

2019

Spring Book Review



Presented by the
Department of Library &
Learning Technologies

Spring Book Review

April 23, 2019

Library & Learning Technologies

Dr. Andrea Harmer, Department Chair

Dr. Michelle Sims, Assistant Professor

Prof. William Jefferson, Associate Professor

Prof. Roseanne Perkins, Instructor

Dr. Cathi Fuhrman, Instructor

Prof. Emily Calaman, Instructor

Prof. Matthew Laubscher, Instructor

Julie Setliff, Department Secretary

Megan Keenan, Graduate Assistant

The Department of Library & Learning Technologies

12 Rohrbach Library
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania
Kutztown, PA 19530
Phone: (610) 683-4300
Fax: (610) 683-1326

E-mail: libsci@kutztown.edu

<http://www.kutztown.edu/libraryscience>

SPRING BOOK REVIEW

Book Lovers- including librarians, professors, teachers, and students convene for the bi-annual Book Review Session, in spring and fall, hosted by the Department of Library & Learning Technologies at Kutztown University. These enjoyable 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!



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Junior Reviews

Title	Author	Page
Code Word Courage	Larson, Kirby	9
Deadly Wish	Thomson, Sarah	10
Making Friends	Gudsnuk, Kristen	8
Mr. Mergler, Beethoven, and Me	Gutnick, David	9
Strays Like Us	Galante, Cecilia	8
When the Crickets Stopped Singing	Donahue, Marilyn Cram	7

Title	Author	Page
A Bunch of Punctuation	Hopkins, Lee Bennett	38
A Grain of Rice	Pittman, Helena Claire	58
About Amphibians: A Guide for Children/ Sobre los anfibios: Una guia para ninos	Sill, Cathryn	63
About Fish: A Guide for Children	Sill, Cathryn	64
About Woodpeckers: A Guide for Children	Sill, Cathryn	63
Abraham Lincoln's Dueling Words	Bowman, Donna Janell	17
All the Stars Denied: An American Story of Deportation and Resistance	McCall, Guadalupe Garcia	52
Am I Yours?	Latimer, Alex	49
Amazing Places	Hopkins, Lee Bennett	38
Arrow of Lightning	Bruchac, Joseph	19
As A Boy	International, Plan	41
Baby Animals Take A Nap	Arnold, Marsha Diane	11
Baby Loves Coding!	Spiro, Ruth	66
Benji, The Bad Day, And Me	Pla, Sally J.	59
Blacklisted!: Hollywood, The Cold War, And The First Amendment	Brimer, Larry Dane	18
Bookjoy, Wordjoy	Mora, Pat	55
Bugs Don't Hug: Six-Legged Parents and Their Kids	Montgomery, Heather L.	54
Clem Hetherington and the Ironwood Race	Breach, Jen and Douglas Holgate	18
Code Word Courage	Larson, Kirby	49

Confusion Is Nothing New	Acampora, Paul	13
Countdown 2979 Days to the Moon	Slade, Suzanne	65
Cyrus Field's Big Dream: The Daring Effort to Lay the First Transatlantic Telegraph Cable	Cowan, Mary Morton	23
Deadly Wish	Thomson, Sarah L.	72
Dog Man	Pilkney, Dav	57
Don't Cosplay With My Heart	Castellucci, Cecil	20
Down By the Cool of the Pool	Mitton, Tony	54
Ebenezer Has A Word For Everything	Rowe, Chelsea H.	62
Emanuel and the Hanukkah Rescue	Hyde, Heidi Smith	40
Fania's Heart	Renaud, Anne	61
Flying Deep: Climb Inside Deep-Sea Submersible ALVIN	Cusolito, Michelle	25
Fruit Bowl	Hoffman, Mark	37
Galapagos Girl/Galapaguena	Arnold, Marsha Diane	12
Give Me Some Truth	Gansworth, Eric	31
Groovy Joe: Dance Party Countdown	Litwin, Eric	51
Hammering for Freedom	Hubbard, Rita Lorraine	39
Hansel & Gretel	Woollvin, Bethan	78
Hey-Ho, To Mars We'll Go!: A Space-Age Version of "The Farmer in the Dell"	Lendroth, Susan	50
Hurricane Child	Callender, Kheryn	19
I Felt A Funeral, In My Brain	Walton, Will	74
I Just Like You	Bloom, Suzanne	16
I Survived: The American Revolution, 1776	Tarshis, Lauren	71
I Survived: The Eruption of Mount St. Helens, 1980	Tarshis, Lauren	71
I Use the Potty	Van Lieshout, Maria	73
In the Rain	Spurr, Elizabeth	68
In the Snow	Spurr, Elizabeth	68
It's Time for School, Stinky Face	McCourt, Lisa	53
Izzy Gizmo	Jones, Pip and Sara Ogilvie	44
Jack B. Ninja	McCanna, Tim	53
Langston Hughes: The Voice of Harlem	Haugen, Brenda	35
Last-But-Not-Least: Lola and A Knot the Size of Texas	Pakkala, Christine	56
Lights, Camera, Disaster	Dionne, Erin	27
Listen To Your Heart	West, Kasie	77
Lovely, Dark and Deep	Chen, Justina	21
Making Friends	Gudsnuk, Kristen	33

Memphis, Martin and the Mountaintop: The Sanitation Strike of 1968	Duncan, Alice Faye	28
Miguel y su valiente caballero: El joven Cervantes suena a don Quijote	Engle, Margarita	30
Misunderstood Shark	Dyckman, Ame	29
Mr. Mergler, Beethoven, and Me	Gutnick, David	34
Mr. Wolf's Class	Steinke, Aron Nels	69
Our Celebracion!	Elya, Susan Middleton	29
Outrage Passion & Uncommon Sense: How Editorial Writers Have Taken On The Great American Issues of the Past 150 Years	Gartner, Michael	32
Pipsqueaks, Slowpokes, and Stinkers: Celebrating Animal Underdogs	Stewart, Melissa	70
Rafi and Rosi: Pirates!	Delacre, Lulu	26
Rafi y Rosi: Piratas!	Delacre, Lulu	27
Real Stories from My Time: The Boston Tea Party	Paley, Rebecca	56
Real Stories From My Time: The Titanic	Berne, Emma Carlson	14
Saffron Ice Cream	Kheiriyen, Rashin	46
Screenshot	Cooner, Donna	22
Smiley's Dream Book	Smith, Jeff	66
So Far Up	Strasser, Susanne	67
So Light, So Heavy	Strasser, Susanne	67
Sparks!	Boothby, Ian and Nina Matsumoto	17
Spooked!: How A Radio Broadcast and The War of the Worlds Sparked the 1938 Invasion of America	Jarrow, Gail	42
Stanley's Numbers	Bee, William	14
Stanley's School	Bee, William	13
Strays Like Us	Galante, Cecilia	30
Tagged	Mullen, Diane C.	55
Ten Cents A Pound	Tran-Davies, Nhung N.	72
Ten Cents A Pound	Tran-Davies, Nhung N.	73
The Biggest Christmas Tree Ever	Kroll, Steven	48
The Bookshop Girl	Bishop, Sylvia	15
The Boxcar Children: The Mystery at the Calgary Stampede	Warner, Gertrude	75
The Elephant Thief	Kerr, Jane	45
The Journey of Little Charlie	Curtis, Christopher Paul	24
The King of Bees	Laminack, Lester L.	48

The Nearly Always Perilous Adventures of Archibald Shrew: Garbage Island	Koehler, Fred	47
The Parker Inheritance	Johnson, Varian	43
The Promise	Zvi, Pnina Bat and Margie Wolfe	78
The Secret Life of the Little Brown Bat	Pringle, Laurence	60
The Secret Science of Magic	Keil, Melissa	44
The Snow Lion	Helmore, Jim and Richard Jones	36
The Spirit of Cattail County	Piontek, Victoria	57
The Three Rules of Everyday Magic	Hill, Amanda Rawson	36
The Wind Called My Name	Sanchez, Mary Louise	62
Tiny Little Rocket	Collingridge, Richard	22
Top Dog: And Other Doggone Delightful Expressions	Davidson, Carli	26
Velocity	Wooding, Chris	77
What Am I?: Passover	Lewis, Anne Margaret	50
Whatshisface	Kormon, Gordon	47
When the Crickets Stopped Singing	Cram-Donahue, Marilyn	24
When We Were Shadows: A Holocaust Remembrance Book for Young Readers	Wees, Janet	76
Zayde Comes to Live	Sinykin, Sheri	64
Zoogie Boogie FEVER!: An Animal Dance Book	Rim, Sujean	61



Junior Reviews



At the 2018 Fall Book Review, we had the pleasure of hosting a few primary level students who selected books for reviewing.

This special section is devoted to their reviews!

WHEN THE CRICKETS STOPPED SINGING

Donahue, Marilyn Cram. *When the Crickets Stopped Singing*. Honesdale: Calkins Creek, 2018. 1629797235. \$18.95. Grades 5-7.

Angie and her friends, Geraldine and Reba Lu, are trying to “love thy neighbors” in the summer of 1939. They make a list of people in their town, Messina, who are a little unlovable in one way or the other and come up with nice ways to help them. They knew this wouldn’t be easy, but they never expected to become targets of a predator, Mr. Jefferson Clement. Jefferson is on their list of people to love, but as they get to know him more, they realize that there is something about him that seems extremely dangerous. One day, as the three friends are camping out, something terrifying happens, leading them to suspect this man. But they are too scared to tell. After this happens, they go to their beloved church picnic, where they see Jefferson Clement trying to sneak a little girl into a tent. Angie doesn’t know what he’s doing, or why. But then, one day at the cliff-side, she hears him threatening someone very close to her. Then something terrible happens, and Angie knows who did it, but she is scared to tell on him, fearing that he might hurt her. This was a very interesting book, and it was scary at some points. I would recommend this book for kids aged 11-14, who enjoy a heart pounding fiction book.

Realistic Fiction

Emma Rohrbaugh, 6th Grade Student, ELANCO School District



STRAYS LIKE US

Galante, Cecilia. *Strays Like Us*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2018. 978-1-338-04300-6. \$16.99. Grades 6+.

It started out as a normal school day for Fred (never Winifred!). But when she is pulled out of class and told that she will be living with a foster mother, or at least until her mom's court hearing, her life goes on a wild ride. Her foster mother, Margery, lives next door to the worst man in the world. When Fred arrives at Margery's house, she locks eyes with the neighbor's scruffy mutt with longing eyes. Toby is in terrible shape, and Fred desperately wants to save him. Fred will only be here for a few weeks, at the most. No matter how hard she tries, this band of misfits keeps getting into her heart - Margery, Toby, even her new friend Delia. When Toby is seriously injured and Fred has to make the most impossible decision of her life at her mom's court hearing, she learns that although the truth of things can be hard, there is always someone to comfort and guide you. If you like reading realistic fiction and/or animal stories, this is the book for you! Some other books by Cecilia Galante are *The World from Up Here*, *Stealing Our Way Home*, and *Be Not Afraid*. If you have read or heard of these books you will never be able to put this down.

Realistic Fiction

Megan Hechler, 6th Grade Student, ELANCO School District

MAKING FRIENDS

Gudsnuk, Kristen. *Making Friends*. New York: Scholastic, 2018. 978-1-33813-921-1. \$24.99. Ages 10-13

Dany knew exactly what to expect in 6th grade. Now that she is in 7th grade, things take a turn for the worse. Her two best friends aren't in any of her classes, and she doesn't really have any other friends. But one day, as they are looking through her late Aunt Elma's belongings, she finds a magical sketchbook. Its' power being that whatever you draw comes to life. When she is still unaware of this, she draws Prince Neptune, a character from her favorite anime show, Solar Sisters. He pops out of the sketchbook and she is thrilled. She realizes she can draw anything she wants, so she draws herself a perfect best friend, Madison Fontaine. Madison is trendy, sassy, and knows how to do makeovers. Dany loves having Madison around. But as their friendship progresses, she realizes that she never designed a backstory, a home, or parents for Madison. And even worse, how will she tell her best friend she isn't technically real? Overall, this was a great book with lots of plot twists and funny moments. For kids interested in science fiction and comics/graphic novels, *Making Friends* would be a great read.

Graphic Novel

Emma Rohrbaugh, 6th Grade Student, ELANCO School District



MR. MERGLER, BEETHOVEN, AND ME

Gutnick, David. Illus. Mathilde Cinq-Mars. *Mr. Mergler, Beethoven, and Me*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2018. 978-1-77260-059-9. \$18.95. Ages 8 -14.

Mr. Mergler, Beethoven, and Me tells a fictional story inspired by a real-life story of a man named Mr. Mergler. The story is about a young girl who meets an older man, Mr. Mergler, who brings her into the world of music and imagination. While on a walk one Saturday morning with her father they meet an older man. The girl and her father soon discover that the older man's name is Mr. Mergler. He is a piano teacher, a subject that the girl just started to learn. Mr. Mergler offers to start giving the girl piano lessons. Her father hesitantly agrees, after careful consideration. Upon seeing the father's hesitation, Mr. Mergler offers free lessons for this girl, as she sees the beauty of music. As the lessons intensify the girl quickly learns from Mr. Mergler and they become great friends. An incredible part of the story is when Mr. Mergler introduces his Beethoven bust. It shows the relationship between Mr. Mergler and the girl, and shows how much they mean to each other. Anyone who has had a role model or meaningful relationship could relate this story. In addition to the story, the book has a facts page of Mr. Mergler and Beethoven at the end.

Picture Book

Lila Albertson, 6th Grade Student, ELANCO School District

CODE WORD COURAGE

Larson, Kirby. *Code Word Courage*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2018. 978-0-545-84075-0. \$16.99. Grade 7+.

Billie is a lonely girl who lives in the countryside during WWII. Her older brother Leo is away at boot camp, training to be a marine. When he returns home, he brings two new friends; one of them is Denny, a Navajo code talker. But the biggest surprise is the stray dog they find, whom they name Bear. The day comes all too soon when Leo and Denny have to ship out. They leave Bear at home with Billie to care for him. Bear soon shows Billie that no matter how lonely you are, there are always good friends nearby to comfort you. When one of Billie's new friends goes missing, she discovers the true meaning of friendship and dedication. If you like reading historical fiction and/or animal stories, this is the book for you! Other great books by Kirby Larson are *Hattie Big Sky*, *Hattie Ever After*, and *Dear America: The Fences Between Us*. If you have read any of those or heard of them, you will fall in love with this amazing book.

Historical Fiction

Megan Hechler, 6th Grade Student, ELANCO School District



DEADLY WISH

Thomson, Sarah. *Deadly Wish*. Honesdale: Boyds Mill Press, 2017. 978-1-62979-777-9. \$17.95. Grades 5-9.

Deadly Wish is the follow up tale to *Deadly Flowers*. *Deadly Wish* is a fictional story following a young girl named Kata. She is on a journey to protect a pearl that houses a demon. Kata has successfully kept the pearl safe for two years until, that is, she finds out that someone is after it. The story opens up to her being a servant to a wealthy man, Master Sakuma, but we later learn she is working for another service; a spy-like service run by a man who is just in it for the money. That is the reason why later in the story she abandoned and sold the pearl to someone she didn't expect, the very person who wanted the pearl. Great parts in the story are where her friends show her trust and honesty through it all. People who enjoy Japanese fantasy and legends would enjoy; otherwise I would not recommend. The text had a lot of plot twists but were solved almost immediately, and the text also moved very slowly and did not have many exciting moments. To understand the text clearer I would recommend reading *Deadly Flowers* first.

Fantasy

Lila Albertson, 6th Grade Student, ELANCO School District

BABY ANIMALS TAKE A NAP

Arnold, Marsha Diane. Illus. Phyllis Tildes. *Baby Animals Take a Nap*. Watertown: Charlesbridge, 2017. 978-1-58089-539-2. \$6.99. PreK-K.

Naptime has never been more educational as young children discover how baby animals sleep. Tildes' illustrations capture the true love of a parent watching over her sleeping child in this creative board book. The vibrant illustrations subtly draw the reader's attention to the eyes of the parent on each page. Even the non-reader will enjoy looking at the illustrations time and time again. The simplistic repetition of taking a nap with each unique animal keeps the interest of young children while enriching their vocabulary with the specific ways that these baby animals nap. Parents will enjoy reading the book as they share many new animals and laugh with their child about the ways that other creatures take naps. This book will become a favorite read as young children branch out their knowledge about some animals that live in the wild. Of course, the ending brings a surprise that no one would expect.

Board Book

Kimberly Andersen, Principal, Eastern Lancaster County School District

GALAPAGOS GIRL/GALAPAGUENA

Arnold, Marsha Diane. Illus. Angela Dominguez. *Galápagos Girl/Galapagueña*. New York: Children's Book Press, 2018. 978-0-89239-413-5. \$18.95. Grades PreK-3.

In this inspiring and playful dual-language book, children will learn about the biodiversity of the Galápagos Islands and the importance of conservation. Inspired by a real person, the book follows Valentina as a young girl growing up on the island of Floreana with her large family who values the beauty and diverse wildlife of the islands. Valentina frolics with finches, scuttles with crabs, and swims with penguins. When she reaches the age where the family sends her off the island for school, she is sad, but she studies biology and eventually returns as a young adult to be a nature guide on her beloved islands. In her new role she helps others see the value of the islands and they in turn want to help to keep them safe. The colorful pictures portray the lively landscape of the islands, with full pages devoted to a single animal at a time. At the end of the book, there is a one-page description about the real Valentina, a few paragraphs describing the islands, and five pages of “fun facts” about each of the animals mentioned in the book with a statement providing readers with further conservation information. In addition to being an entertaining book that highlights the importance of conservation, this book is recommended as a great English/Spanish bridge and for young researches of the Galápagos Islands.

Picture Book

Amber Sams, Librarian, Saucon Valley High School

CONFUSION IS NOTHING NEW

Acampora, Paul. Tara O'Connor. *Confusion is Nothing New*. New York: Scholastic, 2018. 978-1338209990. \$16.99. Grades 3-7.

It's just Ellie Magari and her father and it has been for some time. Ellie never gave the mother who abandoned them any thought at all until her father gives her a box sent from her mother. Ellie is suddenly filled with curiosity, sadness, and resentment for the mother who never cared to stick around and for her father who never wants to talk about her. But despite all these overwhelming emotions, Ellie makes it her mission to find out more about her MIA mom and her mom's band, *CYNDI LAUPER'S NOT DEAD!* As if navigating middle school wasn't hard enough! Ellie must find how to fit her newfound knowledge into her life without breaking her father's heart. Together, they will embark on a father/daughter adventure filled with many trips down memory lane, greasy pizza and perhaps a few too many visits to Sister Stephanie's office. This book has the perfect mix of 80's music, sweet father/daughter bonding, the awkward encounters of middle school and a little bit of mystery.

Coming of Age

Devin Landis, Special/ Elementary Ed Student, Kutztown University

STANLEY'S SCHOOL

Bee, William. *Stanley's School*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2018. 978-1-68263-070-9. \$14.95. Grades 1-2.

Looking for a fun children's book that gets your students ready to start their day? Well, this book is the one! *Stanley's School* is a fictional children's book about a hamster who is a teacher at a school. Stanley starts off each day by ringing his bell to indicate to the children that it is time for school. The book focuses on three students in particular named Little Woo, Sophie, and Benjamin. They go through their daily routine of hanging up their book bags, taking role, reading a story, going to recess, going out to the garden, eating lunch, having nap time, and making art. It encompasses what most schools do in a typical day and follows each of the characters throughout their activities. The reader gets a sense of what Stanley's school is all about. To finish the day off, Stanley rings his bell to indicate to the children that it is time to go home. The illustrations throughout the book are very bright and kid friendly. They also show a lot of items that would be found in an actual elementary classroom including paint, crayons, blocks, a big carpet, books, etc. This particular book would be perfect for children who are just beginning school. It can help prepare them for what to expect while at school. In addition, it can be used to teach about schedules and how they make a classroom function.

Picture Book

Gianna Gallagher, Student, Kutztown University

STANLEY'S NUMBERS

Bee, William. *Stanley's Numbers*. Atlanta: Peachtree, 2017. 978-1-56145-976-6. \$6.95. PreK.

This educational board book is meant to teach simple number and operation skills to young children through a hamster named Stanley and his friends. Stanley is planning for a picnic with his friends and as he gathers different materials for this party, he counts along with the readers the amount of each object he has, from numbers one to ten. This book will help children understand that counting is all around them. The author uses simple sentences that highlight and emphasize the number word; for example, "one". The repetitive nature of the book will help young children understand and catch on to the information presented. For each page, the visual provides a guide for the reader to understand the number of items discussed on each page. This also allows the child to further develop their number correspondence skills when counting the objects on the page and relating them back to the number in the sentence. The pictures are simplistic, yet colorful, inviting and easy to understand for young readers. The board book is a great tool to use to teach young children basic number skills such as counting and number correspondence. Implementing this book into the classroom during math class would be appropriate or during a reading group to reinforce math skills.

Board Book

Erin Crawford, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

REAL STORIES FROM MY TIME: THE TITANIC

Berne, Emma Carlson. Illus. Kelley McMorris. *Real Stories From My Time: The Titanic*. New York: Scholastic, Inc., 2018. 978-1-338-19306-0. \$5.99. Ages 7-10.

Excitement, terror, and sadness bring to life the experience of the Titanic for these younger readers. *The Titanic* is filled with vivid facts about this enormous boat. The reader will learn from the beginnings of how the Titanic was made structurally to the finishing touches of the interior features. Young readers will enjoy learning about children their age who were aboard and the reason why they were making the journey to America. Intermixed with this incredible journey is an American Girl, Samantha's, story about her experiences and feelings when family members are aboard the Titanic. Readers discover the events leading up to the fateful sinking that may cause them to ponder what may have been done differently to prevent this disaster. Emma Carlson Berne includes a glossary and timeline at the end of the book to assist the reader in understanding more of the details and facts. Readers of all ages will become enthralled with this book and find it hard to put down as they strive to discover what happens to these actual passengers aboard the Titanic.

Historical Fiction

Kimberly Andersen, Principal, Eastern Lancaster County School District

THE BOOKSHOP GIRL

Bishop, Sylvia. Illus: Poly Bernatene. *The Bookshop Girl*. Atlanta: Peachtree, 2017. 978-1-68263-045-7. \$16.95. Grades 3-7.

At five years old, Property Jones was abandoned in a small bookstore. Netty (the owner) and her son Michael make her a part of their small family, but they never realize her secret—that she can't read. Six years later, when they are about to lose everything, an opportunity to enter a contest appears in the paper—a chance to win (and become owners of) the popular Montgomery Book Emporium. Their win hurls them into a new fantastic world as they discover the mechanical magic of the new store where books are organized into rooms like the Room of Knights and Castles with its stone walls and tapestries, the Room of Space Adventures with its deep blue walls, twinkling lights, and books that hang from threads and appear to be floating or the Room of Desert Islands where the family chooses to sleep, where there is warm sand, potted palms, and hammocks. The real adventure is holding on to the emporium and keeping it from the hands of Eliot Pink, who claims that he sold Mr. Montgomery an extremely valuable book for which he was never paid. Bishop weaves a quick-paced and enjoyable story that will entertain readers as they learn about the Emporium and watch as Property's observation and thinking skills save the day despite the fact that she can't read. For a short chapter book, the characters are fairly developed and relatable, although it is odd that nobody discovers Property's secret other than Eliot Pink. Bernatene's illustrations add to the quirky feel of the group and give a sinister look to Pink from the moment he is introduced. The book will especially appeal to readers who like a bit of adventure and mystery and those who love libraries, reading, or book stores. A Q&A with the author is included at the end. This book would be a good addition to public or elementary libraries.

Fiction

Karen J. Wanamaker, Librarian, Kutztown University of Pa.

I JUST LIKE YOU

Bloom, Suzanne. *I Just Like You*. Honesdale: Boyds Mills Press, 2018. 978-1-62979-878-3. \$16.95. PreK.

Using a diverse cast of creatures whimsically illustrated with colored pencils and watercolors, Bloom shows us that our “likes” are as diverse as the cast of characters, and all worthy! The text is poetically rhythmic, sometimes rhyming, never wordy, and always in the same appealing blue color that children will love. Repetition of text is masterfully used, especially to relay the idea that “I just like you.” The first four two-page spreads show diversity in looks, viewpoints, walking, and talking, followed by a collection of very different animals repeating, “You just like me!” three times. Then the story diverges to animals sharing that they like different things about the others’ appearances, the others’ characteristics, and the others’ desires to do certain things, often using polite or reinforcing responses. The text concludes with the idea that even though different animals like different things and do things differently, “I just like you!” (repeated three times) is the way to be, reinforcing acceptance and tolerance. This is a great book to read one-on-one or to a group, and discuss how the animals are different, yet each one appreciates and likes the other. It simply, yet cleverly illustrates how we can get to know each other and become friends by vocalizing what we like personally or what we like about the other. This would be a great book to use at the beginning of a new preschool session to learn how to be accepting of each other.

Picture Book

Gayle R. Heath, Library Director, Tamaqua Public Library

SPARKS!

Boothby, Ian and Nina Matsumoto. *Sparks!* New York: Graphix, an imprint of Scholastic, 2018. 978-1339-02946-8. \$12.99. Grades 2-5.

August and Charlie are cats, the most unfortunate animal to be because who likes cats better than dogs anyway? It's a good thing that August is a super genius who builds a dog suit that she pilots with her best friend Charlie to fight crime. They are always willing to risk their hides to save those in danger. When the same baby falls into danger multiple times, they notice something is up. Princess is determined to take over the world by controlling the minds of animals. She just needs a natural born animal leader to control and do her bidding. Will Princess succeed in catching her animal leader and finally taking over the world, or will the Sparks duo take her down before it is too late? *Sparks!* is a graphic novel that younger children might enjoy, but parents will find the storyline dull and the humor dry. It focuses on unlikely heroes with backstories that fuel their fears and motives. August and Charlie will teach children about friendship and learning to conquer their fears. Despite the story's shortcomings, the art throughout the graphic novel is vibrant and the action scenes come alive. However, the illustrations are not enough to save this novel and readers will certainly find other crime-fighting animals, such as *Dog Man*, more exciting and interesting.

Graphic Novel

Alyssa Daney, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S DUELING WORDS

Bowman, Donna J. Illus. S.D. Schindler. *Abraham Lincoln's Dueling Words*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2018. 978-1-56145-852-3. \$17.05. Grades 2-5.

Bowman and Schindler tell the story of an unheard-of "almost duel" between Abraham Lincoln and a rival lawyer/politician. Bowman writes a detailed biography that gives readers the history behind the duel and explains how, or rather who, stopped the duel from happening. Students will easily be able to pick out the "learn and grow from your mistakes" and "treat others the way you want to be treated" morals. The illustrations are detailed and colorful and follow a different pattern than most picture books, which could be used to inspire young artists and writers.

Biography/Picture Book

Brittany Harris, Graduate Assistant, Kutztown University

CLEM HETHERINGTON AND THE IRONWOOD RACE

Breach, Jen and Douglas Holgate. *Clem Hetherington and the Ironwood Race*. New York: Graphix, an imprint of Scholastic, 2018. 978-0-545-81446-1. \$14.99. Grades 3-5.

Clem Hetherington and her robot brother, Digory, have escaped from the orphanage they were living in after their archaeologist parents died. The world seems against the two and when Digory's sparks are taken from him, leaving him dying in a back alleyway, a man from Clem's past is the only one who is able to save them. He urges them to enter the dangerous and illegal multi-day archaeological rally race, where they will encounter deadly opponents and unexpected obstacles. This race will be challenging and take everything Clem and Digory throw at it, but it is the only way to switch their life around. Will they be able to pull it off? With a strong female lead and an action-packed tale, Breach is the mastermind behind the detailed storyline and characters, giving everyone great backstories and unique elements. Holgate creates amazing illustrations that keeps the story progressing in a fashion that will suck the reader into the world of the Ironwood Race. With a world that is similar to *Mad Max* in the style of the cars, scenery, and the strange and unusual characters, this graphic novel will interest both young and old readers alike. The archaeological elements in the story can get students interested in the subject by giving a little bit of information without becoming too technical and boring.

Graphic Novel

Alyssa Daney, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

BLACKLISTED!: HOLLYWOOD, THE COLD WAR, AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT

Brimer, Larry Dane. *Blacklisted!: Hollywood, The Cold War, and The First Amendment*. Honesdale: Calkins Creek, 2018. \$17.95. 978-1-62091-603-2. Grades 6-12.

Post World War II was a scary time in the USA when the Red Scare and Cold War dominated the news in the late 1940s-1950s. The House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) was created before that time to investigate possible communist ties and it focused its gaze on the film industry post WW2. This informative non-fiction title tells the story of a small group of screenwriters referred to as the Hollywood Ten. Each man fought to keep their 1st amendment rights intact when they were being threatened during this period of time. The daring story of these ten men is supplemented throughout the text with full page photos creating a nice balance for the younger reader. The author includes a variety of useful back matter for additional research that includes: a bibliography, quote sources, a searchable index, and photo credits. He also includes an author's note bringing the 1st amendment fight from 1947 to the present in our current political climate. This text would fit in well in any middle school and public library.

Non-fiction/Film History

Sara Moyer, Library Aide at Robeson Community Library

ARROW OF LIGHTNING

Bruchac, Joseph. *Arrow of Lightning*. New York: Tu Books, 2017. 978-1-62014-330-8. \$19.95. Ages 12+.

This is the concluding novel in Bruchac's post-apocalyptic trilogy. Lozen, the young female warrior, has recovered from her battle with the ruthless killer, Luther only to find that he is again a threat to her and her band of survivors. This sequel is not as dark and gory as the previous novel, and does offer a sense of hope at the conclusion. The narrations in Lozen voice are naive and egocentric, lacking the use of descriptive elements or literary devices to move the reader through the story. There are many interjected battles that end incredulously, as are the powers that Lozen develops as she faces the three antagonists; Lady Time, Jester, and Luther. Some of the Native American folklore woven into the story flow nicely into the story while at other times appear to be disconnected. *Arrow of Lightning* may appeal to science-fiction enthusiasts, but I would caution recommending the second book in the series because of the gruesome and dark descriptions of Luther's brutal killings.

Science Fiction

Dr. Mary Ann O'Neil, Professor Emeriti, Kutztown University

HURRICANE CHILD

Callender, Kheryn. *Hurricane Child*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2018. 978-1-338-12930-4. \$17.99. Grades 4+.

This is a tragic and sorrowful story of 12-year-old Caroline. She was born on Water Island during a hurricane, and goes to school on St. Thomas in the Caribbean. Caroline's mother left her and her dad when she was young. She almost drowned when she was very young, and all the girls in her class hate her. She discovers a friend when Kalinda moves to the island, and discovers that she likes Kalinda as more than just a friend. A shocking discovery about Caroline's mother and finding out that Kalinda is leaving the island again completely rocks her world. Callender gives the reader a true glimpse of the lives of people living on the islands after a hurricane as well as very real issues that children face. Young teens will be able to relate to the problems portrayed in this book, and others will find solace in Caroline's tragic tale. Educators should carefully consider which children read this book due to the nature of the serious topics discussed: death, sexual preference, suicide, abandonment, and bullying.

Realistic Fiction

Brittany Harris, Graduate Assistant, Kutztown University

DON'T COSPLAY WITH MY HEART

Castellucci, Cecil. *Don't Cosplay with My Heart*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2018. 978-1-338-12549-8. \$17.99. Grades 7-12.

Meet Gargantua from Team Tomorrow, the comics and television shows that Edan Kupferman is the ultimate fangirl for. Her place to escape is these comics about a kick-butt superhero who is tall, powerful, and has everything going well. Edan cosplays and goes to conventions to escape from her reality of being alone and the mess that is her family. On top of that, her crush is being weird and confusing, and Edan is having trouble processing everything that she's feeling. She works to put on a strong face while suffering on the inside with a wide range of emotions. This book is great for any student within the anime and cosplay community. It's quite underrepresented within literature, and this is just a great book to normalize that kind of hobby for students. Teenagers that aren't a part of the cosplay community could even relate to this book through Edan's struggles with how she feels about what's going on with her life. With the help of her version of Team Tomorrow, Edan finds the strength to live like Gargantua all the time. The book is also separated by season conventions, which a nice little extra bit that kids that are part of the convention and cosplay community will understand and enjoy.

Coming of Age

Megan Meyer, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

LOVELY, DARK, AND DEEP

Chen, Justina. *Lovely, Dark, and Deep*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2018. 978-1-338-13406-3. \$18.99.

Grades

Viola Li is a *Firefly*-loving, bake sale enthusiast, journalistic researcher who loves to go on adventures to different countries. She has life figured out and planned down to when and where she is going and what she is going to do. She and Auntie Ruth just came back from a trip to Africa and Viola is already back to advocating and selling at MoPOP's new *Firefly* exhibit. However, everything is not going as planned. The *Firefly* themed red bean baos are not selling as expected and there is a boy who looked suspiciously like Thor trying to sell comics at her table. To top things off, Viola's skin isn't looking good, but she has only been out in the sun for a few minutes, there's no way that's the problem, right? Viola wakes up in a hospital with bad news. She developed a photosensitivity, which means she's allergic to the sun. Her days of trail running, adventuring to different countries, even standing by windows and under light bulbs seems to be over. Her life changes drastically in a matter of minutes and now she has to find ways to deal with her crush seeing her covered in red, blistering skin, her sister blaming her for ruining her life, and the pity party that everyone is throwing her for being The Sick Girl. *Lovely, Dark, and Deep* is a novel that rivals *Everything, Everything* and *The Fault in our Stars*, following the theme of teenagers just trying to live a normal life despite their medical misfortunes. Chen develops dynamic characters and a heartbreaking story that shows just what perseverance and acceptance can do to change the outlook on life, no matter the shortcomings, and that having a crisis management plan can make all the difference.

Realistic Fiction

Alyssa Daney, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

TINY LITTLE ROCKET

Collingridge, Richard. *Tiny Little Rocket*. New York: David Fickling Books, 2018. 978-1-338-18949-0. \$17.99. PreK-K.

Right from the front cover, it's clear that this particular picture book is quite unique! A tiny, red rocket makes a miniscule blue trail through the massive expanse of space; the proportions and lighting make this book look more like a movie than static pages! The story begins with the little rocket leaving Earth and heading out into space, a nondescript astronaut at the helm (presumably meant to be the reader). He/She whizzes past the sun, pulling levers and boosting the rocket faster and faster, until it strikes a meteor and goes hurtling into deep space. Finally taking the craft back under control, the astronaut turns the rocket back home to Earth, and as they make the final approach, they press a button, unfurling a humongous banner that stretches from the moon to Mars, and it says... well you'll just have to read this enchanting story to see for yourself! This picture book is a truly unique gem in more ways than one. The fact that the author puts the reader into the story is both clever and refreshing, getting the young readers right in the middle of the action and more invested in the plot. Though the book is not particularly lengthy or filled with a lot of dialogue, the art style throughout is its unique strength! With the darkness of space enveloping each scene, the rocket, astronaut and planets leap from the pages with cinematic flair. The final page unfolds into three parts to reveal the message on the little rocket's banner, and a breathtaking view of the Earth below. Young ones will be glued to the pages of this story!

Picture Book

Megan Keenan, Graduate Student, Kutztown University

SCREENSHOT

Cooner, Donna. *Screenshot*. New York: Point, 2018. 978-0-545-90399-8. \$9.99. Grades 7-12.

Skye is an average teenager- she has two best girl friends, a boyfriend, a part-time job, an active online social life, and aspirations to secure a summer internship at Senator Watson's office- which should be a shoe-in, considering her volunteerism and position on student council. However, Skye's future is about to be jeopardized when her best friend Asha takes a live video of her prancing around in a nightie as a joke at a sleepover party. While the video is temporary, soon afterward, Skye receives an anonymous message from someone who gives her conditions she must follow or else a screenshot of the offending video will be broadcast to the world. Skye must grapple with her image, both personal and professional, as she decides how to respond to the blackmailer's demands. Skye soon finds herself confiding in some unlikely friends from work in addition to learning some new things about her old friends. She also gives advice to her younger sister, whose friend is pressuring her to use social media to present an altered version of herself- but can Skye actually take her own advice and do the right thing? While the language is trite at times, young teens who are considering how to navigate the world of social media will easily relate to the characters' dilemmas in this book or in the author's other novel, *Worthy* (2017). Readers may also be engaged by the mystery of finding out who has been blackmailing Skye.

Realistic Fiction

Emily L. Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

CYRUS FIELD'S BIG DREAM: THE DARING EFFORT TO LAY THE FIRST TRANSATLANTIC TELEGRAPH CABLE

Cowan, Mary Morton. *Cyrus Field's big dream: the daring effort to lay the first transatlantic telegraph cable*, Honesdale: Calkins Creek. 2018. 9781629795560. \$19.95. Grades 5-9.

While this book does tell the story of how the first Transcontinental telegraph cable came into existence, it does much more. It tells the story of an amazing man named Cyrus Field. The reader follows Cyrus from his childhood to his death. At first glance it may seem the reader is getting bombarded with irrelevant information, but this is not the case! Cyrus's life comes alive in the pages. The reader learns so much about Cyrus from his early life, his family, his work ethic, how he made his fortune (and lost it), his thirst for investment opportunities, the risks involved with his decisions, and oh yes, how he came to be the man to lay the transatlantic cable. His story exemplifies the term self-made man. Even more amazing, all this took place in the mid to late 1800s. Navy ships were still made of wood, and traveling was not as easy as it is today. Cyrus had to negotiate with both the US and British governments to accomplish his great task. Imagine laying 2200 miles of cable across an ocean using 1850-1860s technology. Then imagine having to do it over a few times because the cable falls into the ocean. All this costs time and money, and through Cyrus's determination, the job got done. The book gives a blueprint on how to succeed in life through hard work and determination. A great book for a young reader that offers valuable lessons in life and also a great story in itself.

Nonfiction

Steve Tichy, Cataloger, Tamaqua Public Library

WHEN THE CRICKETS STOPPED SINGING

Cram-Donahue, Marilyn. *When the Crickets Stopped Singing*. Honesdale: Calkins Creek, 2018. 978-1-6297-9723-6. \$18.95. Grades 5-9.

Suspense and curiosity draw the reader into this historical fiction set in the summer of 1939 at the end of the Great Depression. Angie, a 12-year-old girl, discovers how expanding her friendships can bring its own unique challenges. Angie along with Geraldine and Reba Lu decide to show love to some of their neighbors who may not be as easy to love. Their adventures in this process are filled with experiences that anyone can relate to as they struggle with the complexities of this goal. Cram-Donahue's vivid imagery captures the reader in this small-town experience. Angie's ponderings about the historical events occurring just before World War II cause the reader to wonder what must have been occurring with the lives of those living through this news. Beyond the friendship challenges and project to love their neighbors, this story has an additional storyline tied into the Mr. Clement, who returns and appears to be highly respected by many people in the town. As Angie and her friends interact with Mr. Clement, they become suspicious and more concerned about his intentions. Angie faces the dilemma of justice and doing what she knows is right. Read this suspenseful book to discover how Angie and her friends deal with the normal challenges of growing up and the difficult ones of justice.

Historical Fiction

Kimberly Andersen, Principal, Eastern Lancaster County School District

THE JOURNEY OF LITTLE CHARLIE

Curtis, Christopher Paul. *The Journey of Little Charlie*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2018. 978-0-545-15666-0. \$19.95. Ages 12+.

This story immerses the reader in the struggle of twelve year Charlie Bobo to honor a debt of his deceased sharecropper father or honor his own conscience. Christopher Paul Curtis brings to light the evils of slavery through the dialogue and actions of Cap'n Buck. Buck is the slave overseer at Mr. Tanner's plantation in Possum Moan, South Carolina. Charlie is big for his age, illiterate, yet strong enough to do a man's share of work. After his father's accidental death, Buck evicts Charlie and his mother from their farm and forces Charlie to help him bring back three refugee slaves. Through the dialogue, which at times is difficult, Curtis develops the characters and reveals Charlie's doubts and fears, creating sympathy for this boy of whom more is expected because of his size. The poverty of whites, who are as much in bondage as the slaves, and the contrast between the educated slaves who found freedom in Canada suggests another theme about privilege. Many lessons can be drawn from this story, especially about having the courage to do what is right.

Historical Fiction

Dr. Mary Ann O'Neil, Professor Emeriti, Kutztown University

FLYING DEEP: CLIMB INSIDE DEEP-SEA SUBMERSIBLE ALVIN

Cusolito, Michelle. Illus. Nicole Wong. *Flying Deep: Climb Inside Deep-Sea Submersible ALVIN*. Watertown: Charlesbridge Publishing, 2018. 9785808981119. \$17.99. Ages 5-9.

This is the story of a deep-sea submersible named ALVIN. The reader is told to imagine that they are the pilot of ALVIN. ALVIN is not very big, in fact it is only big enough to fit three people. The mission described in the book is to investigate, confirm sea life is thriving, and collect specimens from an area where underwater volcanos erupted many years ago. ALVIN, with you and two others inside, is launched from a ship named Atlantis in the Pacific Ocean. The story gives a timeline of the adventure. At 8:00am you and ALVIN begin sinking in the water. As time goes by the ocean becomes darker until ALVIN is in blackness. The sea life starts to glow in this darkness. At 9:00am ALVIN is two miles down and has reached the seafloor. It is much colder down there. The book describes many of the things you, the pilot of ALVIN, might see at a depth of two miles underwater. At noon you are still observing and documenting sea life. You and the other crew members decided it is lunchtime. At 3:00pm ALVIN starts the ascent to the surface and back to the Atlantis. The blackness slowly becomes lighter and lighter as you ascend. The trip up takes 2 hours and by 5:00pm you are back on the Atlantis. The illustrations really add to the story and help to give a good visual of what you, the pilot, might be seeing on your adventure. At the end of the book there is a glossary with picture and a list of additional references for educators to research if they want to add to the story. There are pictures of how ALVIN evolved since 1964 and facts about ALVIN. The author also tells us about the inspiration of the story and gives more details into writing the story and ALVIN. It turns out the author was teaching fourth grade when a former ALVIN pilot visited her classroom. This shows how a school experience can lead to a life changing event.

Non-Fiction Picture Book

Cassandra Hillegass EdD, Professor, Central Penn Collage

TOP DOG: AND OTHER DOGGONE DELIGHTFUL EXPRESSIONS

Davidson, Carli. *Top dog: and other doggone delightful expressions*, San Francisco: Chronicle Books LLC. 2016. 9781452151342. \$15.99. Grades K-3.

Sometimes you CAN judge a book by its cover! This particular book cover shows a big oafish dog with a little dog sitting on his head. So right off the bat you know this book has to be good. This is another book in Davidson's children's book line featuring dogs and cats. The book contains photographic representations of dogs with props showing simple idiomatic phrases containing the word 'dog', such as sick as a dog', 'raining cats and dogs', etc. The book is short and to the point, and will hold a child's interest. The last few pages give a bio of each dog used in the photo shoot, and gives the child an opportunity to learn dog breeds. This book would make a nice addition to any library's easy or juvenile section because it is doggone good!

Picture Book

Steve Tichy, Cataloger, Tamaqua Public Library

RAFI AND ROSI: PIRATES!

Delacrue, Lulu. *Rafi and Rosi: Pirates!* New York: Lee& Low Books Inc., 2017. 978-0-89239-381-7. \$16.95. Grades K-3.

This chapter book is a delightful story about the adventures of two young tree frogs who are visiting their aunt in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico. Rafi wants to explore the old El Morrow fort after learning that they are the descendants of the great Puerto Rican pirate, Cofresi. This chapter book leads the reader through Rafi and Rosi's adventures at the fort fighting pretend battles, discovering a hidden Spanish doubloons, and the secret to the haunted guard tower, each chapter is embedded with historical facts. There is a glossary of vocabulary at the beginning and additional information about El Morrow and Cofresi after the story. This is an engaging narrative with full color illustrations on each page that support the text.

Historical Fiction

Dr. Mary Ann O'Neil, Professor Emeriti, Kutztown University

RAFI Y ROSI: PIRATAS!

Delacre, Lulu. *Rafi y Rosi: Piratas!* New York: Lee & Low Books, Inc., 2017. 978-0-89239-3812-4. \$8.95. Grades K-3.

This is the Spanish version of a delightful story about the adventures of two young tree frogs who are visiting their aunt in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico. Rafi wants to explore the old El Morrow fort after learning that they are the descendants of the great Puerto Rican pirate, Cofresi. This chapter book leads the reader through Rafi and Rosi's adventures at the fort fighting pretend battles, discovering a hidden Spanish doubloons, and the secret to the haunted guard tower, each chapter is embedded with historical facts. There is a glossary of vocabulary at the beginning which differs slightly from the English version and additional information about El Morrow and Cofresi after the story. This is an engaging narrative with full color illustrations on each page that support the text in a tale that introduces some historical background about Puerto Rico.

Historical Fiction

Dr. Mary Ann O'Neil, Professor Emeriti, Kutztown University

LIGHTS, CAMERA, DISASTER

Dionne, Erin. *Lights, Camera, Disaster.* New York: Arthur A. Levine Books, 2018. 978-1-338-13408-7. \$16.99. Grades 3-7.

With her executive function disorder (think severe ADHD plus anxiety), Hester Greene struggles to do anything and everything that is not related to moviemaking. Spelling tests are a no-go, but she can write an entire movie script without issue. Hester works her hardest to not let her learning disorder get the better of her and cause her to fail eighth grade, but the most important thing is that it doesn't prevent her from submitting her and her friends' work to the Howard Hoffer Junior High Talent Night, a.k.a. the Hoot. If Hester can't get her grades up, then it's goodbye talent show entry for her and her friends. They lose their chance to show off their moviemaking and acting talents to their fellow classmates. This book is a great show of a student who struggles with their learning disorder overcoming the obstacle that they once thought was impossible for them. The teachers and counselors that work with Hester Greene help her get organized and get her movie into the Hoot. *Lights, Camera, Disaster* shows the behind-the-scenes work of teachers when assisting students with learning disorders. It offers a story of success for those with learning disorders, and it shows those students that they can be successful, even when they feel like they're doomed to fail.

Realistic Fiction

Megan Meyer, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

MEMPHIS, MARTIN, AND THE MOUNTAINTOP: THE SANITATION STRIKE OF 1968

Duncan, Alice Faye. Illus. R. Gregory Christie. *Memphis, Martin, and the Mountaintop: The Sanitation Strike of 1968*. Honesdale: Calkins Creek, 2018. 9781629797182. \$17.95. Ages 9 and up.

This story is told from the point of view of Lorraine Jackson who was nine years old when she participated in the Memphis Sanitation Strike. In January 1968, black sanitation workers in Memphis started discussing a strike due to the poor wages. They were making \$1.70 an hour. The sanitation workers formed a union in order to try to get better wages, treatment, and safety, but the newly elected mayor opposed. On February 12, 1968 due to the death of two black men working on an old and unsafe truck, 1300 sanitation workers went on strike. The city got replacement workers, but of the original 180 sanitation trucks only 38 were operated. The trash and garbage started to pileup. This book goes on to explain how the strike effected the people of Memphis and how Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. got involved in the strike. It tells of his first visit to and march in Memphis and his second visit which turned out to be deadly. The story continues to tell of Coretta Scott King's trip to Memphis to continue her husband's work. On April 16, 1968 President Lyndon B. Johnson sent a negotiator to end the strike since the Mayor continued to refuse to negotiate. At the end of the book is a very nice and detailed timeline of the strike starting with the swearing in of the Mayor on January 1st and going to the end of the strike on April 16, 1968. There is also a list of additional sources if supplemental teaching is desired. The illustrations reflect the somberness of the story and mood the Memphis residents must have been feeling. I highly recommend this book for teachers as a read allowed to elementary students. It would be a great read right before Martin Luther King Jr. Day each year. Students not only learn about MLK and his assassination, they also learn about racism in the 1960's and how a few people can inspire many to make large changes in the world.

History Picture Book

Cassandra Hillegass EdD, Professor, Central Penn Collage

MISUNDERSTOOD SHARK

Dyckman A. *Misunderstood Shark*. New York: Scholastic and Orchard Books, 2018. 978-1-338-11247-4. \$17.99. Grades PreK-1.

Think of all the terrifying things you know about sharks. Now, reframe them as misunderstandings about sharks. This book takes a fun look at a shark who is misunderstood. The author then pairs the misunderstandings with a fun fact about sharks. The illustrator, Scott Magoon, uses humorous quips in the illustrations to accentuate the facts. Set as a live show where an announcer, a jellyfish, is about to go live, a shark crashes the program. He gives everyone a scare as he does something typically associated as terrifying about sharks. Just when you recover from the terrifying fact, the shark indicates that he was misunderstood and only wants to show the animal something special about himself. Quite a twist on the normal thinking about sharks. The book concludes with a twist, too. This book would be great for young children who want to know facts about sea creatures, but not be overwhelmed with facts. The bright illustrations and funny added quips make this book a great read aloud in any library.

Picture Book

Cynthia Stunkard, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

OUR CELEBRACION!

Elya, Susan. Illus. Aranda, Ana. *Our Celebracion!*. New York: Lee & Low, 2018. 978-1-62014-271-4. \$17.95. Grades K-3.

Come and join the the Celebración! It is a beautiful summer day and adult are off work, children play, all are ready to join in the parade! Buildings are decorated, families enjoy food and fun as fire trucks spray water over the hot, happy crowds. Bands play music, girls ride horses, and boys ride unicycles. Rain threatens to stop the party, spilling water onto sidewalks and creating puddles; a beautiful rainbow shines through the rain saving the evening. As the sun sets, bright fireworks light up the night sky; people enjoy a frozen treat of ice cream. Told in both Spanish and English, this simple summer story is accentuated by colorful, thoughtful illustrations. The impressive rhyming text utilizes both languages in a way that allows context clues to make the meaning of words clear. This title would be best used with students whose native language is Spanish or students who wish to learn some Spanish.

Picture Book

Kelsey Means, Librarian, ELANCO School District

MIGUEL Y SU VALIENTE CABALLERO: EL JOVEN CERVANTES SUENA A DON QUIJOTE

Engle, Margarita. Illus. by Raul Colon. *Miguel y su valiente caballero: El joven Cervantes suena a don Quijote*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2017. 978-1-68263-009-8. \$18.95. Ages 8+.

Margarita Engle presents a biography of the difficult childhood of Miguel de Cervantes beautifully through a series of free-form poems written in first person narratives. The rhythm of the Spanish version flows more lyrically than the English version. The context of each poem is the same in each version. Cervantes' childhood as the son of a gambling father who lost everything and was imprisoned several times caused the family to move several times. As an escape, young Miguel daydreamed about a fearless knight who would battle dragons and save the world. These daydreams were the precursors to the first modern novel, *Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha*. The author provides historical and more biographical notes at the end of the book. *Miguel y su valiente caballero* is a noteworthy picture book, exquisitely illustrated by Raul Colon. The representations support the poems that guide the reader from Cervantes' early childhood to young adulthood. I would recommend this book as an introduction to *Don Quixote*, poetry, Spain during the 1500's, and/or pen and ink drawing. The theme that permeates the poems include hope, determination, perseverance, and the power of imagination.

Biographical Picture Book/Poetry

Dr. Mary Ann O'Neil, Professor Emeriti, Kutztown University

STRAYS LIKE US

Galante, Cecilia. *Strays like us*. New York: Scholastic, 2018. 978-1-338-04300-6. \$16.99. Grades 5-8.

Upon entering foster care for the first time, 12 year old Fred (short for Winifred), is determined to be miserable living with offbeat Margery Dawson; not only has her life been turned upside down by the arrest of her mother, but now she has to live an hour away from her home city of Philadelphia. When Fred discovers Toby, the neglected dog next door she soon realizes that helping Toby is going to be difficult; Toby's owner, Mr. Carder, is a grumpy old man who threatens violence if anyone touches his dog. Margery warns Fred to stay away from Toby for her own safety; having lived with a mother who is an addict, Fred struggles to adjust to someone taking care of her. On her first day at her new school, she is involved in a fight, resulting in suspension and a new friend named Delia. When Mr. Carder is involved in an accident, Fred and Delia are able to save Toby. However, even though her new home is nurturing, Fred can't help but wish to be back with her mother, despite her mother's addictions. When an opportunity arises to go back home, Fred must decide if she is willing to tell the truth at her mother dependency hearing or hide her mother's addictions.

Realistic Fiction

Kelsey Means, Librarian, ELANCO School District

GIVE ME SOME TRUTH

Gansworth, Eric. *Give Me Some Truth*. Arthur A. Levine Books: New York, 2018. 978-1-338-14345. \$18.99.

This story is a window into life on and around an Onondaga Indian reservation near Niagara Falls, New York for a group of Tuscarora teenagers. Twins Maggi and Marvin and their older sister, Maria, move from the city back to the reservation and become reacquainted with their friends Carson and Lewis. Set during a period of growth and change in the United States, chapters are named after songs by The Beatles, John Lennon, and Yoko Ono, as the teenagers develop a ragtag band which features the music of Lennon and The Beatles as well as other popular music of the late 1970s. The first half of the novel moves slowly, developing characters and the relationships between them. It shows the meager, simple life on an Indian reservation and the age-old treaties their lives depend on as well as the racism these people encounter on a daily basis. While the characters experience bullying and abuse, the violence with which some respond is disturbing, as are the inappropriate relationships between a seventeen-year-old girl and her middle-aged former teacher and a fifteen-year-old girl and her thirty-one-year-old boss. The hints of sexual interactions, while somewhat realistic, are described using actual clichés. The musical theme running through the novel sometimes seems forced or contrived. The author tries to tie together random pieces of information to establish a time period and culture; sometimes it works, and sometimes it doesn't.

Coming of Age

Marge McCormick, Tamaqua Area Middle School

OUTRAGE, PASSION AND UNCOMMON SENSE: HOW EDITORIAL WRITERS HAVE TAKEN ON THE GREAYESY AMERICAN ISSUES OF THE PAST 150 YEARS

Gartner, Michael and the Newseum. *Outrage, Passion and Uncommon Sense: How Editorial Writers Have Taken on the Great American Issues of the Past 150 Years*. Washington: National Geographic, 2005. 978-0-7922-4197-5. \$30.00. Grades 12+.

This book is a collection of primary source editorials, illustrations, advertisements, and photographs throughout American history, organized into chapters by topic. Each chapter gives an introduction to the history of the topic and a few highlights of the coming editorials. Chapter titles are Newspapering, War, Death, Race, Politics, Christmas, Passions, and Freedoms. The table of contents also includes for each chapter the titles of the editorials with the date and name of the newspaper in which it was originally printed. An index allows for readers to search by authors, individuals, and more detailed topics. Pages that include pictures are in bold. Examples of items that can be found in the index include censorship, communism, Japanese internment, John F. Kennedy, Abraham Lincoln, slavery, women's suffrage, and World Wars I and II. These primary sources are wonderful examples of American thought throughout history, and in many cases, two opposing editorials are printed to give readers a real understanding of the conflicts of the times. The editorials chosen to be included are passionate, articulate, and will have readers both cheering and fuming. This is highly recommended for libraries serving those interested in American history, especially high school students who will find this to be an excellent source for all kinds of research topics.

Nonfiction/Primary Source

Amber Sams, Librarian, Saucon Valley High School

MAKING FRIENDS

Gudsnuk, Kristen. *Making Friends*. New York: Scholastic, 2018. 978-1-33813-921-1. \$24.99. Ages 10-13.

Calling all readers of graphic novels! If you are a fan, then you will want to read this latest graphic novel, *Making Friends*, by Kristen Gudsnuk. Dany is growing up and discovers that life is much different in 7th grade when her best friends are no longer in her classes. She faces the normal challenges of a young teenager feeling alone and unsure of herself. Then something incredible happens when she receives a sketchbook that belonged to her late Aunt Elma. This magic sketchbook makes whatever she draws come to life. Dany discovers this when she is doodling and draws Prince Neptune from her favorite show, Solar Sisters, and he comes to life. Feeling the stress of not having a best friend and not being part of the popular crowd, Dany draws a best friend for herself and Madison Fontaine comes to life. Life is great for a while as Madison helps Dany fit in with her 7th grade peers. While it seems like life will continue smooth, Madison recognizes that she is not like the others and believes that her family does not care about her. Dany struggles to figure out how to share the truth with Madison about being a made-up person and then another twist occurs with Prince Neptune at the center of it. Read to find out if Dany and the other students will be able to survive the fate that awaits them in this fascinating graphic novel.

Graphic Novel

Kimberly Andersen, Principal, Eastern Lancaster County School District

MR. MERGLER, BEETHOVEN, AND ME

Gutnick, David. Illus. Mathilde Cinq-Mars. *Mr. Mergler, Beethoven, and Me*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2018. 978-1-77260-059-9. \$18.95. Ages 7-10.

This picture book, inspired by the life of piano teacher Daniel Mergler, tells the story of a young girl's first encounter with the power of music and the kind of relationship with a teacher that sparks a lifetime of learning and joy. One summer Saturday morning, the narrator is introduced to Mr. Mergler, a piano teacher of more than fifty years. Upon a brief conversation with her and her father, Mr. Mergler almost immediately recognizes a promise of musical talent in this young girl, a new Chinese immigrant. Recognizing the immigrant family's difficult financial situation, he generously extends an offer to teach the girl piano simply for the understanding of "the magic that music can bring to her life." Soon, the narrator is meeting regularly with Mr. Mergler for weekly lessons; growing in her skill and love of music. A bust of Ludwig van Beethoven, which sits upon Mr. Mergler's piano, is a point of conversation and holds special meaning for Mr. Mergler. When Mr. Mergler grows ill, the Beethoven bust becomes a gift for the narrator and a reminder of her time with her first piano teacher, who taught her the magical power of music. This heartwarming tale reflects the impact and power of music and an excellent teacher in a student's life. Accompanied by beautiful illustrations, the story gives tribute to two musicians, Mr. Mergler and Ludwig van Beethoven. The brief biography of each is included at the end of the book and makes a great addition; especially if using this book as a model text in a language arts class when writing biographies or personal narratives. This book would be a nice addition to any elementary school library as it has implications for use across the language arts and musical disciplines.

Picture Book

Cherie Lenahan, Teacher, ELANCO School District

LANGSTON HUGHES: THE VOICE OF HARLEM

Haugen, Brenda, *Langston Hughes: The Voice of Harlem*. Minneapolis: Compass Point Books, 2006. 0756509939. Grades 4-8.

This book tells the story of the life of the author, artist, play write, and poet, Langston Hughes. The reader learns about his life growing up with his mother as his primary caretaker, because his father had moved to Mexico. Originally the family did move to Mexico, but Langston's mother and Langston returned to the United States after an earthquake hit Mexico. While Langston's dad was doing quite well in Mexico, Langston and his mother were financially struggling in the USA. The reader learns of Langston's difficulties as the only black student in his school. Langston was a kind boy and with the help of a white boy who stood up for him at school, he learned not to hate all white people. He believed that most people, no matter their color, were good. He lived with different family members during his school years. By the 7th grade he had his first job keeping a hotel lobby and toilets clean. In 8th grade he was chosen as the class poet. He was very active in school and joined many school activities. He continued to work and in no time had his own apartment and was supporting himself. The reader continues to learn about the struggles of Langston, but also his determination to be the man he wanted to be and to do what he wanted to do. This included defying his father who wanted him to be an engineer. Langston knew he wanted to be a writer. Not just a writer, but he wanted to be a live in New York City, particularly Harlem. So instead of going to college in Germany as his father agreed to pay for, he decided to do his own thing and make his way from Mexico to NYC. This is when he started to get published in addition to teaching English to those in Mexico. Upon making it to NYC Langston began studies at Columbia University. He liked NY, but not Columbia University so he quit college and got a job for the harvest season. When the harvest was over, Langston decided to travel on a freighter to Africa. Langston became a world traveler. He went to Africa, Asia, France, and Italy, but eventually returned to NYC. Good fortune and his writing ability led him to Amy Spingarn who offered to pay for this college education. He started making money reading his work at venues around the USA. He was now writing fulltime and published his first novel in 1929, at only 27 years of age. He became a war reporter and in 1935 one of his plays was to open on Broadway. He passed away on May 22, 1967 at the age of 65. His life might not have been a log one, but he did so very much in those years. The work he did has lasted over time and here we are more than 50 years since his death still learning from Mr. Langston Hughes. This book is part of the Signature Lives Book Series. IT is aimed at readers from 4th to 8th grade. There are pictures and illustrations which will be engaging for the younger readers, but I am not sure a 4th grader would enjoy this book. I would consider it more for middle school, than elementary school.

Non-Fiction/Biography

Cassandra Hillegass EdD, Professor, Central Penn Collage

THE SNOW LION

Helmore, Jim and Richard Jones. *The Snow Lion*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishing, 2018. 978-1-68263-048-8. \$17.95. Grades 1-3.

The Snow Lion is an enjoyable book to share with young readers. It tells the story of a young girl by the name of Cara. Cara has just moved to a new home. The home is filled top to bottom with white walls. Cara is overcome with loneliness in her new home, with no friends and only her mother. A gigantic snow lion who appears to her from the walls becomes her companion. The snow lion gives her the confidence to break out of her shell and make friends. With her newfound confidence, she becomes comfortable in her new environments. This is such a sweet book about finding confidence in yourself. This book would be a wonderful addition to any classroom. A good read for any timid child learning to overcome their challenges.

Picture Book

Karlene Rutherford, Undergraduate student, Kutztown University

THE THREE RULES FOR EVERYDAY MAGIC

Hill, Amanda Rawson. *The Three Rules for Everyday Magic*. Honesdale: Boyds Mills Press, 2018. 978-1-62979-940-7. \$17.95. Grades 3-7.

A coming of age story for a girl called Kate, peppered with notes she writes to her father, who left. This book shows the duality that is faced by a child who simultaneously believes she is too old to believe in magic, and just young enough to hope it's real. It also shows the double life Kate tries to live, hiding the fact that her grandmother is sick from her peers. Amanda Rawson Hill shows the world Kate lives in through her eyes, giving the world the rose-colored glow that comes along with childhood, and showing an introspective perspective into how Kate's father's mental illness and her grandmother's dementia have impacted Kate and her mother's own mental health. Through learning how to use the everyday magic her grandmother is teaching her, and reveling in the good moments among the bad, Kate leads the reader through the heartbreak of losing her father to himself and her best friend to another classmate, and the joy of finding a new friend, a new normal, and everyday magic.

Coming of Age

Jessica Licker, Student, Kutztown University

FRUIT BOWL

Hoffmann, Mark. *Fruit Bowl*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2018. 978-1-5247-1991-3. \$17.99. Grades PreK-3.

Welcome to our fruit bowl! Upon returning from grocery shopping, mom asks the youngster to make sure the fruits and veggies are put away; then during the process of unpacking the produce, the youngster asks, “Hey fruits! How’s everyone doing?” They respond: “Peachy keen, full of zest, I was jammed in that bag,” and etc., but then as a tomato attempts to climb into the fruit bowl, quite an argument begins about whether or not a tomato is a fruit or vegetable. This lively informational story continues with proof of the answer found in a textbook, hearsay evidence from the community, and expert opinion from a legendary elder hidden in the kitchen. As readers share this large picture book, they will be able to explore meaning of puns, investigate scientific information, and relate personal experiences. Hoffman’s hand-lettered text supports brightly painted digital composites of fruits and vegetables that will be familiar to many young readers and their families, but the fruits and veggies portrayed in this book seem to have their own unique personalities that support the story. Curricular connections can be made to the arts, science, technology, literacy, and math, as well as business and sociology. Young readers and their families may be able to experience joy as they read and discuss information and experiences provided by this well-designed, gleeful book that promises to be popular in book collections for classrooms and community libraries.

Picture Book

Dr. Jeanie Burnett, professor emeriti, Kutztown University

A BUNCH OF PUNCTUATION

Hopkins, Lee Bennett. *A Bunch of Punctuation*. Illustrated by Serge Bloch, Honesdale, Pennsylvania: Wordsong, 2018. 978-1-59078-994-0. \$17.95. Grades K-5.

Looking for a fun way to introduce punctuation marks to children? Hopkins weaves learning with fun in this poem picture book that introduces readers to various punctuation: commas, apostrophes, dashes, ellipsis, colons, exclamation marks, hyphens, parentheses, periods, question marks, quotation marks, and semicolons. The extremely simple drawings coupled with thoughtful poems are something that younger kids will love to read, as well as make a great starting point for a building sentences lesson for elementary teachers. These poems could also be useful to older students who need reminders on how to use certain punctuation marks. Hopkins is a Guinness World Records renowned author for anthology and poetry books for children and his latest edition is one to note. *A Bunch of Punctuation* ends with a call to action for readers to create their own poem using a variety of punctuation marks because “You can! (Of course you can!).”

Picture Book, Poems

Alyssa Daney, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

AMAZING PLACES

Hopkins, Lee Bennett. Illus. Chris Soentpiet & Christy Hale. *Amazing Places*. New York: Lee & Low Books Inc. 2015. 978-1-60060-653-3. \$11.95. Grades K-6.

In this beautifully illustrated poetry anthology, the reader is taken across the United States to fourteen phenomenal locations. This collection includes poetry about the natural beauty of our country’s landscape such as The Grand Canyon, but also national attractions such as Fenway Park or treasures like the Liberty Bell. Each page includes the poem, an accompanying illustration, and the specific location of the point of interest. A map of the United States on the final page pinpoints each site. Hopkins gathers together works from an impressive list of poets to make this book a reality. The book makes a great addition to any school or classroom library, especially while teaching a poetry unit. Cross-curricular ties with the geography of the United States is also a natural connection to make as part of classroom instruction. Close examination of each detailed illustration could serve as an activating strategy or introduction to each poem and provides great visual imagery.

Poetry/Picture Book

Cherie Lenahan, Teacher, ELANCO School District

HAMMERING FOR FREEDOM

Hubbard, Rita Lorraine. Illus. John Holyfield. *Hammering for Freedom*. New York: Lee & Low Books Inc., 2018. 9781600609695. \$16.09 Grades K-4.

The author and illustrator work together in this informational picture book about William “Bill” Lewis who grew up as a slave in the 1800s. Colonel Lewis, his biological father and owner, decided he should become a blacksmith at a very young age and eventually let Bill keep a bit of the money he earned. Bill saved enough money to buy his own blacksmith shop, and worked for almost 60 years to earn enough money to free himself and his entire family. He became a respected member of the Chattanooga Community...on both sides of the divide. This story shows the benefit of hard work, patience, and kindness. Educators could use this to explain slavery and/or to introduce a new face for Black History Month. The author also provides additional information and photographs about Bill at the end of the book.

Biography/Picture Book

Brittany Harris, Graduate Assistant, Kutztown University

EMANUEL AND THE HANUKKAH RESCUE

Hyde, Heidi Smith. Illus. Jamel Akib. *Emanuel and the Hanukkah Rescue*. Minneapolis: KAR-BEN Publishing, 2012. 978-0-7613-6625-6. \$17.95. Grades PreK-3.

Emanuel Aguilar is a 9-year-old boy who craves freedom, both in life and in religion. He and his family have moved from Portugal to New Bedford, Massachusetts, and though they are finally able to express their right to practice Judaism, Emanuel's father is still afraid of the religious persecution he faced in Portugal and refuses to light the menorah during the Festival of Lights, despite his son's pleading. Enthrilled by the tales of whaling captains and tired of his father's fear, Emanuel stows away on a whaling ship, leaving only a note behind for his father, hoping that he too can know freedom one day. While on board, Emanuel and the entire whaling crew are sieged by a terrible storm which damages the ship and destroys the light of the lighthouse, leaving them helpless in the dark, stormy night. Suddenly, the ship comes within view of lights on the horizon, which turn out to be the candles in each Jewish home, proclaiming the last night of Hanukkah. When Emanuel reaches shore, he runs to his father and tells him how the lights led the ship home to safety. His father then explains that he was ashamed after reading his son's letter, and so he went to each Jewish family and convinced them to light their menorahs for the last night, proclaiming both their faith and religious freedom. This picture book would make an excellent addition to any library collection seeking to expand their cultural base. This story gives young readers a glimpse into, not only the foundational ideals of America, but also the traditions of Judaism as well.

Picture Book

Megan Keenan, Graduate Student, Kutztown University

AS A BOY

International, Plan. *As a Boy*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2016. 978-1-77260-016-2. \$18.95. Grades 1-4.

Plan International, an organization that advocates for equality for girls around the world, has put together this photographic treatise on what it means to be a boy in the world: No one can choose if they are born male or female, but everyone can work towards equality. Using beautiful photographs taken by various photographers in more than twenty countries, *As a Boy* illustrates how boys have the privilege of education that not all girls have- but as boys, they should desire and fight for the girls in their lives to have this same right. At the same time, boys can be expected to be strong and brave, but they have fears the same as girls do. The simple text of this book calls young boys to recognize a problem and take action to solve it. *As a Boy* joins other picture books, published by Second Story Press in partnership with Plan International, such as *The Way to School* and *Every Day is Malala Day*. These books as well as additional resources for teachers can be found at <https://secondstorypress.ca/plan-international-canada-series>. Teachers could use these books in their classroom to promote diversity, equality, and social justice.

Nonfiction

Emily L. Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

SPOOKED!: HOW A RADIO BROADCAST AND THE WAR OF THE WORLDS SPARKED THE 1938 INVASION OF AMERICA

Jarrow, Gail. *Spooked!: How A Radio Broadcast and the War of the Worlds Sparked the 1938 Invasion of America*. Honesdale: Calkins Creek, 2018. 978-1-62979-776-2. \$18.95. Grades 5-9.

This is an absolutely fascinating account of one of the most unique events in our American history. Having taken place over 80 years ago, students today may be unaware of this monumental event, and the impact that it had at the time. Jarrow's book recounts the events of none other than the panic-inducing, radio broadcast of H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds* in 1938. The program was presented by CBS, and more specifically, by acclaimed actor, writer, producer and director, Orson Welles. Jarrow covers a staggering amount of ground in this 139-page book, yet he does so in a way that is both educational and fun for middle school readers. Graphics, telegram messages, illustrations, documents and photographs sprawl the breadth of this nonfiction title, sometimes in full-page scale. This book is separated into 14 chapters, covering such information as the creation of *Mercury Theater* (Welles' one-hour broadcasting program which adapted famous literature for radio), the background of both Welles and Houseman, the main players and orchestrators of the event, a play-by-play of the broadcast itself and even the aftermath and backlash/praise. Being so detached from the era of radio, World Wars, telegraphs and so on, many young readers would find such a historical "catastrophe" to be ridiculous and would likely have difficulty understanding how such a thing could have ever happened. Jarrow does an exceptional job of explaining this, the tense atmosphere of 1938 and the impending shadow of World War II, which had major ramifications on the response of the population to this seemingly harmless radio show. This book would be an excellent reference tool for a history lesson, after which, students could have the chance to actually listen to the broadcast, and have a better understanding of the panic that could have been generated by one talented team and an hour of radio.

Nonfiction

Megan Keenan, Graduate Student, Kutztown University

THE PARKER INHERITANCE

Johnson, Varian. *The Parker Inheritance*. New York: Scholastic Books, 2018. 9780545946179. \$16.99. Ages 8-12.

Twelve-year old Candice is spending the summer at her late grandmother's house in Lambert, South Carolina instead of being at her home in Atlanta, Georgia. Because of this temporary move, Candice is not happy with her Mother. Her mother and father are divorcing which she is not happy about either, but she would be happier if she was back in her "real" room in her "real" home. This all begins to change when she finds a letter addressed to her grandmother. While she is not sure she should read the letter, she does, and her summer adventure begins. Her grandmother was run out of town when she caused a large situation in Lambert many years in the past. The letter gives clues that are supposed to lead those who received a copy of the letter to a fortune in money that was hidden within Lambert's city limits. Candice and her new friend Brandon Jones, with some help from his sister Tori start to follow the clues that could lead them to the money or to humiliation just as they led her grandmother to humiliation. This story is told in two timelines. The current with Candice and her friends looking for the treasure. The second timeline is primarily set in 1956 and runs to 2007. The story told in the past is written on gray shaded pages. The chapters also state the date, but this gray shade was a nice and different technique to keep the reader aware of which timeline they are reading. The timeline in the past deals a lot with the racism blacks were dealing with in the 1950's. The book is listed as being directed at ages 8-12. I think this book is a bit too advanced for an eight-year old child. I would recommend it for no younger than 5th graders. Some of the content might not be inappropriate for an eight-year old. Also, I am not sure they will be able to grasp everything being mentioned. There is some physical violence in this book, in addition to racism, divorce, and homosexuality. The book references another book *The Westing Game* numerous times. I took a day off from reading this book to read *The Westing Game* for fear I was missing something. That turned out to be another great youth book which I highly recommend, but reading it was not required in order to understand *The Parker Inheritance*.

Mystery

Cassandra Hillegass EdD, Professor, Central Penn Collage

IZZY GIZMO

Jones, Pip. Illus. Sara Ogilvie. *Izzy Gizmo*. Atlanta: Peachtree, 2017. 9781682630211. \$16.95. Grades 1-3.

Izzy enjoys creativity and developing contraptions for everyday activities: whether a machine for serving tea, eating spaghetti, or getting a haircut. However, with new inventions comes malfunctions that must be fixed. Throughout the story, Izzy must find her resolve to push forward despite discouragement. And when she brings home a bird who can't fly, she ventures out to find a way to help him. The rhyme pattern enhances the story by presenting a sing-song tune, which flows naturally and makes the sentences easy to read. In contrast, the illustrations (made from pencil, ink, oil pastel, monoprint, and digital techniques) provoke the imagination of the reader. The vibrant colors and images expand upon the ability of the text. Furthermore, the dialogue and emotions expressed by the characters provide relatability and authenticity. Readers are sure to enjoy this story as they follow Izzy on her journey to find resiliency to succeed at creating inventions she loves.

Picture Book

Laura Conaway, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

THE SECRET SCIENCE OF MAGIC

Kiel, Melissa. Brooke Smart. *The Secret Science of Magic*. Atlanta: Peach Tree Publishing Company, 2018. 978-1682630143. \$17.95. Grades 7-9.

Taking place in Melbourne, we meet Sophia and Joshua, two main characters who couldn't be more different from one another. Sophia is nothing short of brilliant but she has no idea what she wants to do with all this talent she possesses, terrified of failure her anxiety is through the roof. Joshua doesn't find education all that important and would much rather stick to his magic tricks and video games. But they have something massively in common, they are both afraid of thinking about one day going to university. While Sophia crumbles under the looming dread of college and the disconnection between her and her peers; Joshua distracts himself from college with his immense crush on Sophia. While there disappointingly isn't a lot of discussion of magic or science in this book there are a lot of important topics touched upon within these pages. Sophia is a POC character of Sri Lankan descent with debilitating social anxiety, scared of what will happen after high school ends and finding it difficult to connect with her peers. Joshua isn't sure what exactly he wants to do after high school and doesn't have any subject he is particularly interested. This incredible coming of age story with swirls of romance would be an excellent addition to any middle school and high school classroom.

Coming of Age

Devin Landis, Special/Elementary Ed Student, Kutztown University

THE ELEPHANT THIEF

Kerr, Jane. *The Elephant Thief*. New York: Scholastic, 2017. 978-1-338-188843-1. \$16.99. Grades 3-6.

When pickpocket Danny attends an exotic animal auction in his home city of Edinburgh, Scotland, he never expects to buy an elephant. There to steal back money for the Leith Brotherhood, Danny instead gets caught up in the Elephant Race. Mr. Jameson, owner of the Belle Vue Zoological Gardens, offers Danny a job if he can ride Maharajah the elephant from Edinburgh to Manchester in seven days. A new backstory (and a new wardrobe), transforms Danny into Dandip, orphaned prince of India. The race soon becomes the talk of the nation with the Queen and the press following the adventure. However, the trip is not without hiccups. Mysterious roadblocks seem to spring up when Danny least expects it. With a rival zoo owner willing to do anything to see them fail, can Danny really escape his past and the Leith Brotherhood by winning the elephant race? Based on the true story of Maharajah, this historical fiction takes readers on the adventure of a lifetime. Danny's dubious past and chance at a brighter future, along with the mysterious events that happen throughout the race leave the reader in suspense until the end.

Historical Fiction

Kelsey Means, Librarian, ELANCO School District

SAFFRON ICE CREAM

Kheiriyen, Rashin. *Saffron Ice Cream*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2018. 9781338150520. \$17.99. Ages 4-8

Rashin is originally from Iran, but now lives in Brooklyn NY. She is telling the reader about her first adventure to a beach in the USA. Her family is taking a day trip to Coney Island. This is not her first time to a beach. She has gone to the beach by the Caspian Sea in her home country. Her adventure on this day is quite different. When she went to the beach in Iran, they packed the car and drove for hours. In NY she gets on the subway to go to the beach. In Iran the beach is divided by a curtain with one side for men and one side for women. Rashin tells of a time when she was at the Caspian Sea and some boys peeked through the curtain. When the ladies saw the boys, they all ran out of the water shouting and immediately covered themselves up. Beaches in the USA, as we know, are nothing like this and there is no curtain, no division between the beach for men and women. She also notices that there are people of all colors, and there is music playing, and lots of people running around. Things are different than she remembers from the beach by the Caspian Sea, but one thing that is the same is the ice cream seller. She remembers buying saffron ice cream with her friend Azadeh at the beach in Iran. She is very excited when she sees there is an ice cream seller at the beach in NY. That is until she finds out they do not have saffron ice cream. This makes her quite sad and she realizes how much she misses the Caspian Sea, her friend Azadeh, and so much more. That is until a girl says to her “try chocolate crunch! That’s my favorite.” She decides to try chocolate crunch and finds out it is delicious. The girl, Aijah and Rashin, decide to spend their day at the beach together. This story is a fun way for kids to see the differences between two cultures. To learn about another culture which has very different rules than those we are used to in the USA. They learn that while the rules are different, that does not mean those in the other culture are not enjoying their ways and they also learn there are similarities between cultures. The illustrations in this story are fun and very colorful. They help to add to the story and would be fun to show to children to explain the story.

Picture Book

Cassandra Hillegass EdD, Professor, Central Penn College

THE NEARLY ALWAYS PERILOUS ADVENTURES OF ARCHIBALD SHREW: GARBAGE ISLAND

Koehler, Fred. *The Nearly Always Perilous Adventures of Archibald Shrew: Garbage Island*. Honesdale: Boyds Mills Press, 2018. 978-1-62979-675-8. \$17.95. Grades 3-7.

All animal lovers are going to want to read this book. Archibald Shrew and Mr. Popli, mouse mayor of Garbage Island, end up stranded in the ocean when a storm breaks apart Garbage Island. Garbage Island is the garbage patch that rests way out in the Pacific Ocean, and it is home to a variety of creatures. Those said creatures work to make innovations and technological advancements to better their garbage-loving society. When Shrew and Popli get swept away together they fight, create, and work their way back to their beloved island of trash. They face hordes of spiders, a great white shark, a swordfish, and their inability to work together at times. Every once in a while there are some lovely pictures illustrating some major events in the story, which was a cute little touch. The illustrations show off the dangerous perils that the pair face together, which helps readers visualize what it's like being a mouse and a shrew in the middle of the ocean. The teamwork and budding friendship make the crazy, big adventure of two small critters incredibly enjoyable to experience.

Children's Adventure Fiction

Megan Meyer, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

WHATSHISFACE

Korman G. *Whatshisface*. New York: Scholastic, 2018. 978-1-338-20016-4. \$16.99. Grades 3-7.

As a child of a military person, Cooper Vega moves around a lot. As a result, he always sees himself as an outsider. His sister weathers the moves easily and makes friends instantly, but Cooper is not so fortunate and is lonely. In his newest school, he becomes someone – he becomes Whatshisface. No one knows Cooper, but they know Whatshisface. Cooper's parents always try to soften the moving with a special gift. This time it is a brand, new, state-of-the-art phone. Cooper's phone becomes inhabited by a ghost, Rodrick Barnabas Northrop, or Roddy, from the year 1596.

The school puts on a Shakespeare play each year. This year, it is *Romeo and Juliette*. Cooper tries out for the play in the hopes of playing Romeo opposite his new crush, Jolie. He is cast as the second night watchman. Throughout the book, Roddy learns that Cooper lives in a town that is focused on Shakespeare, even is named after the town in which Shakespeare lived. Roddy learns to leave the phone and cause havoc for Cooper, including making the play's Romeo crash his bike, forcing Cooper to take the Romeo lead. This book would be perfect for any student who is "forgettable" in school or one that likes to solve mysteries.

Fiction

Cynthia Stunkard, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

THE BIGGEST CHRISTMAS TREE EVER

Kroll, Steven. Jeni Bassett. *The Biggest Christmas Tree Ever*. New York: Cartwheel Books, 2017. 978-1-338-18735-9. Grades K-3.

Story time is extra fun with this cute, interactive Christmas story. The story begins in the town of Mouseville where everyone loves the time of year when they can pick out and put up their Christmas trees. It is the day before Thanksgiving and there are two things on their mind, the Thanksgiving feast and getting their tree the day after. The day after the Thanksgiving feast, friends Clayton and Desmond both wake up with the same thought, being the first to get to Clara's Christmas Tree Farm. Both friends have trouble finding that perfect tree and disappointedly give up and go home. The next day Clayton's dad gives him the advice that the biggest trees are on the far end of the Christmas tree farm. Desmond's uncle tells him the same thing. Both, still not able to find that perfect tree on their own, bump into each other and decide to look together. As the sun sets they finally find the perfect, big, tall tree. It is so big that they call all of their family members to help them chop it down and take it back into town. On Christmas Eve all the mice in the town celebrate by gathering around the tree. Every other page has a cute little red bird with a quick, fun discussion point to use with children. Some are easy such as, "Do you have a Christmas tree?" and other questions are more involved such as about how they might feel in a certain situation that connects to something that happened in the story. In the back of the book there is a two-page spread of activities that tie into the story. This, and any of the other books in the Story Play series, comes highly recommended for any public library or personal book collection.

Picture Book

Erin Engler, Librarian, Whitehall-Coplay School District

THE KING OF BEES

Laminack, Lester. Illus. Jim LaMarche. *The King of Bees*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2018. 978-1-56145-953-7. \$17.95. Grades PreK-2.

A young boy named Henry enjoys nature's beauty with his Aunt Lila. He lives with his Aunt Lila in South Carolina as he gets the best of both worlds, living on a farm, and being surrounded by marshes. Henry helps out on the farm with duties such as fathering eggs and maintaining the garden. However, Henry is entranced by Aunt Lila's beekeeping as he watches from a distance on the tree stump. Henry yearns each day as he observes his Aunt Lila interact with the bees. Then one day, Henry's curiosity leads him to Aunt Lila's shed with the bee keeping equipment. Henry adventures to the bees as he seeks to be a "bee whisperer" for the bees to stay. The story is both heartwarming and gentle with vibrant colors and illustrations that are visually appealing.

Picture Book

Victoria Defazio, Graduate Student, Kutztown University

CODE WORD COURAGE

Larson, Kirby. *Code Word Courage*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2018. 978-0-545-84075-0. \$16.99. Grades 3-6.

It's September 1944, and all Billie Parker wants is for her brother Leo to come home from boot camp. Billie (and Leo) live with their great aunt Doff who has taken care of them ever since their mother passed away, and their father disappeared. When Leo arrives home from boot camp, he brings with him his friend Denny, a Navajo code talker in training, and a stray dog they have named Bear. Billie is able to spend one last weekend with her brother before Leo and Denny ship out. Along the way, she bonds with Denny and Bear steals her heart. When Denny and Leo ship out to fight in World War II, Billie is left at home trying to untangle the mess her personal friendships have become. As Billie finds comfort in Bear and starts to find the courage to make new friendships, Denny is training to be a code talker and is shipped out to his first battle field. Told in two perspectives (Billie's and Denny's), this timeless story of love, loss, and friendship will engage students who love World War II novels and animal fiction.

Historical Fiction

Kelsey means, Librarian, ELANCO School District

AM I YOURS?

Latimer, Alex. *Am I Yours?* Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2018. 978-1-68263-044-0. \$16.95. Grades 1-3.

An egg is lost and it is looking to find its home! Will the dinosaurs be able to help the egg out? *Am I Yours?* is a story about an egg that gets lost from being blown off of a hill. It lands at the bottom of the hill where different dinosaurs live. The different dinosaurs go up to the egg to see if it belongs to them. Since they cannot see in the egg, the dinosaurs give their names and ask if the egg shares their specific characteristics. The egg encounters a Stegosaurus, Brachiosaurus, Triceratops, Corythosaurus, and a Tyrannosaurus. Unfortunately, all of these dinosaurs do not share the same attributes as the egg. Time is running out for the egg to find its home. With the sun beginning to set, the dinosaurs can make out the silhouette of what is in the egg and they discover that it has a pair of wings, a snout, and two legs. They bring the egg to the top of the hill so it can be with its parents who are Pterosaurs dinosaurs. When the egg is reunited with its parents, it finally hatches. With its fun illustrations, this book would be perfect to teach about the different types of dinosaurs and the characteristics that they have. It also can be used to teach about helping others and guiding others into the right direction.

Picture Book

Gianna Gallagher, Student, Kutztown University

HEY-HO, TO MARS WE'LL GO!: A SPACE-AGE VERSION OF "THE FARMER IN THE DELL"

Lendroth, Susan. Illus. Bob Kolar. *Hey-Ho, to Mars We'll Go! A Space-Age Version of "The Farmer in the Dell."* Watertown: Charlesbridge, 2018. 978-1-58089-744-0. \$19.99. Grades PreK-3.

Fun little rhymes, following the rhythm of "The Farmer in the Dell," give playful introductions to different aspects of space travel in this imaginative book. Four diverse children go through the steps to fly to another planet and each step is described in further detail after the rhyme. Facts covered include how the rocket is built in space to make it easier to get to Mars, food can be grown on the shuttle, astronauts have to exercise while in space because the lack of gravity makes them weak, and there are canyons and mountains on Mars larger than any on Earth. The book demonstrates a gravity free environment by making readers turn it upside down and read multiple pages in the opposite direction in the middle of the book before turning right side up again. The end of the book has an information page that discusses all the things scientists are working on to make a trip to Mars possible and gives resources for further information. The full-page illustrations are delightful and will keep children's attention as they connect the factual information to what is happening on the page. The singsong repetition creates a fun pattern that will also keep children hooked. This book is recommended.

Picture Book

Amber Sams, Librarian, Saucon Valley High School

WHAT AM I?: PASSOVER

Lewis, Anne Margaret. *What Am I?: Passover*. Chicago: Albert Whitman & Company, 2012. \$ 9.99. 978-0-8075-8971-7. Pre-K+.

In the spring, different religions celebrate holidays that correspond with their faith. This fun Lift-the-flap board book introduces one of these celebrations from the Jewish calendar. The Festival of liberation, or Passover, is observed every April. The author lays out the basic activities, food, and practices in a simple but fun way to give an overview of the holiday. A question is asked about each aspect and the answer is shown and explained under each flap. The art is very colorful and pairs well with the text. It is a nice introduction to Passover for the birth to 3 age set.

Board Book

Sara Moyer, Library Aide at Robeson Community Library

GROOVY JOE DANCE PARTY COUNTDOWN

Litwin, Eric. Illus. Tom Lichtenheld. *Groove Joe Dance Party Countdown*. New York: Orchard Books, 2017. 978-0-545-88379-5. \$17.99. PreK-K.

Pete the Cat has been captivating readers for over 10 years. Now, the author of *Pete the Cat*, Eric Litwin, enthralls young children with this new series starring a dog, Groovy Joe. This is the second book in the series that spotlights this new character. The text is repetitive and lends itself to a young reader learning the pattern and reading along. Groovy Joe shares his musical talents with friends who knock on the door wanting to join the party. Older readers can discover the mathematical patterns inside the pages of this book. Tom Lichtenheld draws readers into the story with the vibrant images and illustrated words. Parents and young readers will love the ability to download the song and story which can enhance the reading experience. Will there ever be too many people to join the Dance Party Countdown? Wait until you discover the last person invited to the party! Read Groovy Joe's latest adventure to find out.

Picture Book

Kimberly Andersen, Principal, Eastern Lancaster County School District

ALL THE STARS DENIED: AN AMERICAN STORY OF DEPORTATION AND RESISTANCE

McCall, Guadalupe Garcia. *All the Stars Denied: An American Story Of Deportation and Resistance*. New York: Tu Books, 2018. 978-1-62014-281-3. \$19.95. Grades 7-12.

This companion novel to *Shame the Stars* reveals a dark time in United States history when American citizens were gathered up and shipped off to Mexico under the guise of repatriation. The story follows the journey of the Del Toro family, whose house is burned down after Estrella, a teenage girl, protests against unfair laws and treatment against Mexican Americans in her town. Estrella, her mother, and her little brother are separated from their father and driven across the border to live in a corral in Mexico, with little food. Estrella and her family search for work, fight for food, and battle illness while working to reunite themselves with their father so they can right the wrong and return to their country. McCall includes a glossary of Spanish terms used throughout the book, an author's note about the historical context, and a list of related resources. *All the Stars Denied* is relevant today with the national conversation surrounding immigration and the border. This book could be a great addition to a text set on 1930s United States. Some students may find the set of books challenging to read with the dense details of the political and historical context, as well as the use of the Spanish language, which is not always directly translated. The nature of the content, particularly the treatment of Estrella's family and the other repatriates, may be difficult for some younger students.

Historical Fiction

Emily L. Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

JACK B. NINJA

McCanna, Tim. Stephen Savage. *Jack B. Ninja*. New York: Orchard Books, 2018. 978-0-545-91728-5. Grades K-2.

This story is a fun play on the “Jack be Nimble” nursery rhyme. It follows Jack B. Ninja through his evening and into his eventful night. The illustrations are vivid with a colorful simplicity. Bright colors start his day as Jack B. Nimble jumps over the bamboo stick. As the sun sets, the illustrations take on the dusty purple of evening. Our stealthy ninja finds himself in a variety of adventurous situations. He watches night guards, dips into the garden pool, and breaks into a bandit cave on his quest to find a stolen treasure chest. Once he finds the treasure, his night gets a lot livelier. On his way out of the bandit cave, he trips a wire and springs a trap. The bandit crew is after him as he tries to get that treasure back to the Ninja Master. The end of the story takes a cute turn with Jack B. Ninja spending some entertaining time with his ninja family. Then as the sun begins to rise, just like that, those ninjas disappear. This is a fun read that children will enjoy. I get many requests for “ninja books” from my students and this one will not disappoint! The story’s words flow in a way that is fun for the readers to read and the listener to hear. The reader will also be left in suspense as Jack moves through his night adventures. This book comes highly recommended for any school, public, or personal library collection.

Picture Book

Erin Engler, Librarian, Whitehall-Coplay School District

IT’S TIME FOR SCHOOL, STINKY FACE

McCourt, Lisa. Illus. Cyd Moore. *It’s Time for School, Stinky Face*. New York: Scholastic, 2017. 978-1-338-13582-4. \$6.99. Pre-K.

This board book sequel to the best-selling *I Love You, Stinky Face*, once again features the imaginative boy with all the questions. Stinky Face suggests to his mama all the things that may go wrong upon beginning school. His mama replies to each question with a reassuring and creative answer; helping him to feel confident as he anticipates this new adventure. Stinky Face’s imagined scenarios at school, while seemingly ridiculous to an adult, are great examples of the things a preschool child may worry about. McCourt taps into both the imagination and anxiety of the preschool age child; especially at this important life transition time. The author presents a parent who not only listens to their child, but responds in a way that demonstrates patience, understanding, and love. Simultaneously, the illustrations playfully support Stinky Face’s questions and his mama’s responses; adding an element of humor to each. This heartwarming tale would be a great addition to any home or preschool library as well as a tool for read aloud in any kindergarten readiness program.

Board Book

Cherie Lenahan, Teacher, ELANCO School District

DOWN BY THE COOL OF THE POOL

Mitton, Tony. *Down by the Cool of the Pool*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2017. 978-1-338-15841-0. \$5.99. Ages 3-5.

This interactive book follows a dancing frog and his friends. In the beginning, the frog dances by the pool and as the book continues, it introduces more friends who can dance but not exactly the same as the frog, so they introduce their own dance. The book continues until many animals are dancing and they end up falling into the pool. Throughout the entire story, there are questions for the children to discuss with whoever is reading the story with them. These questions promote problem solving, social development, reading comprehension, pre-reading skills and memory strength. This book focuses on self-expression since each animal expresses his or her own personal way of dancing. The sentences are repetitive making it easier for the readers to catch on and questions throughout will help the child comprehend the story even further. The colorful illustrations make the story fun and engaging. This book would make a great addition to any children's book collection. Implementing this book into a classroom read aloud time will help children develop reading comprehension skills and promote self-expression, which are important skills for the children's future.

Picture Book

Erin Crawford, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

BUGS DON'T HUG: SIX-LEGGED PARENTS AND THEIR KIDS

Montgomery, Heather L. Illus. by Stephen Stone. *Bugs Don't Hug: Six-Legged Parents and Their Kids*. Watertown: Charlesbridge Publishing Co., 2018. 978-1-58089-816-4. \$14.99. Grades 2-3.

Heather Montgomery intertwines interesting facts about insects with a touch of humor while comparing the parenting behaviors of insects to that of humans in *Bugs Don't Hug*. Do bugs tuck in their young, clean up dirty diapers, or play hide and seek? Stephen Stone's colorful illustrations depict the realistic context about bugs and also the humorous comparison to human parenting. This picture book is perfect for introducing youngsters to the world of insects. The after matter includes more detailed information about bugs and suggestions on more books about bugs.

Informational Picture Book

Dr. Mary Ann O'Neil, Professor Emeriti, Kutztown University

BOOKJOY, WORDJOY

Mora, Pat. Illus. Raul Colon. *Bookjoy, Wordjoy*. New York: Lee & Low Books, 2018. 978-1-62014-286-8. \$18.95. Grades 1-2.

This book features a vast array of adventurous poems that are brought to life with creative words and illustrations. The words are integrated incorporating Spanish as well as cohesively complementing each other. The book would be a great selection for English Language Learners. The illustrations are colorful and unique with Raul Colon's artistic style. Each poem selection will tell its own story allowing readers to be imaginative and inspired. Readers will enjoy *Bookjoy, Wordjoy*!

Picture Book

Victoria Defazio, Graduate Student, Kutztown University

TAGGED

Mullen, Diane C. *Tagged*. Watertown: Charlesbridge, 2015. 978-1-58089-583-5. \$16.95. Grades 7+.

Liam is a young teenager who wants to show his creations to the world. He's the oldest of four siblings and struggles to be seen as anything more than an extra set of hands in the house. He struggles to be seen by everyone, so Liam begins working on graffiti designs. Living in the projects of Minneapolis is tough for Liam and his family, and his method of coping is to create art and designs that he wishes to one day paint on the walls of buildings. The problem arises when his estranged older brother coerces him into massive trouble, painting a tag over a gang's graffiti piece. Liam gets sent away to Kat's house, an art teacher and friend of Liam's mom, who helps Liam cultivate his talent and work through his feelings. The book is written in short journal-like entries, which breaks it up into a lot of short portions for kids that might struggle a bit with reading. It also hits on the idea of children thinking that they're unseen and finding a creative way to express these feelings. This book just holds a very positive end message that can inspire kids that might think in a similar fashion or be in a similar situation to Liam.

Realistic Fiction

Megan Meyer, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

LAST-BUT-NOT-LEAST LOLA AND A KNOT THE SIZE OF TEXAS

Pakkala, Christine. *Last-but-not-least Lola and a Knot the Size of Texas*. Honesdale: Boyd's Mill Press, 2016. 978-1-62979-324-5 \$16.95. Grades 2-5.

Fans of the *Junie B. Jones* series will be thrilled to read about Lola and her adventures in this new series. Lola has a problem- each of her grandmothers insist on asking her if her pie is the best, and Lola always says yes. But this year, both grandmothers are coming for Thanksgiving and she will have to admit which one actually tastes like licking a candle! This is not Lola's only dilemma; when her teacher polls the class on who is traveling for Thanksgiving, most of her peers say yes, and somehow Lola volunteers to pet-sit two dogs over the break. Lola knows she will be in trouble for offering to pet-sit without asking her parents first, because her dad has a new job and her mom is extra busy with a sewing project, not to mention the fact that they're hosting for the holiday. To make matters worse, Lola has a knot in her hair "the size of Texas" which she must figure out how to untangle- along with all of her other problems. Teachers of lower elementary students will want to have this fresh new series in their classrooms. Students will enjoy the fun illustrations and humor, and adults will appreciate the lesson of unconditional love.

Realistic Fiction

Emily L. Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

REAL STORIES FROM MY TIME: THE BOSTON TEA PARTY

Paley, Rebecca. Illus. Kelley McMorris. *Real Stories from My Time: The Boston Tea Party*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2018. 9781338148930. \$5.99. Grades 2-5.

In this historical fiction story, readers are whisked back to Colonial America in the 1700s to learn about the Boston Tea Party and the events leading up to the Revolutionary War. Incorporated into the historical events are diary entries from Felicity Merriman, a fictional American Girl who grew up in Williamsburg, Virginia during this time. Her entries provide readers with an inside look at how a young girl may have felt and the observations she made during a tension-filled era between Britain and the Thirteen Colonies. The black and white illustrations at the beginning of each chapter and images from significant people and events enhance the story and aid the reader in understanding the information presented. Also provided throughout each chapter are bolded words that correlate with the glossary and give a clearer understanding of specific terminology. Overall, young girls will find delight in this book, following one of the many American Girl Dolls on their journey through a significant historical event.

Historical Fiction

Laura Conaway, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

DOG MAN

Pilkey, Dav. *Dog Man*. New York: Graphix, an imprint of Scholastic, 2016. 978-0-545-58160-8. \$9.99. Grades 2-5.

The first book of a new graphic comic series by the author and illustrator of *Captain Underpants* is an action-packed, exciting new story that starts with our beloved new hero, Dog Man, a man with a dog's head sewn onto his body. While Dog Man fights to be recognized as a great cop by his chief of police, fights battles with the villains of the city, and uses his cunning and intelligence to get out of tough situations, he is sure to win the hearts of all his readers. Stuffed in this one book are four chapters with a different story each time, interactive pages, how-to-draw tutorials, and behind-the-scene comics. In each new chapter, Dog Man encounters his foe, the cat Petey, along with other unexpected villains who plan to take over the world. The antics that these characters get into are hilarious and something that both children and adults can enjoy. Dog Man has the potential to be a staple in all libraries and homes just like Pilkey's other series, *Captain Underpants*. Continue Dog Man's adventures with the second book in the series, *Dog Man Unleashed*.

Graphic Novel

Alyssa Daney, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE SPIRIT OF CATTAIL COUNTY

Piontek, V. *The Spirit of Cattail County*. New York: Scholastic, 2018. 978-1-338-16705-4. \$16.99. Grades 3-7.

Set in a small town in the Everglades, Sparrow is having a hard time managing the changes that have recently come into her life. She is dealing the illness and subsequent death of her mother, the pressure of keeping up appearances in a small town, adjusting to the structured life her aunt is requiring of her, the possibility of moving away from the only home she knows, and the fact that she sees a ghost. Although no one (except her mother) knows she can see the ghost boy, the ghost makes situations unpleasant for both Sparrow and her strict Aunt Geraldine, but the ghost may provide a way for Sparrow for her to see her mother. If the ghost boy can manifest to Sparrow, perhaps he can help her mother come back to her. The multiple twists in the novel are truly unexpected and keep the reader engaged. The interesting characters, the ghost, and the hard choices make this an appealing novel. The struggles that Sparrow must endure would resonate with any middle school student who may consider themselves as different, unlikeable, or an outsider.

Fiction

Cynthia Stunkard, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

A GRAIN OF RICE

Pittman, Helena Clare. *A Grain of Rice*. New York: Delacorte Press. 978-1-5247-6552-1. \$14.99. Grades 4-6.

Only a grain of rice as a reward for saving the Princess's life? Yes, a grain of rice would do, but when the Emperor of China insisted that although he would not give the hand of his daughter in marriage to a poor farmer, he could give a far greater reward than only one grain of rice to the peasant, Pong Lo. With the Emperor's promise of a special reward, the clever young man respectfully suggested that his majesty "may double the amount of rice every day for one hundred days," and thereby focused the progression of the story plot on the path of building his fortune while earning the hand-in-marriage of his lovely Princess. Originally published in 1986, this new edition of a favorite folktale, now offered with eye-catching jacket art by Maria Nguyen, invites children and youth to share a sensitive love story that is presented within complex mathematical reasoning. Pittman's beautifully composed pencil illustrations display artifacts and customs that provide readers with special contextual depth of understanding and perspective about people of ancient China who are important in the story. An afterward, *The Math Behind the Story*, (pp. 71 – 100) written by Daniel Rockmore, Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science, Dartmouth College, includes math interpretation within a story analysis that is enhanced by a calculation table which shows rice accumulation over the first ten days; a graph depicting ten days of the rice grain growth with detailed explanation; and a description with supporting pictures and explanation of the process and importance of exponential growth. This special book will surely be a useful treasure to lifelong learners in their homes, schools and communities because they will most likely find joy reading this fascinating book as they learn new information and share fun-filled ideas across curricular areas of literacy, social studies, the arts, and mathematics. To travel beyond the book, readers can visit the author at her web site helenaclarepittman.com

Mathematical Folktale

Dr. Jeanie Burnett, professor emeriti, Kutztown University

BENJI, THE BAD DAY, AND ME

Pla, Sally J. Illus. Ken Min. *Benji, the Bad Day, and Me*. New York: Lee & Low Books Inc. 2018. 9781620143452. \$17.95. Grades K-5.

The narrator of this colorful picture book has had a rotten day. As if walking home in the rain wasn't bad enough, the trials of his day go unnoticed upon his return home from school. His mother is busy with work and his younger, autistic sibling is hiding in the "safety" of his box. Our narrator's thoughts are shared as he recalls the ways his brother, Benji, is supported in his challenges – from attending sessions with the "Super-Happy-Lady" to being wrapped tight in his snuggly blue blanket. The older brother is grumpy, hungry, and cold and no one notices. Or does someone? Just then, Benji emerges from his box to share his blanket and comfort his older brother. Whether the days are good or bad, there will always be the special bond between siblings. In this story, Pla uses her own family's experience with autism to create a book about empathy and the relationship between siblings. This is a great book for discussing the difficulty of being the sibling of child with special needs. School counselors, teachers, and parents alike might use this to spark conversation and support the social-emotional learning of the children with whom they work.

Picture Book

Cherie Lenahan, Teacher, ELANCO School District

THE SECRET LIFE OF THE LITTLE BROWN BAT

Pringle, Laurence. Illus. Kate Garchinsky. *The Secret Life of the Little Brown Bat*. Honesdale: Boyds Mills Press, 2018. 978-1-62979-601-7. \$17.95. Grades 1-4.

This delightful picture book follows a brown bat named Otis through his adventures of daily life. Otis is a young bat, barely more than a pup, and one spring evening, he stretches his wings and flies out into the warm night air to catch bugs. From mosquitos to moths, beetles and more, Otis takes his fill while remaining ever vigilant for nighttime predators like owls. Pringle and Garchinsky have previously joined forces for another book in a similar vein called *The Secret Life of the Red Fox* in which they follow a family of foxes, and give factual and scientific background on their daily activity. They even left a fun “easter egg” in this book by hiding a fox in one of the illustrations. What’s unique to this picture book, as opposed to *Red Fox*, is that the animal of choice is characterized with his own name, making the story easier for younger children to relate to Otis. Garchinsky’s illustrations are lifelike and dreamily surreal all in one, with vibrant colors illuminating each page. At the back of the book, the author has provided a “More About the Little Brown Bat” section where more in-depth information can be found about brown bats, such as their scientific name (*Myotis lucifugus*... hence the name Otis for the main star!), lifespan, and anatomical facts. There is also a section which highlights white-nose syndrome, a deadly disease that is currently effecting bat populations around the world, and a glossary where terms in the story are defined. This book would make an excellent tool in any elementary classroom!

Picture Book/Nonfiction

Megan Keenan, Graduate Student, Kutztown University

FANIA'S HEART

Renaud, Anne. Richard Rudnicki. *Fania's Heart*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2018. 978-1772600575. \$18.95. Grades 1-3.

Fania Landau Fainer was a survivor of the Holocaust, this book is dedicated to her story and her heart that was gifted to her by her friends. Fania's heart is on display in the Montreal Holocaust Museum. If you're looking for an informative picture book for your students to talk about the Holocaust, look no further. The book is written from Sorale's point of view about her mother and her mother's story, the moment of Sorale asking her mom what the heart means is a moment that truly happened. Throughout the book, Fania highlights how she came to own the heart during the terrors of the Holocaust and how the heart gave her strength through the darkest days of her life. In the back of the book there is also a few pages dedicated to Fania's life through the holocaust, after liberation, how she ended up in Canada and how she spent the rest of her days with her family. This book is an excellent addition to a classroom for an easy to understand, informative book about the Holocaust. This book is also a wonderful jumpstart for students to do further research on Fania's heart and Holocaust survivors.

Children's Book

Devin Landis, Special/Elementary Ed Student, Kutztown University

ZOOGIE BOOGIE FEVER!: AN ANIMAL DANCE BOOK

Rim, Sujean. *Zoogie Boogie FEVER!: An Animal Dance Book*. New York: Orchard Books, 2018. 978-0-545-90005-8. \$17.99. Grades Pre-K-K.

Have you ever wondered why the animals at the zoo always seem so tired? They must be up all night-dancing! This fun book with colorful, mixed-media illustrations shows readers what zoo animals are up to after the humans leave. Animals of every shape, size, and design do the mamba, salsa, and tango. They wiggle and swing and twirl. But above all else, they cannot be caught- so be sure not to tell their secret. Once the zoo opens, the animals can finally get some rest... until the next night. *Zoogie Boogie* would be a great book to add to an animal-themed lesson, encourage kids to get up and try their own dance moves, or to read just for fun. In an art class, students might model their own watercolor or mixed-media paintings after the art in the book. While there are some scattered rhymes, this book does not have a consistent rhyming pattern as one might expect, considering the content. However, the non-rhyming nature of the prose may add to the whimsy and surprise of animals who dance when nobody is watching.

Picture Book

Emily L. Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

EBENEZER HAS A WORD FOR EVERYTHING

Rowe, Chelsea. Illus. Frank W. Dormer. *Ebenezer Has a Word for Everything*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishing. 2018. 978-1-56145-848-6. \$17.95. Grades PreK-2.

Ebenezer is a charming young boy, who collects of all thing's words. Ebenezer struggles as no one appreciate his fine collection of words. Ebenezer meets Fitzgerald, who loves to share stories. Fitzgerald struggles to find the perfect words to fit his stories, the two realize they can both help each other in their struggles. This is a great book about working as a team and completing other ideas to create something extraordinary. In addition, the book shares the idea of friendship. Learning that finding the right friends for your interests. This would be a great addition to any classroom library.

Picture Book

Karlene Rutherford, Undergraduate student, Kutztown University

THE WIND CALLED MY NAME

Sanchez, Mary Louise. *The Wind Called My Name*. New York: Lee & Low Books, 2018. 978-1-62014-780-1. \$18.95. Grades 4-6.

A heartwarming story about a family from New Mexico, uprooted to Wyoming during the Great Depression for the chance at a better life. Told from the perspective of ten-year-old Margarita Sandoval, the reader learns life lessons taught by her older siblings about making friends and staying true to yourself, alongside her. With its insightful perspective on the particularly poignant issues of race relations, harmful stereotypes, and inherent biases that are still an issue in modern America, this book brings topics often left to the realm of adults down to a child friendly level. The author's use of combined English and Spanish (including a Spanish index at the end of the book) is an ingenious way to integrate more diversity into children's literature. Margarita is a personable and wonderfully wise narrator, and through her, Mary Louise Sanchez tells a story that readers of all ages can enjoy.

Historical Fiction

Jessica Licker, Student, Kutztown University

ABOUT AMPHIBIANS: A GUIDE FOR CHILDREN/SOBRE LOS ANFIBIOS: UNA GUIA PARA NIÑOS

Sill, Cathryn. Illus. John Sill. *About Amphibians: A Guide for Children/ Sobre los anfibios: Una guía para niños*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2018. 978-1-68263-033-4. \$8.95. Grades PreK-2.

This nonfiction book describes the characteristics of amphibians such as their habitats, food, and physical traits in simple sentences. The words and phrases are printed in both English and Spanish which enables students to be exposed to a variety of Spanish words and phrases. This book also features beautiful, watercolor pictures of many types of amphibians that correspond to the information presented on the corresponding page. The name of each amphibian is also featured, and the last six pages of the book have more in-depth descriptions of the information described throughout the book. In addition, a glossary and suggested book and websites for additional reading are found on the last page. Overall, this book would be a great addition to any classroom and would be an easy way for students to complete research about amphibians, their habitats, and their characteristics. It is recommended for classroom use in a variety of grade levels.

Bilingual Nonfiction

Zoe David, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

ABOUT WOODPECKERS: A GUIDE FOR CHILDREN

Sill, Cathryn. John Sill. *About Woodpeckers: A Guide for Children*. Atlanta, GA: Peachtree Publishers, 2018. 978-1-68263-004-4. Grades K-3.

Beautiful illustrations are a highlight of this colorful and informative woodpecker-themed book. In each two-page spread, one page is dedicated to a full page illustration and the other page is for a sentence or two about woodpeckers. The information in the book is interesting and the illustration matches what they are talking about. A fun example is when you learn about the small feathers covering their nostrils to prevent them from breathing in the sawdust they create. The illustration is closer and angled so you are looking more at the top of their beak. The illustrations are eye-catching and beautiful watercolors done on 100% rag watercolor paper. Another fun part to this book is that each page that has words has a section in the lower left-hand corner that gives you a “plate” number and tells you the specific name of the woodpecker that is on the left page. There are eighteen plates and after the story is done, in the Afterword section, there is additional information on woodpeckers. You learn a fact or two about the specific woodpecker in the illustration. They even give you a thumbnail version of the illustration so you do not have to flip back into the story. There is also then a Glossary, Suggestions for Further Reading, and “Resources Especially Helpful in Developing this Book” section for more information. An additional note is that this book is one in a series called the “About...Series”. Sixteen other titles are available in the series, some of which include Amphibians, Hummingbirds, Crustaceans, and Raptors. This book comes highly recommended for any school, public, or personal library collection.

Nonfiction Picture Book

Erin Engler, Librarian, Whitehall-Coplay School District

ABOUT FISH

Sill, Cathryn. Illus. John Sill. *About Fish*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2017. 978-1-56145-988-9. \$7.95. Grades 1-2.

Are you looking for an informative book that can be used with a wide range of different grades? Well, this is the book for you! *About Fish* is a non-fiction text that explains the different characteristics of fish, their habitats, how they reproduce, what they eat, how they survive, and how they interact with people's lives. Each illustration shows a different species of fish and explains the type of fish in a caption. At the end of the book, there is an afterword section that can be used with higher grades to provide more detailed facts about the different fish. This provides really good differentiation for students of numerous ages. If they want to learn more about a particular fish and do enrichment activities, the back of the book would be perfect for them to reference! In addition, it includes a glossary at the end of the book that contains important terms that are referenced throughout the reading. It also recommends other books and provides websites that the students can use to gather more information. This book would be perfect to utilize for a class project or small activity where the student needs to find more information about fish!

Nonfiction

Gianna Gallagher, Student, Kutztown University

ZAYDE COMES TO LIVE

Sinykin, Sheri. Illus. Kristina Swarner. *Zayde Comes To Live*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2012. 978-1-56145-631-4. \$16.95. Grades 1-3.

This picture book introduces young readers to Rachel, a young Jewish girl, who learns how to deal with the impending death of her grandfather. Her "zayde", or grandfather, comes to live with her family, and Rachel discovers that this is because he is dying. Rachel is upset and wants to know what will happen to him. Friends describe what their Muslim and Christian beliefs say about what will happen to him after he dies. Her own rabbi also contributes with the Jewish beliefs about the afterlife. Eventually, Rachel discovers that Zayde will live on in her memories and that allows her to finally be able to cope with the loss. This book provides a source of comfort for children who are dealing with a recent or impending death of a family member or friend. It also provides varying viewpoints from three different religions. Overall, this book would be a good addition to a classroom library that students can refer to when they need additional comfort after a loss.

Picture Book

Zoe David, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

COUNTDOWN 2979 DAYS TO THE MOON

Slade, Suzanne. Illus. Thomas Gonzales. *Countdown 2979 days to the moon*, Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers. 2018. 9781682630136. \$22.95. Grades 5-9.

Almost fifty years ago, man walked on the moon. It took years of hard work, training, and learning from tragedy to accomplish the dream of President Kennedy. This book gives a brief history of each Apollo mission, from Apollo 1 in 1967 in which three astronauts died, up to the historic Apollo 11 mission in 1969 when man finally reached the moon. It is truly fascinating how human beings will risk life itself to achieve a goal. Imagine 'hopping' into a rocket ship and trusting that equipment will work in space. How about getting into a spacesuit and hoping it doesn't have any leaks when you take a spacewalk? Well, this is exactly what happened in the late 1960s. The term "it isn't rocket science" is tossed around lightly, but it WAS rocket science, and human ability that contributed to this monumental task. The book is very easy to read and breaks down each Apollo mission with an informative overview. If the reader wants more information on a particular Apollo mission, they will have to go elsewhere. There are many photos and detailed illustrations throughout the book which provide a very good complement to the story. This book provides the young reader with a nice introduction to mankind's quest to reach the moon and may inspire further reading on the subject. A nice addition to any library.

Nonfiction

Steve Tichy, Cataloger, Tamaqua Public Library

SMILEY'S DREAM BOOK

Smith, Jeff. *Smiley's Dream Book*. New York: Graphix, 2018. 978-0-545-67477-5. \$17.99. PreK-K.

This picture book follows the main character through the woods as he counts the singing birds. He counts up to twelve and then realizes that he is flying with the birds. As he is flying the story, the pages rely solely on the illustrations and onomatopoeias to tell the middle portion of the story. Birds fill the page and the main character flies all through the sky with them until a “mean” bird comes along and scares some of the birds away. For the birds that stay around the main character counts down from ten to one until he wakes up and realizes that all of the story was a dream. This book is great when teaching number and operations skills such as counting forwards and backwards. The pictures are also inviting to the reader making the book exciting and engaging for readers. Implementing this book into the classroom during math class or during a reading group to reinforce math skills would be appropriate.

Picture Book

Erin Crawford, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

BABY LOVES CODING!

Spiro, Ruth. *Baby Loves Coding!*. Charlesbridge: Watertown, 2018. \$8.99. 978-1-58089-884-3. Pre-K.

For the stem-minded parent the “Baby Loves Science” series is a go-to read that introduces science topics to their little one. This particular title introduces the concept of coding and the way one thinks as a programmer. The baby in the story is missing a piece of her train so she must go get it from the toy box. In order to get there though, the author presents her movement in a way that is similar to analog coding similar to the Scratch coding language created by MIT for young programmers. UP 3, LEFT 2 spaces, until baby gets to her goal and retrieves her train car. The art is bright and expressive and features a toy train that can be “coded” for its movement. It reflects some the current beginner coding toys available for the younger age set, i.e. the Codipillar toy train. It's a lofty goal to introduce the programmer's way of thinking but it may be above what the child can comprehend at this age despite its cute packaging. However, it is one of the few in the series that presents a clear concept that could be learned over time.

Board Book

Sara Moyer, Library Aide at Robeson Community Library

SO FAR UP

Strasser, Susanne. *So Far Up*. Waterford: Charlesbridge, 2018. 978-1-58089-848-5. \$7.99. PreK-K.

A delicious cake is tempting the bear, but it is so far up that he must figure out how to reach it. Fortunately, some friends come along to help him. This delightful picture book has been translated from its original German version to bring this board book to a larger audience. The author, Susanne Strasser, provides humorous repetition along with onomatopoeia to capture the attention of young children. Each page adds additional insight into how the animals will reach the cake that is high above them in the open window. The clean and simplistic pictures on each page keep the focus on the words with additions that tie into the text. Older children will find additional humor in the pictures as the animals change positions in each of their desperate attempts. What will happen when the cake disappears from the window? Read *So Far Up* to find out if the animals are successful!

Board Book

Kimberly Andersen, Principal, Eastern Lancaster County School District

SO LIGHT, SO HEAVY

Strasser, Susanne. *So Light, So Heavy*. Waterford: Charlesbridge, 2018. 978-1-58089-849-2. \$7.99. PreK-K.

Elephant is sad; he wants to have some fun teeter-tottering. How is elephant going to teeter-totter? Elephant's friends come to help but to no avail as they are so light, and he is so heavy. Will elephant ever get to teeter-totter? The author, Susanne Strasser, provides humorous repetition along with onomatopoeia to capture the attention of young children. Each page adds additional insight into how the elephant may be able to have some fun. The clean and simplistic pictures on each page keep the focus on the words with additions that tie into the text. Older readers will find additional humor in the pictures as the animals change positions in each of their desperate attempts to help elephant teeter-totter. There are several unexpected surprises that will keep the attention of readers of all ages throughout the book. Read *So Light, So Heavy* to find out if the animals are successful!

Board Book

Kimberly Andersen, Principal, Eastern Lancaster County School District

IN THE SNOW

Spurr, Elizabeth. *In the Snow*. Atlanta: Peachtree, 2018. 978-1-56145-855-4. \$6.95. PreK.

This board book teaches the reader about what to do in the snow. The story follows a young girl through her day of playing in the snow. Throughout the story, the young girl and her mom do different activities in the snow, such as making a snowman and sledding. The author uses descriptive sentences to share what the young girl is doing. The simple nature of the book will help readers to understand the story line and maybe help the reader take what they have read and apply it to their lives. For each page, a detailed illustration helps paint a picture for the reader of what the young girl is doing. This board book is a great education tool for children who are researching activities they can do in the snow, as well as introducing the idea of snow to students who may not have experienced snow before. Implementing this book into the classroom as a social aid or during a science lesson would be appropriate.

Board Book

Erin Crawford, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

IN THE RAIN

Spurr, Elizabeth. *In the Rain*. Atlanta: Peachtree, 2018. 978-1-56145-853-0. \$6.95. PreK.

This board book teaches the reader about what to do in the rain. The story follows a young girl through her day in the rain. It begins with a storm forming and the young girl getting ready to go outside in the rain. The story goes on to discuss different activities that can be done in the rain, such as making mud pies and jumping in puddles. The author uses simple sentences to state what the young girl is experiencing. The simple nature of the book will help readers to understand the story line and maybe take what they have read and apply it to their lives. For each page, a simple illustration helps paint a picture for the reader of what the young girl is doing. This board book is a great education tool for children who are developing an understanding of what to wear when going outside and activities they can do in different types of weather. Implementing this book into the classroom as a social aid or during a science lesson would be appropriate.

Board Book

Erin Crawford, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

MR. WOLF'S CLASS

Steinke, Aron Nels. *Mr. Wolf's Class*. New York: Graphix, an imprint of Scholastic, 2018. 978-1-339-04768-4. \$9.99. Grades 2-5.

This is Mr. Wolf's first year at Hazelwood Elementary School. As he gets his classroom ready for his fourth-grade class, he has no idea the antics his students are going to get into, whether they are planned or not. The students in the class each have their own distinct personality and come to school with different situations at home, similar to a real fourth-grade class. When the first day of school finally comes, the students fall into their crazy fourth grade selves and Mr. Wolf encounters problems that every elementary school teacher deals with, like the potty parade, tattling, walking through halls, and the occasional...missing student?! Steinke illustrates his graphic novel with fantastically simple drawings that bring Mr. Wolf's class to life. The story is light and fun, focusing on all the differences that are bound to come with a class and its students. The use of animals to represent the students and teachers creates a story where anyone can place themselves in a character and relate. Elementary students will undoubtedly enjoy the story, but teachers, those who currently teach elementary school or are looking to, will find it equally enjoyable and relatable.

Graphic Novel

Alyssa Daney, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

PIPSQUEAKS, SLOWPOKES, AND STINKERS: CELEBRATING ANIMAL UNDERDOGS

Stewart, Melissa. Illus. Stephanie Laberis. *Pipsqueaks, Slowpokes, and Stinkers: Celebrating Animal Underdogs*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2018. 978-1-56145-936-0. \$16.95. Grades PreK-3.

Everyone is different in their own way, and each of us have felt a sense of separation from others. Being different is not to say that any of us are less valuable, in fact, over time, we learn that our differences are what make each of us unique and makes us all stronger as a common people. Stewart addresses this exact lesson in a fun manner for a young audience by utilizing the “underdogs” of the animal kingdom! In this picture book, each unusual underdog is presented first by what makes them so strange/unique and then how that seeming “deficit” is truly their strength. Whether it’s the Etruscan pygmy shrew or Amau frog whose bodies are tiny, or the zarilla or hoatzin whose stench can clear a room, each oddball of the animal kingdom has their role to play and strengths to their advantage. After presenting several examples of these animal underdogs, Stewart concludes the book with a final thought for young minds to consider: what may seem like a weakness to some can actually be a strength! At the back of the book, there is a “More About the Underdogs” section where a snapshot of each unique critter is placed beside a fact regarding their “weakness” and how it helps them to survive. There’s even a small annotation from the author on the very last page where she addresses children who are currently being bullied, and she implores them to never give up and to always remember that what others may see as their weakness may very well be a strength. Not only is this picture book a great source for animal facts, but it also conveys a powerful social message for kids.

Picture Book

Megan Keenan, Graduate Student, Kutztown University

I SURVIVED: THE ERUPTION OF MOUNT ST. HELENS, 1980

Tarshis, Lauren. Illus. Scott Dawson. *I Survived: The Eruption of Mount St. Helens, 1980*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2016. 9780545658522. \$4.99. Grades 3-5.

Eleven-year-old Jess has grown up in Washington State, not far from Mount St. Helens—a majestic mountain surrounded by forest and streams. However, St. Helens is also a volcano that has started giving subtle warning signs of a bigger disaster. The author takes readers on Jess’s journey as a girl who loves exploration, adventuring with her twin best friends, Sam and Eddie, and remembering her father by immersing herself in nature and photography. Tarshis provides a detailed historical account of the volcanic eruption no one expected, while incorporating the fictional story of Jess. The black and white illustrations presented enhance the text, offering another lens to view the story. Additional information and resources are also included to encourage readers to explore this topic. The themes of friendship, enduring the loss of a parent, and surviving a natural disaster are drafted uniquely for children in this short chapter book that is sure to keep young readers engrossed until the final page.

Historical Fiction

Laura Conaway, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

I SURVIVED: THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, 1776

Tarshis, Lauren. *I Survived: The American Revolution, 1776*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2017. 978-0-545-91973-9. \$4.99 Grades 2-5.

I Survived #15 follows Nathan, an 11-year-old boy who finds himself involved in the Revolutionary War just as it was getting started. After losing his father to the sea, Nate was forced to move in with his rich, English-supporting, very mean uncle. One day, Nate ran away to try his own hand at sailing, but landed in New York City as it was preparing for a Redcoat attack. Nate finds himself working as a camp helper and then shooting a gun during the disastrous Battle of Brooklyn. He and most of his friends from the Connecticut 5th escape thanks to General Washington’s quick thinking. Nate then receives a letter stating that his uncle died of smallpox and he now owns the land, so he heads home to free the two people he loves most in the world: Eliza and Theo, two of his uncle’s slaves. The author provides information on the Revolutionary War, including examples of weapons used, and shares her research process. She also provides book titles for students and educators who are interested in reading more about the Revolutionary War.

Historical Fiction

Brittany Harris, Graduate Assistant, Kutztown University

DEADLY WISH

Thomson, Sarah. *Deadly Wish*. Boyds Mill Press: Honesdale, PA. 2017. 978-1-62979-777-9. \$17.95. Grades 5-9.

In this fast paced, action-packed sequel to her previous novel, *Deadly Flowers*, Thomson continues the story of Kata, a young female ninja who is on a mission to protect herself and indeed, the world. Kata serves as the guardian of a pearl that holds a demon who could be released with a simple wish. In her efforts to prevent the demon from being unleashed, Kata learns that even though she is a highly trained ninja and is skilled at working alone, sometimes you must allow others to offer their help in order to successfully complete the mission. Filled with both fantasy and action, this novel may be enjoyed by both male and female adolescent audiences. The strong female protagonist, however, makes it especially relevant for young girls. Readers are encouraged to consult the author's notes at the end of the book to better understand Asian mythical and cultural references. This book would be a nice addition to any intermediate or middle school library collection and may be paired with nonfiction text on Asian culture and/or ninjas in an instructional setting.

Fantasy

Cherie Lenahan, Teacher, ELANCO School District

TEN CENTS A POUND

Tran-Davis, Nhung N. Illus. Josee Bisaillon. *Ten Cents A Pound*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2018. 9781772600568. \$18.95 Grades K-3.

In this story the reader learns about the hardships a mother will endure to make her daughter's life better. The daughter mentions how her mother's back is sore, her hands are cracked, her vision is blurry, and her slippers are ruined. Due to these concerns the daughter wants to stay and help her mother in the coffee rows. When the daughter mentions each individual concern, the mother explains that she endures and continues to do the hard work for 10 cents per pound to make her daughter's life better than her life has been. She does not want her daughter to stay and help her. She wants her to take the shoes, backpack, and items in the backpack, which she bought with the money she saved making 10 cents per pound and go off to school and make a better life for herself. This is a wonderful story that shows the love between a mother and daughter. We see how the daughter wants to be there and help her mother in her hard job working in the coffee rows, but we also see that the mother is doing that hard job, so her daughter never has to do a hard job making only 10 cents per pound. This story teaches us about the love of a mother and daughter and how a parent should always want to make the life of their children better than the life they have lived. The illustrations in this book help to add meaning to the story. They depict the hardships of the mother, the dreams of the daughter, and the love they share for each other. I highly recommend this book to younger elementary students.

Picture Book

Cassandra Hillegass EdD, Professor, Central Penn College

TEN CENTS A POUND

Tran-Davies, Nhung N. Illus. Josée Bisaillon. *Ten Cents A Pound*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2018. 978-1-77260-056-8. \$18.95. Grades K-3.

This picture book describes a mother-daughter relationship in which it is proven that the mother always wants the best for her daughter. A young girl must choose between staying home with her family in their village and going to school to learn and discover all the new things in the world. This book describes their exchanges in which the daughter questions her desire to attend school and her mother insists that she must go. This book would be ideal to showcase diversity and the sacrifice that many children, especially girls, make in order to receive an education. It could also be used to describe what life is like in developing countries. It can be read aloud to students, but the words are also simple enough that young students can read it on their own. This book would also be beneficial when teaching students to look for deeper meanings in stories. The beautiful, watercolor pictures enhance the rhyming prose which leads to an engaging book. This would be a great addition to any classroom or library.

Fiction/Picture Book

Zoe David, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

I USE THE POTTY

Van Lieshout, Maria. *I Use the Potty*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2016. 978-1-4521-3535-9. \$9.99. PreK-K

This great picture book encourages readers to “use the potty.” The book follows a little boy who shares with the reader how he went from using a diaper as a baby, to now using the toilet when needing to go to the bathroom. This is a great social story for children to experience, which encourages them to use the toilet. The author uses simple pictures with repeating color to help the images jump off the page. She also uses simple sentences to relate to the way a younger child may speak, at an easier level of understanding for their comprehension. This book is a great tool for parents and educators to use to encourage children who are at an age where using the toilet is appropriate. The book is engaging for the reader and encourages using the toilet as a way to become a “big kid.” Implementing this book into the classroom as a social aid and concept book would be appropriate, especially in an early intervention or Special education setting.

Picture Book

Erin Crawford, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

I FELT A FUNERAL, IN MY BRAIN

Walton, Will. *I Felt a Funeral, In My Brain*. New York: Push, 2018. 978-0-545-70956-9. \$17.99. Grades 9-12.

High school age Avery is hurting and expresses himself with poetry. In this novel, some in prose and some in verse, readers will discover Avery's favorite poets (most have killed themselves), music (pop), inspirational teacher (Ms. Poss), best friends (Luca and Pal), internal struggles, and family trauma. As he embraces his homosexuality by tentatively experimenting with Luca, he also struggles to take care of himself when the adults in his life cannot pull themselves together. His mother is an alcoholic and spends some time in a rehabilitation facility after crashing the car, breaking Avery's leg. Avery has to live with his grandfather, Pal, and his grandfather's girlfriend, Babs, who both care for him like their own, but have their own limitations. Pal has diabetes and also struggles with alcohol, but continues to secretly consume beverages dangerous to these conditions. Avery, Luca, Pal, and their families all live on the same street in a small, rural town, and with Avery's broken leg, he does not get to move around much this summer. He starts to experiment with alcohol and readers worry about the repeating pattern of alcoholism within families. Avery will also lose someone very close to him, which exacerbates this budding habit. This is a moving and heartbreaking novel that will help readers struggling with their own internal and family demons to see that some coping mechanisms are better than others. This is recommended for libraries that serve young adults.

Realistic Fiction/Poetry

Amber Sams, Librarian, Saucon Valley High School

THE BOXCAR CHILDREN: THE MYSTERY AT THE CALGARY STAMPEDE

Warner, Gertrude. *The Boxcar Children: The Mystery at the Calgary Stampede*. Chicago: Albert Whitman & Company, 2015. 978-0-8075-2840-2. \$15.99. Grades 1-5.

The adventures of the boxcar children continue as the four siblings travel with their grandfather to the province of Alberta, Canada to experience the Calgary Stampede. Once there, they meet an old friend of their grandfather, Judy Simon, and her niece Daisy. Because Daisy is about to perform for the first time as a Young Canadian as part of the Stampede festivities, her aunt gives her a special pin for good luck. However, before the show begins, Daisy finds she has lost her pin! It is up to Henry, Jessie, Violet, and Benny to discover what has happened to the pin- a mystery that teaches them about the importance of preserving historical artifacts, fixing one's mistakes, and friendship. Young readers will enjoy helping to solve the mystery of the missing pin as they learn about the traditions of Cow Town Calgary through the descriptions of the festivities and the delightful illustrations. This book would be a great addition to a classroom library as *The Boxcar Children* promotes a love of reading (with many, many books in the series, from the original nineteen books written by Gertrude Chandler Warner as well as the dozens of others continued to be written by other authors) as well as teaches background knowledge of important places in North America.

Realistic Fiction

Emily L. Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

WHEN WE WERE SHADOWS: A HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE BOOK FOR YOUNG READERS

Wees, Janet. *When We Were Shadows: A Holocaust Remembrance Book for Young Readers*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2018. 9781772600612. \$14.95. Grades 5-8.

This WWII/ Holocaust book tells the reader the true story of a family who spends most of the war years on the run and in hiding. His story is told in by Walter through letters to his granddaughter, Jenny, which he wrote many years after the war and letters he wrote during the war years to his Oma (grandmother). In 1937, when Walter, who was only five years old at the time, his family fled Germany for the Netherlands. Walter's father made a deal with a friend to keep his business and belongs safe while they were in the Netherlands. This was a scary plan because his father had to trust this man to keep his promise. For almost three years they were safe in the Netherlands, but on May 10 1940, the Germans invaded the Netherlands and Walter's family had to had to run and hide. Some of Walter's family were taken to safe places where they would be hidden for the long term. This was his elderly grandmother and his ill sister. Walter, his mother, and father were now on the run or hiding when they were able to find somewhere safe or the resistance was able to find them a safe place to hide. They hid in many places of the next five years. The reader is taken on the adventure with Walter, learning of the places his parents and he hid. Living in small areas with many people, hiding in homes of strangers, going without food, surviving the cold, losing friends he made along the way, literally running from Nazis, and other horrific situations. This book is directed at 5th-8th graders. I agree with that age range, but highly recommend this book for anyone interested in learning how a young boy and his family lived during and survived the WWII. I have read many books on the war and the holocaust, but this was my first related to a family who survived on the run. This is a truly inspiring story of courage and how people, even in the worst of times, still cared to help each other.

Non-Fiction/History, WWII

Cassandra Hillegass EdD, Professor, Central Penn Collage

LISTEN TO YOUR HEART

West, Kasie. *Listen to Your Heart*. Point: New York, 2018. 978-1-338-21005-7. \$17.99. Grades 9-12.

High school junior Kate Bailey loves life in Lakesprings, but attending school in the nearby town of Oak Court is a different story. Since her boyfriend Hunter moved away, she must rely on her best friend, Alana, and her large extended family for support. When Alana talks her into taking a podcasting class, Kate becomes the popular cohost of an advice podcast. As Kate learns the ins and outs of podcast production, she weathers the complex relationships in her life. A wealthy family in Lakesprings is trying to take over her family's marina, and her best friend's crush, Diego, adds complications. Teen dialogue and interactions are honest and realistic; Ms. West clearly knows her way around teenage girls. The plotline moves along steadily, with vivid descriptions of locales and character actions. This young adult fiction addresses all of the typical teen topics: dating angst, friendship, love, family issues, bullying, and the stresses of school. The novel is likely to interest girls ages 13-18.

Young Adult

Marge McCormick, Tamaqua Area Middle School

VELOCITY

Wooding, Chris. *Velocity*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2015. 978-0-545-94494-6. \$18.99. Grades 7+.

Two friends, Cassica and Shiara, battle it out on the racetrack against several other competitors for a chance at a life of luxury. The only problem is that while their lives are on the line so is their friendship as they enter into the Widowmaker, a three-day racing competition. It's the biggest and deadliest race of the year that the pair are sure they could win with their set of skills, but the competition is fierce. The need to compete wedges its way into the middle of their friendship slowly separating them from each other. This racing battle for luxury isn't the only thing pitting Cassica and Shiara against each other because a man named Harlan works to make their competition even harder. As the three-day competition continues more and more problems arise, but Cassica and Shiara hold strong. The book really shows the power of friendship and how anyone can be a hero in some way. The pair become legends in their hometown of Coppermouth by taking down of the system in a Hunger Games kind of style only with homemade racecars. It's another great display of strong female characters, which can show girls that they can do anything they set their minds on, even build a racecar.

Dystopian Fiction

Megan Meyer, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

HANSEL AND GRETEL

Woollvin, Bethan. *Hansel and Gretel*. Atlanta: Peachtree, 2018. 9781682630730. \$16.95. Grades K-4.

Hansel and Gretel go on an alternative adventure in this fractured fairytale, testing the limits and patience of a good witch they encounter living in a gingerbread house. Despite the generosity shown to them, the children repay the kindness with disobedience and selfishness. The ending, based on the characters' actions, is comical and will leave readers surprised. Overall, the author does a wonderful job of taking a well-known fairytale and transforming it for a younger audience. Woven into the narrative, Woollvin's gouache illustrations on cartridge paper enhance the story by offering more visuals than the text supplies by itself. In addition, the limited color palette allows for the focus to be centered on select images. Elementary age children will enjoy this easy read presented in an engaging format.

Picture Book

Laura Conaway, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

THE PROMISE

Zvi, Pnina Bat. And Margie Wolfe. Illus. Isabelle Cardinal. *The Promise*. Ontario: Second Story Press, 2018. 978-1-77260-058-2. \$18.95. Grades 1-3.

This powerful and moving true story is set up in Auschwitz. Two sisters forced from their homes during World War two make a promise to their parents that they will stay together. The authors of the book are cousins, the daughters of the sisters in the book. Together they share the chilling and powerful story of their mothers. The strength of these two sisters is admirable. This real-life story allows the readers to sympathize with the sisters. The illustrations only add to the powerful story. This book is a good book for elementary school students to share an awful historical time such as the Holocaust.

Picture Book

Karlene Rutherford, Undergraduate student, Kutztown University

Instructions For Submitting Book Reviews

After you have read the books you have selected, please follow the instructions provided for writing and submitting your book reviews. Please include ALL information and do not skip any criteria. If a review is incomplete, it will not be used.

1. Plagiarized book reviews will not be accepted.
2. Submit reviews in Microsoft Word format (.docx or .doc). If a program other than MS Word is used to write the reviews, please save the files as "rtf" or "rich text format" files. **All reviews should be in the same document** you should be sending **one attachment** with all of your reviews in it. Reviews should be emailed to libsci@kutztown.edu.

**If you have ANY questions about how to write. Format. or submit your reviews please email the graduate assistant at libsci@kutztown.edu and ask.*

3. The following are examples of **genre/format**: Adventure, Animal Story, Autobiography, Biography, Board Book, Chapter Book, Coming of Age, Drama, Fairy Tale, Fantasy, Fiction, Folktale/Legend, Graphic Novel, Historical Fiction, Horror, Humor, Mystery, Mythology, Nonfiction, Picture Book, Poetry, Realism, Romance, Science Fiction, Short Stories, Sports. These are examples, you are not limited to them.
4. Once the reviews are finished, send them in an email, as a single attachment, to libsci@kutztown.edu with your last name and Book Review in the subject line. Please save a copy of your reviews until they have been published.
5. **Below** is an example of a proper citation and review and its components:

Author Last Name, First Name. Illus. Illustrator First and Last Name. Title. City of Publisher: Publisher, Copyright Year. ISBN. \$Price of Book. Grade Level.

If the illustrator is not named or if the author is also the illustrator your citation does not need the illustrator information. Your review should give a brief summary of the book. **Do not use the words "I" or "we" or "you"**. A good review should be between 150-300 words. The last sentence or two should tell what you thought about the book (without saying "I liked this book..."). You can also include how the book could be used in a library or classroom.

Genre/Format

Name, Position, School

EXAMPLE:

Wiesner, David. *Tuesday*. New York: Clarion Books, 1991. 0395870828. \$14.13. PreK-1

Wiesner's *Tuesday*, a Caldecott Medal winner, is a nearly wordless picture book that depicts the strange events of a Tuesday evening through stunning watercolor pictures. Beginning around 8:00 Tuesday evening, the first page shows a three panel picture of a quiet pond where a turtle sits on a log. What seems quiet and serene drastically changes with the flip of a page when frogs rise from the pond on floating lily pads, above the now frightened turtle. The frogs take flight to a nearby neighborhood where they chase birds and scare dogs, confuse a man eating his late-night snack and watch some television in an old woman's home. As morning approaches the frogs fly back to the pond, abandon their magical lily pads and leap back into the pond. The reader is left to wonder what might happen next Tuesday evening, when pigs fly. Wiesner's stunning watercolor pictures are rich in color and elaborately detailed. Young children with growing imaginations will love this book, as they can create the story to go along with the pictures. This is a great text to engage children who cannot yet read, or are just learning to read, as a way to support emerging literacy skills. *Tuesday* is a must have for every children's book collection.

Picture Book/Fantasy

Lindsay Bowman, Graduate Student, Kutztown University

The Department of Library Science and Instructional Technology sends your book reviews to the **Children's Literature Comprehensive Database (CLCD)**. This database is a national collection of professional book reviews. To ensure your review is included in this database we are asking that each review be written completely and professionally. When writing your review make sure it is a review you would find helpful if you wanted information about the book. Any reviews that do not meet these criteria will not be included in the database. On the following page, you will find some general guidelines that will tell you what the CLCD is looking for in a review.

General Guidelines (from the Children's Literature Comprehensive Database)

Every review should have three essential components: a strong opening that invites further reading; a summary of content or plot; and an evaluation that assesses how well an author presents the material, creates believable characters, and serves the target audience. The evaluation is by far the most useful portion for collection developers. Presenting this information in one short paragraph enables the reader to understand both content summary and the evaluation.

- a. **Stay within the limit of 150-300 words** (the review may approach 600 words when reviewing an Encyclopedia). Anything less than 150 words is merely an annotation.
- b. **Use present tense, active voice when writing a review, unless** when writing about events in history for nonfiction reviews. **Avoid the use of "you"** whenever possible, instead **use third-person point of view**.
- c. Reviews should **follow a logical progression of thought**.

- d. **When citing an author, use only the last name.** The full name appears in the header containing bibliographic information. It is also unnecessary to repeat the title within the review, a practice that also wastes word count.
- e. **Include the names and roles of the main characters** and be sure to **identify their general or specific ages** (i.e. eleven-year-old, middle schoolers).
- f. Try to **limit pulling quotes** from the book. Doing so often wastes words and is an example of "telling", not "showing."
- g. **Avoid repetition** of word and thought. Rereading your review and editing can help solve this problem.
- h. **When using the word "this," make sure that there is a noun attached to it** to avoid confusion, lack of clarity. "This is an example of bad writing." "This review exemplifies good writing."
- i. **Provide comparisons or alternatives where appropriate**, especially when a book is not recommended. Book A does not fulfill its purpose effectively. Recommend Book B or C instead.
- j. **Always proofread your work and edit. Then read it again. And again.**

**THANK YOU EVERYONE FOR
PARTICIPATING IN THE SPRING BOOK
REVIEW!**

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU
IN THE FALL!**

The Department of Library and Learning Technologies

