

Spring Book Review

Tuesday, April 15, 2008

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Spring Book Review

Book lovers – including librarians, professors, teachers and students – convene for the biannual Book Review Session, in spring and fall, hosted by the Department of Library Science and Instructional Technology at Kutztown University. These energetic gatherings culminate in a selection of books to be reviewed by the attendees. The result of this process is the collection of reviews you hold in your hands.

To the publishers who generously contribute books, year after year, and the reviewers on the following pages...

Thank you for your time and effort!

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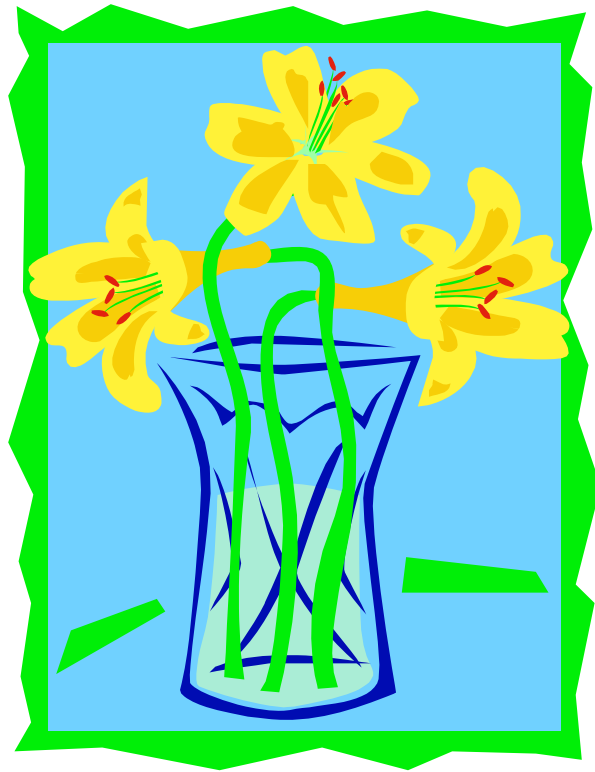
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**All Books
Alphabetized by
Author's Last Name**



NOTHING

Agee, Jon. New York: Hyperion, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-78683-694-9. Genre: Easy Fiction. Grade Level: Preschool-4.

Summary

After selling his last item, Otis, an antique dealer, is about to close when Suzie Grump, the richest lady in town, arrives. She wants to know what he has for sale. Otis tells her nothing. She says she will take nothing and pays \$300 dollars. The trend of buying nothing takes off and soon everyone is buying nothing and getting rid of everything to make from for the nothing. Otis collects everything just in time for Suzie to realize she needs everything. She comes to Otis's store to buy everything. When the store is empty, in walks Toby Portabello, the richest man in town. He wants to know what is for sale. The cycle is broken when Otis pushes him out the door. This is a great satire for older students on fads and consumer mentality. It could be used for group discussions. The younger audience will love Agee's illustrations.

Eileen Kern, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

GALLOP-O-GALLOP

Alonzo, Sandra. New York: Penguin Group, 2007. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-0-80372-967-4. Genre: Poetry. Grade Level: K-12.

Summary

This book contains 21 poems about horses told mostly from a young girl's perspective, though a few are from that of the horse. The topics of the poems range from birth of a foal to competitions and races to unicorns and seahorses. This book was written for a younger audience, but the poems are so fun that I think horse-lovers of all ages will enjoy them. The illustrations are beautiful and perfectly fit the poems. The style of the poems is varied enough that this book would fit well in a poetry unit.

Anna Berry, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

AN AMISH YEAR

Ammon, Richard. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, 2007. \$10.95 ISBN: 978-1-59078-465-5. Genre: Nonfiction/Picture Book. Grade Level: 2-4.

Summary

An Amish Year details a year in the life of the Amish culture. A young Amish girl is our storyteller as she walks the reader through each of the four seasons, describing both the highlights and the typical days that take place during each time of year. This book provides the reader with a simple introduction to the Amish culture. Young readers may appreciate learning about the lifestyle of individuals who physically live so close but live in a manner that is so different from the reader's own way of life. Both the detailed illustrations and the descriptive text help the reader to understand what life may be like for a young Amish child.

Kristin Blue, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

ROMEO AND LOU BLAST OFF

Anderson, Derek. New York: Simon & Schuster. 2007. \$15.99 ISBN: 978-1-41693-784-5 Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-2.

Summary

These adorable penguin and polar bear friends build a rocket ship out of snow. On a shooting star they take off for an adventure winding up in a city where none of the sights or sounds are

familiar. The friends try to get help from all kinds of people, but just don't understand the city. Their only solution is to build another rocket to get back home. The illustrations add so much to this story. Romeo and Lou mistake a man in a black suit and his furry white dog as another penguin and polar bear. They think two men using a jack hammer are sharks. It's a fun story for children to use their imagination. How else could the duo return to the pole? The only negative thing is that it gives the wrong idea that penguins and polar bears live at the same pole.

Wendy Snyder, Retired Elementary School Teacher

MY FATHER'S HOUSE

Appelt, Kathi. New York: Viking, 2007. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-0-67003-669-1.

Genre: Picture Book/Poetry. Grade Level: Preschool-3.

Summary

This poem celebrates the beauty of nature by giving thanks for its many aspects, from the stars in the sky to the rainforest and the desert. The illustrations contribute to the mood and theme of the poem: nature is wonderful. Together, they successfully convey a sense of wonder and appreciation for nature. The title and the text allude to the Bible verse from John 14:2, "In my Father's house are many mansions." This book is lovely and clearly intended to express and teach appreciation of Earth's variety and beauty. It could be used to introduce a unit on different climates, but only in certain settings, since its text clearly expresses a Judeo-Christian worldview, giving thanks to "My Father" for each new marvel in the world. Ironically, the text takes the verse out of context, applying a teaching about heaven to the natural world, giving a poem with a psalm-like beginning a modernistic and somewhat incongruous ending.

Ruth Gavin, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

WIGGLE AND WAGGLE

Arnold, Caroline. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge Publishing, 2007. \$12.95.

ISBN: 978-1-58089-306-0. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

Wiggle and Waggle are worms that live in a vegetable garden. All day they dig and squirm around the roots of the plants. To make this hard work seem easier, they sing a digging song. They also discover that their digging helps the garden grow strong plants. In five easy chapters, the beginner reader can enjoy the friendship of these two worms as well as learn facts about the benefits worms bring to a garden. This would be a perfect selection to accompany a primary classroom's study of plants. The story includes the lyrics of the song the friends sing throughout the story, and although it doesn't include the melody, it would be fun to make a simple song up and allow the students to sing along. This would make a nice addition to the simple chapter book collection.

*Alexis Cuff, Library Media Specialist, Durham Nockamixon Elementary/
Springfield Elementary Schools, Palisades School District*

THERE WAS AN OLD LADY WHO SWALLOWED FLY GUY

Arnold, Tedd. New York: Cartwheel Books, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-43963-906-4.

Genre: Easy Fiction. Grade Level: K-2.

Summary

This easy reader is a takeoff of *There Was An Lady Who Swallowed A Fly*. Tedd Arnold's award winning character, Fly Guy, gets swallowed by Buzz's grandmother. The usual list of

insects and animals are swallowed until Buzz calls Fly Guy to come out. Once Fly Guy escapes from grandmother's stomach, the rest of the insects and animals appear outside on the ground. The abrupt ending is jarring to the reader. The illustrations are hilarious and typical Tedd Arnold.

Eileen Kern, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

RACE: A HISTORY BEYOND BLACK AND WHITE

Aronson, Marc. New York: Ginee Seo Books, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-68986-554-1.

Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 10+.

Summary

Marc Aronson discusses the concept of race, including prejudice and racism, as it has been viewed throughout time and the effects it has had on world history. Race is more than just "black and white" and is interpreted differently according to a population's background, upbringing and time period of existence. Biological and psychological aspects are discussed. In chronological order, the work describes how race has been defined and treated, including histories of the first civilization in Sumer, European imperialism, religious conflicts, the Holocaust, abolition, the civil rights movement and current immigration trends. Very well written and easy to understand, this work does a nice job of exposing historical misconceptions and explaining past and present thinking about race. Aronson's insightful descriptions of historical events discuss race in new ways that students will appreciate. An index also makes the work helpful for research projects. Highly recommended.

Amber Ziemba, Librarian, Saucon Valley High School

IRON THUNDER

Avi. New York: Hyperion, 2007. \$15.99. ISBN: 1-42310-446-9.

Genre: Historical Fiction. Grade Level: 5-8.

Summary

Newbery Award-winning author Avi, shows us how it would have felt to live in the 1860s and be part of the exciting race to build the *Monitor*, the Union's first ironclad warship. Avi's descriptive writing makes us feel like we're part of the action. The book is narrated by Tom Carroll, a 13-year-old who takes a job to help support his family after his father is killed in the Civil War fighting for the Union. Tom finds work in the city of Brooklyn, New York, as assistant to the *Monitor*'s inventor, Captain John Ericsson. Kids will learn what it's like to run from dangerous Confederate spies who desperately want information about the ship. They also share the experience of being a young crew member on an untried vessel when new technology doesn't work. Tom is aboard the *Monitor* as she takes part in a sea battle that changes the course of the war and revolutionizes naval warfare. He describes the thick smoke from the engines, the heat in the small turret where the 19-man gun crew is stationed, the noise of gunfire and the shouts of the crew. Readers will share Tom's fear and excitement as the battle rages around him. The book features fictional, action-packed historical narratives illustrated with primary source material – including period illustrations, photographs, and maps. The drawings and photos show what objects, places, and historical figures really looked like, adding a realistic edge to the reader's experience. It's the first in a series, I Witness.

Eloise M. Long, Library Science/Instructional Technology Chair, Kutztown University

JACK PLANK TELLS TALES

**Babbitt, Natalie. New York: Michael DiCapria Books, 2007. \$15.95.
ISBN: 978-0-54500-496-1. Genre: Tall Tales. Grade Level: 2-5.**

Summary

Jack Plank is a lovely fellow. But the fact of the matter is that when it comes to pirating, he stinks. He gets along with everyone and he's been with his ship, *The Avarice*, for years and years now. But pirates always have to consider the bottom line and when it comes right down to it, Jack doesn't plunder very well, not very well at all. So off he goes to find a job. While doing so, he settles into a boarding house run by the kindly Mrs. DelFresno and her daughter, Nina. Each day, Jack and Nina go off to try to find him an occupation and each day they come back empty-handed. Fortunately, for every job that Jack turns down, he's able to tell a rip-roaring story for why becoming a baker, a fisherman, a goldsmith, or a host of other occupations might be too much of a reminder of his days back on the pirate ship. In the end, Jack has told stories involving everything from a girl raised by seagulls to squid men, vengeful ghosts, mermaid lovers, and trolls. Fortunately, sometimes the best job is one so glaringly obvious you don't notice it until someone points it out to you. This is the first book Natalie Babbitt of *Tuck Everlasting* fame has written in 25 years. It is good bedtime story material.

Carol Gearhart, Professor Emerita, Kutztown University

DREAM FACTORY

**Barkley, Brad and Heather Hepler. New York: Dutton, 2007. \$16.99.
ISBN: 987-0-52547-802-7. Genre: Realistic Fiction. Grade Level: 7-12.**

Summary

Ella is spending the summer in Florida working as (ironically) Cinderella in Disney World. The normal actors and actresses are on strike, so a group of young adults are being used as temporary actors until the strike is over. Disney World with all of the acting and happiness seems fake to Ella who is trying to get over a traumatic situation. Luke is another one of the cast of characters, Dale. He is trying to decide his future and trying to figure out why he's *interested* in Ella when he has the "perfect" girlfriend. The point of view switches between Ella and Luke throughout the story to give it a more dimensional approach to the things that happen. This novel has the normal elements of a teen romance, but also a deeper level about grief, life-long decisions, and what is real and what is not. I liked the way this book switched between Ella and Luke's points of view to increase the reality of the story. I was almost put off by the very girly cover of the book, but the deeper emotions and happenings make this book interesting for all students. The layout of Disney World appears to be accurate according to the story and Ella and Luke's problems are ones that teenagers can either associate with personally or have known someone who went through something similar. Overall, I think this novel would be a great addition to a high school library or for an advertising project to compare the views to those of the Disney World image.

Melissa Lemke, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

TWO WAY STREET

**Barnholdt, Lauren New York: Simon Pulse, 2007. \$8.99. ISBN: 978-1-41691-318-4.
Genre: Realistic Fiction. Grade Level: 10-12.**

Summary

This is the journey of two freshmen college students to their first days of college. Courtney and Jordan were dating but then all of a sudden they just broke up! They decide to keep their plans

to drive to college together since they go to the same school. As the story progresses the reader learns through present day and flashback what had happened to their relationship and how it may be put together again. Will Jordan and Courtney get back together and overcome all the problems they had? This is a great story for upper level teenagers to engage in because of all the upcoming transitions they will be faced with. This story shows that you can always overcome bad things that happen and it is not always the end of the world and that sometimes things do happen the way you want them to in the end.

Amanda Powell, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

PETER AND THE SECRET OF RUNDOON

Barry, Dave and Ridley Pearson. New York: Hyperion Books, 2007. \$18.99.

ISBN: 978-0-78683-788-5. Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 4-7.

Summary

This is an action-packed conclusion to the Starcatchers trilogy. In this fantasy, Peter, Tinkerbell, Molly, George, and Molly's father find themselves in a place called Rundoon. They are prisoners of a wicked King Zarboff and his big snake, who loves to eat humans. The shadow creature, Lord Ombra, is back and is trying to destroy the world and everyone in it using a rocket that carries starstuff. Back in Neverland, there are more problems as the Scorpion Tribe tries to destroy the pirates and the Mollusk Tribe. The pirates and the Mollusk tribe unite to try and destroy the Scorpion Tribe. There are flying camels, magic carpets, a giant snake, lots of monkeys, a mad Russian rocket scientist, and even a flying ship (manned by Captain Hook) as Peter and friends try to save the world. This is a wonderful, fast-moving, and exciting adventure written by two very talented authors. In the final story of the Starcatchers trilogy, the fun continues as the Starcatchers try to save the world. The good characters are always in trouble and they always seem to find a way to overcome the bad guys. The authors have done it again as they created the final story of this entertaining trilogy. This trilogy is a "must have" for every elementary school library!!!

Pat Koontz, Librarian, Walton Farm Elementary, North Penn School District

THE PERIODIC TABLE: ELEMENTS WITH STYLE!

Basher, Simon and Adrian Dingle. Boston, MA: Kingfisher, 2007. \$8.95.

ISBN: 978-0-75346-085-6. Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 6-10.

Summary

This book describes over 100 elements of the periodic table from a first-person point of view making the elements seem like they are people. Each element has a two-page spread, with one page containing information about the element and the other page showing a cartoon picture of the element. The information listed includes the element's symbol, atomic number, color, and date of discovery. Each element then describes its characteristics through a first-person narrative. A glossary and index are available at the end, and a poster of the periodic table with the cartoon pictures is included. This book is so cute and clever! It makes a topic which can be boring to students into something fun. Having the information written in first person helps to draw the reader into the book because it is more like a story. It includes some information on how the elements are grouped together, but mostly concentrates on describing the individual elements. The poster is an added bonus. My students loved this book! If you teach chemistry, this should definitely be part of your collection.

Michele Ezzell, Graduate Student, Kutztown University

THE LAST KNIGHT

**Bell, Hilari. New York: Harper Collins, 2007. \$17.89.
ISBN: 978-0-06082-504-1. Genre: Fantasy. Grade level: 6-8.**

Summary

A knight and his squire rescue a lady being held prisoner in a tower only to discover that she is actually a murderer. The two are charged to re-capture her, or suffer the consequences. I loved this book. The two main characters make for a comedy that kept me laughing. The honorable knight and his dishonorable squire are constantly at ends about the best way to recapture the murderer. Also, the plot keeps moving and never drags, perfect for keeping the attention of students.

Kirby Barnett, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

ALMOST HOME

**Blank, Jessica. New York: Hyperion, 2007. \$15.99. ISBN: 1-42310-642-3.
Genre: Realistic Fiction. Grade Level: 10-12.**

Summary

Eeyore, Rusty, Squid, Scabius, Critter, Laura, and Tracy are all teenage runaways trying to survive on the streets of Los Angeles. Each character has some tragedy in his or her past that has somehow ended with them being homeless. Most of them no longer have hope for a home, but Eeyore just may make it out in the end. The novel is split into parts told by each person involved and the characterization of each person is what moves the story along. I really liked this novel, but it may not be appropriate for most school age groups. The novel includes lots of cursing, sex, violence, and drugs. In order to create an accurate description of being a homeless teenager, these things are all needed, but younger audiences shouldn't be exposed to the adult material.

Melissa Lemke, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

TREASURE

**Bloom, Suzanne. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mill Press, 2007. \$15.95.
ISBN: 978-1-59078-457-0. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-1.**

Summary

Treasure features the same characters from Suzanne Bloom's book, [A Splendid Friend, Indeed](#) – made famous because of its designation as Pennsylvania's One Book Every Young Child for 2007. Goose is being his typical pesky self as he and Polar Bear discover a map and dive in search of treasure. Of course, there is no treasure – except for their friendship with each other. Warm illustrations add to another charming Bloom story.

Eloise M. Long, Library Science/Instructional Technology Chair, Kutztown University

FOREVER

**Blume, Judy. New York, NY: Simon Pulse, 2007. \$8.99. ISBN: 1-41693-400-6. Genre:
Realistic Fiction. Grade Level: 9-12.**

Summary

Blume tells a convincing tale of first love--a love that seems strong and true enough to last forever. Katherine loves Michael so much, in fact, that she's willing to lose her virginity to him, and, as the months go by, it gets harder and harder for her to imagine living without him. However, something happens when they are separated for the summer: Katherine begins to have feelings for another guy. What does this mean about her love for Michael? What does this

mean about love in general? What does "forever" mean, anyway? As always, Blume writes as if she's never forgotten a moment of what it's like to be a teenager. As a future librarian and mother of a daughter, I definitely believe this book is a wonderful tool to assist in the discussion of sex, pregnancy, teenage love, and the decision to wait. I would be sure if one were to include this in their library that they be prepared to have a parent dispute it. There are subjects which may be graphic and may not be acceptable for some school libraries. I personally would include this book in a high school library because it teaches many valuable lessons for young adults who are growing and maturing during that time. This book can offer guidance in subjects teens are interested in.

Rachel Copenhaver, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE HUMAN FLY AND OTHER STORIES

Boyle, T.C. New York: Penguin Group, 2005, \$17.99. ISBN: 0-67006-054-2.

Genre: Short Stories. Grade Level: 11-12.

Summary

This book has 13 short stories. These stories bring to life adult themes of humor, sadness, mystery. Among them is an O Henry Award-winning story, "The Love of My Life". The stories require critical thinking and good vocabulary knowledge (or willingness to look up definitions to understand). The stories are direct and to the point. They are interesting to read. This book is for mature students. I would not give it to students in grades lower than 11th because parents might object. Sex and alcohol use are mentioned in some of the stories. The language is mature and the stories' ideas will challenge good readers. Because of the topics of the stories, I would be careful about recommendations. You will need to know your students and their parents' wishes.

Deborah Peters, 7th grade Language Arts Teacher, Northwestern Lehigh MS

LEAP OF FAITH

Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-80373-127-1. Genre: Realistic Fiction. Grade Level: 5-8.

Summary

Abigail is entering sixth grade. She gets into a little bit of trouble in the beginning and must transfer schools. At first Abigail does not like her new (Catholic) school and lots of things happen to her during her first week. Soon after going to church for class every week, Abigail begins to see that she may like church despite her parents' feelings of it. She begins to take classes to become Catholic and finds that she does love it as well as her favorite class, drama. An excellent book that allows young students to see that they can make decisions for themselves and enjoy their school lives despite the hardships they may encounter. This inspiring story can help readers realize their own capabilities. As well as teaching this lesson the story is a quick read that keeps readers entertained up through the end.

Amanda Powell, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

EIGHTH GRADE BITES (THE CHRONICLES OF VLADIMIR TOD, BOOK 1)

Brewer, Heather. New York: Dutton Children's Books. 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-52547-811-9. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 5-12.

Summary

Vlad Tod is half vampire. He manages to keep this hidden from everyone except his best friend and his “Aunt” who has taken care of him and provided for his needs since his parent’s mysterious death. Vlad is living a “normal” life until a favorite teacher disappears and strangers start looking for him and asking questions. This book has everything: an unpopular thirteen year old vampire with a sense of humor and a kind heart, mean substitute teachers who just don’t understand, and teenage vampire boy and girl dating angst. There is enough suspense and mystery to keep students turning the pages and asking for the sequel.

Gwenn Davis, Librarian, Stroudsburg High School

WE ARE ONE: THE STORY OF BAYARD RUSTIN

Brimner, Larry Dane. Honesdale, PA: Boyd Mills Press, 2007. \$17.95.

ISBN: 978-1-59078-498-3. Genre: Biography. Grade Level 7-9.

Summary

This biography is about Bayard Rustin, a seldom talked about leader of the Civil Rights Movement. The book contains anecdotal stories from Rustin’s life as a Quaker to Communist to Civil Rights Leader. Along with the facts and stories of his life are black and white photographs of both private and public moments in Rustin’s life. Additionally, the biography includes information on important milestones in the Civil Rights movement with side notes and explanations of issues such as the Jim Crow laws. I have taught the Civil Rights movement as a social studies teacher and was unfamiliar with Bayard Rustin. The biography is brief enough to be used by younger students but also provides enough factual information to be utilized in a report/project for older students. A good book that places a human face on the issues in the Civil Rights movement and tells the life story of an African American man. The text is easy to read and the large photographs are engaging and break up the text.

Robin Burns, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

WHEN DINOSAURS CAME WITH EVERYTHING

Broach, Elise. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 0-68986-922-3. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-2.

Summary

A little boy is upset because today is Friday - the day his mother runs errands - and he knows it’s going to be boring. At their first stop, the baker, a sign on top of the counter reads “Buy a dozen get a dinosaur.” He knows that it will be a little toy so when they get ready to leave he doesn’t even mention it. Then the bakery clerk reminds them not to forget the dinosaur and it turns out to be a real triceratops. Everywhere they go they are given another dinosaur and eventually they all become part of the family. The situations that happen to the boy and his mother are very funny. They are beautifully depicted in the pictures by David Small. This book is fun to read and children will love seeing the collection of dinosaurs as it gets bigger and bigger. It’s also fun to see how the family reacts to having these new “family members.”

Sharon Leitner-Cohen, Library Media Specialist, The Hillside School

SNOW MOON

Brunelle, Nicholas. New York: Viking, 2005. \$15.99. ISBN: 978-0-67006-024-5.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: 1-5.

Summary

A child is going on this adventure to Owl Ridge. This is a place where hundreds of owls fly around. The artwork brings the owl to life. The illustrations are amazing. After I read this

book, I look at owls differently since I've never actually seen hundreds of them at a time. I could not even imagine what a sight that would be.

Janet Kichline, Adult Services Librarian, Mary Meuser Memorial Library

EMMA'S TURTLE

Bunting, Eve. Honesdale, PA: Boyd's Mill Press, 2007. ISBN: 978-1-59078-350-6.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-2.

Summary

Emma reads to her turtle about all the wonderful places to visit in the world. One day the turtle decides he wants to see all places so he digs his way out of his pen. As he travels, he actually believes that he's going to all these fabulous places. Soon he starts to realize that the animals look familiar and he begins to question where he is. Soon Emma finds him at the other end of the yard and returns him to his pen. This story is a great read-aloud to begin a discussion on how reading can take someone on an adventure.

Eileen Kern, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

THE BABY SHOWER.

Bunting, Eve. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2007. \$15.95.

ISBN: 978-1-58089-139-4. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-K.

Summary

Ms. Brindle Cow is having a baby. A happy bird spreads the news and soon Brindle's friends are on their way to the shower with cakes, booties and a song for the little one or ones as Brindle has twin calves. A rhyming story with wonderfully humorous illustrations by Judy Love. The bunnies are reading Peter Rabbit and Mrs. Pig is reading The Three Little Pigs to the piglets. The expressions on the animal's faces are worth the price of the book.

Carol Ann Gearhart, Professor Emerita, Kutztown University

THE MAN WITH THE RED BAG

Bunting, Eve. New York: Joanna Cotler Books, 2007. \$16.89 ISBN: 978-0-06081-828-9.

Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 5-8.

Summary:

12-year-old Kevin Saunders and his grandmother are on a Star Tour bus traveling in the Rocky Mountain region of the United States. Kevin notices a gentleman named Charles Stavros with a red bag that he keeps with him at all times. Kevin and Geneva, a 12-year-old girl he met on the ride, must watch his every move to find out if he is a terrorist. Stavros has something in the bag that he doesn't want to share with anybody. It is up to Kevin to save the day, and maybe even the world. The book had an interesting plot, but the conflict developed very slowly. I think it will be a good story for young adults because many can relate to the family vacation concept. The book also teaches a good lesson – perception isn't always reality.

Taylor Thompson, 6th Grade Teacher, Kutztown Area Middle School

JINX

Cabot, Meg. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2007. \$17.89.

ISBN: 978-0-06083-764-0. Genre: Fantasy/Coming of Age. Grade Level: 7-9.

Summary

The main character, Jean Honeychurch a.k.a. “Jinx”, must move from her hometown in Iowa to live with her cousin in New York City after a mysterious confrontation with a past love interest. Throughout the story, the reader is meant to wonder what circumstances led to her displacement, and whether a naïve country girl could ever be accepted in the Big Apple. There were several aspects to this story that I found to be somewhat frustrating. Throughout the story, Jean complains about how unlucky she is, despite some obvious improvements in her condition. After encountering the boy-next-door, Jinx develops a crush, only to discover that her cousin has a crush on the same boy. The evil cousin attempts to ruin her life, and Jean continues to play the role of the victim. I found the answer to the big secret to be incredibly disappointing.

Kaylynn Hove, Student, Kutztown University

VOCABULARY POWER

Carangelo, Audrey. New York: Play Bac Publishing, 2007. \$9.95.

ISBN: 978-1-60214-004-2. Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 2

Summary

This flipbook presents children in second grade with a way to learn 200 words that will boost their reading comprehension. Each of those 200 words is presented on a separate page that also includes the pronunciation of the word, the part of speech of the word, a sentence that demonstrates proper use of the word, a cartoon that depicts the meaning of the word, and a question and answer section that uses the word for a unique riddle or joke. For further help, this flipbook also offers a pronunciation guide, instructions and suggestions for use of the book, supplementary learning activities, an index of all of the vocabulary words, and a pop-out display stand that helps the book be displayed at the user’s convenience. The author seems to be highly qualified for the creation of such beneficial learning materials. The flipbook format, colorful pages, and original combination of cartoons, riddles, and jokes may make children more inclined to use the book and learn the words. I have no doubt that children will benefit from this book if they use it in the intended manner. However, I also feel as if some of the pictures could have been better because some of the pictures contained stereotypes that we really should not reinforce in children’s minds. For example, one page contains an illustration of the stereotypical librarian, a stereotype that limits the children’s views of librarians, and is, for the most part, inaccurate.

Rebecca Schroder, Library Science & Elem. Education Student, Kutztown University

I DON'T LIKE TO READ!

Carlson, Nancy L. New York: Viking, 2007. \$15.99. ISBN: 978-0-67006-191-4.

Genre: Easy to Read. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

Henry the mouse enjoys learning about volcanoes, calendars, and how to add and subtract. The only problem is that he hates to read because the letters and words do not make sense. All of his friends are reading and so he soon is saying that reading is boring. His teacher and his parents realize that he is having trouble and they give him extra help and extra time. One night the babysitter is in the middle of a story when she receives a phone call and just keeps talking

and talking and talking. Henry decides to read the story himself and he succeeds. Nancy Carlson has done it again. Her characters are charming and they work out their predicaments on their own with just a little help from their friends, family and teachers. This would be useful with students, who hate to read, to show them that they may succeed if they work hard.

Paulette Braucher-Watton, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

CROSS MY HEART AND HOPE TO SPY

Carter, Ally. New York, NY: Hyperion Books for Children, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 1-42310-005-0. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 5-8.

Summary

After staking out, obtaining, and then being forced to give up her first boyfriend, Josh, all Cammie Morgan wants is a peaceful semester. But that's easier said than done when you're a CIA legacy and go to the premier school in the world...for spies. Despite Cammie's best intentions to be a normal student, danger seems to follow her. She and her best friends learn that their school is going to play host to some mysterious guests--code name: "Blackthorne." Soon Cammie and her friends are crawling through walls and surveilling the school to learn the truth about Blackthorne. Even though they have confidence in their spy skills, this time the targets are tougher (and hotter), and the stakes for Cammie's heart--and her beloved school--are higher than ever. This was a great book which teen girls will not be able to put down! It has everything from ex-boyfriends, to crushes, to spying, and undercover CIA missions! This is a sequel to the novel *I'd Tell You I Love You, But Then I'd Have to Kill You* but it is not necessary to have read the first to understand this book. This is a must have for any middle school library!

Rachel Copenhaver, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

BY THE SWORD: A YOUNG MAN MEETS WAR

Castrovilla, Selene. Honesdale, PA: Calkins Creek, 2007. \$17.95.

ISBN: 978-1-59078-427-3 Genre: Historical Fiction. Grade Level: 4-6.

Summary

Benjamin Tallmadge is serving with the Sixth Connecticut Levies during the American Revolution. Benjamin and his horse, Highlander, are fighting at the Battle of Long Island. This would be a wonderful picture book to incorporate into an American Revolution unit. Bill Farnsworth created realistic paintings to accompany the text. The author used Benjamin Tallmadge's own memoir, as well as other listed sources, to make this story as historically accurate as possible. A timeline, which includes important dates from the Revolution as well as from Tallmadge's life, is located at the back of the book.

Melissa DeLong, Teacher, Kutztown Elementary School

IVAN THE TERRIER

Catalanatto, Peter. New York: Atheneum, 2007. ISBN: 978-1-41691-247-7.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-2.

Summary

Ivan, a high-spirited terrier, interrupts a narrator who is trying to tell four bedtime fairy tales. The terrier plays havoc with the Three Billy Goats Gruff, Three Bears, Three Little Pigs and the Gingerbread Boy. Ivan's interaction with the gingerbread boy is incomplete prior to the narrator deciding to tell a story about the dog. Ivan is too tired to be the main character of the

story so he goes to bed. Readers will enjoy predicting in which fairy tale Ivan will create pandemonium.

Eileen Kern, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

CHRISTMAS MOUSELING

Chaconas, Dori. New York: Viking, 2005. \$15.99. ISBN: 978-0-67005-984-3.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-4.

Summary

A baby mouse was born on a December night. The winter wind blows the tiny nest apart and Mother Mouse takes her mouseling to find a warm and safe place for her baby. She goes from nest to nest but none of the nests stay still because of the wind. Finally, Mother Mouse finds a place for her little mouseling. Nice illustrations accompany the text. This would be a great addition to any library.

Janet Kichline, Adult Services Librarian, Mary Meuser Memorial Library

PENNIES IN A JAR

Chaconas, Dori. New York: Peachtree Publishers, 2007. ISBN: 978-1-56145-422-8.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-2.

Summary

Lewin's realistic watercolors capture the feelings of a young boy's struggle to find a perfect birthday present for his father who is overseas. The young boy realizes that the best present would be for him to conquer his fear of horses and show his bravery by having his picture taken on a horse. Although the setting of the story is World War II, the feelings of the young boy could resonate with children today who have parents in the military. The artwork is the strength of the book that will be more appreciated by adults than the targeted audience.

Eileen Kern, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

TIRE MOUNTAIN

Cheng, Andrea. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, 2007. 978-1-93242-560-4.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: PreK-2.

Summary

Aaron lives in the city with his mom and dad next to his father's tire repair business. Old tires were piled high on the property and Aaron's mom began to look for a home in the country so that Aaron could have a beautiful place to play. Aaron, however, loved his "tire mountain" and couldn't understand why his mom wanted to leave. He soon came up with the idea that his tires could be turned into swings and garden containers in the empty lot next door. Others in the neighborhood joined in and the tire mountain was moved and turned into a beautiful place for Aaron and his friends to play. Mom agreed and plans to move came to an end. This story illustrates the message that even children can create positive change. The idea is a good one to share with youngsters, but the overall book is a bit ordinary. I would consider this a secondary purchase for the library.

Emily Cuff, Student, Kutztown University

ECHOES OF THE WHITE GIRAFFE

Choi, Sook Nyul. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993. \$6.95.

ISBN 0-61880-917-1. Genre: Historical Fiction. Grade Level: 5-9

Summary

Sookan Bak and her mother and younger brother are refugees of the Korean War living in Pusan, far from their home in Seoul. They live on a tall, muddy mountain with a huge village of other refugees, but work hard to be accepted by the residents of Pusan. Sookan and her friends construct a building so they will be able to continue their schooling. Sookan also deals with her best friend's grief, meets a "shouting poet," worries for her lost father, and experiences a special friendship. This is an excellent book surrounding a rare topic (the Korean War.) The plot is interesting, moves quickly, and will appeal to students of many ages. The characters are well-developed, especially Sookan. The language is gentle and poetic. This could be used to supplement a history curriculum and could also parallel lessons about current events involving refugee camps. It is also the middle book in a series about Sookan.

Laura Van Cott, Library Science student, Kutztown University

GATHERING OF PEARLS

Choi, Sook Nyul. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1994. \$6.95.

ISBN 0-61880-918-X. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 7-9

Summary

In 1954, Sookan Bak travels from her home in Korea to New York for the first time. She is the only foreign student at the women's college she attends. She must learn English and learn how to live in a culture completely foreign to her own. Not only that, but she feels she must honor her family members in Korea through her actions in America, including her understanding mother and demanding older sister. This is the third and last book in a trilogy about Sookan. I felt that the character changed quite a bit in this story. In the other books, she is portrayed as a determined, compassionate dreamer, but in this installment, she seemed meek and worried. I could understand that this could be caused by the strange environment she finds herself in, but it does not seem as though her personality would change so drastically. The book does have excellent themes about family and friends, and a good story with interesting minor characters. It could be read alone but would be more meaningful read with the rest of the series.

Laura Van Cott, Library Science student, Kutztown University

PUG IN A TRUCK

Coffelt, Nancy. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. ISBN: 0-61856-319-9.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-2.

Summary

Pug the dog introduces young readers to his human friend and their big, red truck – describing how they pick up a load and deliver it. Sometimes they see toothpicks, dragon wagons (tow-trucks), and even ground-clouds. Pug tells us what the truck stop looks like; what it is like to drive on the highway; and how they spend their day. Simple sentences, along with bold, bright illustrations will attract young readers to this delightful tale. Some of the trucker vocabulary will be lost upon its intended audience. If this book is read to children by an adult, and the lessons of keeping safe and avoiding accidents is stressed, this will be a valuable read. Use of the Trucker Glossary is highly recommended. I would recommend this book for a story time with elementary or daycare children.

Shawn Glancy, Graduate Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE INVISIBLE RULES OF THE ZOË LAMA

**Cohen, Trish. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2007. \$15.99
ISBN: 978-0-52547-810-2. Fiction/Coming of Age. Grade Level: 5-8.**

Summary:

Zoë, a seventh grade girl, is famous in her middle school for advising students about her unwritten rules to live by. Her overworked mother, her grandmother who has a mild onset of Alzheimer's disease, being chairperson of the dance committee, and finally helping give advice to those in need, make her life difficult. She finds it necessary to attempt to set up dates for her single mother as well. She finally has a breakdown. I thought the book was a quick read and it will appeal to girls in the middle school setting. The book covers many aspects of middle school life for students: schedules, issues with friends, juggling school and home life issues. It was interesting to read about what many middle school students think and wonder about besides academia during the school day.

Taylor Thompson, 6th Grade Teacher, Kutztown Area Middle School

ON MEADOWVIEW STREET

**Cole, Henry. New York: Green Willow Books, 2007.
ISBN: 978-0-06056-482-7. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-3**

Summary

Caroline was excited to move to her new home on Meadowview Street. As soon as she could, she went to explore to find the Meadow. But as in most developments, no meadow could be found. She did find a single wildflower that she convinced her dad not to mow. To preserve the flower, she used stakes and string to protect it. Soon this small sanctuary grew to include a pond, a tree and the animals that would naturally be found there. Finally the entire yard and the surrounding neighborhood became the meadow for which she had longed. This is a lovely book that celebrates the natural beauty of our surroundings. It is an obvious choice for Earth Day reading but could be shared at any time. This is a great addition to the elementary library collection.

Emily Cuff, Student, Kutztown University

ARTEMIS FOWL: THE GRAPHIC NOVEL

**Colfer, Eoin and Andrew Donkin. New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2007. \$18.99.
ISBN: 0-78684-881-2. Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 5-8.**

Summary

Artemis Fowl, genius, criminal mastermind, 12-year-old, is possibly the only con artist who would imagine trying to rob the fairies of their gold. Combining his brilliant powers of deduction with the latest technology, Artemis locates a fairy and bargains for her "Book," the key to all the fairies' secrets. More brilliant reasoning lets him decode the fairies' language, thus enabling him to set a trap for them and con them out of large amounts of gold. Artemis shares the stage with his fairy opponent, Holly Short of the Lower Elements Police recon squad (LEPrecon). The story allows both to be sympathetic characters and provides an opportunity for Artemis, a dedicated criminal genius, to express his wit, haughtiness, and yes, vulnerability as he amasses his fortune to find his lost father and cure his grieving mother. Some of Eoin Colfer's original word play and wittiness are lost in this adaptation. For readers who have already devoured Artemis's adventures, the characters are wrested from our imaginations and depicted according to the confines of the graphic novel genre. Everyone has enormous eyes

and a choice of square or triangle-shaped face. Holly sacrifices her feminist attitude for a body that is virtually the same shape as every other comic book female: Barbie. As an addition to the Artemis Fowl series, this really is enjoyable, but I'm not sure how well it would stand on its own.

Ruth Gavin, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

OINK-OINK AND OTHER ANIMAL SOUNDS

Conteh-Morgan, Jane. Chicago: Cricket Books, 2006. \$7.95. ISBN: 978-0-81267-934-2. Genre: Board Book. Grade Level: Pre-K.

Summary

The book consists of pictures of different animals and the noises they make, interpreted in different languages. Each animal noise is given as spelled in a certain language and on the next page the country of the language's predominance is given. The pictures are colorful and entertaining. This would be fun to sound out words with children and hear how they sound like animal noises even in a different language. Recommended.

Amber Ziemba, Saucon Valley High School Librarian

DOG POEMS

**Crawley, Dave. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press. 2007. \$16.95
ISBN: 978-1-59078-454-9 Genre: Poetry. Grade Level: K-3.**

Summary

This collection of 24 rhyming poems tackles a variety of topics with lots of humor. Poems deal with animal rescue, animal evolution, the bond between pet and owner, dog habits, dog breeds, and dog responsibilities like washing, grooming and walking. This is a follow up to his 2005 book called Cat Tales. Any dog lover is sure to enjoy this book. The water-color illustrations add to the humor found in the poems. After reading it, the most skeptical will want to rush out and get a pet dog.

Wendy Snyder, Retired Elementary School Teacher

THE CASTLE CORONA

**Creech, Sharon. New York: HarperCollins, 2007. \$19.89
ISBN: 978-0-06084-621-3. Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 3-7.**

Summary

In the Castle Corona, there lives a rich, royal, and spoiled family, including the King, the Queen, a Princess, and two Princes. Down in the village live two peasant children, Enzo and Pia. They are orphans who are forced to live with a mean taskmaster who makes them work for their keep. The orphans discover a mysterious pouch in the woods, which ends up guiding the two children to the Castle Corona where their lives are changed forever. This is Sharon Creech's first attempt at fantasy. The story is interesting and it is written well. The beautiful color illustrations by David Diaz add to the beauty of this book. I felt the story was interesting and fun but it seemed to take forever to get to the end. I was waiting for a big Sharon Creech surprise at the end, but it never really occurred. I have a group of students in Grades 5-6 who will love this book because they love fantasy, but I was expecting more from one of my favorite authors. Yes, it is still hard to find something as good as her Newbery Award-winning book Walk Two Moons.

Pat Koontz, Librarian, Walton Farm Elementary, North Penn School District

TOUGH BOY SONATAS

**Crisler, Curtis. Honesdale, PA: Wordsong/Boyd's Mills Press, 2007. \$19.95.
ISBN 1-93242-577-2. Genre: Poetry. Grade Level: 6-12.**

Summary

Curtis Crisler uses verse to portray images of inner city life and the African-American community. Floyd Cooper's illustrations are as open and flowing as the lyrics yet both the poems and pictures depict the hard realities of urban life. Although each of the poems can stand alone, together they create a full and rich depiction of a young man's life. It is easy to imagine reading the poems aloud to a rhythmic beat, as a rap, and showing teens how meaningful words and verse can be.

Stephanie Towles, Librarian, Glenside Elementary, Reading School District

DIARY OF A FLY

**Cronin, Doreen. New York: Joanna Cotler Books, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-06000-156-8.
Genre: Easy Fiction. Grade Level: K-2.**

Summary

This is another winner from author Doreen Cronin and illustrator Harry Bliss. Fly, a purple girl with multifaceted green eyes, writes in her diary about the first day at school, her flying lessons, her relationships and antics with her 327 siblings. She wants to be a super hero but realizes that it is not possible. She learns many worldly things from her playmates, Worm and Spider. The cartoon illustrations and humorous but fact filled text make this book another winner in the series.

Eileen Kern, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

ELIJAH OF BUXTON

**Curtis, Christopher Paul. New York: Scholastic, 2007. \$16.99.
ISBN: 978-0-43902-344-3. Genre: Historical Fiction. Grade Level: 5-8.**

Summary

Christopher Paul Curtis's trademark style – humorous, yet heart wrenching – is evident yet again when we meet Elijah. Set in 1860, *Elijah of Buxton* is the story of Elijah, an eleven-year-old, first-generation freeborn child. Elijah's Canadian town of Buxton, located just 40 miles from Detroit, serves as a haven for runaway slaves and their children, where Blacks can live free and govern themselves away from the horrors of pre-emancipation America. When one former slave steals money from another who has been saving to buy his family's freedom, Elijah finds himself kidnapped and dragged to Michigan in pursuit of the thief. Add it to your read aloud list for the middle school crowd.

Eloise M. Long, Library Science/Instructional Technology Chair, Kutztown University

THE COYOTE ROAD: TRICKSTER TALES

**Datlow, Ellen & Terri Windling. New York: Viking, 2007.
ISBN: 978-0-67006-194-5. Genre: Mythology. Grade Level: 4-9.**

Summary

An anthology of trickster tales by modern authors, this book celebrates myths and ways of life from around the world. The study of the short story in schools is often filled with dreary predictions of the future and over wrought tableau. This volume offers witty stories that are at once light hearted and full of deep meaning. Each of these stories is a chance for the writer to express their relationship to that most fickle muse, the trickster. Japanese fox daemons, Anansi

the spider and Coyote Woman all dance together along with other cultural heroes to form a crazy quilt of the world's tricksters.

Rita Cohen, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

THE DOWN-TO-EARTH GUIDE TO GLOBAL WARMING

David, Laurie and Cambria Gordon. New York, NY: Orchard Books, Scholastic Inc., 2007. \$15.99. ISBN: 978-0-43902-494-5. Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 5-8.

Summary

As the title summarizes, this book discusses the topic of global warming. The book is split up into chapters that describe what global warming is, how it can affect our planet and everything living on it, and what we can do to stop this problem. A glossary and an index are included. To fit with the earth-friendly subject material, the book is even printed with soy inks on recycled paper. This book is a great introduction to the topic of global warming. Since this topic is something that people sometimes disagree on, readers can use the information in the book to form their own opinions. I think that the authors do a very good job of not only discussing their opinions, but also using facts to back them up. I think the best chapter in this book is the one discussing what we can do to help the earth. The ideas in this chapter are ones that young people can do on their own, like not leaving the chargers for their cell phone or mp3 player plugged in when the device is not connected to it. The bright bold pictures are what drew me to this book and they would definitely keep readers interested.

Michele Ezzell, Graduate Student, Kutztown University

THIS HOUSE TAKES A VACATION

Davies, Jacqueline. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish, 2007. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-0-76145-331-4. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

When the Peterson family goes on vacation, their house decides that it should get away as well. The trouble begins when the different parts of the house can't agree on where they would like to go. Finally, the sun porch prevails and they take off for the beach to see the "Dance of the Sunlight". It was a difficult journey and when they arrived in the dark of night, the different parts of the house didn't see what was so good about the ocean. Once dawn broke, they all agreed that it was a great place to be. They even ventured off the beach and into the water! The story ends with the house back on its foundation and ready to greet the returning family. The Petersons never could understand how that octopus got into the flower box! Puns and word play keep the groans coming with this comical book. The chimney complains that "travel is a pain in the bricks" while the basement is chastised for being a "stick-in-the-mud". The roof felt like it had contracted "shingles" and the chimney ached like it had the "flue". Through it all, the beauty of the sea calmed them all and they understood the magic of travel. The text could lend itself as a model for a writing lesson on personification and word play for upper elementary classes. They would be more likely to understand the jokes without further explanation, but younger listeners would enjoy the fantasy features and the silly illustrations. This is a unique story and would be a nice addition to a library collection.

*Alexis Cuff, Library Media Specialist, Durham Nockamixon Elementary/
Springfield Elementary Schools, Palisades School District*

THE FIRE THIEF FIGHTS BACK

Deary, Terry. New York, Kingfisher: 2007. \$9.95. ISBN: 978-0-75345-970-6.

Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 4-8.

Summary

Sam and his mother are selling dirty water to the people of Eden City by persuading them that it is a miracle medicine that will heal their every ill. When their ruse is discovered they are saved from the citizens by Prometheus who is still traveling in time looking for a hero to fulfill his bargain with Zeus and earn his freedom from eternal suffering. Meanwhile, in ancient Greece, all the mythological monsters are plotting to overthrow Zeus and travel to kill Prometheus as well. This book was a satisfying conclusion to the Fire Thief Trilogy. This book presented mythological figures in a new setting, integrated with new characters facing new threats, and popular threats from mythology as well. This book was funny and enjoyable to read.

Katie Hanchuruck, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

RUN FAR, RUN FAST

Decker, Timothy. Asheville, NC: Front Street, 2007. \$17.95.

ISBN: 978-1-59078-469-3. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 7-12.

Summary

The mother of a young girl forces her daughter from home when the Pestilence arrives in their town. The Pestilence beats her to every place she runs for safety. Eventually she meets a stranger who can help her. The black and white illustrations are reminiscent of those of a graphic novel. The drawings express the tone of the story better than the text. I would recommend this book for older students who have knowledge of Europe during the Middle Ages.

Anna Berry, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

MARTINA THE BEAUTIFUL COCKROACH: A CUBAN FOLKTALE

Deedy, Carmen Agra. Singapore: Peachtree Publishers, 2007. \$16.95.

ISBN: 987-1-56145-399-3. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: 2-4.

Summary

“Martina Josephina Catalina Cucaracha, Beautiful muchacha...” is the refrain in this delightful folktale set in old Havana. Martina is indeed a beautiful cockroach thanks to the luscious illustrations of Michael Austin and this is the tale of how she chose a husband from her many suitors. Martina is advised by her wise old abuela (grandmother) to spill coffee on the shoes of each husband wannabe to see how he will treat Martina when he is angry at her. Agra Deedy does a marvelous job of retelling this age old advice using language that is lyrical and witty. This story is terrific for a read aloud because it’s fun for all ages.

Stephanie Towles, Elementary Librarian, Reading School District

NIGHT OF THE SOUL STEALER

Delaney, Joseph. New York: Greenwillow Books, 2008. \$17.00.

ISBN: 978-0-06076-625-2. Genre: Horror. Grade Level: 6-9.

Summary

This is Book Three in the Last Apprentice series. Thomas and The Spook retreat to Old Gregory's winter home, a bleak, cold home in a deep crevasse just below the moor, the place where a demon just barely has been contained. Thomas' mother predicts that the coming winter

will be a very difficult time for them all, and she's always right. Thomas' father dies, and the letter notifying him to come home quickly to see his father before he dies reaches Thomas too late. On top of that, Morgan, a former apprentice who failed to complete the training with Old Gregory, shows up and demands that The Spook return something to him that is his. Morgan tricks Thomas into coming into his secret room and puts a spell on him that will compel Thomas to do his bidding. This series is not for the faint of heart. Although the books are simply written and will appeal to reluctant readers, the story line will not disappoint those who love suspenseful, horrifying reads. Full of cold basements and live witches imprisoned in pits, even I, who am not easily frightened, admit to hearing things go bump in the night after reading this series. Highly recommended!

Kathy L. Fiedler, Librarian, Northwestern Lehigh Middle School

THE BOY WHO PAINTED DRAGONS

Demi. New York: Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2007. \$21.99.

ISBN: 978-1-41692-469-2. Genre: Folktale. Grade Level: 1-3.

Summary

Ping is back in another wonderful story with many lessons to learn. Ping paints dragons everywhere, not because he loves them, but because he is terrified of them. Ping learns to face his fears when the dragons in heaven send him on a quest. The illustrations in the book are beautifully created. Brightly-drawn dragons cover each page, drawing even the youngest of readers into the story. This would be a good story to use to discuss our fears and how we can overcome them.

Melissa DeLong, Teacher, Kutztown Elementary School

JAZZ ON A SATURDAY NIGHT

Dillon, Leo & Diane Dillon. New York: The Blue Sky Press, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 0-59047-893-1. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: 2-4.

Summary

The book is about how people in the 1940's and 1950's would get a Saturday night off and would go to hear jazz music. They were able to hear the music of such famous musicians as Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Ella Fitzgerald and others. In this book the most famous jazz players come together to have a "dream" of a jam session to the delight of their audience. This book is very exciting, colorful, and musical. The story makes you feel like you're there and the pictures support that feeling. The author includes short biographies of each of the famous jazz musicians included in the story and there is also a CD with an introduction to jazz included in the back of the book. I think this is a great book for children but would also be interesting to older students.

Alexis Leitner-Cohen, 7th Grade Student, Eyer M. S., East Penn School District

BEYOND THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES

DiTerlizzi, Tony. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007. \$10.99.

ISBN: 978-0-68987-131-3. Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 3-5.

Summary

Beyond the Spiderwick Chronicles takes us down south to Florida where 11-year-old Nicholas Vargas thinks his life has been turned upside down after his developer father remarries and moves his new wife and her daughter into Mangrove Hollow. But an expedition to a nearby lake turns up a little nixie with a giant problem, the huge, lumbering, fire-breathing variety. It's

up to Nick, his stepsister, Laurie, and his big brother, Julian to figure out the best way to stop a host of rampaging giants before all of Florida goes up in smoke. I would recommend this for those 4th and 5th grade fantasy fanatics.

Eloise M. Long, Library Science/Instructional Technology Chair, Kutztown University

PEANUT AND PEARL'S PICNIC ADVENTURE

Dotlich, Rebecca Kai. New York: HarperCollins, 2007. \$16.89.

ISBN: 978-0-06054-920-6. Genre: My First I Can Read! Grade Level: K-1.

Summary

Peanut likes cowboy hats and Pearl likes party hats. Put the two friends together and you have plenty of fun. Peanut and Pearl decide to go on a picnic. They have a few problems getting together and having a picnic in the same spot, but they manage to have fun anyway. This is a typical "My First" reading book that children can enjoy as they are learning to read. The story is adorable. The characters are fun. The illustrations are beautiful. The words and the pictures will keep children interested in this fun and easy-to-read first book.

Pat Koontz, Librarian, Walton Farm Elem. School, North Penn School District

NOVEMBER BLUES

Draper, Sharon M. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-1-41690-698-8. Genre: Realism. Grade Level: 8-12.

Summary

November Blues is the follow up novel to *Battle of Jericho* and follows the events in November Nelson's life after her boyfriend's tragic death in a pledge stunt. The story is told by November and Jericho Prescott, Josh's cousin, who both must deal with the loss of a loved one in two very different ways. Jericho finds strength in playing high school football just as his cousin did in life. November finds strength in both herself and those around her when she discovers she is pregnant with Josh's child. November is forced to decide between raising the baby as a single mother or allowing Josh's parents to adopt the baby and raise it as their own. I was already a fan of Sharon Draper and found the portrayal of teen pregnancy to be both honest and touching. Both the main characters are damaged by loss and deal with life after Josh in two different ways. I think this story would be good for either boys or girls at the teen level because the story is split into two viewpoints. Jericho's story centers around football and finding himself as a man whereas November's story is about impending motherhood. The tough choices both characters must make will translate to teens on many levels.

Robin Burns, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

INTO THE WILD

Durst, Beth Sarah. New York: Razorbill, 2007. \$15.99. ISBN: 978-1-59514-156-9.

Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

The Wild is a fairytale world-at least it was until the fairytale characters escaped-but lately it is just a pile of hungry vines under Julie's bed. Julie and her mother Rapunzel do their best to keep it hidden and under control. But Julie is sick of living with the Wild- it eats her jeans and sneakers whenever it wants! When someone makes a dangerous wish that set the Wild free, it grows and grows and quickly begins to devour Julie's entire Massachusetts town. The Wild is hungry, and the time it wants its characters back for good. Julie must venture deep into the Wild and outsmart fairy-tale characters in the ultimate quest to save her family. If Julie can't

find a way to defeat the happily-ever-after, she will never see her family again. This book is exciting from the start of the book to the end of the book. The characters are from fairytales and they live in the modern world. This book is also filled with adventure when Julie has to go into the wild to save her family. This book is great for girls who loved fairytales when they were younger.

Stephanie Martin, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

DEAR MISS PERFECT

Dutton, Sandra. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007. \$16.00.

ISBN: 978-0-61867-717-7 Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-4.

Summary

This book is a beast's guide to proper behavior. The book is humorous and shows real life obstacles through animals such as an elephant, monkeys, pigs, etc. It's written through letters back and forth from the animals to Miss Perfect. Overall, the book was exciting to read and I enjoyed the suspense of wanting to know what the next animal would need Miss Perfect's advice for. I think it's a good book to be used when talking about manners at school, home, the kitchen table, etc.

Jennifer Miller, Library Science/ Elementary Education, Kutztown University

I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE: A TREASURY TO INSPIRE OUR CHILDREN

Edelman, Marian Wright. New York: Harper Collins, 2005. \$.

ISBN: 978-0-06028-051-2. Genre: Poetry. Grade Level: K-4.

Summary

There are a group of stories, poems, songs, quotations, and folktales that speak to all children, to let them know that they make a difference in the world. I like how the illustrations work with each story, poem, song, quotation or folktale. There is a little something in each work that teaches us something. This would be a great addition to an elementary school library

Janet Kichline, Adult Services Librarian, Mary Meuser Memorial Library

THANKS TO YOU: WISDOM FROM MOTHER & CHILD

Edwards, Julie Andrews & Emma Walton Hamilton. New York: Harper Collins, 2007.

\$14.99. ISBN: 978-0-06124-002-7 Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: All

Summary

Children learn much about the world from their mothers. But what about the unexpected wisdom mothers gain while parenting? Julie Andrews Edwards and her daughter Emma Walton Hamilton share their mutual discoveries and delight in the growth experiences of childhood and motherhood. Accompanied by photographs from the authors' extended family collection, these personal exchanges between mother and child celebrate a special bond while reflecting a universal truth. I found this book to be extremely touching as a mother and the photography included was beautiful. However, I do not think this is a book to be included in a school library setting. Children may not be as interested as an adult would be. This is a great book to give as a gift to your mother, a new mother, or as a sentimental piece for a grown child. Beautifully written.

Rachel Copenhaver, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

OH NO, GOTTA GO #2

**Elya, Susan Middleton. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2007. \$15.99.
ISBN: 978-0-39924-308-0. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: PreK-1.**

Summary

The heroine in this book is a little girl who goes on a picnic with her parents. Everywhere they go she is asked if she has to use the bathroom. She always says no because she didn't drink anything. Unfortunately, she did eat spinach at lunch and on the way home she does have to go. When she realizes that not drinking anything didn't stop her insides from working she lets her parents know that she has to go NOW. For any child who has ever said "No" and then needed a bathroom this book is hysterical. The author uses Spanish words (with a glossary thoughtfully provided) so that the reader can read the book, enjoy the rhymes, and still understand what the characters are saying. This book is a delight.

Sharon Leitner-Cohen, Library Media Specialist, The Hillside School

FRANNIE IN PIECES: SAVE THE BLUES FOR LAST

**Ephron, Delia. New York: Harper Teen, 2007. \$17.89 ISBN: 978-0-06074-717-6.
Genre: Coming of Age/Fiction. Grade Level: 6-9.**

Summary

Author Delia Ephron better known for her screenwriting career in movies has written a wonderful and touching coming of age story. Frannie is a ninth grade girl whose father dies suddenly leaving behind a jigsaw puzzle. Frannie can only assume it was her last birthday gift. As Frannie assembles the puzzle she begins to work through her grief and understand her father, mother, their divorce, and her own life. The story spans several months and covers the grieving process with a fantasy twist. Frannie finds herself working on the puzzle late one night when she "enters" the puzzle. Through the puzzle Frannie is able to connect with her father and find peace in his death. I would highly recommend this book for students dealing with issues of divorce or death of a family member. Frannie is a likable character and it is written in a frank and honest way that speaks to middle school students. There is grief, joy, and even a little bit of romance in the story which keeps the attention of the reader. I really enjoyed learning about Frannie and reading about Frannie learning about her fathers life BF, before Frannie.

Robin Burns, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

QUAKING

**Erskine, Katheryn. New York: Philomel Books, 2007. \$16.99.
ISBN: 978-0-39924-774-3. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 7-10.**

Summary

Matilda, only known as Matt, is a 14 year old girl who doesn't need anything from anyone. She dresses in black and keeps to herself, for that is the only person she can trust. Everything changes when she moves in with a Quaker family in Pennsylvania. All they want is peace and all Matt wants is to move to Canada. But when churches keep getting attacked and her peace loving family becomes a target for promoting peace, Matt will have to sort through her emotions to help decide what she wants to feel and how to act for herself and people she loves.

This book got me interested from the first chapter. The characters are very believable and you can really feel for Matt in the emotions she shows and feels. This book is a must have and must read for every person who knows how it feels to be an outsider in any capacity. It is listed on the 2008 Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers, so go out and buy it!

Lisa Maderic, Librarian, Pennridge High School

OLIVIA HELPS WITH CHRISTMAS

Falconer, Ian. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2007. \$18.99.

ISBN: 978-1-41690-786-2. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

It's not easy trying to keep Olivia calm and busy while she waits for Santa. The impetuous little pig burns some Christmas cookies, gets tangled in the tree lights and just can't sit still. Her mother gives her things to do, but they just aren't enough. She does set a nice table with a cute little tree in the center, but her then mother realizes that Olivia cut the top off their real tree to make the table tree. She throws herself in front of the fireplace when her father wants to build a fire. How is Santa going to come down the chimney? Do you want to cook him? She finally falls asleep and Christmas comes complete with gifts - some are good (skis) and some are not (pajamas). Olivia is popular with students and combine that with Christmas, this book is sure to be a winner.

Paulette Braucher-Watton, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

HENRY THE DOG WITH NO TAIL

Feifer, Jules. New York: Simon & Schuster. 2007. \$16.99

ISBN: 978-1-41691-614-7. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-2.

Summary

Poor Henry the dog has no tail and he admires all his friends with tails since they can all do such neat tricks. He decides to visit a tailor and have a tail made. The tail is too long and when Henry does a trick he trips on it and gets all tangled. The other dogs point out that real tails can wag. Next Henry visits a wagon maker to see if a wagging tail can be made. No such luck. Henry wanders into Battery Park which is filled with batteries. He hooks a battery to his tail and can do all kinds of tricks. He's a hit with all his dog friends back home until his tail takes him flying and lands him in a tree. After unhooking the tail and climbing down the tree, Henry realizes that it is best for him to have no tail at all. This is a great tale to help children with self acceptance. The book includes some interesting puns and many life lessons. It also touches on finding your true identity and how true friends stick by you through difficult times. Dog lovers everywhere will be cheering for Henry.

Wendy Snyder, Retired Elementary School Teacher

LITTLE TAD GROWS UP

Ferri, Giuliano. New York: Penguin Young, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-69840-060-3. Genre: Animal Story. Grade Level: 1-4.

Summary

The main character is a tadpole named Tad. When he is born, he has only a tail. But as he grows up, he changes: he grows legs and arms. He is very unhappy about this because he misses his tail. Everyone keeps telling him it is okay; he is just growing up. But Tad does not want to grow up. One day, when he has his arms and his legs, a snake tries to play a trick and eat Tad, but Tad is able to jump away. He becomes grateful for his legs.

There was nothing special about this book. The pictures were okay. One thing I did like about this book is it taught you the different parts of the frog and about a frog's life cycle. However, I did not like how the book depicted family. Tad's aunt is a Salamander and his cousin is a Newt, but his grandfather is a Frog. It teaches children about different animals but it is a bit unrealistic.

Shannon Brunner, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

SISTER SPIDER KNOWS ALL

Fogelin, Adrian. Atlanta: Peachtree, 2003. \$7.95. ISBN: 978-1-56145-386-3. Genre: Realistic Fiction. Grade Level: 6-8.

Summary

Rox lives at the flea market. Well, not actually, but she might as well live there, since her grandmother makes her living selling other people's junk. Mimi (Rox's name for her grandmother) is doing the best she can, raising Rox and her nephew, John Martin. Although she is disabled and has a very limited income, Rox and John Martin are content living with her. Rox's only complaint is that Mimi won't talk about her mother. When Rox finds her mother's diary, her life takes on a whole new meaning. This book will make you laugh and cry by turns. The characters are compelling, the story line is compelling... Highly recommended!

Kathy L. Fiedler, Librarian, Northwestern Lehigh Middle School

THE SORTA SISTERS

Fogelin, Adrian. Atlanta, Georgia: Peachtree, 2007. \$15.95. ISBN: 978-1-56145-424-2. Genre: Grade Level: 5-7.

Summary

Two girls, Anna and Mica, both outcasts in their little communities form a bond through letters. They are brought together by a mutual friend, whose family visits the marina where Anna and her father currently have their boat (on which they live) moored. Throughout the story, the two friends share their frustrations and delights. When a third person enters the picture, there is some jealousy, too. Throughout the story, the girls bring to light the issues that beset the outsider (new student, move-in, a little different than the others). This book has an unusual conclusion, when Anna's father admits to being an alcoholic and asks Mica's foster mother for help. This book is one I will give to students who are struggling with being an outsider, or with growing up and handling all the issues that adolescents face. The main characters deal with emotions that become so difficult to handle at the middle school age on one's own. It can help students with their own coping devices. I really enjoyed the book. The letters that are exchanged are included, as well as typical prose. This is definitely a "girls' book".

Deborah Peters, 7th grade Language Arts Teacher, Northwestern Lehigh Middle School

WHALE PORT

Foster, Mark. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007. \$18.00 ISBN: 978-0-61854-722-7. Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 4-8.

Summary

The development of the whaling industry is illustrated in this tale of the fictional New England village of Tuckanucket as the town grows from a small settlement of colonists in the 1600's to a prosperous whaling city in the 1800's, and then to an historic tourist destination in the present day. This is an interesting, beautifully illustrated work packed with facts about the whaling

industry and the communities it supported. The story line follows a fictional family through the centuries, showing how individuals made and lost their fortunes in this industry and bringing home the terrors and difficulties faced by many people in this region. There are many sidebars to explain concepts such as ranks on a ship, the use and importance of whale oil to people of the time, and phrases commonly used by whalers. Colorful diagrams and cutaways help to illustrate various features of the whaling industry. A comprehensive, informative work for both research and leisure reading.

Katrina Bender, Librarian, Providence Elementary School, Solanco School District

A PARTICULAR COW

Fox, Mem. Orlando: Harcourt Books, 2007. \$16.00. ISBN: 978-0-15200-250-3.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-K.

Summary

A particular cow goes out on a particular day – unfortunately she takes a wrong turn and ends up with a pair of bloomers on her head and that sets off a series of particularly funny events. Comic-book like illustrations add to the fun of this madcap cumulative tale.

Eloise M. Long, Library Science/Instructional Technology Chair, Kutztown University

INTERWORLD

Gaiman, Neil & Michael Reaves. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007. \$17.89.

ISBN: 978-0-06123-897-0. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: Grade 5-12.

Summary

Joey Harker is a normal high school boy with no particularly special talents... that he is aware of. Until one day, Joey enters a world... much like the one he already lives in. This may not sound that interesting, but Neil Gaiman slowly unravels this deceptively simple story and reveals an intricate world with many unseen layers. This story is filled with magic, science and ordinary worlds that all collide in one fantastic tale. Gaiman and Reaves delve into mind breaking mathematical concepts about our universe and reveal its many layers. Joey Harker has the power to discover these layers and save our world. If you enjoy fantasy, science-fiction, or heroic tales from ordinary people you will enjoy Interworld.

Mark Hafer, Graduate Assistant, Kutztown University

STUCK IN THE 70's

Garfinkle, D. L. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-39924-663-0. Genre: Science Fiction. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

Tyler Gray lives in a nice house with a hot tub. The year is 1978. One night, he discovers a naked girl in his hot tub! Her name is Shay, and she claims that the year is 2006. Of course, Tyler thinks she's beautiful, and more than a little crazy. Shay makes a deal with Tyler that, if she can give Tyler a makeover to become more popular, he will use his very intelligent brain and superior knowledge of physics to help her get "back to the future." Although very funny and fast-paced, this book is not great literature. Kids who are fans of "That 70s Show" will probably find this a light but enjoyable read. Due to mature content, I would not purchase this book for my middle school library.

Kathy L. Fiedler, Librarian, Northwestern Lehigh Middle School

HOW MANY MICE

Garland, Michael. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2007. \$15.99

ISBN: 978-0-52547-833-1. Genre: Children's Animal Stories. Grade Level: Preschool-2.

Summary

This is a counting book about ten mice and the foods that they collect in the farmer's fields. On their travels, they sometimes find pieces of food, and sometimes lose them or have them stolen by other animals. I really like the clear, colorful illustrations. I think the math concepts are too mixed and confusing for young children to follow... often there is adding and subtracting of different items on the same page. There isn't much of a story except for the counting of food items. I've seen better math concept books.

Valorie Thompson, Teacher, Daniel Boone Middle School

BROKEN CHORDS

Gilbert, Barbara Snow. Asheville: Front Street, 1998. \$9.95.

ISBN: 978-1-59078-534-8. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 9-12

Summary

Clara is a pianist, but not just any pianist. She is a child prodigy. Now as Clara trains for a competition that could do more than just give her a scholarship if she wins, she finds herself with an injured wrist from a ballet fall. Ordered not to play the piano for some weeks so that her wrist can heal, Clara discovers that she does not miss playing and rather enjoys her life as a normal teenager. Now the only problem is deciding how to tell her family and friends that she is rejecting the one thing that everyone believes she was destined to do: play the piano. This is a poetic story that will stay with you once read. Although the plot starts out a little slow, the ending makes the wait worthwhile. And even though the book focuses on music, many students can relate to Clara's inner turmoil over rejecting the dreams her parents, and even society, have planned for her. This is an excellent book to encourage students to define themselves on their own terms.

Jessica Robinson, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE COMPANION'S QUARTET BOOK 1: SECRET OF THE SIRENS

Golding, Julia. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-76145-371-0. Genre: Fantasy/Adventure. Grade Level: 6-9.

Summary

Upon moving to her aunt's seaside home in the British Isles, Connie becomes part of a secret society that shelters mythical creatures, and must use her ability to communicate with these beings to protect them from evil and the incursions of humans. This book was highly amusing and integrated a sense of caring for the world and all its creatures, even if the world is different in the book. The message is the same. The main character is also very realistic and many young girls will connect to her.

Caitlin Gilroy, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

GRAY WOLVES RETURN TO YELLOWSTONE

Goldish, Meish. New York: Bearport Publishing Co, Inc., 2008.

ISBN: 978-1-59716-502-0. Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 1-5.

Summary

I have had a fascination with the reentry of wolves to Yellowstone for a long time. This is part of the America's Animal Comeback series. This book explains how the wolves disappeared

from Yellowstone and why it was decided to bring them back to the park in 1995. Although a brief book of 32 pages, it is filled with interesting facts about wolves and the park. It is illustrated with photographs. There is a Glossary of difficult words used in the book, a current bibliography for further reference, an online citing, an Index, and a list of books for additional reading by children.

Carol Gearhart, Professor Emerita, Kutztown University

THE PERFECT SPOT

Goode, Diane. New York: Harper Collins, 2006. \$16.99.

ISBN: 0-06072-697-0. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-2.

Summary: A child decides one beautiful morning that he knows the perfect spot where he and his mother can have a picnic. This book is less about the words than the pictures. Yes, there are words that tell the simple story, however, the pictures sell it. Children will be able to tell you the story, along with a lot of supporting information, just by looking. This would be a wonderful addition to any collection of pre-reader picture books.

*Shawn Kerbein, Librarian, Midway Manor & Lincoln Early Childhood Centers
Allentown School District*

AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH

Gore, Al. New York: Viking, 2007. \$23.00. ISBN: 978-0-67106-271-3.

Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 5-10.

Summary

This book was created from the multimedia presentation of Al Gore, who speaks around the world on the crisis of global warming. The arrangement of photographs, illustrations and charts helps explain the overwhelming content about global warming. This kid friendly format is colorful and published in an easy to follow format. An Inconvenient Truth was adapted for a new generation from the original novel to help a younger generation understand the dangers of global warming. Each scientific concept is partnered with several pictures and explained in the clearest of terms. Even the most uninformed person on the topic of global warming will be able to understand how global warming affects us all. The publisher did a fantastic job of creating a book friendly enough to capture and keep the readers attention on such an important topic. I would recommend this book for middle school and high school libraries.

Lisa Maderic, Librarian, Pennridge High School

DANNY'S FIRST SNOW

Gore, Leonid. New York: Ginee Seo Books, 2007. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-1-41691-330-6.

Genre: Children's Animal Stories. Grade Level: Preschool-2.

Summary

Little Danny has never seen snow before. In this little bunny's first snow adventure, his imagination runs away with him as he pictures animal forms in mounds of snow. Some of them are fun but then they get scary as they start to look like wolves. Danny runs home to his warm house. The pictures are magical but the story is less so. There is no real meaning or lesson, and there are better books about snowfall.

Valorie Thompson, Teacher, Daniel Boone Middle School

BLUE LIPSTICK: CONCRETE POEMS

Grandits, John. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2007. \$15.00. ISBN: 978-0-61856-860-4. Genre: Poetry. Grade Level: 6-12.

Summary:

A fifteen-year-old girl named Jessie voices typical and not so typical teenage concerns about new make-up and hairstyles, playing volleyball, her annoying younger brother, and more, in a unique, hilarious collection of poems. This was an excellent book to show the concept of concrete poetry. Each of the 34 concrete poems illustrates an issue of Jessie's teenage life. The first poem is on the cover and even the dedication is shaped in concrete poem fashion. This definitely should be in every library poetry collection! **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!**

Christine Poirier, Librarian, Esperanza Academy Charter High School

MEERKAT MAIL

Gravett, Emily. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2007. \$17.99. ISBN: 978-1-41693-473-8. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

Sunny Meerkat lives in the Kalahari Desert, where it is hot and dry. His large family is very close, so close that Sunny thinks it is time for him to find a better place to live. He visits some of his relatives, but finds that he doesn't like where they live, how they live, and what they eat. He hates to admit it, but there is no place like home. All of his travels are documented through postcards that are attached to the page. The postcards really show how he is feeling about the places he visits and each card shows the reader that Sunny really wants to go home! This was a favorite of mine. It was funny and the illustrations really brought out Sunny's feelings about where he was at that particular moment.

Paulette Braucher-Watton, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

MOOSE AND HILDY PIG PICKIN'

Greene, Stephanie. New York: Marshall Cavendish Children, 2006. \$14.99. ISBN: 978-0-76145-324-6. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 1-3.

Summary

Hildy the pig is excited because she is invited down south back to the town where her grandma was raised for pig pickin'. She invites her friend Moose to come along to support her for what she thinks is a beauty contest. Moose has his suspicions while Wendell Hill, the farmer who raised her grandma, continues to buy her all types of foods at the fair. Moose's nose smells a delicious aroma and he decides to check it out. When he does, he finds that his suspicions were correct and that pig pickin' meant that Hildy was going to be used for pork barbeque. Moose devises a plan to get Hildy out of danger. He tries to convince Hildy that she doesn't look well. Moose returns to the shop where Hildy bought a dress and shoes for the contest and purchases the same dress in a bigger size and the same shoes in a smaller size. This baffles Hildy. She and Wendell go back to the fair for more food. Moose does this again and buys a dress in the next size up and shoes in the next size down. Hildy doesn't understand how her clothes still don't fit. Moose explains that she must have foot and mouth disease (like hoof and mouth disease) and Wendell darts as fast as he can back to the fair without the infected pig. Moose then explains to Hildy that she really is alright and how he worked to save her life. In the end, Moose brings Hildy to his yard where he sculpted a pig that resembles Hildy out of a bush. This pig has a crown on her head and holds a sign that reads, "Grand Loser of Wendell Hill's World Famous Pig Pickin'". Hildy loves this and doesn't mind the title at all. This is a

short, transitional chapter book for younger students. There are black and white illustrations throughout the book that make it easier for students who are transitioning from the picture books to chapter books. It is a nice story of friendship between two characters. Subtle clues are given throughout the story which helps the reader make predictions about what may happen to the main character. Students will enjoy coming up with ways to help save Hildy.

Joanne Butler, Second Grade Teacher, Springfield Elementary

THE FRIENDLY FOUR

Greenfield, Eloise. New York: Harpers Collins Publishers, 2006. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-06000-759-1. Genre: Poetry. Grade Level: 2-5.

Summary

Eloise Greenfield weaves a narrative about four friends through a series of poems illustrated by Jan Spivey Gilchrist. The poems are written as dialogue in a play; each character is represented by a different color print. The poems carry the friends from their introduction through a fun-filled summer. This book is easy to read, the themes are universal and easy for children to relate to. The illustrations are full of positive depictions of an urban black community. There are many ways teachers could use this in the classroom.

Stephanie Towles, Librarian, Glenside Elementary, Reading School District

THE FIRE

Griessman, Annette. New York: Penguin, 2005. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-0-39924-019-5.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: 2-4.

Summary

Maria is watching her mother make soup while she's holding her teddy bear. She tells her mother that the soup is burning. Her mother runs to the stove, her brother starts to run after her mother and Maria grabs his hand and runs outside to get away from the fire. Soon they are safe outside while the firemen are putting out the flames. When they are finished the fireman walks over the family and tells them that he found two things after the fire. A teddy bear and a picture frame. Now the family did not lose everything. The illustrations are fantastic. This story really can help families who have had a fire in their house. It shows the love of how families are in times of need.

Janet Kichline, Adult Services Librarian, Mary Meuser Memorial Library

BAD DOG, MARLEY!

Grogan, John. New York: HarperCollins, 2007. \$17.89. ISBN: 978-0-06117-115-4.

Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

Marley, a rambunctious puppy, causes lots of trouble in his new home, and feels very bad about it, but he just can't help himself. Things go from bad to worse. He is so bad that his family finally advertises for a new home. In the end, Marley saves the day (and baby Louie) and proves beyond a doubt that he is a valuable member and he gets to stay with his family. The illustrations are cute but I did not care for this book.

Paulette Braucher-Watton, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

MARLEY: A DOG LIKE NO OTHER

Grogan, John. New York: Harper Collins, 2007. \$17.89. ISBN: 978-0-06124-034-8.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: 4-7.

Summary

Any dog lover will be able to identify with John Grogan and his yellow lab, Marley. Adapted for younger readers from the best seller, *Marley and Me*, this book will leave you laughing hysterically as Marley goes racing through the outdoor restaurant – with his leash still attached to the café table. It will also leave you choking back tears as John writes his final newspaper column in memory of Marley. Was it possible for a dog to point humans to the things that really mattered in life? Things like loyalty, courage, and devotion. And the things that did not matter? A dog has no use for fancy cars or big homes or designer clothes. A waterlogged stick will do just fine. A dog judges others not by how they look but by who they are inside. A dog doesn't care if you are rich or poor, smart or dull. Give him your heart, and he will give you his. It was really quite simple.

Eloise M. Long, Library Science/Instructional Technology Chair, Kutztown University

DEEP AND DARK AND DANGEROUS

Hahn, Mary Downing. New York: Clarion, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-61866-545-7.

Genre: Fiction/Ghost Story. Grade Level: 6-8.

Summary

Before leaving to go stay with her aunt and cousin, Ali finds a picture in her attic that has been torn in half and her mother gets very upset when she tries to ask about it. In Maine it is Ali's job to watch over her little cousin Emma while her aunt works on painting. Pretty soon they meet a little girl named Sissy who seems to know about the incident involving the picture, an incident that took place when Ali's mother and aunt were kids. Sissy is a mean girl, but she is also not what she appears to be. I thought that this book was very spooky. I really like ghost stories and this one had some twists that I didn't expect. It was a pretty quick read and I found myself not wanting to put it down, but only wanting to find out what happened to Ali's mom and aunt. Eventually I did figure out the story and the twists, but it was still fun to try and guess what was going to happen next. I would recommend this book to anyone who enjoys a good old-fashioned ghost story.

Loretta Berrigan, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

SAMUEL BLINK AND THE FORBIDDEN FOREST

Haig, Matt. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-39924-739-2. Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 6-9.

Summary

Accompanied by his aunt's Norwegian elkhound, Ibsen, twelve-year-old Samuel ventures into a weird forest filled with strange and dangerous creatures to rescue his younger sister, Martha, who has been mute since her parents' recent death. Very detailed and thought out with a healthy smattering of comedy throughout. Very sad at the start with the tragedy that happens and its effect on the characters.

Caitlin Gilroy, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE SECRET LIFE OF SPARROW DELANEY

Harper, Suzanne. United States: Greenwillow Books. 2007. \$17.89.

ISBN: 978-0-06113-159-2. Genre: Fantasy/Coming of Age. Grade Level: 7-10.

Summary

Sparrow Delaney has attended school with the same people her whole life, and has had a reputation for being part of an outwardly psychic family. Now it is time for her to attend high school, and she is ready for a fresh start in a building with a bunch of people who know absolutely nothing about Sparrow and her family. The story follows Sparrow as she makes new friends and learns to accept her true self. At first I thought this book was fairly stereotypical of other books written for this age group, but despite its predictability, I found myself unable to put the book down. I recommend this book to anyone who enjoys a quick read, somewhat predictable, but entertaining nonetheless. This story deals with the topic of death and the afterlife, the difficulties and advantages of starting anew, and having faith in the unseen.

Kaylynn Hove, Student, Kutztown University

THE PRINCESS AND THE HOUND

Harrison, Mette Ivie. New York: Harper Collins Publisher, 2007. \$18.89

ISBN: 978-0-06113-188-2. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 7-12.

Summary

Prince George of Kendel has a special ability: animal magic. However, animal magic is not something accepted in his kingdom, so he hides it and tries to stay away from animals. When Prince George is seventeen he becomes betrothed to Beatrice, Daughter of King Helm of Sarrey, who goes nowhere without her hound Marit. The story is about them meeting and getting to know each other and their secrets. Overall, I liked the story. The plots were new and interesting but a little confusing. The characters are very interesting and the descriptions are wonderful.

Rebecca Gaxiola, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

COOL BOPPER'S CHOPPERS

High, Linda Oatman. Honesdale, PA. 2007. \$16.95. ISBN: 978-1-59078-379-5.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: 2-4.

Summary

Cool Bopper is a saxophone player in the Snazzy Catz Jazz Club. He is a well-respected artist who can bebop to satisfy any crowd. One night, while performing, Cool Bopper's teeth flew out of his mouth and into the beehive hairdo of a listener. She went into the ladies' room and accidentally flushed his choppers down the hopper. Cool Bopper was so upset; he didn't have the song in him anymore to bebop. Cool Bopper's boss told him to leave and try to find his bop again. While at the seashore, Cool Bopper takes a stroll on the beach. As he walks, he hears a familiar sound. He decides to further investigate and finds his choppers attached to a bone-colored shell. Out of the opening in the shell poured Cool Bopper's music. He replaces his choppers and goes back to bebopin' at the jazz club. The music in Cool Bopper returns and he bebops once again. This story is written in a fun way through rhyme and word play. The author writes in a style that is like poetry; text written mostly in phrases. On each page, the

illustrator cleverly shows text on paper that is situated on a music stand. The illustrations throughout the book are colorful, busy, and amusing. The usage of vivid adjectives and words ending with in' (ex. note-blowin', somethin', soothin', groovin', etc...) reassures the feel of a jazz club, snapping fingers setting and leads to all types of possibilities in the classroom.

Joanne Butler, Second Grade Teacher, Springfield Elementary

PRETTY IS

Holmes, Elizabeth. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-52547-813-3. Genre: Fiction/Coming of Age. Grade Level: 5-8

Summary:

Next year, Erin will be entering middle school. Unfortunately, her dorky sister Monica already attends the school and is subject to much ridicule from her peers. Erin's former best friend, Kayla, relentlessly teases Erin for being Monica's sister. One day Hannah and Erin take revenge on Kayla by cutting off her precious hair. Erin spends the summer grounded but learns a lot about family unity when difficult circumstances arise. I thought the book had good themes of family loyalty, acceptance of others, and a desire to belong. I would have liked to see more development of the character's relationships with each other. Overall, the book should appeal to adolescents because virtually all of us experience some of the similar emotions with our peers that the characters went through.

Taylor Thompson, 6th Grade Teacher, Kutztown Area Middle School

ZODIAC GIRLS- FROM GREEK TO GODDESS

Hopkins, Cathy. Boston: Kingfisher, 2007. \$5.95. ISBN: 978-0-75345-895-2.

Genre: Fiction/Coming of Age. Grade Level: 6-8

Summary

This book is about a girl named Gemma. Gemma is not happy about going to boarding school and she really misses her old friends. As a Gemini, friendship is the most important thing to her but she has a roommate who is shy. The school bully is out to get her. Life looks dull-until she gets picked to be a Zodiac Girl. Her life could change for the better. But will Gemma make the right decisions to meet new friends and fit in? This book is good for girls who are having trouble fitting in or making new friends. It proves making new friends and fitting in is not as hard as it may seem. Girls can relate to Gemma and what she is going through trying to make new friends and getting picked on by the school bully. This is a great book for girls who are looking for a fun story.

Stephanie Martin, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

BURNED

Hopkins, Ellen. New York: Simon Pulse, 2006. \$9.99. ISBN: 1-41690-355-0.

Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

Pattyn Von Stratten begins to question her strict Mormon upbringing when she begins to read more diverse books from the library. Her abusive father has enough of her rebelling and sends her off to live with her aunt in Nevada. Pattyn learns so much more about life than she expected. She is accepted by her aunt and falls in love, but when her summer ends she is challenged with pregnancy and the death of her boyfriend. This book is written in verse, and is addictive. I found myself thinking, "just one more page." It is a haunting book. I was thinking about it days after I finished reading it. The protagonist is left at the end sitting

on a bridge, and the reader is left to believe that she committed suicide. It would have been a smart follow up to discuss mental health and other ways to deal with issues.

Allison Rheinhardt, Special Education Teacher, Lehighton High School

THE LAST POLAR BEARS

Horse, Harry. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2007. \$12.95. ISBN: 1-56145-379-X.

Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 3-5.

Summary

A child's grandfather wants to see the last polar bears. So one night, he leaves and starts writing the child letters telling about his expedition. He took with him the dog, Roo. Eventually, after a number of tough days at sea and tough days on land trying to get to the place where the polar bears would be, Grandfather and Roo see polar bears. All in all, I did not like this book. When I was reading it, I thought of a tall tale; the dog could talk and other animals could talk. Also, at random times, the Grandfather used words such as "shall," which could really confuse young readers. It would have been a better read if it was more of a non-fictional book.

Shannon Brunner, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

LITTLE RABBIT'S CHRISTMAS

Horse, Harry. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2007. \$15.95

ISBN: 978-1-56145-419-8. Children's Animal Stories. Grade Level:Preschool-K.

Summary

Little Rabbit gets a new sled for Christmas and does not want to share. When his sled breaks, his friends help patch it back together. He shares after that, and learns that sharing makes toys more fun. A sweet winter story that also teaches a lesson about friendship and sharing. Cartoon rabbit family offers Christmas nostalgia and a bit of winter wonderland. A very cute choice for small children.

Valorie Thompson, Teacher, Daniel Boone Middle School

MYTHS AND LEGENDS

Horwitz, Anthony, New York: Kingfisher, 2007. \$6.95.

ISBN: 987-0-75346-126-4. Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 4-6.

Summary

This book is a compilation of many famous myths and legends spanning from ancient Greece, to Rome, to Germanic tribes. I liked the humor in this book. Horwitz was able to take some seriously depressing myths, and make them comical for the sake of younger students. His modernization also made it easier to relate to some of the oldest stories in existence. Even Beowulf was made simple. The stories could have been a bit longer, and more detailed, but only at the risk of losing some readers.

Kirby Barnett, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

TERRORIST FILE: THE LOCKERBIE INVESTIGATION

Howard, Amanda. New York: Bearport Publishing, 2007. \$25.99.

ISBN: 978-1-59716-552-5. Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 4-6.

Summary

This book chronicles the explosion of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie Scotland and

subsequent investigation that led to the capture of the people who were responsible. This is a great book to introduce students on how crimes are solved and the techniques that are used. The author has written other books about true crimes. This book can also show students that crime does not pay and that you are always caught eventually.

Steven Mellinger, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

FIREFIGHTERS! SPEEDING! SPRAYING! SAVING!

Hubbel, Patricia. New York: Marshall Cavendish Inc., 2007. \$14.99.

ISBN: 978-0-76145-337-6. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: PreK-2.

Summary

This simple book begins with the alarm ringing. Next the firefighters get dressed and board their truck. The story continues showing and sharing the equipment used as well as the actions of the firefighters until the people are rescued. The fire is out finally and the firefighters return to the station. Young children will love going on this fire fighting trip and learning exactly about a firefighter's job. Spot, the firehouse Dalmatian, and the female firefighter are nice additions to the story. There is brief rhyming text throughout the book. The artwork is simple and the colors are vibrant and lively. This book would be a good read aloud to young children especially during fire prevention week in October.

Sheila Fox, First Grade, Topton Elementary School

BARN DANCE!

Hutchins, Pat. China: Greenwillow Books, 2007. \$ 17.89. ISBN: 978-0-06089-122-0.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-K.

Summary

The mishaps of the barn animal mothers are chronicled throughout the night, but when they finally settle down the little ones have some fun of their own. This feels like a story that has been told before. The rhyming text will appeal to the intended audience. Illustrated with beautiful watercolors. Overall, not an outstanding volume.

Belinda Rusnock, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE PRINCESS AND THE PEA

Isadora, Rachel. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-39924-611-1. Genre: Fairy Tale. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

This Hans Christian Andersen classic is retold, by Caldecott Honor artist, Rachel Isadora, (Ben's Trumpet), in an African setting. True to the original plot, the prince travels far and wide in search of a princess, but how to know if she is a real princess? The queen has a plan. She places a tiny pea under twenty mattresses and then places twenty feather beds atop the mattresses. If the princess can feel the tiny pea as she sleeps, she is a true princess and worthy to wed the prince. What a creative way to retell one of my favorite Hans Christian Andersen fairy tales! This book, with its vibrant illustrations, would be a visually stimulating and engaging read aloud. Students could create another setting for this or any fairy tale after researching a region or country. The story also includes three ways to say hello in different countries in Africa.

Kelly DeAntonis, Librarian, Parkland School District

ME, PENELOPE

**Jahn-Clough, Lisa. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007. \$16.00
ISBN: 0-61877-366-5. Genre: Coming of Age. Grade Level: 7-12.**

Summary

This book is about a girl named Penelope, Lopi for short. She is haunted by an accident that killed her brother when they were little. She is desperate to grow up, but has difficulty making adult decisions. Her mother often acts like a friend leaving Penelope to set her own boundaries. Penelope wants to run from her past. If she had only said something would her brother still be alive today?

Evaluation

This is an enjoyable book that at times reads like a journal. Penelope appears to be a typical teen who wants to flee from all her problems. She talks openly about boys and her desire to have sex. It is a book that a mature teen would enjoy.

Allison Rheinhardt, Special Education Teacher, Lehighon High School

Evaluation

Overall, this story was well written. I believe that girls could really relate to the main character, Penelope, especially girls in a household with no father. The story really goes into depth about her feelings and what she thinks about things. I really enjoyed this book and recommend it to those who are looking for a book about girls and coming of age.

Andrea Rohrbach, Student, Kutztown University

THE PRINTER'S TRIAL: THE CASE OF JOHN PETER ZENGER AND THE FIGHT FOR A FREE PRESS

**Jarrow, Gail. Honesdale, PA: Calkins Creek Books, 2006. ISBN: 1-59078-432-4.
Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 4-8.**

Summary

As a pawn of greater men, John Peter Zenger saw an opportunity to boost his income by printing a new newspaper from New York, and his backers saw a chance to criticize the Crown-appointed governor. The printer took the fall for their actions, but Andrew Hamilton defended him brilliantly. This, and other events preceding the American Revolution are outlined, and the importance of Zenger's victory to the birth of a free press is discussed. This work fills an important historical void – the 1735 trial of printer John Peter Zenger. This work provides a good summary of Zenger's legal battle and its ultimate importance. The author clearly organizes and discusses the events leading up to and surrounding the Zenger trial, its influence on political publishing, and public debate in the pre-revolutionary colonies. I would highly recommend this work for elementary and middle school students being introduced to the American Revolution, and how it impacted the nature of political speech in future centuries.

Shawn Glancy, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

THE NUTCRACKER

**Jeffers, Susan. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007. \$17.89.
ISBN: 978-0-06074-387-1. Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: Pre-K – 3.**

Summary

This is a simple version of the classical ballet, *The Nutcracker*. This is a great book to use to introduce young children to the classic story. Susan Jeffers wrote and illustrated this book. The pictures help to tell the story. There is also an Author's Note at the end of the book that

explains even more about the story, as well as recommended reading for students who might enjoy the entire text rather than the simplified version.

Melissa DeLong, Teacher, Kutztown Elementary School

DOGS AND CATS

Jenkins, Steve. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-61850-767-2.

Genre: Easy Non-Fiction. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

General facts about cats and dogs are shared in this clever flip book by Steve Jenkins, author of *Actual Size*. Start the book one way and learn about dogs, then flip it over and learn similar facts about cats! The history of the animals from their wild ancestors to the breeds we love today is included. The book will be hard to keep in the library. Books on pets are popular already, and this one tells facts of two of the top favorites. Even better than the facts, are the intricate cut-paper illustrations. The animals seem to leap right off of the page. Interestingly, as you read facts about either the cat or dog, Jenkins includes a small coordinated fact about the opposite animal as well. This is a great addition to the collection!

Emily Cuff, Student, Kutztown University

SPELLBOUND

Jones, Diana Wynne. Boston, MA: Kingfisher, 2007. \$6.95. ISBN: 978-0-75346-144-0.

Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 4-12.

Summary

Excerpts of modern and classic fantasy stories by well known authors are gathered together by Jones, a celebrated fantasy writer of children's books. These eighteen stories are from the likes of Baum, Lewis, Yolen, and Kipling. These enjoyable short reads give students a taste of different authors and their writing styles. There is a short synopsis at the beginning of the piece for background and enough of the story to hook the reader into wanting to read the entire book. Any student who enjoys reading fantasy will enjoy this collection.

Gwenn Davis, Librarian, Stroudsburg High School

WORLD'S APART

Karr, Kathleen. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 2005. \$15.95. ISBN: 0-76145-195-1.

Genre: Historical Fiction. Grade Level: 5-8.

Summary

This historical novel is set in the first colonial settlements in South Carolina and tells the story of English settler Christopher West and Asha-po of the Sewee Native American Nation. The narratives does a good job of comparing and contrasting the two vastly different cultures while underscoring the universal coming of age challenges all boys face. I thought the early chapters moved a little slowly and the initial meetings of the two boys were a bit contrived and unrealistic. As I got further into the story I became more engrossed. Overall, I really enjoyed the book.

Stephanie Towles, Librarian, Glenside Elementary, Reading School District

HELP! A STORY OF FRIENDSHIP

Keller, Holly. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007. \$17.89.

ISBN: 978-0-06123-913-7. Genre: Children's Animal Stories. Grade Level: Preschool-2.

Summary

Mouse is told that snakes are dangerous and in her panic she falls into a deep hole. Eventually it is her good friend Snake who is able to save her. She is sorry, and they are friends once again. The pictures are an unusual style called collographs, and are bright and textured. The story is a sweet one about friendship that my 3-year-old loves. Sometimes the reader has to turn the book sideways for a long picture. Very sweet.

Valorie Thompson, Teacher, Daniel Boone Middle School

FINN'S GOING

Kelly, Tom. New York: HarperCollins Children's Books, 2007. \$17.89.

ISBN: 978-0-06121-454-7. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 5-9.

Summary

Ten-year-old Danny runs away after the death of his identical twin brother because he believes he reminds his parents of the tragedy. The book is divided into three parts: "Thinking," "Doing," and "Being," with each one reflecting a different stage of grief. The complete story of Finn's passing away is not uncovered until the end, but hints dropped along the way arouse readers' interest. *Finn's Going* is a great novel about moving on and about being yourself no matter how hard.

Tara Howell, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

THE BLABBER REPORT

Kelly, True. New York, NY: Dutton Children's Books, 2007. \$15.99.

ISBN: 978-0-52547-809-6. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: 1-4.

Summary

In this story, talkative Blabber Mouse (in his second book) is assigned an oral report for his next book report. He spends most of his time talking, doodling, helping others, telling jokes, and goofing around. When it is his turn to present his oral report, he starts to fall apart. With the help of his friends, he is able to pull himself together and complete his oral book report. This is a delightful book about teamwork. Blabber Mouse is a likeable mouse who likes to do everything except his school work. He does everything in his power to "put off" working on his report. Do we know students like this? There is peer pressure here, however, because if he doesn't present his oral book report well, the entire class will suffer because everyone must do well in order to receive a special cookie party. When Blabber Mouse finally puts it all together, he is surprised to realize how scared he is about getting up in front of the class. His classmates help out and everyone ends up happy.

Pat Koontz, Librarian, Walton Farm Elementary, North Penn School District

JOSHUA CHAMBERLAIN AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

Kennedy, Robert F. Jr. New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-1-42310-771-2. Genre: Non Fiction/History. Grade Level: 3-5.

Summary

Joshua Chamberlain is famous in Pennsylvania history as the hero of Gettysburg. He was a professor from the state of Maine who volunteered to fight for the Union Army in 1862 at the age of 34. Chamberlain became a Lieutenant Colonel and led the 20th Maine Infantry

Regiment. Chamberlain was very popular with his men and they fought bravely for him. Chamberlain and his men saved the Union forces from being overrun by the Rebels at Little Round Top with a downhill charge. This book details further battles until the South's surrender at Appomattox. General Grant put Chamberlain in charge of accepting the Rebel's surrender. He returned to teach at Bowdoin College and was later elected Governor of Maine. Chamberlain died in 1914 at the age of 85. This book is in the American Heroes series. It details Chamberlain's life from young boy to soldier in the Union army. The full page color pictures depict parts of the story of this Civil War Union officer. It is written in an easily understood style while managing to insert many of the well known facts of Chamberlain's heroism. I'd recommend this book for any elementary library as a Civil War resource.

Nancy Krial, Gifted Support Teacher, Palisades Schools

UNDERCOVER

Kephart, Beth. New York: HarperTeen, 2007. \$17.99. ISBN: 978-0-06123-893-2.

Genre: Sports/Romance. Grade Level 6-8.

Summary

This story is fun to read – definitely a “girls book”. The main character is the underdog in her family. She has a beautiful mother and sister. Her father's work keeps him out of town – a lot. This hurts her mother, who feels that the time he is gone is excessive and that it is because he is unhappy in the marriage. The story centers on Elisa, who helps boys woo girls by secretly authoring poems for them – their *Cyrano*. She comes to a point where she no longer wants to write for these guys, because she realizes that she wants to be more than a friend to one of them. At the same time, she writes to her father regularly, trying to keep him up-to-date on the goings-on at home. Her letters help to tell the story. One of the ways that Elisa copes with “growing up” has been to go ice-skating on a deserted pond. Theo, the young man she has developed a crush on, follows her there and begins to skate with her, and seems to welcome a friendship with her. Unfortunately, Elisa learns the hard way that the popular girl – the one Theo is dating – is not tolerant of this friendship. To *show her*, she tries to destroy Elisa's chances of winning an ice-skating competition, but Elisa rises above it. The ice-skating competition also serves to bring the family together. The story is one that will catch the attention of any girl who is growing up and discovering boys while learning about herself. The book is not too difficult to read and I will recommend it to some of my lower readers who are entering that special time in their lives, when they discover the opposite sex.

Deborah Peters, 7th grade Language Arts Teacher, Northwestern Lehigh MS

MONKEY TOWN

Kidd, Ronald. New York: Simon Pulse, 2006. \$6.99. ISBN: 978-1-41694-921-3.

Genre: Historical Fiction. Grade Level: 6-12.

Summary

This novel brings to life the Scopes Monkey Trial, a famous trial that was officially brought about to charge John Scopes of illegally teaching evolutionary theory in 1925. Unofficially however, the trial was also, among other things, a publicity stunt for the small town of Dayton, Tennessee. Readers of this novel will see the trial and its life-changing effects through the eyes of Frances Robinson, the daughter of a man who helped to bring the trial into being. Ronald Kidd seems to have done his homework well. He not only met the actual Frances Robinson, but also had the chance to listen to her memories of the trial. However, not everything in the novel is true to the actual trial. Kidd tweaked some of the facts to create his

story, but he thoughtfully included in the book a list of what he has changed as well as why. All in all, I would have to say that this book just may be a teenager's connection to a unique and unforgettable part of history.

Rebecca Schroder, Library Science & Elem. Education Student, Kutztown University

THE THREE CABRITOS

Kimmel, Eric A. New York: Marshall Cavendish Children, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-76145-343-7. Genre: Fairy Tale. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

Another Eric A. Kimmel retelling of a tale from around the world, this one originally from Norway. Kimmel transports the original three billy goats to Texas and calls them cabritos (young goats). The three cabritos wish to attend a Mexican fiesta. Their mother warns them of a Chupacabra that lives under the bridge that they must cross to enter Mexico. But these cabritos have a secret weapon. They can play music that makes everyone dance, even a Chupacabra. They play faster and faster, until the monster deflates and is as dry as a dead cactus and then off they go to the fiesta. This is my absolute favorite fairy tale and I am always searching for variants. The lively illustrations will have children swaying to the music of the three cabritos as they listen to the story read aloud. It was fascinating to learn in the author's note that the Chupacabra is a legendary creature that supposedly attacks farm animals at night. The first reported sightings were in Puerto Rico. I appreciated the addition of a glossary and pronunciation guide for the numerous Spanish words throughout the text. This would serve as an excellent tool for contrasting and comparing versions of fairy tales, examining multicultural story settings, and sequencing activities.

Kelly DeAntonis, Librarian, Parkland School District

BEAR'S FIRST CHRISTMAS

Kinerk, Robert. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007. \$16.99

ISBN: 0-68986-972-X. Genre: Picture Book. Grade: Pre K-2.

Summary

The evergreen tree at the opening of little bear's cave isn't much to look at. It's rather scrawny and wobbly and is the last thing he sees before he starts to hibernate. He wakes up to an unusual sound and follows it. On his way, he helps a crow, moose, and a pheasant family. Together they discover the sound is coming from a family celebrating Christmas. The animals go back to bear's cave and find the little tree transformed and shining. They all curl up in the cave and stay warm together until spring. This sweet story of Christmas and caring for others is written in rhyme, as are the other books written by this award-winning author. The illustrations by Jim LaMarche are soft and the animals expressively detailed. Parents and children will enjoy adding this book to their holiday collection.

Gwenn Davis, Librarian, Stroudsburg High School

CLORINDA TAKES FLIGHT

Kinerk, Robert. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2007.

ISBN: 978-0-68986-864-1. Genre: Picture Books. Grade Level: Preschool-2.

Summary

I selected this book because it is illustrated by Steven Kellogg (*Island of the Skog*). This is a sequel to *Clorinda*. Clorinda the cow watches a barn swallow flying by and decides that she wants to fly. She enlists the help of her friends Hop the pig and Lenny, a farmer. At the dump,

they find boxes and cases. They borrow tires from Lenny's old Jeep and his washing machine motor and they soon have a flying machine. But alas, the plane plummeted to the ground after it took off. So they put their heads together and make a rocket, then a helicopter, and finally a balloon made with clothing from the wash line. This turns out to be a successful venture as Clorinda and Hop fly over New York and land in London where they are knighted by the Queen. Upon returning to the farm, they promise Lenny that next time they fly, they will take him along. This is a rhyming story and the best part of the book is the illustrations especially the picture of Queen Elizabeth.

Carol Gearhart, Professor Emerita, Kutztown University

CAT POWER!

Kirk, Daniel. New York: Hyperion Books, 2007. \$15.99.

ISBN: 978-1-42310-081-2. Genre: Poetry/Humor. Grade Level: 1-4.

Summary

This book contains 18 poems about the unique qualities of cats. This book is a companion to Daniel Kirk's book of poems about dogs titled Dogs Rule! The poems describe the many special activities in which cats participate, such as "Cat on a Leash," "Scratching Post," "I Want to Go Out!," and "Litter Box," to name a few. A CD is included that includes voices and instruments performing each one of the 18 poems in the book. Daniel Kirk has done it again! My students loved Dogs Rule! and I know they will feel the same about this book. The poems are funny and the illustrations are bold and beautiful. Cat lovers will understand this book, but all students will find it funny and will enjoy it, too, especially when you read it aloud to them. For those dramatic librarians out there, each poem is a performance! Have fun!

Pat Koontz, Librarian, Walton Farm Elementary, North Penn School District

NACKY PATCHER AND THE CURSE OF THE DRY-LAND BOATS

Kluger, Jefferey, New York: Philomel, 2007. \$18.99.

ISBN: 978-0-39924-604-3. Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 6-8.

Summary

This is the story of a man and a town and how he finds himself in a young boy as they search for the reasoning behind the boat that they find in the town lake. Children will love this book because it is full of adventure and excitement and brings fantasy to a level that they can enjoy. This is great leisure book that children will love to read over and over again. It brings all the elements that children look for in television and movies and puts it into a book and it has a great potential of drawing children to read other stories like it.

Amanda Powell, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE RED QUEEN'S DAUGHTER

Kolosov, Jacqueline. New York, Hyperion Books for Children, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-1-42310-797-2. Genre: Fantasy, Historical Fiction. Grade Level: 7-12.

Summary

This story of what may have happened had widowed queen Katherine Parr's daughter lived to be a young woman follows Mary Seymour after the deaths of her famous parents. Told from her point of view, Mary describes the death of her first guardian and how she came to live with Lady Strange, a white magician who wishes to teach Mary to be one as well, so she may eventually serve Elizabeth I, when she becomes queen of England. Mary learns about white magic and courtly manners in time to be sent to stay with the young Queen. For someone raised away from

the politics of court, she is suddenly a focus of attention and trouble, and must learn who she can trust to help her. Kolosov doesn't say anywhere in the introduction that events are entirely made up; the reader must find the author's note at the end of the book for that particular piece of information. However, the blend of fantasy and historical fiction is well done, including superstitions and beliefs of the era alongside the magic and illusions. The ending is somewhat anticlimactic and gives almost a sense of being unfinished, but does allow us to see how Mary has grown from her experiences. A good portion of the book is her learning to trust herself and figuring out her strengths on her own which most adolescent girls can relate to. For someone with an interest in Tudor England the book could be frustrating for its main character or fascinating for the portrait it paints of those closest to Elizabeth I. It would be a decent addition to any assignment concerning the "what if's of literature and history.

Carolyn Tetley, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE MYSTERIOUS EDGE OF THE HEROIC WORLD

Konigsburg, E.L. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007. ISBN: 978-1-41694-972-5.

Genre: Historical Fiction. Grade Level: 5-8.

Summary

I have been a Konigsburg fanatic since Miss Mann made me do a creative book report on *The Mixed-Up Files*. So of course, I scarfed up her latest one. Unfortunately, I was disappointed. Amedeo Kaplan has just moved into the town of St. Malo, Florida, a navy town where new faces are the norm. But Amedeo has a dream: More than anything in the world, he wants to discover something -- a place, a process, even a fossil -- some treasure that no one realizes is there until he finds it. And he would also like to discover a true friend to share these things with. He and his new friend William work together on a house sale for Amedeo's eccentric neighbor, Mrs. Zender, whose mansion is crammed with memorabilia of her long life, and there is a story to go with every piece. This is where the secret comes in -- it's a story that links a drawing to the time when Nazi Germany destroyed all art that was not acceptable in their eyes. The style and characterization, of course, are wonderful BUT I'm not sure kids will be able to identify with the two boys working on a house sale or the issues of the eccentric neighbor. There are so many things in the book that are reminiscent of *Mixed-Up Files* but it's just not the same. Personally, I think this would be a great novel for adults -- if fleshed out.

Eloise M. Long, Library Science/Instructional Technology Chair, Kutztown University

SCHOOLED

Korman, Gordon. New York: Hyperion, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-78685-692-3.

Genre: Coming of Age. Grade Level: 5-8.

Summary

I recently got stuck in the bus lane after visiting a student teacher. Fortunately I had this book by Gordon Korman in my car. By the time the buses left, I was hooked and, of course, finished the book that night. A 14 year old boy, Capricorn, is raised on a commune by his grandmother, a hippie he calls Rain. He is home schooled by Rain as the two of them are the only ones left on this commune/farm. Cap has little contact with the outside world, has never watched TV, handled money, or had a friend his age. When Rain falls and breaks a hip, she is hospitalized. Cap is temporarily placed in the home of a social worker with a teenage daughter--who hates him--and attends a local middle school. This is the epitome of an innocent and gullible child

walking into the jungle on a middle school campus, creating many interesting events. Bullying issues galore – great book.

Eloise M. Long, Library Science/Instructional Technology Chair, Kutztown University

WALTER THE FARTING DOG: BANNED FROM THE BEACH

Kotzwinkle, William. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-52547-812-6. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

Walter goes to the beach with his family and his constant farting gets him into trouble. He is only allowed back on the beach when the other tourists need his help. This book is probably inappropriate for the K-3 age level for which it was intended because it focuses a lot on farting. It still can be used with older grades to teach that even though a person may be different, it does not mean that they are bad. Many people also have pets who they love, but other people hate.

Steven Mellinger, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THEODOSIA AND THE SERPENTS OF CHAOS

LaFevers, R.L. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 2007. \$16.00. ISBN: 978-0-61875-638-4.

Genre: Mythology/Fantasy. Grade Level: 5-8.

Summary

This book is about a young girl named Theodosia whose parents work in a museum and spend much of their time traveling around the world to find artifacts to put on display. Theodosia spends most of her time in the museum and possesses a unique gift, one which allows her to be near artifacts and tell if the objects have an ancient curse upon them. She has taught herself how to read hieroglyphics and lift curses off of objects brought into the museum and has made amulets to help protect her parents from these curses. She is drawn into a sticky situation which eventually leads her to travel to Egypt in order to protect her family and the rest of the world from a cursed object her mother had recently discovered. I really enjoyed this book. It had the perfect blend of adventure and humor. I had to read it all in one sitting because I just couldn't put it down. I would definitely recommend this book to young adults who want a great adventure story because it appeals to both boys and girls. It does have the potential to be challenged because it talks about cursed objects and how they can affect the population and the world as we know it. This is definitely a book that I will read again and I highly recommend checking it out!

Heather Werner, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

SNOW DAY!

Laminack, Lester. New York, Peachtree Publishers, 2007. ISBN: 978-1-56145-418-1.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-2.

Summary

A father, a boy and a girl hear a weatherman forecast snow. The narrator describes the fun family activities they can do if school is closed. Adam Gustavson creates a festive mood with the oil illustrations. But the festive mood ends and anxiety prevails when in the morning there is no snow. The surprise ending will identify the true narrator of the story.

Eileen Kern, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

SKULLDUGGERY PLEASANT

Landy, Derek. New York: Harper Collins, 2007. \$18.89. ISBN: 978-0-06123-116-2.

Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 5-8.

Summary

This is a book about inheritance. From her Uncle Gordon, twelve year old Stephanie Edgley inherits an estate, a fortune, and some very interesting friends. The most interesting is Skulduggery Pleasant, an animate skeleton who has been fighting for the safety of the magical world and the ignorance of the non-magical world for several centuries. Unlike her English counterpart Harry Potter, the Irish Stephanie Edgley is shown some of the dangers of the magical world and has to make a choice to join it. Will she remain safe with her parents or will she hunt down her uncle's killers, powerful and deadly though they may be. This book is a highly entertaining fantasy adventure which stresses personal responsibility and sense of duty.

Rita Cohen, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

COME LOOK WITH ME: AMERICAN ART

Lane, Kimberly. Watertown: Charlesbridge, 2007. \$15.95.

ISBN: 978-1-89067-420-5. Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 4-6.

Summary

This is a collection of Latin American Artist's works along with biographical information about the artist. It is part of a series titled "Come Look With Me," which highlights different aspects of art in each volume. The examples of each artist's work provide a springboard for conversations about art and its meanings. Accompanying biographical text about the artist can be used for informational purposes. This book would make a good addition to a multicultural collection.

Belinda Rusnock, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE LAST GIRLS OF POMPEII

Lasky, Kathryn. New York: Viking Press, 2007. \$15.99. ISBN: 978-0-67006-196-9.

Genre: Fiction/History. Grade Level: 3-6

Summary

This book follows the lives of two young girls in Pompeii, 79 A.D. One girl is the daughter of a wealthy shipbuilder and the other is her slave. No one in Pompeii realizes that Mount Vesuvius is a sleeping volcano ready to awaken with horrific results. The daughter, Julia, does not want to marry because she has a withered arm while her slave, Sura, a beautiful sixteen year old, is about to be sold to a man she despises. The story faithfully documents life in Pompeii, even down to their diet. Who knew that they ate dormice and flamingo tongues?! The volcano erupts and then Julia and Sura have critical decisions to make about their future lives. Pompeii is a fascinating setting and the story is told in a way that makes the reader feel as if you are there. Julia and Sura are interesting characters with similar problems despite their different stations in life. Fountains running dry and a rotten egg smell in their water were clues to Pompeiians that a disaster was near but no one connected the dots. In their time, Pompeii had not been active. It's amazing that these people's lives were obliterated in about 25 hours and then all was hidden for approximately fifteen hundred years. This captivating book is full of factual information about the society of Pompeii so readers will learn important background on this famous archaeological site. I'd recommend this book to any elementary librarian and all classroom teachers of grades 3-6.

Nancy Krial, Gifted Support Teacher, Palisades Schools

THE MAN IN THE MOON-FIXER'S MASK

Lawson, Jon Arno. Honesdale, PA: Wordsong, 2006. \$14.95. ISBN: 978-1-93242-582-6. Genre: Poetry. Grade Level: 3-8.

Summary

A book of poetry that will catch anyone's attention. This poetry shows what fun one can have with the English language and will appeal to all ages. It would be a great read out loud for the classroom or for the library. The poems are thought-provoking and well put together. The layout is also appealing as each page only contains one poem and often a poem will come with an illustration. Although the illustrations are in black and white, they match very well with the content of the poem and are quite nice. This author has also published several other books of poetry in the adult age range which have also been well reviewed but this is his first venture into children's books.

Amanda Kohr, Student, Kutztown University

MISSING MAGIC

Laybourn, Emma. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 2007. \$16.99 ISBN: 978-0-80373-219-3. Genre: Fiction/Fantasy. Grade Level: 3-6.

Summary

Ned doesn't understand why he is the only one in his family that doesn't seem to have magic. His mother and father both have magic, and his uncle Kelper is one of the most magical people in Leodwyck City, but he doesn't seem to have any magic whatsoever. His uncle decides that he will pay for Ned to go to the most expensive and prominent magic school in the city, Leodwyck School, in hopes that he might acquire some magic. Things start going bad when children start disappearing from the city, and it is up to Ned and a couple of his friends to find out what is going on and save the day. This book is amazing. The way Emma Laybourn portrays Ned and his desire for magic is excellent. The twists and turns of the story keep you interested to the last page. It is a fast read that you pick up and don't want to put down until you finish it.

Heather Grossmann, Student, Kutztown University

FAIRY HAVEN AND THE QUEST FOR THE WAND

Levine, Gail Carson. New York: Disney Press, 2007. \$17.99. ISBN: 978-1-42310-100-0. Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 2-4.

Summary

This story takes place in Fairy Haven and is the sequel to *Fairy Dust and the Quest for the Egg*. The main characters Rani, Ree, and Tinker Bell must travel to the Land of Wandering and procure a wand in order to save Fairy Haven from being flooded by the mermaid Soop. Soop is a selfish mermaid who wants a wand but does not realize the power and problems that come with wand ownership. All of Fairy Haven is at risk from both a flood and the powers of the wand. This book is geared toward younger students but contains verbose and flowery language that is oftentimes confusing for the reader. Another issue with the story is that there are new characters introduced every few pages making the story difficult to follow. The illustrations in the book are wonderful and eye catching. The soft watercolor pictures capture the magic of fairies, mermaids, and all of the other characters of Fairy Haven. A good read aloud for elementary students that enjoy the Disney Princess stories.

Robin Burns, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

UNDER THE KISSLETOE: CHRISTMAS POEMS

**Lewis, J. Patrick. Honesdale, PA: WordSong, 2007. \$16.95.
ISBN: 978-1-59078-438-9. Genre: Poetry. Grade Level: 1-4.**

Summary

This book contains 16 rhyming poems covering a variety of topics related to Christmas, such as “The Gingerbread House Song,” “Mrs. S. Claus,” “What Everybody Wants for Christmas,” and “Why Do Parents Want to Ruin Everything?” The poems are light and warm and the illustrations are excellent. This is a great “pick-up” book when you have a few extra minutes during a story time to add something special. The poems are cute and brisk and perfect for a winter setting.

Pat Koontz, Librarian, Walton Farm Elementary, North Penn School District

DO THE MATH: SECRETS, LIES, AND ALGEBRA

**Lichtman, Wendy. New York: Harper Collins, 2007. \$17.89.
ISBN: 978-0-06122-956-5. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 7-8.**

Summary

Tess, an eighth grader is a responsible girl who loves Algebra. She thinks and writes her personal thoughts in algebraic terms (<, >, Venn diagrams, circles, etc). Tess allows a teacher’s test to be copied by a student and she spends the days wondering what to do about it. In the meantime, she thinks her mother knows information about a murder at her workplace. Algebra is the solution for all her problems. This book has little to no plot. It is obvious that the author is knowledgeable about Algebra and shows both written and visual cues to explain the algebraic terms to show similes in an eighth grader’s life. The story twists and turns and does have a happy ending, but I didn’t feel close enough to the characters to care how the story ended. This might be a story for gung-ho girls interested in Math but I wouldn’t recommend this book to just any reader.

Lisa Maderic, Librarian, Pennridge High School

NINI HERE AND THERE

**Lobel, Anita. New York, Greenwillow Books, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-06078-767-7.
Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-2.**

Summary

Using her personal cat, Nini, as the main character, Lobel tells the story of the cat’s anxiety each year when the family moves from the city to the countryside. In order to avoid going, the cat lies on the piles of suitcases, clothing, books and guitar. Eventually the cat is put in a carrier where she falls asleep and dreams of adventure. Once at the new location, the cat enjoys the wonder and beauty of the countryside. The strength of the book lies in the illustrations and the facial expressions of the cat.

Eileen Kern, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

MUCUMBER MCGEE AND THE HALF-EATEN HOT DOG

**Loehr, Patrick. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007. \$16.89.
ISBN: 978-0-06082-328-3. Genre: Children’s. Grade Level: Preschool–3.**

Summary

Patrick Loehr tells the story of a young boy named Mucumber. Mucumber is extremely hungry and all he can find is an old hotdog in the back of the refrigerator. The rest of the book follows the plight of Mucumber as he fears his imminent death from making such a bad snack

choice. The story told through rhyme is extremely funny. Loehr also illustrates this book with stylized somewhat gothic art. The story has a fantastic moral and humorous ending. Patrick Loehr's first book is definitely one for the shelves.

Mark Hafer, Library Science Graduate Assistant, Kutztown University

THE FUTURE OF NATURE: WRITINGS ON A HUMAN ECOLOGY FROM *ORION* MAGAZINE

Lopez, Barry. Minneapolis, MN: Milkweed Editions, 2007. ISBN: 978-1-57131-306-5.

Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 10+.

Summary

This is a collection of environmental essays that were previously published in Orion Magazine between 1992 and 2006. Barry Lopez sought to include essays that explore the connection between humanity and ecology and also offer paths for concerned environmental activists to follow. Very intellectual and well-written, the essays cover an array of topics from genetic engineering to disastrous flooding. They truly reaffirm the original principles of Orion, stated by the magazine's first Editor-in-Chief, George Russell, in 1982: "It is *Orion's* fundamental conviction that humans are morally responsible for the world in which we live, and that the individual comes to sense this responsibility as he or she develops a personal bond with nature (The Orion Society. 12 Mar. 2008 <<http://www.orionsociety.org/pages/os/about.cfm>>)." This work is an informative and provocative read that explores many facets of environmentalism. After they finish, readers may find their original views of the world altered in some way. Specific essays would be useful for individual research projects and some could be used for classroom discussion; however the language and intellectualism may be a bit over the heads of some students. Recommended.

Amber Ziemba, Saucon Valley High School Librarian

GOONY THE FABULOUS

Lowry, Lois. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2007. \$15.00.

ISBN: 978-0-61876-691-8. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 2-3.

Summary

Another title in the Gooney Bird Green series that is suitable for 2nd and 3rd graders. Mrs. Pidgeon has been reading Aesop fables to her 2nd grade class. Gooney Bird gets a fabulous idea. What if each child creates his or her own fable and tells it to the class? The fable must have an animal in it that begins with the same letter as the person's first name. So they create stories and costumes to share with the class and to have a parade around the school. Everyone creates a fable except Nicholas. He can't think of an animal that begins with an N. Gooney Bird helps him and they write a fable together called *The Two Gnus*. The moral of the story is "No gnus is good news." Some of the fables the children write are clever. Gooney Bird is a precocious child and takes over the class more than most teachers would allow. This could inspire a writing assignment after reading the book aloud.

Carol Gearhart, Professor Emerita, Kutztown University

GOSSAMER

Lowry, Lois. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. \$16.00. ISBN: 978-0-61868-550-9. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 5-12.

Summary

While learning to bestow dreams, a young dream-giver tries to save an eight-year-old boy from the effects of both his abusive past and the nightmares inflicted on him by the frightening Sinisteads. Sinisteads are former dream-givers turned dark, who inflict nightmares, and sometimes attack in Hordes. This book was very different from what I am used to reading of Lois Lowry's books. The interesting thing about the book is the explanations of the dreams.

Janet Kichline, Adult Services Librarian, Mary Meuser Memorial Library

I WANT TO LIVE

Lugovskaya, Nina. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. \$17.00. ISBN: 978-0-61860-575-0. Genre: Autobiography. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

Nina writes her diaries while living mostly in Moscow during Stalin's reign of terror. She is very intelligent for her age and more informed than most considering all of the propaganda. She writes mostly about normal teenage girl emotions and plans, but she also writes about some of the political happenings or just about general life during that time. Because it is written in diary form, the plot isn't smooth with Nina writing anywhere from twice a day to not writing for a few weeks at a time. This however makes it seem more real as many people that keep diary don't write consistently. Despite the diary's blatant title, Nina often doesn't know if she wants to live or not. She even attempts suicide at one point, making the story too dark for younger readers. The diary doesn't go into lots of violence, because it stops before Nina is sent to a work camp. This story would be a good comparison to Anne Frank's diary, with students either reading both or just selected passages and comparing them.

Melissa Lemke, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

ADVENTURES OF RILEY: SAFARI IN SOUTH AMERICA

Lumry, Amanda and Laura Hurwitz. Bellevue: Eaglemont Press, 2003. \$15.95. ISBN: 0-96622-578-3. Genre: Adventure. Grade Level: 2-5.

Summary

Riley goes to visit his aunt, uncle, and cousin in South Africa. While he is there, they take him on an adventure around South Africa. Riley sees all different kinds of animals, from a Lilac-Breasted Roller (a bird), to lions and a black rhino. Eventually, Riley has to return to his home. This book is a very good book for many reasons: the illustrations are unique; the illustrator combined comic book characters with real life pictures, the book has a glossary so the children can look up a word if they don't understand it, and the book teaches children about all different types of animals by including facts on the different animals in South Africa. I was very pleased with this book.

Shannon Brunner, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

GOOEY JELLYFISH: NO BACKBONE! THE WORLD OF INVERTEBRATES.

Lunis, Natalie. New York: Bearport Publishing, 2008. \$21.00. ISBN: 1-59716-510-7. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

This non-fiction book takes the reader for a look into the world of jellyfish. It provides simple scientific explanations of what jellyfish are, the different types, and how dangerous they can be. The text is supported by photographs and boldfaced words are defined in a glossary at the back of the book. This is the kind of book that the children will love. When shown some of the pictures, my students gave a collective “Yuck!” and then proceeded to ask to see more. We were all engrossed in the pictures and the information. If the other books in this series are as entertaining as this one, they will be a definite ‘must have’ for any elementary school library.

Sharon Leitner-Cohen, Library Media Specialist, The Hillside School

BOY TOY

Lyga, Barry. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-61872-393-5. Genre: Coming of Age. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

Josh Mendel is trying to survive his last year in high school so that he can escape from the small town that holds so many memories. And now he also has to deal with the news that his teacher, who molested him when he was 12 years old, has been released. That news brings up a whole slew of memories and thoughts he tried to erase. And when his old best friend Rachel decides to rekindle their relationship, he has to deal with all the feelings of love he had seemed to reject before. Can he reorder his life and bring some peace back into it? This book was beautifully written and so touching. Josh is trying to deal with the after-effects of being sexually molested by his seventh grade teacher. Switching back and forth between his past and present, it relates his trauma to his attempt at regaining his new life. Barry Lyga just amazes me with his wonderful books. You find so few books that attempt to draw in male readers, but this one is amazing. It discusses girls, sports, hanging out with friends, and trying to move on from the traumatizing event of his life. I am excited to share this book with my friends.

Rachel Liesau, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

HAPPY BIRTHDAY MRS. PIGGLE-WIGGLE

MacDonald, Betty and Anne MacDonald Canham. New York: Harper Collins, 2007. \$16.89. ISBN: 978-0-06072-813-7. Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 1-4.

Summary

While author Betty MacDonald (1908-1958) created the famous Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle books a long time ago, her daughter Anne MacDonald Canham has used one of her mother’s stories (one chapter) and added some of her own words (six chapters) to create a wonderful Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle book. In this book, there are seven short stories. In each story, parents are troubled because their child is a picky eater, or won’t finish a task before starting another one, or won’t stop watching TV all day, or won’t brush their teeth, etc. Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle is consulted by parents and comes up with a cure that sometimes involves one of her three pets or may contain something magical (sprinkle this powder on your child after she is sleeping). Each chapter is resolved in a funny way and the child becomes a wonderful child once again. The final chapter is a celebration of Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle’s birthday, with a party planned by all the children who love her so much. Reading this book was fun! The stories are full of

everyday problems that parents face and magical solutions offered up by delightful neighbor and friend, Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle, who ALWAYS has the answers. I wish she were real! Her stories were magical back in the 50's and they are magical now in the hands of her daughter and granddaughter, who also helped with the book. There is an interesting "acknowledgment" at the beginning of this book where author Anne MacDonald Canham gives credit to her own daughter, Joanie, for helping her with the book. Just like the first four Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle books from the 50's, this story will delight young students, especially if read aloud by a teacher or parent.

Pat Koontz, Librarian, Walton Farm Elementary, North Penn School District

THE GREAT, SMELLY, SLOBBERY, SMALL-TOOTH DOG

MacDonald, Margaret Read. Atlanta: August House, 2007. \$16.95.

ISBN: 978-0-87483-808-4. Genre: Folktale/Legend. Grade Level: K-4.

Summary

A British version of the traditional tale, this florally symbolic retelling features a rich man, his daughter, and a great, smelly, slobbery, small-tooth dog. The dog manages to save the man from thieves and the man offers the dog any treasure in his house as a reward. The dog chooses the rich man's daughter. The girl rides away on the creature's back to live with him in his palace. The two become friends, but in missing her father the girl does not always remember to be kind to the dog, which in the end becomes a handsome prince that the girl finds "sweet as a honeycomb". This variant is exquisitely illustrated in varying tapestry-like designs and readily captures the essence of the tale. I thought the endpapers, depicting the meanings of the flowers throughout the story was a unique touch. Students will enjoy matching the flowers on each page to the emotions within the storyline. There are so many aspects to this book that could be applied to the curriculum, such as comparing and contrasting various multicultural folktales, similes and metaphors, adjectives, and sequencing. I found it to be a most enjoyable read and I am sure children would agree.

Kelly DeAntonis, Librarian, Parkland School District

THROWING LIKE A GIRL

Mackey, Kerr Weezie. Tarrytown, New York: Marshall Cavendish Corp, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-76145-342-0. Genre: Fiction/Coming of Age. Grade Level: 7-8.

Summary

No one asks Ella how she feels about moving to Texas in the middle of her sophomore year. She ends up there without plans for the weekend or friends to guide her through the alien campus of her new private school. So she decides to try out for the softball team and she makes it. Softball changes Ella's life. It makes it better and worse. She discovers a confidence she never knew she had and makes new friends and enemies. When Ella falls in love with her snotty teammate's hot brother, suddenly she is not just fielding balls, she is also dodging mean glares from girls in class and on the team. If Ella's going to survive this school year, she'll have to set up some ground rules and learn to stand up for herself- in the game and in her life. This book is interesting from beginning to the end. The characters are typical teenage girls dealing with boy problems and bully problems. I would recommend this book to girls who want to learn more about softball or who play softball. I also would recommend this book to girls who need to gain confidence.

Stephanie Martin, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

EDWARD'S EYES

MacLachlan, Patricia. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2007. ISBN: 978-1-41692-743-3. Genre: Realistic Fiction. Grade Level: 5-7.

Summary

I chose this book because I have always enjoyed Patricia MacLachlan's writing. Jake is part of an extraordinary family. His life is filled with art, music, and long summer nights on the Cape. He spends lots of time playing baseball. Jake has an older sister, Sola, and an older brother, Will. But best of all, Jake has Edward, his younger brother. When they bring Edward home from the hospital, Maeve, his mother, puts him in Jake's arms. Jake at the time is three. Jake thinks the best thing about Edward is his eyes which are dark mud-blue. From the moment Edward was born, Jake was sure he was destined to be something. Edward could make anyone laugh and everyone think. Edward also loved baseball and one summer learned to throw a knuckleball that no one could hit. But also that summer, something dreadful happens to Edward. This is a story about family love, a family having to make a difficult decision, and a family recovering from tragedy. This is a bittersweet story. This is perhaps a good read aloud for 5th or 6th grades. It is a haunting tale that sticks with you. There is a fifth child born into the family named Sabine. Just as Maeve put Edward into Jake's arms, the father, Jack, puts Sabine into Edward's arms right after she is born and he falls in love with her vowing to teach her everything he knows including, "Oh, Canada." One day Edward jumps on his bike to go to town to buy something special for Sabine. Jake tried to stop him telling him that the wheels on the bike are not safe. Edward didn't listen. After he made his purchase, he started home. Then he turned on his bike to wave at someone he knew and ran into a tree. He died in the early afternoon. The little baseball cap he had bought for Sabine is taken home and given to her. The family decides to make a donation of his lungs, heart, and cornea. The corneas go to a young baseball player that the family eventually meets.

Carol Gearhart, Professor Emerita, Kutztown University

LOUISIANA'S SONG

Madden, Kerry. New York: Viking, 2007. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-0-67006-153-2. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 7-12.

Summary

Livy Two and her sister Louisiana must be brave to help their family. With their father sick and seven other siblings to support, the girls must put their talents to good use. Livy Two writes songs, and Louise paints portraits. But the girls must learn patience and acceptance in order to get back the father they once knew. This book uses an accurate dialect of the North Carolina mountain cities. However, it is a little hard to get used to at first. I found myself rereading many lines in order to read and fully understand the text. The plot is a little slow at first, but it is also a book that has a heartwarming ending that makes reading the book worthwhile. Excellent themes, such as "never give up" are included.

Jessica Robinson, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

HUGO AND MILES IN I HAVE PAINTED EVERYTHING!

Magoon, Scott. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2007. \$16.00. ISBN: 978-0-61864-638-8. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-3

Summary

Hugo is an elephant who loves to paint. At the moment he is an artist who has a very big problem. Hugo has painted everything and he has run out of a very important artistic ingredient

– inspiration. After all, where is an artist if he doesn't have any ideas? So, Hugo goes to see his friend Miles, hoping that Miles will know what can be done to salvage the situation. I thought this was a really great story because it helps show young children that there are many different ways to look at one thing. It promotes thinking outside of the box and uses fun plays on words.

Erica Lambert, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

DOWN THE BACK OF THE CHAIR

Mahy, Margaret. New York: Clarion Books, 2006. \$16.00. ISBN: 0-61869-395-5.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool–2.

Summary A father loses his car keys, and his daughter suggests that he search down the back of the chair for them. This book is a lot of fun to read, and has some wonderful word play. It is very good for beginning and ending word sounds, so it could easily fit in with literacy lessons. Some of the rhyming is a little forced, but overall the tone is lighthearted and fun and is a great read-aloud. The illustrations are childlike, whimsical, and quite appealing – especially considering just what comes out of the chair!

Shawn Kerbein, Librarian, Midway Manor & Lincoln Early Childhood Centers, Allentown School District

MADDIGAN'S FANTASIA

Mahy, Margaret. New York: Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2007. \$17.99.

ISBN: 1-41691-812-4. Genre: Fiction/Fantasy. Grade Level: 5 and up

Summary

Garland Maddigan is the only true Maddigan left alive after her father, Ferdy, is killed. It falls upon her mother, Maddie, and her to lead the grand Maddigan's Fantasia, a circus that brings joy to the world after the days of the "Chaos". The grand task of bringing a solar converter back to Solis before the summer solstice is laid upon the Fantasia. Things start getting dangerous when three mysterious children show up and claim that they are from the future. Timon, Eden, and baby Jewel are being followed by two evil minions of the Nennog (their uncle in the future) and the Fantasia vows to protect them. The story twists and turns as the Fantasia tries to complete their journey and get back to Solis in time. Though the book is lengthy, every page is worth reading. On every page you are taken into another twist of the plot, or another character does a heroic deed. The "magic" of the Fantasia and the boys from the future makes you want to join in on their adventures and get in on the action. Margaret Mahy has written yet another amazing fantasy book that you will not want to put down until you find out whether or not the group completes their task.

Heather Grossmann, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

CHEECH THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER

Marin, Cheech. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007. \$17.89.

ISBN: 978-0-06113-201-8. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

Cheech takes the students from his bus to a Battle of the Bands contest and they have to figure out how to win because they are the only mariachi band there. This is a great book for any student who is interested in music. It also teaches that if you take the time to do something well that other people will appreciate it even though it might be different than what they are used to. This book is great because it also has a version in Spanish.

Steven Mellinger, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

UNINVITED

Marrone, Amanda. New York: Simon Pulse, 2007. \$8.99. ISBN: 978-1-41693-978-8.

Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

Jordan's sleaze of an ex-boyfriend, Michael, supposedly killed himself in the summer past. Now he appears at Jordan's window every night, appealing to her weaknesses and claiming he always loved her and none of the other dozens of girls he was with in order for her to open her window. Michael only needs to be invited in before he can enter. All Jordan has to do is say the words. I could barely get through this book. The main character had no appeal and the story was very boring. It was a cliché vampire book, which would normally catch my interest, but this one fell extremely short.

Caitlin Gilroy, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

BIRD SPRINGS

Marsden, Carolyn. New York: Viking, 2007. \$14.99. ISBN: 978-0-67006-193-8.

Genre: Realism. Grade Level: 4-6.

Summary

Ten year-old Gregory must adjust to several changes in his life. His father walked out on the family and Gregory had to move with his mother and little sister from his home on a Navajo reservation to a shelter in Tucson. Gregory feels out of place in his new school and he longs for his old way of life. His only companion is his imaginary friend, Joey. In time, Gregory slowly begins a friendship with another boy in his class and learns to cope with all the difficult changes he has endured in his short life. Although this is a short book, I struggled with finishing it. The story lacks character development; the main character, Gregory, felt one-dimensional. In addition, the writing style did not grab and hold my attention. This book would be most appropriate for a child who may be experiencing similar life changes and be able to identify with the main character's thoughts and feelings.

Kristin Blue, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

THE NIGHT TOURIST

Marsh, Katherine. New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2007. \$17.99.

ISBN: 978-1-42310-689-0. Genre: Mythology/Legend. Grade Level: 6-9.

Summary

Jack Perdu, a ninth grade classics prodigy who spends most of his time alone, his nose buried in a book is sent away to a doctor after an accident. In Grand Central Terminal, he meets Euri, a girl who offers to show him the train station's hidden places and eight flights below the train station, Jack discovers New York's ghostly underworld. This, Jack believes, is his chance to see his mother again. But as secrets about Euri's past are revealed, so are the true reasons for Jack's visit to the underworld. The integration of mythology into a modern setting was astounding and made for a really interesting story. There were a few twists that were really gripping.

Caitlin Gilroy, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

DRAGON DRAWING BOOK

Masiello, Ralph. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2007. \$7.95.

ISBN: 978-1-57091-532-1. Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 7-9.

Summary

This book is a step-by-step guide on how to draw dragons from all around the world. The book contains the name of each type of dragon, a step-by-step black and white drawing of each dragon, its history, and a full color drawing of each dragon as it should appear when it is completed. The book also contains a world map that shows the habitat of each dragon and there is a resource and pronunciation guide at the back of the book. The drawings and instructions are very easy to follow. The pictures are colorful and creative. This book would be useful for anyone interested in art or who is interested in fantasy and drawing. I really like this book because it is very inventive and a lot of fun.

Alexis Leitner-Cohen, 7th Grade Student, Eyer Middle School, East Penn School District

A CLOSER LOOK

McCarthy, Mary. New York: Harper Collins, 2007. \$17.89.

ISBN: 978-0-06124-073-7. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-2.

Summary

Through four double page spreads, close-up images of a ladybug, cardinal flowers, and hummingbirds are slowly revealed. Children will enjoy observing and making guesses about each one in this interactive nature book. This discovery book is wonderful for adults to share with young children. The paper collages are handmade and eye appealing. The text is large and is spread throughout the magnified scenes. The author provides short factual information about each object at the end of the book.

Sheila Fox, First Grade Teacher, Topton Elementary School

CITY HAWK

McCarthy, Meghan. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers 2007.

\$15.99. ISBN: 978-1-41693-359-5. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-3.

Summary

New York City is known for its sky-scrapers, subways, and hustle and bustle -- not for its wildlife. So everyone is surprised when a red-tailed hawk is spotted flying over Fifth Avenue, and even more surprised when he decides to settle down on the ledge of one of the Big Apple's swankiest apartment buildings. This was a really interesting and informative story. I had never heard of the hawk that lived in New York, but it is a true story. At the end of the book there are extra notes about Central Park, a bibliography, and notes from the author about Pale Male. The illustrations are fantastic, too. The big googly eyes on the birds are endearing.

Erica Lambert, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

A PERFECT SNOWMAN

McDaniels, Preston. New York: Simon & Schuster. 2007. \$15.99.

ISBN: 13: 978-1-41691-026-8 Genre: Picture Book. Grade level: K-2.

Summary

After a wonderful snowfall, a boy who lived in a perfect house and had a perfect life built a perfect snowman. He was the finest snowman dressed in the best scarf and hat. Neighbor children came to admire him and peek at him over the garden wall. He listened to all of their wonderful comments about how perfect he was. Soon nightfall came and the snowman was all

alone waiting for the children to return. Instead of children, animals came. A starving rabbit asked for his carrot nose to feed her children. A stray cat asked to borrow his hat and scarf to stay warm. An angelic child appeared in tattered clothes asking for his coal to keep her warm. Every time he almost turned these lowly creatures away, but always gave in to their requests. Eventually warm weather arrived and the snowman melted away only to find himself suddenly living in a wonderful place with the little angel girl. The snowman learned that life is not about being perfect, but about loving others. This book is beautifully illustrated in sepia-colors. It tugs at the heartstrings as this perfect snowman learns the truly important lessons in life: compassion, humility, and love.

Wendy Snyder, Retired Elementary School Teacher

BEAN THIRTEEN

McElligott, Matthew. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2007.

ISBN: 978-0-39924-535-0. Genre: Easy Fiction. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

Two bugs, Ralph and Flora, go out one night to pick some beans. Against Ralph's warning, Flora picks bean #13. Ralph tries to explain that the number 13 is not lucky, but Flora brings the bean home anyway. Ralph declares that he will NOT eat Bean 13 and so they decide that they will invite friends over and they will be able to divide the beans up evenly and give the unlucky bean to someone else. Unfortunately, they discovered that there was no way to evenly divide 13 beans. As the guests arrive, the beans are accidentally dropped and the "13th" bean is mixed with the others. As it turns out, the guests took the number of beans that they wanted to eat instead of all being served the same amount. By the end of the meal, all were full and all the beans were gone. No one knew who ate the unlucky bean. I chose this book thinking that it would go well with our district math initiative. However, the point of the story was not very clear. I wasn't sure if the legend of the number 13 was the focus, or the fact that you can't divide the number 13 evenly. I do not think this will help with a math lesson nor do I think the story was very interesting.

Emily Cuff, Student, Kutztown University

SCRAPS OF TIME, 1928: A SONG FOR HARLEM

McKissack, Patricia. New York: Penguin Young Readers Group, 2007. \$14.99.

ISBN: 978-0-67006-209-6. Genre: Historical Fiction. Grade Level: 3-5.

Summary

A Song for Harlem relates the adventures of Lilly Belle's pilgrimage from the rural south to the Harlem Renaissance in the New York of the 1920's. Lilly Belle has won a poetry scholarship from the daughter of the millionaire entrepreneur Madame CJ Walker and will be taught by none other than the most prominent woman of her day, Zora Neale Hurston. As the story evolves Lilly Belle experiences the pains of the inner-racial cast system within the African-American community of the time, educated urban sophisticates ashamed of the southern country bumpkins. In a story that is light and somewhat predictable Lilly Belle confronts the stereotypes others have of her, a classmate's plagiarism and her own self doubts. The story is littered with references to Harlem institutions and legends of the time, many of which will be lost on contemporary audiences. The themes of kindness and honesty are universal and narration moves quickly through this pleasant book. This book would tie in well with lessons on the Harlem Renaissance, the Great Black Migration to the North, poetry and writing ethics.

Stephanie Towles, Elementary Librarian, Reading School District

FOREIGN EXPOSURE: THE SOCIAL CLIMBER ABROAD

**Mechling, Lauren and Laura Moser. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. 2007. \$8.99.
ISBN: 978-0-61866-379-8. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 9-12.**

Summary

Mimi is sent to Berlin to spend the summer with her mother and annoying boyfriend. Our protagonist hates Berlin, however, and not just because her mom volunteered her to babysit two horrible eight year old twins. Mimi is angry that her mom won't listen to anything she says, so she runs away to stay with a friend in London for the summer. While working at a magazine as an intern in London, she meets many interesting characters, and she learns a lot about other people and herself. I enjoyed this very entertaining and humorous book. The excellent characterization of the characters really made this book great. There are accurate descriptions in the text of British culture. With a theme of personal growth, I highly recommend this book to high school students.

Jessica Robinson, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE WONDERFUL THING ABOUT HICCUPS

**Meng, Cece. New York, Clarion Books, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-61859-544-0.
Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-1.**

Summary

This story begins with a case of hiccups during story time at the library. The silly adventure involves a hippo, a little sister stuck on the roof of the library, a librarian who is afraid of heights, an overturned ice cream cart, and a stack of library books that need to be returned on time and in good condition. The end result is your own library card and the discovery of many things, including a cure for hiccups, in the wonderful world of books. At the end of the story, there is a list of library book rules to remember so this would make a good introduction to the library for kindergartners.

Sharon Breeden, Library Science Graduate Assistant, Kutztown University

PEBBLE

**Milford, Susan. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007.
ISBN: 978-0-06085-808-7. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-2.**

Summary

This is a story about belonging and finding one's place in the world. It begins with a small, round pebble on a rocky shore among endless pebbles and rocks. In the end, the pebble becomes the pocket friend of a little boy. Susan Milford's writing and illustrations will capture the attention of all.

Sharon Breeden, Library Science Graduate Assistant, Kutztown University

BABY

**Monninger, Joseph North Carolina: Front Street, 2007. \$16.95.
ISBN: 978-1-59078-502-7. Genre: Realistic Fiction. Grade Level: 7-10.**

Summary

Baby is a troubled teenager who has moved among several foster homes throughout her life. Finally she arrives at the Potters and this couple is her last chance at a family before she is sent to a juvenile detention center. At first, Baby is resistant to her new family but soon warms up

to them as she learns that they raise dogs that do sled racing. She becomes attached to the dogs and learns to race them. But all does not remain well for Baby. Soon her boyfriend finds her and takes her away and they live a miserable life together until she returns to the Potters and attempts to fix all the bad things that have happened to her. This is a great story for teenagers to read when they are going through a rough time. This story shows even in tough times that a person's life can improve and this is a valuable lesson for teenagers to learn when they feel out of place or in trouble.

Amanda Powell, Library Science Student Kutztown University

HERO

Moore, Perry. New York: Hyperion, 2007. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-1-42310-195-6.

Genre: Fantasy, Coming of Age. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

Thom Creed wishes he was just a normal kid. But the child of two superheroes doesn't luck out so much especially when your mom has been missing for years and your father is loathed by everyone on the planet. So Thom just finds it easier to keep secrets from his father. And when the League, the same organization that disowned his father, asks Thom to join, Tom just adds that to his other secrets. But when superheroes start mysteriously dying off, Thom and his new team work together (unwillingly) to save the day. This novel was amazing! Out of all of the books I chose this time, this was by far my favorite. Thom is such an interesting character, struggling with his father's disgrace, his mom's disappearance and the secrets that they both kept hidden from him. I loved how Moore took some of the well known superheroes of our world and altered their personas a bit to make the world more understandable. This story is a lot about trusting your friends, family, and ultimately, believing in your self. The book also addresses society and its reactions to homosexuality, and believing in yourself.

Rachel Liesau, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

DAIRY QUEEN

Murdock, Catherine Gilbert. New York: Graphia, 2006. \$8.99.

ISBN: 978-0-61886-335-8. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 8-10.

Summary

I love to go to Dairy Queen, thus the reason for choosing this book which has nothing to do with ice cream. D.J. (Dorrie) Schwenk has to do the farm work because her father has hip surgery and her older brother left home after an argument with their father. D.J. had to quit the basketball team. Her brothers are football players of renown in their small town and her father had at one time coached the high school football team. This summer the coach of Red Bend's greatest rival, Hawley, talks D.J. into being the personal trainer of Brian Nelson, the quarterback for Hawley. Brian is sent to the Schwenk farm to do some work, probably the first ever for this spoiled son of a wealthy appliance store owner. At first, it is not a healthy relationship. But as the weeks go by, a friendship grows between D.J. and Brian and one believes they can become boyfriend and girlfriend until D.J. decides to go out for the Red Bend football team herself. D.J. has a best friend, Amber. Until D.J. shows an interest in Brian and develops a close relationship with him, Amber had never revealed to D.J. that she was attracted to her. This book has sports, family unrest, homosexuality, and romance all told through the eyes of D.J. I personally did not think it was all that wonderful a book, rather slow-paced, but what do I know since it was a 2006 ALA Best Book for Young Adults.

Carol Gearhart, Professor Emerita, Kutztown University

Summary

15-year-old D.J. Schwenk lives on a Wisconsin dairy farm. After her father's hip surgery, she has to give up her sophomore year basketball and track seasons to keep the farm running. As her father's recovery moves into the summer, Brian Nelson from the more affluent rival school district comes to help with the farm work. However, Brian is the quarterback for the high school football team and has been sent by his coach to train for the upcoming season. Football is very important to the area and D.J.'s two older brothers were stars in high school and college. Despite her disdain, D.J. and Brian become friends and their conversations reveal that every family has its problems. At the end of the summer D.J. decides to follow her dreams by trying out for the football team and attempting to break down her family's frustrating communication barriers. This first person story is told through the eyes of D.J., using witty internal dialogue and an often stream of consciousness narrative. Teenagers will relate to her seeming inability to control her own life. The extreme lack of communication among her family members and their ability to overcome this difficulty by the end of the book is encouraging and almost heartwarming. Young women will enjoy the girl-power message and the feel-good ending. There is a brief scene that discusses homosexuality and one or two references to alcohol consumption. This book was also on YALSA's 2007 Best Books for Young Adults list. Highly recommended.

Amber Ziemba, Saucon Valley High School Librarian

JABBERWOCKY

Myers, Christopher. New York, Hyperion, 2007. ISBN: 978-1-42310-372-1.

Genre: Poetry. Grade Level: 3-8.

Summary

Christopher Myers' interpretation of Lewis Carroll's poem "Jabberwocky" moves it from a classic setting to an urban setting by utilizing a sports theme. Myers uses visual metaphors throughout the book. Myers masterfully uses visual literacy - his choice of colors, proportions, text size, position of text, and perspective - that brings the words to life. This version deserves attention and should be considered for awards.

Eileen Kern, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

THE FURRY-LEGGED TEAPOT

Myers, Tim. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 987-0-76145-295-9. Genre: Folk Tale. Grade Level: 1-4.

Summary

Yoshi, a mischievous tanuki (a popular Japanese folk character) accidentally changes himself into a teapot and doesn't have the power to change back. He longs to get back to his family but is incapable of doing so until a young boy recognizes him for what he truly is. I liked this book. It was very similar to Sylvester and the Magic Pebble. Yet the similarity almost made this a pleasant retelling of the story. It's a book worth looking into for cultural development as its setting is Japanese.

Kirby Barnett, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

GIRL

Nelson, Blake. New York: Simon Pulse, 2007. ISBN: 0-67189-707-1.

Genre: Fiction/Coming of Age. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

Meet Andrea. She is addicted to thrift stores and the downtown music scene. It also doesn't hurt that she is a straight-A student. But times are changing for Andrea. She is about to experience her first taste of love and she is also about to branch out from the same things she's been doing all her life. She is taking risks as far as high school standards are concerned and she isn't worried or frightened, but only itching to find out what else is out there, outside of her comfort zone. I liked this book, but I wouldn't say that I loved it. The book is set up so that it is just paragraph after paragraph and there isn't much dialogue. It is really just a string of thoughts from Andrea's mind, with some conversation thrown in here and there. I did like the fact that this is a story that most girls would be able to relate to. I read this book and found myself identifying with Andrea and the things she is experiencing for the first time. I also found myself laughing out loud by some of her thoughts and dilemmas, like what to do when she is stranded at the party with no ride home, or contemplating whether or not to call that boy who gave her his number. It's a good read for anyone who wants to fit in while still trying to stand out.

Loretta Berrigan, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

SEVENTEEN

Nilsson, Per. Honesdale: Front Street – An Imprint of Boyds Mills Press, Inc., 2007.

\$17.95. ISBN: 978-1-93242-589-5. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

As seventeen-year-old Jonathan lies in a hospital bed, unconscious and suffering from alcohol poisoning, his father explains the reasons he has been missing from his son's life for the last eleven years. Strange story told from the point of view of the father and mother. Interesting take on how reality is perceived by two different people in a situation. Not worth the money to purchase it for a collection.

Christine Poirier, Librarian, Esperanza Academy Charter High School

ONE BEASTLY BEAST (TWO ALIENS, THREE INVENTORS, FOUR FANTASTIC TALES)

Nix, Garth. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007. \$16.89.

ISBN: 978-0-06084-320-5. Genre: Fiction/Fantasy. Grade Level: Grade 2-6.

Summary

Garth Nix takes a break from his teen audience to create four hilarious tales for children. The first tale tells of a boy who is on his way to the video rental store when his movies get stolen by a pirate rat named Blackbread. The second tale describes a bored princess and her quest for adventure in her unexciting kingdom. In the third story a young science loving orphan can't seem to find the right family to go home with. And finally a little girl tries to save her town and others like it from a giant sea serpent. All four of these hilarious tales are cleverly illustrated by Brian Biggs. Biggs' illustrations remind me of Crockett Johnson's illustrations in Harold and the Purple Crayon. They are more like doodles. These doodles however add to the lightheartedness of these memorable tales. These stories could definitely become instant classics with young children.

Mark Hafer, Library Science Graduate Assistant, Kutztown University

JACK OF ALL TAILS

**Norman, Kim. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2007. \$16.99.
ISBN: 978-0-52547-793-8. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-2.**

Summary

Kristi Kibbleman comes up with an idea for a family business. They will hire themselves out to act like pets for various clients. The Kibblemans discover that they are all very good as the pets they become. All, that is, except for Kristi. Her home visits turn into disasters! Finally, as she is going out for her run, she realizes which pet she should become—a hamster in a wheel. This family is very talented to be able to mimic the actions of the various pets to help others learn how to care for the real animal. They also help those who are coping with the loss of their pet by becoming a stand-in. The antics of the Kibblemans, especially the adults, provide the illustrator with wonderful opportunities for comical pictures. Readers will enjoy the silly actions. FYI—There is a reference to “passing gas” so if this offends you, you may not want to add this to your collection.

Emily Cuff, Student, Kutztown University

I'LL ASK YOU THREE TIMES, ARE YOU OK?

**Nye, Naomi Shihab. New York: Greenwillow Books, 2007. \$16.89.
ISBN: 978-0-06085-393-8. Genre: Short Stories/Humor. Grade Level: 9-12.**

Summary

Many stories focus only on the destination...Nye is more interested in the journey of each excursion. This book is basically a reflection on different traveling experiences accumulated throughout the life of the author. Not only does the author focus on her own journey from place to place, but she also reflects upon the personality of the people who facilitate her transportation. Although I would not necessarily describe this book as a “page-turner,” I did find each story to be somewhat poignant. This book provided a different perspective to something that most of us do not normally consider. When traveling, we are usually so focused on where we are going that we do not consider the people we encounter along the way. I would recommend this book to anyone who is looking for a new angle on life.

Kaylynn Hove, Student, Kutztown University

THE SHADOW SPEAKER

**Okorafor-Mbachu, Nnedi. New York: Jump at the Sun/ Hyperion, 2007. \$16.99.
ISBN: 1-42310-033-6. Genre: Fantasy/Science Fiction. Grade Level: 7-11.**

Summary

The shadows have told Ejii that a war is coming and she must prevent it, so she follows the Red Queen, Jaa, to the meeting of the Golden Dawn. Ejii must use her abilities to keep the other worlds from declaring war on Earth. On her journey, Ejii meets Dikeogou, a boy her age whose abilities as a rainmaker caused his exile from his family and home. Together, Ejii and Dikeogou join Jaa to go to the world of Ginen to attend the meeting of the Golden Dawn. Jaa intends to secure peace for Earth by assassinating the ruler of Ginen. Can Ejii prevent both war and the assassination? This novel takes place in Africa of the near future. Earth has been dramatically altered by both nuclear warfare and “Peace Bombs,” which counteract the

negative effects of the nuclear bombs. The action of this novel is engrossing and the setting plausibly futuristic. Main characters are well-rounded and interesting. The novel deals with the topics of anger, war, and social responsibility against the backdrop of Ejii and Dikeogou's coming of age. This works as a young adult novel and as a science fiction novel, addressing a traditional sci-fi motif—the inevitability and effects of nuclear warfare.

Ruth Gavin, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

DARKWING

Oppel Kenneth. New York: Harper Collins, 2007. \$17.89.

ISBN: 978-0-06085-055-5. Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 6-9.

Summary

A young glider discovers that he can fly. Dusk is threatened with banishment for his unique gift simply because it is different, when the colony of gliders is attacked by vicious cats. His unique ability is put to use as he helps save what is left of his colony and discovers a new place for them to live. This book was great for dealing with issues of racism. Clearly Dusk is not at fault for his uniqueness, yet he is still considered an outcast. The progression of the book helps students to see that these differences can actually be a good thing, as Dusk saves his colony and finds a new place for them to live

Kirby Barnett, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

NO BITING, LOUISE

Palatini, Marjorie. New York: Katherine Tegen Books, 2007.

ISBN: 978-0-06052-627-6. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-K.

Summary

This is a great preschool story about a small alligator, Louise, who loves to show off her baby chopper by biting everything and everyone. Reinhart's cartoon illustrations enhance the laughable antics of this toddler. This circular story ends with Louise's tendency changing from biting to burping. It would have limited appeal in an elementary school.

Eileen Kern, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

THE CHEESE

Palatini, Margie. New York: Harper Collins, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-06052-631-3.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-2.

Summary

You'll need to break out into song when you read this book because, yes, it is a take off on *The Farmer in the Dell*. A rat living in the dell wonders why the posted rules and regulations state that the cheese stands alone—especially when it is a tasty-looking hunk of cheddar standing uselessly in a meadow. Napkin in hand, he goes to investigate. The rat is then joined by a cat, a dog, a child, a mother, and finally the farmer father, all of whom initially insist that the cheese must stand alone, and then are persuaded to consider that the rule might actually be a silly one worth challenging. The farmer decides that if they are going to eat the cheese, they might as well make a party out of it, and everyone goes to fetch apples, pears, sausages, milk, and, of course, crackers. Very rich with country colors and cartoon animals make it a fun book to share.

Eloise M. Long, Library Science/Instructional Technology Chair, Kutztown University

BREAD AND ROSES, TOO

Paterson, Katherine. New York: Clarion Books, 2006. \$16.00.

ISBN: 0-61854-798-0. Genre: Historical Fiction. Grade Level: 5-9.

Summary

A 1912 union strike in the Lawrence, MA textile mills causes friction in an immigrant family. To escape the poverty and danger caused by the strike, the youngest children are sent to foster families. This is a fictionalized account of the “Bread and Roses” strike at the Lawrence, MA textile mills, told from the point of view of the children. (This would be a good book for current teenagers to read, to realize how easy their lives are today.) The story is easy to read, and pulls you in from the very first chapter. The characters are well developed, the plot moves along, and the story is very engrossing. This would be a wonderful book to have in a middle school collection and would be a good addition to a social studies or history unit.

Shawn Kerbein, Librarian, Midway Manor & Lincoln Early Childhood Centers Allentown SD

ISABEL AND THE MIRACLE BABY

Pearce, Emily Smith. Asheville, NC: Front Street, 2007. ISBN: 978-1-93242-544-4.

Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 2-4.

Summary

I chose this book because of the picture on the cover. I found this to be a “whiny” story. Eight year old Isabel’s world has been turned upside down. Because her mother has cancer, her father has to sell his fix-it shop and move the family from the ocean to the city where he could get a better paying job. Then Isabel’s mother has another child whom they call the miracle baby because who would have thought after having cancer that she would be able to have another child. Isabel feels left out. She dislikes the other cancer survivors who come to their house for support group, is angered that her mother will not allow her to play with her next-door neighbor Tara, and finds herself in trouble at school because of her attitudes toward the other girls who make fun of her. A child who is going through some of the same struggles could identify with Isabel. Otherwise, it is 125 pages of sadness and misunderstanding.

Carol Gearhart, Professor Emerita, Kutztown University

THE CAT MASTER

Pemberton, Bonnie. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-76145-340-6. Genre: Animal Fiction. Grade Level: 5-8.

Summary

Buddy is an “Indoor”, that is, a house cat. He wasn’t always a house cat; it has only been a year since he found The Boy who needed him. So do the young indoors, Zekki and Pris. The old Cat Master, who rules the Ferals, has died, and Buddy is his successor, only Buddy didn’t receive the message. His brother, the evil Jett, is determined to be the next Cat Master. When Jett kidnaps Zekki and Pris, Buddy has no alternative but to follow them. Fans of The Warriors series and animal lovers of all kinds (even dog lovers) will enjoy this well-written story. The dialogue is often humorous and the situations the cats face are very realistic, even though the book is a fantasy.

Kathy L. Fiedler, Librarian, Northwestern Lehigh Middle School

REMEMBER AS YOU PASS ME BY

Perez, King, L. Minnesota: Milkweed Editions, 2007. \$16.95 ISBN: 978-1-57131-677-6. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 7 – 9.

Summary:

Silvy and Mabelee are the best of friends in a small Texas town. Mabelee lives in the colored section of town, and Silvy lives in “white town.” The girls find themselves confronted with racial issues throughout the book. Then Brown vs. the Board of Education passes and orders all schools to be desegregated. Racial issues are at an all time high in the Texas town. How will this affect Silvy and Mabelee? Perez did a great job showing the racial issues of the time period through the eyes of young adolescent children. The language can be seen as offensive and off-color at times due to the stereotypes of the time. I would recommend this book for students in upper middle school – grades because of the themes and offensive language.

Taylor Thompson, 6th Grade Teacher, Kutztown Area Middle School

PERCEVAL (KING ARTHUR’S KNIGHT OF THE HOLY GRAIL)

Perkins, John. Tarrytown, NY: Marshal Cavendish, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-76145-339-0. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 4-6.

Summary

In this lesser known Arthurian Legend, Perkins tells the tale of a young man named Perceval. While many of us know of the quest for the Holy Grail, few of us know of the story of the knight who first saw it. The story is of a young man who goes on a quest to become a knight. He is foolish and makes many mistakes on his quest but in doing so also discovers the castle which holds the grail. The tale of Perceval came to an abrupt end when it was told originally by Chretien de Troyes and Perkins does not create a new ending in this retelling. He does, however, offer a brief idea of what may have happened. Although this tale was not extremely inviting to me, it does have some very strong points. First, the illustrations were done by Gennady Spirin. Spirin won many awards for his past illustrations and it is obvious why. Spirin created a large egg tempera work on a “levkas” canvas. Levkas is an old Russian form of painting used in medieval times and Spirin recreates this quite well. Also, the story of the grail is one we hear about in many modern day representations from Indiana Jones and the DaVinci Code to Monty Python. Learning this story through a well illustrated book was definitely worth it.

Mark Hafer, Library Science Graduate Assistant, Kutztown University

PICTURES FROM OUR VACATION

Perkins, Lynne Rae. New York: HarperCollins, 2007. \$17.89

ISBN: 978-0-06085-097-3. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

At the beginning of a family vacation, the narrator and her brother are given instant cameras and notebooks to record their experiences. At first they are excited about the trip and their cameras, but they quickly discover that their snapshots cannot capture what they really see and feel. After a long drive, the family comes to their father’s childhood farm, but where he sees memories, everyone else sees dirt and warped furniture. However, as extended family begins to arrive for a memorial service, the narrator and her brother find that they are really to busy having fun with their newfound cousins to take pictures after all, and the dusty house takes on a new character as new memories are made. The title seems to suggest that this will be the story of a family vacation told through the photos they take; however, as both the narrator and

the reader soon discover, photos cannot capture the boredom of a long ride in the car, or the fun of building a house out of cards on top of a sleeping relative. In fact, on the days the children spend with their extended family they do not take any photos at all—the best pictures, they find, are memories they can keep in their minds. Perkins' colorful yet detailed illustrations add to the warmth and nostalgia of this book, and she engages the mind by including maps and overhead views of the area, as well as speech balloons and pages from the narrator's journal.

Katrina Bender, Librarian, Providence Elementary School

THE NEDDIDAD

Pinkwater, Daniel. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-61859-444-3.

Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 3-8.

Summary

A wonderful story, interweaving real facts and mythical fantasy. Neddie, our hero, learns many real facts and gives us a firsthand account of adventures that many people might have, like flying down into the Grand Canyon in a tour plane and eating in the Brown Derby restaurant. He also has some more fanciful experiences like his friendship with Billy the Phantom Bellboy, a ghost who he meets in Santa Fe and invites to travel to Los Angeles with him. The exacting detail in which the 1950's American environment is described lends such reality to Neddie's quest of protecting the magic stone turtle given to him by an Indian shaman, and therefore civilization. For younger readers I would recommend this book as a read aloud. The short chapters make for easy breaks and it would be good to have someone point out how much in this book is verifiable and what comes from traditional myths and stories.

Rita Cohen, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

Summary

This story is about a boy, Neddie, and his family who have decided to move out to California just so they could eat at a restaurant shaped like a hat. The story is told through Neddie's eyes and it is about his adventures on the train to California and the events that take place once he gets there. Along the way to California he runs into a shaman who gives him a carved turtle that he is now in charge of. This tiny turtle turns out to be the source of Neddie's adventures and the reason why Neddie decides to tell this story. I have mixed feelings about this book. When I first started reading it I thought it was a realistic fiction story, but as I continued to read, it slowly changed to a legend or fantasy story. The idea of the book was good but it built up to the climax throughout the entire book and as soon as you get to the event that has been built up, the story just ends. It doesn't wrap up any loose ends and the reader is just left hanging. What I found good about the book were its short chapters that were great to read between classes or if you like reading books before bed.

Heather Werner, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

YO-YO MAN

Pinkwater, Daniel. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007.

ISBN: 978-0-06055-502-3. Genre: Easy Fiction. Grade Level: K-2.

Summary

The story is based on the theme of practice and perseverance. An anonymous third grade narrator decides to become the best speller to show the teacher, Mrs. Mousetrap, and win the "yo-yo" contest to show the class bully. This Daniel Pinkwater story is a straight forward plot

of a loser who tries to win. Jack Davis' illustrations are packed with details and fabulous facial expressions. The story will appeal to kids. The illustrations make the book.

Eileen Kern, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

HOMEWORK HELPSTER GRADE 5

Play Bac Publishing USA, Inc., 2007. \$12.95. ISBN: 978-1-60214-002-8.

Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade level: 3-6.

Summary

A flip book that can stand on its own, this book is chock full of facts and information in the four categories of 5th grade math, social studies, science, and language arts: "The Core Curriculum in 200 Flip Cards." This is a great reference tool and homework helper for kids. Each page covers a different topic, and the explanations are easy to understand. With illustrations, paintings, and diagrams on every page, you can't go wrong using this book! The publishers also print Helpsters for grades 3 - 4 and Vocabulary Power books for grades 1 - 3.

Christine Gingrich, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

DINO PETS

Plourde, Lynn. New York: Penguin Group, 2007. \$15.99. ISBN: 978-0-52547-778-5.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

A boy attends the Grand Opening of the Dino Pets store. He buys the biggest dinosaur but when he gets it home it won't fit into his house. So he returns it to the store with his receipt. Next he pays for the fastest dinosaur but it runs away. He continues buying other dinosaurs but something always goes wrong until no more are left at the store. When he returns home the last time all of the dinosaurs are waiting for him. The author provides delightful text for this simple story, which includes rhyming couplets. The ending was quite a surprise. Brief facts about each dinosaur were at the end of the book. The double-page humorous and colorful artwork was wonderful and quite appealing. I would recommend this book for elementary libraries and the primary classrooms.

Sheila Fox, First Grade Teacher, Topton Elementary School

GINGER AND PETUNIA

Polacco, Patricia. New York: Philomel Books, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-39924-539-8.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-3.

Summary

Ginger, the rich socialite woman, leaves her adored pet pig, Petunia, with a pet sitter who never shows. Through a series of events, the pig takes over Ginger's social obligations and fools everyone to thinking she IS Ginger. Further the pig makes mistakes at the events but the mistakes end up working out for the best and the pig, aka, Ginger, becomes more and more celebrated. The ending is a hilarious dip into a chocolate fountain (thought to be a mud bath by the pig) at an important party. Everyone at the party joins in. Not one of my favorite Polacco books but kids will enjoy the hilarity of the adventures.

Eloise M. Long, Library Science/Instructional Technology Chair, Kutztown University

BILLY CREEKMORE

Porter, Tracey. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007. \$17.89.

ISBN: 978-0-06077-571-1. Genre: Historical Fiction. Grade Level: 5-12.

Summary

Billy Creekmore is a fictitious character that experienced about as much as a poor boy could experience in the early twentieth century. He was a poorly-treated child in the Guardian Angels Home for Boys, a thief, a part of a coal town rebellion, a member of a respected circus, and a whole bunch of other things in between. As readers progress through the story, they will be exposed to a challenging, surprising and sometimes cruel world that is just a glimpse of what America once was. I personally do not know what everyone's childhood was like, but I know several people (including me) who sometimes wished that they were going on adventures like the one that Tracey Porter fashioned for Billy Creekmore. I recommend this novel to anyone who remembers what it was like to experience adventures (real or imaginary), and I recommend this book to those who are curious about what exactly life could be like in the early twentieth century. I also recommend this book to everyone else, because Billy Creekmore's story is worth sharing.

Rebecca Schroder, Library Science & Elem. Education Student, Kutztown University

IN AUNT GIRAFFE'S GREEN GARDEN

Prelutsky, Jack. New York, Greenwillow Books, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-06623-868-5. Genre: Poetry. Grade Level: Preschool-5.

Summary

A poetry collection of nonsensical verse by Children's Poet Laureate, Jack Prelutsky, deals with animals and locations around the world. Some of Mather's illustrations are stiff and do not capture the playfulness of the verses. Not as fun loving or exciting as their previous collaboration, *The Frog Wore Red Suspenders* but there are some delightful moments.

Eileen Kern, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

THE WIZARD

Prelutsky, Jack. New York: Greenwillow Books, 2007.

\$17.89. ISBN: 978-0-06124-077-5. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: 1-3.

Summary

The wizard in this rhyming book is looking for some evil to do. He finds a frog and turns him into a variety of other things just to amuse himself. When he's done he turns the frightened creature back into a frog again. The rhyming text is lots of fun to read. The pictures are beautifully detailed illustrations by Brandon Dorman. The pictures are dark but they are also very colorful. They remind me of the pictures of the evil queen in the Disney movie "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs". I love this book. It would be fun to read around Halloween.

Alexis Leitner-Cohen, 7th Grade Student, Eyer Middle School, East Penn School District

LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE

Pressler, Mirjam. Honesdale: Front Street, 2007. \$16.95. ISBN: 978-1-93242-584-0.

Genre: Realism, Coming of Age. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

Johanna, a German girl, learns on a trip to Israel that her family's successful clothing store was originally owned by a Jewish family and was acquired by her grandfather through the anti-Semitic laws of the Nazi regime. Interesting story of how a simple high school trip can change

the way a girl thinks about her family and their history. Johanna learns that her grandfather was a Nazi after an interview with an elderly Jewish woman brings this to light. Johanna is thrown into turmoil over what she has always known is really tainted. Eventually she makes peace with her family history and decides on how to best move forward with her life. A possible purchase for a school with a Holocaust focused course.

Christine Poirier, Librarian, Esperanza Academy Charter High School

THE DARK SIDE

Price, Susan. Boston: Kingfisher, 2007. \$6.95. ISBN: 978-0-75346-143-3.

Genre: Fiction/Scary Stories. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

This book is full of short stories that are sure to chill your bones. It has stories from great writers like Stephen King, Edgar Allen Poe, Charles Dickens and other lesser known authors. You'll be sleeping with the lights on after you've finished this book. I thought that this book was great. I think anyone who is a scary story fan will love this book. I liked it because not all the stories were about monsters and the supernatural which made it more fun to read about things that potentially could happen in real life. This is a great and fun read.

Loretta Berrigan, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

BULLYVILLE

Prose, Francine. New York: HarperTeen, 2007. \$17.89.

ISBN: 987-0-06057-498-7. Genre: Realistic Fiction. Grade Level: 7-12.

Summary

Bart is "Miracle Boy," the boy who was sick on 9/11 causing his mother who worked in the Twin towers to stay home and take care of him. Bart's father, who had been separated from his mother for a few months, wasn't so lucky and wasn't found. Bailyville (the local prep academy) offers Bart a full tuition scholarship to the school. However, Bailyville is not as nice as the shiny image that Bart's mother sees, and the school is aptly nicknamed Bullyville. Bart tries to work through his father's death and separation, his mother still being alive, and being bullied at school. The plot takes a few unexpected twists that keep the reader on his/her toes. I recommend this novel for use in schools; it really gives a realistic view of bullying and what it's like to be bullied. The ending may be controversial, but it is understandable with the combination of the character of Bart and the plot of the book. This novel doesn't end with a happy ending and that's one of its best features. The characterization of most of the characters is very well done. I liked this novel as well if not better than After, an intriguing and psychological novel by the author.

Melissa Lemke, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

SADDLE UP: THOROUGHBRED HORSE STORIES

Pullein-Thompson, Christine. Boston, MA: Kingfisher, 2007. \$6.95.

ISBN: 978-0-75346-145-7. Genre: Animal Story/Fiction. Grade Level: 4-8.

Summary

This book is a collection of 20 horse stories. Some of them are short stories while others are extracts from popular books such as *Black Beauty* and *The Black Stallion*. I am a horse lover and have always enjoyed reading horse stories. I like that the stories in this book really varied, from a classic like *Black Beauty* to a Sherlock Holmes story and many others. It was nice that they were not all the same type of story and that some were more obscure. I thought that I was

a horse expert, but there were a lot of stories in here that I had not heard of before reading this book, so it would be great for horse enthusiasts. My only complaint is that I did not enjoy the extracts from the longer books as much as I enjoyed the short stories. Since I did not read all of the books that these extracts came from, I felt that they were a little hard to follow. However, I think that they could pull a reader in enough to get them to find the original book and read the entire thing.

Michele Ezzell, Graduate Student, Kutztown University

LOVE, MEG

Purtill, C. Leigh. New York: Razorbill - Penguin Group, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-1-59514-116-3. Genre: Coming of Age/Fiction. Grade Level: 10-12.

Summary

Believing her parents are dead and forced to live a nomadic life with her older sister, thirteen-year-old Meg tries to find friendship in the oddest of places, but when she discovers that her sister is actually her mother and that her father is not dead, Meg makes a cross-country journey from L.A. to New York City to sort out all the family secrets once and for all. Similar in story to Voight's Homecoming and similar in narration to Walker's The Color Purple, the story is about a girl and her quest to find herself. Meg writes to Jennifer Aniston and references *Friends* episodes as they relate to her life. The story was suspenseful insofar as you wanted to keep reading to find out what Meg was going to do. The book has a current pop culture feel to it that will appeal to students. Recommended!

Angela D'Urbano, English Teacher, Esperanza Academy Charter High School

GRANDDAD'S FISHING BUDDY

Quigley, Mary. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 2007. \$16.99

ISBN: 978-0-80372-942-1. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

Sara's granddad loves to go fishing, and Sara finally gets the chance to go with him. Granddad paddles out into the lake and tells Sara to keep quiet so that his secret fishing buddy will join them. Lots of people pass by but none of them are his fishing buddy, until the very end when his fishing buddy does show up and they catch lots of fish.

This book is a very cute book for younger children. A lot of the kids can relate to wanting to do things with their parents or grandparents. The pictures are beautiful and tell the story just as well as the words do. Children will love the end when Granddad's fishing buddy finally shows up.

Heather Grossmann, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

IN THE SHADOW OF THE BEAR

Randall, David Sorrel. New York: Margaret K. Elderry Books, 2007. \$16.99

ISBN: 978-0-68987-872-5. Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 5-8.

Summary

Clovermead the magical bear-girl is sent by her mother to the Steppes to try and find allies. She must use the diplomatic skills she has gained to outmaneuver her rival, Lucifer to persuade the people of the steppes to ally with her, instead of with Lord Ursus, Clovermead's previous enemy whose bear slaves look to Clovermead to free them. This book was difficult to get into. I think if I had read the other books in the series I would like it a lot more. I enjoyed the story, and the personal victories of the strong heroine. Some of the elements of Clovermead's world

were unexplained because this is the third book in the series, and this book was written for people who had read the previous installments.

Katie Hanchuruck, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

MY WAY: A MI MANERA

Reiser, Lynn. New York, NY: Harper Collins, 2007. \$15.99.

ISBN: 0-06084-101-X. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-3.

Summary

This bilingual picture book has a mirror-image structure that simultaneously reflects the individuality and interconnectedness between two similarly named little girls. Each child does things her way, but every once in a while, one girl tries something the way the other girl does it. The book effectively communicates both the value of friendship and of friends understanding and accepting one another. The bilingual presentation enriches the story as it describes the same activity in both languages, with the differences appearing in the illustrations. I liked this book a lot because it helped me to learn more Spanish words. It was easy to know what the words mean because the pictures tell you and you can read the words in English too. I was glad that the girls were friends and tried things each other's way.

Taydem Copenhaver, Age 6, Kindergarten Whitfield Elementary

SANTA'S ELEVEN MONTHS OFF

Reiss, Mike. Atlanta, Georgia: Peachtree Publishers, 2007. \$16.95.

ISBN: 978-1-56145-421-1. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-K.

Summary

Everyone knows that from December first until Christmas, Santa Claus works hard to make sure that every good girl and good boy in the world gets just what he or she wanted on Christmas Day. Needless to say, he is pretty worn out after all this hard work and for the rest of the year he takes a rest. But this does not mean he does nothing for eleven months. For example, in January he went on an exercise binge. In February, he went to Hollywood from some sunshine and fun. For a complete change of scene, he went to Japan in May to participate in some sumo wrestling and in June, Santa attended the Summer Reindeer Games. This is the perfect book for children who ask "What does Santa do after Christmas is over?" Delightfully comical rhymes will have readers giggling in no time. The illustrations by Michael G. Montgomery are terrific. Montgomery's full-color paintings showing expressive, energetic people in dynamic compositions are amusing and delightful.

Tara Howell, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

THE TRUE MEANING OF SMEKDAY

Rex, Adam. New York: Hyperion Books, 2007. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-0-78684-900-0.

Genre: Science Fiction. Grade Level: 7-9.

Summary

Gratuity Tucci, aka "Tip," has a problem. Her mother has been stolen by the Boov aliens who have just taken over the Earth! In order to find her mother, Tip befriends the outlaw alien, "J.Lo," and manages through many misadventures to save the world from the evil Gorg aliens and find her mother. This was a very entertaining book! It started out a bit slow, with Tip beginning the story as a writing assignment. However, the story too picked up the pace, with sketches and funny comics throughout the tale. It's very expressive and easy to read. I loved it!

Christine Gingrich, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE CAT, OR, HOW I LOST ETERNITY

Richter, Jutta. Minneapolis, MN: Milkweed Editions. 2007. \$14.00

ISBN: 1-57131-676-0. Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 5-9.

Summary

A talking white cat stops Christine every day on her way to school. Being a polite eight year old, she listens and considers what the cat has to say. This makes her very late for school and gets her in trouble. Eventually, she dismisses what the cat has to say and forms her own opinions about people, the world, and eternity. This short book was written by a German author and translated from German. The story was too esoteric and didn't seem like the type of story most of my students would understand or enjoy. The simple black, yellow, and white cat illustrations, by Rotraut Susanne Berner, were what first caught my eye when I picked up this book. While they don't always follow the text, they add an interesting effect to the story.

Gwenn Davis, Librarian, Stroudsburg High School

MRS. FICKLE'S PICKLES

Ries, Lori. Honesdale, PA: 2006. \$16.95. ISBN: 978-1-59078-195-1.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Pre K-1.

Summary

Mrs. Fickle loves pickles. She is very dedicated to her favorite hobby, making pickles. This book takes us through all the steps of pickle production from buying the seeds, planting and caring for the seedlings, transplanting them into the ground, watering and weeding, and finally harvesting. Mrs. Fickle's anticipation and hard work pays off when she creates a delicious batch of pickles and takes them to the county fair where they win first place. In the end, Mrs. Fickle has a complete expression of joy as she holds up one of her jars of pickles with a blue ribbon around the top. She can't resist eating one of her famous pickles. We now see that Mrs. Fickle likes making pickles, but of course, she LOVES eating them more. Students will love participating in this read aloud with the repetitive phrase, "Mrs. Fickle likes her pickles." that appears throughout the book. They will also enjoy picking up on the subtleties in the illustrations like the green wheelbarrow and car that resemble a pickle. This book is a great way to introduce to students how a crop changes as it moves through phases and finally seeing the end result.

Joanne Butler, Second Grade Teacher, Springfield Elementary

OX, HOUSE, STICK: THE HISTORY OF OUR ALPHABET

Robb, Don. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2007. \$7.95. ISBN: 978-1-57091-610-6.

Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 4-6.

Summary

This book contains information about the alphabet that English-speaking people use. It covers details about forms of communication, explanations as to why and how different alphabets were created, a look at each letter's creation and development over time, and most everything imaginable that is connected to the creation of the English alphabet. The colorful Anne Smith collage illustrations that are included in this book depict what Don Robb's text describes. This book ends with a summarized chart of each letter's probable source, approximate first use, and possible meanings. It also ends with additional resources for children and adults. This book is interesting and educational, but it was not a book that I could complete in one sitting. Its

organization made sense, and the illustrations of the letters over time were quite interesting. I believe that children interested in learning about the alphabet could gain a wealth of information from this book.

Rebecca Schroder, Library Science & Elem. Education Student, Kutztown University

TRACES: DOUBLE CHECK

Rose, Malcolm. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2007. \$5.95. ISBN: 978-0-75346-004-7.

Genre: Young Adult Science Fiction. Grade Level: 8-12.

Summary

Luke Harding is a young FI (forensic investigator) and he is faced with the task of freeing an innocent boy from the death sentence. At the same time his loyalties are being tested by the authorities concerning the Pairing Committee and possible corruption within. Excellently written! The author keeps the details at just the right level so that the reader is engaged but not overwhelmed by all the fine details. The characters are easily related and the plot moves along very well. This would be an excellent book to jump to from the Hardy Boys series or even the Nancy Drew series. It is murder mystery with a more complex plot.

Amanda Kohr, Student, Kutztown University

TRACES: FINAL LAP

Rose, Malcolm. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. \$5.95. ISBN: 978-0-75346-005-4. Genre:

Young Adult Science Fiction. Grade Level: 8-12.

Summary

A futuristic society where a very young forensic investigator attempts to solve a mystery involving scandals surrounding the new athletic games building complex. Things become puzzling and even dangerous for the young investigator when an attempt is even made at his own life. A very well written book for young adults that travels on the theme of science fiction and forensic investigation. Being set in a futuristic society it makes a leap from books such as The Giver and is a good jump off book for other similar types of literature. The writing style is easy to follow and gives good details without being overwhelming. It is basic for a struggling reader to enjoy but also complex enough to hold the attention of a more advanced reader.

Amanda Kohr, Student, Kutztown University

THE OK BOOK

Rosenthal, Amy Crouse & Tom Lichtenheld. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007, \$14.99. ISBN: 978-0-06115-256-6. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-3

Summary

This simple picture book has one line text and large pictures. It explores the many possibilities in life for trying new experiences and the fact that you won't be great at everything. You may be just...OK! And that's all right. Eventually, you'll find something that you do really well but you'll have had a lot of fun trying things along the way. This book is extremely clever with the use of the two letters OK in every page's picture. The theme is a wonderful one to explore with students who worry about always being good at all they do. The pictures make the reader laugh but the text makes you think. The OK stick figure ends the book with the upbeat theory that

people should try lots of experiences (ex. sledder, kite flyer, marshmallow roaster) and you'll finally grow up to be really excellent at something! This book could be a great springboard to a discussion of why it's important to take some risks and try new experiences. Definitely a book I'd recommend for school libraries and any primary classroom.

Nancy Krial, Gifted Support Teacher, Palisades Schools

STEP-BY-STEP CRAFTS FOR GIFTS

Ross, Kathy. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, 2007. \$15.95.

ISBN: 1-59078-361-1. Genre: Craft Book. Grade Level: K-5.

Summary

It's fun to create the perfect gifts for family and friends with these easy-to-make projects. Each craft is made from readily available materials, including household recyclables. Detailed color illustrations and clear step-by-step instructions assure success as well as hours of enjoyment for even the youngest crafters. I like to make crafts for everyone in my family and there were a lot of things to do in this book. My favorite thing I made was the notebooks and wormy bookmarks. Everyone liked their gift and said they were good ideas. I had fun making them.

Taydem Copenhaver, Age 6, Kindergarten Whitfield Elementary

CAMP RULES

Rotter, Jordan. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2007. \$15.99.

ISBN: 978-0-525-47803-4. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 7-12.

Summary:

Fern Lake Camp is a summer overnight camp for girls ages 8 through 16. FLC is a place where girls can truly be themselves. Penny Moore is forced to attend this camp by her parents. She is placed in Bunk One which girls who have attended FLC for years. She is an outsider. She must try to find ways to fit in with her bunkmates. I enjoyed reading this book because it portrayed teenage girls in their rawest sense. There are elements of dating, sexual innuendoes, and female adolescence throughout the book. Penny, the main character, wants out of camp and a bunkmate wants to help her get out of camp sooner than later. Definitely a fun read for adolescent girls!

Taylor Thompson, 6th Grade Teacher, Kutztown Area Middle School

HUNTED

Russell, Christopher. New York: Greenwillow Books, 2007, \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-06084-120-1. Genre: Historical Fiction. Grade Level: 4-9.

Summary

This tale takes place in England long ago, in the time of the Black Death. When his lady wife dies from the plague, Sir Edmund is convinced by a villainous friar that her death was caused by his ward, Aurelie, and his huntsman, the boy Brind. In his grief, Sir Edmund throws them off his manor. Aurelie and Brind head for Garwood Manor, home of Sir Edmund's sister-in-law, accompanied by their faithful mastiffs, Glaive and Gabion. They are worried about Sir Edmund and want to get help for him from Lady Alice. Many adventures and close calls with death come their way but they do end up at Garwood Manor. Sir Edmund realizes his mistake and sets out to find them. All parties, good and bad, meet and clash at the scene of Garwood Manor. I loved the historical accuracy of this tale and the characters are quite well drawn. Lots of suspense and an exciting ending combine to make a thoroughly satisfying tale. Once I started reading, it was hard to put down. The interaction between Brind and the mastiffs was

intriguing and I found this time in history well depicted. I'd recommend this book to upper elementary classrooms and all elementary libraries. Read the previous book about these characters titled *Dogboy!*

Nancy Krial, Gifted Support Teacher, Palisades Schools

A PORTRAIT OF PIA

Russo, Marisabina. Orlando, Florida: Harcourt Books, 2007. \$17.00.

ISBN: 978-0-15205-577-6. Genre: Coming of Age. Grade Level: 5-7.

Summary

Pia is a twelve year old girl who has never met her father, and decides to contact him around the time of her thirteenth birthday. She is a typical girl with a brother who is mentally ill, and a huge crush on a boy she has known since elementary school. Her best friend is a social climber who betrays her for a more popular new friend. One constant in the life of Pia is her interest in art. This story follows Pia as she learns about herself and her family history. Although I found this book to be very clichéd and predictable, the author has good intentions, and the story may be better appreciated by the middle school population. It includes all of the elements that are considered important to a student of that age: family, social status, and that first crush, as well as the importance of discovering what truly matters in life.

Kaylynn Hove, Student, Kutztown University

PAINT THE WIND

Ryan, Pam Munoz. New York: Scholastic, Inc. ISBN: 978-0-43987-362-8.

Genre: Adventure. Grade Level: 5-8.

Summary

Even if you're not a horse lover, you'll love this book; and if you ARE a horse lover, you'll be ecstatic about this book. When her grandmother dies, Maya travels from her over-protected life in California to live with her grandfather and great-aunt on their Wyoming ranch. She rediscovers her late mother's love of horses as her life intertwines with the wild mustang, Artemesia. The conflict builds as an earthquake causes potential disaster for Maya. There is a glossary of horse terms for those of us non-riders.

Munoz Ryan draws on the artistic talent of famous painters as she describes the landscape and names the horses after painters – Artemisia Gentileschi is an Italian painter of the early Baroque period. – one of the first female painters. Very readable – good read aloud for middle school age.

Eloise M. Long, Library Science/Instructional Technology Chair, Kutztown University

WALT DISNEY'S CINDERELLA

Rylant, Cynthia. New York: Disney Press, 2007. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-1-42310-421-6.

Genre: Fairy Tale/Picture Book. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

A retelling of the classic story of Cinderella: a lonely and ill-treated stepdaughter longs for love, romance and happiness. Through the help of a fairy godmother, she is able to attend a ball at the castle where she meets and falls in love with the prince, who is also looking for his one true love. In her haste to leave the ball by midnight, Cinderella loses one of her glass slippers. The prince finds this slipper and determines that only the girl who fits that slipper will have his heart. The accompanying illustrations are by Mary Blair, the artist responsible for the artistic vision of Walt Disney's animated film, *Cinderella*. This retelling of *Cinderella* has a

more ethereal, romantic quality than that of other versions. This version omits the talking mice, the singing birds, the friendships Cinderella has forged with animals, the songs and the bibbity-bobbity-boo(ing). For this reason, I believe I appreciate this version more as it is not the typical, commercialized, Disney-fied version to which we have grown accustomed. The focus of Rylant's recreation is on the romantic idea of love. The accompanying illustrations are beautiful and also have a more airy, romantic quality about them.

Kristin Blue, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

MYSTERY ISLE

St. George, Judith. New York: Sleuth Puffin, 1976. ISBN: 978-0-14240-841-4.

Genre: Mystery. Grade Level: 6-9.

Summary

Kimball is traveling to her family's large ancestral home in Maine to help get ready to sell it. But when she gets there it doesn't seem that her great-grandfather is ready to part with the house any time soon. Then strange music, bright flashing lights, and an exotic parrot convince her great-grandfather that he has gone as crazy as his father, and he is seeing the Chinese pirate ghosts. It is left up to Kimball to discover who or what is actually haunting their island. This mystery reminds me a lot of a Scooby Doo episode. Strange music, a distant relative, and someone with an ulterior motive of getting the great-grandfather out of the house for a financial gain for themselves, the only thing missing is the Scooby Snacks (and the rest of the gang in the Mystery Van). The story was intriguing but slightly predictable. This would be a good read for upper elementary and middle school students.

Rachel Liesau, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

FREAK SHOW

St. James, James. New York: Penguin Group, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-52547-799-0.

Genre: Fiction/Coming of Age. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

The fabulous Billy Bloom has just moved to Florida to live with his father who doesn't really have much time for his flamboyant, cross-dressing son. Billy is the new student at the ultra-conservative and ultra-white Dwight D. Eisenhower Academy. Billy immediately falls for the school's Golden Boy, Flip Kelly. But life at his new school is going to be far from peaches and cream for Billy Bloom. This was the best book I've read in a long time. I think I actually read it in about 3 days. James St. James writes with such flair and drama, comedy and tragedy. It is surely a book you won't want to put down. For anyone who is an underdog and just doesn't want to or seem to fit in, you will see some of yourself in our hero/heroine Billy. This book explodes with creativity and fabulous detail. You'll find yourself rooting for Billy and hoping that he will come out on top. James St. James is a wonderful author and I look forward to reading more from him.

Loretta Berrigan, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

GETTING IT

Sanchez, Alex. New York: Simon Pulse, 2006. \$8.99. ISBN: 978-1-41690-898-2.

Genre: Coming of Age/Realism, Humor. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

Hoping to impress a sexy female classmate, fifteen-year-old Carlos secretly hires gay student Sal to give him an image makeover, in exchange for Carlos's help in forming a Gay-Straight

Alliance at their Texas high school. Great story told from a high school boy's perspective. Carlos changes from being shy and mumbly to confident and assertive with help from a friend but more from realizing that he didn't like being the jerk he had always been. This book is perfect for a high school collection and a good read for boys to pick up. Recommended!

Christine Poirier, Librarian, Esperanza Academy Charter High School

THE GOD BOX

Sanchez, Alex. New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-1-41690-899-9. Genre: Coming of Age. Grade Level: 10-12.

Summary

This is a challenging, thought-provoking book about Paul, a religious high school student, who is trying to cope with his homosexual feelings. All his life he has been told that being homosexual is wrong, and every day he prays that these feelings will go away. When an openly gay Christian student moves to town, Paul is forced to deal with his faith and his feelings, ultimately having to take a stand. This book was engaging and easy to read. It realistically follows the inner conflicts of a young man dealing with his spirituality and sexuality. Using quotes from the Bible, thoughts on homosexuality are debated and pored over. This is a great read for someone who is struggling with what they believe and what they feel, or anyone who wants to understand oneself.

Christine Gingrich, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

CHEW ON THIS

Schlosser, Eric and Charles Wilson. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006. \$8.95.

ISBN: 978-0-61859-394-1. Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 6-12.

Summary

This book shows kids everything you don't want to know about fast food. It teaches the history of fast food and the impact the fast food industry has had on society. It talks about the different chemicals in the food, how products are marketed, why kids are targeted, and what junk food is doing to our bodies. The information is very similar to Eric Schlosser's previous book Fast Food Nation, but is written for a younger audience. It puts into the clearest terms everything you didn't want to know about the fast foods we eat. It really makes you think twice about the food that you put into your body. Anyone who eats fast food, especially McDonalds, really needs to read this book. I would greatly recommend this book for all libraries. It is one of those books that are disgusting to read but impossible to put down.

Lisa Maderic, Librarian, Pennridge High School

Summary

This gruesomely honest book about the fat food industry begins with its history and the first Drive-In restaurants, ends with the current child obesity rate and the growing number of young people receiving gastric bypass surgery, and covers everything in between. The authors do an excellent job showing the powerful reach of the industry and include discussions on advertising to children, labor unions, lobbyists, slaughter houses, modern farmers and "natural flavoring." Many personal stories about teenagers affected by the industry, including employees, customers and even and advocate against soda machines in schools, put the facts into perspective. The use of humor and shock value make this book an entertaining and extremely informative read that will easily hold the interest of young adults. Simple language is used to explain complex concepts. Parts of the work could be paired with curriculum from many

subjects, including history, government, economics, health/nutrition and biology. Highly recommended.

Amber Ziemba, Saucon Valley High School Librarian

THE MONSTER WHO DID MY MATH

Schnitzlein, Danny. New York, Peachtree Publishers, 2007.

ISBN: 978-1-56145-420-4. Genre: Easy Fiction. Grade Level: Preschool-3.

Students with a dislike of math will relate to the young boy who goes so far as hiring a monster to his homework. This solution works until the teacher asks him to come to the board to explain a problem. After being exposed, the boy's determination to get out of the contract he made with the monster proves to the young boy that he can do the math. A great book to use with students who think they can't do math.

Eileen Kern, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

A NON-BLONDE CHEERLEADER IN LOVE

Scott, Kieran. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2007. \$16.99

ISBN: 978-0-39924-494-0. Genre: Realistic Fiction. Grade Level: 6-9.

Summary

Annisa Gobrowski lived all her life in New Jersey, but now her family up and decides to move to Florida. While living there she decides that she wants to join the cheerleading squad and makes it, making her the only non-blonde cheerleader on the whole squad. Things are going great until Coach Holmes decides that it is time to put boys on the squad too. Annisa likes the idea until her boyfriend, Daniel Healy, decides he wants to try out. Will having boys on the squad make it better or worse? This book is excellent for girls to read. It is funny and it could really happen. It really shows you what the life of a cheerleader is like, and what happens when you decide to mess with routine. It is also a good book to show that you can do anything, even if you are different from everyone else.

Heather Grossmann, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

RUSSELL'S CHRISTMAS MAGIC

Scotton, Rob. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007. \$17.89.

ISBN: 978-0-06059-855-6. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-2.

Summary

On Christmas Eve Santa crashes into Firefly Wood. Realizing that his sleigh is broken Santa tells Russell that "Christmas must be cancelled." Thinking quickly Russell figures out an alternate method for Santa to deliver all of the gifts with Russell's help, of course.

Russell the sheep is back and he brings more fun and sweetness with him. The story is engrossing and the pictures are hysterical. This book is sure to delight all of the children who read it or hear it and it's tremendous fun for adult readers, too. My students were particularly excited to try and find Russell's friend, the frog, in each picture.

Sharon Leitner-Cohen, Library Media Specialist, The Hillside School

THE LONELY MOOSE

Segal, John. New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2007. \$15.99.

ISBN: 978-1-32410-173-4. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: PreK-2.

Summary

Moose lived alone in the forest without any friends until one day he rescued a bird that could not fly. Even though they were so different from one another, Moose protected the bird from enemies and they spent all their time together enjoying the forest. One day a forest fire broke out and miraculously, the bird was able to fly to safety. Moose was also safe, but when the smoke cleared, the bird was nowhere to be found. The seasons passed until spring arrived again and to Moose's surprise, the bird returned to the forest bringing with her MANY bird friends. The final page shows all the birds latched onto the moose's antlers and carrying him up into the sky reminding us that "you can never have too many friends." This is a delightful little book! John Segal has illustrated for many other authors and has created drawings for the Wall Street Journal, New York Times and other publications but this is his first children's book for this publisher. The theme of friendship has certainly been told before but the humorous text and the soft watercolor illustrations allow us to enjoy the lesson once again. Bring this moose to your library!

*Alexis Cuff, Library Media Specialist, Durham Nockamixon Elementary/
Springfield Elementary Schools, Palisades School District*

SCANDALOSA: A HONEY BLONDE CHICA NOVEL

Serros, Michele. New York: Simon Pulse, 2007. \$15.99. ISBN: 978-1-41691-593-5.

Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

Evie must volunteer at a horse ranch this school year. Why? She let her grades fall, and she has to get them back up so her parents will let her have her sixteenth birthday party. As Evie deals with the drama of boyfriends, best friends, family, school, and now horses, she begins to discover some things about herself and life in general. Readers will enjoy the excitement and humor of this story. The accurate use of native languages in the book makes it an excellent piece of multicultural literature. The plot is very fast paced, with very few slow spots. This book also presents a good lesson on growing up.

Jessica Robinson, Student, Kutztown University

WINTER SONG: A POEM BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Shakespeare, William. Honesdale, PA: Wordsong, 2006. \$15.95.

ISBN: 978-1-59078-275-0. Genre: Poetry/Picture Book. Grade Level: K-5.

Summary

An illustrated version of William Shakespeare's poem, "Winter Song".

This book is word for word to Shakespeare's "Winter Song". The illustrations are very colorful and complement the words and help younger readers understand what is happening in the lines. It is a great introduction to Shakespeare and even has a glossary in the back. This would be a great read aloud and would fit into classroom curriculum as well as in the library. The woman who illustrated this book is well known and has illustrated many other children's books such as "The Seventh Day". The woman who did the introduction has also written and illustrated many other children's books and is also the winner of a Caldecott Medal for "The Glorious Flight: Across the Channel with Louis Bleriot."

Amanda Kohr, Student, Kutztown University

FAMILY LULLABY

Shapiro, Jody Fickes. New York: Greenwillow Books, 2007.

\$17.89. ISBN: 978-0-06051-483-9. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool

Summary

Grandma, Grandpa, Auntie, Uncle, Brother, Sister, Mommy and Daddy show their love for the new baby. Even puppy and kitty join in. Young children will enjoy the repetition of We all love Baby. Yes, we do. They will also be able to relate to the ways that each person shows love to the baby. Simple illustrations accompany the brief text.

Carol Ann Gearhart, Professor Emerita, Kutztown University

BLACK-EYED SUZIE

Shaw, Susan. Asheville: Front Street, 2002. \$9.95. ISBN: 1-59078-533-9. Genre: Fiction.

Grade Level: 8-12.

Summary

Every teenager goes through a phase in order to express their individuality. At first Suzie's parents think her out of character behavior is just that, a phase. Suzie begins to sit on one chair all the time; she refuses to talk to anyone, and cries for no apparent reason. One day her uncle comes over and expresses true concern over her well-being. She is admitted to a mental hospital. While at the hospital the true reason for her odd behavior emerges. The depth of Suzie's mental illness slowly shows itself throughout the book. It conveys a strong message to teens that help is out there. This book would have been a great vehicle to discuss mental illness with teens if it included information about seeking help or mental health, but it doesn't have any resources once the reader is finished.

Allison Rheinhardt, Special Education Teacher, Leighton High School

PAUL BUNYAN: TWENTY-ONE TALES OF THE LEGENDARY LOGGER

Shepard, Esther. New York: Harcourt, 2006. \$5.95. ISBN: 978-0-15205-857-9.

Genre: Folklore. Grade Level: 3-6.

Summary

This will make an excellent introduction to American folklore. The stories are entertaining and the accompanying pictures are fitting for each of the tales. This book would be excellent for a read aloud exercise and could be used to springboard into other lessons involving the canon of folklore. This was a very fun book.

Willow Hozella, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

I'M THE BIGGEST THING IN THE OCEAN

Sherry, Kevin. New York: Dial Books For Young Readers, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 978-0-80373-192-9. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-2.

Summary

A giant squid brags that it is the biggest thing in the ocean—until it is eaten by a whale. This book will definitely get a few laughs from any child who picks it up and it comes with fun bathroom clings. It also has bright colors and interesting illustrations.

Erica Lambert, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

KEEPING CORNER

Sheth, Kashmira. New York: Hyperion, 2007. \$ 15.99. ISBN 078683859-0.

Genre: Historical Fiction. Grade level: 7-12

Summary

In 1918, twelve-year-old Leela lives in India. Her marriage was arranged by age 2, and she will soon move into the home of her husband. Right before this happens, her husband dies, and she is forced into “keeping corner.” This mourning period does not allow her to leave the house for an entire year. The formerly light-hearted girl must deal with this difficult time...but how will she react? This book highlights several interesting topics, many of which are unusual for young adult literature. It considers traditions and the way the different genders are treated. The story also contains historical information about Gandhi and his non-violent movement. So the story will provide good cultural and historical knowledge for students. A glossary of Indian terms is included at the end of the book. The way the main character develops and matures through the story will also provide inspiration to students.

Laura Van Cott, Library Science student, Kutztown University

MY DADIMA WEARS A SARI

Sheth, Kashmira. Atlanta, GA: Peachtree Publishers, 2007. \$16.95. ISBN: 978-1-56145-392-4. Genre: Picture Book. Grade level 3-5.

Summary

Yoshiko Jaeggi captured the colors of textures of the traditional sari as described in Kashmira Sheth’s intergenerational tale of tradition and culture. The pages are bordered by the patterns of the materials and used to help the grandmother tell the story of her three favorite sari’s. At the end of the book there is a note from the author and photographs of how to wrap a sari. I enjoyed the story and loved the illustrations.

Stephanie Towles, Librarian, Glenside Elementary, Reading School District

EVERLOST

Shusterman, Neal. New York: Simon Pulse, 2006. \$6.99. ISBN: 978-0-68987-238-9.

Genre: Science Fiction. Grade Level: 8-12.

Summary

Nick and Allie are involved in a car accident and don’t seem to be alive anymore, but they also don’t seem to be dead either. They seem to be trapped in between worlds, in a place called Everlost, a place where people quickly forget who they are and what their purpose is. There is constant danger that lurks in Everlost with the threat of falling down into the center of the Earth and monsters such as the McGill. There are unique twists and turns throughout the book especially at the end, but don’t worry I won’t ruin your fun. This is an interesting read with a storyline that has a unique set of twists and turns. The characterization of this book strikes empathy for the main characters as they continue their journey through Everlost. The reader will be sure that they know who the bad guy and who the good guy is in the story or do they? The ending is tricky and provides a bit of a surprise.

Kent Muench, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

UNWIND

Shusterman, Neal, New York: Shuster Books, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 987-1-41691-204-0. Genre: Science Fiction. Grade Level: 8-12.

Summary

This book is about a future society that uses teenagers to donate body parts even though it is not willfully. The story unfolds the trials of a few children called Unwinds and their journey to escape the tragic end to their lives as a whole person. This book would be a great modern book to have students read with classics like 1984 and Brave New World. There are real articles throughout the book that lead the reader to think that it is possible for a society like this one to exist. It is a wonderful tale of heroics from a perspective that teenagers can understand.

Amanda Powell, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THIS IS JUST TO SAY

Sidman, Joyce. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2007. \$16.00.

ISBN: 978-0-61861-680-0. Genre: Poetry. Grade Level: 1-6.

Summary

This book contains poems about apologies and forgiveness. Part One are the apologies written by Mrs. Mertz's sixth grade class. Part Two are the responses. The title of the book comes from a poem by William Carlos Williams. This could be used as a stimulus for students to write poetry.

Carol Gearhart, Professor Emerita, Kutztown University

PENGUINS

Simon, Seymour. New York: Smithsonian, 2007. \$17.89. ISBN: 0-06028-396-3.

Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 2-5.

Summary

This book tells about how penguins survive in Antarctica. The text includes information on breeding patterns, predators, different types of penguins, their physical abilities, what they eat, how they recognize each other, and where they live. There are pictures that illustrate the text for every pair of pages. The text in this book is very educational but very hard to read through. The pictures are excellent quality but there is one that shows a penguin and a leopard seal that might be upsetting to some young readers. This would not be my first choice of books if I was looking for information on penguins.

Alexis Leitner-Cohen, 7th Grade Student, Eyer Middle School, East Penn School District

MAKE ME OVER: ELEVEN STORIES OF TRANSFORMATION

Singer, Marilyn. New York: Dutton Children's Book, 2005. \$17.99.

ISBN: 0-52547-480-3. Genre: Short Stories/Fiction. Grade Level: 6-12.

Summary

These short stories by notable YA authors are not the typical Hollywood makeover magic to entrance and captivate the girl, or boy, next door. There are a few Cinderella-type stories, but

just enough to keep teens turning the pages. Mostly, though, the selections reflect the vulnerability of teen relationships with family, friends, and strangers.

This is a great book which includes 11 original short stories about teens transforming within to find their true selves. I loved how positive all the stories were and how easily teens could relate to them all in their own way. Although boys may be turned off by the cover, it truly is a book which both boys and girls can find inspiration in.

Rachel Copenhaver, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

GIVING UP THE GHOST

Sinykin, Sheri. Atlanta: Peachtree, 2007. \$15.95. ISBN: 978-1-56145-423-5.

Genre: Mystery. Grade Level: 6-8.

Summary

Thirteen-year-old Davia is about to spend the summer on a spooky Louisiana plantation with her parents and her dying great-aunt Mari. She brings her fear of new places, her fear of her mother's cancer returning, and her fear of death, itself, with her. The reader is privy to Davia's thoughts and feelings as she acclimates herself to her new surroundings and relates to her Aunt Mari. She also encounters a restless spirit of a girl named Emilie. While attempting to soothe the spirit and appease her great-aunt, Davia resolves many of her own emotional concerns. This book was very moving and I could really identify with the feelings of the main character, Davia. The author truly captured the voice of a thirteen-year-old who has almost lost her mother to cancer and now faces the death of her great-aunt. I thought the addition of the spirit, Emilie, was an effective venue for having Davia face her fears and uncover truths and strengths within her self. I feel that this book could have potential value as a tool for bibliotherapy. The title could lead to an interesting discussion focusing on the author's intended meaning or meanings.

Kelly DeAntonis, Librarian, Parkland School District

THE IMPOSSIBLE PATRIOTISM PROJECT

Skeers, Linda. New York, NY: Dial Books for Young Readers, 2007. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-0-8037-3138-7. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-2.

Summary

Caleb's class is making projects that symbolize patriotism to display at Parents' Night. But Caleb can't think of a single way to show what patriotism means to him. What's more, his dad can't even come to Parents' Night because he is far away, serving as a soldier. That night, when Caleb really starts thinking about his dad and what he is doing for the country, inspiration finally strikes! Touching, wonderful, and based on a true story which is just as moving (see back inside flap). This book shows through text and art the various icons we associate with freedom along with the people who work to keep us free, specifically the men and women in our armed forces. Skeers and Hoyt have done a fabulous job conveying the idea of being a patriot to young children. I loved it!

Tara Howell, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

HORSERADISH: BITTER TRUTHS YOU CAN'T AVOID

Snicket, Lemony. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007. \$12.99.

ISBN: 978-0-06124-006-5. Genre: Humor. Grade Level: 4-8.

Summary

This book contains a collection of advice and wisdom on topics ranging from home to school to travel and other facets of life which we all face. Mr. Snicket has something smart to say about almost everything it seems. As a fan of *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, I really enjoyed this book. The same style and humor used in those books is found in this one as well. The only things missing are the Baudelaire children.

Anna Berry, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

SOMEDAY

Spinelli, Eileen. New York, NY: Dial Books for Young Readers, 2007. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-

0-8037-2941-4. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-2

Summary

A young girl dreams of all the things she might do someday: become a great artist, swim with a dolphin, dig for dinosaur bones, be an animal scientist and many more. "Someday" is perfect for any kindergartner. It's difficult to find books for girls that focus on the mind and talent of a young girl. The main character, who is cute in a non-princess kind of way, dreams big and yet realistically. Her aspirations are sentimental and ring true to any five year old girl.

Tara Howell, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

THE LONGEST CHRISTMAS LIST EVER

Spiridellis, Gregg and Evan Spiridellis. New York: JibJab Media Inc., 2007. \$15.99

ISBN: 978-1-42310-193-2 Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: 1-3.

Summary

This story is about a young boy who wakes up one morning for Christmas and realizes he didn't get what he really wanted. So right then and there he decides to start a list for Christmas next year. Overall, this book is about a young boy's adventures of achieving and getting everything he wants for Christmas. I really enjoyed reading the book because the expressions on the characters' faces are priceless and really can relate to what kids see on Christmas morning. I think this book would be fun for the whole family.

Jennifer Miller, Library Science/Elementary Education, Kutztown University

THE CHOCOLATE CAT

Stainton, Sue. New York: HarperCollins, 2007. \$17.89. ISBN: 978-0-06057-246-4.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-2.

Summary

A grumpy old chocolate maker displays his candies in his dusty old shop where he lives alone with Cat. No one was buying the chocolates until one day the chocolate maker made something different, chocolate mice with crunchy pink-sugar tails. Cat carried the tasty rodents to the neighboring stores and thus began a whole new business of gourmet chocolate delights, fruits

covered with chocolate, the baker's cakes dipped in chocolate, candy flowers for the flower shop, molds from the hardware store used in chocolate making and finally a smile on the face of the chocolatier. Luscious pictures accompany the text. Anyone who likes chocolate or cats will love this book. Includes a brief history of chocolate.

Carol Ann Gearhart, Professor Emerita, Kutztown University

MINE

Stein, Mathilde. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, 2007. \$16.95.

ISBN: 978-1-59078-506-5. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool -3.

Summary

One evening at bedtime, Charlotte finds a tiny ghost in her bed. She quickly discovers that the ghost does not know how to share. Despite his chorus of "Mine!" that rings throughout the house, he and Charlotte become fast friends. They spend every moment of the next day with each other, making pancakes, playing games, and learning along the way that it is more fun to share. I really liked the ghost. He was cute and wore a sock on his head. The girl named Charlotte taught him how to share and play games together nicely because in the beginning he always said "Mine" and did not want to share.

Taydem Copenhaver, Age 6, Kindergarten, Whitfield Elementary

ROTTEN SCHOOL; BATTLE OF THE DUMB DIDDYS

Stine, R. L. New York: HarperCollins Children's Books, 2007. \$14.89.

ISBN: 978-0-06078-834-6. Genre: Humor. Grade Level: 3-7.

Summary

Bernie Bridges is back and he's up to no good. He's conning every kid at Rotten School for extra money so that they can save Rotten School from being shut down. Bernie has been hired to be the director of the school's first annual pageant and everything turns to out of control chaos. There are some funny parts in the book but on the whole it was just okay. I like R.L. Stine's Goosebump's books better. Humor doesn't seem to be his style.

Alexis Leitner-Cohen, 7th Grade Student, Eyer Middle School, East Penn School District

ROTTEN SCHOOL; GOT CAKE?

Stine, R. L. New York: HarperCollins Children's Books, 2007. \$14.89.

ISBN: 978-0-06123-270-1. Genre: Humor. Grade Level: 3-7.

Summary

Bernie Bridges goes to Rotten School and firmly believes that he is the most popular boy there. Bernie wants to win the Most Popular Rotten Egg title in the school yearbook. Sadly, for Bernie the other students do not share his opinion of his popularity. Throughout this funny tale Bernie goes to almost any extreme to get his fellow students to realize how popular he is and how much they really like him. Young readers will enjoy descriptions of the funny and strange school that Bernie goes to including such interesting places as Pooper's Pond and Headmaster Upchuck's house. The short chapters are easy to read, the black and white illustrations are delightfully bizarre, and the high interest level will make it a must read for many elementary school students. This series is a big break from R.L. Stine's "Goosebumps" series.

Sharon Leitner-Cohen, Library Media Specialist, The Hillside School

BRAIN QUEST AMERICA

Strong, Lynn St. Clair and Joni Miller. New York, NY: Workman Publishing Co. 2005. \$10.95. ISBN: 0-76113-775-0. Genre: American History. Grade Level: 4-6.

Summary

A kite-flier from Philadelphia. A bus rider from Montgomery. A statue from France. And which came first: elevator or escalator? Peanut butter or Jelly? Post-it or Band-Aid? Laws, literature, events and inventions, it's the Brain Quest that asks: How well do you know the U.S.A.? Wonderful game for all ages for both the library and at home! Includes a variety of easy to play games with over 850 questions and answers in an easy-to-keep-together deck. This would be a wonderful tool to include in a professional collection for teachers to check out and include a fun way to get students to learn!

Rachel Copenhaver, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE ARRIVAL

Tan, Shaun. New York: Arthur A. Levine Books, 2006. \$19.99.

ISBN: 978-0-43989-529-3. Genre: Graphic. Grade Level: 4-8.

Summary A book with no words but a powerful story about arriving in a new land and trying to find your way around when the world seems so confusing.

I loved the artwork so much in this book. The style reminded me a lot of the movie, *Mirrormask*, as did many of the creatures. But overall this story was amazing. It follows the story of one man leaving his home and family, and immigrating to a new and "better" place. The man can't read the signs, just as we can't because the symbols are of no alphabet that we know. Through the man's journeys, we meet and learn about several people's own journeys and struggles that they have gone through. And although there are no words in this book, there is such a triumphant story to go with it. As a warning, there are some graphic images dealing with war and death, so if a student is sensitive towards that be careful.

Rachel Liesau, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE SHADOWMANCER RETURNS: THE CURSE OF SALAMANDER STREET

Taylor, G.P. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2006. \$17.99.

ISBN: 978-1-59979-084-8. Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 4-8.

Summary

Kate and Thomas flee to London with the smuggler Jacob Crane, to escape the evil vicar Obadiah Demurral who is trying to conquer Heaven. Their friend Raphah, last seen falling overboard their ship, has made it to shore in the belly of a whale. He is taking a land route to the capital in the company of Demurral's former servant Beadle. Eventually Kate and Thomas are kidnapped by a sinister alchemist who uses supernatural means to control his child-labor force. With the children captured, their mission seems hopeless in this struggle of good versus evil. This book was really exciting. Although the story wasn't that good I was drawn into it right away. The plot was layered and complex and I really liked reading about the interwoven stories, even if sometimes they seemed hokey and contrived.

Katie Hanchuruck, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

FAERIES OF DREAMDARK: BLACKBRINGER

Taylor, Laini. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2007. \$17.99.

ISBN: 978-0-39924-630-2. Genre: Fantasy/Adventure. Grade Level: 9-11.

Summary

Magpie Windwitch, faerie, devil hunter and granddaughter of the West Wind, must defeat an ancient evil, the Blackbringer, who has escaped from his bottle and threatens to unmake all of creation. This book was simply amazing and I was enthralled the entire time. The grammar usage was a bit hard to follow at times, but the context clues were easy enough to get.

Caitlin Gilroy, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

A CHILD'S GUIDED TO COMMON HOUSEHOLD MONSTERS

Thach, James Otis. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, 2007. \$. ISBN: 978-1-932425-58-1. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-2.

Summary

This is a children's picture book about the different kinds of monsters that like to live in your home. It starts out a little scary by admitting that all those noises you hear in your house at night really are made by monsters, but then it becomes humorous. It tells the story in rhyme which adds another bit of fun. I loved this book! I loved how it rhymed and made the book fun when it seemed like it was going to be scary. The illustrations are absolutely wonderful. I spent a long time just looking at the pictures because they were so detailed and colorful. I think any child would love reading this story just as much as I did!

Heather Werner, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

DRAGON'S EGG

Thomson, Sarah L. : , . \$. ISBN:

. Genre: Fantasy. Grade Level: 4-7.

Summary

This book is about a young girl, Mella, whose parents run an inn that is famous for using dragon eggs for breakfast. Mella is a dragon keeper, which means that she has a special way of communicating and caring for the dragons without them becoming scared of her. However, these are just your common dragon and nobody believes there are any real fire-breathing dragons left, but Mella stumbles upon a real dragon and its egg. The trust between humans and dragons has been broken but now it is Mella's turn to show the dragons that humans can be honorable and trusted by taking the dying dragon's egg back to the dragon's hatching grounds. Mella, and a boy visiting her parent's inn, go on the journey to bring the egg back while running into several challenges along the way. This book is great for young readers who are developing a taste for fantasy books. This book isn't so much a story about dragons, but about a young girl and boy on their quest to leave home and carry out a task to keep their honor. It was a very predictable story with fairly flat characters and no extensive vocabulary, but that made it suitable for younger readers.

Heather Werner, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

HAIR FOR MAMA

Tinkham, Kelly. China: Dial Books for Young Readers, 2007. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-0-80837-295-1. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: 2 -5.

Summary

Marcus is worried that his mother won't participate in their annual family portrait this year because she has lost her hair during her chemotherapy treatments. Marcus contrives several plans, including taking the trimmings from his visit to the barbershop, to provide his mother with artificial hair but none succeed. Marcus and his family learn that nothing, not even hair, is more important than having family members who love you. This story is inspired by Tinkham's real life bout with cancer and how it affected her son. Although the subject matter is sensitive, it is handled in a caring and inspiring way. The illustrations by Amy June Bates warmly depict this African American family's turmoil in a dignified and attractive manner. I read this to my second grade classes; the students related well to the story and the discussions were uncharacteristically deep and thoughtful.

Stephanie Towles, Elementary Librarian, Reading School District

HURRICANE FORCE: IN THE PATH OF AMERICA'S DEADLIEST STORMS

Treaster, Joseph B. Boston: Kingfisher, 2007. \$16.95 ISBN: 978-0-75346-086-3. Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 4-8.

Summary

As a reporter for the New York Times, Joseph Treaster met Hurricane Katrina up close and personal in New Orleans. This book focuses on both the human and scientific sides of that tragedy, as well as investigating the history of deadly hurricanes in America—from Galveston in 1900 to New Orleans in 2005. Among other topics, Treaster explores the formation of hurricanes, scientific methods used to track and predict, and the impact of such storms on the coastal areas they strike. Drawing on his personal experiences as well as many other books and NY Times articles listed in the source notes, Treaster has woven together a riveting drama of the formation of a hurricane as well as its devastating impact on the lives of people in its path. The color photographs and diagrams illustrate the science behind the storm as well as bring home the panic and destruction such storms often cause. The book also discusses the valuable lessons to be learned in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, and includes sidebars discussing special topics as well as extensive source notes and a timeline.

Katrina Bender, Librarian, Providence Elementary School

THE GIRL'S LIKE SPAGHETTI: WHY YOU CAN'T MANAGE WITHOUT APOSTROPHES

Truss, Lynn. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2007. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-0-39924-706-4. Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 4-8.

Summary

The Girl's Like Spaghetti is a visual guide to the use of the apostrophe. Each page features a phrase, such as, "The dogs like my dad," and an illustration of the phrase's meaning, on this page, the dad with a group of dogs surrounding him. The following page has the same phrase, but with an apostrophe moved or added. So the phrase becomes, "The dog's like my dad," and in this illustration, the dog and the dad are wearing matching sweaters. Maybe the fact that this book made me laugh shows me up as a grammar geek. This type of punctuation humor always makes me giggle. Especially funny were the phrases, "These smelly things are my

brother's/These smelly things are my brothers," and, "Look, it's behind/Look, its behind." The illustrations are cute drawings that make each phrase's meaning clear and humorous. Although I snorted my way through the pages, the 5th grade class with whom I shared the book was not buying it. Their general reaction was, "You can't fool us. This might be funny, but it's still grammar."

Ruth Gavin, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

SITTING BULL REMEMBERS

Turner, Ann. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007. \$17.89.

ISBN: 978-0-06051-400-6. Genre: Historical Fiction. Grade Level: 1-5.

Summary

This is a historically accurate picture book about a great warrior of the Hunkpapa band of the Sioux Nation, Sitting Bull. The book explains how he got his name, as well as information about how his people lost their land, their battle against Custer's army, and their retreat to Canada. Wendell Minor's illustrations truly help tell the story written by Ann Turner. This book is well-researched and includes two pages of Historical Notes at the end of the book. That information would be wonderful to share with older students of American history. This book would be a good resource to add to a unit on Native Americans and Westward Expansion.

Melissa DeLong, Teacher, Kutztown Elementary School

A YOUNG SHEPHERD

Urbigkit, Cat. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, 2006. \$15.95. ISBN: 1-59078-364-6

Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: K-5.

Summary

Cass lives with his parents on their Wyoming sheep ranch, Paradise Sheep Company. At 12 years old, Cass has had several years of experience helping out on the ranch. This photo-essay follows Cass as he starts his very own flock of sheep by buying orphan lambs from a friend. This is an introductory text which covers the basic information necessary to becoming a shepherd. Many young animal-lovers will delight in the photos of the lambs in this book, but its primary audience seems to be 4-H members. They will get the most from this book. The last page of information about different breeds of sheep in the US

Anna Berry, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

VAMPYRE: THE TERRIFYING LOST JOURNAL OF DR. CORNELIUS VAN HELSING

Van Helsing, Dr. Cornelius and Gustav de Wolff. New York: HarperCollins, 2007.

\$19.99. ISBN: 978-0-06124-780-4. Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 5-8.

Summary

This book is made up of actual entries by Dr. van Helsing and his manservant, Gustav de Wolff. The book has all different kinds of print, along with facts and pictures on every page. There are also many interactive things in the book, such as a replica of French money, pop-ups, mini books, newspaper clippings, and things to touch. The little comments and facts make the book fascinating. The actual story is also very interesting, since it's a little spooky, and there's not a solid ending. A captivating read for many ages.

Christine Gingrich, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

FARLEY FOUND IT

Van Patter, Bruce. Honesdale, PA. 2006. \$ 16.95. ISBN: 978-1-59078-351-1.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-2.

Summary

Farley is a sheep who lives in a meadow filled with dandelions. He is very happy with his home except at nighttime. Farley is afraid of the dark. One night when Edna, the dog, leaves her doghouse for dinner, Farley sneaks into her doghouse and falls into a deep, cozy sleep no longer afraid. This doesn't sit well with Edna. She has a terrible night's sleep on top of her doghouse. Each day when Farley returns to the meadow, Edna moves her doghouse to another location hoping to avoid the problem of not having a place to sleep because of Farley. Over and over, Farley is able to find the doghouse; in the cow's meadow, in the hay loft, under the henhouse, and even in the great oak tree. Each time Edna finds her doghouse occupied by Farley with the surrounding animals sound asleep all around. Edna finally can't take anymore. She decides to solve the problem by building another doghouse for herself and letting Farley have her old one. There is just one twist at the end. When Edna thinks everyone is happy, you see the rest of the flock of sheep peeking around the corner at the comfy houses leaving you thinking that Edna may not have completely solved the problem. This book is filled with vivid illustrations that are enjoyable to look at and tell the story without even looking at the text. The humorous text and illustrations help lead the reader to make many predictions of what's to come throughout the entire story. The reader also may take simple pleasure in the reactions of the other animals in the book as they settle comfortably around to the doghouse in each of the locations Edna chooses. I would highly recommend this book for prediction and problem solving discussions. This book also lends itself very well to writing an extension of the story once we see the flock of sheep eyeing up the comfy houses both Edna and Farley occupy in the end.

Joanne Butler, Second Grade Teacher, Springfield Elementary

LADYBUG, LADYBUG AND OTHER FAVORITE POEMS

Various Authors. Peru, IL: Carus Publishing, 2006. \$17.95.

ISBN: 978-0-81267-936-6. Genre: Poetry. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

This book is a collection of 21 poems taken from the literary magazine Ladybug. The poems are all written by various authors and include beautiful illustrations by various illustrators. Each author is listed at the end of the poem, but illustrators are listed on the verso next to the name of the poem. This simple book of poems is delightful. The poems are short, the words are big and fun, and the illustrations match the poetry. This would be a great addition to any elementary school library poetry section. In A Doggie Song, Mom is at the piano, the dog is singing on top of the piano, and the cat is sitting nearby holding his ears. Delightful! The poem: "Mommy plays the piano, Fido sings along. It isn't really singing. He doesn't know the song." Shirley Anderson

Pat Koontz, Librarian, Walton Farm Elementary, North Penn School District

THE GETAWAY

Vere, Ed. New York: S&S/McElderry, 2006. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-1-41694-789-9.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-3.

Summary

The “notorious cheese thief Fingers McGraw,” drawn as a pale-pink rat in a bandit mask, absconds with his favorite dairy product in this mixed-media spoof of the hardboiled genre. His nemesis is “ace lawman detective Jumbo Wayne Jr.,” a stern elephant in a bobby's blue-black gear (this book originated in the U.K.), and Fingers enlists readers' help in avoiding capture. Expository captions, printed in an uneven typewriter font, chart the crime Dagnet-style. This fun thriller will keep students on the edge of their seats. Will Fingers McGraw get away? It seems that he is almost caught every turn he makes! The illustrations in this book are fantastic, and they tell half of the story. However, to fully appreciate it, you may want older elementary students to read it because the writing could become hard to follow.

Erica Lambert, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

SIGHT

Vrettos, Adrienne Maria. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007. \$16.99.

ISBN: 1-41690-657-6. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 7-10.

Summary

Sixteen year old Dylan Driscoll sees dead people! She has nightmares of children who die, and then she helps detectives find the bodies. It all began when she was five. She had a nightmare about a child's murder. The next day a student, Clarence, was missing. Clarence's murderer was coined the Drifter, and is believed to be back in town. This is Dylan's chance to find the Drifter and bring him to justice. Tap into your sixth sense with this book. It's definitely one that will give you chills. The main character, Dylan, insists on singing a catchy song about the town murderer. This book will keep you guessing who done it.

Allison Rheinhardt, Special Education Teacher, Lehighton High School

SKIN

Vrettos, Adrienne Maria. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006. \$6.99.

ISBN:1-41690-656-8. Genre: Realistic Fiction. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

Donnie wants to be a typical boy who has a typical family, but the truth is his life is far from typical. His parents are divorcing, he alienates his friends by telling lies, and now his beloved sister is anorexic. He feels utterly alone after her death, and tries to fool everyone. He manages to work through the tough stuff with a little help from unexpected friends. This is an excellent book. Donnie goes through so many emotions. Your heart will break for him. This book was named an ALA Best Book for Young Adults and ALA Quick Pick for Reluctant Young Adult Readers. It was also on the New York Public Library Top 100 books for Reading and Sharing.

Allison Rheinhardt, Special Education Teacher, Lehighton High School

HACKING HARVARD

Wasserman, Robin. New York: Simon Pulse, 2007. \$8.99.

ISBN: 978-1-41693-633-6. Genre: Fiction. Grade Level: 9-12.

Summary

Three boys all the same age, which is 17, make a bet to prove that they can get a totally unqualified student past the admissions process of the most highly regarded educational institution in the country: Harvard. Eric, Max, Schwarz and Lex make up the main characters of this story that looks at the college admissions process. They all have a plan, but can they succeed and successfully hack Harvard? The author provides excellent characterization that helps the reader through the storyline. The pace of the story starts out slowly but builds nicely as the characters interact with each other. The story is exciting all the way to the end with humor that will relate well to a young adult audience. This is a fun read for all students.

Kent Muench, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

THE LION HUNTER: THE MARK OF SOLOMON - BOOK ONE

Wein, Elizabeth E. New York: Viking, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-67006-163-1.

Genre: Fantasy/Historical Fiction. Grade Level: 5-10.

Summary

The hero of this book is Telemakos, the half Ethiopian grandson of the legendary King Arthur. He loses his arm to a foolish accident on the day his sister is born and learns through the rest of the book to live with the consequences of that day, as well as the consequences of his actions in a previous book. The themes of this book, learning from your mistakes, overcoming obstacles, and protecting family at all costs are powerful and well crafted. The one thing I would fault this book on is that it sits on the fence between fantasy and historical fiction. Not enough research has been done to give an accurate picture of 6th century Africa, but the author holds onto place names and possible social structures derived from history. I would be much happier to see this story written in a world more wholly of the author's construction.

Rita Cohen, Library Science Graduate Student, Kutztown University

BOOTH'S DAUGHTER

Wemmlinger, Raymond. Honesdale, PA: Calkins Creek, 2007. \$17.95.

ISBN: 978-1-93242-586-4. Genre: Historical Fiction. Grade Level: 11-12.

Summary

In March 1880, at age eighteen, Edwina is experiencing many new things. For the first time she sees her actor father, Edwin Booth in *King Lear*, a play he had considered "too harsh for a young lady." For the first time she finds herself squarely facing the burden carried by her family name for more than a decade: the assassination of President Lincoln by her uncle, John Wilkes Booth. Throughout the story Edwina finds it difficult to escape the family tragedy and to meet the needs of a demanding father while maintaining her independence. This book was very good for those who want to learn more about the nineteenth century. It provides a lesson about how people acted and dressed in the nineteenth century. It also is good for readers who want to learn more about John Wilkes Booth. It is great for readers who want to find out how the assassination of President Lincoln may have affected the family of John Wilkes Booth.

Stephanie Martin, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

PARADE OF SHADOWS

Whelan, Gloria. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007. \$16.89. ISBN 978-0-06-089029-2. Genre: Historical fiction. Grade level: 5-12.

Summary

In 1907, sixteen-year-old Julia lives a mundane life in London. Her father often travels for his work, and her mother died when she was very young. She is finally able to join her father for a mysterious trip to the Middle East. She meets an interesting cast of characters as she travels through the exotic (and possibly dangerous) landscape. This is an exciting and interesting story. The characters are very well developed, especially the spunky main character. Despite the mysterious plot, students will be able to relate to and be inspired by several young characters. This book could also be used in curriculum and related to current events due to its setting in the Middle East. Overall, this is a very unique and well-written book.

Laura Van Cott, Library Science student, Kutztown University

ICECORE: A CARL HOBBS THRILLER

Whyman, Matt. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2007. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-1-41694-907-7. Genre: Suspense Thriller/Adventure. Grade Level: 7-10.

Summary

Carl Hobbes is the main character. He is a 17 year old who is a computer hacker. He looks for challenges and when he goes one step too far, he finds himself being put in a military prison located in the Arctic by the American government. His breach into the Fort Knox security system has resulted in the gold bars stored there finding their way into the hands of terrorists. The story evolves as he tries to escape. He finds himself forced to align with another inmate, who in fact is the reason he ended up in prison. The story keeps you on the edge of your seat. I am sure that this book will be enjoyed by many of my male readers who love suspense thrillers. The girls will also enjoy the book. It is fast-paced and interesting.

Deborah Peters, 7th grade Language Arts Teacher, Northwestern Lehigh MS

KNUFFLE BUNNY TOO: A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

Willems, Mo. New York, Hyperion, 2007. ISBN: 978-1-42310-299-1. Genre: Picture Book. Reading Level: Preschool-2.

Summary

A magnificent sequel to *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale*, preschooler Trixie takes Knuffle Bunny to show and tell. To her surprise, the bunny is not unique because Sonja, a classmate, has one too! An argument occurs between the girls and the teacher confiscates both bunnies until the end of the day. When she returns them, the teacher mistakenly switches the bunnies. The switch is not discovered by the girls until 2:30 am when they demand an exchange to solve the dilemma. Willems again masterfully uses the technique of hand drawn characters against black and white photographs of neighborhood and schools in Brooklyn. He perfectly balances text and illustrations.

Eileen Kern, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

BEAR FEELS SICK

**Wilson, Karma. New York: Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2007. \$16.99.
ISBN: 978-0-68985-985-4. Genre: Animal Story. Grade Level: K-2.**

Summary

Bear Feels Sick is a story about a bear that gets a cold. When his friends badger, hare, mouse, owl, and crow come over to play, they see how sick bear is. They stay with him and nurse him back to health. Eventually, bear feels better and wants to play, but then his friends are sick. So Bear takes care of them the way they took care of him. This book is a great book for many reasons. It has rhyming so it will keep children interested, the illustrations are colorful, and some of the words are arranged in an interesting way. It can be used to teach about germs or the importance of friendship and what friends would do for each other.

Shannon Brunner, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

PRINCESS ME

**Wilson, Karma. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007. \$16.99.
ISBN: 978-1-41694-098-2. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Pre-K-2.**

Summary

This is a true “Princess” story for little girls. With a simple, rhyming text, a young princess looks at all the glories of being a princess. She has wonderful King and Queen parents, she has loyal subjects in her bears, dolls, and toys, and ladies-in-waiting as companions. It is a book that is “all about the princess” in each little girl. I need one of these books in my library for every little girl who comes in and asks for a “princess” book. This book depicts in beautiful words and illustrations how little girls want to feel when they imagine themselves as princesses. When they ask for a “princess” book, they don’t really want a story about Snow White, Cinderella, or Sleeping Beauty. They want this book!!! I recommend this book for any library that has young girls who come in and ask for a “princess” book.

Pat Koontz, Librarian, Walton Farm Elementary, North Penn School District

MAGGIE AND THE MONSTER

**Wintrop, Elizabeth. New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1987. \$16.99.
ISBN: 978-0-39924-711-8. Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-K.**

Summary

Maggie is visited every night by a little monster with big, hairy feet. The monster doesn’t leave when Maggie asks her to, but bumps into things and makes a mess while she seems to be looking for something. Maggie also notices that there is another monster that lives in the broom closet of the house. After being awoken night after night, Maggie asks her mother for advice. Her mother suggests that Maggie ask the little monster what she is looking for. The little monster says she is looking for her mother. Maggie realizes that the monster in the broom closet must be the missing mom. This book caught my eye when I saw it was illustrated by Tomi dePaola. I always enjoy his neat and inviting books and drawings. His pictures enhance this story, as well, creating a loveable, yet silly monster. This book stands the test of time and would add to the early primary collection.

*Alexis Cuff, Library Media Specialist, Durham Nockamixon Elementary/
Springfield Elementary Schools, Palisades School District*

HOW COME? PLANET EARTH

**Wollard, Kathy. New York, NY: Workman Publishing, Inc., 1999. \$12.95.
ISBN: 978-0-76111-239-6. Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 5-9.**

Summary

This book is a follow-up to the original *How Come?* book. The book is broken up into four main parts: questions about the earth, animals, the body, and how things are made. Each question is answered in just a few pages and includes cartoon pictures and fast facts. There is an index at the end of the book. This is a great book to pick up and put down over and over. All questions were submitted by kids, which makes it appealing to young readers. The questions are common ones that kids are always asking, like why it looks like there is a man on the moon and why dogs bark. Now they can find the answers themselves! It is an easy reader and the pictures are really cute. Even older students would enjoy this book because it is long so it does not look like a children's book and it answers the types of questions that kids of all ages ask. This would be a nice book for a classroom where students could pick it up and look through it little by little.

Michele Ezzell, Graduate Student, Kutztown University

BASEBALL TREASURES

**Wong, Stephen. New York: HarperCollins, 2007. \$17.89
ISBN: 978-0-06114-473-8. Genre: Non-Fiction. Grade Level: 4-8.**

Summary

This book is a celebration of America's national pastime, showcasing over one hundred treasures from baseball history housed at the Smithsonian. Includes photos of game-used bats and jerseys, autographed balls, trophies, baseball cards, letters, and more. Stephen Wong, "a lifelong collector of rare and historically significant artifacts," takes the reader on a private tour of an extensive collection of baseball treasures. Wong does an excellent job of explaining the significance of each artifact, as well as giving an overview of the development of each type of artifact (such as a baseball bat) and explaining what makes a "treasure" more or less valuable. He also provides tips on how to start a collection of baseball memorabilia. A fascinating read for any baseball fan.

Katrina Bender, Librarian, Providence Elementary School, Solanco School District

HOW DO DINOSAURS GO TO SCHOOL

**Yolen, Jane. New York, The Blue Sky Press, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-43902-081-7.
Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool-2.**

Summary

A great first day of school year story which could serve as a starting point for discussing how to act at school. The short rhythm and rhyming text asks questions concerning typical school scenarios. Teague's cast of 10 delightful and frolicking dinosaurs fill up and pop off the page. Young readers will laugh at the antics. This is another winner in the How Do Dinosaurs series.

Eileen Kern, Adjunct Professor, Kutztown University

SHAPE ME A RHYME: NATURE'S FORMS IN POETRY

Yolen, Jane. Honesdale, PA: Wordsong, 2007, \$17.95. ISBN: 978-1-59078-450-1.

Genre: Poetry/Math. Grade Level: K-3

Summary

This poetry book combines photos with shape poems. There are 12 basic forms in this text such as triangle, heart, arch, crescent, etc. Each photograph is written over with other words relevant to that shape. For example, the triangle picture of a toothy alligator is overlaid with additional vocabulary...pyramid, tricorn, deltoid. The visuals in this book are stunning and the poems complement the beautiful photographs. The additional vocabulary sparked my students to come up with more words that could have gone on an individual shape page. The poems are short and quickly read but they make the reader ponder about the beauty of nature and its forms. Jane Yolen is a well known children's author and the photographer is her son, Jason Stemple. This book gets my recommendation for use in math lessons in addition to the study of poetry.

Nancy Krial, Gifted Support Teacher, Palisades Schools

WHEN I FIRST CAME TO THIS LAND

Ziefert, Harriet. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1998. ISBN: 978-0-39923-044-8.

Genre: Picture Book. Grade Level: K-2.

Summary

Simms Taback, illustrator, has once again teamed up with Harriet Ziefert in this version of the traditional song that reflects the life of the immigrant who comes to the land and buys a farm. It's a cumulative tale with the vibrant illustrations for which Taback is known – no cutouts (Swallow a Fly). The only disappointment was that there was no music included. I don't know the tune to this song.

Eloise M. Long, Library Science/Instructional Technology Chair, Kutztown University