until its dramatic end.

Hair for Mama by Kelly A. Tenkharry, Amy June Bates (Illustrator). Dial Books for Young Readers. Unpaged. \$16.99. contemporary Realistic Fiction. Primary/Intermediate. African-American. 0-80372-955-3,



It is October, and for the Carter family that means it is picture time! But this year Mama doesn’t want to be in the family photo because she has lost all her hair due to her cancer treatments. Eight-year-old Marcus goes on a quest to find Mama some hair, but instead he discovers something even more important. This touching story shows the struggles of a family faced with a life-threatening illness. Accompanying the story are beautifully detailed pictures with muted colors and soft edges that help capture the many powerful emotions of this inspiring family. In the end, *Hair for Mama* shows that love truly conquers all.

The Girl’s Like Spaghetti by Lynne Truss, Bonnie Timmons (Illustrator). G.P. Putnam’s Sons. Unpaged. \$16.99. Informational Concept. Primary/Intermediate. O. 0399247068



The importance of the apostrophe is illustrated with paired sentences, identical except for the use of the apostrophe. The giant kids’ playground shows a very large playground, while the giant kid’s playground shows a very large child at play. Author’s notes at the end explain each difference referring to contractions, singular and possessive nouns. The simple, wavy lines of the illustrations contribute to this lighthearted approach to standard punctuation. The book is a good companion to the author’s earlier title, **Eats, Shoots & Leaves**, that focuses on comma usage.

Intermediate

Satchel Paige: Don't Look Back by David A. Adler, Terry Widener (Illustrator). Harcourt Brace & Company. Unpaged. \$16.00. Biography/Memoir. Intermediate. African-American. 0152055851



As Leroy Paige works at the train station carrying suitcases on a stick fitted with rope, someone thinks he looks like a satchel tree, and a nickname and legend are born. Adler traces Satchel's life from his birth in 1906, to his stint in reform school, to finally making the majors at age 42, an age when most modern players have retired. On display throughout is an historical time period when overt racism methodically prevents Paige and other Black ballplayers from using their talents to the fullest extent. Deft, crisp text and rounded, caricature-like illustrations tell a story that is as smooth and flowing as one of Satchel's pitches.

Jack Plank Tells Tales by Natalie Babbitt. Scholastic. 128 pages. \$15.95. Historical Fiction. Intermediate. 0. 0545004969



When Jack Plank decides to get out of the pirate business, he finds himself at Saltwash, an island port, without a proper occupation. He convinces Mrs. DelFresno, proprietess of a boardinghouse, to allow him to reside there for a week, providing he finds steady work and proves himself to be upstanding. Nina, the good woman's daughter, offers to escort Jack around town in search of an appropriate career. Each night at dinner, Jack and Nina enthusiastically relate the tale of the job they investigated that day and why it was unsuitable for the former pirate. Jack always has a pirating story to share, reinforcing just why he cannot be a farmer, a baker, a fortune-teller, a fisherman, a barber, a goldsmith, an actor, or a magician. The other boardinghouse residents relish his stories and provide animated responses. In the end, the problem of Jack Plank's career is solved quite logically, as the title suggests. Readers and listeners will love Jack's pirate adventures and how he relates the tales to his adverse reaction to the various occupations he considers. The text is accompanied by lively black and white drawings.

Stealing Home—Jackie Robinson: Against the Odds by Robert Burleigh, Mike Wimmer (Illustrator). Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. Unpaged. \$16.99. Biography/Memoir. Intermediate. African-American. 0689862768



On the one hand, Burleigh lyrically chronicles Robinson's athletic grace in stealing home in front of adoring fans and congratulatory teammates. On the other hand, on each double-page spread, detailed biographical information is given in baseball card replicas under the larger text about that one spectacular World Series game play. Baseball fans, and those who know Robinson more for courageously breaking the major league baseball color barrier in the 1940's, will relish the details of the great man's life and career shared by Burleigh. Wimmer's dramatic oil paintings realistically and arrestingly capture the fans, setting and suspense of the sprint and slide for home. His early close-up portrait of a pensive Jackie Robinson, waiting for the right moment to make his move home, shows his determination on and off the field.

Tracking Trash: Flotsam, Jetsam, and the Science of Ocean Motion by Loree Griffin Burns. Houghton Mifflin. 56 pages. \$18.00. Informational Science. Intermediate. 0. 0618581316



In this fascinating account of ocean currents and the research of Curt Ebbesmeyer who uses trash to map them, readers will come to appreciate the importance of knowing about what the ocean does and where it goes. His work with trash began when his mother told him about a big spill of cargo containers filled with Nike shoes into the Pacific Ocean. As thousands of sneakers washed up on shores all over, the science of mapping currents took great strides. There are many vivid photographs, maps and a glossary that bring the story to life for readers. Those interested in the science behind David Wiesner's *Flotsam* will also appreciate the list of other books and websites included at the end of the book. Another great addition to the Scientists in the Field series.

Emi and the Rhino Scientist by Mary Kay Carson, Tom Uhlman (Illustrator). Houghton Mifflin. 57 pages. \$18.00. Informational Science. Intermediate. 0. 0618646396



This book is actually a love story about Terri Roth, director of the Center for Conservation and Research of Endangered Wildlife, and Emi, an endangered Sumatran rhino living at the Cincinnati Zoo. With a profusion of informative photos and plenty of understandably explained scientific information, the fascinating story

of how Emi was finally able to become the first Sumatran rhino in captivity in 100 years to reproduce with Terri's help is told. This is another fine addition to the excellent, lonely-lab-scientist-stereotype breaking **Scientists in the Field** series.

No Talking by Andrew Clements. Simon & Schuster. 146 pages. \$15.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Intermediate. O. 1416909834



Clement's latest school story begins with Dave Packer, a usually talkative member of Mrs. Overby's rambunctious 5th. grade class, in his fourth hour of not talking. Readers are assured that they'll soon learn why he's decided not to speak. The ensuing "no talking" contest between the boys and the girls in the class takes some funny twists and turns that will ring true to anyone who has spent time in an elementary school classroom or lunchroom. Who wins? The perfect ending requires that I reveal "not a word."

The Castle Corona by Sharon Creech. Joanna Cotler Books/HarperCollins 336 pages. \$18.99. Fantasy. Intermediate. O. 0060846216



Creech has woven the elements of a classic folktale into this warm story about discovery and acceptance of who—and what—you are. Of note is the character of the wordsmith, who tells enchanting stories that remind his listeners of their better selves. And who is to say there aren't any happy endings?

Skyscraper by Lynn Curlee. Atheneum Books. 48 pages. \$17.99. Informational Social Studies. Intermediate. O. 0689844891



"More than just a building," the American invention *skyscraper* has long been a symbol of aspiration and accomplishment. Lynn Curlee's survey of the history of skyscrapers begins with the social and economic contexts which led to the birth of the form and follows through the decades to the present and future skyscraper designs. Curlee introduces readers to key architects and architectural styles and engages them with biography-like narratives of skyscrapers' births. Acrylic paintings in strong, but steely-muted colors establish a sense of awe and otherworldliness. While this may not be a book for every child, children drawn towards construction and history will be rewarded here.

The Strongest Man in the World by Nicolas Debon. Groundwood Books/Douglas & McIntyre. 27 pages. \$17.95. Biography/Memoir. Intermediate. Canada. 0888997319



This graphic-novel inspired biography is a perfect tool for grabbing reluctant readers. The book opens with an ailing Louis Cyr, known as The Strongest Man in the World, telling his daughter about his life. Through the comic-book-style illustrations and text, we learn that Cyr entertained audiences throughout Europe and North America with his amazing strength. He could lift boulders weighing 450 pounds, resist the pull of four horses each weighing 1,200 pounds, and lift a 314 pound barrel of cement onto his shoulder with one hand. Debon's choice of topic and format will introduce the genre of biography to students who would likely be unwilling to pick up most biographies. In addition to source material, Debon also includes an afterword which gives background information about traveling circuses and historical weightlifters.

The Ghost of Poplar Point by Cynthia DeFelice. Farrar Straus & Giroux. 183 pages. \$16.00. Fantasy. Intermediate. O. 0-374-32540-5



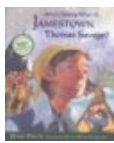
Allie Nichols, the ghost solver in three earlier books by the author, is back, and this time she's on summer vacation and hoping to not see any ghosts. Unfortunately, as she participates in the pageant to celebrate the founding of the town, the ghost seems to find her. The ghost is a young Seneca Indian girl, who ultimately leads Allie to a centuries-old secret about the true relationship of the Indians and the townspeople during the Revolutionary War days, as well as helping Allie uncover information about a land deal being proposed by an unscrupulous developer. Fans of the earlier Allie ghost stories are also sure to enjoy this one.

The Fabled Fourth Graders of Aesop Elementary School by Candace Fleming. Schwartz and Wade Books. 186 pages. \$15.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Intermediate. Multicultural. 0375836721



Not a single teacher is willing to teach the “precocious, high-energy, robust, special” incoming 4th. grade class, but luckily for Mrs. Struggles, the school principal, exotic Mr. Jupiter shows up just in time to take over. Each episode in this hilarious book concludes with a moral a la Aesop, the writer of fables for whom the school is named. Classmates include math-challenged Calvin Tallywong who soon realizes just how sorry he is that he wished to go back to kindergarten (“Be careful what you wish for—it might come true.”) and Melvin Moody, “The Boy Who Cried Lunch Monitor” falsely too many times (“Liars are not believed even when they tell the truth.”) There are also many other aptly named characters like mousy librarian Paige Turner and iron-fisted, bullhorn wielding lunchroom monitor Mrs. Bunz (sure to get a laugh if the book is read aloud!). This is one book to turn to when students need a break from spelling, geography or other challenging subjects.

Who’s Saying What in Jamestown, Thomas Savage? by Jean Fritz, Sally Wren Comport (Illustrator). Putnam & Grosset. 62 pages. \$18.99. Historical Fiction. Intermediate. Native American. 0399246444



Jean Fritz has done a remarkable job of introducing us to Thomas Savage, a young English boy living in Jamestown in 1607. At the request of John Smith, Thomas lived with the Algonquians and learned their language, becoming an interpreter for them and a friend of Powhatan. Though Fritz had no diaries to draw on and very few letters that tell much about how Thomas Savage viewed his world, she brings to life the relationships between the Jamestown settlers and the various native people who lived in that area. The story also touches on the relationship between Pocahontas and John Smith and later with John Rolfe, whom she married. Fritz tells us in her introduction that this is a work of historical fiction, yet she is meticulous in her research and includes a useful bibliography for those who want to know more about people Thomas Savage would have known.

The Whale Scientists: Solving the Mystery of Whale Strandings by Fran Hodgkins. Houghton Mifflin. 63 pages. \$18.00. Informational Science. Intermediate. 0. 0618556737



After a comprehensive introduction to the history of whales and their often tragic encounters with man, Hodgkins considers the many theories about why they strand themselves on beaches around the world. Her passion for these endangered creatures is evident in her reverant descriptions of their majesty and their plight. Many photos are included to spark interest and give further information to young whale enthusiasts and future scientists.

Pippi Longstocking by Astrid Lindgren, Lauren Child (Illustrator), Tiina Nunnally (Translator). Viking. 203 pages. \$25.00. Fantasy. Intermediate. Europe (Scandinavia). 0670062766



Pippi triumphantly returns in this newly illustrated, wonderfully designed and translated edition of Lindgren’s classic tale. She will be a heroic wonder to those children who have not yet met her and her friends, including her little African monkey and horse. From her tightly braided, carrot-colored hair to her freckled nose to her outrageous stockings, they will know right away that Pippi is a spirited girl who relishes her freedom from adult intervention. School? After one day, she knows it’s just not for her. The circus? She outperforms all performers. Generations of readers have loved Pippi; Child’s inimitable illustration style adds a modern, new dimension to this spunky character.

Old Penn Station by William Low. Henry Holt & Company. Unpaged. \$16.95. Informational Social Studies. Intermediate. 0. 0805079254



Low doesn’t so much tell what New Yorkers lost when the original Penn Station was torn down to make way for Madison Square Garden as show the impact of the destruction with dramatically lit illustrations of the majestic building that had a main concourse that “looked like a magical spider-web of metal and glass.” The most poignant illustration has all of the once formidable columns and statues now smashed and dumped as trash on a moonlight night in the New Jersey Meadowlands. The one positive outcome of the tragic loss is that organizations like the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, that saved Grand Central Station from Penn Station’s fate, have sprung up around the country.

The Adventures of Thor the Thunder God by Lise Lunge-Larsen, Jim Madsen (Illustrator). Houghton Mifflin. 76 pages. \$19.95. Folk Literature. Intermediate. Europe (Scandinavia). 0618473017



What reader or listener can resist these well told, entertaining tales of the mighty Viking god Thor who kept the world safe from evil giants? Who won't want to repeatedly study the dramatic, classically styled paintings, touched with a wry modern sensibility, of Thor's world and those who inhabit it? Who won't think of his mighty hammer, Mjolnir the Thunderbolt, every time there's a loud thunderstorm? The dramatic book is beautifully designed with pages and paintings edged in complicated Viking designs and text set in Trump Mediaeval font.

This collection of tales of the Viking gods and their opponents will especially appeal to boys who will love the action-packed stories from ancient Viking storytellers. For those unfamiliar with the Norse names, a handy glossary and pronunciation guide is included.

The Escape of Oney Judge: Martha Washington's Slave Finds Freedom by Emily Arnold McCully. Farrar Straus & Giroux. 32 pages. \$16.00. Biography/Memoir. Intermediate. African-American. 0374322252



McCully tells the fascinating true story of one of Martha Washington's slaves who escaped during George Washington's term in office. Martha brought Oney to Philadelphia when George took office. After seeing all the free Blacks living there, Oney decided she wanted her freedom too. After her escape Oney was seen in New Hampshire, and when the Washingtons heard of her whereabouts, they sent people to bring her back to Mount Vernon. Oney managed to elude them, and she remained free for the rest of her life. The picture book format gives readers a great deal of information about the protagonists and early New England and makes this story accessible to younger readers. Although the book is somewhat fictionalized biography, **The Escape of Oney Judge** includes an author's note about the real Oney Judge and her sources of information.

Lawn Boy by Gary Paulsen. Wendy Lamb Books. 96 pages. \$12.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Intermediate. 0. 0385746865



Beginning with a birthday gift of an ancient lawn mower, a series of coincidences lead to the 12-year-old protagonist running a summer lawn business, investing in the stock market, sponsoring a prize fighter, standing up to some really bad guys, and ending up rich. And this is all because his dotty grandmother gave him his grandfather's old lawn mower. This very funny look at a summer lawn mowing business is sure to delight young fans of Paulsen and to create new fans as well. Minnesota kids will enjoy the Eden Prairie setting.

On the Wings of Heroes by Richard Peck. Dial Books. 148 pages. \$16.99. Historical Fiction. Intermediate. 0. 0803730810



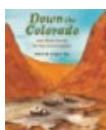
Richard Peck, a master storyteller, gives the reader a true sense of everyday life in the Midwest during World War II. The young protagonist, Davy Bowman, tells how his family, school, and neighborhood changed because of the war. His older brother joins the military, his teacher leaves to work in a defense plant, and his difficult grandparents come to live with his family. Davy and his friends collect scrap for the war effort and his once light-hearted father becomes the neighborhood air raid warden. Their lives are never quite the same again. As usual, Peck has filled his book with humor, pathos, interesting characters, and insights into the time period.

Rickshaw Girl by Mitali Perkins, Jamie Hogan (Illustrator). Charlesbridge. 91 pages. \$13.95. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Intermediate. Asia (Southeast). 1580893090



Naima's alpina decorations are always the most beautiful in her village, but they don't help her family earn money. As a girl she can't help her family drive her father's rickshaw which makes her think, "If only I had been born a boy." Over the course of the story she proves to her family that she can use her skill in art to help her family because she is a girl. Set in the present day, this book introduces students to Bangla clothes, words, and traditions. It also contains an author's note explaining microloans and their role in the story.

Down the Colorado: John Wesley Powell, the One-Armed Explorer by Deborah Kogan Ray. Frances Foster Books/Farrar Straus Giroux. Unpaged. \$17.00. Biography/Memoir. Intermediate. 0. 0374318387



Even if readers already know the outcome of Powell's 1869 expedition down the treacherous Colorado River through the Grand Canyon, they'll read Ray's stirring account with trepidation. She precedes her description

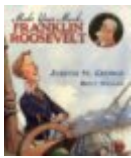
of the trip with Powell's early life story and gives a brief account of what happens to the national hero after his expedition. Her dramatic illustrations capture the dangerous majesty of the unexplored West. She frequently incorporates quotes from materials written during the expedition and also includes a chronology and bibliography for readers who would like to know more.

When Is a Planet Not a Planet? The Story of Pluto by Elaine Scott. Clarion Books. 44 pages. \$17.00. Informational Science. Intermediate. 0. 0618898328



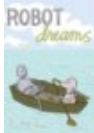
In order to give an explanation for why Pluto was recently declared to not be a planet, Scott provides a brief history of astronomy and scientific thinking about space. Surprisingly, the definition of a planet wasn't finalized until scientists agreed upon criteria in 2006. Using many NASA photos and other helpful illustrations, similes and clear language that even 3rd. and 4th. grade student astronomers can easily understand, Scott answers the question of why Pluto is now considered to be a dwarf planet. A glossary, list of book and web resources and helpful index are included.

Make Your Mark, Franklin Roosevelt by Judith St. George, Britt Spencer (Illustrator). Philomel Books. Unpaged. \$16.99. Biography/Memoir. Intermediate. 0. 0399241752



St. George's new biography series takes a look at the turning points in our presidents' young lives that lead them to the White House. For Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the adored and spoiled only child of wealthy Sara and James Roosevelt, being sent to Groton School, under the tutelage of Rev. Endicott Peabody, after his father's death led him on his path of serving others. Politics, so dreaded by his mother, proved to be just the thing for Franklin, especially after hearing his vigorous Cousin Theodore speak to his classmates. It was possible to be a gentleman, a man of action and a politician. Franklin followed in the footsteps of Theodore, who showed him the way to the presidency. Spencer's lively, muted full-color illustrations mirror the times and give life to Roosevelt and his family. The story is followed by a note about Franklin Roosevelt and a bibliography for further reading.

Robot Dreams by Sarah Varon. First Second. 208 pages. \$16.95. Fantasy. Intermediate. 0. 1596431083



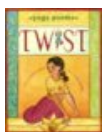
A simpatico friendship between dog and the robot he has built comes to a seemingly sad ending in this poignant graphic novel when robot becomes immobilized with rust after his frolic with dog in the ocean. Problems for robot compound as he languishes on the beach month after month, and dog is just as unsuccessful in his futile attempts to replace his dear friend. Varon clearly sequences her simply but emotively drawn cartoons using somber colors and white space that make them easily "read" and enjoyed.

The Flying Bed by Nancy Willard, John Thompson (Illustrator). Blue Sky Press. Unpaged. \$16.99. Fantasy. Intermediate. Europe (Western). 0590256106



In this original fable set in Florence, a young, not too accomplished baker and his hard-working wife are so destitute that he sells their bed. When his wife leaves him, saying she won't return until there's a bed for both of them, he wanders the city searching for one that he can afford. The ornately carved, magical bed he's given by a mysterious shop owner leads them on soaring, nightly adventures that result in a reversal of fortune. Willard explores the consequences of greed, good fortune and its loss, and abiding love in the mesmerizing story. Thompson's exquisitely detailed, realistic paintings of characters, opulent bakegoods, the tiled rooftops of Florence and the glowing night sky make the fantastic story seem so possible that readers just may want to go to the street of St. Agostino to find the bed, its owners and their three lovely daughters. As noted on the book jacket, "Bed Flying over Rooftops", an illustration from the book, won the 2006 Hamilton King Award for the Best Illustration of the Year.

Twist: Yoga Poems by Janet S. Wong, Julie Paschkis (Illustrator). Margaret K. McElderry Books. Unpaged. \$17.99. Poetry. Intermediate. 0. 0689873948



From the importance of breath to poses such as the bridge or the low crow, those new to yoga will be able to really understand why so many advocates love to move and stretch as shown in these lyrical poems and accompanying illustrations. While doing each pose, yoga practitioners in these boldly colored, Eastern-inspired, mystical illustrations become what they're imitating: "I am Mountain/My stillness is never still." "Darkness/ pushes Cobra up from damp soil." After seeing the poses and reading Wong's revealing descriptions, readers will want to try to become Eagle or Tree as well. The collection of sixteen poems gives a comprehensive introduction to the benefits of yoga for practitioners of all ages.

Rex Zero and the End of the World by Tim Wynne-Jones. Farrar Straus & Giroux. 181 pages. \$16.00. Historical Fiction. Intermediate. Canada. 0374334676



Wynne-Jones sets Rex Zero's story in the early 1960's Ottawa of his own boyhood, and he admits that there are many similarities between them and their families, but assures the reader that this is a work of fiction, not an autobiography. At a time during the Cold War when children are drilling what to do in case of an atomic bomb attack while they're in school, Rex and his friends—and even his older sister—are all fearful and a bit jumpy. No wonder everyone's quite interested in potential bomb shelters. Rex also needs to solve the mysteries of his dog who has disappeared and an escaped black panther that all his friends are sure is hiding in the park while reckoning with an angry, elderly, French-speaking stranger who is warning everyone who comes near that the world will soon end. The tension mounts until the final confrontation with the creature hiding in the park and the piercing sound of the air raid siren seem to signal doom. A great story for reading aloud to 9-12 year old students to give them a sense of what life was like for their contemporaries at that time.

Intermediate/Adolescent

Raleigh's Page by Alan Armstrong. Random House Books for Young Readers. 336 pages. \$16.99. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. 0. 0375833196



When Andrew's father takes him to London to turn him over to Sir Walter Raleigh as his page, Andrew can only imagine what adventures await him, even as he worries about being worthy and successful. His life in London, journey to the Virginia colony, and his experiences there shape him into a brave and thoughtful man. His story is filled with life and color, details of the time and places that truly make history come alive. It's a gripping read, even though we all know the ending.

The World Made New: Why the Age of Exploration Happened & How It Changed the World by Marc Aronson. John W. Glenn. National Geographic Society. 64 pages. \$17.95. Informational Social Studies. Intermediate/Adolescent. Multicultural. 0792269780



"In 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue" and "discovered" the Americas. Rather than looking at the importance of this date from a solely European perspective, the authors take a far more global view of this pivotal meeting of people from two very different, and until 1492, separate worlds. The story of the Age of Exploration is divided into three, well organized sections: "Causes" (why did the explorers set sail?); "What Happened"; and "Consequences" (how was the world changed?). In their conclusion, Aronson and Glenn ask readers to imagine what it would be like to wake up to a fleet of space ships filling the sky, preparing to invade. Throughout the book, they provoke readers to think globally, to see the positive and negative effects of the merging of disparate cultures that have created the world as we know it. The book is profusely illustrated with maps, photos of artifacts, and early illustrations. There are short biographies of important people from the Americas and Europe, timelines, a glossary and other useful extras for those wanting to do further reading and research.

Iron Thunder: The Battle Between the Monitor and the Merrimac by Avi. Hyperion. 224 pages. \$15.99. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. 0. 142310446-3



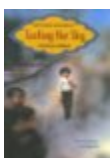
Thirteen-year-old Tom takes a job in the ironworks in Brooklyn, NY, when his father is killed fighting in the Civil War. There, he runs errands for Captain Ericsson, genius inventor of the soon-to-be-famous ironclad, the Monitor. Tom sails on the Monitor and recounts the battle in which she defeats the Confederate Merrimac and turns the tide of the war. This is a great adventure story, with a sympathetic and well-developed character, that presents many details of this time in the history of our country.

The Traitor's Gate by Avi. Atheneum Books. 354 pages. \$17.99. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. Great Britain. 0689853351



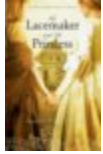
In a style reminiscent of his Newbery Award winning **Crispin: The Cross of Lead**, Avi tells the suspenseful story of another young boy in England. In **The Traitor's Gate**, Avi paints a vivid picture of life in Victorian London. John Huffman is trying to unravel the mystery of his father's arrest and subsequent incarceration for a debt he claims he never incurred. John encounters several puzzling characters and begins to suspect that a traitor is involved. He doesn't know whom to trust when he discovers that his father has not been completely truthful. Although there are some slow spots, most readers will be interested enough in the mystery to stay with the story.

Tasting the Sky: A Palestinian Childhood by Ibtisam Barakat. Melanie Kroupa Books. 176 pages. \$16.00. Biography/Memoir. Intermediate/Adolescent. Asia (Middle East). 0374357331



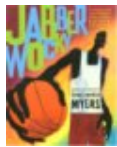
Sandwiched between "A Letter to No One" which tells the harrowing story of being on a bus to her home in Ramallah, stopped by Israeli soldiers and removed at gunpoint during a 1981 uprising and "A Letter to Everyone" in which she states that she is "midway from forgetting to remembering" is Barakat's collection of childhood memories. Fortunately for the reader, she does remember what it was like to be a young child in a family under siege, a family bedeviled by war. Some of her stories and images, especially when the family is torn apart, are so heartbreaking that they're difficult to read. We really care about what happens to this little girl who becomes a teen and then an adult searching for the refuge that can only be found by telling her story.

The Lacemaker and the Princess by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley. Margaret K. McElderry Books. 199 pages. \$16.99. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. Europe (Western). 1416919201



Young Isabelle Bonnard is torn between two worlds. As a daughter and granddaughter of lacemakers, she lives a life of drudgery and constant worry about food. After being noticed by Marie Antoinette however, she spends a great deal of time at Versailles as a companion to her daughter, Princess Therese. Tension builds as the idyllic world at the palace is dramatically changed by the threat of the French Revolution; even Isabelle's brother, George, joins Lafayette's guard, excited by the promise of freedom and fraternity. Isabelle is an endearing protagonist through whose eyes Bradley gives a sympathetic portrait of the beleaguered royal family while also helping readers understand the roots of revolution. Her eyewitness account of the night the people of Paris storm Versailles and force the royal family into confinement in Paris is quite stirring. In an Author's Note, Bradley lets readers know which of the characters are real and which are fictional, as well as what happened to the king and queen, their friends and children during and after the French Revolution.

Jabberwocky by Lewis Carroll, Christopher Myers (Illustrator). Jump at the Sun/Hyperion Books for Children. Unpaged. \$15.99. Poetry. Intermediate/Adolescent. African-American. 1423103726



After researching the origins of the classic nonsense poem, Myers became certain that the author was influenced by his knowledge of the ancient Aztec game ollamalitzli, played with a ball and hoop similar to those used in basketball. Hence his visually stunning, expressionistic interpretations of familiar lines such as, "Twas brillig,/ and the slithy toves/ Did gyre and gimble in the wabe." Jabberwock, the fiery-eyed, long-armed, giant basketball player, dominates the court while colorfully dressed girls jump rope and boys splash in the water from the fire hydrant. This bold new version will bring appreciative new readers to Carroll's well loved poem through Myers' modern art.

The Klipfish Code by Mary Casanova. Houghton Mifflin. 227 pages. \$16.00. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. Europe (Scandinavia). 0618883932



After the Nazis invade Norway in 1940, young Marit and her brother Lars are forced to stay on Godoy Island with their brusque, fisherman grandfather, whom she discovers is not what he seems, and loving aunt while her parents join the Resistance. Marit soon finds that there is no safe haven or profession as long as the war continues and that even some Norwegians, including the parents of one of her best friends on the island, can't be trusted. She sets out on a risky mission of her own and learns just how terrible war can be. This adventure-filled, riveting story is based on extensive research into life in Norway during WWII when 50,000 Norwegians were arrested while enduring the so-called "friendly" occupation.

Elijah of Buxton by Christopher Paul Curtis. Scholastic. 341 pages. \$16.99. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. African-American. 0439023440



Elijah, the first child of slaves born free in Buxton, Canada, is one "frag-ile", sensitive and impressionable eleven year old who never-the-less shows true courage when he crosses the river and goes to Michigan to try to recover the money The Preacher, a devilish former slave, has stolen. While he isn't able to help his friend Mr. Leroy and his family still in slavery, he is able to aid another African family and their infant daughter who are so close to freedom when recaptured by slavers. There are scenes filled with hilarity, especially those where Elijah and his mother are confronted by their fears of snakes and "toady-frogs", and ones that are quite graphic and harrowing. The juxtaposition conveys a sense of what the real lives of freed and escaped slaves were like in the mid-1800s. Curtis's research of the Buxton Mission and Elgin Settlement, that at one time had as many as 2000 residents, provides a rich background for this tale of courage and the constant hope of freedom.

Fire from the Rock by Sharon M. Draper. Dutton Childrens' Books. 229 pages. \$16.99. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. African-American. 0525477209



Although Sylvia Patterson and her family are fictional, what happens to them in Little Rock in 1957 as Central High School is integrated is based upon fact. Sylvia comes of age against the backdrop of racism, both against African and Jewish Americans, and the opposing views of many in her own community about whether she should or should not be in the first group to integrate the all-white high school. Her occasional diary entries and poetry are used as a vehicle for introducing some of the historic background with which younger readers may be unfamiliar.

The Red Shoe by Ursula Dubosarsky. Roaring Brook Press. 178 pages. \$16.95. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. Australia/New Zealand. 1596432659



In 1954 in the outskirts of Sydney, three sisters suffer from the aftereffects of what happened to their often absent, mentally unstable father in WWII, the polio outbreak, and the Cold War with its constant threats of the hydrogen bomb. Their story begins with 6-year-old Matilda being read Andersen's tale "The Red Shoes" by her older sister Francis. The symbolism of the red shoes is repeated again and again as the story of the desperate love triangle involving the girls' mother, her husband and brother is paralleled with the real story of a Russian diplomat and his wife defecting to the West and the house next door to Matilda's. What happens on the tragic family picnic at the Basin is slowly revealed through flashbacks and warnings from Matilda's imaginary friend and is set against the backdrop of excerpts from real newspaper accounts of the time that also are used to give closure to what happens between the three adults in the story. So much occurs in the two weeks during which the story takes place; the reader feels assured that the events will definitely change the lives of Matilda, her parents and her sisters for the better.

The Land of the Silver Apples by Nancy Farmer. Atheneum Books. 496 pages. \$18.99. Fantasy. Intermediate/Adolescent. Europe (Western). 1416907351



In this exciting sequel to **The Sea of Trolls**, 13-year-old Jack is reunited with brave Thorgil and joined by Pega, a homely but talented young slave he has helped to free, on a quest to save his sister Lucy after she has been magically taken by the Lady of the Lake to the seemingly perfect land of the elves. All sorts of mystical creatures populate the dangerous, underground world they must traverse, including hobgoblins, yarthkins, kelpies and elves. But perhaps the most dangerous and evil of all they must escape are the abbot and monks of St. Filian's Well. Because the story is set in middle ages Britain, the beliefs of the characters range from those of the ancient druids to Christianity and the inevitable mixture of both. Jack is now an apprentice druid bard who also greatly respects Brother Aiden, a monk from the Holy Isle, and Father Severus whom he helps to free from the amoral elves. Pega has strong Christian beliefs and yet is also beloved by Bugaboo, king of the hobgoblins, who considers her the most beautiful of all creatures and wants her as his wife. The truth about Lucy's identity adds an interesting twist to the fantasy, the second book in the trilogy. Readers who loved the first book will not be disappointed!

Comets, Stars, the Moon, and Mars by Douglas Florian. Harcourt Children's Books. 48 pages. \$16.00. Poetry. Intermediate/Adolescent. 0. 0152053727



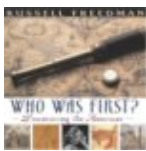
With gouache, collage and rubber stamp paintings of the vast sky festooned with holes scattered throughout and poems with images as clear as a brilliant, star-studded night, Florian introduces readers to planets, constellations—even the universe. He yearns for a black hole "Like a giant/cosmic broom./ (Wish I had one in my room.)/ He muses about the fact that "/>Pluto was a planet./.../Till one day it got fired." He thinks about why inhospitable Venus was named for the goddess of love. Readers, especially those studying astronomy, will think about the night sky in ways they never have before. A "Galactic Glossary" and a list of books for further reading are also included.

How to Catch a Fish by John Frank, Peter Sylvada (Illustrator). Roaring Brook Press. Unpaged. \$17.95. Poetry. Intermediate/Adolescent. Multicultural. 1596431636



Whether angling for bass in Georgia's Chattahoochee National Forest or using cormorants to catch fish in Japan's Nagara River, there are many ways to catch a fish. Through lyrical poems filled with stunning images, Frank gives insights into fishing around the world. His thirteen poems are accompanied by stunning oil paintings of expansive skies and prominent water features, of fish and the joys of fishing.

Who Was First? Discovering the Americas by Russell Freedman. Clarion Books. 88 pages. \$19.00. Informational Social Studies. Intermediate/Adolescent. Multicultural. 0618663916



In this well researched account, Freedman begins his look at those who came to this continent over many centuries with the notion "that Columbus was among the last explorers to reach the Americas, not the first." For readers who have learned otherwise, the revelation is startling and provocative. He shares stories of earlier Chinese and Norwegian explorers and then traces back to the earliest inhabitants of the continent who probably came from Asia 20,000 to 30,000 years ago, possibly also travelling by boat. Discoveries that may give more definitive answers are still waiting to be made, maybe by readers intrigued by Freedman's fascinating narrative.

I Am Not Joey Pigza by Jack Gantos. Farrar Straus & Giroux. 214 pages. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. O. 0374399417



Joey's father, Carter Pigza, who has renamed and supposedly remade himself as Charles Heinz, returns with his Heinz family plan after winning the lottery. Both Joey and his mother are caught up in the exciting turmoil of his wild plans to begin anew with a bee-themed diner and an elaborate remarriage ceremony. Just as Joey, newly renamed Freddy, races around the yard on his ATV firing his paintgun at anything that moves, the episodes speedily pile up leaving Pigza havoc in their wake. Those who have enjoyed the previous books in the series will want to learn what happens next to poor, well meaning and good hearted Joey, who repeatedly injures his head and other body parts in one stunt after another, as he searches for his true identity. When his father, now definitely behaving just like Carter, not Charles, deserts the family as he has done in the past, readers are reassured that Joey and his mother and new baby brother will be just fine once again.

The Garden of Eve by K. L. Going. Harcourt, Inc.. 232 pages. \$17.00. Fantasy. Intermediate/Adolescent. O. 0152059865



The Prelude begins with Eve's mother telling her another one of her fascinating stories: "Once there was a beautiful garden." Three years later, her mother has died and her father, for reasons that he only reveals after they've moved, has left Michigan for a dying apple orchard in New York. Still haunted with grief, Evie is also haunted by her seeming encounter with Alex, the boy next door who died shortly before she moved. Life and love and new growth spring forth from a magical seed left by the elderly former owner of the orchard for Evie's 11th. birthday, a birthday also commemorated by her mother in a note written before her death. The surprises that come at the end take the chill of death off of the town, the orchard, a sorrowful brother and Eve, who knows that "magical things can still happen at eleven." The book would make a suspenseful read aloud for boys and girls.

Emmy and the Incredible Shrinking Rat by Lynne Jonell, Jonathan Bean (Illustrator). Henry Holt & Company. 352 pages. \$16.95. Fantasy. Intermediate/Adolescent. O. 080508150X



Readers unconsciously flip through chapter books before deciding whether or not to read the one in hand. If the title of this book does not grab a reader's attention, that unconscious flip will. Along the right sides, a rat will fall off a tree branch and land softly in human hands. Emmy's hands. This good girl listened when Ratty asked to be released from the classroom pet cage and really listens when he tells her she needs to stick up for herself and stop being so good. Emmy heeds his advice, especially when it involves her mysterious nanny, Miss Barmy, who seems to have odd medicines and ways of limiting Emmy's free time and decisions. In her meanderings, Emmy discovers a strange shop called The Antique Rat and discovers more than antiques there. An odd assortment of rodents with fantastical powers reside in cages and are loaned out at great cost by Professor Vole. Emmy's discovery opens many more options for all characters involved, the ultimate goals being freedom for the creatures, time with her parents for Emmy, and justified punishment for Miss Barmy. Read this book aloud. Share it with reluctant readers. It will enchant readers of all ages.

Marie Curie by Kathleen Krull, Boris Kulikov (Illustrator). Viking. 137 pages. \$15.99. Biography/Memoir. Intermediate/Adolescent. Europe (Western). 0670058947



In this latest installment in her **Giants of Science** series, Krull not only brings the brilliant yet reticent Curie to life but also celebrates her scientific investigation of the miraculous properties of radium, the new element she discovered, in light of scientific knowledge of the time. With their discoveries, Marie Curie and her husband Pierre literally gave their lives to science. In engaging prose and revealing episodes, Krull tells us who these scientists were and why they risked so much in their pursuit of knowledge. A bibliography of resources and websites is included.

The Last Girls of Pompeii by Kathryn Lasky. Viking. 184 pages. \$15.99. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. Europe (Western). 0670061964



Set against the backdrop of the impending, now famous eruption of Mount Vesuvius, Lasky tells the story of two young women. Julia, whose withered arm is seen as the Curse of Venus, endures her role as attendant at her petulant sister's marriage, sure that she will never be married, especially now that her cousin Marcus is betrothed. Although beautiful Sura is her slave, the two young women are very close, their futures intertwined because of Julia's parents' terrible decision about her future. As the time of the wedding and the foreshadowed eruption is imminent, the fates of the two depend on their following the directions of the mysterious Sibyl of

Sarnus. Students of ancient Rome will be fascinated by the well-researched details and the rich setting for the story of these women, their friends and relatives.

Sweet! The Delicious Story of Candy by Ann Love, Jane Drake, Claudia Davila (Illustrator).

Tundra Books. 2007. 64 pages. \$19.95. Informational Social Studies. Intermediate/Adolescent. O. 0887767524



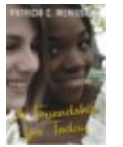
Candy lovers will savor the stories behind their favorite treats in this engaging information book. From the ingestion to the tasting, candy's roots and development are featured in chapters specific to various sweets and in a timeline that runs the entire length of the book. Consider the sweets that tempt candy lovers all over the world. Read about raw ingredients. Discover the chemistry behind candy making. Explore the history of favorites like lollipops, jelly beans, and salt water taffy. Learn about how chocolate's fame spread across the world. Candy-colored illustrations accompany the facts.

Edward's Eyes by Patricia MacLachlan. Atheneum Books. 116 pages. \$15.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. O. 1416927433



Jake's is a large and loving family, a family that spends its languorous summers reading, listening to music, exploring the ocean on the Cape, and especially playing game after game of baseball in the yard with all their friends. It's Edward, Jake's youngest brother, who captures his heart. Edward is such a special child, and Jake feels so responsible for him; he wants to teach him all he knows. Edward reads the signs and knows that the next child, his special responsibility, will be Sabine, and she's born right when he's sure she will be. The intriguing prologue and all the other signs along the way point to the tragedy that finally occurs and to the hope that rises as well. This is a quiet story, and much like the song lyrics that recur throughout the book, it is a song to a young boy and summer and life.

A Friendship for Today by Patricia McKissack. Scholastic Press. 240 pages. \$16.99. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. African-American. 043966098X



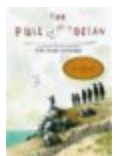
Based on the author's memories of her own sixth grade experience, this very readable novel presents a year in the life of a 12-year-old African American girl who is in the front lines, breaking the barrier of school segregation. She discovers an unlikely friend in the person of a girl from a racist family, a person who has been her tormenter. A wise mother, a cat, and a close friend help the protagonist through this difficult but triumphant time in her life.

Miss Spitfire: Reaching Helen Keller by Sarah Miller. Atheneum Books. 208 pages. \$16.99. Biography/Memoir. Intermediate/Adolescent. O. 1416925422



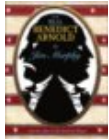
Because she tells Annie Sullivan's story of teaching Helen Keller the power of language in the first person, Miller readily conveys all the frustration and triumph involved in unlocking Helen's mind and freeing her soul and makes these well known people truly come to life for the reader. Annie Sullivan, nicknamed Miss Spitfire when a young girl, is the only one who can match Helen's determination and deal with her wild behavior. Miller interlaces Annie's own harrowing childhood story with the ups and downs of the first five weeks she spends with Helen, resulting in the famous recognition of the word "water" at the pump. The drama of Helen and her teacher is one that has never been more immediate and compelling than in this well researched, fictionalized biography. A collection of photos, a timeline of events from Annie's birth in 1866 until Helen's death in 1968, and an extensive list of resources are also included.

The Pull of the Ocean by Jean-Claude Mourlevat. Delacorte Books for Young Readers. 208 pages. \$13.95. Fantasy. Intermediate/Adolescent. Europe (Western). 0-385-73348-8



What would send seven brothers—three sets of twins and the youngest, a miniature boy—fleeing from their home in the middle of a dark and stormy night? This modern interpretation of "Tom Thumb" is presented through various narrators, those close to the action and those only incidental to the plot, a technique that simultaneously makes the story more believable and heightens the unreliability of the narration. How could this possibly happen? How could it not, if witnessed by so many? But what really happened? It is only in the penultimate chapter that the motivation for running away is finally revealed.

The Real Benedict Arnold by Jim Murphy. Clarion Books. 272 pages. \$20.00. Biography/Memoir. Intermediate/Adolescent. 0. 0395776090



Murphy uses military maps, historical artwork, original documents and personal accounts to tell the real story of Benedict Arnold. The narrative covers Arnold's life from birth to death, but it focuses on his military career. It is clear that the author believes Arnold was much maligned and that previous historical accounts were often based on unsubstantiated rumor. The well told story keeps readers interested as they learn about Benedict Arnold's contribution to the success of the Revolutionary War as well as his reasons for defecting to the British side.

Runner by Robert Newton. Knopf Books for Young Readers. 224 pages. \$15.99. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. 0. 0375837442



It's 1919 and Melbourne is a hardscrabble city, especially for Charlie. His father has died, and he desperately needs money to help his mother and baby brother, so he gets himself involved with the mob. It's easy but dangerous money. As his experiences spiral from adventurous to dangerous, he has decisions to make about living life with honor. The characters are vivid, the plot exciting, and the ending just perfect.

Tap Dancing on the Roof: Sijo (Poems) by Linda Sue Park, Istvan Banyai (Illustrator). Clarion Books. Unpaged. \$16.00. Poetry. Intermediate/Adolescent. Asia (Far East). 0618234837



All the poems in this book are based on the traditional Korean sijo, which can have 3, 5 or 6 lines in English and use syllabic structure. Park's poems are often playful: long division has its house metaphor; the amazing vitality of weeds growing through pavement cracks is questioned; and bedtime snack are compared with superlatives. The surprise at the end of each—typical of the form—will entertain all readers. Banyai's digital illustrations, reminiscent of those in his wordless picture books, add their own clever twists to the meanings of Park's sijo. The author gives poets helpful tips for writing their own sijo at the end of the book.

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows by J.K. Rowling. Arthur A. Levine Books. 784 pages. \$34.99. Fantasy. Intermediate/Adolescent. Great Britain. 0739360388



The seventh book in the Harry Potter series is a rousing, action packed finish. J. K. Rowling ties up a lot of loose ends that readers have been wondering and worrying about. There are several more deaths that will stun Harry Potter fans. This book strays from the setting at Hogwarts as Harry attempts to find a way to fulfill his destiny. The circumstances test the strength of the three protagonists friendship. It is one of the best in the series, but readers may have mixed feelings about the final chapter.

Hidden on the Mountain: Stories of Children Sheltered from the Nazis in Le Chambon by Karen Gray Ruelle, Deborah Durland DeSaix. Holiday House. 2007. 275 pages. \$24.95. Biography/Memoir. Intermediate/Adolescent. Europe (Western). 0823419282



The villages around Le Chambon are nestled in the mountains of south-central France. The people here are Huguenots, French Protestants in a Catholic country. Their ancestors were persecuted for their religion and so these people became an isolated community. When Hitler's armies overran most of Europe during WWII, the villager's sympathy for those in need of shelter and the relative safety of their region made it possible for them to shelter several thousand Jews, most of them children. They were hidden on farms and in village homes until they could be taken to safety across the mountains into neutral Switzerland. The pastors who organized this effort, and all of the people involved, risked their lives and those of their family members for a dangerous cause, and fortunately they were successful. This is a book of interviews of survivors of that time, mainly the Jewish children who are now adults recounting their memories of life with the villagers and the hardships of leaving their parents and friends behind. Israel's Museum of the Holocaust honors people they designate as "Righteous Among the Nations" for help given to Jewish people during the war. As of 2005, 64 of the villagers, including pastors, farm workers and others both young and old, have been honored with the medal.

Paint the Wind by Pam Munoz Ryan. Scholastic Press. 325 pages. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. 0. 0439873622



In her strict grandmother's house, all that remains of Maya's dead mother, killed with Maya's father in a terrible accident, is her secret collection of horse figures and one photo. The proud Paint horse, Artemisia, has just foaled. With the death of her grandmother and her move to Wyoming to be with her mother's family, the lives of these two intersect, resulting in true freedom for both. This modern horse story is one that will be welcomed by those who avidly read Marguerite Henry's books.

Night of the Howling Dogs by Graham Salisbury. Wendy Lamb Books. 190 pages. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. Multicultural. 0385731221



In his author's note, Salisbury relates the facts of the true event upon which his survival adventure is based. In 1975, an earthquake hit Halape, Hawaii, causing a tsunami that killed two men, one of whom was accompanying a Boy Scout troupe including his cousin at the remote campground near Kilauea. Knowing this riveting story is based upon the harrowing survival of these real people makes it even more amazing. Dylan learns a great deal about his own courage and instincts as well as those of Louie, his adversary who constantly berates him during the first half of the book. The descriptions, first of the amazing volcanic landscape juxtaposed against the immense ocean and then of the earthquake and tsunami, make the reader feel as if they've witnessed the devastation of a place they know well. The race to save the survivors in the aftermath will keep readers on the edge of their seats.

The Invention of Hugo Cabret by Brian Selznick. Scholastic. 532 pages. \$22.99. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. Europe (Western). 0439813786



Behind the walls of a busy train station in 1931 Paris lives 12-year-old Hugo Cabret, an orphan who maintains the clocks as his uncle did before he disappeared, hoping to avoid detection and life in an orphanage. Hugo also hides a fantastic automaton that was being rebuilt by his dead father, sure that once he uses his father's precious notes and completes the rebuilding process, the man machine will write a significant message for him from his father. Text is interspersed with over 200 pages of elaborate, black and white illustrations in Selznick's wonderfully cinematic graphic novel. The story begins with a black page edged in the kind of spirals common in silent films, continues with a closer and closer look at the earth, Paris and then with a series of dramatic action close-ups and introductory portraits of Hugo, the cantankerous older man from whom he steals toys and his goddaughter who becomes Hugo's best friend, and includes many references and photos from famous movies of the time. Tension builds as the mystery of the older man's identity and his relationship to Hugo's automaton are eventually solved and Hugo's future is secured. And fade to black. This is a book that readers will pore over again and again, noticing new details in the illustrations and story with each reading.

This Is Just to Say: Poems of Apology and Forgiveness by Joyce Sidman, Pamela Zagarenski (Illustrator). Houghton Mifflin. 48 pages. \$16.00. Poetry. Intermediate/Adolescent. Multicultural. 0618616802



This collection of poems saying "I'm sorry," and "I forgive you," begins with William Carlos Williams's resonant poem "This Is Just to Say", hence the title. In the book's first section, a fictional 6th. grade class writes poems in many forms to express their apologies; the second section includes responses to each of those poems. A sister is truly sorry that she stabbed her older sister with a pencil and that a black spot remains; her sister retorts: "I'm still really/pissed off at you." Tenzin is so sorry that his dog had to be euthanized; the school custodian reassures him: "You were loving him, and he was loving you back." The issues, language and sentiments are typical of young adolescents. Because a 6th. grader is supposed to have illustrated the poems as well, the illustrations have been created on the kinds of paper found in classrooms and have a whimsical, naive style, just what you'd expect from a talented 6th. grade artist. There is no doubt that we all have someone to whom we need to apologize; reading this book is the perfect impetus for poetically doing so.

The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain by Peter Sis. Farrar Straus & Giroux. Unpaged. \$18.00. Biography/Memoir. Intermediate/Adolescent. Europe (Eastern). 0374347018



When you see the cardboard and string collage book jacket, you know this is going to be a personal story that will give readers insights into the life of the child sitting with his drum inside the walled red star. The black and white map on the endpapers contrasts the rest of the world with Czechoslovakia and other countries occupied

by the former Soviet Union in bold red as well. In fact, the whole first half of the book's intricate illustrations of all that was compulsory under the Communists is illustrated in black and white with only the occasional touch of Soviet red, giving readers an insider's view of what life was like at that time in that place. In the middle of the book, when Sis is introduced to the West with its poetry, music and the Beatles, the double-page spread thrums with glorious color and all that is beautiful and free in life. Sis begins his book by saying that for "as long as he could remember, he had loved to draw." The last illustration in the book of the artist as an older man echoes the first as a toddler, with a wry twist of his opening line: "As long as he can remember, he will continue to draw." And we will continue to learn more about his life and the other lives he chooses to illuminate.

Peak by Roland Smith. Harcourt, Inc.. 246 pages. \$17.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. 0. 0152024174



Peak is the son of distinguished mountain climbers and an aspiring climber himself. After a skirmish with the law in New York City (because he climbed the Woolworth Building), Peak is given over to the custody of his father, who has been absent from his life for several years. In a surprise move, Peak's father takes him to Nepal and then to Tibet where the two join a hiking expedition to the top of Mt. Everest. The days that follow are filled with drama and suspense. Smith describes the climbing conditions so vividly that we can feel the struggle to move and breathe at high altitudes, particularly in the midst of a raging blizzard. Peak has the opportunity to be the youngest person ever to climb that daunting mountain. His own physical struggles, problems within the hiking party, and the interference of Chinese border police make this a gripping story.

Summerhouse Time by Eileen Spinelli, Joanne Lew-Vriethoff (Illustrator). Alfred A. Knopf. 224 pages. \$12.99. Poetry. Intermediate/Adolescent. 0. 0375840613



Sophie's story poems about the anticipation prior to and the experiences at her family's summerhouse on the beach radiate her enthusiasm and love for those people and things she cherishes. Besides her frugal and dedicated parents, there are aunts, uncles, cousins, and Grandmom and Granpop to share in the activities by the beach. They do all the usual family things, in addition to experiencing only what such an eclectic family could: a disastrous dinner at the local crab shack, not-so-scary stories by the beach, drinking Grandmom's mint tea whenever someone is not feeling well, and searching for Orange, Sophie's lost cat. Sophie experiences those things only an in-between cousin can. She wants to be cool like her older cousin Colleen. She knows she has to be respectful to her younger, annoying cousin Tammy. She wants to be helpful to her cousin Cooper by guiding him to overcome his fear of water. Meanwhile, her thoughts cannot help but drift back home where the new boy on the block, Jimmy Gabbiano, has promised to write her letters. Filled with humor, American history (her father is a history teacher), some Italian (Sophie is trying to learn it to impress Jimmy), and family life, the story will spark interest in sharing summer and family stories. The free verse poems help to create a unique picture of eleven-year-old Sophie in a succinct, honest manner. Small pen and ink illustrations are perfect accompaniments to the text. Great as a read-aloud selection prior to summer vacation or upon return to school in the fall, the story would also appeal to readers wanting to recall family time and summer vacations.

Grace Above All by Jane St. Anthony. Farrar Straus & Giroux. 166 pages. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. 0. 0374399409



Grace is sure that the two weeks she has to spend at the old lake cottage with her family will be dreadful, and things certainly begin that way when Beth, her youngest sister who can't swim, needs to be saved after floating out far from shore. After helping Grace save Beth, Frankie, the boy next door, saves Grace in a way and makes the visit much more interesting. With grace, she rises above the constant insults and commands of her completely inept, chain smoking mother, the absence of her well meaning father, and the aggravation of her brothers and sisters for whom she is the always responsible, other "mommy". While all is not completely well at the end of the visit, things seem much more hopeful for this young teen and her dysfunctional family.

Hitler's Canary by Sandi Toksvis. Roaring Brook Press. 191 pages. \$16.95. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. Europe (Scandinavia). 1596432470



While occupied by the Germans during World War II, Denmark was sometimes referred to as "Hitler's canary", since the caged country seemed to sing Hitler's tune. Eventually, the Danes proved to be quite courageous and resourceful in saving almost all Danish Jews from Hitler's final solution over a ten-day period in 1943. In an author's note, Toksvis shares that this fictionalized story is based on the lives of her grandparents, an actress

and a painter, who did help many Jews escape to Sweden “because it was the right thing to do.” Readers will relish the story of young Bamse and his best friend Anton, whose involvement with the resistance movement progresses from playing harmless pranks on hapless German soldiers to much more dangerous assignments. The drama extends from the stage to Bamse’s family’s apartment and will keep readers wondering about the fate of the boys, their friends and families. Both good and bad Danes and Germans are shown with their complexities. A good companion book to Lois Lowry’s **Number the Stars**.

Way Down Deep by Ruth White . Farrar Straus & Giroux. 197 pages. \$16.00. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. O. 0374382514



When a seemingly abandoned redheaded toddler, dressed in a pettycoat, is found on the first day of summer, 1944, she declares herself to be “Woo-bee” but is no help when it comes to finding her family. Ruby is taken in by Miss Arbutus Ward and leads a happy, carefree life at The Roost until she turns twelve and her true identity is revealed. Ruby’s good nature is sorely tried while living with her cranky grandmother, but her spirit prevails as the story ends with the best possible solution to her dilemma. As she did in her previous books, White creates a story filled with a wonderful cast of eccentric characters, rich dialogue, and a setting so vividly described that *Way Down Deep*, West Virginia seems as real as the reader’s hometown. Ruby is one appealing, lovable girl!

The Aurora County All-Stars by Deborah Wiles. Harcourt, Inc.. 242 pages. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. O. 0152060685



In her third book set in Aurora County, Mississippi, home of Ruby Lavender and Comfort, Wiles tells the story of 12-year-old House Jackson, baseball pitcher, reader and problem solver. During the summer, he deals with the death of his elderly neighbor, the adoption of the neighbor’s dog, Eudora Welty (a wonderful reference most young readers won’t get), the upcoming big baseball game and Frances Schotz, his nemesis from the previous summer whose clumsiness resulted in his broken elbow and long absence from his beloved baseball. Readers of this distinctly Southern coming-of-age story will enjoy the new larger-than-life characters and catching up with favorite characters from past books while following House as he learns about life and baseball against the backdrop of Walt Whitman’s poetry.

Someone Named Eva by Joan Wolf. Clarion Books. 208 pages. \$16.00. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. Europe (Eastern). 0618535799



When Nazi soldiers invade the village of Lidice, Czechoslovakia one evening in 1942, Milada’s life takes a bizarre turn. The men and boys are separated from the women and girls, and experts begin to take measurements of those girls with blond hair and blue eyes, attributes Milada has. Because she possesses the physical Aryan profile, Milada is taken from her mother, sister, and neighbors to a Lebensborn center in Poland where she is taught to be the perfect German. Her name changed by the authorities to Eva, Milada struggles to accept the constant messages perpetuated by the teachers and doctors. She fights to remember her earlier life, her family members, what she knows of the German atrocities against other people, and her grandmother who told her to always remember who she is. When Eva is adopted by a German family, it is even harder to resist the brainwashing and transformation for the young girl. The author so effectively transports the reader into Milada’s situation and time that it becomes difficult to remember her old name amidst the German demands and changes. This book enlightens readers about a time and experience in WWII history that has not received attention in fiction for adolescents. It is a powerful story. The author’s note explains even more about the history of Lidice and Lebensborn centers.

Feathers by Jacqueline Woodson. G.P. Putnam’s Sons. 118 pages. \$15.99. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent. African-American. 0399239898



When a new, pale, long-haired boy comes into Frannie’s 6th. grade African-American classroom “as white and softly as snow”, he’s immediately nicknamed Jesus Boy and is the nexus for an exploration of race, class, religion and many forms of prejudice in the early 1970’s. Through many incidents in the book—some involving racially inspired violence, some more subtle like the lack of acceptance of Frannie’s older deaf brother Sean by hearing girls his age—Frannie eventually understands the Emily Dickinson poem that begins “hope is the thing with feathers/that perches in the soul.” Young adolescent girls will particularly be interested in this multi-layered, coming-of-age story, and will find the way Frannie deals with all that’s happening in her life quite realistic.

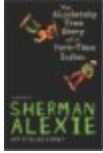
Little Klein by Anne Ylvisaker. Candlewick Press. 186 pages. \$15.99. Historical Fiction. Intermediate/Adolescent.
0. 0763633593



Harold, youngest of the Klein family, is known throughout the small, rural river town in which he lives as “little Klein,” smallest in a family of strapping older brothers, known as “the bigs.” When little Klein hooks up with an endearing stray dog, he’s led into adventures that end in the rescue of the “biggs” by the “little.” This heartwarming tale of family ties and finding one’s place in the world takes place around 1949, when even young boys could roam free. The humor and suspense make this a great read-aloud.

Adolescent

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie, Ellen Forney (Illustrator). Little, Brown. 230 pages. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. Native American. 0316013684



Accidentally hitting his white teacher in the face with a disgusting, old geometry book that his mother had used when she was a student is the impetus for Arnold “Junior” Spirit to leave his reservation high school to attend the white high school over 20 miles away. He has always been bullied because, as he says, “I was born with water on the brain,” and he has always drawn cartoons to talk to the world and make the world pay attention to him. Arnold walks a fine line between the world of the reservation and that of his white classmates and teachers, between wrenching pathos and hilarity. The wry and wise cartoons and comments about school, basketball, friends and life will keep adolescents reading because you can’t help but really care about sensitive and brilliant Arnold, his best friend and enemy Rowdy, Gordy, Penelope and all the other fascinating characters in this richly told story.

Twisted by Laurie Halse Anderson. Viking. 272 pages. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. 0. 0670061018



Anderson takes the eponymous story of the poor, clueless boy who finally matures, the wealthy bully, and the beautiful rich girl and twists it into a pitiless look at class differences and dysfunctional families. Great dialogue captures the humor and the drama of adolescence as the protagonist struggles to discover what it means to be a man.

Broken Moon by Kim Antieau. Margaret K. McElderry Books. 183 pages. \$15.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. Asia (Middle East). 1-4169-1767-5



Nadira, an adolescent Pakistani girl, struggles with the cultural expectations of what women and girls are allowed to do. Due to a tragic event from her past, her skin is scarred, and she is now viewed as damaged, both inside and out, and no longer fit to be a wife. When her little brother Umar is taken (and allegedly sold by a nasty uncle) to be an illegal camel racer, Nadira takes matters into her own hands. In the process, she discovers what it feels like to be respected and treated as a worthy person. Throughout this story, the reader feels a strong connection to Nadira, as the story is told both through her eyes and through stories of the past that she tells Umar and other young boys.

Race: A History Beyond Black and White by Marc Aronson. Atheneum Books. 322 pages. \$18.99. Informational Social Studies. Adolescent. Multicultural. 0689865546



This compelling book traces the history of racial prejudice to its roots in ancient civilizations while also critiquing the assumptions and beliefs upon which this prejudice rests. Aronson presents his ideas as abstract notions and through stories of people who either acted upon or suffered from racist ideas, immediately grounding these ideas in consequences. Never preachy, this is a thoughtful, lucid exploration of one of the most important issues of our time.

Cowboy Stories by Various Authors, Barry Moser (Illustrator). Chronicle Books. 180 pages. \$16.95. Historical Fiction. Adolescent. 0. 0811854183



This is a collection of short stories ranging from classic to contemporary tales of cowboys, quintessential American heroes, and their exploits. Augmented by 22 engravings by Barry Moser, this attractive collection offers young adults the opportunity to explore America’s history and literary tradition.

Muckrakers: How Ida Tarbell, Upton Sinclair, and Lincoln Steffens Helped Expose Scandal, Inspire Reform and Invent Investigative Journalism by Ann Bausum. National Geographic Society. 111 pages. \$21.95. Informational Social Studies. Adolescent. 0. 1426301375



Today’s investigative reporter might have been considered a muckraker at the turn of the last century. No matter how corrupt the government official or ruthless the businessman, reporters weren’t supposed to cross

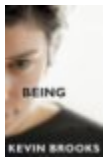
the line of decency, or as Teddy Roosevelt proposed, they should “lighten up a bit from their raking up of muck, dirt, wrongdoing, and scandal.” Bausum shows readers the power of words through telling the fascinating stories of the three most famous—or infamous, depending on who was describing them—journalists of their time and their impact on government and business, and on how journalists, including Edward R. Murrow and Woodward and Bernstein, have reported the news since. Photos from the time, font that looks like old-time typing, and typewriter keys with page numbers distinguish the book’s design.

Evolution, Me & Other Freaks of Nature by Robin Brande. Knopf Books for Young Readers. 268 pages. \$15.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. O. 0375843495



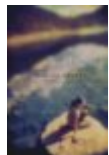
Mena knows that her first day of high school is going to be ugly, and it is. What horrible thing could she have done to make all of her former friends, many of whom also attend her fundamentalist Christian church, revile her so? Even her parents are angry and cold. While Mena’s written apology to a gay student who has been harassed by church members leads to a law suit and her banishment, her science teacher’s refusal to allow a statement about creationism by Mena’s minister during her evolution unit leads to a prolonged battle between the opposing sides of the separation of church and state issue. Because we care so much about Mena, the few students who befriend her, and her science teacher, the issues don’t take over the story, and Mena grows because she has to face them.

Being by Kevin Brooks. Chicken House/Scholastic. 336 pages. \$16.99. Science Fiction. Adolescent. O. 0-439-89973-7



Robert Smith is a teenager who’s been in foster care for as long as he can remember, although he does remember some strange people making strange remarks about him when he was very young. When he goes to the hospital for what should be a routine endoscopy, Robert can, in spite of the anesthetic, hear and see what is happening to him, and realizes that something is terribly wrong. His organs seem to be mechanical rather than human and suddenly he is in the midst of a deadly game with a sinister antagonist. This book appeals to *mature* readers who enjoy complex science fiction within a realistic setting.

Mistik Lake by Martha Brooks. Farrar Straus & Giroux. 207 pages. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. O. 0374349851



This deftly written story of three women, a mother, a daughter and her great aunt, begins with the prologue where Odella tells about the tragic car accident that only her mother Sally survived, and why, even after that terrible day, her family continued to visit Auntie Gloria’s cottage overlooking the lake where her mother’s friends died. While chronically three lives, shifting seamlessly over many decades from present to the past and back again, and from one point of view to the other, all the interconnected secrets the women hold eventually are shared, and Odella finally knows who she is. The men and women loved (or not) by the three have stories that are also slowly and lyrically revealed. And in the end, when 18-year-old Odella finally knows so much about her mother, she realizes that there are some things she’ll never really understand about Sally but also that she now knows what she wants from life.

Deadline by Chris Crutcher. Greenwillow. 316 pages. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. O. 0060850892



Ben Wolf has the ultimate deadline: he’s been told he has a terminal illness and has been given only one year to live. As he says, “Planet Earth is a tough town.” And choosing to do the best thing for him, the right thing, also proves to be tough. Ben is determined to have as normal a senior high school year as he can, so he decides not to undergo treatment that won’t work and to keep his illness a secret—even from his brother and parents—for as long as he can. He takes many risks, falls in love, strives to gain knowledge and be truly educated, challenges racism, and learns firsthand that while there is good and evil in the world, there are also many shades of gray. Crutcher adroitly deals with the complexities of how to live a good life in this story about dying. He shows that death can be capricious and that one must truly live each day as if it were the last. The small town of Trout, Idaho, and all of its 943 inhabitants, will never be the same because of Ben Wolf’s determination to live life to the fullest.

November Blues by Sharon M. Draper. Atheneum Books. 320 pages. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. African-American. 1-4169-0698-3



In the King honor-winning **November Blues**, Draper continues the story begun in **The Battle of Jericho**. Josh is dead, but he lives on in the baby that November discovers she is carrying. She and her mother certainly didn't plan this. November is a top student, courted by colleges, groomed to be academically successful, not to be a pregnant teenage girl. The book tackles many issues surrounding teen pregnancy, sometimes gracefully and sometimes not, but the characters of November, her mother, and her friends are the strength of this story.

Skin Hunger: A Resurrection of Magic, Book One by Kathleen Duey. Atheneum Books. 357 pages. \$17.99. Fantasy. Adolescent. 0. 0689840934



Sadima's and Hahp's chilling parallel stories are told in alternating chapters. At first, separated by many generations, their connection is unclear. Soon, the icy wizard, Somiss, is shared antagonist to both, while Franklin, his servant, offers both glimpses of hope. This is a tale of good and evil, of dark, ancient magic banned during Sadima's time but prized in Hahp's. The first book ends with both main characters fighting for survival, leaving the empathetic reader anxiously waiting for the second book in the trilogy.

Sacred Leaf by Deborah Ellis. Groundwood Books/Douglas & McIntyre. 206 pages. \$16.95. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. South America. 0888997515



We were introduced to Diego in **I Am a Taxi**, the first book in the **The Cocacero Novels** series set in a Bolivian woman's prison where so many children like Diego live, leaving by day to earn the money families need. As this second book begins, Diego is living temporarily with the Ricardo family, though he is soon caught up in the ugly cocaine trade that has the countryside gripped in terror. His life is dramatically turned upside down in a way that reveals the true evil of the drug trade. The ending offers hope and justice for all those like Diego and his friend who have been exploited.

In Search of Mockingbird by Loretta Ellsworth. Henry Holt & Company. 181 pages. \$16.95. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. 0. 0805072365



On the eve of her 16th. birthday, and with the electrifying gift of her mother's diary written when she was the same age as impetus, Erin acts on impulse and heads toward the bus station and Monroeville, Alabama, home of her and her mother's favorite author, Harper Lee. She's not so much running away to search for the beloved author of her tattered copy of **To Kill a Mockingbird** as she is searching for her mother who died shortly after Erin was born. She's helped along the way by some very colorful fellow bus riders who benefit from her help as well. The time away from home is both harrowing and exhilarating and gives Erin a renewed sense of her place in the world and in her love for her often exasperating brothers, father and his fiance.

Touching Snow by M. Sindy Felin. Atheneum Books. 234 pages. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. Caribbean. 1416917950



The first person story of Karina, a young Haitian immigrant making the transition from 7th. to 8th. grade, chillingly begins, "The best way to avoid being picked on by high school bullies is to kill someone. Anyone will do." We know right away that the person who is killed is "the Daddy"; the rest of Karina's story is one of her resilience and determination in the face of continued abuse and neglect. The detailed description of the beating of her older sister, Enid, by their gigantic stepfather is shocking. The fact that she's almost beaten to death and that the other adults in the family struggle to care for her but don't call the police or take her to the hospital is even more shocking. The cultural tensions build as Karina deals with her budding adolescence and the misguided help of outsiders, including the parents of her new friend Rachel, her teacher, and priest, who are sympathetic to her parents' cultural differences to the point that they ignore the extreme abuse happening right under their noses. Even knowing how the story will end takes nothing away from the powerful final scenes. Karina is such a smart, sympathetic character that her story will resonate long after the book has been read.

The One O’Clock Chop by Ralph Fletcher. Henry Holt & Company. 183 pages. \$16.95. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. 0. 0805081437



When his cousin Jazzy tells him that “jazz music can take a sharp turn and change without warning”, fourteen-year-old Matt doesn’t know just how prophetic that statement is in describing their complicated relationship. While spending his long days clamming on Dan’s boat, Matt’s summer is also filled with learning about himself and those he cares about most. By the end of the book and the season, Matt has come a long way. He can handle the “one o’clock chop.”

Blue Lipstick: Concrete Poems by John Grandits. Clarion Books. 46 pages. \$15.00. Poetry. Adolescent. 0. 0618568603



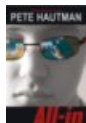
If a poem is “a little snack for your soul,” this book is a full meal for adolescent girls! Jessie, a young teen, considers all that life offers: relationships with family and friends and others; really bad hair days; male jocks and far-too-peppy cheerleaders; school and the horrible bus drivers who take you there. The concrete poems written in many different fonts that twist and turn are sometimes challenging but always rewarding when the last line is read. Though she’s never spoken to Andrea Herkimer, the cheerleader all the boys drool over, Jessie knows she’d hate her if they did. Humor, wit, angst and the frustration of being a teen are all represented in poems in this collection. Poems like “My Absolutely Bad Cranky Day” or “Talking to My Stupid Younger Brother Is Like Swimming Upstream in a River to Nowhere” are great models for young poets looking for new, creative ways to express themselves.

The Noah Confessions by Barbara Hall. Delacorte Books for Young Readers. 224 pages. \$15.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. 0. 0385733283



When Linnie turns sixteen, she is surprised to find a small, battered charm bracelet rather than the expected car as her birthday gift. This is followed by a manuscript that her now-dead mother wrote and wanted her to have “when she was losing perspective.” As she reads the manuscript and discovers secrets of her father and mother’s past, she begins to learn who she is and who she might become.

All In by Pete Hautman. Simon & Schuster. 192 pages. \$15.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. 0. 1416913254



This new Hautman book focuses on gambling, as one might guess from the title, and the serious addiction that plagues society today. While it is very suspenseful and has masterful character development, there’s a bit too much time at the table for those who aren’t all that interested in Texas Hold’em.

Kissing the Bee by Kathe Koja. Farrar Straus & Giroux. 121 pages. \$16.00. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. 0. 0374399387



Dana is part of a complicated triangle with her best friend, Avra, and Avra’s boyfriend, Emil. As senior prom approaches, she and Emil are faced with some difficult decisions about their own relationship, while Avra continues to plot her escape from home, her escape from who she is. Koja cleverly uses Dana’s senior project on bee communities, and Avra and Emil’s butterfly costume for the prom, as extended, recurring metaphors for the three teens’ changing relationships. Many teens will see themselves in this story of the kind of self-wisdom that only comes with pain.

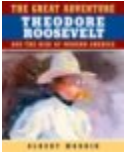
Cupid: A Tale of Love and Desire by Julius Lester. Harcourt Children’s Books. 198 pages. \$17.00. Fantasy. Adolescent. Europe (Mediterranean). 015202056X



Lester’s lively and humorous retelling of the Greek myth of Cupid—not the mischievous cherub with his bows and arrows but a grown-up god defying his overbearing mother (in his case, Venus) after falling in love for the first time with someone she abhors—and his beloved Psyche is an intriguing blend of the classic and pop culture. Psyche’s greedy and vengeful sisters are married to men referred to as Dumb and Dumber, a fact that will appeal to many knowing readers. The storyteller, who repeatedly interjects his wisdom about women and affairs of the heart since he has been married so many times, is an important character in the book though we

never really know who he is; even the story itself is personified. The god of love is so taken with Psyche that he requires the help of many quite interesting lesser gods to woo her, introducing readers to mythological characters not usually associated with the story. Adolescents will enjoy this angst-filled version of the myth, even if they find the narrator to be too long winded and “philosophical” on occasion. Reading about one male’s obsession with a beautiful woman definitely has its appeal.

Theodore Roosevelt: The Great Adventure and the Rise of Modern America by Albert Marrin. Dutton Books. 248 pages. \$30.00. Biography/Memoir. Adolescent. 0. 0525476598



Teddy Roosevelt is undoubtedly one of the most colorful and interesting presidents of the United States, and the man who shepherded a young America into the twentieth century. He was also a man of great intellect; a naturalist, sportsman, scholar and writer, he spoke several languages and possessed an inquisitive and open mind. He also had an inability to consider opinions at odds with his own. Marrin, in his usual stellar form, presents many sides of this iconic president in a biography that reveals not only the man, but the life and times he helped shape.

The White Darkness by Geraldine McCaughrean. Harper Tempest. 371 pages. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. Great Britain. 0060890355



Sym’s love of the Antarctic has been nurtured by her father and his business partner, who is close enough to the family to be called Uncle Victor. As the chilling novel quickly unfolds, Sym and Victor are off on an Antarctic adventure that holds the answers to so many of the problems in her life, including the reason for her significant hearing loss and her father’s lingering illness that led to his death. As Victor’s evil, maniacal plans to discover a lost hole into the center of the earth and the people who he believes live there are revealed, all Sym has to rely on for her own desperate survival in the brutal surroundings is her strong-willed determination and her surreal relationship with Captain Titus Oates, one of the valiant men who died on Scott’s long ago, doomed expedition to be the first to reach the South Pole. In this mixture of fantasy and reality, the stunning white darkness of the Antarctic wilderness is as much a main character as is the indefatigable but gullible Sym.

Echo by Kate Morgenroth. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 137 pages. \$15.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. 0. 1416914382



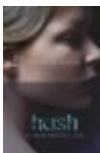
Justin is haunted by the guilt and horror of witnessing his younger brother Mark’s death and has alienated himself from everyone who was close to him. When he explodes in anger and is afraid that he has accidentally killed his former best friend, Justin’s emotional problems finally cause him to attempt suicide. At the urging of an insistent voice in his head, Justin begins to live the day over and over again, each time slightly modifying what he says, subtly changing his perceptions, but always ending with the same result. The quick-paced novel is at times a disturbing look at the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder; the reader is inside Justin’s mind, feeling his pain, seeing the world through his tortured psyche. The twist at the end explains all that has been happening and gives hope that all will be well...eventually.

Harlem Summer by Walter Dean Myers. Scholastic Press. 165 pages. \$16.99. Historical Fiction. Adolescent. African-American. 043936843X



When 16-year-old Mark gets a job downtown at The Crisis publishing office, he wonders what “the new Negro” is and if he fits the definition that includes people like WEB Dubois and Langston Hughes. He’s more at home uptown in Harlem with musicians like Fats Waller, whom he tries to impress in order to get a break in the music business. It turns out that Fats is not a perfect hero as he gets Mark involved with Dutch Schultz’s mob and their illegal rum running. Written with Myers’ signature style, the book contains great characters, evokes the setting of the Harlem Renaissance, and engages through humor and a well told coming-of-age story.

Hush: An Irish Princess’ Tale by Donna Jo Napoli. Atheneum Books. 307 pages. \$16.99. Fantasy. Adolescent. Europe (Western). 0689861761



As she has done with many other traditional stories, Napoli fleshes out the ancient Icelandic saga of Melkorka, an Irish princess who is kidnapped, placed on a Russian slave ship and eventually sold to the powerful Viking, Hoskuld. In the original story, Mel is mute; in this version, she doesn’t speak because she wants to retain some power in her desperate situation. A compelling survival story, **Hush** is also a portrait of the savage medieval

times rife with violence, slavery, rape and pillage, yet with the occasional act of kindness and generosity. While Melkorka's wisdom, courage and nobility is repeatedly tested, she is triumphant throughout her ordeal.

The Curse of the Romanovs by Staton Rabin. Margaret K. McElderry Books. 273 pages. \$17.99. Fantasy. Adolescent. Europe (Eastern). 1416902082



What begins as a straight forward historical account told by Alexei, son of Tsar Nicholas II and Tsarina Alexandra and heir to the Russian throne, of the last years of the lives of the Romanovs before the Russian Revolution, soon becomes a time-traveling thriller. After his cousin assassinates Rasputin, Alexei flees through time to New York City in 2010, and the home of his distant cousin Varda. Together they go back to 1918 Russia and valiantly try to save Alexei's family with the unexpected help of Rasputin, who seems to have as many lives as a cat as he chases them through time on two continents. The quick-paced tale has a surprising ending that mirrors the many theories of what might have happened to Alexei and his sister Anastasia since their bodies were never found. Rabin concludes with a list of sources and more than 20 pages of notes to give interested readers helpful information about the family and the pertinent Russian history.

Come Juneteenth by Ann Rinaldi. Harcourt Children's Books. 244 pages. \$17.00. Historical Fiction. Adolescent. African-American. 0152059474



Teen-aged Luli tells the story of her family, including her lovely, almost white adopted sister, Rose, who is called Sis Goose, the daughter of a slave who died in childbirth and a white riverboat captain. In presenting a Texas ranch run with the help of well-treated slaves, Rinaldi shows the incongruities of the South during the Civil War and the hypocrisy of what is considered honorable, since Luli's family decides that they must keep the fact that Lincoln has freed the slaves a secret for two years, even from Sis Goose, legally a slave, whom their son Gabe intends to marry. Tension builds after Yankee soldiers take over the main house and mistreat the family, especially Sis Goose. What will happen when Gabe returns? Because freedom is presented as so much more than not being kept in chains, the tragic ending of the book seems a bit forced and too convenient. All in all though, the book is an interesting consideration of good and evil, right and wrong, and a good explanation for why the Juneteenth holiday is still celebrated by African Americans.

Beowulf by James Rumford. Houghton Mifflin. Unpaged. \$17.00. Folk Literature. Adolescent. Great Britain. 061875637X



This stunning retelling of the Anglo-Saxon hero poem, *Beowulf*, consists of language that comes from the ancient roots of Old English, with two memorable lines spoken by Beowulf presented in Old English, with a translation provided. The illustrations, inspired by Rackham and Dulac, heighten the impact of this ancient story. Even those who have read and loved the original will be glad to share this accessible retelling with adolescent readers.

The Wednesday Wars by Gary Schmidt. Clarion Books. 272 pages. \$16.00. Historical Fiction. Adolescent. 0-618-72483-4



A Newbery honor book from the author of *Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy*, *The Wednesday Wars* presents a timeless story set in a turbulent time in America—the Vietnam era. It's 1967, and tensions between pro-war and anti-war groups are high, but Holling Hoodhood (not a typo!) has more important things on his mind. His teacher, Mrs. Baker, insists that he read and discuss Shakespeare with her on the Wednesday afternoons that he spends alone in her classroom. The story of how Holling endures his seventh-grade year and matures tremendously in the process is both comic and emotionally wrenching.

Love, Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli. Knopf Books for Young Readers. 274 pages. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. 0. 0375813756



In this companion novel to *Stargirl*, Stargirl is not quite falling out of love with Leo, from Arizona, and almost falling in love with Perry, from Pennsylvania where she now lives. In her gentle way, Stargirl makes new friends and looks after an assortment of people who seem to need her help. Several times, she makes it clear that she has no time for bullies. Many of these adventures appear in the letters she writes (but never mails) to Leo. The writing is poetic, the characters quirky, and the story quite satisfying.

The Red Thread by Roderick Townley. Atheneum Books. 294 pages. \$17.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. O. 1416908943



At 16, Dana is suffering from horrible nightmares that result in her sessions with Dr. Sprague, an oddly disturbing psychotherapist who wants to lead her back to past lives through hypnosis. While the coincidences and convergence of the lives of the present-day and past characters stretch believability of those who aren't adherents of reincarnation, the eventually resolved, spine-chilling murder mystery from the past and the building threat of violence in the present make the book a compelling read.

One Good Punch by Rich Wallace. Knopf Books for Young Readers. 128 pages. \$15.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. O. 0375813527



Michael Kerrigan is Scranton, Pennsylvania's golden boy: captain of the track team, fabulous runner, editorial assistant at the newspaper, good student, never in trouble. He's ready to move onward and upward, out of Scranton and into a perfect life. Until a friend puts four joints in his locker and the police find them. Until he doesn't want to implicate his friend. Until he doesn't want to shade the truth enough to get himself off. His internal struggle is mesmerizing, and the reader is left wondering, what would I do if I were in his shoes?

Red Moon at Sharpsburg by Rosemary Wells. Viking. 236 pages. \$16.99. Historical Fiction. Adolescent. O. 0670036382



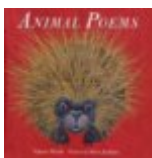
Life in Virginia during the Civil War is showcased in this gripping story of the war's affect on two families—the Moodys, tradespeople, and the Trimbles, landowners—and their friends and even those who are supposed to be their enemies. India Moody, the main protagonist through whose eyes the story is told, is a strong-willed, sensitive and extremely bright girl who desperately wants to learn all she can about science, a subject deemed not appropriate for young women, and to eventually go to Oberlin College where she's heard women are allowed to study. Emory Trimble, a young scientist very interested in medicine and the importance of sterilization, becomes her able teacher in the meantime. Wells gives an in-depth look at the wide variety and complexity of Southern views about the war, slavery, class and the role of women during the time period. Her use of powerful imagery, especially when describing famous battles like Sharpsburg and the destruction of the Trimble's plantation, makes the people and setting come to life for adolescent readers. These are characters and events that will be remembered long after the book has been read. In an Author's Note, Wells details her twelve years of research and preparation for writing this evocative historical novel.

Parrotfish by Ellen Wittlinger. Simon & Schuster. 287 pages. \$16.99. Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Adolescent. GLBT. 1416916229



"There's no use trying to change people until they're ready to change." Angela is truly ready to change to Grady, but not everyone in her/his life is ready to accept the gender transformation. Grady realistically handles the rejection and other consequences of the decision with grace and eventually finds that he can have new, accepting relationships at school—even love—and stronger ties to family members that are explored and revealed when everyone gets ready to celebrate their most important family holiday: Christmas. Wittlinger's is a sensitive and well-researched portrayal of what it's like to be transgendered, to live an honest life, to be who you really are. The transformation of the parrotfish, a fish that Grady's new friend Sebastian says change genders when it needs to, is a reassuring, natural parallel for Grady.

Animal Poems by Valerie Worth, Steve Jenkins (Illustrator). Farrar Straus & Giroux. 44 pages. \$17.00. Poetry. Adolescent. O. 0374380570



In this perfect marriage of poet and illustrator, animals and insects come to life. Jenkin's torn paper collages show horrible cockroaches scuttling across the page, the owl on the black page staring directly at the reader, and the slender snake with twisting coils so long it is partially off of the page. Worth's free verse poetry, with its alliteration, strong images, and startling comparisons, gets at the essence of these diverse creatures. The bat, who is the color of dust and clay, isn't aware "That in his/Own blind/Veins run/ The lighthearted lavas/Of the sun." Jellyfish rise "Like transparent/Ghost-bells/ Of lost lands." The hummingbird is "Awhirr with/The dark's/Atomic thrum." The eye of the bear is "Like a fierce/Furious/Bee;" that of the snake a "Fixed/Jewel." This is a book to be relished, to be read and reread aloud, so that the power of the words and illustrations can truly be appreciated.