The background features a large, light brown leaf on the left side. In the center, there is a dark brown rectangular box with a thin orange border. Below this box, there is a bright orange pumpkin with a black stem and three black curly lines representing leaves. To the right of the pumpkin, there are several autumn leaves in shades of brown, orange, and red. The text is centered within the dark brown box and the white box above it.

**The Department of Library Science and
Instructional Technology**
Presents

**FALL
BOOK
REVIEW**

2015

Sponsored by Kutztown University

Fall Book Review

Tuesday, November 17, 2015

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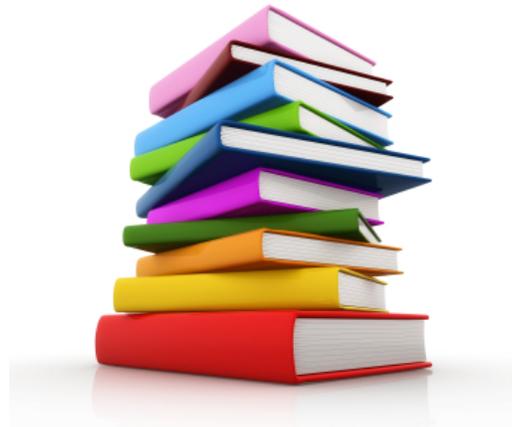
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FALL BOOK REVIEW

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

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

Thank you for your time and effort!



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THE CASE FOR LOVING: THE FIGHT FOR INTERRACIAL MARRIAGE

Alko, Selina. *The Case For Loving: The Fight for Interracial Marriage*. New York: Arthur A. Levine Books, 2015. \$18.99. 978-0-545-47853-3. Print

The Case for Loving is a nonfiction book that describes the hardship of interracial couples during the 1950's and 1960's. This is based on a true story from the case of *Loving vs. Virginia*. Two young adults were in love but there was a small problem, one was white and one was "colored". Today, that is not a problem and it can be legally done, but in the 1950's, not so much. 16 states outlawed interracial marriage. These two young lovers, Richard and Mildred, affectionately nicknamed "String Bean", thought they could still get married in Washington D.C. and live in Virginia peacefully. Well, two officers who came in the middle of the night after they got married said otherwise. They were arrested for living together. The distraught couple ended up leaving Virginia and going to Washington, D.C. During the nine years there, they missed their family and the life of their hometown. It was the 1960's and the Civil rights Movement was kicking off. They decided to bring their case to court and to try again. The subject of interracial marriage is not as sticky or inappropriate as it was before 1960. Many families are considered bi-racial. This could be an eye-opener for children and a book appropriate to discuss the Civil Rights Movements. Ages 7-11.

Nonfiction

Carla Castro, Library Science Student, Kutztown University of Pa.

PLEASE, MR. PANDA

Antony, Steve. *Please, Mr. Panda*. New York: Scholastic, 2014. 978-0-545-78892-2. \$16.99.

Picture Book. Grades Preschool-1.

When Mr. Panda, in his too-tiny hat with the word "doughnuts" on it, asks a penguin, a skunk, an ostrich, and a whale if they would like a doughnut, they forget their manners. The ostrich simply tells him, "No, go away," and the others answer in demands instead of politeness, which causes Mr. Panda to reply, "No, you cannot have a doughnut. I have changed my mind." The story and the picture are both turned around when he encounters a lemur that not only asks politely, but also says thank you when the panda rewards him with the whole box.

Antony has created a brief and powerful lesson with his text and images. The neutral background and character colors allow the expressions of the characters and the colorful doughnuts to stand out. Young readers will enjoy the seemingly grumpy Mr. Panda and his quest to free himself from the doughnuts, and the story gives adults a chance to point out the importance of politeness without a heavy lesson. With simple text, a quick plot, and a good lesson, this book would work well in elementary schools and preschools, and it would make a great addition to all public and school libraries.

Picture Book

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

SCHOLASTIC DISCOVER MORE: ANIMAL FACES

Arlon, Penelope and Tory Gordon-Harris. *Animal Faces*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2015. 978-0-545-79121-2. \$7.99. Gr. K-3.

The cover alone will attract young readers to this interesting nonfiction book. *Animal Faces* is a book in Scholastic's Discover More series. The book allows the readers to view and compare the faces of a wide variety of animals. Each page focuses on a different animal topic, such as "senses" or "mammals", but shows a variety of animals within that topic. The photographs are appealing and will keep readers interested. There are facts peppered throughout the pages which will keep the readers attentive. This book begins with a simple table of contents. It ends with an age-appropriate, informative glossary and an extensive index for a primary nonfiction book. The pictures are also credited in a specific section as well. A wonderful feature in the books in the Discover More series is that you are given a code to download a free digital companion book, in this case titled *Baby Faces*. This book would be recommended for school and public libraries. (160)

Children's Nonfiction

Erin Engler, Gockley Elementary, Whitehall-Coplay SD

MY GRANDFATHER'S COAT

Aylesworth, Jim. Illus. Barbara McClintock. *My Grandfather's Coat*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2014. 978-0-439-92545-7. \$17.99. Gr. K-2.

Aylesworth retells the Yiddish folksong, "I Had a Little Overcoat". The story is told from the granddaughter's point of view of how her Jewish grandfather came to America and made a living. The grandfather came over on a boat to Ellis Island all alone as a small boy. He grew up to be a tailor. When the grandfather decided to get married he made a handsome coat for the wedding day. He wore the coat until he wore it out, but the material was still good so he created a smart jacket. The jacket wore out so the grandfather created a snazzy vest from the jacket. When the vest wore out he made a stylish tie out of the vest. After the vest wore out the grandfather made a toy cloth mouse for his great grandchild. The toy wore out and the grandfather assured his great grandson that nothing was wasted. Later a mouse took what was left of the toy to make a nest for her babies until the nest disintegrated. The story ends with the granddaughter reading the tale to her son. Throughout the book the illustrations tell of how each piece of cloth was worn out at special events for the family. The detailed pen, ink, and watercolor illustration make this story a great read-aloud with its repetitive words and opportunities for prediction. There is an author and illustrator note that explains the history of immigration and the importance of hard work and thrift which could be explained to young readers. The back cover has a recipe for coat cookies where children are encouraged to nibble the coat into one of the other shapes listed in the book. Aylesworth and McClintock have created another hit which would make a great addition to any public or school library.

Folktale

Sarah Meitzler, Circulation Manager, Lower Macungie Library

JUNA'S JAR

Bahk, Jane. Illus. Felicia Hoshimo. *Juna's Jar*. New York: Lee & Low Books, 2015. 978-1-60060-853-7. \$17.95. PreK-4.

This delightful picture book is about a young girl, Juna, who, along with her best friend Hector, loves to collect nature in an old kimchi jar. When Hector moves away, Juna continues to fill her jar with something new- a fish, a plant, a cricket- and each time imagines how much more fun her adventures would be if Hector were with her. And each time her imagination takes her on a fantastic journey, the plant or animal she has collected becomes too big for the jar and needs to be set free. The story ends with a new friend, a new creature, and an untold adventure. *Juna's Jar* invites readers to let their imaginations run wild, ask questions about nature, and explore what it feels like to have a friend move far away. Readers might also learn new words in Spanish and Korean. The beautiful watercolor illustrations are captivating and help set the story's heartwarming tone. This book would be great in an elementary classroom tied to the themes of friendship, loss/separation, imagination, nature, or multiculturalism. The open-ended conclusion lends itself to teaching the skill of predicting. Students could easily write or illustrate Juna's next adventure.

Picture Book

Emily L. Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

DECODING OUR DNA: CRAIG VENTER VS. THE HUMAN GENOME PROJECT

Ballen, Karen Gunnison. *Decoding Our DNA: Craig Venter vs The Human Genome Project*. Minneapolis, MN: Twenty-First Century Books, 2013. 9780761354895. \$33.27. Grades 8+.

This book is one of at least four in a series named **Scientific Rivalries and Scandals**. This particular entry details the often nasty race to sequence the human genome. Thoroughly detailing the scientists, corporations, government and public agencies, and the actual science behind human DNA, the book is so fully packed with information it borders on information overload and may be a tough sell for younger readers to complete the book. Each chapter discusses a different hot topic in human DNA mapping such as the patent process or the ethics involved. With so much information on the key players involved, a DNA timeline, source notes, glossary, and many photographs, the book would make an excellent reference source for a school project. However, due to the fact the book is so technical in nature, it is best suited for advanced readers and may find a good home in the Young Adult (YA) section.

Nonfiction

Steve Tichy, Cataloger, Tamaqua Public Library

PIECES AND PLAYERS

Balliett, Blue. Illus. Brett Helquist. *Pieces and Players*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2015. 978-0-545-29990-9. \$17.99. Gr. 4-6.

Calder, Petra, and Tommy from Balliett's *Chasing Vermeer*, *The Wright 3*, and *The Calder Game* novels are back and ready to solve another mystery. This time the players are joined by Zoomy from Balliett's *The Danger Box*, and Early from Balliett's *Hold Fast*. Five thirteen year old detectives are trying to solve the disappearance of thirteen pieces of art that were stolen from the fictitious Farmer museum. The teens' old friends, Mrs. Sharpe and Ms. Hussey, encourage the teens along their journey. The pieces of art that are stolen speak to the teens along with the museum ghost, prime numbers, famous pieces of Chicago art, and Mother Goose nursery rhymes. Along the way the teens must learn which players in the game they can trust such as Eagle and the trustees of the museum. This new novel by Balliett is not as well written as her previous novels. The ending was rushed and the clues were forced by the use of an Ouija board. Since the characters are now in their teens the novel only included one of Helquist's illustrations instead of including multiple illustrations which allowed readers a chance to solve the puzzle using the pantomimes in the illustrations. The addition of Zoomy and Early seemed awkward at first especially since a group of five teens sneaking around was not as conspicuous as three characters. The author's note reveals that this art heist was based on a real heist in Boston. Readers who love Balliett's novels will also enjoy this addition and new readers do not need to read the rest of the series to appreciate this novel. This title seems to be more geared toward an older audience than Balliett's previous novels but nevertheless should be added to a school or public library.

Chapter Book; Mystery Sarah Meitzler, Circulation Manager, Lower Macungie Library

STANLEY'S GARAGE

Bee, William. *Stanley's Garage*. Great Britain: Random House, 2014. 978-1-56145-804-2. \$14.95. Gr: Pre-K

The main character, Stanley, who is a hamster, runs a busy garage. In this day in the life of story, Stanley fixes car problems as they arrive from his friends. He pumps gas, fixes a flat tire, cools an overheating car, uses his tow truck, and of course gets dirty. He then goes home, eats, showers, goes to bed ready for another day. Each of the rodent customers has a unique name, color, type of car, and problem. Stanley always has the right tool or solution for any problem thrown at him. Narrated in a way that asks the listener to think about what is happening and what will happen next. This is a colorful book that is digitally illustrated with simple pictures. The beginning has all of Stanley's tools laid out, covering two pages. This book could be used for young children in a unit designed to explain career and job choices. It is very simple, yet entertaining for youngsters.

Picture Book Michael Murphy, Librarian, Quakertown Community SD

THE IRON TRIAL

Black, Holly & Cassandra Clare. Illus. Scott Fischer. *The Iron Trial (Magisterium Book 1)*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2014. 978-0-545-52225-0. \$17.99. 7-10.

Young adults who are a fan of Harry Potter will delight in waiting for the release of each book in this series. This first book in an upcoming set of five introduces readers to 12-year-old Callum Hunt, who is instructed by his widower father, Alastair, to fail the tests for entrance to the Magisterium, where young apprentices learn how to control their magical powers. Students in the Magisterium must learn to control fire, water, air, earth, and chaos to protect the world against the Enemy of Death. Call knows he is different, never really having fit in due to his bad leg and general misbehavior. But he does not realize quite how different he is until he fails to fail, and Master Rufus pick him anyway. Until he starts to make friends, real friends... only to discover that he might be much more than just a misfit. Ultimately, Call is forced to choose between being accepted and doing the right thing. His choice creates a cliffhanger at the end of Book 1, leaving readers wondering how Callum Hunt's decision will affect his new friends and fellow apprentices Aaron and Tamara, the rest of the Iron Year class, and the future of the entire Magisterium. *The Iron Trial* is an exciting read, complete with adventure, mystery, danger and good versus evil. This is a great book choice for fantasy-loving teens, and could even fit into a classroom theme on bullying or friendship.

Fantasy

Emily L. Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

STINKY CECIL IN OPERATION POND RESCUE

Braddock, Paige. *Stinky Cecil In Operation Pond Rescue*. Kansas City: Andrews McMeel Publishing, LLC, 2015. \$9.99. 978-1-4494-5711-2. Fiction – Comic book. Grades 3-9.

Stinky Cecil is an American toad who lives with his friends at a pond that is about to be taken over by road construction. When Cecil is caught by a hawk that carries him over the construction site, he uses his ability to release a stinky gas to free himself so that he can warn his friends and come up with a plan to save the pond. Although the group's plans don't work out, some biologists show up at just the right time and recognize that Cecil's friend RayRay is an endangered "Jollyville Plateau Salamander." This makes the pond a protected habitat and saves the pond. Although Braddock is a successful writer and illustrator, the plot in this comic seems somewhat forced at times. That being said, I think readers will enjoy the story overall, which is well-served by Braddock's clear, bold, and colorful illustrations that capture the emotions of the characters and move the story along at a decent pace. She provides some fun facts and cartoons at the end of the book that provide basic information about both the American toad and common earthworms. The book would work well in a text set for an elementary lesson on pond life, conservation, or even friendship and teamwork. It would also be a nice additional resource for school and public libraries.

Comic Book

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

RAINY, SUNNY, BLOWY, SNOWY: WHAT ARE SEASONS?

Brocket, Jane. *Rainy, Sunny, Blowy, Snowy: What are Seasons?* Minneapolis: Millbrook Press, 2015. 978-1-4677-0231-7. \$26.60. PreK-3.

This book's enthralling photographs and poetic language will draw readers in, and will be enjoyed just as much, if not more, on each successive reading. Brocket invites young readers to consider the signs of weather, light, and nature when identifying the season. The author describes each of the four seasons with thoughtful words which accompany the appropriately chosen photographs, completing the picture of what the world looks like during that particular season. Young children will have fun lingering on their favorite photographs, making and sharing connections with their own experiences during each season. At the conclusion of the book, Brocket asks readers to describe the seasons where they live and identify their favorite season. This book would work well as a companion to topics in science, as a springboard for teaching descriptive writing, or for vocabulary development in an ESL classroom.

Picture Book; Nonfiction

Emily L. Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

JEDI ACADEMY: RETURN OF PADAWAN

Brown, Jeffery. *Jedi Academy: Return of Padawan*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2014. \$12.99. ISBN: 978-0-545-62125-0. Graphic Novel. Grade Level: 7-10.

A new school year begins for the young Padawan Roan at the Jedi Academy. He looks forward to Jedi fighter pilot training in a flight simulator that was purchase by the school and a new class pet, a Voorpak, that they all must take care of. The school also institutes a new social media website called holobook. Not all is well though for Roan this year. Holobook, while it is a positive thing, creates some cyber bullying by the meaner kids in his class. He breaks the flight simulator and doesn't work well with Mr. Griffin, his flight teacher. Roan makes some decisions that end up distancing himself from his friends and almost loses them completely. He starts hanging out with the students that bullied him after they were put into a group for a class project and almost goes more towards the dark side. Luckily, Roan is able to see the faults in his actions that entire year and is able to repair the relationships with his friends. He becomes a stronger, more humble person because of it. And thus another school year at the Jedi Academy ends! The novel is set up in the same way as the previous book, with the story broken up in journal entries with pages of cartoons and various documents that Roan gets during his school year. At the end of the novel, the author encourages the reader to write their own story in their own way and to share it with others. It is a good graphic novel for the middle and early high school grades that are Star Wars fans. It deals with bullying in various forms either though the holobook or in person and how a misunderstanding can be fixed by listening to the other person, instead of assuming the worst.

Graphic Novel; Science Fiction

**Sara Moyer, Instructional Support Specialist at
Reading Area Community College**

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL

Cali, Davide. Illus. Benjamin Chaud. *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to School*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2015. 9781452131689. \$12.99. Gr. K-3.

In Davide Cali's *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to School*, a boy tells his teacher an elaborate magical tale of why he's late to school. The boy tells of the ninjas, the mole people, the blob he had to fight off, the president needing his help for an alien invasion, and many more ridiculous excuses. The ending involving a time machine, leaves the reader wondering of the boy's unexpected credibility. From the author and illustrator of *I Didn't Do My Homework Because..*, this is another whimsical story that will spark children's imagination and have them laughing out loud. The detail and color in the illustrations pair with the story, the ridiculous plot, and bring the story to life. Due to the smaller size of the book, this would be excellent for a child to read independently, one-on-one reading or a smaller group of children for a read aloud. **Picture Book; Humor** **Melanie Stuhr, Librarian, King George Elementary VA**

SOMETIMES YOU BARF

Carlson, Nancy. *Sometimes you barf*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 2014. 978-1-4677-1412-9. \$13.99. Gr: K-3

This book is narrated by an unnamed child who explains that "everyone barfs once in a while." Learned though the book, dogs get sick and then snap back for more carefree eating. As an example her dog Archie gets sick. In contrast when kids get sick they can worry what is happening to them. The main character eases the fear of the reader by taking a comical journey explaining how our bodies work. There is the flu bug, lots of green faces, avoiding math tests, classmates overreacting, biohazard outfitted cleanup crews, and sick days from school. Comfort can be found in the way the child recognizes the problem and goes through the steps till her green face disappears along with the flu bug character. She gets back to school, classmates are happy to see her, there is an unavoidable math test, and barfing is recapped. Pictures of variously green faced animals are drawn barfing. The vomit is not gross looking. Different colored squiggles that are exiting mouths are used to portray what happens when sickness does occur. Only the flu is mentioned as cause for vomiting, therefore a point to explain to children. Generally a funny book ideal for ill child scarred about their sickness.

Picture Book

Michael Murphy, Librarian, Quakertown Community SD

ALL FALL DOWN: AN EMBASSY ROW NOVEL

Carter, Ally. *All Fall Down: An Embassy Row Novel*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2015. 978-0-545-65474-6. \$17.99. Grades 7 and up.

In this first book of Carter's new Embassy Row series, the characters come from and explore a very different world. A world where one wrong move can cause war between countries. Grace, the main character, is the granddaughter of a powerful United States Ambassador with whom she is sent to live with and in the process has to follow all the rules of Embassy Row. Grace has not only lost her mother, but watched her being murdered. Everyone thinks her mother's death was just an accident, but Grace knows different. Grace's mother's murderer has shown up on Embassy Row, and Grace is determined to make him pay, but finding him is dangerous and not everything is what it seems. This is great book for young adults to get a better understanding of politics and the traditions and cultures in different countries. Not just a great story, but this is a book that will inspire teens to take a greater look at what it takes to keep peace; and it goes in depth to explore the grief of losing a parent. This book is a highly recommended addition to the Young Adult section of any library – the next book in the series is also highly anticipated.

Fiction

**Hannah Miller, former Young Adult Specialist
Tamaqua Public Library**

CLONEWARD BOUND (THE CLONE CHRONICLES #2)

Castle, M.E. *Cloneward Bound (The Clone Chronicles #2)*. New York: Egmont, 2013. 978-1-60684-223-1. \$15.99. Gr: 3-6.

Fisher Bias and a clone he created are back after defeating Dr. X in book #1. The clone, named Two, has moved to Hollywood and becomes semi-Internet famous in search of his "Mom" and fame. Fisher, while being tailed by the Feds, uses a weekend school trip to L.A. along with his friends Amanda, Veronica, and his sidekick FP to get into wacky situations. The problem becomes, how do you find Two; a single person in a whole city? It helps to be a being a brainy inventor with gadgets to spare. Simple, yet resourceful pictures are drawn to show Fisher's devices. Zany new characters include a teen heartthrob, a Bill Nye-like TV personality type with too much vanity and no science expertise, pushy talent agents, and of course evil-doers (including robots and dinosaurs). Children will enjoy the action, espionage, secrets, pre-teen swoony, pup love, peril, plot twists and shocking reveals. It is highly recommended to read the first book in the series, since this book #2 refers to those plot points often. This book could be used to illustrate fiction written in 3rd person and how to problem solve. The only controversial point occurs late in the book, when everyone believes Two has died in a gruesome fashion. Just as good as the first book, this sequel is a nice addition in the overall strong series.

Chapter Book; Adventure/Humor

**Michael Murphy, Librarian
Quakertown Community SD**

FAREWELL FLOPPY

Chaud, Benjamin. *Farewell Floppy*. Trans. Taylor Norman. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2015.

Print

Floppy the rabbit was always useless at playing, or at least, that's what the little boy thinks. It never mattered before, but now the little boy is too old to have a rabbit as a friend. So the little boy decides to set Floppy- and himself- free. The boy takes his rabbit deep within the woods and sets him free, saying, "It's better for the both of us." On the journey home, the boy begins to realize he loves his rabbit, but will Floppy still be there? This translation of the French tale *Adieu chassette* is a wonderful story of loss, love and the trials of friendship. While the ending felt too predictable and the boy came off as callous and had no redeeming qualities, the story was still heart wrenching and heartwarming in turns. Children (and parents) with pets of their own would be able to connect with the emotions of the story really well. This story would be good for children ages 4 to 6.

Fiction

Jade Pritz, student, Kutztown University of Pa.

UKULELE HAYLEY

Cox, Judy. *Illustrator: Amanda Haley. Ukulele Hayley*. New York: Holiday House, 2013. \$16.95. 978-0-8234-2863-2 Chapter book—Realistic Fiction. Grades 3-6.

When Hayley, a shy third grader with no clear talent, is faced with finding one for the school talent show, she isn't sure what to do. Then she purchases a used ukulele at a garage sale and learns about a determined great aunt who formed a ukulele band despite having polio. Hayley asks her music teacher for help, and while she learns to play, she gains confidence and determination that eventually leads to her creating a ukulele band and teaching fellow students to play. When the school board votes to close the school music program to save money, Hayley uses her newfound skills to organize a rally and a concert that saves the program and her music teacher's job.

Cox has created a fast-paced story that will appeal to a broad audience. The main character (Hayley) is well developed, and the other characters are diverse and developed enough to add to a realistic elementary school plot and setting without weighing it down with a lot of unimportant information. Black-and-white illustrations are scattered throughout the book and add just the right balance to give readers a glimpse of the action. This story could be used with lessons on fitting in, picking a musical instrument, school talent shows, confidence, and determination. Cox includes a two-page section called "Hayley's Tips on How to Play the Ukulele" at the end of the book. The book would make a good addition to an elementary or public library.

Fiction

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

THE MADMAN OF PINEY WOODS

Curtis, Christopher Paul. *The Madman of Piney Woods*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2014. 978-0545-15664-6. \$16.99. Gr. 5-8.

Benji and Red star in this companion to Curtis's *Elijah of Buxton*. Benji is a thirteen year old African American boy who lives in Buxton, Ontario and Red is a thirteen year old of Irish descent who lives in Chatham, Ontario in 1901. Red would like to be a scientist when he gets older and Benji wants to be a newspaperman. Despite being from different kinds of backgrounds and prejudices surrounding them the boys become friends who like to play a few pranks. The boys play in the Piney Woods which is located between Buxton and Chatham. Both boys encounter the Madman of Piney Woods who is sometimes called the South Woods Lion Man. Red and Benji discover that the Madman of Piney Woods is not really mad or a lion but a troubled veteran from the Civil War who needs help. The novel is told by alternating the boys' perspective each chapter which makes the book very choppy. This book starts off slowly and does not pick up until halfway through the book. The title only focuses on one part of the novel and would have been more accurate with a different title. It is not until almost the end that the reader discovers why this book is truly a companion novel to *Elijah of Buxton*. Readers would not need to read the first book to enjoy the second book, but it would make the ending more meaningful if they read *Elijah of Buxton* first. It is recommended that if a library owns other works by Curtis especially *Elijah of Buxton* that this companion novel be added to the collection. Due to the violent scalping and gruesome details of the Irish Potato Famine it is recommended for older readers.

Chapter Book; Historical Fiction

**Sarah Meitzler, Circulation Manager,
Lower Macungie Library**

SUSAN MARCUS BENDS THE RULES

Cutler, Jane. *Susan Marcus Bends the Rules*. New York: Holiday House, 2014.

978-0-8234-3047-5. \$16.95. Gr. 3-5.

In 1943, ten year old Susan Marcus moves from the Bronx to Clayton, Missouri. Susan immediately learns that living in a border state is very different from New York. As a Jewish young girl Susan tries to mask her northern accent and her love of the Yankees baseball team. Susan finds the Jim Crow laws to be confusing and decides to defy the law with help from her new friends. Despite what her prejudiced friends' relatives say Susan makes friends with Loretta, her African American neighbor, and Marlene and Liz, white Christian sisters from across the street. Susan learns about segregation in Clayton including how African Americans were not allowed to swim in pools, go to the movies, and they had to eat separately at restaurants. Buses however were not segregated in the area of Missouri where Susan lived. After seeing the segregation and wanting to include all her friends in one activity Susan comes up with a plan. Susan and her friends ride a bus to a Chinese restaurant where she has dined in the past with her parents. Unfortunately, Susan and her friends discover more discrimination against the Chinese people who the Missourians confuse for Japanese. The girls learn about Japanese internment camps that are being created because of World War II. The story is slow moving and then as soon as one exciting event happens the book ends. The cover and title of the book are not very enticing. I would not recommend that this title be added to a collection but instead titles such as the *Lions of Little Rock* by Kristin Levine be added to school and public libraries.

Chapter Book; Historical Fiction

**Sarah Meitzler, Circulation Manager,
Lower Macungie Library**

THE SCARECROW'S WEDDING

Donaldson, J., & Scheffler, A. *The Scarecrow's Wedding*. New York: Alison Green Books. 2014.

\$14.66. ISBN: 978-0545726061. Picture book. Grade Level: K-2

The story of Betty O'Barley and Harry O'Hay is a beautifully illustrated book about two scarecrows that want to get married but must first prepare for their wedding day by rounding up a dress, rings, and flowers. However, the groom gets lost along the way and must find his way back to his bride before the terrible Reginald tries to ruin their special day. The book is entirely in rhyme and can be quite lengthy with a diverse vocabulary for young children but makes for a wonderful read. The story contains a strong anti-smoking message as the villain of the book tries to offer the heroine a cigar but accidentally lights her on fire after she refuses, stating how bad smoking is for you. This was a wonderful seasonal book whose pictures contained wonderful levels of detail for both children and adults to enjoy together. Best recommended for ages 4-8.

Children's Book

Sara Fiorenza, Graduate Student, Kutztown University

OWL DIARIES: EVA'S TREETOP FESTIVAL

Elliott, Rebecca. *Owl Diaries: Eva's Treetop Festival*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2015. 978-0-545-68362-3. \$4.99. Gr. 1-2.

Eva the owlet is always thinking big! She wants to have a festival that includes her class. She comes up with the Bloomtastic Festival to celebrate the coming of spring. She decides her festival will have a variety of contests such as a fashion, talent and art show and a bake-off. She asks her best friend Lucy to help her, but she soon finds out that two owlets are not enough to pull off an entire festival of this magnitude. The lesson in this book is subtle and positive. Children can see the excitement of creating something like a festival, understand how it can be too much for just two people, and then understand the importance of asking for help. The idea of teamwork to create something fun is a great message for children at this age as well. The author used many plays on words, such as “flappy-fabulous” and “flapperific” that made the story fun to read. Elliott’s pictures are charming and diary-style writing will interest many children at this age. This book would be recommended for public, school and personal libraries and I would be interested to see more from this series. (194)

Early Chapter Book

Erin Engler, Librarian Whitehall-Coplay School District

THE BADGER KNIGHT

Erskine, Kathryn. New York: Scholastic Press, 2014. \$19.99. ISBN: 978-0-545-46442-0. Chapter Book. Grade Level: 9-12.

What can a twelve year old albino boy do when the call to war with the Scots arrives in 1346 CE? Adrian, or otherwise known as the Badger, is a boy that strives to prove his worth despite his illness and opinions about him from the village. His father is a highly respected bowyer, or bow maker, and he wants to be an apprentice to him. He is denied that and is made to work in his Uncle’s fields but that does not suit him as he is weak physically, despite his excellent skill with the bow. He helps Grandmother, a local healer and grandmother to his best friend Hugh, by scribing, or writing, out her remedies for the villagers. It is a skill that he does not show off but as the plot continues, it becomes very useful in his adventures and gives him something to be proud about. When the war with the Scots becomes imminent, his best friend runs off to join it and protect his father in battle even though he is only 15 years old. Adrian, who does not have the best relationship with his aunt and cousins, gladly goes to find him for the village but his true motive is to join him in the battle and aide him with his archery skills. On his way he encounters thieves, a gang of orphans, a kindly monk, a corrupt church official, a noble knight, and many others that shape his mind and character. This is a story about a brave boy who becomes a man in a matter of months as he journeys to find his friend. The author is able to convey the time period in the choice of language and weaves in historical facts that impact the journey the Badger. There is a glossary of terms in the back of the book written by Adrian for the reader to refer to if they never saw that word before. It is a charming coming of age tale set in the Middle Ages and would be perfect for readers in the middle to high school grades interested in historical fiction.

Chapter Book; Historical Fiction

**Sara Moyer, Instructional Support Specialist,
Reading Area Community College**

THE SHORT GIRAFFE

Flory, Neil. Illus. Mark Cleary. *The Short Giraffe*. Chicago: Albert & Company, 2013. 9780807573464. \$15.99. Gr. PreK-1.

Neil Flory's *The Short Giraffe* is short picture book that children will love. Geri is the shortest giraffe in his herd. Especially when Bobo the baboon is taking a picture of all the giraffes, Geri is very self-conscious about his height compared to the others. In this picture book, the family of giraffes tries everything to make Geri taller: stilts, springs, even turtles, until they come up with the perfect solution to take this picture. Geri is depicted and illustrated as a silly, clumsy character that makes the reader laugh and smile with him. The colors of the giraffes in the illustrations are bright and inviting. Humorous facial expressions on each giraffe show each personality in the story. Hearing this simple story that explains it is okay to be different, young children will sympathize with Geri's feelings and laugh at all the silly ways of trying to make him tall.

Picture Book

Melanie Stuhr, Librarian, King George Elementary VA

**THE CAT, THE DOG, LITTLE RED, THE EXPLODING EGGS, THE WOLF, and GRANDMA
Fox, Diane. Fox, Christyan. *The Cat, The Dog, Little Red, The Exploding Eggs, The Wolf, and
Grandma*. New York: Scholastic Press 2014. 9780545694810. Print. \$16.99**

The Cat starts to read the story of little Red Riding Hood, first to herself, until a curious dog comes along. The cat continues to read the story to the dog. Too bad all the dog does is interrupt her along the way. He suggests such wild ideas such as Little Red Riding Hood had super powers or weapons, such as a kindness ray or exploding eggs in her basket. By this time, the cat seems very agitated and starts shouting at the poor dog. The dog continues to question the story, even after it finished, and the cat continues to get aggravated; silly dog won't let her finish the story! This cute and whimsical book puts a twist into the retelling of this classic Grimm's fairy tale. With its simple drawings and the typical "dog vs. cat" argument, it is bound to put a smile on anyone's face. Ages 4-10.

Fiction

Carla Castro, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

BY DAY, BY NIGHT

Gibson, Amy. Illus. Meilo So. *By Day, By Night*. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mill Press, 2014. 978-1-59078-991-9. \$16.95. PreK-2.

Embracing the “we are all the same; we are all different” approach to multicultural understanding, Gibson wrote this book to benefit the Global Orphan Project. The text enumerates ways in which human beings are alike all over the world: we sleep under the same stars and wake under the same sun; we work, play and learn together; we all sing and tell stories; we all laugh and cry. So’s bright and cheerful watercolor illustrations add depth to the text by showing families and children of different backgrounds engaging in these activities in many diverse landscapes. The message is clear: though people around the world may have different homes and traditions, we are more alike than we are different. A smidge lighter in tone and slightly more specific than Mem Fox’s *Whoever You Are*, this title will prove useful to teachers and librarians who are interested in encouraging empathy or are celebrating the International Day of Peace with younger students.

Picture Book

Stephanie Gibson, Librarian, Montessori Academy of Lancaster

BERNADETTE TO THE RESCUE

Glickman, Susan. Illustrator: Mélanie Allard. *Bernadette To The Rescue*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2012. \$8.95. 978-1-926920-38-2 (paperback)

Chapter book—Realistic Fiction. Grades 2-5.

Bernadette and the Lunch Bunch (her group of best friends) return in their third chapter book. With a new puppy, third grade ending, and a summer to plan, Bernadette and her friends are making plans for summer camp and helping at a street fair and yard sale. The budding scientist in Bernadette yearns to go to another year at museum camp, but her friends are all going to Camp Lakeview. She gives it a try and finds a scientific mystery to solve involving frogs while studying nature at the camp.

Glickman’s story is solid and moves the reader quickly through an interesting plot with a good deal of realistic dialog. Bernadette is a well-developed character, and the other characters play off of her lead role very well. There are limited illustrations in the book, but the black-and-white sketches that do exist add to the story nicely. Elementary school girls will enjoy reading about the Lunch Bunch, and will be able to relate to the friendship that they have developed. It was nice to see the female lead have such an interest in science, and the ecological mystery and talk of the scientific process would relate nicely to a science unit in schools. The book would also make a great addition to a school and public library.

Fiction

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

CALL ME TREE: LLAMAME ARBOL

Gonzalez, Maya Christina. *Call Me Tree: Llamame arbol*. New York: Children's Book Press, 2014. 978-0-89239-294-0. \$17.95. Gr. K-2.

Gonzalez is an award winning illustrator who has written and illustrated her third book, *Call Me Tree: Llamame arbol*. The child is talking about strength and growing comparing that to trees. The story connects to the idea of diversity and yet everyone sharing in the desire to have an important part in the world. Finding that place in the world and growing to be strong are the beautiful themes in throughout this story. The watercolor, ink, and colored pencil illustrations are whimsical and appealing. The story is written in English and Spanish and would be a wonderful story for students who speak English as their second language. *Call Me Tree: Llamame arbol* and other books written in the two-language format would be a helpful tool for children and adults learning another language. This book would be recommended for school and public libraries. (142)

Picture Book; Multicultural; Bilingual.

**Erin Engler, Librarian,
Whitehall-Coplay School District**

CHARLIE BUMPERS VS. THE SQUEAKING SKULL

Harley, Bill. Illus. Adam Gustavson. *Charlie Bumpers vs. The Squeaking Skull*.

Atlanta, GA: Peachtree Publishers, 2014. Book \$13.95. ISBN: 9781561458080.

Audiobook \$16.95. ISBN: 9781561458097. Grades 2-4.

This is the third book in the Charlie Bumpers series which chronicles the life of a nine-year old, fourth grader who is the middle child in his family. This Halloween adventure begins as Charlie and his best friend Tommy convince their mothers to let them attend a sleepover at Alex's house in an upscale neighborhood instead of taking their younger sisters trick-or-treating. However, Alex has plans to show horror movies which terrifies Charlie. Older brother Matt attempts to help Charlie overcome his fear by telling scary stories in the dark while younger sister Mabel tries in vain to go with Charlie so as not to miss the anticipated large candy bars on the trick-or-treat route. The horror movie and large candy bars never materialize but Charlie's life is full of adventures including help from his art teacher to design the perfect costume for the costume contest in this short chapter book. Audiobook available separately.

Fiction

Sharon Breeden, Cooperative Education, Harrisburg School District

MURPHY, GOLD RUSH DOG

Hart, Alison. Illus. Michael Montgomery. *Murphy, Gold Rush Dog*, Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2014. 9781561457694. \$12.95. Grades 5-7.

Alison Hart continues her Dog Chronicles series with another solid entry featuring Murphy, a dog that has had a hard life and dreams of better things to come. The story starts out with Murphy laboring as a sled dog for a nasty man named Carlick. The setting is 1900 in Nome, Alaska at the height of the gold rush. Thousands of dream filled prospectors are flooding Alaska looking to strike it rich no matter what it takes, and Carlick is one of those whose business practices are less than honest. Murphy is suffering from starvation and exhaustion and makes a daring escape... but what to do now? Luckily for him a mother and daughter arrive in Nome to start a new life. The little girl named Sally sees Murphy and it is love at first sight. Sally's mother is less than receptive to now having to care for a dog and a girl in an unknown territory, but Murphy proves his worth by being the family's protector. But always nipping at Murphy's heels is the evil Carlick looking to reclaim his dog. Sally's mother is doing all she can to make a go of it in their new home but eventually wants to go back to San Francisco, but Sally will have none of this and decides to show her mother she can strike it rich and stay in her new home. When a little girl sets out in harsh Alaska seeking her fortune and is less than prepared, this can only lead to bad things. Sure enough Sally is faced with many dangers, but with Murphy by her side she manages to survive and get back to town safely. Carlick catches up with Murphy, but the law also catches up with Carlick and arrests him. With him out of the picture, Murphy now has a new loving family and everyone can live happily ever after. Sure you see the ending coming, but what's wrong with that!

Fiction

Steve Tichy, Cataloger, Tamaqua Public Library

SCHOLASTIC DISCOVER MORE: POLAR ANIMALS

Hayes, Susan. *Scholastic Discover More: Polar Animals*. New York , NY: Scholastic, 2014. 9780545667777. \$12.99. Grades 5-8.

Scholastic's *Discover More* series continues with *Polar Animals*. The book is designed to be reader friendly and does not read like a typical book. The reader can open the book to any page and be perfectly satisfied with the information on display. This is because the book features animals from both the Arctic and Antarctic which are beautifully photographed. Surrounding each photo is a short description describing the animal and its habitat. The reader can't help to learn about the wildlife in both Polar Regions. The index and glossary provided make locating and understanding information quite easy. A short interview with an Arctic scientist will further add to the reader's enjoyment. This *Discover* book is a fun way to learn about what animals live in the Polar Regions and would be a great addition to any collection.

Nonfiction

Steve Tichy, Cataloger, Tamaqua Public Library

U.S. CULTURE THROUGH INFOGRAPHICS

Higgins, Nadia. Graphics by Vic Kulihin. *U.S. Culture Through Infographics*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications Company, 2015. ISBN: 9781467734646. \$22.46. Gr. 2-8.

This volume of the *Super Social Studies Infographics* series explores many facets of United States culture. Topics covered include All-American Pies, A Tour of Cultures, How We Relax, American Art Forms, Play Ball, What To Read, Let's Celebrate, Be A Star Citizen, Protect My Rights, Patriotic Dos and Don'ts, Know Your Symbols and American Landmarks. This book uses various charts, graphs and other infographics to inform curious minds about many things American. The charts and graphs make this an excellent resource for a math lesson. The content would be a good complement to a history lesson on freedom and citizenship. Contains a glossary, index and further information resources.

Non-Fiction **Sharon Breeden, Cooperative Education, Harrisburg School District**

LOVE IS THE DRUG

Johnson, Alaya Dawn. *Love is the Drug*. New York: Levine, 2014. Print. 978-0-545-41781-5. \$17.99. Gr. 10-12.

High school senior Emily Bird has had a privileged life as the daughter of two brilliant scientists in the upper-class Washington D.C. area. Her future has been planned out for her, but she knows she can't live that life. At an exclusive party, something goes horribly wrong and Bird wakes up in the hospital, unable to remember anything past 9pm. Coffee, a drug-dealing, organic chemistry genius, and Bird have a special, but forbidden, connection and he is implicated in her accident. Bird doesn't believe what Paul, her ambitious boyfriend, and the dangerous government agent, Roosevelt, tell her about Coffee. When a flu epidemic spirals out of control, and tensions between the United States and oil-rich Venezuela come to a head, Washington D.C. is placed in quarantine. Emily's parents are at an undisclosed location because of their very important, but very secretive, positions. As D.C. becomes more violent and unpredictable, Bird has an epiphany. She stands up to her parents, breaks up with Paul, and chooses new friends, all to be true to herself. After chasing clues and running from Roosevelt's very real threats, Bird eventually learns the truth about the origins of the pandemic, and her parents. The internal conflict Bird undergoes as she fights between pleasing her mother and pleasing herself will resonate with teens. The same pressures of wanting to fit in, preparing for college, false friends, and romantic tension experienced by Bird are those experienced by most high school students. The added drama of a pre-post-apocalyptic environment will excite readers of that genre. Racial issues are also raised that will appeal to readers of all ethnicities. Bird and her family are black and she feels like her mother wants to avoid that fact by using relaxers on her hair and ignoring Uncle Ricky, who lives in a poorer, more diverse neighborhood. Recommended.

Realism, Fiction

Amber Sams, High School Librarian, Saucon Valley HS

WHEN LUNCH FIGHTS BACK

Johnson, Rebecca L. *When Lunch Fights Back*. Minneapolis: MillBrook Press, 2015. \$14.99. ISBN:978-1-4677-2109-7. Grade 1-6.

Animals are a fascinating subject to read about, but to see them in detail can be quite shocking! **When Lunch Fights Back** is an engaging non-fiction book that brings readers up close and personal with a variety of interesting creatures. Through vivid photography, the author is able to shock and capture a reader's attention instantly. Each page highlights a different creature and descriptively tells a story of encounters with predators and prey. For example, let us look at the seemingly defenseless African Hairy Frog. At first glance, one would think there is not much of a chance for this amphibian to escape a hungry otter. However, what we soon learn is this frog has a secret weapon - bones under its hind legs that act like claws when attacked! Score one for the African Hairy Frog as the otter slings away. Each animal scenario is followed with a page entitled, "The Science Behind the Story". This page offers deeper explanation into the unique animal characteristics and adaptations described in the stories. This book is perfect addition to any elementary classroom, school library or public library. The photographs can be used on their own to capture interest and begin a lesson. In addition, the book is useful in a variety of science and ELA units of study. This book is a valuable teaching piece that aligns with the Common Core's emphasis on non-fiction reading and writing.

Non-fiction

Krista G. Varano, Elementary Professor, Kutztown University

TIN

Judge, Chris. *Tin*. Minneapolis: Anderson Press USA, 2014. 9781467750134. \$16.95. Gr. K-3.

From the award-winning creator of *The Lonely Beast*, comes another quirky delightful picture book. *Tin* tells the story of one afternoon when a young robot left in charge to watch after his little sister Nickel. Tin says "no problem, this will be easy!" Soon after, Tin realizes this won't be as simple as he predicted. While Tin is reading his comic book, he's interrupted by Nickel climbing a tree, flying away with a balloon, falling on to a giraffe. Soon Tin is being taken all across the big city. Tin and his dog, Zinc, need to rescue Nickel and get her safely home before his mom realizes they are gone. The illustrations of robots and robot city are simplistic in shapes yet detailed, colorful, and fun for younger kids' imagination. Each page is enjoyable for the reader to search for Tin, his little sister, and other surprises in the robot city.

Picture Book; Fantasy

Melanie Stuhr, Librarian, King George Elementary VA

AMULET: ESCAPE FROM LUCIEN

Kibuishi, Kazu. *Amulet: Escape from Lucien*. China: Graphix, 2014. 9780545433150. \$12.99. Grade Level 4+

The sixth book in the Amulet series, this graphic novel takes the tale in a new direction with engaging color illustrations and a fast-moving sci-fi/fantasy story. Emphasizing friendship and bravery, the high vocabulary and complex storyline will make this book a hit with parents and teachers, while readers will enjoy the exciting and thought-provoking story. This book is perfect for older kids, reluctant readers, and even young adults. This series would be a great addition to middle school and public libraries.

Graphic Novel Christine Weida, Children's Librarian, Sinking Spring Public Library

GOLDIE TAKES A STAND

Krasner, Barbara. *Goldie Takes a Stand: Golda Meir's First Crusade*. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben Publishing, 2014. 9781467712002. \$17.95. Grade Level 1-3.

This simple yet inspiring picture book tells a childhood story about Goldie Meir, a former Prime Minister of Israel. After seeing that fellow classmates can't keep up with their studies since they can't afford the textbooks, Goldie gathers a group to creatively raise money and buy books for all students. Warmly sweet illustrations lend a sense of the conventions of the time period and engage the reader. The main story is followed by a brief biography and resources. Readers will be encouraged to do good works and also learn that they too can grow up to make a difference in the world. This book is recommended for elementary and public libraries.

Picture Book/Biography

**Christine Weida, Children's Librarian,
Sinking Spring Public Library**

PEEK-A-ZOO!

Laden, Nina. *Peek-A-Zoo!* San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 2014. 978-1-4521-1175-9. \$6.99. PreK.

Laden's *Peek-A-Who?*, published in 2000, is a board book classic. This follow-up title is likely to be a hit with fans of the first. Both books have cut-outs and page turns that play on the classic toddler game of peek-a-boo. The cut-out gives a hint of what is to come. The first page begins "Peek-a" with a cutout showing a white background and black spots. When you turn the page a cow is revealed behind the cut-out and the phrase is completed with "Moo!" The book continues with this pattern until the last page, which is a mirror and the concluding part of the "peek-a" phrase: "You!" Part of the success of *Peek-a-Who?* is that the reveals are familiar to children just beginning to develop verbal language: moo, zoo, boo, choo-choo. *Peek-a-Zoo!* maintains the familiar pattern from *Peek-a-Who?* but with one difference. As the title suggests, all the reveals are zoo animals. Sadly, "kangaroo", "cockatoo", and "bamboo" are not as predictable, familiar and easy to mimic as the rhymes in the original book. Still, young fans of the first title will find familiarity in the form and may be excited to stretch their developing vocabulary with this new title.

Board Book

Stephanie Gibson, Librarian, Montessori Academy of Lancaster

DEAR WANDERING WILDEBEEST AND OTHER POEMS FROM THE WATER HOLE

Latham, Irene. Illus. Anna Wadham. *Dear Wandering Wildebeest and Other Poems From the Water Hole*. Minneapolis: Millbrook Press, 2014. 978-1-4677-1232-3. \$17.95. Grades PreK – 4.

Latham has poetically presented to the reader many interesting animals of the African nation. Along with child-friendly drawings by Wadham, Latham has included with her poetry numerous informative facts concerning the featured animals and insects. This story first introduces the water hole. Latham has vividly described the immense need of the water hole, which sustains all the creatures' lives from dung beetles to elephants. Every page is painted to reflect the featured water hole's guest and terrain. The only change I would have suggested, if editing this story, is displaying the facts before the poems. If not familiar with Africa's wildlife, the poems could leave a younger person perplexed. It is, in all, a great read and an imaginative view into a continent with a very harsh climate.

Poetry

Susan M. Schlosser, Employee, Tamaqua Public Library

PIG AND SMALL

Latimer, Alex. *Pig and Small*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2013. 978-1-56145-797-7. \$15.95. Gr: K-3

Pig has a squeak on his nose. He lives with the noise for a day until it wouldn't stop. He tries the medical book to no avail. Finally he notices that the squeak is coming from a tiny bug on his nose. The unlikely duo try different activities, like bike riding, but realize that with their size differences it isn't working out. They decide to go their separate ways. Pig sees a flyer for a movie and they try one more time to be friends. They find this is something they can do together. The books ends with a montage of activities they can do together. Written and drawn by Latimer, many of the pages contain multiple scenes that move the story along without too much unnecessary detail. Light hearted and funny, this is a good book to provide insight to children that friends can come in many packages and that sometimes you have to work at it.

Picture Book

Michael Murphy, Librarian, Quakertown Community SD

PUFFING PATROL

Lewin, Ted & Betsy. *Puffling Patrol*. Illus. Ted & Betsy Lewin. New York: Lee and Low Books, Inc, 2012. \$19.95. ISBN: 978-1-60060-424-9. Grade 1-4.

What's black and white and as cute as can be? No, not a well-timed joke, but a fascinating bird in a distant land. Set off the coast of beautiful Iceland, **Puffling Patrol** details a look at a group of citizens that come together for the good of saving lost little pufflings as they make their way to the sea. Elementary students will enjoy the realistic drawings by the Caldecott Honor winning authors as they depict with wonderful detail the Puffling Patrol's story. In addition, delightful facts are woven throughout the written story to create a vivid imagine of this little known happening. This story is a fabulous non-fiction book that draws the reader in from the beginning. The book will appeal to every child who ever wanted to help a little lost animal teaching them the valuable role we all play in respecting wild creatures. It is recommended as a key non-fiction book for any elementary classroom, school library, or public library.

Picture Book; Non- Fiction Krista G. Varano, Elementary Professor, Kutztown University

BOATS GO

Light, Steve. *Boats Go*. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 2015. 978-1-4521-2900-6. \$9.99. PreK.

Many transportation books have the word "go" in the title, as airplanes go in the air, ships go on the sea, and cars go on the road. Light's title is a play on this concept. In *Boats Go*, the "go" indicates the sound each boat makes, rather than the way it moves. Usual players are represented: tugboats, speedboats and sailboats, but also, fireboats, paddleboats and gondolas! The text is simple with wonderful, onomatopoeic words to delight young listeners. The ending has a small twist that feels slightly "off," but this will not trouble the target audience one bit, and adults who enjoy performing will have fun with it. Relaxed watercolor illustrations match the tone of the text perfectly. The trim size is twice as wide as a normal board book, making it better suited to grown-up than toddler hands. However, the rough and tumble kids who are drawn to the sounds in the book may welcome the challenge of manipulating the larger pages. Other titles in the series include: *Cars Go*, *Diggers Go*, *Planes Go*, *Trains Go*, *Trucks Go*. A terrific choice for any library serving toddlers and preschoolers.

Board Book

Stephanie Gibson, Librarian, Montessori Academy of Lancaster

THE CASE OF THE VANISHING LITTLE BROWN BATS

Markle, Sandra. *The Case of the Vanishing Little Brown Bats*. Minneapolis, MN: Millbrook Press, 2015. 9781467714631. \$29.27. Grades 6-8.

Since early 2007 the brown bat population in the U.S. has been hit hard with a mysterious disease. Sandra Markle follows several teams of scientists on their quest to solve this deadly mystery. The reader is whisked along for the ride as these scientists travel to various bat habitats to collect data to aid in their mission. As the scientists conduct their experiments, it is determined the bats are infected from a type of fungus that causes them to emerge from hibernation too soon and they use up their stored energy, and due to lack of food are too weakened to survive. That is one mystery solved, but where did this fungus come from, how can it be prevented? What is the future of the little brown bats? The answers are... it might be too early to tell, science needs to catch up with nature. Loaded with pictures, facts, a glossary and additional references, this book is a fabulous resource for the young reader to learn about the brown bat. Presented in an easily readable format, the reader will not be overloaded with incomprehensible information. This book would be an excellent addition for the junior reader.

Nonfiction

Steve Tichy, Cataloger, Tamaqua Public Library

BUG ON A BIKE

Monroe, Chris. *Bug on a Bike*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 2014. 978-1-4677-2154-7. \$16.95. Gr. PreK-2.

The bug on a bike is leading his friends on a mysterious ride. He starts picking up his friends along the way to an unknown destination. Along the ride we are introduced to and get to know a little about each of his friends such as the “athletic pickle” and the “polka dotted dog”. Children will stay interesting by meeting bug’s new friends along the way and listening to the funny details in the story. The cadence of the story flows wonderfully and is fun to read. The watercolor-and-ink illustrations are appealing and at times may keep you searching for more details. This book would be highly recommended as a read-aloud in school and for public, school, and personal libraries. (120)

Picture Book

Erin Engler, Librarian, Whitehall-Coply School District

WATER ROLLS, WATER RISES/ EL AGUA RUEDA, EL AGUA SUBE

Mora, Pat. Illus. Meilo So. *Water Rolls, Water Rises/ El agua rueda, el agua sube*. NY: Children's Book Press, 2014. 978-0-89239-325-1 \$18.95. PreK-2.

The movement of water across our planet can be dramatic, gentle or destructive. Mora celebrates the power and life-giving necessity of water. Each two-page spread addresses a different quality of water through just one poetic sentence. Mora's writing is beautiful and evocative. The text is bilingual; Adriana Dominguez helped Mora write the translations. So's mixed media illustrations are stunning. With the large format of a double page spread with which to work, she creates dramatic landscapes and points of view. The full beauty and diversity of the earth is on display: the Colorado River running through canyons, the sweep of a rocky beach, a stream cascading over stones through a forest in autumn, and a peaceful desert oasis at night are just a few of the most stunning spreads. An author's note describes the inspiration for the book. Following the author's note, thumbnail reproductions of each spread detail the places on earth that inspired the artwork. A beautiful addition to any collection.

Picture Book

Stephanie Gibson, Librarian Montessori Academy of Lancaster

FROM WOOD TO BASEBALL BAT and FROM STEEL TO BICYCLE

Nelson, Robin. *From Wood to Baseball Bat*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner, 2015. 978-1-4677-3891-0. \$18.04. K-3.

Nelson, Robin. *From Steel to Bicycle*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner, 2015. 978-1-4677-3892-7. \$18.04. K-3.

Lerner's "Start to Finish" series gets some high interest additions with these two titles from the "Sports Gear" subseries. As with other entries in the "Start to Finish" series, both titles describe the manufacture of a piece of sports equipment from raw material to finished consumer product. The intended audience is newly confident readers, and the sentence structure and vocabulary address this audience. Each page turn reveals five or six descriptive sentences in a large, easy to read font. Each paragraph is accompanied by a clear photograph that supports the text, and illustrates the described activity. Each title has a table of contents that lists the topic sentence of each page. Backmatter includes a glossary, index, and a page for "Further Information." The "Further Information" includes books and weblinks to videos. Curiously, the "Further Information" in *From Wood to Baseball Bat* includes a fictional book about dinosaurs playing baseball. Recommended for libraries where sports books are popular.

Nonfiction

Stephanie Gibson, Librarian Montessori Academy of Lancaster

CAROLRHODA

Neri, G. Surf Mules. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda LAB, 2014. Print. 978-4677-4238-2. \$9.95. Gr. 9-12.

Seventeen-year-old Logan's life is surfing. However, he's smart and his mother is pushing him to go to college to make something of himself. That's the plan, until a fellow surfer, and former friend, is killed in a surfing accident. What follows is a chain of events that sends Logan on an illegal cross country adventure with his dropout best friend, Z-Boy. Logan's mom is constantly working dead end jobs to make ends meet. His absentee father has been draining their money away and accumulating more and more debt. After the fatal accident, his father informs him that the money they had put away for his education has been frozen by the bank until further notice. Logan is devastated and lets Z-Boy talk him into working for Broza, a local legend and drug dealer, as drug runners disguised as members of the Young Republicans. Before leaving, Logan starts a relationship with Emmie, a fellow surfer. They had been friends for years because neither of them had the guts to take it to the next level, even though they both had wanted to. On the road, Logan and Z-Boy are constantly having close calls with both the authorities and people outside of the law. Z-Boy's antics and poor judgment are usually the cause of these encounters. They finally reach their destination in Florida, only to be faced with more tragedy. Logan returns to his California home where he begins to pick up the pieces and plan his life in a realistic fashion. Despite the very stereotypical surfer and pot-head characters and far-fetched storyline, teen readers will be able to relate to Logan and his struggle to make smart decisions, stay loyal to his friends, plan for the future, and do what he loves.

Coming of Age, Fiction

Amber Sams, High School Librarian, Saucon Valley HS

MARK OF THE THIEF

Nielsen, Jennifer A. *Mark of the Thief*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2015. 978-0-545-56154-9. \$17.99. Grades 4-7.

Book 1 of a new series, called “Mark of the Thief,” after the pilot title, takes place in ancient Rome, 300 years after the death of Julius Caesar. The Roman empire is on the precipice of radical political change from within and possible barbarian attack from without that will forever change the course of its history. And central to the political intrigue is Nicolas Calva, a purportedly orphaned slave in the mines south of Rome whose only family is his sister, Livia. In the opening pages, when Nic is ordered to enter and explore the recently uncovered deep shaft thought to connect to a cavern containing the lost treasure of Caesar, the plot of the story takes off on an adventurous, fantastical, and magical trek – one you become so immersed in that it is next to impossible to deviate from the reading path! Of course Nic discovers the treasure, but also the golden bulla (a pendant-like amulet hung from a leather thong and worn around the neck) that once belonged to Caesar and a real live griffin – a supposedly mythical creature having the head, front talons, and wings of an eagle and haunches of a lion. Nic is able to grab the bulla while fleeing the griffin, but at the expense of his back being torn open by the griffin’s talons, leaving a very peculiar and distinct mark. Both the mark and the bulla instill the power of magic in Nic, and the emperor, a general, and a senator are all after the power that this magic imbues to the owner. Many interesting twists occur in the story that keeps the reader’s interest. The usage of Roman gods’ names and places encourage the reader to want to find out more about this ancient history. And of course, the book ends with a really unexpected development and cliff-hanger that will make the reader long for the next book in the series!

Fantasy

Gayle R. Heath, Library Director, Tamaqua Public Library

BIRD CAT DOG

Nordling, Lee and Meritxell Bosch. Minneapolis: Graphic Universe, 2014. \$5.90. ISBN: 978-1-4677-4523-9. Graphic Novel. Grade Level: 1-4.

This is a story about a bird, a cat, and a dog. This story is not told through words however. It is all shown through art in panels. It shows the journey of the bird, the cat and the dog and how each hero's story is joined with the other two. A bird takes the opportunity to leave its cage and fly free in sky. A cat bored with nothing better to do sees said bird and decides to go after it. The dog sees the cat in the tree and is not so happy about it. Thus starts their journey together and separate. This is told in both a vertical way and horizontal way. Each hero has a horizontal row of panels for their perspective, while the vertical reading of it gives the complete story involving all the animals. The author prepares the reader for this by explaining the ways it can be read in the very beginning of the book before the title page. Because it is wordless, it is great for young readers to use their developing visual intelligence to see where the story is heading. It is great that it allows various ways of reading it, whether of one perspective of the bird, cat, or dog, or a combo of all three. The art is very cute and the author shows just how creative presenting a story can be.

Graphic Novel; Wordless; Animals

**Sara Moyer, Instructional Support Specialist at
Reading Area Community College**

WE'RE GOING TO THE FARMER'S MARKET

Page, Stefan. *We're Going to the Farmer's Market.* San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2014. 978-1-4521-1834-5. \$7.99. Pre-K.

This board book describes a trip from the farmer's market to the kitchen table in rhyme and bright, two-dimensional and geometric illustrations. Young children will love to get their hands on this book, turning the pages themselves to explore the delicious foods that are grown or raised by local farmers. Reading this book would be a great way to celebrate one's own weekly market trip, talk about healthy food, and springboard a discussion on why it's important to support small farms. Besides that, it is just fun to read and look at. There are matching ABC flash cards and a mobile to put together, for separate purchase.

Board Book

Emily L. Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

CAN I COME TOO?

Patten, Brian. Illus. Nicola Bayley. *Can I Come Too?* Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2014. 978-1-56145-796-0. \$16.95. Grades PreK-2.

From a famous English author and illustrator duo comes a book whose cover has such a beautifully magical and wondrous illustration of an unlikely group of animals, that the viewer is immediately captivated to know the story! Posing the book title as a question only adds to the intrigue. And so the story begins with a tiny adventurous mouse seeking to find the biggest creature in world. Each animal she encounters on her journey is bigger than the one before and they each come from different native environs of the earth, except for the two creatures coming from the zoo! The story concludes with following the river to the ocean and seeing the mighty whale – the biggest creature in the world. The animals then part company, go home, and the story ends with a very contented mouse going to sleep after her big adventure. Each two page spread introduces the next animal in its native environment and also contains all the previous animals introduced. Children will love the cumulative nature of the tale and enjoy searching for all the animals on each page. One of the pages cleverly depicts the animals by their paws, so it truly becomes a challenge to match their feet to the correct animal, especially for younger readers! The text of the story is repetitive enough to keep young readers engaged, while having slight variations to keep the older children interested, also. Both clever text and exceptional colored-pencil illustrations make this book a truly coveted addition to any child's library.

Picture Book

Gayle R. Heath, Library Director, Tamaqua Public Library

SLOWPOKE

Pearce, Emily Smith. Illustrator: Scot Ritchie. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, 2010. \$16.95. 978-1-59078-705-2. Chapter book—Realistic Fiction. Grades 2-6.

Fiona, who likes to take her time with everything from bathing to getting ready for school, sometimes frustrates her speedy family. When she misses the school bus one too many times, her parents send her to Speed School. Here, Fiona learns the motto, “The less I see, the faster I will be.” She is a quick learner and soon is so fast that she can, “shower in five seconds flat.” One day she multitasks too many things and ends up with her head spinning so much that it ends up backwards. Fiona decides that fast isn’t her speed, but she agrees to be on time for school if her family goes through Slow School, where the motto is, “the more I see, the better my day will be.” In the end, Fiona’s family returns to their fast ways, but they learn that some things are best done at a slower pace.

In a world of instant messages and speed dating, Pearce comes through with a valuable but quick story on the importance of knowing when to slow down and enjoy life. This early reader will appeal especially to readers who are hurried through their day by adults who think they are too slow, but even fast-paced students will get a kick out of the story and the humorous black-and-white illustrations. This book would make a nice addition to a classroom or to a school or public library.

Fiction **Karen J. Wanamaker, Outreach Librarian, Kutztown University of Pa.**

BIG NATE’S GREATEST HITS

Peirce, Lincoln. *Big Nate’s Greatest Hits*. Kansas City, KN: Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2015. ISBN: 9781449464899. \$12.99 (paperback). Gr. 2-6.

Eleven-year-old Nate Wright is back again in comic book format. He is full of escapades and hilarity which will delight many students from voracious readers to the most reluctant readers. The only disappointing part to some may be the fact that a good part of the book contains parts that appeared in previous books. Big Nate fans are surely always anticipating new adventures from this likeable character. This title will surely garner a lot of usage.

Comic Book **Sharon Breeden, Cooperative Education, Harrisburg School District**

LUCKY STRIKE

Pyron, Bobbie. *Lucky Strike*. New York: Scholastic, 2015. 978-0-545-59217-8. \$16.99.

On Nathaniel Harlow's eleventh birthday, after he is struck by lightning, his previous streak of notoriously bad luck is reversed. He suddenly has the golden touch, which brings him popularity and material advantages. But he soon realizes that those things aren't as valuable as good friends. Characters are quirky, with typical prepubescent behaviors, but the author pushes the stereotypes of brainiacs and twins a bit too far. The setting is old-fashioned, small-town cute, with fundraising dinners and a dog as the town's mayor. The use of local landscape and wildlife adds a dimension to the story as readers learn about the habits of loggerhead turtles. Language is appropriate for upper elementary or middle school students.

Coming of age

Marge McCormick, Tamaqua Area Middle School

IF YOU'RE READING THIS

Reedy, Trent. *If You're Reading This*. New York: Arthur A. Levine Books, 2014. 978-0-545-43342-6. \$17.99. 7-12.

This young adult novel tells the tale of almost-sixteen-year-old Mike who lives with his younger sister, Mary, and mother, a military widow since Mike was seven. Mike begins anonymously receiving letters and videos that had been written or recorded by his father before he died in Afghanistan, intended for him to read shortly before he turned sixteen. In these letters, his father tells stories and gives Mike advice which he attempts to follow the best he can, despite a strained relationship with his mother, trouble fitting in at school, and a crush on a girl, Isma, who is misunderstood due to her cultural background. A difficult financial situation requires Mike to labor many hours on a farm, maintained by a man named Derek, to support his family. As time goes on, Mike tries to figure out who is sending the letters and how his father died. *If You're Reading This* is a great choice for reluctant readers at the high school level, as it is an easy read and includes a little bit of everything- romance, sports (specifically football), war, mystery, friendship, high school drama, cultural tensions, and family relationships. There are some descriptive football scenes which may be hard to understand without knowledge of the game. Teens may be impacted positively by the story which encourages readers to have integrity and be honest in their actions and relationships. Reedy has authored several other books related to war or Afghanistan.

Realistic Fiction

Emily L. Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

HEY, CHARLESTON! THE TRUE STORY OF THE JENKINS ORPHANGE BAND

Rockwell, Anne. Illus. Bootman, Colin. Hey, Charleston! The True Story of the Jenkins Orphanage Band. Minneapolis: Carolhoda Books, 2014. 9780761355656. \$16.95.

“Have you ever known someone who was always trying to turn bad into good, always seeing hope where others saw despair? Then you know the kind of person the Reverend Daniel Joseph Jenkins was.” Reverend Jenkins did not let this statement get him down. He was a kind soul who started off by taking in orphans, despite him and his parish not having enough money. Soon, more children came to the church and they had to relocate. Soon, they moved to a warehouse next to a jail, and the inmates enjoyed harassing the children by making loud noises. The Reverend got the idea of singing to drown them out. He later got a better idea to gather instruments from the Civil War Era and teach the children how to play. Everyone in Charleston soon knew of the Jenkins Orphanage Band. They went to New York City to try and get more money for the orphanage. Since New Yorkers only knew they were from Charleston, and they played rag, they simply yelled, “Hey Charleston! Give us a rag!”, and the band would start playing. Reverend Jenkins never stopped being generous, and his band grew more and more popular. This band gave several children a new start in life. “Graduates” of this Jenkins Orphanage Band included several players from Duke Ellington’s bands. This is a great book for students learning about rag, jazz, and music art history from the early 1900’s. This is one band that everyone should be talking about. Ages 7-11.

Nonfiction

Carla Castro, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE SIN EATER’S DAUGHTER

Salisbury, Melinda. *The Sin Eater’s Daughter*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2015. 978-0-545-81062-3. \$17.99 Grades 7 and up.

The Sin Eater’s Daughter is a book that takes the reader to a world of old, with magic, love, and of course, Twylla, who instantly kills anyone she touches. Salisbury does an amazing job of creating a world in which the reader can get totally captivated and lost. The Queen controls Twylla and forces her to lay her hands on those accused of treason. The book explores Twylla love for Merek, the prince to whom she is betrothed; and Leif, the new guard who joins her service and how she gradually begins to take her life into her own hands, instead of being at the mercy of the Queen. As Twylla rebels against the Queen, she starts uncovering secrets. Those secrets change everything, and Leif isn’t who he seems. The book is very inspiring and full of mystery and surprises. For the readers that love fantasy and a little bit of mystery, this is the book for you!

Fantasy

Hannah Miller, former Young Adult Specialist, Tamaqua Public Library

THE WAY TO STAY IN DESTINY

Scattergood, Augusta. *The Way to Stay in Destiny*. New York: Scholastic, 2015. Print.

In the wake of the Vietnam War, Theo finds himself uprooted from his grandparents when they find themselves too old to care for him. His Uncle Raymond, a Vietnam vet and loner, agrees to take on Theo. Theo gets off the bus in Destiny where he lands at Miss Sister Grandersole's Boarding House and School of Dance where Uncle Raymond rents a room. Alone during the summer days, Theo meets Annabel, a fellow baseball fan who is avoiding Miss Sister. He also discovers Miss Sister has a beautiful piano. This feel good novel is a great reflection of the time period in which America was at odds with the way they treat the returning soldiers and the way gender roles are defined by society. Scattergood uses humor, friendship, and family to create a story of how sometimes places choose people to live there, not the other way around. A gentle coming of age story about a boy who is defining family and his place in the world, the novel would be geared towards upper elementary school students in grades four through 8. Readers will fall in love with the characters and the plot rich in mystery and adventure in Destiny, a town defined by its name.

Historical Fiction, Vietnam War

Brooke Gerlach, Manheim Central Middle School

SUCH A LITTLE MOUSE

Schertle, Alice. Illus. Stephanie Yue. *Such a Little Mouse*. NY: Orchard Books, 2015. 978-0-545-64929-2. \$16.99. PreK-2.

Such a cozy story! A little mouse lives in a hole in a meadow. Each season, the little mouse pops out of his hole and goes about the tasks of his day, encountering other animals and preparing himself for winter. In less able hands this story could be just another book about seasons or hibernation, but Schertle is a poet and knows how to craft elegant text. With just enough repetition, and a few dashes of alliteration, onomatopoeia and other figurative language, this story begs to be read aloud. Yue's illustrations are soft and lovely without being sentimental. The double page spreads of the meadow capture the sense of a much wider world, while the depictions of the mouse's hole are comforting and filled with delightful details of the mouse's miniature life. Fans of Beatrix Potter or the less well-known *Fourteen Bears in Summer and Winter*, by Evelyn Scott, will want to read this title again and again!

Picture Book

Stephanie Gibson, Librarian Montessori Academy of Lancaster

RUSSEL THE SHEEP

Scotton, Rob. *Russell the Sheep*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005.

0060598484. \$15.99. Gr. PK-1.

Falling asleep at night can be a real challenge for some people, even for Russell the Sheep. Russell tries many ways to help himself fall asleep until he comes up with the perfect solution, or so he thinks; he will count things! Every type of audience will be able to relate to this beautiful story. As Russell tries and tries again to find ways to solve his problem, he demonstrates the power of persistence as well as how useful his counting skills can be. The illustrations compliment this engaging story with soft hues and brushed effects to create the opportunity for the audience to experience Russel's sleepy time dilemma. This story provides several entry points to integrate different skills for early learners. Early childhood teachers and parents will find this book suitable for any environment.

Picture Book; Fiction

Michele L. White, Professor, Kutztown University

ABOUT PARROTS

Sill, Cathryn. Illus. John Sill. *About Parrots: A Guide for Children*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2014. 978-1-56145-795-4. \$16.95. Grades 1-3.

Yet another noteworthy volume in the About.... series by educator/author Cathryn and prize-winning illustrator, husband, John, this book is exceptional in its illustrations and information about the varieties of parrots. The book follows the usual series format of simple text on the left page, along with a reference plate number and name for the right-page-illustrated parrot(s). The book concludes with an Afterword, containing the plate number, more detailed information about the parrot, and a thumbnail version of the original full page illustration of the parrot, which is presented to the left of the text on the left page and to the right of the text on the right page. A glossary, suggested further reading list with books and websites, and resources used in developing the book complete the informational data. Young children will love seeing the beautiful pictures of these amazing birds and learning about what they eat, where they live, and how they look and behave. Older children will love all those elements and also the additional information given in the Afterword. This series and this book, in particular, should be included in any child's reading list, for it makes reading nonfiction extremely interesting and fun!

Nonfiction

Gayle R. Heath, Library Director, Tamaqua Public Library

YOU ARE MY BABY: MEADOW

Siminovich, L. *You Are My Baby: Meadow*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books LLC, 2015. \$8.99.

ISBN: 978-1452140117. Picture Book. Grade Level: Preschool and up.

A simple 10 page book for parents to read with their toddler, *You Are My Baby: Meadow* is a wonderful book that teaches children the names of baby animals while being able to participate. This book design allows the parent to flip the larger half of the book while a small portion is cut out for the child to flip. The adult's portion reveals the adult animal while the child's portion reveals its baby equivalent with its baby name. This is not your typical mommy and baby book as the parent animal is not gendered so a mother or father could read this with their child and make parallels. The soft colors along with simple repetitive wording make this book great for infants and toddlers while the sturdy cardboard will last for many reads to come. This book is one of many in a series that talk about different baby names in different environments including ocean, woodlands, and safari.

Board book

Sara Fiorenza, Graduate Student, Kutztown University

BONE

Smith, Jeff. New York: Graphix, 2015. \$14.99. ISBN: 978-0-545-80070-9. Graphic Novel. Grade Level: 7-10.

What trouble can three cousins get into after getting chased out of Boneville? The Bone cousins are a varied bunch. Phoney Bone is the shady, recently ex-rich cousin, Smiley Bone is the gambler of the group and doesn't quite follow the rules, and lastly there is Fone bone the youngest of the cousins and is more kind hearted. They end up getting lost after getting chased out of town and an unfortunate locust attack separates them. Fone Bone moves on ahead to find his missing cousins. In his journey he meets many fun and dangerous characters. There are the Rat Creatures out looking for Phoney Bone, the mysterious Dragon who comes to Fone's aid many times throughout the story, the beautiful and strong lady named Thorn and her Grandmother among many others. This is only the first book in the series of many in the full saga of Bone. Smith is able to create a full wondrous epic tale with fantasy elements throughout. This version of the first volume is a special tribute edition to celebrate the 10 year anniversary of the publication of the full color version of the graphic novel. He is able to create this fantastical world with characters that are varied and fun. There is added content to the back of the novel to help celebrate this anniversary. There is a poem Smith wrote called "An Ode to Quiche", individual art pages by the author of various moments in the first volume, and a tribute gallery of fan art by 16 well known comic and graphic novel artists. There is also a sneak peak at the next part of the story, if the reader is interested to continue the epic saga. This is a work that has wonderful developed characters and beautiful art and is a great choice for a reader from middle to high school age and beyond.

Graphic Novel; Fantasy

**Sara Moyer, Instructional Support Specialist,
Reading Area Community College**

I SURVIVED TRUE STORIES

Tarshis, Lauren. *I Survived True Stories: Five Epic Disasters*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2014. 9780545782241. \$12.99. Grade Level 2-5.

Five engaging stories illustrate epic disasters through the stories of children who lived through them, spanning from 1888 to 2012. The stories are followed by facts about each event, as well as information about other historical events taking place at the same time, and suggested reading. With dynamic storytelling laid out in bite-sized pieces and clear black and white photos, this narrative non-fiction easily draws the reader in and holds their attention. This is a welcome addition to the popular “I Survived” book series, and would be perfect for any library!

Non-Fiction **Christine Weida, Children’s Librarian, Sinking Spring Public Library**

SISTERS

Telgemeier, Raina. New York: Scholastic/Graphix, 2014. \$10.99. ISBN: 978-0-545-54060-5. Graphic Novel. Grade Level: 7-10.

Siblings can be a pain and Raina's companion novel to her previous memoir Smile shows this perfectly. It tells the story of the year her family took a cross country road trip to a family reunion in Colorado. It shows that as much as she wanted to get along with her sister, they were instead constantly butting heads. Raina shows this by inserting flashbacks to the memories about her sister from before she was born to various moments when they were younger. She is able to convey this by coloring those pages in sepia-like tones that look faded compared the main story art. The trip takes a week and the reunion doesn't go quite as planned but during that trip they are able to understand each other more after they realize that their parents are dealing with ideas of divorce. The art in the novel is her usual style like in Smile and Drama and perfectly shows the humor in the many memories with her sister Amara. Anyone with a sibling whether it be a brother or sister can relate to this graphic novel. At the very end, Raina includes photos of her and her sister that relate to different situations she puts into the book, which is a nice wrap up of the novel. This can be read by a reader in middle school but since it is about sibling relationships, it can also be a good read for a high school reader as well.

Graphic Novel; Memoir

**Sara Moyer, Instructional Support Specialist,
Reading Area Community College**

NNEWTS

TenNapel, Doug. Nnewts. New York: Scholastic, 2015. ISBN: 978-0-545-67646-5. \$10.99.

The first book in Nnewts is an amazing graphic novel that combines magic and science in a sense that allows them to co-exist in their own uniqueness that bring out the best in each other. What makes the story a joy to read was the amount of unexpected events. The story opens with a character that was thought to be the protagonist, however it turns out that his son is to be the protagonist. Nnewts continues to be filled with surprises that leave the reader on the edge of their seat. The only downside to the series is that it follows a cliché that reptiles are bad, mean and evil. This book is recommended for action lovers that love tragedy and hardship but ache for the noble hero to win.

Graphic Novel; Science Fiction/Fantasy

**Sara Fiorenza, Graduate Student,
Kutztown University**

NOODLE MAGIC

Thong, Roseanne Greenfield. Illus. Meilo So. *Noodle Magic*. NY: Orchard Books, 2014. 978-0-545-52167-3. \$17.99. K-2.

Mei's Grandpa Tu is a noodle maker and he makes magic with his dough. Noodle creatures and jump ropes and kite strings that can capture clouds are all kneaded and pulled and stretched from Grandpa Tu's kitchen. The Emperor's birthday is coming and Mei wants to make something special for the celebration. Her uncle insists Mei has magic inside herself to make something wonderful for the Emperor. Mei does not believe him, and approaches the moon goddess for help. Written in the style of a folktale, this story has a modern message of self-empowerment. So's bright, watercolor illustrations convey a sense of place and excitement as people in Mei's village get ready for the celebration. So's clever illustrations of Grandpa Tu's fantastical noodle creatures populate Mei's home and add to the whimsy of the story. An unusual setting and positive message make this title a solid choice for school libraries.

Picture Book

Stephanie Gibson, Librarian, Montessori Academy of Lancaster

POLAR BEAR'S UNDERWEAR

Tupera, Tupera. *Polar Bear's Underwear*. USA, Chronicle Books LLC, 2015. 9781452141992. \$16.99. Gr. PreK-1.

Tupera Tupera are Tatsuya Kameyama and Atsuka Nakagawa. They're an illustrator and designer team based in Japan. Originally *Polar Bear's Underwear* was published in Japan in 2012, then later translated in 2015. Throughout this delightful story, a mouse helps a clueless polar bear find his missing underwear. The mouse and polar bear search through various sizes and designs of different ones. Cutouts throughout the story reveal the underwear and the next page shows which animal it belongs to whether it's a butterfly, pig, or an octopus. This allows the young readers to giggle and guess who the animal could be, based on the size and design. This picture book is engaging, silly, and perfect for a read aloud and follow up activity. The patterns in the illustrations are bright, detailed, and similar to Eric Carle's style. Expressions on each of the animals, in the illustrations, are humorous and make it enjoyable to see which animal will be on the next page.

Picture Book; Humor

Melanie Stuhr, Librarian, King George Elementary VA

BACKSEAT A-B-SEE

van Lieshout, Maria. *Backseat A-B-See*. San Francisco: Chronicle, 2012. Print. 978-1-4521-3732-2. \$7.99. Gr. PreK.

This book takes readers through the alphabet with the view from the backseat of a car. Using mostly signs that go through every letter of the alphabet (A is for Airport, B is Bike Route, etc.), and block-type illustrations with bold colors, this engaging book will have young children pointing out the different shapes and items. Some are a bit of a stretch, such as Q shows a duck crossing sign (for quack), but that is to be expected, as there is not a sign for everything! Recommended.

Board Book

Amber Sams, High School Librarian, Saucon Valley HS

THE STORY OF DEAF MAJOR LEAGUER WILLIAM HOY

Wise, Bill. *Silent Star: The Story of Deaf Major Leaguer William Hoy*. China: Lee and Low Books, 2012. 9781600604119. \$18.95. Grade Level 2-5.

Beautiful, active illustrations help to convey the powerful nature of this biography. William Hoy was not born deaf, but had a terrible sickness which caused it when he was three. He loved to play baseball and eventually became so impressive that he made it to the major leagues. Hoy went on to become famous, making an impressive record despite having to fight prejudice and have hand signals added to the game in order for him to play. This remarkable story will be a hit with baseball lovers, and is recommended for elementary and public libraries.

Picture Book/Biography

**Christine Weida, Children's Librarian,
Sinking Spring Public Library**

10 TRUE TALES: WAR HEROES, VOICES FROM IRAQ

Zullo, Allan. *10 True Tales: War Heroes, Voices from Iraq*. New York: Scholastic Nonfiction, 2014. 978-0-545-81840-7. \$5.99. Grades 3-7.

Zullo's *War Heroes, Voices from Iraq*, is a good read for this age group, and will probably be most intriguing for boys rising from grades 3-5. Zullo interviewed ten veterans from the more recent Iraq war. The book begins with background on the terrorist attacks of 9/11. The summary is easy for a younger reader to understand, without it being too graphic. Much like the introduction, the entire collection of stories is not too graphic, yet it describes the intensity of each soldier's plight as each serves his/her nation in battle. The book is pretty balanced with regard to the diversity of race and gender of soldiers—it includes a tale from a female soldier in charge of commanding a battle helicopter, as well as the first Hispanic-American soldier since the Vietnam War to receive the Navy Cross. Another good attribute of this book is that it has a glossary of terms in the back which readers will find helpful when trying to understand military language. What will really engage readers is the use of intertextuality—the book features excerpts of letters from soldiers to family members. The dialogue also really solidifies this selection as a good read for this age group. Zullo is honest, and writes with candor and sensitivity for this lexile level. It would be a good school elective read in as a history lesson.

Non-fiction, Paperback

Rachael Hughes, Library Assistant, Tamaqua Public Library

JUMPING JACK

Zullo, Germano and Albertine. *Jumping Jack*. San Francisco: Chronicle, 2013. Print. 978-1-4521-3152-8. \$17.99. Gr. K-3.

Jack and Roger, an unbeatable team of horse and rider, are great friends and great jumpers! However, one day, Jack starts faltering on the course. They go to many doctors and try many remedies, but Jack's troubles are not being resolved. At one competition, during yet another accident, Roger's glasses fall onto Jack's face, and viola! Jack is back to his old unbeatable self! It turns out Jack's eyesight was poor. With this new development, the team is back to winning and back to being everyone's favorite pair. The cute little surprise ending to this story will have kids cheering. The illustrations are comical and can be examined for details that further enhance the story. This is also a nice introduction to horse riding competition. Recommended.

Picture Book

Amber Sams, High School Librarian, Saucon Valley HS

Thank You Everyone for participating in the Fall
Book Review!

We look forward to seeing you in Spring!

**The Department of Library Science and
Instructional Technology**