

THE FALL BOOK REVIEW

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/Presented by Library & Learning Technologies/



Fall Book Review

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FALL BOOK REVIEW

Book Lovers- including librarians, professors, teachers, and students- convene for the biannual Book Review, in spring and fall, hosted by the Department of Library & Learning Technologies 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!

YES! WE ARE LATINOS: POEMS AND PROSE ABOUT THE LATINO EXPERIENCE

Ada, Alama Flor and F. Isabel Campoy. *Yes! We are Latinos: Poems and Prose About the Latino Experience.* Watertown: Charlesbridge, 2013. 978-1-58089-549-1. \$9.95. 4-6.

Monica is from El Salvador, when she was little her father left her and her mother to work in Texas. They moved to Mexico to be closer to her father but it would be 3 years till she saw him again. Her Aunt, Tia Vicky would travel back and forth across the border since she had married an American and was now a citizen. She worked for Mrs. Randall cooking and cleaning. One day Mrs. Randall and her niece came to take her across the border. She had to cut off her long braids and wear a dress Mrs. Randall brought for her. When the border patrol looked in the car Mrs. Randall said “My nieces” and they waved us through. She lived for several weeks with Mrs. Randall and her mom wrote to her every week promising they would be a family again. One day a woman came to the house looking just like her Tia Vicky, but different. She had the same clothes and same hair color but was different. Then Monica realized it was her mom! Yes! We are Latinos introduces us to 13 children each from a different Spanish country. Written as a poem is their story of where they were born, how they migrated to the United States and their experiences. Each chapter starts off explaining the history and culture of each country. Very moving stories about these children and the hardships they endured as immigrants and assimilating into American society. This book would be good to use as a read aloud for a lesson during National Hispanic Heritage month. I would definitely recommend this book for public and school libraries that service a Spanish population.

Poetry

Melinda Bender, Librarian, Thirteenth and Green Elementary

LIVING FOSSILS: CLUES TO THE PAST

Arnold, Caroline. Illus. Andrew Plant. *Living Fossils: Clues to the Past.* Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2016. \$16.95. 978-1-58089-691-7 Grades 3-6. When someone mentions fossils, usually extinct dinosaurs come to mind. *Living Fossils: Clues to the Past* focuses on five animals that lived millions of years ago that still resemble animals alive today. The book features a then and now structure. “Then” discusses what the animal would have looked like and how they survived millions of years ago. “Now” highlights the animal in the present. The book is filled with amazing facts about each of the animals including size, survival strategies, and similarities between the ancient and modern-day animal. A time line is included as well as a glossary, books for more information and websites for extra exploration of the topics. There is even a bonus feature about the Coelacanth, a fish thought to be extinct, but caught off the coast of Madagascar in 1938. It was truly a living fossil. This book would be a great addition to any child’s library who is interested in dinosaurs and ancient life.

Picture Book

Cynthia Stunkard, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

TOO HOT? TOO COLD? KEEPING THE BODY TEMPERATURE JUST RIGHT

Arnold, Caroline. *Too Hot? Too Cold? Keeping Body Temperature Just Right*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge Publishing, Inc., 2013. 978-1-58089-276-6. \$17.95. Gr. 4-6.

This book thoroughly explains how the bodies of animals and people regulate body temperature. Topics include warm-blooded versus cold-blooded (with an explanation of their scientific terms), moving muscles, sweating, fur, hair and feathers, fat, body size and shape, external factors, hibernating, and migrating. Throughout the book, human experiences are compared to those of animals. There is a glossary of terms and author's note in the back. The illustrations are attractive, appealing to children, realistic, and informative. Children of various ethnicities are portrayed. A great variety of animals from different continents are illustrated and identified. A typical page includes main text as well as smaller text adding additional information about the illustrations, diagrams, or related topics. The book ends with a short summary that explains that humans and animals will always find ways to feel "just right" no matter the climate where they live. This book would be an excellent addition to a classroom's nonfiction and/or science collection.

Nonfiction Picture Book Emily Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

NEVER INSULT A KILLER ZUCCHINI

Azose, Elana & Brandon Amancio. Illus. David Clark. *Never Insult a Killer Zucchini*. Watertown: Charlesbridge, 2016. 9781580896184. \$16.95. Grades 2-5.

Killer Zucchini Runs Amok at a Science Fair! A young boy grows a “killer zucchini” for his school’s science fair in this A-Z comic-picture book. As the boy signs in at the science fair, Mr. Farnsworth, the principal, comments that he loves zucchini. The “killer” zucchini falls instantly in love with Mr. Farnsworth. The boy leaves the zucchini unattended at the first science fair project, “antimatter.” The illustrations clearly depict interest and devotion to Mr. Farnsworth as the “killer” zucchini stealthily works its way, alphabetically, through each exhibit at the science fair in pursuit of Mr. Farnsworth. Mr. Farnsworth is oblivious. The “killer” zucchini follows behind as Mr. Farnsworth visits projects entitled, bionic limb, cloning, dooms day device, eraser beam, force field, and so on. The boy returns and warns Mr. Farnsworth not to insult the zucchini, because this zucchini is a trained assassin. Mr. Farnsworth promptly insults the zucchini by saying it looks perfect for an afternoon snack dipped in ranch dressing. The zucchini’s feelings of love quickly disperse, and turn into something sinister. As the boy, “killer” zucchini, and principal work their way to the final science fair project, zero gravity, the zucchini becomes caught in a vortex. Mr. Farnsworth saves the zucchini from being sucked into the vortex, and the zucchini’s feelings of love return.

If a reader wonders, “What is antimatter?” The reader may turn to the glossary, and learn that antimatter occurs when particles of opposite electrical charge touch; they annihilate each other, explode, and leave nothing. Teachers may use this humorous book to spark interest and to help students generate ideas for a science fair project.

Picture Book

Angel Bestwick, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

BEAR CAN DANCE!

Bloom, Suzanne. *Bear Can Dance!* Honesdale, Pennsylvania: Boyds Mill Press, 2015. 978-1-62979-442-6. \$16.95. PreK-1.

Bloom’s Goose and Bear series is continued with a musical book about a fun loving dancing bear. Bear wishes he could fly so his friends Goose and Fox try to help Bear with his dream to fly. Bear’s goal is to swoop and glide and feel the air in his fur while Fox wants him to whoosh, but instead Bear feels woozy and wobbly. After some prompting from Fox, Bear wears his flying gear. All three friends try to ski together to get the effect of flying. Then when Bear continues to try to fly he starts swooping and gliding in his dance. While the record player plays music Bear dances with Goose and Fox. The blue and white dominated pastel illustrations always pop with a splash of color in Bloom’s series. Readers who enjoyed other books in the series will love this new addition. Young readers will most likely have questions about the record player.

Picture Book

Sarah Meitzler, Circulation Manager, Lower Macungie Library

ANALYZE AND DEFINE THE ASSIGNMENT

Bodden, Valerie. (Info Wise) *Analyze and Define the Assignment*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 2015. 9781467752237. \$30.65. 3-6.

An introductory book for students who have been assigned a research project. This first book in the InfoWise series covers topics such as being an information detective, purpose and audience for the research, choosing a topic, developing a research plan, sources and how to find them, differences between primary and secondary sources and how to start selecting sources. Contains a glossary, selected bibliography, a further information section and an index. Also reviewed *Research and Synthesize Your Facts* which is the fourth title in the Info Wise series and delves into notetaking, sources and citations. The other titles in the series which were not reviewed are *Assess and Select Your Source* (second title), *Identify and Evaluate Advertising* (third title), and *Write and Revise Your Project* (fifth title).

Non-fiction; Research

Sharon Breeden, Librarian, Lebanon School District

KINDERGARTEN LUCK

Borden, Louise. Illus. Godbout, Genevieve. *Kindergarten Luck*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2015. 978-1-4521-1394-4. \$16.99. PreK-2.

Borden's *Kindergarten Luck* is a colorful and interesting picture book that tells the story of a young boy named Theodore who finds a lucky penny with vibrant pictures and big bold words on each page. On a somber morning as Theodore is going to eat breakfast he finds a penny with Abraham Lincoln's picture, face up. He places this lucky penny in his pocket and races to the bus stop with his friend Louisa. Theodore describes his school as "the best school in the whole world" as he makes his way in the sunshine to the building. When he arrives in his classroom his teacher, Mr. Leland, calls on him to show the class the day of the week on the calendar. Then later, his kindergarten teacher reads his poem aloud to the class. From playing a perfect tetherball game at recess, getting chosen as line leader, typing on the computer by himself, helping the art teacher hang the kindergarten's Matisse pictures in the lobby, and getting to wave to Louisa in the hall, Theodore was having the luckiest day ever. During math class he forgot which pocket he put the penny in and thought he had lost it. On the ride home from school he told Slim, the bus driver, about his day and about the luck he was having. When the bus pulled up to his stop he took out his penny and quietly slid it on the floor next to Slim's seat because he had realized he had enough luck of his own that he could share some with a friend. Children that have heard stories about lucky pennies will enjoy this book. The pictures and words on each page are very fun and make the story come to life. This story can also teach children the idea of giving back when they receive an abundance of something in their lives. *Kindergarten Luck* is a wonderful book to have in a classroom or library.

Picture Book

Nicole Tener, Elementary Education Student, Kutztown University

THE RAIN WIZARD: THE AMAZING MYSTERIOUS, TRUE LIFE OF CHARLES MALLORY HATFIELD

Brimner, Larry Dane. *The Rain Wizard: The Amazing, Mysterious, True Life of Charles Mallory Hatfield*. Honesdale: Calkins Creek, 2015. 9781590789902. \$16.95. Grades 4-8.

Rain, rain, go away, come again some other day... so the rhyme goes. But this rhyme is the total opposite of the conditions facing California and other areas of the country and world during the early 1900's. Sound familiar? These drought conditions still exist in California today! So what's so different? Back then people, private corporations, and even governments would hire "rainmakers". Sure, some of these rainmakers were scam artists and all had some kind of scheme that would invoke rain to fall, but there was one individual that actually seemed to cause rain to fall wherever he wanted.

This man was Charles Mallory Hatfield, a sewing machine salesman, but also a dabbler in the art of making rain. This book chronicles his life and his amazing rain producing feats. Mallory and an assistant would set up a platform shrouded in secrecy and mix up a batch of smelly chemicals. The resulting vapor would reach the clouds and voilà rain would fall. Of course he had his detractors, but for those desperate for rain many were willing to take a chance.

A fair portion of the book details Mallory's effort to cause rain to fall in the San Diego area in 1916. San Diego officials agreed to pay Mallory ten thousand dollars if he could fill a reservoir. The rainmaker got to work and soon after rain began to fall, and it fell, and it fell. So much so that a flood occurred causing millions in damage. What a dilemma! Mallory wanted to be paid his fee, but the city tried to renege on its promise to pay him. If Mallory would agree to pay the damage claims, they city would pay him. Obviously Mallory could not win. After the San Diego debacle, Mallory continued to perform his rain making for a fee, but eventually because of rivers being diverted, and dams being built, Mallory's services were no longer required and he eventually died taking his secret formula to the grave.

The book presents an unfamiliar topic and is quite interesting. The young reader will definitely enjoy Mallory's escapades. Undoubtedly a book worth having in any library.

Nonfiction; Biography

Steve Tichy, Cataloger, Tamaqua Public Library

FRESHWATER FISH BASS, TROUT, WALLEYE, CATFISH AND MORE

Carpenter, Tom. *Freshwater Fishing Bass, Trout, Walleye, Catfish and More*. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 2013. 978-1-4677-0219-5. Grade Level 3-5.

Freshwater Fishing is one of the titles in the Great Outdoors series. It is a comprehensive piece of literature with a focus how to fish in freshwater ponds, lakes and rivers. The reader will learn about the history of fishing, fishing tools, how to fish responsibly, and recipes to cook fish. The format includes bright subheadings, and large, colorful photographs. The print is a little small which makes this selection better for students in third through fifth grade. The fish guide at the back of the book includes facts about different species of freshwater fish. This would be a great read for students in grades third through fifth grade who have an interest in freshwater fishing.

Nonfiction **Laura Sweinhart, Librarian, Lower Pottsgrove Elementary School**

JOB SITE

Clement, Nathan. *Job Site*. Honesdale, PA: Boyd's Mill Press, 2011. 978-1-62979-407-5. \$7.99. Gr. Pre-K.

In this simple board book, the "boss" orders each of the construction vehicles to do its job until the crew arrives at the final product. The text follows this pattern: "Boss says, 'Level that pile!' And the bulldozer lowers its blade and levels the pile of gravel." The computer-generated illustrations are clean and bold. This is the board book version of the regular book. Clement also authored the books *Speed and Drive*. Very young readers will enjoy listening to the book over and over, following along with the pattern of text and being awed by the size and strength of the vehicles. Toddlers learning to talk can be encouraged to identify each machine as it appears. The board book is a nice option for little ones to carry around.

Board Book **Emily Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School**

NEVER GIVE UP: A STORY ABOUT SELF-ESTEEM

Cole, Kathryn. *Never Give Up: A Story About Self-esteem*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Second Story Press, 2015. 978-1-927583-60-9. \$15.95. Gr. K-4.

Nadia is jumping rope when she notices that Shaun is struggling to learn how to ride his bike. Soon, a group of kids comes up and teases Shaun, but he keeps on trying. Nadia is unsure how to stand up to the bullies but after talking to Shaun, she arrives at an idea. Nadia goes home and tells her dad, and the two of them return to Shaun to help him learn to ride without training wheels. In exchange, Shaun helps Nadia become better at jumping rope- and her father and the other children who had harassed Shaun jump in as well. Woven throughout this touching story are the themes of self-esteem and not giving up. This book would be a great addition to character education and growth mindset curricula. At the end of the book is a note for parents defining self-esteem and providing advice for encouraging self-esteem in their children. Leng's illustrations portray children of multiple ethnicities. *Never Give Up* was published as part of the Prevention Program Series by Boost Child Abuse Prevention & Intervention.

Picture Book

Emily Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

FOLLOW THE MOON HOME: A TALE OF ONE IDEA, TWENTY KIDS, AND A HUNDRED SEA TURTLES

Cousteau, Philippe and Deborah Hopkinson. Illus. Meilo So. *Follow The Moon Home: A Tale of One Idea, Twenty Kids, and a Hundred Sea Turtles*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2016. ISBN: 9781452112411. \$16.99. K-3.

Deborah Hopkinson (author of *Sky Boys, How They Built the Empire State Building*) collaborates with Jacques Cousteau's grandson, Philippe, for this picture book designed to spark an interest in environmental education. Vivienne's family moves to a new town on the South Carolina coast. Her teacher assigns a class community action project. Viv is anxious to be the one to find a community problem. She bikes all over town but mostly just gets lost. Several days later, she is at the beach and runs into her classmate, Clementine. Viv is baffled by a loggerhead turtle nesting area sign. Later that night, Viv and her mom are walking their dog on the beach when Viv figures out that the baby turtles are mistaking the lights from the beach houses for the moon which causes them to walk away from the ocean and dehydrate. This begins Viv's "Lights Out for Loggerheads" Campaign. This captivating picture book concludes with information from Cousteau designed to spark interest in the environment as well as information on loggerhead turtles. This title could be used in a science lesson or as a way to help students learn to identify problems around them.

Picture Book

Sharon Breeden, Librarian, Lebanon School District

J.P. AND THE GIANT OCTOPUS

Crespo, Ana. *J. P. and the Giant Octopus*. Illus. Erica Sirolich. Chicago: Albert Whitman & Company, 2015. 978-0-8075-3975-0. \$16.99. K-2.

J.P. is brave, but he has to remind himself of that a lot, especially when his dad takes the car to the giant octopus! (The giant octopus is the car wash.) Inside the car, J.P. and his dog are nervous and point out all of the scary aspects of the giant octopus. However, they come to realize it is a friendly octopus who is just giving them a big hug. The humorous illustrations include some from J.P.'s point of view and show how the carwash looks like a giant octopus. Children will see the connections between the two and enjoy the happy ending. This book is recommended.

Picture Book

Amber Sams, Librarian, Saucon Valley High School

ANIMALS THAT MAKE ME SAY EWWW!

Cusick, Dawn. *Animals That Make Me Say EWWW!* Watertown: Imagine! Publishing, 2016. 978-1-62354-063-0. Grade Level 3-8.

Animals That Make Me Say Ewww! is an extremely well-written and well-designed book. It is one of three titles in the Ranger Rick series. A short biography of Dawn Cusick is included on the back dust jacket. Her biography explains the expertise that is so prevalent in the text and photographs of this book. Although she teaches biology at a college level, she clearly is able to relate to the interests of younger children. She takes the gross behaviors of animals and educates children on the animals' biological behaviors. The vocabulary is rich and the topics are tactfully presented. The reader will learn about vomit, regurgitation, boogers, nasal detritus, mucus, scent molecules, algae, microscopic life, and symbiosis. Even adults will find this book interesting. But, the real audience for this book is boys in the earlier grade levels up to eighth grade. They will enjoy the colorful photographs, and reading about behaviors that their mothers' told them never to talk about.

Nonfiction

Laura Sweinhart, Librarian, Lower Pottsgrove Elementary School

UNTWINE

Danticat, Edwidge. *Untwine*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2015. 978-0-545-42303-8. \$16.99. Grades 7-12.

Isabelle and Giselle Boyer are twin sisters that are also best friends. They always have each other's backs, especially when their parents are thinking about getting a divorce. It was almost their 17th birthday and they were on their way to Isabelle's flute concert when the family gets into a car accident. Giselle wakes up in the hospital, trapped in her body unable to move or know if her family is alive and well. She can hear the doctors calling her Isabelle, which really confuses her. She remembers only a few things from the crash and throughout the story she tries to put the pieces together to figure out what had happened to her family. Through her slight memories and observations in the hospital she realizes the sister she grew up adoring was killed in the accident. Danticat weaves her Haitian culture in the story through the characters, which is a great opportunity for readers to learn more about topics they might not know about. The overall story is eye opening because it is about events that actually happen in the world.

Realistic Fiction

Nicole Tener, Elementary Education, Kutztown University.

FINDING OUT ABOUT HYDROPOWER

Doeden, Matt. *Finding Out About Hydropower*. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 2015. 978-1-4677-3659-6. Grade Level: 2-5.

Finding Out About Hydropower is one title in the Searchlight Books series. This nonfiction book includes a table of contents, glossary, index, list for further reading and a list of informational websites. There are large, colorful photographs and picture captions on every page. A short explanation on the water cycle is included in chapter one. The chapters reveal what hydropower is, how to produce it, and the pros and cons of hydropower. The last chapter touches on the future of hydropower. I recommend purchasing *Finding Out About Hydropower* for any library that services young children. Hydropower is a current science topic. Lerner publishes beautiful, nonfiction literature. This one is no exception. The layout, photographs, text, cover, and additional locators are of high quality. This is an excellent example of nonfiction at its finest.

Nonfiction

Laura Sweinhart, Librarian, Lower Pottsgrove Elementary School

UNBECOMING

Downham, Jenny. *Unbecoming*. New York: Scholastic, Inc, 2016. 9780545907170. \$17.99. 8-12.

The three females on the front cover have hair but no faces. Could it be because they all have secrets that are intertwined? Katie's life is about to fall apart due to drama issues with her friends when her mother, Caroline, receives a phone call out of the blue. After years of estrangement, Caroline must go assist her mother, Mary, who is suffering from severe dementia. The novel flip flops back and forth between 1950's England and present day told through third-person perspective of both Katie and Mary as these three women discover their interconnectedness and reunite as a family.

Fiction; Young Adult

Sharon Breeden, Librarian, Lebanon School District

THE LETTER FOR THE KING

Dragt, Tonke. *The Letter for the King*. New York: David Fickling Books, 2015. 978-0-545-81978-7. \$18.99. Grades 7-9.

Tonke's *The Letter for the King* is a high fantasy novel perfect for any student that has an interest in knights, kings, and the medieval era. Tiuri, a sixteen-year-old knight-to-be, is disturbed during his vigil by a man claiming to have seen another knight in a forest. Tiuri breaks custom and goes outside, giving up his chances of becoming a knight. In the woods, Tiuri finds a dying knight holding a letter, stressing that it must make its way to the kingdom in the west. Tiuri takes up the dying knight's wish to have the letter delivered and sets out on an epic quest to the western kingdom. Along the way, Tiuri meets up with a wide range of friends, from a boy who lived in the woods to another that would end up becoming his best friend. *The Letter for the King* offers students a classic from another country to be introduced into their library, originally being published in the Netherlands. With its use of world building, *The Letter for the King* gives students that opportunity to go on an epic quest with knights on a mission. This book is perfect for the student who wishes to learn about the medieval era.

Chapter Book

Valerie Korsick, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

44 HOURS OR STRIKE!

Dublin, Anne. *44 Hours or Strike!* Toronto, Ontario: Second Story Press, 2015. 9781927583760. \$11.95. Young adult.

This story takes place in 1930's Toronto. The reader is introduced to a Jewish family that has fled Russia due to increasing anti-semitism. The family has landed in Canada instead of the intended target of America, but this is close enough for them. Two sisters, Sophie the youngest, and Rose the oldest must work in a garment factory earning meager wages because their father has passed away. Working conditions are far from pleasant as the sisters as well as the other women are forced to work long hours in lousy conditions. Throughout the book the union wants to organize a strike to draw attention to the plight of the workers (both male and female) and force the company to increase wages and improve working conditions. Eventually a strike is authorized and workers picket. Rose is arrested and thrown into a reformatory where she is brutalized. This leaves a young Sophie to look after her ailing mother and keep the dangling threads of her family together. Rose is released after 30 days, but is not the same. It is here that the book seems to lose focus on what would seem to be insinuated in the title - to draw attention to the worker's plight in the garment industry in Toronto. Instead, the reader is faced with Sophie's dilemma of having a non-Jewish boyfriend and other family troubles. Quite literally, a page is turned and oh, by the way, the strike is over, and on to post strike events. What a disappointment. Yes, this is a fiction book, but it is as if the book had to end in a certain number of pages, so a quick ending was needed. The book does present relevant information about the garment workers plight in Canada, but if the reader wants to learn about this subject, a nonfiction book is advised. This book is not recommended.

Historical Fiction

Steve Tichy, Cataloger, Tamaqua Public Library

SOME KIND OF MAGIC

Fogelin, Adrian. *Some Kind of Magic*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2015. 978-1-56145-820-2. \$15.95. 5th - 8th.

Part crime-solving part coming of age, this novel features the four friends Justin, Cass, Jemmie, and Ben along with Ben's kid brother Cody on their adventures as their last summer before high school kicks off to a boring start. Set in Tallahassee within a week countdown to Cody's birthday, the story centers around the "magic hat" Cody finds that leads them to an abandoned shed on the site of a house fire that serves as their new secret hangout. A subplot of the novel is finding out what happened to the brothers' Uncle Paul. It doesn't take long for them to find out how the house fire, Uncle Paul, and the hat all connect. In the end Ben has an accident and Justin proves to be a hero as everything resolves. Teenage drama runs throughout the story with romance, family troubles, obesity, interracial friendships, and the uncertainty of a new school all being relatable to the reader. The novel does become very unrelatable when the "magic" is brought in. As this novel is designed for middle schoolers, the youngest will say they've outgrown it and the oldest really have. While the hat's magical powers are symbolic of imagination and confidence, the characters' expressed belief and the title can be deterring to potential readers. This is great for teachers to use to reassure students going to high school or for the kid sibling always tagging along. Some real issues and learning lessons are presented and can be effectively used for discussions in the classroom. For more adventures with these characters look for Fogelin's novels, *Crossing Jordan*, *The Big Nothing*, and *My Brother's Hero*.

Chapter Book

Gwen Harter, Undergrad, Kutztown University

DC COMICS: SUPER HERO SOCIETY- STUDY HALL OF JUSTICE

Fridolfs, Derek and Dustin Nguyen. *DC Comics: Secret Hero Society- Study Hall of Justice*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2016. 978-0-545-82501-6. \$12.99. Grade Level: 6-9.

Imagine a world where DC Comics Superheroes and villains existed in a school setting before they grew up to fight one another. Bruce Wayne is invited to the prestigious Ducard Academy, and already by the first day he is sensing something off. As he uses his detective skills to fete out the source of the evil, he acquires two allies: Clark Kent and Diana Prince (Superman and Wonder Woman respectively), to help him. The story is told through graphic novel panels in the standard block style, along with journal entries from all three kids, online group chats, the school paper, various school flyers, student evaluation reports, and video monitor footage. Most of the student body and faculty at the school appear to be villains from across the DC Comics universe. The art style is done in watercolor and pen work that complement the story wonderfully. This is a perfect read for a DC Comics fan as Batman, Superman, and Wonder Woman, are pitted against their greatest enemies in a middle school setting.

Graphic Novel

Sara Moyer, Library Aide at Robesonia Community Library

HARE AND TORTOISE RACE ACROSS ISRAEL

Gehl, Laura. Illustrations by Sarah Goodreau. *Hare and Tortoise Race Across Israel*. Minneapolis, MN: KAR-BEN Publishing. 2015. Paperback, \$7.95. ISBN: 978-1-4677-3819-4. Grade level: PreK- 2.

This retelling of the popular hare and tortoise fable places the characters as friends who live together near the Hashalom train station in Tel Aviv. They spend their days playing at the beach, visiting museums and sharing ordinary foods such as carrots and hummus. As anticipated, hare brags about his ability to run fast, and challenges tortoise to a race. Tortoise sets the finish line to be The Dead Sea. As they raced from the big city across the countryside of Israel, readers are invited to notice traditional foods, some of which are labeled with Hebrew signs. Local activities and traditions enticed hare to take breaks, and “rest on his laurels.” He watched a soccer game, enjoyed street performers, relaxed, napped, until he was startled awake only to notice that tortoise had passed him and was winning the race! “Slow and steady might win the race,” but the two were still friends. They joined the other animals as they floated and frolicked in the soothing waters of The Dead Sea.

Curriculum connections can be made to visual literacy, social communication and local customs, map drawing, and symbolic art, music and dance. Children may also be invited to dramatize the fable during playful, outdoor group activities such as those so skillfully depicted in the clever, stylistic illustrations of the book.

Jeanie Burnett, Professor, Kutztown University

THE G-MAN SUPER JOURNAL: AWESOME ORIGINS

Giarrusso, Chris. *The G-Man Super Journal: Awesome Origins*. Kansas City: Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2015. 978-1-4494-5844-7. \$13.99. 2-5

In English class Michael G. a.k.a. G-Man was assigned to start a journal and he could write about anything that he likes, so he writes about his life. Well, Michael does not go to just any school he goes to a school where super heroes are in the making go and discover their talents. As for Michael he has no super powers and no special talents as of yet but several of his classmates are beginning to discover theirs. The math and science teacher Mr. Leary says that superheroes got lucky and they should not be idolized because they did not earn it. He constantly points to his framed diploma on the wall telling students that's what they need to succeed in life. In his journal Michael likes to write about his favorite superhero Captain Thunderman because he is strong, invulnerable, he can fly and he carries a lightning bolt that shoots out thunderblasts. During the school year Michael watches as his classmates' powers develop from color changing, to having super speed and to flying. Some of them have super talents naturally while others have some help with magic props and Michael is trying to figure just what his are. The G-Man Super Journal is a hilarious look at the awkward stage of when kids are trying to find themselves and are looking to make friends while they have an annoying brother constantly teasing them. It is an excellent book for those students who do not like to read. I would highly recommend this book for any library.

Graphic Novel

Melinda Bender, Librarian, Thirteenth and Green Elementary

GEORGE

Gino, Alex. *George*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2015. 9780545912542. \$16.99.

George is a girl. This matured fourth grader knows and understands that she is different, but fears she has to lie to world for the rest of her life. She has not told anyone just yet, not even her best friend, Kelly. George tries to be “normal” but she struggles with her secret. George finally decides to try something different. The fourth grade classes are putting on a play about, Charlotte’s Web, an all-time classic. George wishes to be Charlotte, but even after nailing his audition, her teachers would not let her. Their reason is because Charlotte is a girl and George is not a girl. This crushes George, but Kelly came up with a grand scheme because Kelly knows that George is meant to be Charlotte. Only now, the whole school will know. Being different and knowing that others would condemn your existence is a harsh reality for many. Gino does an amazing job with representing the transgender community and what they are facing. The language Gino presents is very important. Gino still used the main character’s birth name, but uses the pronouns she preferred; this showed that George understood what she is, but no one outside of her head knew. Another great feature of this piece of transgender literature is that it is appropriate for a lower age group. It is short and uses simple language so younger readers can understand and find representation. Ages 9-13.

Fiction

Carla Castro MSLS Student, Clarion University of Pennsylvania

OLD MACDONALD HAD A TRUCK

Goetz, Steve. Illus. Eda Kaban. *Old MacDonald Had a Truck*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books LLC, 2016. 9781452132600. \$16.99. PreK-2.

E-I-E-I-O-what-a-book! It is a twist on the classic song, Old MacDonald Had a Farm. Rather than sing about farm animals and animal sounds, this song-filled picture book provides lyrics about heavy machinery. “And on his farm he had an EXCAVATOR!” Each introduction of particular heavy machinery is followed by appropriate sounds such as, “SCOOOP SCOOP” and “SPIN WHIRL.” Eda Kaban’s whimsical illustrations depict the comical antics of the busy farm workers and Old MacDonald and his wife. The busy farm workers are the animals themselves, dressed in yellow construction vests and hard hats, and in pit crew attire. For example, a pig, dressed as a mechanic, is suspended in the air while trying to pump air into a large tire. *Old MacDonald Had a Truck* would make for an amusing sing-aloud (rather than read-aloud). Teachers might use this book to teach making predictions. Each new stanza of the song is on a double page spread: the recto page text [“And on that farm he had a...”] naturally leads to students making a prediction about the next featured piece of heavy machinery. Teachers might also use this book to teach onomatopoeia [“With a SQUISH SMASH here...”]. Teachers may find a variety of uses for this charming text.

Picture Book

Angel Bestwick, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

HORSES, DONKEYS, AND MULES IN THE MARINES

Goldish, Meish. *Horses, Donkeys, and Mules in the Marines*. New York: Bearport Publishing, 2012. 978-1-61772-453-4. Grade Level: 2 – 5.

Horses, Donkeys, and Mules in the Marines is one of the titles in the nonfiction series America's Animal Soldiers. The text focuses on U.S. military use of horses, donkeys, and mules throughout history to present day. There is a focus on Marine use of these animals, but also includes modern day uses by the general public. This is a very unusual topic and no doubt is a hard topic to find for young readers. The pages are filled with large, colorful photographs. There is a table of contents, glossary, index, bibliography, and list of more titles written by Meish Goldish. Adults with an interest in military history may also find this an interesting read. The organization of the pictures and text, the large subheadings in bold colorful print, and the picture captions all add to the overall attractiveness of this book. This is a great title to add to any collection. For a school library, this title may be most appealing to second through fifth graders.

Nonfiction

Laura Sweinhart, Librarian Lower Pottsgrove Elementary School

OVER THE OCEAN

Gomi, Taro. *Over the Ocean*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2016 (1979). 978-1-4521-4515-0. \$16.99. PreK-2.

In this brightly and beautifully illustrated book, a young girl stands on a beach imagining what lies on the other side of the ocean. The text is minimal with some repetition and questions that children may like to answer. The watercolor illustrations use bold colors and dramatic scenes to portray what the girl imagines lies over the ocean. These scenes change on each page, but the girl on the beach remains the same. The message at the end suggests a connection among people around the world that children will enjoy. This book is recommended.

Picture Book

Amber Sams, Librarian, Saucon Valley High School

MOVING TARGET

Gonzalez, Christina Diaz. *Moving Target*. New York: Scholastic, 2015. 978-0-545-77318-8. \$17.99. Grades 6-8.

Gonzalez's *Moving Target* offers readers a fast-paced adventure story that will keep them on their toes and wondering what is going to happen next. Following twelve-year-old Cassie Arroyo, the reader is taken on a journey where Cassie learns that everything she knew about her father is wrong and that she is not really who she thinks she is. She is actually an accommodator to an ancient spear that has the power to shape her destiny and the destiny of the entire world. However, she is being hunted down by a group of people who want to be rid of this power and to do that they must get rid of Cassie. Making new friends and avoiding new obstacles, Cassie must find this spear and dodge the Hastati to be reunited with her father. This book gives the young reader a strong female character that will do what needs to be done. The story is rich with deceit and clues and danger around every corner. This suspenseful adventure book would be perfect for any reader that wants a face-paced chapter to sink into.

Chapter Book

Valerie Korsick, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

CODE OF HONOR

Gratz, Alan. *Code of Honor*. Broadway, NY: Scholastic Press, 2015. 978-0-545-69519-0. \$17.99. Gr. 9-12.

Kamran Smith is a star football player with great friends, a supportive family, and an older brother who is a West Point graduate and currently stationed in Afghanistan. His world comes crashing down on him, however, when he finds out that his brother, Darius, is suspected of joining a terrorist group. Suddenly, because of his mother's Iranian heritage, his whole family is taken into custody by the U.S. government. Kamran finds himself being sequestered and questioned, but he is determined to clear his brother's name- because Darius would never do something like that... Right? As he becomes mired more and more deeply in the investigation, Kamran begins to question what he thought he knew about his brother. As videos emerge of Darius claiming to be on the terrorists' side, Kamran starts to piece together clues into a secret message that he believes will save Darius and the United States at the same time. Kamran must escape his bondage and save the day before it is too late. This exciting novel is hard to put down. Gratz keeps the reader on his toes, anxious to find out what fate will befall the protagonist. Young adults will be rooting for Kamran and for justice in this poignant novel which is so relevant in our post-9/11 culture. Males may especially appreciate the adventure so central to this story, but the book will appeal to females as well.

Realistic Fiction

Emily Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

POEMS IN THE ATTIC

Grimes, Nikki. Elizabeth Zunon. *Poems in the Attic*. New York: Lee & Low Books, 2015. 978-1-62014-027-7. \$19.95. Pre-K- 2nd.

This richly illustrated children's book focuses on a seven-year-old girl visiting her grandmother for three days. She finds a box of poems her mother wrote about the places she lived as a young girl in a military family. Each poem the mother wrote is accompanied by the daughter's reflection about the poem and her time with her grandmother. All of the poems are very reflective and show the fun each experiences, culminating in the daughter's surprise book of poems for her mother. The mother's poems are written in the Japanese style Tanka, and the daughter's in free verse, both forms are explained in the back of the book. Each set of poems is set up with an oval cut-out illustration of the girl on the right and the mother's memory and poem fill up the remaining one and a half pages of the two page spread. Zunon uses a combination of deeply colorful acrylics, oils, and collaging for each picture adding a sensory level to the stories the poems portray. This book can be used well as an introduction to poetry and the help children cope with moving, friends, family, and armed forces.

Picture Book

Gwen Harter, Undergrad, Kutztown University

NOW YOU SEE THEM, NOW YOU DON'T: POEMS ABOUT CREATURES THAT HIDE

Harrison, David L. Illus. Giles Larouche. *Now You See Them, Now You Don't: Poems About Creatures That Hide*. Watertown: Charlesbridge, 2016. 9781580896108. \$17.95. K-3.

Poetry and science? This book is a perfect blending of two seemingly incongruent subjects. The topic of animal adaptations is represented in poetic form, with a focus on camouflage. Rhyming poems are arranged under the headings of "Sea Life," "Reptiles & Amphibians," "Mammals," "Insects & Spiders," and "Birds." The paratext at the end of the book contains informational snippets about each creature featured in the poems (e.g. ghost crab, gray tree frog, eastern gray squirrel, etc.). Each poem is accompanied by a cut-paper relief including hand-painted papers thus creating a beautiful, realistic 3-dimensional image of particular creatures. For instance, the poem about the reef stonefish realistically depicts the brilliant red color of the fish, yet also conveys the deadliness of its protruding spiny fins and sharp teeth. Science teachers may use this book as a supplement or alternative to informational text about the animal adaptation of camouflage. Primary grade teachers may use *Now You See Them, Now You Don't: Poems About Creatures That Hide* to teach about rhyming sounds.

Poetry

Angel Bestwick, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

FINDER, COAL MINE DOG

Hart, Alison. Illus. Michael Montgomery. *Finder, Coal Mine Dog*, Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2015. 9781561458608. \$12.95. Grades 5-7.

The main theme of Alison Hart's Dog Chronicles series is usually a heroic dog saving the day, and this third entry of the series doesn't disappoint. This "hero dog" story takes place in Illinois during 1909. The main characters being a young boy named Thomas, his dog Finder, and Thomas' aunt and uncle with whom he now lives. Family life was tough at this point in time, farmers were not making enough from their land, and the rise of coal mining was taking place. A person could make more money working in the mine rather than working the land. But with more money comes more danger as the reader soon finds out.

Thomas' parents had passed away leaving a large debt to be paid back by "aunt and uncle". Other than working in the mine as a coal digger, options were non-existent to get the money to pay back the loan. Thomas was resigned to working deep below the earth to get some money. Picking coal was no easy task, and the amount Thomas picked was so small he had little chance of working off the debt any time soon. He got an idea that Finder could help him in the mine by pulling the coal cart when full, and thereby increasing the amount Thomas could gather. Well it turns out this idea worked pretty well...that is, until an accident fills the mine with smoke and flame, and it is up to Finder to get Thomas and others to safety. Finder's sense of smell and hearing helped him save quite a few men, and the mine safety supervisors were so impressed that both Finder and Thomas were asked to be a part of a mine rescue team. Thomas would still have to go into the mines, but he no longer would be digging coal.

The storyline extends deeper than just the coal mine aspect, and it is this depth of storyline that makes this book well worth reading, it will definitely keep the young reader engaged. As icing on the cake, beautiful illustrations and background information about coal mines and rescue dogs contribute nicely to the book.

Chapter Book

Steve Tichy, Cataloger, Tamaqua Public Library

STELLA AND THE NIGHT SPRITES: KNIT KNOTTERS

Hay, Sam. Illus. by Turine Tran. *Stella and the Night Sprites: Knit Knotters*. New York: Branches/Scholastic, 2016. 978-0-545-81998-5. \$4.99. Grades 1-4.

Stella isn't thrilled about having to get glasses, but when a strange woman adds some magic to her new frames, everything changes. Stella finds that she not only likes the frames better, but she can see better—so much better that she can see night sprites! With her new-found ability to see clearer, Stella stays up late reading and discovers a knit-knotter sprite named Trixie who comes at night to knit knots in her hair. Stella, who has to go get a haircut tomorrow because her hair gets so knotty, is not very happy about Trixie's job, but Trixie isn't alone. There are 50 knit-knotter fairies who have been sent on a mission to drum up business for a hairy fairy in town who runs the beauty shop. Each fairy who ties one thousand knots will receive a fairy bracelet in return. Stella comes up with an alternate plan involving her dolls and her beading skills that saves a lot of painful brushing and unwanted haircuts. Readers will delight with this fun first book in the Night Sprites series. Hay's plot, though somewhat predictable, flows nicely from one chapter to the next, and the characters will certainly appeal to the intended lower-elementary age group. Tran's black and white illustrations grace every page adding just the right dose of magic and helping the readers to connect with the settings, plot, characters and even some of the words. The large number of illustrations also fills out the pages making this a quick read. The book is part of Scholastic's Branches line of chapter books, which are intended for newly independent readers. It would make a good addition to any library that needs more early-chapter books for readers interested in fairies, crafts, or magic.

Chapter Book

Karen J. Wanamaker, Librarian, Kutztown University

LET'S MEET A CONSTRUCTION WORKER

Heos, Bridget. Illus. Mike Moran. *Let's Meet a Construction Worker*. Minneapolis: Millbrook Press, 2013. 9780761390237. \$18.99. K-3.

What do construction workers do? This early reader chapter book features a group of school children on a field trip to a construction site guided by construction worker, Mr. Moore. Mr. Moore is in charge of building the children's new school. The book is divided into three chapters: "Trucks with Teeth," "Safety First!" and "Green School." *Lets' Meet a Construction Worker* is a mix of narrative and informational text. Each chapter contains knock-out type with informational text pertaining to the story and illustrations. The book also contains additional informational text features such as a table of contents, how to make a graham cracker structure with energy-saving features, a glossary, additional resources page [with a list of construction related books and web sites], and an index. Narrative text presents Mr. Moore explaining what is happening at the construction site, and answering the children's questions about construction work and building the new school. This book is an indispensable resource for providing content about community helpers, a topic frequently taught in social studies in the primary grades. Primary grade teachers may also use this book to help students attain Common Core Reading: Informational Text standard, "Know and use various features (e.g. captions, bold print, subheading, glossaries, indexes, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text efficiently."

Picture Book

Angel Bestwick, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

THE BUDDY FILES: THE CASE OF THE MIXED-UP MUTTS

Hillestad Butler, Dori. Illus. Jeremy Tugeau. *The Buddy Files: The Case of the Mixed-Up Mutts*. Chicago, Illinois: Albert Whitman & Company, 2010. 978-0-8075-0933-3. \$4.99. Gr. 1-3.

Buddy the golden retriever is back in the second book of The Buddy Files series! He is still with his new family Connor and his mom. His first family, Kayla and her parents, are still nowhere to be found, although they are still on Buddy's mind. While he is thinking of ways to look for them he comes across a new mystery at obedience school, his favorite place. He overhears a conversation between the humans about a pug, named Peaches. Her human, Kathy, claims that this is not her real dog. Her real dog, Muffin, was mysteriously switched at a dog park. Peaches, whose real name is Jazzy, confirms the story that her owner took Muffin and left her behind for Kathy to take home. After hearing this story Buddy is now on a mission to return the mixed-up mutts to their rightful owners. Buddy is a character any dog lover will find appealing. This intriguing mystery, told from the dog's point of view, will interest early chapter book readers. There are now six books in this series, which would make excellent additions to any class or school library.

Mystery; Chapter Book Erin Engler, Librarian, Whitehall-Coplay School District

SUNNY SIDE UP

Holm, Jennifer L. Illus. Matthew Holm and Lark Pien. *Sunny Side Up*. New York: Scholastic, 2015. 978-0-545-74166-8. \$12.99. Grades 5-8. The colorful graphic novel *Sunny Side Up* starts off with Sunny Lewin heading off to Florida to, what is supposed to be, a fun filled summer vacation with her grandfather. However, Sunny quickly realizes that her grandfather lives in a place far different than an amusement park. Luckily for Sunny, she is not the only kid who has to spend her summer in an old folk's home. Buzz introduces Sunny to a magnitude of fun things that they can do to spend their time, like fetching golf balls from the gold course that leads to the discovery of Sunny's love of comic books. Turns out that this summer might not be as bad as Sunny originally believed. *Sunny Side Up* focuses on a lot of important issues in the lives of young children. From finding out who oneself truly is to family issues, like drugs and alcohol, this graphic novel touches on a lot of tough subjects with its hilarious situations and simple but beautiful artwork. This graphic novel is great for kids who never read a graphic novel before or are just getting into them. It is a must have for any library.

Graphic Novel Alyssa Daney, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

JUMPING OFF LIBRARY SHELVES: A BOOK OF POEMS

Hopkins, Lee Bennett. Illus. Jane Manning. *Jumping Off Library Shelves: A Book of Poems*. Honesdale, Pennsylvania: Word Song, 2015. 978-1-59078-924-7. \$16.95. Grades 3-5.

Hopkins who is known for his own poetry and anthologies has selected fifteen poems from fourteen different poets for this book. The warm and fuzzy illustrations done in paint and pencil invite the reader to curl up with the book and enjoy reading the poems. There are poems about the joy of owning a library card, the library as a refuge, the relationship between a child and a librarian, a storyteller, poetry, book buddies dog therapy, dictionaries, the internet, libraries at night, and dreams about libraries. A table of contents is included. The vocabulary range of the book is not always appropriate for the intended audience. Some of the poems that are included are very lyrical and fanciful while others are a real dud. Despite some of the poems failings this poem collection is recommended for school and public libraries. There are many different kinds of lessons that could be used with this book including writing different kinds of poems such as haiku, rhyme structure, and writing prompts. Librarians will be enthusiastic that this book includes more than just books in the library but so many reasons to visit a library.

Poetry Sarah Meitzler, Circulation Manager, Lower Macungie Library

FLORA AND THE PEACOCKS

Idle, Molly. *Flora and the Peacocks*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books LLC, 2016. 9781452138169. \$17.99. Grades PK-3.

Flora returns! After dancing with a flamingo (2013) and a penguin (2014), Idle brings Flora back with not one but two new dance partners—peacocks. Dressed in shades of blue and green to match her new companions, Flora first appears on the left page with her face covered by a fold-out flap in the shape of a yellow fan while the pair of peacocks appear together on the right page behind two flaps that form a fanned tail. While one peacock takes an interest and moves to Flora's page to copy some flap-folded fan shapes with her, the other bird stubbornly does the opposite moves on the right page of the spreads. When Flora reaches out to include the other peacock, the first gets jealous. This back-and-forth dance of jealousy leads to Flora's fan getting ripped in half as she is split between the two birds in the center of a two-page spread. The peacocks realize what has happened and make things right in a glorious two-page fold-out followed by an image of Flora sitting with both of her new friends at the end of the book. Idle is a master of using visual language, suggested movements, and the use of white space. Her colored pencil illustrations convey the jealousy and sadness and the flaps add fantastic 3D fun. This book would be a great addition to all public and school libraries. In addition, it would be a wonderful introduction to a lesson or talk about jealousy.

Wordless Picture Book

Karen J. Wanamaker, Librarian, Kutztown University

THE MAGIC SCHOOL BUS PRESENTS DINOSAURS

Jackson, Tom. Illus. Carolyn Bracken. *The Magic School Bus Presents Dinosaurs*. New York: Scholastic Books, 2015. \$6.99. 978-0-545-68583. Grades 1-3.

Do you love the Magic School Bus Series? The love of the Magic School Bus and the information presented continues with this extension of the Magic School Bus's: *In the Time of Dinosaurs*. This nonfiction companion to the original Magic School Bus series explores, in more depth, the lives of dinosaurs from the period in which they lived, to how they cared for their young. In classic Magic School Bus fashion, the pages are filled with detailed illustrations and interesting facts contributed by the class or Miss Frizzle. In fact, each page contains a "Frizzle Fact." The book explores flying, armored, swimming, horned, and just plain weird dinosaurs. In addition to the information about dinosaurs, paleontology and fossil exploration are discussed. A glossary accompanies the text for vocabulary development. If you have the original book, *In the Time of Dinosaurs*, this nonfiction companion is a must for young readers. Even grown-ups can learn something new.

Picture Book

Cynthia Stunkard, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

FATAL FEVER: TRACKING DOWN TYPHOID MARY

Jarrow, Gail. *Fatal Fever: Tracking Down Typhoid Mary*. Honesdale, Pennsylvania: Calkins Creek. 2015. 978-1-62091-597-4. \$16.95. 8 and up.

The month is March, the year 1907 and typhoid fever has struck New York City to the fullest. This disease killed tens of thousands of Americans each year. The second installment in a three-part trilogy of books about disease, this book is one of the first that follows a cook who unknowingly spread the disease along with the people who realized what she was doing and decided her fate. The woman's name was Mary Mallon but she was more commonly known as Typhoid Mary during this time. This nonfiction book also goes into great detail about what typhoid was along with a complete chapter that focuses on the history of public health. Not only does this book follow the life of Mary during this time it also does it for George Albert Soper, a sanitation engineer and typhoid expert; and Sara Josephine Baker, a doctor working at the New York City Department of Health. All of these details give readers a very in-depth look at this disease.

Non-Fiction

Andrea Dow, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

BELIEVAREXIC

Johnson, JJ. *Believearexic*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishing. 978-1-56145-771-7. \$16.95. 12-18 years.

The story "Believarexic" follows the journey of Jennifer Johnson and her fight to free the monster within herself that she calls an eating disorder. It takes the reader through the recovery process from how she felt alone and wanting help to overcome her eating issues to stage three of the institution where she does learn to maintain her weight and deal with some of the other issues which lead her to her problems. Her fight to regain herself wasn't an easy one. Some days, alone or feeling frustrated with the nursing staff, she had to keep moving forward in her recovery process to better herself. "Believarexic" is a powerful story and can help those that are also having similar problems. This book could give readers hope that one day they could also get "the monster" out of them too if they just believe in themselves. This book can be used in the classroom to show the students what people go through and that nobody is perfect even if they seem it.

Chapter Book

Melissa Carson, Kutztown University

MIRACLE MUD: LENA BLACKBURNE AND THE SECRET MUD THAT CHANGED BASEBALL

Kelly, David A. Illus. Oliver Dominguez. *Miracle Mud: Lena Blackburne and the Secret Mud That Changed Baseball*. Minneapolis, MN: Millbrook Press, 2013. \$16.95. 978-0-7613-8092-4 Grades 2-4.

Mud? Inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame? Lena Blackburne loved baseball and wanted to be a professional baseball player, but he just wasn't good enough to make it in the big leagues. He had the skill to be a coach though and during one game, an umpire complained about the condition of the balls. Lena thought about how to make the baseball dirty without making it too wet or stinky. One summer, Lena was on the riverbank in New Jersey and found a mud that worked. It made the ball dirty without the stink or soggiess. How did Miracle Mud become the secret mud that changed baseball? This historical biography will take you back to the 1920s to find out. Handed down through three generations, Miracle Mud still has secrets. The historical information about Miracle Mud in the author's note found at the end of the book is a great resource for kids and adults who want to know more about this secret mud.

Picture Book

Cynthia Stunkard, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

ONE THING STOLEN

Kephart, Beth. *One Thing Stolen*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2015. 1452128316, \$17.99. 14 and up.

One Thing Stolen opens up in the city of Florence, Italy where a girl named Nadia is fighting a mental illness. During the course of the story Nadia meets an Italian boy, but what is weird is she is the only one that has seen him. Meeting this boy makes Nadia feel sane and not delusional. Throughout her journey she goes through many obstacles such as being trapped by her own obsessions and becoming a thief. This book is not just in Nadia's point of view, but also in her best friends' point of view as well. When her best friend Maggie speaks, she tells us exactly what is going on in Nadia's life since Nadia is not capable to do so. This book would be a good book to read to teenagers to show them what mental illness does to people and what you can do to get help.

Chapter Book

Melissa Carson, Kutztown University

THIS IS THE STORY OF YOU

Kephart, Beth. *This is the Story of You*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2016. 9781452142845. \$12.99.

Mira, her mom Mickey, and her brother, Jasper Lee, all live on an island called Haven. A place that is only one letter away from Heaven. Mira lives a fairly normal life. She and her brother have different absent fathers and they have a hard working mother. Mira goes to school, has friends, and gets along fairly well. She loves her mother and half-brother very much. Jasper Lee has a chronic illness, which made Mickey and him to go to the hospital on the mainland. Mira was home alone for one night, but that was all it took. Soon, Mira found herself in the middle of a terrible storm. It ended up destroying everything, including contact with her mother and brother. The storm leads to new surprises and difficulties for her and the community of Haven. With the help of the community, her own strength, and her recently adopted cat Sterling, Mira fights to continue with her life. While a simply-written story, the point of it was hard to find. It was slow to start and the reader will still be left confused as to what they are supposed to learn from Mira's story. The writer attempts to be poetic and beautiful, but it turns out to be poorly executed and rather corny.

Fiction

Carla Castro MSLS Student, Clarion University of Pennsylvania

NIGHT ON FIRE

Kidd, Ronald. *Night On Fire*. United States of America: Albert Whitman & Company. 2015. 978-0-8075-7024-1. \$16.99. Gr: 7 and up.

This novel, set in Anniston, Alabama tells the story of a thirteen-year-old girl named Billie Simms. Billie shares the unpopular belief that her hometown should be desegregated and she closely follows the journey of the Freedom Riders on television. Of course television really doesn't show the full story to an issue which is something that Billie learns when the Freedom Riders come through her hometown and she sees how much hatred the people of her hometown have inside them towards people of another race. Billie hops on a bus and follows after the Freedom Riders so that she is able to see their journey up-close-and-personal. She also gets the chance to meet Dr. King, who is her hero. Billie learns that violence isn't the answer and that people can't be judged on the color of their skin.

YA Literature

Andrea Dow, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

HISS-S-S-S!

Kimmel, Eric. *Hiss-s-s-s!* New York: Holiday House, 2012. 9780823424153. \$16.95. Grades 3-7.

After doing plenty of research on corn snakes, Omar tells his parents he would like to get one for a pet. His mother, who suffers from a strong phobia of any type of snake, is extremely against the idea until Omar's father convinces her to listen to what he has to say. Omar's mother gives in, and allows him to get a snake as long as he follows specific rules set forth by the family as a whole. Omar readily agrees and finds the perfect snake, a white and red striped corn snake, whom he names Arrow. For the first couple of days, everything was fine, but then disaster struck. When Omar went to feed Arrow for the first time, he was distracted by his mother yelling about the mouse that was thawing out on her kitchen counter in a glass, and the snake escaped. Omar does not tell anyone except for his father and his friend Samkatt, who both agreed that it would be best to search for and find the snake before Omar's mom found out that it escaped. While searching for Arrow, Omar learns just how much his mother fears snakes and how hard she is trying to stifle her fear so that Omar could have one as a pet. This book teaches the reader a lot about both snakes and phobias without the reader even realizing it while still being humorous and enjoyable. Children in search of a great story about snakes and family should absolutely consider reading this book.

Fiction

Janette Kabana, YA Specialist, Tamaqua Public Library

MONSTER & SON

LaRochelle, David. Illus. Joey Chou. *Monster & Son*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2016. 978-1-4521-2937-2. \$16.99. Gr. K-2.

This is an endearing story about the love between fathers and sons. It depicts a different set of monster father and son pairs doing fun and silly activities throughout their day. The story includes a wide variety of monsters, Frankensteins, dragons, skeletons, mummies, gorillas and more! They may be playing catch, having tickle fights, fishing, finding secret hideouts, or telling jokes. There is a ton of monstrous fun going on in this story! The day ends by getting the little monsters in their jammies and tucking them into bed. Love is the main theme throughout the story. The rhyming cadence of the story makes it enjoyable to read. The alluring illustrations only add to the sweetness of this story. This book would appeal to teachers and families. It would also make a great gift for fathers. This unique story would be a delightful addition to any elementary, public, or personal library.

Picture Book

Erin Engler, Librarian, Whitehall-Coplay School District

AUDACITY JONES TO THE RESCUE

Larson, Kirby. *Audacity Jones to the Rescue*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2016. 978-0-545-84056-9. \$16.99. Grades 3-5.

Eleven-year-old Audacity Jones is an orphan who is seeking adventures. Little does she know that she is in for a little more adventure than she can handle that is, of course, until her friends come to the rescue. Audacity loves to read and dreams of going to places like the ones in her books that she finds in the Punishment Room or what most people call the library. The library is meant to be a punishment for Audacity but she finds pleasure in this comforting room. Audacity is invited by a mysterious man to help him with his plan in Washington DC. She hopes that she will meet President Taft while she is there. Along the way Audacity meets friends and foes in the nation's capital. At one point there is a kidnapping plot, but with the help of Audacity's pet cat and maybe the President himself Audacity just might have the chance to end her adventure and go back to her friends at Miss Maisie's School for Wayward Girls. This book has many humorous characters and events. Younger elementary children might be scared by the kidnapping scenes so the book is recommended for upper elementary students. This title is the first in a new series about Audacity Jones. Children who enjoy Little Orphan Annie will enjoy the book without breaking into song.

Historical Fiction Sarah Meitzler, Circulation Manager, Lower Macungie Library

WATCH OUT FOR FLYING KIDS: HOW TWO CIRCUSES, TWO COUNTRIES AND NINE KIDS CONFRONT AND BUILD COMMUNITY

Levinson, Cynthia. *Watch Out for Flying Kids: How Two Circuses, Two Countries, and Nine Kids Confront Conflict and Build Community*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2015. 978-1-56145-821-9. \$22.95. 6th-12th.

Reaching for the impossible is easy for these remarkable kids. A form of entertainment that doesn't come up often, the circus arts, focuses on skilled physical and mental talents. But what about talents of peace and unity? Levinson writes about children performers from St. Louis, USA and Galilee, Israel that challenge the norms of society about typical hobbies and typical relations. The unprecedented novel follows the stories of nine main troupers through seven years of international friendships and performances. The book observes each circus, flipping back and forth over a specified course of time, explaining tricks and routines, the nine trouper's thoughts and personal lives, and the directors' engagements, as well as general experiences that feed into the circuses developments. Each circus is enthralling. The St. Louis Arches with their professional performances and highly demanding practices show how advanced this hobby can go, to the point of attending a circus college! The Galilee Circus sections speak out about the difficulties of mixing Arab and Jewish children together because of their religions, languages, and moving past their shared yet volatile history as a country and community. Not to mention, their struggles of developing as a circus without the proper training space and supportive staff to train them. Together, is when the circuses have the most impact on the people around them and the reader as they recount performing as the cohesive Galilee Arches, learning from each other and gaining valuable life experience. Switching the trips between Israel and America gives all of the troupers a chance to experience a different culture while setting a social example. The book is equipped beautifully with a pronunciation guide, index, pictures, and side bars. Easy to use to inspire many conversations about diversity, barriers, strength of character, and more.

Nonfiction; Biography

Gwen Harter, Undergrad, Kutztown University

THE KEY TO EXTRAORDINARY

Lloyd, Natalie. *The Key to Extraordinary*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2016. 978-0-545-55274-5. \$16.99. Grades 5-6.

Lloyd's *The Key to Extraordinary* is a wild ride of magic and mystery that pulls the young reader into a beautifully crafted world of fantasy. Readers are introduced to the main character Emma, a spunky young girl who craves adventure. She is a young girl who has just lost her mother and is trying to find her way through her life with these facts and figuring out the mystery of the lost treasure in the local cemetery. Along with Emma, a slew of characters creates a wonderful and inviting atmosphere of whimsy from a motorbike riding grandmother to a boy who is mute due to tragedy. The young reader is taken through an adventure that involves exploring a cemetery, a treasure hunt for the ages, and a mystery that will leave young minds guessing. Students will love the colorful characters and the variety of ideas that each offer. The whimsical quality of the book will give students a sense of magic that some books are lacking. *The Key to Extraordinary* is a must have book for middle schoolers.

Chapter Book; Fantasy Valerie Korsick, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

MAMA SAURUS

Lomp, Stephan. *Mama Saurus*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2016. 978-1-4521-4424-5. \$16.99. PreK-2.

This is an adorable account of a baby brontosaurus who is looking for his mother. He comes across different young dinosaurs, all with names that are a variation of their scientific names and each conversation reveals a characteristic of that particular dinosaur. The illustrations are playful and give the dinosaurs childlike features, such as big eyes and rounded corners. The affirmation of the mother-baby relationship is one to which children will relate. This book is recommended.

Picture Book Amber Sams, Librarian, Saucon Valley High School

SUPER HAPPY MAGIC FOREST

Long, Matty. *Super Happy Magic Forest*. New York: Scholastic Books, 2015. \$17.99 978-0-545-86059-8. Grades PK-3.

Five unlikely heroes set off on an epic quest to find the stolen Magical Crystals of Life that make living in the Super Happy Magic Forest so fun. As the heroes make their way through the epic quest, they confront their fears and ensure each other's safety. Matty Long infuses many literary references throughout the book *Super Happy Magic Forest*. With a nod to J.R.R. Tolkien, the heroes encounter a Gollum-like figure and his Precious, almost plummet off a cliff, meet the goblin king, and are rescued by large eagles. They trek through frozen lands, a super creepy haunted forest, a dungeon, and the goblin kingdom. Adults who enjoy video games, *Lord of the Rings*, Monty Python, and "find the object" books will enjoy the illustrated references sprinkled throughout the book. Will the five heroes complete the quest? Will the villain be an unlikely suspect? The *Super Happy Magic Forest* book holds all of the answers.

Picture Book

Cynthia Stunkard, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

FREEDOM'S PRICE

MacColl, Michaela, and Rosemary Nichols. *Freedom's Price*. Honesdale: Calkins Creek, 2015. 978-1-62091-624-7. \$17.95. 4-8.

Freedom's Price tells the story of the daughter of Dred Scott during the time it takes for the Supreme Court to make the infamous decision on whether the family is free or still in slavery. The family resides in a jail throughout the trial to avoid slave catchers who would want to kidnap Eliza and sell her as a slave. The interaction between mother and daughter is heartwarming and gut wrenching as you witness their relationship and Eliza's mother's worries for her safety as a free African-American. When cholera breaks out, Eliza struggles facing the facts that gender and race doesn't divide humans the way many say they do. The fire that comes after does not help Eliza understand the contradictions and in the end, Eliza's decisions may jeopardize her, her family, and her community. This historical tale accurately portrays the way many were living during these events and gives the reader an inside view of life for these people.

Chapter Book

Anne Bonnefoi, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

THE SANDWICH THIEF

Marois, Andre. Illus. Patrick Doyon. *The Sandwich Thief*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2013. 978-1-4521-4659-1. \$14.99. Grades 1-5.

In *The Sandwich Thief* by Marois, Marin's mom makes him delicious sandwiches every day for school and Marin, an elementary schooler, always looks forward to his lunch. When Marin's sandwich is stolen from his lunchbox one day, he begins a hunt to track down who the culprit is. Along with the help from his friends and family, Marin finally figures out who is stealing his delicious homemade sandwiches. This book is quite short and uses a total of four main colors for the pictures; orange, yellow, white, and black, however the limited color choices and sketch style illustrations in the book do not detract from the story at all and in fact enhance it. The text is easy enough to read for young children to understand and the mystery will keep them wondering who the thief is until the end. This would be a great addition to any children's library.

Mystery; Picture Book Alyssa Daney, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

BECOMING MARIA

Marzano, Sonia. *Becoming Maria*. Broadway, NY: Scholastic Press, 2015. 978-0-545-62184-7. \$17.95. Gr. 9-12.

Becoming Maria is a heart-rending memoir about the former Sesame Street actress's experience growing up in the Bronx, up until her audition for the show for which she is well known. Marzano expertly tells her sad but hopeful story from the perspective of a child in a style reminiscent of Sandra Cisneros' *House on Mango Street*. She relates her experience in an urban Puerto Rican community, describes what it is like to live with a drunken, abusive father, and invites the reader to follow along on her journey from acting school to following her dreams. Marzano describes coming-of-age experiences, like first growing breasts and having men gawk at her or try to brush against her, with the innocence of a child. Young adults will enjoy learning about the childhood behind a familiar face and either empathizing with her plight or reminiscing on tough childhood experiences of their own. Marzano's story will not be easily forgotten by any reader. This text could be well-used as a mentor text to inspire students to create their own narratives.

Nonfiction; Memoir Emily Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

EAT YOUR U.S. HISTORY HOMEWORK: RECIPES FOR REVOLUTIONARY MINDS

McCallum, Ann. Illus. by Leeza Hernandez. *Eat Your U.S. History Homework: Recipes for Revolutionary Minds*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2015. 9781570919237. \$15.95. Grades 2-8.

Historical facts and foods collide in McCallum's latest *Eat Your Homework* book. While previous books in the series had students eating their math (2011) and science (2014) homework, this book starts with an introduction and a timeline to introduce the reader to "edible connections to American history." McCallum uses six recipes to connect with the revolutionary time period: Thanksgiving Succotash, Colonial Cherry-Berry Grunt, Lost Bread, Southern Plantation Hoe Cakes, Revolutionary Honey-Jumble Cookies, and Independence Ice Cream. Each recipe is introduced by information about the time period and events and who might have eaten the food. Recipes are broken into four sections: Before You Begin, Equipment, Ingredients, and Method. After each recipe is a two-page spread that gives more information about the people, places, or events that relate to the time period as well as a "Side Dish" insert with more relevant facts and some thought-provoking questions for the reader. After the last recipe, a two-page "History Review" summarizes the time periods, and a glossary and an index finish out the book. Hernandez's mixed-media illustrations supplement the book nicely with cartoon bunnies as the student chefs. Her artwork also provides separation for the various information on the pages and illustrates the method section of the recipes to help students understand what to do. Younger readers will need adult supervision (as is suggested by the author) to complete the baking. Teachers and parents will enjoy using this book to help students make delicious connections to real historical events. With clear language, interesting facts, and fun foods, this book would be a great addition to a social studies classroom or library collection.

Non-Fiction; Picture Book

Karen J. Wanamaker, Librarian, Kutztown University

TILT YOUR HEAD, ROSIE THE RED

McCarney, Rosemary. Cathcart, Yvonne. *Tilt Your Head, Rosie the Red*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2015. 9781927583593. \$15.93 6-9 years.

The story “Tilt Your Head, Rosie the Red” is about an influential little girl that is very open to learning new perspectives. Everyday Rosie wears a red cape everywhere she goes. When Rosie showed up to school there was a crowd of kids laughing at a girl named Fadimata who was wearing a headscarf. Rosie immediately thought that what was happening at her school was wrong and knew she had to fix it in some way. Instead of joining the laughing kids Rosie decided to look at the circumstances in another person’s point of view and she used that knowledge to help the girl that felt alone. Rosie brought unity to her school by making her cape into a hijab for the day, this showed their classmates that it is okay to be different. This book would go great for teaching about different religions and cultures in the classroom. Not all parents teach their children that everyone is different in their own way. This is a book that you can read to your class to express that lesson and bring unity.

Picture Book

Melissa Carson, Kutztown University

EMMA AND JULIA LOVE BALLET

McClintock, Barbara. *Emma and Julia Love Ballet*. New York: Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., 2016. 978-0-439-89401-2. \$17.99. Grade Level: K-2.

The love of dance spans different ages and skill levels, whether it's the young just starting out, the professional dancer, or one who just loves the experience of watching it. Emma is just starting out learning the basic form and technique of ballet whereas Julia is part of a professional company, taking class and rehearsing for a performance that very night. The author shows how each goes about their day showing the similarities and differences. Amongst all the differences though, the ultimate message of the book is the shared love of ballet that both Emma and Julia have. McClintock is able to show the hard work that goes into learning the craft of ballet, or any form of dance, and how that is reflected in the performance on the stage. The art is simple but colorful in a watercolor and Gouache style. The author's considerable research from attending a local dance school to take photos and sketches of the dancers is shown in the beautiful illustrations showing well-drawn jumps, turns, and barre scenes. This is a good pick for young readers who love to dance just like Emma and Julia.

Picture Book; Dance

Sara Moyer, Library Aide at Robesonia Community Library

ELMER AND BUTTERFLY

McKee, David. *Elmer and Butterfly*. Minneapolis: Andersen Press USA, 2014. 978-1-4677-6326-4. \$16.95. PreK-1.

Elmer the patchwork elephant was out for walk when he heard a cry for help. It was Butterfly who was trapped in a hole behind a fallen branch. Lifting the branch Elmer helped her out and she thanked him for saving her. Butterfly offered to help Elmer and to call her when needed. Elmer continued on his walk down the path and he found himself out on a cliff. Unable to turn around he continued planning to turn around once he reached the entrance of a cave at the end of the path. Just as he entered the cave part of the path collapsed and Elmer was trapped. He called out for help and luckily Butterfly heard him, she flew to get help. A group of elephants were playing together in the forest when Butterfly told them about Elmer and they followed Butterfly to where Elmer was trapped. Connecting like a chain the elephants along with Butterfly work to save Elmer. Beautiful and colorful illustrations are found on every page. The pictures alone would engage young readers. The story is a nice variation of Aesop's *The Lion and The Mouse* fable. This book would make a great read aloud for story time.

Picture Book

Melinda Bender, Librarian, Thirteenth and Green Elementary

THE CYBERSKUNK FILES #2: THE HYPERLINK

Naftali, Joel. *The Cyberskunk Files #2: The Hyperlink*. New York: Egmont, 2013. 978-1-60684-119-8. \$15.99. 4-6.

Doug is a normal kid who loves to play virtual video games and get lost in that world. His best friend is Jamie and she is a genius and a hacker. One day when Doug was checking his blog he found new comments asking for his help. Three high school students were missing and possibly a computer virus was involved. With the help of his computer, Auntie "M", talking to him and guiding him what to do next he takes action. I found this story very confusing right from the beginning. The main character would start describing a situation that was happening and then you realize he is playing a video game. The storyline keeps switching back and forth as the main character gets distracted playing video games while telling the story. Maybe someone who is highly interested in video games would be able to follow but for me I would not recommend this book because it is too confusing and boring.

Fantasy

Melinda Bender, Librarian, Thirteenth and Green Elementary

SIR CUMFERENCE AND THE ROUNDABOUT BATTLE

Neuschwander, Cindy, Illus. Wayne Geehan. *Sir Cumference and the Roundabout Battle*. Watertown: Charlesbridge, 2015. \$16.95. 978-1-57091-765-3. Grades 2-5.

Sir Cumference is back and this time he has some help! When the castle steward, Edmund Rounds, notices some new tents in the kingdom, his son Round 2 decides to help investigate. What Round 2 discovers are rows of mighty men with several bow and arrow filled tents! Surely this is trouble for the unsuspecting castle. As Round 2 alerts Sir Cumference to ready the troops, he is tasked with totaling the number of bows and arrows the castle has for battle. Using his mathematical skills, Round 2 frantically adds the big numbers as danger approaches. Will he complete his task on time? Will his totals be accurate? Will the castle fall? This delightful book explains the process of rounding and the usefulness of estimating in a relatable content. Suitable as a lesson supplement, this book is a great addition to introduce or extend the concept of rounding and estimation. It is recommended for any elementary classroom, school library or public library.

Picture Book Krista G. Varano, Elementary Education Professor, Kutztown University

RISE OF THE WOLF

Nielsen, Jennifer A. *Rise of the Wolf*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2016. 978-0-545-562041. \$17.99. Grades 6-8.

Rise of the Wolf, book two of the Mark of the Thief trilogy, begins a few months after the Mark of the Thief cliffhanger. In the first book Nic was a teenage Roman slave who battled his enemy for magical powers. Now he lives with his grandfather and sister. Nic, whose power comes from the amulet he wears must learn from his past enemy who Nic finds out is his grandfather. Nic learns to battle both in the Roman arena with swords and chariot races and in the countryside. He must discern who he can trust and who might betray him in order to save himself, his family, friends, and country. Throughout the book Nic battles both humans and gods while his power gets stronger. Will a teenage boy be able to win against such strong opponents? Nic, with some help from his friends and family just might be able to conquer over the evil forces of this war of the gods. Readers who enjoy Percy Jackson or the Gladiator movie will devour this read. A mixture of adventure, magic, and history make this book a must- have in any middle school or public library.

Fantasy Sarah Meitzler, Circulation Manager, Lower Macungie Library

A NIGHT DIVIDED

Nielson, Jennifer. *A Night Divided*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2015. 9780545682428. \$16.99. Grades 5-8.

When the Berlin wall went up, it separated eight-year-old Gerta's family; her father and brother Dominic in the West, and her mother, her brother Fitz, and herself in the East. Four years later, she still does not want to think or feel the way the communist government wants her to, which is very dangerous not only for her, but for her family. Gerta finds herself being alienated from society and soon after receiving a picture from her father, she begins planning an escape from the East. What follows is an exciting and terrifying experience as Gerta, Fritz, and their mother risk their lives in order to be free and finally reunite their family while learning that sometimes the best thing to do is not always as easy as it should be. This book is a wonderful story depicting a young German girl's life during a terrible period in history. Students in grades 5 through 8 who are learning about the Berlin Wall would definitely benefit from reading it.

Historical Fiction

Janette Kabana, YA Specialist, Tamaqua Public Library

FISH FISH FISH

Nordling, Lee, and Bosch, Meritxell. *FISH FISH FISH*. Minneapolis, MN: Graphic Universe. 2015. 978-1-4677-4576-5. \$6.95. Pre-K and up.

This is one of the first books that I have ever seen set up in this format. It's a picture book that is set up like a graphic novel given the fact that it has paneling, but it is also a book that tells either three separate stories or one story when all the tiles are read together. In fact, the first page of the book shows how the story can be read. If a person reads only the top panels then they will see a yellow fish who swims on his own, the middle panels show a barracuda who eats as much as he can, and the bottom panel shows a school of fish who are always swimming together. There are absolutely no words in this book which make it the perfect first book to introduce graphic novels. The pictures in this book are also delightfully bright and sure to catch and keep the attention of both younger and older eyes.

Graphic Novel

Andrea Dow, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

FRIENDS FOR LIFE

Norriss, Andrew. *Friends for Life*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2015. 978-0-545-85186-2. \$17.99. Gr. 8-12.

Francis and Jessica have a unique friendship. Now all friendships are unique, but this one especially is because Jessica is a ghost. They met at a solitary bench on the far side of the playing field after a rough day for Francis. He was tired of being teased about his love for fashion and was looking for some alone time when a girl suddenly appears walking up to his bench. This is where their friendship begins and also where he figures out that she is a ghost. Unsure of what he just experienced he heads back to school. When he is at home, his friend shows up again. Over time they develop a tight, fun friendship starting over their love for fashion and also their respect for each other. Throughout the story two more teens join this interesting friendship circle. It seems to be that only this crew can see and hear Jessica. As they get closer they begin to see that they all have deep-rooted problems affecting their personal lives. This story touches upon all of their thoughts and feelings as they deal with their struggles, including thoughts of suicide. This story has a best-possible-outcome ending and it touches upon some important life lessons for teens. It reveals that there is hope to find new friends and hope for a good life after those tough teen years are over. This book could be an important addition to a high school or public library. This could also be a great tool for families with children struggling with bullying or other related friendship issues.

Realistic Fiction

Erin Engler, Librarian, Whitehall-Coplay School District

CHEESECAKE FOR SHAVUOT

Ofanansky, Allison. Photos. Eliyahu Alpern. *Cheesecake for Shavuot*. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben Publishing, 2013. 9780761381266. \$15.95. PreK-2.

It takes a village and almost a year's time to make this strawberry cheesecake. *Cheesecake for Shavuot* chronicles an academic year with Israeli school children and their school garden. Guided by their teacher, Nili, a small group of children plant in the fall, and then tend, winter wheat in their school garden. While students tend the wheat, Nili helps the students to make connections between the wheat and students' Jewish holidays. As spring begins, Nili points out that the wheat has produced seed heads before Passover. Eager students ask if the wheat is ready to make into flour, but Nili says it will be ready during Shavout, in late spring. When the school children harvest the grain, some grains drop to the ground. One student remembers that, according to the Book of Ruth, the Jewish people may not pick up grains of wheat that have fallen to the ground: they must leave the grains to feed the poor. The children worry that the poor will not come to the school garden: one student has an idea to feed the grain to goats at the local petting zoo. In return for the grain to feed the goats, the zoo keeper shares freshly made goat cheese. With the addition of strawberries grown in the school garden, the children have all the ingredients to make Cheesecake for Shavuot. The book concludes with a "Goat Cheese Cheesecake" recipe, and author's notes about the Shavuot holiday. This simple and sweet story offers a glimpse into the cultural heritage of the Jewish faith, represented in a way that is relatable for primary grades. Cheesecake for Shavuot may be used by teachers to inspire students to create a school garden, to learn about the origin of foods, or to understand the significance of Jewish holidays.

Photo Essay

Angel Bestwick, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

THE WATER AND THE WILD

Orsbee, K. E.. *The Water and the Wild*. San Francisco, California: Chronicle Books LLC. 2015. 978-1-4521-1386-9. \$16.99. 7 and up.

Every year since Lottie's parents have died she's gotten her birthday wish granted from a magical apple tree in her front yard. Although the responses to her requests are sometimes awfully written they always seem to be just what Lottie needs. The year that her best friend Eliot gets incredibly sick with a disease that the doctors have stopped trying to cure all Lottie wishes is for Eliot to be able to get better. That year instead of getting a letter saying that her wish has been granted two sprites appear and take her through a magic door in an apple tree into their magical world. When Lottie arrives in the world she has to decide if Eliot's life is worth that of the entire sprite population.

YA Novel

Andrea Dow, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

ABC WORD PLAY

Perret, Fany. *ABC Word Play*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2016. ISBN: 9781452148113. \$19.99. PreK-2.

The alphabet comes to life in 3" high neon and pattern colored letters which easily pop in and out of this 4" x 12" board book. Each letter is represented by three to five word suggestions but students will most likely be able to think of many more. This may be a difficult book for library check-out because the letters may disappear. However, it could work well for a classroom, learning support room, reading teacher or a makerspace area. I found it helpful for Orton Gillingham tutoring.

Board Book

Sharon Breeden, Librarian, Lebanon School District

HAS TO BE LOVE

Perry, Jolene. *Has to Be Love*. Chicago: Albert Whitman & Company, 2015. 978-0-8075-6557-5. \$16.99. Grades 10+.

In *Has to Be Love* by Perry, Clara's life is turned upside down when she receives her acceptance letter into her dream school, Colombia. Scars that mark Clara's face from a bear attack a few years ago hold her back from making decisions like whether to stay safe in her small hometown in Alaska or to go off to New York City for college. When a new student teacher from Colombia arrives, romantic tension between him and Clara causes Clara to question whether staying with her current boyfriend is what she really wants. Clara's indecisiveness can get on the reader's nerve, but the pain that Clara feels over having her life ruled by the scars on her face feels very real. The reader will find themselves enjoying the novel's sweet scenes between Clara, her boyfriend, and family and upset at the misfortune that Clara has to endure. This novel sends a great message to any teen going through tough decisions and shows them that their situations shouldn't hold them back from doing something that they love. *Has to Be Love* is a must-buy for any library catering to teens.

Fiction; Realism; Romance Alyssa Daney, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE BIG DARK

Philbrick, Rodman. *The Big Dark*. New York: Blue Sky Press, 2016. 9780545789752. \$17.95. Grade 6-9.

Adult fiction has it, adult nonfiction has it, so why not junior literature. What is "it"? "It" is story about what happens when a magnetic pulse hits the Earth. Storylines usually deal with a sinister EMP (electromagnetic pulse) caused by evildoers detonating a nuclear device in the atmosphere which render all electronic devices useless. In *The Big Dark*, it is not an EMP that hits the Earth, but a massive solar flare. The reader is introduced to a young boy named Charlie Cobb and his family in a small town in New Hampshire. The whole town gathers to witness the aurora borealis taking place in the evening skies. But something is not right. A huge flash filled the sky, and then there was darkness. Here is where the "fun" begins, or should it be, this is where the terror begins. Imagine your world without the common everyday amenities you take for granted, heat, light, water supply, refrigerated food, medicine availability, 24-hour convenience stores. Everything gone in a flash. Chaos ensues, looting occurs, and yes, people die in these awful times. Villains, as well as heroes emerge. One of these heroes is Charlie. He must travel south to find medicine for his mother, and another hero, Mr. Kingman, a volunteer officer is faced with keeping up morale and keeping the peace. Charlie's adventure takes up much of the story, and Mr. Kingman's valiant effort to maintain order fills in the gaps. In the end, the power does come back on, the villain (Mr. Bragg) slithers away, Charlie and Mr. Kingman are heroes, and the world goes on. This book is every bit as good as the adult fiction versions and is a great addition to any library. It will give the young reader a good introduction for what to expect when the lights go out.

Fiction; Chapter Book

Steve Tichy, Cataloger, Tamaqua Public Library

CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS AND THE SENSATIONAL SAGA OF SIR STINKS-A-LOT

Pilkey, Dav. *Captain Underpants and the Sensational Saga of Sir Stinks-A-Lot*. New York: Scholastic, 2015. Grades 2-5.

Captain Underpants returns with Dav Pilkey's twelfth epic novel: *Captain Underpants and the Sensational Saga of Sir Stinks-A-Lot*. It is no secret that boys in the elementary grades love to read the Captain Underpants books and this one will be no exception. This novel has 39 very short chapters. The comical plot is exaggerated with silly comics and graphics. There is the page-turner challenge in the middle of the story that the author titles his Flip-o-rama. The reader is instructed on how to move the pages back and forth very quickly to create moving illustrations. George and Harold return in this sequel along with Mr. Meaner the very mean gym teacher and Mr. Krupp. Mr. Meaner creates a mind-altering potion that causes all the children to be totally obedient to any adult that gives them instructions. If it were not for Harold, George, and Mr. Krupp all children would be transformed into mind-numbed servants to the adults. The slapstick jokes and juvenile pranks create a hilarious story that even adults will enjoy. The author makes reference to Tony Orlando and Dawn and other entities that only older adults will remember from time past. This is a great selection to place in any library collection. There is nothing better to see than students in a library snickering under their breaths at a silly story.

Humorous Fiction

Laura Sweinhart, Librarian Lower Pottsgrove Elementary

THE SECRET LIFE OF WOOLLY BEAR CATERPILLAR

Pringle, Laurence. Illus. Joan Paley. *The Secret Life of the Woolly Bear Caterpillar*. Honesdale, Pennsylvania: Boyds Mill Press, 2014. ISBN: 9781620910009. \$16.95. PreK-3.

Who doesn't love a woolly bear caterpillar? Follow the story of Bella, a woolly bear caterpillar, from spring to winter. Pringle has received recognition for his work from Science and English teachers' associations and lives up to the acclaim in this narrative which highlights scientific terms as it explores the life of a woolly bear caterpillar. This book contains a glossary, a section on further information about the banded woolly bear caterpillar and an explanation about the myth that woolly bear caterpillars can predict winter weather.

Picture Book; Nature

Sharon Breeden, Librarian, Lebanon School District

THE IMPOSSIBLE VOYAGE OF KON-TIKI

Ray, Deborah Kogan. *The Impossible Voyage of Kon-Tiki*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2015. \$16.95. 978-158089-620-7. Grade 4 and up.

Could there be some truth to the native people's belief that their ancestors were transported to the island of Fatu Hiva from a faraway land across the vast Pacific Ocean by the legendary Tiki? Stories the Polynesian islanders shared with a curious young anthropologist, Thor Heyerdahl, prompted intriguing questions about the origin of mythical stone carvings of Fatu Hiva that were quite similar to those made by ancient Incan civilizations of South America. Determined to prove his theory that ancient civilizations migrated throughout the world by sea as well as land, and undaunted by the skepticism of most people he contacted for support, Heyerdahl combined his scientific scholarship with his sense of adventure into the seemingly impossible quest to reenact a voyage from Peru to French Polynesia on a balsa raft.

This colorful picture book, fluently written and illustrated by an award-winning Pennsylvania author and illustrator, is well researched with documented source notes, succinct biography of the Norwegian anthropologist Thor Heyerdahl, bibliography, and access to further information via print and electronic sources.

Teachers, parents and students can be invited to make curriculum connections to visual literacy, communication, cultural backgrounds, anthropology, history, science, geography, economics, and political organization such as the United Nations.

Jeanie Burnett, Professor, Kutztown University

PRESIDENT SQUID

Reynolds, Aaron. Illus. Sara Varon. *President Squid*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2016. \$16.99. 978-1-4521-3647-9 Grades K-3.

What does it take to be a great president? *President Squid* has the answers, but not the ones you think of when you think of presidential qualities. Honest – nope. Diplomatic – not that either. Well-educated – not even mentioned. What does Squid think it takes to be a great president? Squid outlines five reasons why he would make a good president. Having a big house, being famous, and doing all the talking are three of the reasons on Squid's list. When he finds a clam that doesn't listen and Squid needs to work hard to earn his respect and the respect of the sea creatures, he changes his mind about wanting to be the president. This book, *President Squid*, could serve as a starting point for a discussion about the presidential election and what it takes to hold the highest political office in the United States. It would even be an appropriate discussion starter for older children during an election year.

Picture Book; Humor

Cynthia Stunkard, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

THE PROBLEM WITH NOT BEING SCARED OF KIDS

Richards, Dan. Illus. Neubecker, Robert. *The Problem with Not Being Scared of Kids*. Honesdale: Boyds Mills Press, 2015. 978-1-62979-102-9. \$16.95 K-3.

In *The Problem with Not Being Scared of Kids*, Richards uses very few words to explain the struggles that monsters go through. The monsters tell how they dislike not being able to participate in the same activities as the kids because the kids are scared of them. These activities include, having sleepovers, going on bus rides, playing tag, trying to lend a helping hand, and just trying to fit in. Throughout the course of the book the monsters are trying to learn different things that kids like so that maybe they will like them to join them but no task becomes easy for them. Although the images of the monsters look friendly and colorful, most of the children in the story still do not wish to include the monsters in their fun times, until the monsters meet a few children who are not afraid of them and they change everything. This story is important to read to children to introduce the idea that not everyone is the same and not everyone is good at everything. Children must learn how to include people and have patience for others.

Picture Book

Nicole Tener, Elementary Education Student, Kutztown University

TWO FRIENDS: SUSAN B. ANTHONY AND FREDERICK DOUGLAS

Robbins, Dean. Illus. Sean Qualls and Selina Alko. *Two Friends: Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass*. New York: Orchard Books, 2016. 978-0-545-39996-8. \$17.99. Grades 1-3.

What kind of discussions would Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass have over tea? Both civil right activists met on occasion in Rochester, New York to discuss their work and passions for rights for women especially women's suffrage and abolition for African Americans. Throughout the book a brief childhood background is given of both activists. This book gives a fictional account of these moments which would have been historically a huge deal because a woman and African American man met together alone. The title, subject matter, and content lead the reader to believe that the book is completely nonfiction when in fact it is a historical fiction picture book. It will be confusing for young readers to discern fact from fiction. Instead, it would be better for the intended audience to read a nonfiction account of the talks between the two important historical figures. Even then it would be difficult for the intended audience to grasp the significance of the civil rights highlighted in this book. The lyrical text and the illustrations which are done in paint, collage and colored pencil makes the book inviting. At the end of the book an author's note is included along with a bibliography.

Picture Book

Sarah Meitzler, Circulation Manager, Lower Macungie Library

DING DONG GORILLA

Robinson, Michelle. Illus. Leonie Lord. *Ding Dong Gorilla*. Atlanta: Peachtree, 2013. \$15.95. 978-1-56145-730-4 IL Grades PK-3.

When you order a pizza, you expect a pizza – right? Not in this book. The pizza does not arrive in *Ding Dong Gorilla* until after a gorilla arrives and storms through the house making a huge mess. The gorilla dumps out toys, writes with crayons on the wall, breaks things in the house, makes a mess in the kitchen, and leaves dirty clothes everywhere. When the doorbell rings again, the pizza has arrived, but not before the damage has been done. The narrator in the story blames the gorilla for everything. But did the gorilla really do it? This book would be a great way for parents to discuss the consequences of making a mess and not taking responsibility. The text lends itself to many examples of cause and effect for young children. The brightly colored illustrations and story line make the book appealing, not to mention the quick paced action throughout the book.

Picture Book: Fantasy

Cynthia Stunkard, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

THE HERO TWO DOORS DOWN: BASED ON THE TRUE STORY OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN A BALL AND A BASEBALL LEGEND

Robinson, Sharon. *The Hero Two Doors Down: Based on the True Story of Friendship between a Boy and a Baseball Legend*. New York: Scholastic Press; Scholastic Inc., 2016. 978-0-545-80451-6. \$16.99. 2rd-5th.

Written in the first person narrative Steve reflects on his childhood baseball relics set aside for him by his recently deceased father and remembers when as an eight-year old, the famous Jackie Robinson moves into his neighborhood and his life. 1948 Brooklyn is an amazing time for Steve. Bonding over baseball with his father Archie, is what he lives for, listening endlessly to the radio-casted games and reading the paper for news about their beloved Dodgers. Steve itches to see the opening game for the season and to meet Jackie Robinson. Amazingly his dad surprises him with both on the same day! The two families become close friends and begin to have dinners, attend games, give gifts, and share their differences happily. Jackie's influence on Steven doesn't stop there as the man encourages Steven to focus on school and behave better, and teaches Steven valuable lessons when he falls short. The baseball legend successfully sways most of Steven's schoolmates into his favor and the fear and prejudice of the Jewish neighborhood melts quickly away after encountering Jackie's charming and gentle personality. Sharon Robinson briefly addresses the readers in the afterword with the changes she makes to the true tale, pictures, and her accounts of the very real Stephen Satlow. A feel-good story perfect for sports fans and novices alike, this book has some great perspective on maturity, religion, race, and relationships, ideal for conversations amongst families and classmates.

A LITTLE PRINCESS STORY: I FEEL SICK!

Ross, Tony. *A Little Princess Story: I Feel Sick!* United Kingdom: Andersen Press, 2015. 978-1-4677-5797-3. \$16.99.

This story is about a little princess who is never sick until anyone asks her to do something. When the King asks her to take the dog for a walk, she is sick. When the Queen asks her to help clean the litter box, she feels sick. When the General asks her to help teach his horse to jump, she is suddenly sick. When it came time to go to school, the Little Princess was always feeling sick. When the Queen told her she did not look sick the Little Princess went and painted her face green so her mother took her to the Doctor. The Doctor suggested she eat more vegetables and wash the paint off her face. When dinnertime came she was too sick for the dinner that was made but she could manage a few jellybeans. One day, when she was just too sick for anything the postman brought her an invitation to Molly's party. She was so excited but the Queen told her she was too sick to go and she insisted that she felt better. When the party came she ate a lot of snacks and danced so much that she actually felt sick. This story has an important lesson in it for children that if they pretend they are sick or something similar all of the time they may regret it when something fun actually comes along.

Picture Book

Nicole Tener, Elementary Education, Kutztown University

A LITTLE PRINCESS STORY: I WANT MY MOM!

Ross, Tony. *A Little Princess Story: I Want My Mom!* UK: Anderson Press, 2012. 9781467703185. \$12.64. 3-6 years.

"I Want My Mom" is a story about a little girl who has several things happen to her and the only person she wants to make it better is her mom, the queen. The queen, never fails to turn a bad situation such as a ruined painting into something good by saying how wonderful the painting was. At the end of the story the princess learns to manage without her mom and starts to become independent, but the mom starts to feel sad that her little princess doesn't need her anymore. Overall, the book shows just how strong a daughter- mother relationship can be. There's nothing like a mother's love and one day the children that read this book will experience how strong the bond is between a mother and daughter. This book can be read to a group of children to promote independence at home and in a classroom setting as well.

Picture Book

Melissa Carson, Kutztown University

RITA'S RHINO

Ross, Tony. *Rita's Rhino*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publishing Group, Inc., 2014. 9-781467-763158. \$16.95. Gr. K-2.

In this fantastical book, young Rita begs her parents for a pet, but they only concede to giving her "a very little pet." Rita, unsatisfied, takes matters into her own hand by going to the zoo and asking the rhinoceros if he would like to come home with her- to which the rhinoceros replies, "Yes, please." Rita finds many creative ways to "hide" the rhino without causing any adults suspicion. She is even able to buy the last bag of "grass from Africa" at the local pet shop. Rita and her new pet soon realize that maybe a little girl cannot quite take care of a rhinoceros, and a rhinoceros probably does not belong living with a little girl. The illustrations, by the London-born illustrator of Hippopotamus and author-illustrator of many other children's books, are quirky and fun. Rita's Rhino would be a fun read aloud, but also lends itself to discussing with children the difference between reality and fiction. It could also inspire creative writing about what it might be like to have different animals as pets.

Picture Book

Emily Hershey, Reading Specialist, Wilson High School

ONCE WAS A TIME

Sales, Leila. *Once Was a Time*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2016. 978-1-4521-4009-4. \$16.99. Grades 3-6.

Charlotte Bromley lives in Bristol, England during World War II. Her father is a scientist working on the theory of time travel and Charlotte and her best friend Kitty are extremely interested in finding out how time travel works. However, her father's research leads Charlotte and Kitty to get kidnapped one day and find themselves in a life or death situation. When the unbelievable happens, Charlotte makes a break for it and finds herself transported into another time and place with no loved ones around and has to find her way around this strange new world. *Once Was a Time* holds a great concept for a story in the beginning but it quickly seems like it is going nowhere fast. The situation that Charlotte faces would be traumatizing for anyone whether they are a child or an adult and she seems to handle it surprisingly well, even if it does seem to make the story a bit unrealistic at times. This book would be a good addition to children's libraries, but not a necessary one.

Science Fiction

Alyssa Daney, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

LEAFLETS THREE, LET IT BE

Sanchez, Anita, Illus. Robin Brickman. *Leaflets Three, Let it Be*. Honesdale: Boyds Mills Press, 2015. \$16.95. 978-1-62091-445-8. Grades 1-8.

Itchy, scratchy.....ooh! Lower and upper elementary children will be immediately drawn to the topic of this book – poison ivy. The book begins with a common childhood poison ivy rhyme – Leaflets three, let it be! Through the use of beautiful illustrations that depict the changing seasons, *Leaflets Three, Let it Be* follows the life cycle of poison ivy in great detail. From hairy vine to white berry, poison ivy is depicted as a positive contributor to the forest animals that utilize the plant for shelter and food. At the conclusion of this book the poison ivy life cycle comes full-circle and readers have the opportunity to learn more about this wildly intriguing and often misunderstood plant in a two-page question and answer supplement. This book successfully educates while it simultaneously entertains. With new knowledge, students can break preconceived notions and form a new appreciation for this mysterious plant. It is recommended as a key non-fiction book for any elementary classroom, school library, or public library.

Picture Book Krista G. Varano, Elementary Education Professor, Kutztown University

THE INKER'S SHADOW

Say, Allen. *The Inker's Shadow*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2015. 9780545437769. \$19.99. Grades 4-9.

One could say ink was in Allen Say's blood. The first image in *The Inker's Shadow* shows young Allen drawing ink cartoons. It is an autobiographical account of Allen's life between the ages of 15 and 18. Allen's father brought him from Japan to America in 1953 and abandoned him in California. Allen's father arranged for Allen to attend a military academy and to work there for his tuition. Allen arrived at the academy with a suitcase and a paint box. He earned his keep at the academy by washing dishes, mopping floors, painting, mowing, and digging holes. During time off, Allen would create pen and ink cartoons. Shortly after his seventeenth birthday, he decided to sneak away in his recently purchased used car and see America. He was only gone a day when he decided to return. Allen's father was there to tell Allen he was no longer welcome at the academy, and had to find his own place to live. Allen found an inexpensive room for rent. He decided to enroll in a high school. There he met two people who changed his life forever, the principal and an art teacher. The principal helped Allen get a job. The art teacher recognized Allen's talent and recommended him to an art institute in Los Angeles. The book concludes with Allen's graduation from high school. It is a heart-wrenching and beautifully written coming-of-age story about a young man, despite abandonment by his father, who pursues his dream of becoming an artist with support and encouragement from his teacher and his principal. Allen dedicated this book to those two individuals. Middle level teachers may use Allen's self-portrait to assist students to explore issues related to individual development and identity portrayed within the text, or to examine elements of an autobiography.

Autobiography

Angel Bestwick, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

JACK WANTS A SNACK

Schories, Pat. *Jack Wants a Snack*. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, 2008. 978162794068. 7.99. Infant - Pre-K.

Boring, typical, predictable. These words describe what this book is NOT. On a quick read through this board book, it is very easy to see, and think that this is the usual story line... Girl has snack, dog sees snack, dog wants snack, dog gets snack. Simple, right? Wrong! The reader's attention is focused on the illustrations of the child and dog and the play setting. A typical tea party where the child is serving her dolls a snack that the dog must have, and in the end, he does get it, and so does someone else! Very subtly placed after the first page is a small chipmunk peeking at the dog and child. Very simple to miss on the first read through. As the story progresses in pictures, that chipmunk appears in the background however so slightly. It is this chipmunk that is the star of this book, and not the dog Jack at all! Through a series of mishaps Jack gets trapped instead of the chipmunk, and the chipmunk escapes with the snacks. But Jack is hot on his trail and now he wants a treat from that not so hidden chipmunk. Nice illustrations, and the subtle chipmunk placement will cause much interaction for the reader and child. A very nice addition to any library.

Board Book

Steve Tichy, Cataloger, Tamaqua Public Library

WAR DOGS: CHURCHILL AND RUFUS

Selbert, Kathryn. *War Dogs: Churchill and Rufus*. Watertown: Charlesbridge Publishing Inc., 2013. 978-1-58089-415-9. \$8.95. Kindergarten- 3rd.

Taking the main perspective of Rufus, Churchill's dog, the First World War is looked at through an innocent's eyes. Selbert expresses Rufus observations about his important owner working hard to keep his country together. Repeatedly, Rufus is being shown as a comfort and constant companion to the prime minister. The war is described in vague terms including bombings of London, interactions between the big three (USA, England, and Russia), D-day, and the announcement of victory. This story expresses the difficulties of war through the quotes taken from the gifted orator Churchill and the descriptive, short paragraphs. The stylistic choices of acrylic and collaging add a charming effect to the rather solemn content. The art adds emotion and warmth to the story making it more child friendly and showing a softer side to the "English Bulldog" Churchill. Included in the back is a war timeline and brief biographical entries. Great way to introduce the serious topic of war and create interest in WWII.

Picture Book; History

Gwen Harter, Undergrad, Kutztown University

THOR SPEAKS!

Shecter, Vicky Alvear. *Thor Speaks!* Honesdale: Boyds Mills Press, 2015. 978-1-62091-599-8. \$16.95. 5-7.

Kvasir was considered the most intelligent human. He was created in a vat from the spit of all gods. His knowledge was so powerful that when evil dwarves killed him and brewed mead with his blood, it was said that anyone who would drink this blood would instantly become a poet or scholar. The blood was then stolen by a giant and buried under a mountain with the giant's daughter as a guard. Angry Odin, god of all gods went to save Kvasir's blood pretending to be in love with the giantess. To secretly carry home the blood, he drank all of it little by little each day and left with it in his stomach. He escaped by changing into an eagle to fly off of the mountain. The giantess father saw the eagle leaving the mountain and figuring the mead was stolen turned himself into an eagle to go after Odin. This is just one of the many stories told by Thor as he introduces us to many characters from Norse mythology and the 9 worlds from the Nordic cosmos. Students who enjoy mythology will like reading story after story of all the gods and their adventures and learning that many words from mythology are used in our language today. This book also gives great historical background information about the Vikings. This book is recommended for libraries looking to expand their mythology section.

Nonfiction; Mythology Melinda Bender, Librarian, Thirteenth and Green Elementary

FACELESS

Sheinmel, Alyssa. *Faceless*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2015. 978-0-545-67601-4. \$17.99. Grades 7-12.

Faceless is a story of a girl named Maisie Winters who loves to run, loves her boyfriend, her friend, and her parents. One day while returning to her home from a run in her neighborhood the sky opens up and a storm begins. She finds herself unable to move but continues to watch a nearby tree catch fire and fall to the ground. She then wakes up in a hospital and is completely unaware of what had happened to her. She notices that she is tied to the bed and she has a wrapping on her arm and all over her face. Her father tells her about the accident and how when the tree was struck by lightning it fell on her and her body caught on fire. She suffered from second degree burns on her arm and the electrical fire completely killed the nerve endings of the skin on half of her face so they put her in a medically induced coma and then proceeded to do a face transplant on her. When she goes home from the hospital she struggles with finding peace in the fact that she now has a new face where her old one once was and she realizes that she is no longer the girl she used to be. She goes through not only a physical recovery throughout the book but also an emotional recovery. Her whole life is different now and she adjusts to it the way she wants. The book is perfect for older children or young adults because it is a real thing that could happen to someone. It teaches a lesson that you should always learn to love the skin you're in and it is a very powerful story.

Realistic Fiction Nicole Tener, Elementary Education Student, Kutztown University

THE FARMERETTES

Sherman, Gisela Tobien. *The Farmerettes*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2015. 978-1-927583-64-7. \$12.95. 8-12.

The Farmerettes tells the story of six different girls who have recently finished high school that end up living together during the summer of 1943 on a farm to volunteer as part of the Canadian Farm Service Force. Through this program, the girls are doing the work that the men left behind when they went off to the war. We are introduced to Helene, Peggy, Binxie, Isabel, Jean, and the mysterious X. Each girl has a different personality and a different back ground yet become close friends as the summer continues on and World War II looms over all of their heads. *The Farmerettes* is an intriguing tale that gives the reader a different view of WWII than many are used to. The tale focuses on friendship, romance, hardship and heartbreak while having the war play almost second fiddle in a way that makes the reader always want to know what is going to happen next.

Realistic Fiction Anne Bonnefoi, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

UNICORN ON A ROLL: ANOTHER PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN ADVENTURE

Simpson, Dana. *Unicorn on a Roll: Another Phoebe and Her Unicorn Adventure*. Kansas City, Missouri: Andrews McMeel, 2015. 978-1-4494-7076-0. \$9.99. 2 and up.

This graphic novel is one that female readers of any age will enjoy. It tells many one or two page-long stories of the human Phoebe and her best friend, and unicorn Marigold Heavenly Nostrils. This novel is the second in the series, but readers don't have to have read the first one to know what is going on with the characters. There is a short letter from Lauren Faust (developer of Hasbro's animated television series *My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic*) that begins the book and tells how the world is changing in the way that it looks at girls and their love of unicorns. The dialogue between Marigold and Phoebe is witty and absolutely hilarious. The illustrations are beautifully cute and vibrant, which add to the whimsical and childlike wonder of the book. This book is perfect for female readers who love friendship, secrets and unicorns who wear only the finest finery.

Graphic Novel

Andrea Dow, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

UNICORN VS. GOBLINS: ANOTHER PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN ADVENTURE

Simpson, Dana. *Unicorn vs. Goblins: Another Phoebe and Her Unicorn Adventure*. Kansas City: Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2016. 9781449476281. \$9.99. Grades 2-6.

Phoebe and her self-loving BFF, a unicorn named Marigold Heavenly Nostrils, are back for their third book. This adventure begins at the start of Phoebe's summer vacation with a trip to music camp where she makes a quirky new friend named Sue. The reader also meets Marigold's sister, Florence Unfortunate Nostrils (who is thus named because she sneezes spiders out of her nose), and a lake monster who likes tacos. Later, when school is back in session, Phoebe has Marigold remove her "shield of boringness" so that everyone can see that she does in fact have a unicorn. This makes her very popular for a brief time, and even more bizarre events occur that include Goblins, Phoebe's "frenemy" Dakota, and some enchanted hair. Simpson tells the story in cartoon vignettes rather than a solid plot from start to finish, and some readers may find this difficult to follow. Even so, readers who enjoyed the first books will likely enjoy the continued adventures of Phoebe and her unicorn. Entertaining and colorful illustrations tie the story together as readers transition from one vignette to the next. The book also includes an introduction by Cory Doctorow and his daughter Posey. Teachers who are looking for a fun way to incorporate this book into the curriculum can download a Unicorn vs Goblins Teacher's Guide (available on the publisher's website) which includes a lesson that has students exploring unique adjectives. Overall, this is a fun book for libraries and classrooms that will appeal to the targeted elementary audience.

Graphic Novel

Karen J. Wanamaker, Librarian, Kutztown University

SNOW DOG, SAND DOG

Singleton, Linda Joy. Illus. Jess Golden. *Snow Dog, Sand Dog*. Chicago, Illinois: Albert Whitman & Company, 2014. 978-0-8075-7536-9. \$16.99. Gr. K-2.

Ally desperately wants a dog. The problem is she is allergic to them. She tried drawing pictures of all kinds of dogs, but just could not get it right. Winter came and Ally decided to make a dog out of snow. Even though the other kids said there was no such thing as a Snow Dog she took her dog home and had fun with him all throughout winter. During that winter they did winter things that would match a Snow Dog, like eating popsicles and making dog angels in the snow. However, when the winter snow melted, so did Snow Dog. Ally was sad but realized she could make a new dog in the spring, Flower Dog. During the other two seasons came Sand Dog and Leaf Dog. This story would appeal to children and families. At the end of the story there are directions on “How to Make a Dog Without Snow”, which would be a fun activity. This sweet, imaginative story would be a wonderful addition to any elementary, public, or personal library.

Picture Book

Erin Engler, Librarian, Whitehall-Coplay School District

THE BOY AND THE BOOK: A WORDLESS STORY

Slater, Michael. Bob Kolar. *The Boy and the Book: A Wordless Story*. Watertown: Charlesbridge Publishing Inc., 2015. \$16.95. Pre-K -2nd.

Learning proper book care and etiquette can be tough for young overexcited little kids. This simplistic Adobe Illustrator built book focuses on a boy and his treatment of the blue book. On the first page it becomes apparent that the little boy has a reputation for mistreating books and all of the books are alarmed at his arrival in the library. The next several pages show the boy tearing, bending, throwing, folding, and dragging the book around and the book looks scared and in pain. The mom collects her son and the book is tossed on the ground to be rescued and repaired by his book friends. When the boy returns the blue book hides in terror but he gets caught, the other books rescue the book. The boy is really sad, not understanding why the blue book was so unhappy and the book feels bad and returns to the boy, who figures out how to treat the book nicely, ending with the two reading at bedtime. Throughout the book in the background it is obvious that other library users know how respect the books, reading quietly at the tables holding the books correctly. There is very little thought put into the resolution of the book, frustratingly the boy seems to magically learn his lesson making it hard to explain the correct ways of caring for books because there is never a clear demonstration. While it has its flaws this book is functional as a gateway to proper library use, book care and repair, and how to get excited about books.

Picture Book

Gwen Harter, Undergrad, Kutztown University

CLAUDE ON THE SLOPES

Smith, Alex T. *Claude on the Slopes*. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2013. 978-1-56145-805-9. \$12.95. 1-3.

Claude is a small dog who lives on Waggy Avenue with Mr. and Mrs. Shinyshoes. His best friend is Sir Bobblysock who is a sock and they are looking for an adventure. One day it snowed and Claude saw kids sledding and people skiing in this stuff that he never saw before. Claude and Sir Bobblysock followed these people all the way to a snowy mountain resort. He saw people doing all sorts of fun things in the snow and he gets into a snowball fight then goes sledding down a mountain. Sir Bobblysock enters into the Great Snowman Competition and wins a silver shovel with a heated foot spa. During their visit to the resort an avalanche occurs and it is up to Claude to save someone and Sir Bobblysock who are trapped under the snow. Lucky for him he has the silver shovel prize to help him. The illustrations throughout the book have a 1950's retro feel to them. This is a sweet story that would be good for a student who is just beginning to read chapter books.

Fiction; Chapter Book Melinda Bender, Librarian, Thirteenth and Green Elementary

GOOSEBUMPS: SLAPPY'S TALES OF HORROR

Stine, R. L. Illus. Dave Roman, Gabriel Hernandez, Ted Naifeh, and Jamie Tolagson. *Goosebumps: Slappy's Tales of Horror*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2015. 978-0-545-83595-4. \$12.99. Grades 3-6.

Four short stories by different illustrators are compiled in this graphic novel. Slappy, a creepy marionette doll narrates the stories and set the reader up for the chill-inducing tale that they are about to read. The stories range from an amusement park, a swap, a beach, and the very tale that tells the origin of Slappy. All the short stories are told in classic *Goosebumps* style where there is a twist at the end that the reader won't see coming. Slappy adds some hints of comedy to the little skits as his 'scary' speeches might come off a bit overdramatic. The art of all the illustrators is very detailed and intriguing. This is a great novel for any *Goosebumps* and horror fan or anyone who is interested in graphic novels. Each illustrator has their own art style, some more detailed than others, and this makes the graphic novel a great starting point for readers to see all kinds of comic strip art. This would make a great addition to any library.

Graphic Novel; Horror Alyssa Daney, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE MEMORY OF LIGHT

Stork, Francisco X. *The Memory of Light*. New York: Arthur A. Levine Books, 2016. 9780545474320. \$17.99.

She wrote the letter to her nana, took the pills, and lied down. Instead of finding her death, Vicky finds herself waking up in the mental ward of the hospital. Against her unhelpful father's and stepmother's wishes, she decides to stay there for a couple weeks. She was not alone in the ward. E.M, Gabriel, and Mona keep her company and help her in ways she would have never thought. Through group therapy and private sessions, Vicky starts asking questions and starts to wade through this fuzzy dark haze of her depression. She finds her anger towards her father and sister. She rekindles her deep sadness for the death of her mother and how almost losing her nana caused a break within Vicky's seams. It will take some time, but Vicky is a hero, both to herself and others. Depression has been stigmatized and even openly talking about suicidal thoughts can be considered taboo. Stork eloquently talks about both with realistic views. He also writes his mentally ill people not just as mentally ill, but as humans. This gut-wrenching and honest novel can be considered bibliotherapy for many and can give understanding to others.

Fiction

Carla Castro MSLS Student, Clarion University of Pennsylvania

WILL'S WORDS

Sutcliffe, Jane. Illustrated by John Shelley. *Will's Words*. Watertown: Charlesbridge Publishing, 2016. 978-1-58089-638-2. \$17.95. Grade Level: 3-6.

William Shakespeare has contributed a lot of fun and colorful phrases to the English Language. Will's Words celebrates this by exploring the origin play of those phrases and giving the reader a look back into the world of 1606 theater. Some of the phrases mentioned include "outbreak", "too much of a good thing", "green-eyed monster", and "wild-goose chase". The author includes a box on the page with the phrase that W. Shakespeare created, giving its meaning from present day and the past and where in the play it's located in. Shelley pairs the words with full double page spreads of wonderful pen and ink watercolor illustrations of city views of 1606 London. He shows where the many theaters were located and a cutaway view inside the globe showing the inner workings of the theater backstage. The artist playfully creates a "Where's Waldo" effect by inserting William Shakespeare into almost every page and the book can be turned into a fun game to find him amongst the crowds in each scene. There is also a timeline provided at the back of the book and a bibliography of the sources used that the reader can use. This is a great introduction to the words and theater world of Shakespeare for a younger reader.

Picture Book

Sara Moyer, Library Aide at Robeson Community Library

SAMURAI RISING: THE EPIC LIFE OF MINAMOTO YOSHITSUNE

Turner, Pamela S. *Samurai Rising: The Epic Life of Minamoto Yoshitsune*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2016. 9781580895842. \$16.95. Young adult.

Betrayal, murder, beheadings, loyalty, sibling rivalry, love affairs, bravery, friendship, war, seppuku (suicide by stabbing oneself in the abdomen), and the list goes on. If these attributes can't grab the reader's attention, then nothing will. Reading like a twelfth century soap opera, the reader is transported to Japan to follow the life of Minamoto Yoshitsune, a boy that was orphaned by his father's rival and sent to a monastery for training as a monk. As the reader finds out, Yoshitsune had other plans.

In order to tell the story of Yoshitsune, ancient war chronicles had to be consulted. Obviously due to the time period, and less than reliable record keeping, there are many gaps in the story. The author tries to fill in these gaps with educated guesses based on prevailing practices in the time period. Who knows if the actual story took place as the author suggests. But this is not a problem, as it allows the reader to imagine if this is how events truly took place.

Yoshitsune, escapes the monastery and must seek revenge on the tribe that has killed his family. The reader is then immersed in the complex life of Yoshitsune, his samurai training, the life of a samurai, and Yoshitsune's friends and foes. His rise as the great samurai is detailed. Even in the twelfth century it seems as politics rule the world. Those doing the "right thing" are rewarded by being punished and those who do nothing are promoted.

So much action and adventure takes place within the book's pages, it is impossible to describe every adventure, battle, twist and turn. In the end, the great warrior Yoshitsune takes his own life through seppuku. A not so happy ending for this great warrior. The young reader will not lose interest in following the great samurai Yoshitsune's adventures. The book is an engrossing read and is great addition to any library.

Nonfiction; Biography

Steve Tichy, Cataloger, Tamaqua Public Library

EVERY DAY BIRDS

VanDerwater, Amy Ludwig. *Every Day Birds*. Illus. Dylan Metrano. New York: Orchard Books, 2016. 978-0-545-69980-8. \$17.99. 1-4.

This book describes a feature of one common/popular bird on each page in a rhyming pattern. The descriptions are fun and personify each bird. The cut paper illustrations use bold colors and provide powerful visual connections to the text. At the end, each bird is described in more detail with informational text that would be useful for older children who are researching birds or who are interested in the topic. This book is highly recommended.

Picture Book; Nonfiction

Amber Sams, Librarian, Saucon Valley High School

COZY CLASSICS: LEO TOLSTOY'S WAR & PEACE

Wang, Holman and Jack Wang. *Cozy Classics: Leo Tolstoy's War & Peace*. China: Chronicle Books, 2016. 978-1-4521-5245-5. \$9.95. Pre-K.

The Wang Brothers bring the content of Leo Tolstoy's *War & Peace* to very young readers. The seemingly simple word choice, paired with the beautifully sculpted wool figure illustrations, allow access to the story's plot line. In twelve words, the Wang Brothers summarize the salient structure of a classic novel. The reader is able to use the detailed illustrations to understand the intricacy of friendship, love, and loss. To take a historical drama and make it accessible to young children is a feat to be applauded. Sitting with a young child, reading this adaption of a literary classic, would be time well spent. The durability of the board book, along with the child-friendly rounded corners, will give parents years of use. Jack and Holman Wang have published three other Cozy Classics which could be added to a preschooler's library. In addition to *War and Peace*, Jane Austin's *Pride and Prejudice*, Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, and Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* are available.

Board Book

Cynthia Stunkard, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Wang, Holman and Jack Wang. *Great Expectations*. San Francisco: Cozy Classics, 2016. 9781452152431.\$9.95. Ages 0+.

Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* for children? You might think it not possible. Yet this beautiful board book reduces the classic Dickens tale into twelve simple words, and is perfect for young ones. Each simple word is paired with a complementary and delicately crafted needle-felted illustration. The first word of the book is "boy." "Boy" paired with an image of a needle-felted boy [Pip, the central character] standing on a genuine page one of Dickens's book: the words "Chapter 1" and first paragraph distinctly visible. Each of the twelve words and illustrations exemplify important events within *Great Expectations*. Nonetheless, the books are not intended to produce baby Einsteins, but are rather intended to develop a vocabulary with child-friendly words such as "help," "old," "pretty," and so on. Accompanying illustrations have been created to provide visual clues for each word. For instance, paired with the word "cry" is a needle-felted Pip with a clearly sad face, as two women look on with concerned faces. Cozy Classics' *Great Expectations* is a visually enchanting read for all ages. Primary grade teachers may use this board book with young children to build visual literacy and word recognition skills. High school teachers may use it as an appealing means to introduce *Great Expectations* at the beginning of a literary unit.

Picture Book; Board Book

Angel Bestwick, Assistant Professor, Kutztown University

COZY CLASSICS: MOBY DICK

Wang, Jack and Holman Wang. *Cozy Classics: Moby Dick*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2016. 98-1-4521-5246-2. \$9.95. Pre-K and up.

The Wang brother reimagine *Moby Dick* with a twist. Creating stunning scenes with needle-point and felt figurines, the brothers are able to convey the story in just twelve words. These twelve words are able to sum up the events in *Moby Dick* and also increase young reader's vocabulary by introducing words with pictures that are simple to understand. The figurines are adorable and fun to look at for both kids and adults. The imagination is able to take this book farther than just twelve words and a few pictures. The book is able to convey the plot of *Moby Dick* to that of young children. The book has the board pages that are durable for young readers and have rounded corners for the parents who worry about their children hurting themselves on sharp corners or paper. This book would be perfect for any pre-k teacher or parent that wants their child to start out early with reading the classics.

Board Book; Classic

Valerie Korsick, Undergraduate Student, Kutztown University

STAR WARS EPIC YARNS: RETURN OF THE JEDI

Wang, Jack and Holman Wang. *Star Wars Epic Yarns: Return of the Jedi*. San Francisco: Chronicle, 2015. 978-1-4521-3500-7. \$9.95. Pre-K-2.

Younger readers will enjoy *Star Wars Epic Yarns: Return of the Jedi* for its use of a topic that is currently popular in society. The book only contains twelve words along with twelve pictures but it is simply adorable. Each of the pictures in the book is an intricately detailed and handcrafted scene that tells the tale of a familiar story for older readers as well. The pictures are all made up of complex scenes, all of which are made from felt and other small things such as mulch, dirt, and of course yarn (as the title of the series would suggest). Another interesting thing that the book has is the corners are almost rounded off, so parent don't have to worry about their young readers getting jabbed with the sharp corners that board books usually have. This book is a great addition to any library where younger Star Wars fans will frequently visit!

Board Book

Andrea Dow, Library Science Student, Kutztown University

THE BOXCAR CHILDREN: THE SLEEPY HOLLOW MYSTERY

Warner, Gertrude Chandler. *The Boxcar Children: The Sleepy Hollow Mystery*. Chicago: Albert Whitman & Company, 2015. 978-0-8075-2843-3 Grades 2-5.

Mrs. McGregor arrives in the town of Sleepy Hollow with Benny, Henry, Jessie, and Violet. The electric is not working at Mrs. Vanderhoff's home. The children have come to see how the town of Sleepy Hollow celebrates Halloween and they are anxious to participate in the town's ghost tours. The children begin to hear strange noises and soon witness a headless rider on a black horse. Mrs. Vanderhoff's daughter, Annika, is in charge of the ghost tours and is quickly blamed for the horrifying sightings of the headless horseman. Annika denies any involvement with the scary scenes. If it is not Annika's doing, who is the culprit of the unwanted incidents occurring in the Hudson Valley? The children quickly unite to try and find out who is scaring all the tourists away. This is a great mystery for second to fifth grade students. They will enjoy the scary, nasty tricks that go on throughout the story and will read on to find out who is behind all the drama.

Mystery

Laura Sweinhart, Librarian, Lower Pottsgrove Elementary School

Instructions For Submitting Book Reviews

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

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

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

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

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

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

Genre/Format

Name, Position, School

Example:

Wiesner, David. *Tuesday*. New York: Clarion Books, 1991.0395870828.\$14.13.PreK-1

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

Picture Book; Fantasy Lindsay Bowman, Graduate Student, Kutztown University

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

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

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

a Stay within the limit of 150-300 words (the review may approach 600 words when reviewing an Encyclopedia). Anything less than 150 words is merely an annotation.

b. Use present tense, active voice when writing a review, unless when writing about events in history for nonfiction reviews. Avoid the use of "you" whenever possible, instead use third-person point of view.

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

*Thank You Everyone for
participating in the Fall Book
Review!*

*We look forward to seeing you in
Spring!*

**The Department of Library & Learning
Technologies**



