

The HORN BOOK GUIDE to Children's and Young Adult Books

Volume XXIII, Number 1 • Published Spring 2012

Reviews of books published July–December 2011

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THE HORN BOOK GUIDE

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The Guide to the *Guide*

The Horn Book Guide strives to include short, critical reviews of all hardcover trade children's and young adult books published in the United States within a six-month period. (Novelty books, board books, and mass market titles are reviewed selectively.) Qualified books that arrive in our offices too late to be included will be reviewed in the next issue.

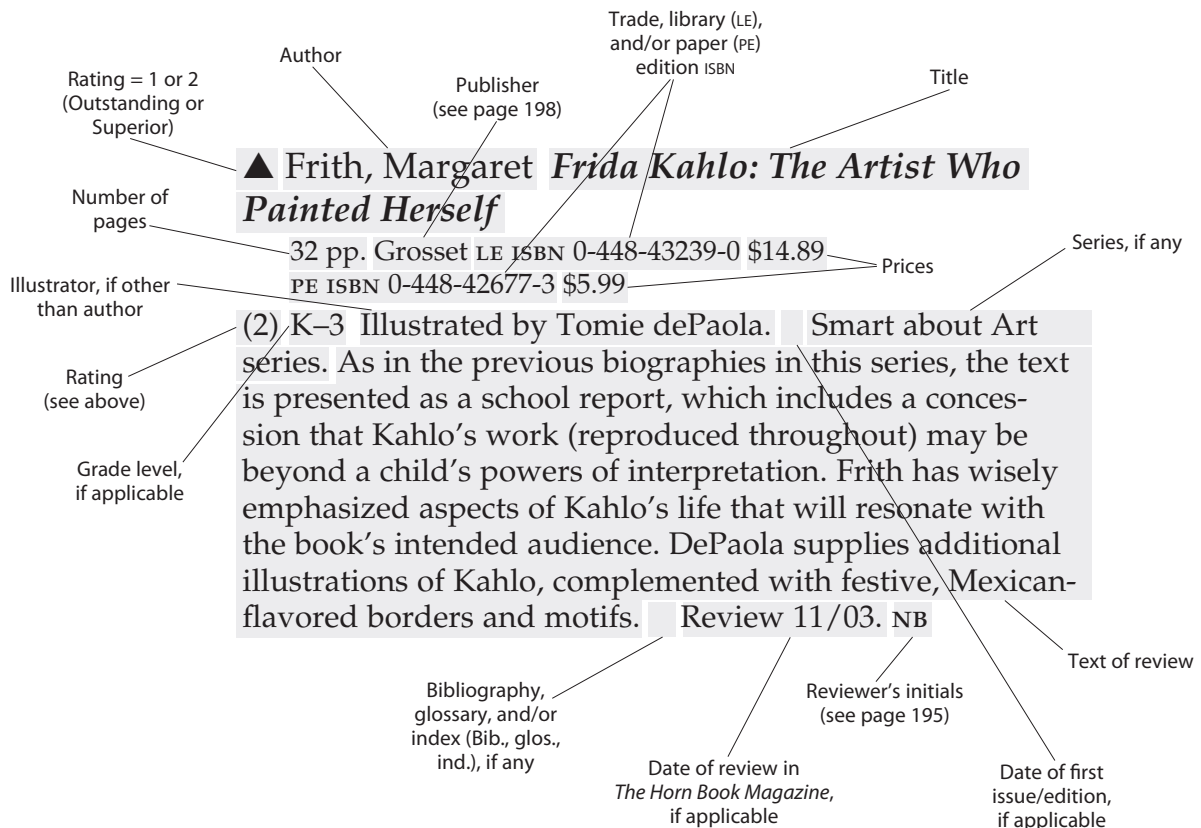
The reviews are arranged alphabetically by author within categories and are signed with reviewer initials. Fiction is arranged by genre or school grade level. Nonfiction falls within the general divisions of the Dewey decimal system. Further subdivisions are listed at the beginning of each nonfiction section. Books are rated from 1 (outstanding) to 6 (unacceptable), with a ▲ marking books receiving a 1 or 2. The editors determine the final rating.

THE RATING SYSTEM

Each book receives a rating of 1 to 6:

- 1 = Outstanding, noteworthy in style, content, and/or illustration.
- 2 = Superior, well above average.
- 3 = Recommended, satisfactory in style, content, and/or illustration.
- 4 = Recommended, with minor flaws.
- 5 = Marginal, seriously flawed, but with some redeeming quality.
- 6 = Unacceptable in style, content, and/or illustration.

SAMPLE REVIEW



friends; since everyone they meet is deemed unworthy (or too intimidating), they end up back where they started. After a message-y pep talk from the offstage narrator, the bugs recommit. Distracting present-tense text further weakens the didactic offering. ERG

Allum, Margaret *The Best Kind of Kiss*

24 pp. Walker ISBN 978-0-8027-2274-4 \$14.99

(3) Illustrated by Jonathan Bentley. A girl describes her favorite kisses: “pecky kisses” from the hen, a “fluttery kiss” from a butterfly, a “sorry kiss” after fighting with a friend, and of course “snuggly-cuddly-mommy” kisses. But the kisses she likes best are “great big bristly-growly-daddy” kisses. Digitally enhanced pencil, ink, and wash illustrations in shades of yellow and orange add humor to this amusing catalog of kisses. PR

▲ Atinuke *Anna Hibiscus’ Song*

40 pp. Kane/Miller ISBN 978-1-61067-040-1 \$15.99

(2) Illustrated by Lauren Tobia. From the mango tree in her family’s compound in “Africa. Amazing Africa,” Anna Hibiscus observes her large loving family and feels so happy, “she almost floats out of the tree.” She finds a way to express her own happiness—in glorious song. Textured watercolors, using a muted green and brown palette, depict the richness of the gardens, avian life, and clothing. Review 11/11. R. SMITH

▲ Baker, Keith *No Two Alike*

40 pp. Simon/Beach Lane ISBN 978-1-4424-1742-7 \$16.99

(2) In a thoughtfully structured picture book, two little red birds explore a snowy landscape, while a rhyming text draws listeners into looking carefully at the pictures to find similarities and differences between things. The digitally rendered illustrations are in muted blues and greens, the bright birds and other animals lending their colors and providing more things for children to spot. Review 1/12. SDL

Banks, Kate *This Baby*

40 pp. Farrar/Foster ISBN 978-0-374-37514-0 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Gabi Swiatkowska. A girl watches her pregnant mother knit a layette and wonders what the future will hold (“Will this baby like the stars?”). The art is as metaphorical as the text: in one typically lovely spread, the girl imagines that her new sibling balances on a strand of yarn that connects their mother’s knitting needles with the moon. NB

Barner, Bob *Animal Baths*

24 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-1-4521-0056-2 \$15.99

(4) “Monkeys groom messy hair / to start the monkey day. / Elephants flap big ears / in cool, misty spray.” Barner can be a stop-and-go driver of rhymes, but overall his book, which compares animal (including human) hygiene habits, is a pleasant ride. The collage art is photographed so pristinely that readers can see each stitch in every decorative ribbon. NB

Barnes, Brynne *Colors of Me*

24 pp. Sleeping Bear ISBN 978-1-58536-541-8 \$15.95

(5) Illustrated by Annika M. Nelson. While drawing pictures, a child asks a series of questions about colors. “Does the rain have a color? / If it did, would it still make puddles, too?” Most of the rhyming verses are awkward, unsubtle, and not especially engaging; some could serve as discussion-starters about race and individuality. Nelson has chosen effective materials for her bright collages. MFS

▲ Bartoletti, Susan Campbell *Naamah and the Ark at Night*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4242-6 \$16.99

(1) Illustrated by Holly Meade. Bartoletti shapes the ancient Arabic *ghazal* verse form into a gentle text centered on Noah’s wife’s lulling song: “As rain falls over the ark at night, / As water swirls in the dark of night . . .” Meade’s watercolor collages, including sunlit figures and quietly dramatic, near-black silhouettes, are a fine complement to the text. A lovely lullaby, in a beautiful, masterfully integrated book. Review 7/11. JRL

Bataille, Marion *10*

24 pp. Roaring Brook/Porter ISBN 978-1-59643-682-4 \$14.99

(3) The creator of the elegant alphabet pop-up book *ABC3D* introduces children to the numbers up to ten in an equally handsome (although esoteric) creation. One number is printed on a page; lift the flap to transform it to another number on the other side of the page. At the end of the book readers can start again with one and read backward to ten. MVK

Battersby, Katherine *Squish Rabbit*

40 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01267-1 \$12.99

(4) Little rabbit Squish is lonely. He’s rendered in simple black outline, but his surroundings are more intricate and interesting; the illustrations feature what looks like paper-bag earth, fabric-swatch trees, etc. Unfortunately, the art isn’t enough to sustain the thin story. One of Squish’s remedies, sewing a fabric friend, is an endearing touch, however. NB

▲ Bedford, David *When I Love You at Christmas*

24 pp. Kane/Miller ISBN 978-1-61067-039-5 \$9.99

(2) Illustrated by Tamsin Ainslie. A little girl and her toy lamb prepare for Christmas while an offstage narrator showers her with love: “When you wrap your gifts . . . / That’s when I love you.” The book’s small, square trim size; generous white space on well-composed double-page spreads; and cheerful illustrations full of eye-pleasing colors and patterns combine to make an attractive package for the youngest reader. Review 11/11. JMB

▲ Bentley, Peter *King Jack and the Dragon*

32 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3698-6 \$17.99

(2) Illustrated by Helen Oxenbury. In this classically sweet picture book, two preschoolers and a toddler build a cardboard-box fortress and protect it from dragons until

darkness falls and their parents take them home. Bently's unforced rhyming couplets swing along, and Oxenbury, in gentle watercolors and crosshatched line drawings, showcases her gift for portraying the personalities and relationships of young children. Review 11/11. SE

▲ Biggs, Brian *Everything Goes: On Land*

48 pp. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray
ISBN 978-0-06-195809-0 \$14.99

(2) Henry and his dad make their way through Richard Scarry-esque double-page spreads packed with colorful cars and trucks and things that go. They discuss (via speech balloons) the different modes of transportation, from construction trucks to buses to subways. Biggs's illustrations, with strong black lines and rich colors, feature lots of visual jokes and mini-stories. A smorgasbord for young motorheads. Review 11/11. KF

Blake, Stephanie *A Deal's a Deal!*

40 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86901-3 \$15.99

(3) Bunny Simon (*I Don't Want to Go to School!*) and his friend work a toy trade: three normal cars for one "extraordinary" red one. When the red car breaks, Simon must fix the rotten deal. Straightforward text aptly captures (with a touch of booger humor) the logic within childhood negotiations. Uncluttered illustrations keep focus on the conflict. CHS

Bloom, Suzanne *Feeding Friendsies*

32 pp. Boyds ISBN 978-1-59078-529-4 \$16.95

(4) Various children make meals from leaves, mud, and other outdoor finds. Asks the omniscient narrator: will the child eat it? ("Oh no, no, no. / It's for Lamby and Bunny and Bear.") The baby-talking prose can be grating, but toddlers will recognize their make-believing selves in the creative kids shown in gouache and colored-pencil art. NB

Boyd, Ella *Hello, Bicycle!*

24 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5964-4 \$12.99

(4) Illustrated by Daniel Griffio. A girl takes her new two-wheeler bicycle for a ride: down hills and up, over bumps, around roller-skaters, and back to her proud dad. The slim story is told in short, clipped lines of verse that can sound awkward. Cheerful colors dominate the digital illustrations, and children making the switch from three to two wheels will identify with the intrepid cyclist. AK

▲ Brown, Monica *Waiting for the Biblioburro*

32 pp. Tricycle ISBN 978-1-58246-353-7 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-1-58246-398-8 \$19.99

(2) Illustrated by John Parra. For Ana, the arrival of a burro-riding librarian in her remote village is a joyful event. Impatiently awaiting the *bibliotecario's* next visit, Ana reads avidly, writes, and creates her own book. Parra's acrylics portray a sunny village with cheerful children engaged in imaginative play. Spanish words (defined in context and in a glossary) add a useful dimension, as does an author's note. Review 7/11. JRL

▲ Buck, Nola *A Christmas Goodnight*

24 pp. HarperCollins/Tegen ISBN 978-0-06-166491-5 \$12.99

(2) Illustrated by Sarah Jane Wright. On Christmas Eve, a boy says goodnight to the participants in the Christmas story ("Goodnight to the baby in the hay . . . / Goodnight to the sleepy mother. / Goodnight to Joseph, too"). Soothing rhymed text and soft illustrations are ideal for bedtime read-alouds while serving as a straightforward introduction to that first Christmas. Review 11/11. CR

Butler, M. Christina *One Christmas Night*

32 pp. Good ISBN 978-1-56148-727-1 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Tina Macnaughton. Little Hedgehog worries that his home isn't "Christmas-y" enough. He receives help from his animal friends and gets into a holiday mood while learning that the true gift of Christmas is in giving and sharing with friends. Though the familiar lesson isn't new, the friendly text and glitter-enhanced illustrations speak directly to the target audience. BLS

▲ Carle, Eric *The Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse*

32 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-25713-1 \$17.99

(2) An artist paints animals the "wrong" color: a blue horse, red alligator, green lion, etc. When Carle, as we learn in an afterword, was growing up in Nazi Germany, this mixing up of natural coloration was seen as degenerate. While the book's simple, direct text and large type indicates a young audience, Carle is also making a larger, more autobiographical statement. Review 1/12. LR

Carlson, Melody *Goodnight, Angels*

32 pp. Zonderkidz ISBN 978-0-310-71687-7 \$15.99

(5) Illustrated by Sophie Allsopp. As evening falls, a boy says goodnight to everything that was part of his day ("Goodnight, bunny slippers, snuggling 'neath my bed. / Goodnight, Mister Teddy. You're a sleepyhead"). His last goodnights are for "Father God" and "the angels . . . watching over me." The illustrations, while warm-hearted, are as vanilla as they come, and the text's rhymes don't always scan. MVK

Caswell, Deanna *Train Trip*

32 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-1837-4 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Dan Andreasen. A boy travels alone by train to visit his grandmother in the city: "Ticket ready. Tight grip. / To Grandma's house. Train trip!" Spare rhyming text includes sensory details of a train experience. Die-hard locomotive fans will likely notice when the illustrations, starring a smiling pink-cheeked train engine and doll-like human figures, don't match the more concrete words. MVK

Christelow, Eileen *Five Little Monkeys Reading in Bed*

40 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-38610-2 \$16.99

(3) Despite Mama's instructions, the monkeys help themselves to more books after lights-out. Each story elicits a cacophony of hoots, howls, sobs, or cheers, bringing Mama

running to spout her refrain: “Lights out! Sweet dreams! No more reading in bed!” The troublemaking monkeys’ antics highlight the pleasures of reading. An entertaining twist at the end—and the rambunctious illustrations—will delight fans. RRW

Comden, Betty, and Adolph Green *What’s New at the Zoo?*

40 pp. Blue Apple ISBN 978-1-60905-088-7 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Travis Foster. Stepping on one another’s noses, toes, necks, and tails, the zoo animals are demanding to be let out of their cramped quarters. The text, song lyrics from the 1960s musical *Do Re Mi*, doesn’t quite work as well when spoken. Frantic cartoon-style illustrations are packed with graphics that emphasize the congestion. Occasional gatefolds add to the frenzy. RRW

▲ Costello, David Hyde *Little Pig Joins the Band*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-58089-264-3 \$14.95

(2) Little Pig, too small to play an instrument, watches his siblings have all the fun with Grandpa’s marching band equipment. However, physical stature doesn’t stop him from thinking big. Sprightly ink and watercolor illustrations match the upbeat text’s tempo and include comic asides to help advance the narrative. Readers will likely recognize Little Pig’s predicament and give his take-charge solution a hand. Review 9/11. KF

Cousins, Lucy *Maisy’s Amazing Big Book of Learning*

48 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5481-8 \$14.99

(3) This all-in-one concept book for preschoolers dedicates one spread each to numbers, patterns, weather, colors, shapes, sizes, noises, etc. Cousins’s trademark spare illustrations in bold colors outlined in black keep things well contained amidst the flaps to lift and chicks to count (there are over sixty). ERG

▲ Cushman, Doug *Christmas Eve Good Night*

32 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-6603-6 \$12.99

(2) As a girl holds a snow globe containing a miniature Santa’s workshop, rhyming text asks how critters at the North Pole would say good night (e.g., a reindeer says “Jingle! Jingle!”). The book closes with the girl asleep; when readers spot her pointy elf ears, they’ll turn back to the beginning to see how Cushman’s clever illustrations disguised her as a human. Review 11/11. JMB

Dale, Penny *Dinosaur Dig!*

24 pp. Candlewick/Nosy Crow ISBN 978-0-7636-5871-7 \$15.99

(3) From one to ten, dinosaurs dig, shovel, dump, lift, mix, build, roll, pump, spray, and splash their way into the brand-new pool they built themselves. Dale’s colorful watercolors get all the right dinosaurs and construction vehicles onto the pages of this energetic and noisy concept book. Simple phrasing and word repetition combine to make this an engaging read-aloud. RRW

de Las Casas, Dianne *The House That Witchy Built*

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-58980-965-9 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Holly Stone-Barker. Based on “The House That Jack Built,” this cumulative tale comes complete with suggested read-aloud sound effects: “This is the cat (*meow, meow*) / That lived in the house (*creak, creak*) / That Witchy built (*clap, clap, clap, clap*).” It isn’t very imaginative but could be fun for Halloween. Not every picture’s a hit, but there are some creative elements to the cut-paper art. NB

Dewdney, Anna *Llama Llama Home with Mama*

40 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01232-9 \$17.99

(3) “Achy, fever, stuffy head . . . Llama Llama back to bed.” The young llama stays home from school, takes medicine, plays with toys, naps—and passes his malady on to Mama. As usual, the text is well metered, and young fans of the series will identify with the rituals of a sick day. Parents, too, will appreciate Llama Llama’s recognition of his mother’s needs. RRW

DiTerlizzi, Angela *Say What?*

32 pp. Simon/Beach Lane ISBN 978-1-4169-8694-2 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Joey Chou. “When a duck says *QUACK*, does she really mean *SNACK*?” Parent-and-child animal pairs depicted in various human scenarios offer playful suggestions for what animals might be saying when they utter their familiar sounds. The short rhyming questions and an intermittent refrain of this bouncy verse are well served by the colorful pictures. SRA

Dodd, Emma *I Am Small*

24 pp. Scholastic/Cartwheel ISBN 978-0-545-35370-0 \$8.99

(4) A baby penguin muses about being small compared to the deep ocean, steep mountains, strong wind, long winter, etc. The final contrast is to its large mother, but the chick knows it’s “the biggest thing” to her regardless. Dodd’s gently rhymed text is reassuring (verging on sentimental); her bold illustrations in cool blues with touches of silver foil shine. KEH

Durango, Julia, and Katie Belle Trupiano *Dream Away*

32 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-8702-4 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Robert Goldstrom. This lilting poem describes a boy’s dream journey as he and his companions sail the nighttime skies: “In a dream the full moon was a yellow balloon. / We followed its trail and grabbed on to its tail.” Constellations come alive and interact with the traveler until he sails home. The deep-blue-hued pages contain memorable images, including smiling clouds and a genial moon. MFS

Emberley, Rebecca, and Ed Emberley *Ten Little Beasties*

32 pp. Roaring Brook/Porter ISBN 978-1-59643-627-5 \$12.99

(3) Black-and-white beasties rendered with tribal art-like motifs cavort across brightly colored backgrounds in this counting rhyme. One by one, ten beasties (but no numerals)

appear on graphically bold, busy pages. Sharp-eyed kids will delight to find one sharp-toothed monster gobbling the others as the counting goes backward from ten to one. A song is downloadable at the publisher's website. CLS

Fernandes, Eugenie *Kitten's Winter*

24 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-343-5 \$14.95

(3) In *Kitten's* fourth seasonal adventure, the inquisitive feline explores a snowy woodland landscape. Ten simple couplets—"Snow blows, / Kitten hurries. / Pond freezes / Fox scurries"—are accompanied by mixed-media collage illustrations with alluring wood and clay textures. The cross-section visual perspective offers above-and-below-ground vantage points, adding a glimpse at some animals' dens, nests, and hibernation practices. SMG

Fletcher, Ashlee *My Dog, My Cat*

32 pp. Tanglewood ISBN 978-1-933718-22-4 \$13.95

(4) An offstage narrator enumerates the ways that her dog and cat are different before concluding with what they have in common: besides loving pepperoni pizza, they "both love ME!" There's not much here, but the concept's simplicity may appeal to the book's audience. The art, with wavy ribbon-like borders, is suitably basic in use of shapes and colors. NB

George, Lindsay Barrett *That Pup!*

32 pp. Greenwillow ISBN 978-0-06-200413-0 \$16.99

(3) A puppy uncovers ten acorns from around the yard. The squirrel that hid those acorns is upset, but the two make a friendly game out of returning them to their hiding spots. This gentle and simply told tale of friendship is just right for preschoolers, who will be drawn to the big-eyed animals on clean, white backgrounds. SRA

▲ Gershator, Phillis *Moo, Moo, Brown Cow! Have You Any Milk?*

40 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86744-6 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96744-3 \$19.99

(2) Illustrated by Giselle Potter. Published spring 2011. In this riff on "Baa Baa Black Sheep," a boy asks five animals what items they can offer to help him sleep. The tale's familiar pattern leads quietly to dreamland. Gershator tells an engaging bedtime story enriched by Potter's parallel visual narrative. Uncluttered illustrations carry the minimalist thread while also adding humor to the rhymed text. Review 9/11. BC

Ghigna, Charles *I See Fall*

24 pp. Capstone/Picture Window

LE ISBN 978-1-4048-6589-1 \$21.32

PE ISBN 978-1-4048-6851-9 \$4.95

(4) Illustrated by Ag Jatkowska. *I See* series. Delivered in a repeating "I see" pattern, this simple rhyming text touches on typical fall sights and events such as foliage, apples, Halloween, and Thanksgiving. Although the text is lively, it doesn't always flow, and some word choices don't work well. Friendly illustrations embrace the brilliant oranges, reds, and yellows of the season. SRA

▲ Godwin, Laura *One Moon, Two Cats*

32 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4424-1202-6 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Yoko Tanaka. The moon prompts parallel wakeful behavior from a cat that lives in town and one that lives in the country. A panoramic scene almost brings the two together—but a clap of thunder sends them scurrying home to snooze at daybreak. Godwin's succinct verse and Tanaka's acrylic art capture the felines' serene and agile grace in this pleasing bedtime adventure. Review 11/11. JRL

Gorbachev, Valeri *Shhh!*

32 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-25429-1 \$16.99

(4) While his baby brother sleeps, a boy quiets his toys with a "Shhh!" Once the baby wakes up, all returns to noisy normal—until the baby goes back to sleep. Without any conflict ("I am quiet again. Because I love my baby brother so"), there's not much story here. Gorbachev's engaging illustrations do most of the heavy lifting. KA

Gorbachev, Valeri *Two Little Chicks Go to School*

32 pp. North-South ISBN 978-0-7358-4027-0 \$6.95

(3) New ed. (2003). Two chicks feel trepidation about their first day of school. After the other animal children help them, the chicks feel braver. The perky illustrations are just right for this amiable story. The new "Tuff Books" edition of the story (originally titled *Chicken Chickens Go to School*) sports a smaller trim size and glossy, heavy paper suitable for young hands. MFS

Gudeon, Adam *Me and Meow*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-199821-8 \$12.99

(3) A little girl and her cat play together from breakfast until bedtime. In the clutter-free illustrations, solid background colors bring to the front the spare, childlike drawings made from simple shapes and outlined in black. Rhyme and alliteration ("Stump jumping. / Leaf leaping. / Slip sliding") make for a playful beginners' read. SJW

Harper, Charise Mericle *If Waffles Were like Boys*

40 pp. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray

ISBN 978-0-06-177998-5 \$14.99

(3) Illustrated by Scott Magoon. In this fun-filled book, a boy uses his imagination to transform everyday routines into action-packed adventures: "If shopping carts were like boys . . . grocery stores would be RACETRACKS!" The illustrations are bursting with activity and inventive detail, depicting ordinary objects such as food, socks, and pillows as characters in some kind of lively recreation, race, or battle. SRA

Harper, Charise Mericle *The Power of Cute: My Very First Graphic Novel*

32 pp. Random/Robin Corey ISBN 978-0-375-85965-6 \$10.99

(4) This appropriately adorable picture book for preschoolers is about a baby whose superpower shrinks monsters down to size so that they are as cute as it is. The book has sturdy square pages, spacious double-page spreads, flaps

and foldout pages, dialogue balloons, and sound effects (“AAHHH!!!”, “ROAR ROAR ROAR”). But how is it a graphic novel? MVP

Henkes, Kevin *Old Bear*

28 pp. Greenwillow ISBN 978-0-06-208963-2 \$7.99

(3) During the winter, an old bear dreams of his cubhood through the seasons in four glorious, vividly colored spreads. The original edition’s design and construction were in sync with the story’s soft, subtle nature. This board book’s smaller size lessens the book’s impact a bit, but simplicity of the text and art help overcome any shortcomings. Review 11/08. KF

Hines, Anna Grossnickle *I Am a Tyrannosaurus*

40 pp. Tricycle ISBN 978-1-58246-413-8 \$12.99

LE ISBN 978-1-58246-414-5 \$15.99

(3) Double-page spreads feature illustrations of a boy mimicking the behaviors and characteristics of a variety of dinosaur species. To find out which is highlighted, readers turn the page to see the name and a picture. Participation in the boy’s story-acting will be practically irresistible; listeners will quickly be roaring and stomping along as their own imaginary dinosaurs. DJF

Hubbell, Patricia *Shaggy Dogs, Waggy Dogs*

32 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5957-6 \$17.99

(3) Illustrated by Donald Wu. In bouncy rhymes, Hubbell describes how dogs come in all shapes and sizes and have different personalities: “Shaggy dogs, waggy dogs. / Pencil-thin and saggy dogs . . . / Itty-bitty pretty dogs. / Shy dogs. Bold dogs . . .” Cheerful colored-pencil over acrylic drawings showcase the canines’ expressions as they eat, sleep, play, and offer companionship and love to their owners. CAL

▲ Intriago, Patricia *Dot*

40 pp. Farrar/Ferguson ISBN 978-0-374-31835-2 \$14.99

(2) Intriago’s opposites book uses a circle as its sole subject and character. Bold graphics, mostly in black and white, highlight meaning with variations on the circle theme. The book also reflects the arc of a child’s day, beginning with the sunrise on the cover and ending with a full moon. It’s all about perception, seeing things differently through context and composition. Review 9/11. KTH

Isop, Laurie *How Do You Hug a Porcupine?*

32 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-1291-0 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Gwen Millward. “Can you hug some billy goats? / Entice them with a bag of oats!” Well-metered verse describes the conundrum of one brave boy who, after watching his friends hug horses, cows, bunnies, pigs, yaks, and a host of other animals, figures out the best way to hug a porcupine: “carefully!” Finely detailed watercolors suggest the delicacy required for this potentially prickly pursuit. RRW

▲ Jocelyn, Marthe, and Nell Jocelyn *Ones and Twos*

24 pp. Tundra ISBN 978-1-77049-220-2 \$15.95

(2) Published spring 2011. In this concept book, rhyming text describes two friends who meet up at the park. Following a predictable pattern (“One bird, two eggs, / One girl, two legs”), the text counts single items and pairs, each easily found in the art. Cut-paper collages employ a wide range of colorfully patterned and textured paper that will have viewers poring over the details. Review 9/11. JMB

Joose, Barbara *Dog Parade*

40 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-15-206690-1 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Eugene Yelchin. Eight dogs humor their owners by allowing themselves to be dressed up for a neighborhood pet parade. Joosse’s lighthearted text and Yelchin’s humorous gouache illustrations on colored pages allow the different breeds—with wildly varying personalities—to shine in their costumes, from ghost to superhero to hot dog complete with bun. CAL

Judge, Lita *Red Sled*

40 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4424-2007-6 \$16.99

(3) One moonlit night, woodland animals borrow a child’s sled and take it for a ride through the winter landscape. High-spirited pencil and watercolor illustrations tell the story without words, except for the exuberant cries of the sledders (“*Alley-oop!*”) and some strategically placed sound effects (e.g., the “*scrinch scrunch scrinch scrunch*” noise of someone walking in snow). MFS

Katz, Karen *The Babies on the Bus*

32 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-9011-6 \$14.99

(3) Katz brings her signature style to a favorite song, depicting a gaggle of diverse babies on a bus-bound adventure. Though the bus driver appears only marginally older than the passengers, everyone arrives safely at the children’s museum. The vibrant colors and patterns provide an engaging backdrop to the familiar text (with a few new additions, including a brief naptime). HRB

▲ Keats, Ezra Jack *The Snowy Day*

48 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01270-1 \$19.99

(2) New ed. (1962). This fiftieth-anniversary edition is appended with eight pages of background material about the 1963 Caldecott Medal winner. Included are fascinating tidbits about the creation of both text and collage art, a letter to Keats from Langston Hughes (saying he wished he had grandchildren to give the book to), as well as photos of and quotes from Keats. Review 2/63. JMB

King, Stephen Michael *You: A Story of Love and Friendship*

32 pp. Greenwillow ISBN 978-0-06-206014-3 \$14.99

(3) “The world is colored with big things, / small things, / and all sorts of things. / But the most colorful part of my world is . . . / YOU.” In lyrical, well-paced text, a dog pays

tribute to her friend, a bird. Spare, unfussy watercolor and ink illustrations with plenty of white space show the friends enjoying life in their “colorful,” “musical” world. PR

Kirk, Katie *Eli, No!*

32 pp. Abrams ISBN 978-0-8109-8964-1 \$14.95

(3) “Eli is a good dog, but sometimes bad.” Vibrant colors and bold patterns trace the happy-go-lucky antics of the rambunctious pup as he discovers the many entertaining ways he can get into trouble during the course of a typical day. Minimal text reinforces the fact that, despite his mischievous behavior and his owner’s frequent corrections, Eli knows he will always be loved. CAL

Kochan, Vera *What If Your Best Friend Were Blue?*

24 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5897-5 \$12.99

(4) Illustrated by Viviana Garofoli. An offstage narrator asks a child questions about skin color: “What if your best friend were blue?” “What if a policewoman were green?” The child’s answers (“Even if my best friend were blue, he’d still play soccer with me”) sound canned; the text amounts to what well-meaning adults want children to hear. Hospitable acrylics provide a more kid-friendly vehicle for the message. NB

▲ Lionni, Leo *Little Blue and Little Yellow*

42 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-87290-7 \$7.99

(2) New ed. (1959, McDowell). Published spring 2011. Lionni’s first picture book is now available in board-book format. The transfer is effortless; no pages or text are missing, nothing is cropped or cut off. Illustrated with bright colors and simple geometric shapes, Lionni’s minimalist story about the friendship between two different colored dots will appeal to the intended audience of very young children, fifty-plus years after its original publication. Review 2/60. CR

▲ Ljungkvist, Laura *Follow the Line to School*

32 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01226-8 \$16.99

(2) Readers tour Ljungkvist’s bustling digital collage illustrations with a continuous black line that wends its way through every page, taking the shape of words and various objects. The line snakes through the school’s front door and enters a colorful classroom while the text asks questions about the items pictured. There’s something of interest everywhere; even the cafeteria food looks yummy. Review 9/11. CMH

MacLachlan, Patricia *Lala Salama: A Tanzanian Lullaby*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4747-6 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Elizabeth Zunon. MacLachlan imagines a Tanzanian woman singing to her baby as they go about their day together, babe secured in a “long colorful *kanga*” on Mother’s back. The volume is not only lyrical and soothing, it’s also instructive about daily activities on the banks of Lake Tanganyika. The luminous color-saturated oil paintings are calm and lovely. MLB

▲ Mandel, Peter *Jackhammer Sam*

40 pp. Roaring Brook ISBN 978-1-59643-034-1 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by David Catrow. Sam describes his work in bursts of rhymed couplets: “ATTA-RATTA-BATTA-BLAM, I’m the sidewalk blasting man!” As his tall tale grows, Sam’s jackhammering goes from stopping traffic to drilling a giant’s tooth and draining the Milky Way. Mandel’s text, punctuated by onomatopoeia and nonsense words, is as loud and brash as Catrow’s cartoon-style illustrations or, for that matter, a jackhammer. Review 11/11. KTH

Manushkin, Fran *The Belly Book*

32 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-64958-6 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Dan Yaccarino. “Looking closer, if you squint, / you can see a little lint.” This fitting follow-up to Manushkin’s *The Tushy Book* is part anatomy lesson, part self-esteem builder, part riotous joyride. That last attribute is driven by Yaccarino, whose fearless color choices and no-frills renditions of humans, pets, and other creatures couldn’t be a better match for this content. NB

▲ Martin, Bill, Jr *Ten Little Caterpillars*

40 pp. Simon/Beach Lane ISBN 978-1-4424-3385-4 \$17.99

(2) Illustrated by Lois Ehlert. This counting book showcases ten members of the Lepidoptera order, mostly in lush settings that incorporate and label the flora and fauna of their habitats. The tenth caterpillar (a tiger swallow tail) becomes a chrysalis before maturing into a beautiful butterfly. Martin’s gentle rhyme provides quiet background for Ehlert’s vibrant illustrations. Back matter lists each species of caterpillar shown. Review 9/11. BC

McBratney, Sam *Guess How Much I Love You: The Pop-Up Edition*

16 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5378-1 \$19.99

(4) Illustrated by Anita Jeram. Paper Engineering by Corina Fletcher. New ed. (1998). The original text of this popular sentimental picture book is paired with pop-up illustrations. The resulting gift book retains the feel of the original. Large flaps reveal Big Nutbrown Hare reaching up to the sky or swinging Little Nutbrown Hare up off the pages of the book. MVK

McCue, Lisa *Quiet Bunny and Noisy Puppy*

32 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-8559-7 \$14.95

(4) In wintertime, with all his forest friends hibernating, Quiet Bunny wonders who will play with him. Suddenly, “Arf arf arf,” Noisy Puppy appears. The two seem to be totally different; soft-focus pictures of the fluffy-looking critters illustrate their dissimilar styles of playing. In spite of this, they can be best friends. There’s nothing new in the message, but the details are reassuring. PR

Meadows, Michelle *Traffic Pups*

32 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-2485-2 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Dan Andreasen. The creators of *Pilot Pups* reunite for another pairing: police puppies and motorcycles. Two canine motorcycle cops zoom around busting rule-

breaking animal drivers: “Red-light runner / on the loose. / Captain Dog says, / ‘CATCH THAT GOOSE!’” Andreasen’s friendly oils are well suited to depict the book’s (stuffed) animal cast. NB

Melling, David *Don’t Worry, Douglas!*

32 pp. Tiger Tales ISBN 978-1-58925-106-9 \$12.95

(4) When bear Douglas’s father gives him a woolly knit hat, Douglas enthusiastically rushes outside to play. Alas, the tassel snags and the hat unravels, turning it into “one long string of spaghetti.” His friends offer ideas for the string, but Douglas worries about his father’s reaction (spoiler: he’s not mad). Jaunty illustrations help bolster the slim story line. PR

Meltzer, Lynn *The Construction Crew*

40 pp. Holt/Ottaviano ISBN 978-0-8050-8884-7 \$14.99

(3) Illustrated by Carrie Eko-Burgess. A construction crew knocks down a building, then builds a new house from the ground up. In a rhyming text that reads like one big cheer for all things construction, each spread introduces the next vehicle or tool used in the process. The vibrant digital art will captivate young truck fanatics, and the recurring “What do we need?” chant is irresistible. SRA

Merlin, Christophe *Under the Hood*

14 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5535-8 \$14.99

(4) “Welcome to my garage! My car needs to be fixed, and I need help.” Mr. Bear’s salutation welcomes readers to this lift-the-flap fix-it extravaganza. The clever paper engineering features flaps-within-flaps, which will delight young tinkerers. That’s good because there’s not much story here: Bear fixes his car only to have it break down again. KF

▲ Milgrim, David *Eddie Gets Ready for School*

32 pp. Scholastic/Cartwheel ISBN 978-0-545-27329-9 \$8.99

(2) First on Eddie’s “checklist for getting ready all by myself”? “Wake up,” of course, but it’s Eddie who’s waking his parents—with a megaphone. “Wash up” (scuba mask required) is followed by “get dressed” (cape and under-wear-on-head helmet). Eddie’s proud determination is economically conveyed in Milgrim’s simple cartoon drawings. Kids for whom the morning routine is a chore will enjoy Eddie’s antics. Review 7/11. JMB

Moore, Tim *Must Be Santa*

32 pp. Golden ISBN 978-0-375-86853-5 \$8.99

(4) Illustrated by Pete Whitehead. Based on the titular Christmas song’s lyrics, this slight book portrays a down-the-chimney visit to a boy and girl. Digital-looking cartoon illustrations showcase Santa’s “cap on head, / suit that’s red. / Special night, / beard that’s white.” Fans of the popular song may enjoy the cheery visual depiction. CHS

Newman, Jeff *Hand Book*

40 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-5013-4 \$15.99

(3) “One hand. / Two hands. / Two hands clap. / Two hands slap” (a drum). So begins this minimalist meditation on hands, presented in spare, rhythmic text. The accompanying digitally composed, limited-color-palette art in ink, marker, and gouache has the carefully calculated looseness of a Jules Feiffer cartoon. NB

▲ Nolan, Dennis *Sea of Dreams*

40 pp. Roaring Brook/Porter ISBN 978-1-59643-470-7 \$16.99

(2) In this wordless book, a girl builds a sandcastle. As the tide surrounds it, eight tiny people, forced to flee, seek a new home. Nolan’s luscious double-page spreads capture all the qualities of an ocean setting, from crystal-clear blues of daytime to dark hues of the night sky. The story concludes in a cyclical fashion befitting its impermanent subject matter. Review 9/11. CR

Numeroff, Laura *If You Give a Dog a Donut*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray

ISBN 978-0-06-026683-7 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-06-026684-4 \$17.89

(4) Illustrated by Felicia Bond. The dog from *If You Give a Pig a Party* gets his own zany cause-and-effect plot. In a familiar pattern, the dog’s initial request (apple juice to go with his doughnut) comes full circle, though some of the links in the chain of events seem arbitrary. The bright illustrations match the text’s enthusiasm. BLS

Numeroff, Laura *What Puppies Do Best*

24 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-0-8118-6601-9 \$14.99

(3) Illustrated by Lynn Munsinger. In this inviting book for preschoolers (also a good choice for early readers), large-print sentences list all types of puppy behavior, both exasperating and endearing: “Puppies can play tug-of-war, / take a bath, / and get you all wet.” Lively illustrations with touches of gentle humor feature a variety of children and puppies interacting from morning to night. MFS

Parot, Annelore *Kokeshi Kimonos*

32 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-1-4521-0493-5 \$17.99

(5) Wooden dolls known as *kokeshi* are the cheery characters introducing a few Japanese customs and vocabulary (provided in both Japanese and romanized forms; there’s an unfortunate spelling error). Search-and-find games, lift-the-flaps, die cuts, and gatefolds add some interest to a handsomely illustrated book that isn’t particularly child-friendly (the text is cramped and the font’s not easy to read). JMB

Parr, Todd *The I’m Not Scared Book*

32 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-08445-1 \$9.99

(3) This catalog of children’s anxieties also includes ways to overcome them: “Sometimes I’m afraid of the dark. / I’m not scared if I have a night-light . . . / Sometimes I’m scared on my first day of school. / I’m not scared when I make new friends.” Parr’s trademark brightly colored and childlike illustrations, along with the straightforward text, provide a comfortable platform for discussing fears. RRW

▲ Patricelli, Leslie *Be Quiet, Mike!*

40 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4477-2 \$14.99

(2) Monkey Mike drums on any available surface. What does his family say? “BE QUIET, MIKE!” Purchasing a drum set is out of the question, so Mike decides to build his own. And when he’s finished, his family joins in with a rousing finale: “PLAY LOUDER, MIKE!” Patricelli’s full-bleed, brightly colored illustrations are as energetic as her rhythmic text. Review 9/11. BC

▲ Perlman, Willa *Good Night, World*

40 pp. Simon/Beach Lane ISBN 978-1-4424-0197-6 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Carolyn Fisher. A child sends good-night wishes to outer space, various ecosystems, and then home. Perlman’s lilting, rhythmic text has a reassuring predictability and is thoughtfully placed on the pages. Fisher’s beautifully textured mixed-media illustrations spill across the spreads, with impressionistic landscapes taking form through swathes of saturated color. An appended “Saying Good Night Around the World” spread features sixteen different languages. Review 9/11. ERG

Pfister, Marcus *Dazzle the Dinosaur*

24 pp. North-South ISBN 978-0-7358-4038-6 \$6.95

(5) New ed. (1994). A young dinosaur sets off with his sister to conquer the dreaded Dragonsaurus. Young dinosaur fans may appreciate the (confusing) bevy of real and imaginary dinosaur species, but the would-be climactic rescue scene is far from dazzling. This smaller-format “Tuff Books” edition features rounded corners and sturdy, glossy pages. ERG

Portis, Antoinette *Not a Box*

28 pp. HarperFestival ISBN 978-0-06-199442-5 \$7.99

(3) New ed. (2006). This board book, featuring strikingly simple cartoon illustrations, remains mostly intact. A bunny turns what looks like a box into a boat or a race car or a mountain. To escape the narrator’s insistence that it is a box, the bunny escapes in his “Not-a-Box” rocket ship. Review 1/07. KF

Portis, Antoinette *Princess Super Kitty*

40 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-182725-9 \$14.99

(3) A girl adapts her dress-up costume on the fly, fully embracing (and enforcing) the evolution of her kitty character until it’s time to transform once again—usually when one trait of the new character doesn’t fit what she wants to do. Accompanied by cheerful illustrations, this clever story celebrates imaginative play and the timeless power of the dress-up box. SRA

Quattlebaum, Mary *Jo MacDonald Saw a Pond*

32 pp. Dawn ISBN 978-1-58469-150-1 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-58469-151-8 \$8.95

(4) Illustrated by Laura J. Bryant. Quattlebaum’s text, set to “Old MacDonald,” acquaints children with the sights and sounds they might encounter around a pond: “And at that pond she saw a dragonfly . . . / With a *whir-whir* here / And a *whir-whir* there . . .” Bryant’s watercolors show a lit-

tle girl interacting with nature. Pictures and text are entirely bland but somewhat useful; appended notes tell more about “The Pond Community.” Reading list, websites. MLB

▲ Raschka, Chris *A Ball for Daisy*

32 pp. Random/Schwartz & Wade

ISBN 978-0-375-85861-1 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-95861-8 \$19.99

(1) Published spring 2011. In this wordless story, dog Daisy and her little-girl owner play catch. All goes well until another dog, joining in play, pops Daisy’s big red ball. Raschka communicates so much through Daisy’s posture, varying the line to echo her emotions. Background washes also reflect Daisy’s mood, from bright yellows to somber browns. A satisfying story noteworthy both for its artistry and child appeal. Review 9/11. KTH

▲ Rayner, Catherine *Solomon Crocodile*

32 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-38064-9 \$15.99

(2) A quiet morning on the river is disrupted by exuberant Solomon Crocodile. The other animals don’t hold back their irritation; he’s rebuffed by the frogs, dragonflies, and hippo: “GO AWAY! YOU’RE NOTHING BUT TROUBLE!” In Rayner’s lush illustrations, the peaceful riverbank scenes barely contain mischievous Solomon. The well-paced story will draw in little troublemakers who will cheer for Solomon’s eventual triumph. Review 11/11. KF

▲ Reidy, Jean *Light Up the Night*

40 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-2024-7 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Margaret Chodos-Irvine. A boy’s mother tucks him in, but he doesn’t go straight to sleep. Instead, he transforms his blanket into a rocket ship and soars off, into the heavens then back again. Soft assonant sounds soothe the cumulative rhyme that parallels nighttime routines through its repetition and structure. Double-page spreads of bright but not overpowering collages depict the child’s full-circle journey. Review 9/11. BC

Robinson, Fiona *What Animals Really Like*

24 pp. Abrams ISBN 978-0-8109-8976-4 \$15.95

(3) When the cows sing about digging and the warthogs about blowing bubbles, conductor Herbert Timbertooth threatens to end the performance of his new piece, “What Animals Like Most.” Realizing he made assumptions, he allows the animals to sing about their real interests and the show is saved. Cheerful and silly pen-and-ink illustrations, with two expansive gatefolds, enhance the story’s stereo-type-smashing message. RRW

▲ Rockwell, Anne *Apples and Pumpkins*

24 pp. Simon/Aladdin ISBN 978-1-4424-0350-5 \$14.99

(2) Illustrated by Lizzy Rockwell. New ed. (1989, Macmillan). A girl visits Comstock Farm with her parents to pick a bushel of apples and cut a pumpkin from the vine. At home they carve a jack-o’-lantern, then the girl goes trick-or-treating. Simple sentences and friendly art make this a perennial preschool favorite. This new edition sports a fresh cover and reset type. Review 11/89. BTM

Rylant, Cynthia *Brownie & Pearl Grab a Bite*

24 pp. Simon/Beach Lane ISBN 978-1-4169-8634-8 \$13.99

Rylant, Cynthia *Brownie & Pearl Hit the Hay*

24 pp. Simon/Beach Lane ISBN 978-1-4169-8635-5 \$13.99

(3) Illustrated by Brian Biggs. Best friends Brownie (a girl) and Pearl (a cat) take us through their lunchtime (*Bite*) and bedtime (*Hay*) routines. Rylant's spare, humorous texts leave plenty of room for Biggs's zoomed-in digital art, and viewers will love marking the similarities and differences in how Brownie and Pearl do everyday things. HRB

Sadler, Judy Ann *Reaching*

32 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-456-2 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Susan Mitchell. Sadler's rhymed text celebrates a baby's extended family circle of love. From Mama and Daddy to sibling, grandparents, great-grandmother, cousins, Auntie, Uncle, and a puppy, everyone "is reaching" for Baby, until Baby, now old enough, starts reaching for "everything new." Watercolors bolster the slight story, conveying the playful affection for Baby across the generations as everyone shares cuddles, books, and a picnic. SMG

Scheffler, Axel *Pip and Posy: The Little Puddle*

32 pp. Candlewick/Nosy Crow ISBN 978-0-7636-5878-6 \$12.99

Scheffler, Axel *Pip and Posy: The Super Scooter*

32 pp. Candlewick/Nosy Crow ISBN 978-0-7636-5877-9 \$12.99

(3) In *Puddle*, rabbit Pip wets his pants at his mouse friend Posy's house; she handles it respectfully ("It's OK, Pip . . . Everyone has accidents sometimes"). In *Scooter*, Pip must cope with Posy borrowing his scooter without asking. This promising new friendship-centered series includes art that nods at Rosemary Wells's work. NB

Schulman, Janet *10 Valentine Friends: A Holiday Counting Book*

32 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86967-9 \$8.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96967-6 \$11.99

(5) Illustrated by Linda Davick. Lighthearted but awkwardly rhymed text and splashy digital illustrations depict ten friends making cards for each other and setting up a Valentine's Day party (but whose house are they decorating?). The counting aspect is hard to follow since there are often more (or fewer) cards per spread than the text indicates. HRB

Sebe, Masayuki *Let's Count to 100!*

24 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-661-0 \$16.95

(3) "There are 100 mice! Count them all, starting with the brown ones." The accompanying expertly laid-out spread, featuring mice clustered by color, is the first of ten populous scenes, each starring a different subject (kids, ants, vehicles), designed to encourage counting. The *Where's Waldo?* crowd will derive particular pleasure from each spread's embedded challenge ("Where is the mouse with the red ribbon?"). NB

Shaskan, Stephen *A Dog Is a Dog*

32 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-0-8118-7896-8 \$14.99

(3) Jaunty rhyming text presents a variety of animal switcheroos: "A dog is a dog, unless it's a . . . / cat!" "A cat is a cat, unless it's a . . . / squid!" Meanwhile, spare digital illustrations show the animals removing costumes to reveal the (increasingly unlikely) next creature. It's a clever idea, humorously executed. CAL

Shea, Bob *Dinosaur vs. the Library*

40 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-3338-4 \$15.99

(3) "Roar! Roar! Roar!" cries the cheeky red dinosaur making his way to the library. Told to use his "inside roar," the easily excitable dino manages a dull roar. However, he soon meets his ultimate challenge—storytime—leading to the question: "Can Dinosaur not roar for a whole story?" Bold, expressive black lines and pops of color display the endearing dino's dilemma. CHS

▲ Silverman, Erica *The Hanukkah Hop!*

32 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-0604-9 \$12.99

(2) Illustrated by Steven D'Amico. On the last night of the holiday, extended family and friends gather in Rachel's streamer-festooned living room for her family's "Hanukkah Hop." The evening starts with storytelling and dreidel-spinning; arrival of the Mazel-Tones klezmer band ramps things up. Silverman's gleeful text has rhythm, and D'Amico's angular illustrations, with their circa-1950s flair, keep up the pace throughout this unabashedly joyful Hanukkah romp. Review 11/11. ERG

Smith, Danna *Pirate Nap: A Book of Colors*

40 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-57531-5 \$14.99

(3) Illustrated by Valeria Petrone. Two young brothers play pirates, cheerfully avoiding naps by looting, fighting a purple monster (a.k.a. baby sister), and seeking treasure. Vibrant digital gouache illustrations and a smooth-sailing rhyming text feature nine basic colors as the boys chase and plunder. As a concept book, colors play a distant second fiddle to imaginative play, but the energetic story has appeal. BTK

▲ Soltis, Sue *Nothing like a Puffin*

40 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-3617-3 \$15.99

(2) Illustrated by Bob Kolar. The narrator of this clever book declares with sturdy confidence that there's nothing like a puffin: not a ladder or a house or a newspaper . . . except that the last is "black and white"—like a puffin! What's more, jeans have two legs, just like a puffin; and so on. Bold yet muted hues nicely match the retro look of the digital art. Review 9/11. JMB

Srinivasan, Divya *Little Owl's Night*

32 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01295-4 \$16.99

(4) Although he enjoys watching his nocturnal forest friends come alive at night, Little Owl wants to know: "Mama . . . tell me again how the night ends." Her poetic

response predictably lulls him to sleep. The functional story is a showcase for the notable art, which has the crisp edges of cut paper but the creamy warmth of paintings. NB

Sturgis, Brenda Reeves *10 Turkeys in the Road*

32 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5847-0 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by David Slonim. Ten turkeys are causing a traffic jam; busy, colorful illustrations show the birds practicing their circus act and blocking the road. A farmer in his pickup truck honks, and “One turkey flew away.” His frustration mounts as he scares the animals off one by one. The buoyant countdown ends with a silly, satisfying twist when the turkeys take off in the farmer’s vehicle. PR

Suen, Anastasia *Road Work Ahead*

32 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01288-6 \$15.99

(4) Illustrated by Jannie Ho. A boy notices all the road-work, repairs, and beautification efforts going on out his window as his mother drives them to his grandmother’s house. The text’s rhymes, while bouncy, are nothing special (“People at work / here and there, / Fixing things up / everywhere”). The motion-filled art, busy but under control, features perpetually smiling characters. NB

▲ **Symes, Sally** *Yawn*

24 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5725-3 \$7.99

(2) Illustrated by Nick Sharratt. The first spread of this inviting board book shows rosy-cheeked baby Sean mid-yawn. Yawns are contagious: Sean transfers his to “a scruffy, fluffy . . . cat,” who passes hers along to “a cheeping, chirping . . . bird,” and so on. In each instance, a large die-cut offers a peek inside the character’s gaping maw. Sharratt’s compositions are effectively spare, and Symes’s jauntily rhymed text is pleasingly repetitive. Review 1/12. ERG

Taback, Simms *Simms Taback’s Farm Animals*

16 pp. Blue Apple ISBN 978-1-60905-078-8 \$12.99

(3) Children are given two clues to guess each of six animals—“I have a snout / I have a curly tail”—before the answer is revealed: “I’m a pig!” Each clue is printed on a page-size flap, first opening out, then up, then horizontally across to create a large square-shaped image; it’s a rewarding payoff. Thick black outlines and bright colors enhance the creative presentation. SJW

Thomas, Jan *Is Everyone Ready for Fun?*

40 pp. Simon/Beach Lane ISBN 978-1-4424-2364-0 \$12.99

(3) Three goofy cows jump on Chicken’s red sofa. He objects, so instead they decide to dance on it. Again he objects, and so on. Thomas delivers laughs, with the tantrum-throwing “adult” animal and the persistent silliness for silliness’s sake. The sofa—the spare cartoony illustrations’ only prop—is used to great effect. NB

Thomas, Jan *Pumpkin Trouble*

40 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-169284-0 \$9.99

(3) “This will be GREAT!” exclaims Duck when he finds a pumpkin. He excitedly begins carving a jack-o’-lantern but lands himself in trouble when he falls headfirst into the hollowed-out gourd. Pig and Mouse assume that their pumpkin-covered friend stumbling about is a “Pumpkin Monster,” and utter panic ensues. Thomas’s expressive, boldly colored illustrations will delight preschoolers—as will the clever ending. KEH

▲ **Thurlby, Paul** *Paul Thurlby’s Alphabet*

64 pp. Candlewick/Templar ISBN 978-0-7636-5565-5 \$16.99

(2) Thurlby brings his “retro-modern, mid-twentieth-century” look to an impressive alphabet book. Each left-hand page includes a capital and lowercase letter, while the right-hand page shows the letter incorporated into a picture. Thurlby largely succeeds in keeping a high standard of art, design, and child appeal. Review 9/11. LR

Verburg, Bonnie *The Kiss Box*

32 pp. Scholastic/Orchard ISBN 978-0-545-11284-0 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Henry Cole. Little Bear is worried because Mama Bear has to spend some time away from him. The two bears exchange boxes full of imaginary kisses as a reminder of how much they love each other. The ending may be a bit drawn-out, but the warm sentiments and clever resolution are reassuring. Expressive illustrations show the bears going about their daily activities. MFS

Walsh, Joanna *The Biggest Kiss*

32 pp. Simon/Wiseman ISBN 978-1-4424-2769-3 \$12.99

(4) Illustrated by Judi Abbot. Abbot’s deep-hued, soft-edged illustrations join Walsh’s playful text to explore the world of kisses, from “kisses on noses” to “kisses on toes,” frogs, dogs, elephants, and fish kisses. The rhythm falters at times, but it’s a quick read-aloud that will likely find an appreciative market among parents and grandparents, especially around Valentine’s Day. HRB

Ward, Jennifer *There Was an Odd Princess Who Swallowed a Pea*

32 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5822-7 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Lee Calderon. The titular “odd princess” goes on a royal eating spree, swallowing everything she comes across, from a pea, to a crown, a queen, and an entire castle. Peppy rhyming couplets introduce the princess’s newest snack before the cumulative list is rehashed, concluding each time with, “Then burped with glee.” Bright cartoonlike digital art tracks the silliness until the fitting happily-ever-after resolution. KEH

Wells, Rosemary *Love Waves*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4989-0 \$15.99

(4) When Mama and Daddy Rabbit take turns going to work, they send their bunny child “love waves” (shown in the pictures as shiny blue lines of foil). These waves deliver good thoughts from parents to child and back to parents across the miles. This sentimental paean to parental love is illustrated, with flair and skill, in rich hues. AK

Weninger, Brigitte *Happy Birthday, Davy!*

32 pp. North-South ISBN 978-0-7358-4026-3 \$6.95

(3) Illustrated by Eve Tharlet. New ed. (2000). Young rabbit Davy wishes for someone who’s always there to spend time with him. His grandparents surprise him on his birthday, bringing stories, games, and love. Soft watercolor and charcoal illustrations convey the warmth in the rabbit household. This smaller-format “Tuff Books” edition features rounded corners and sturdy, glossy pages. MG

White, Kathryn *When Will It Snow?*

32 pp. Good ISBN 978-1-56148-729-5 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Alison Edgson. Little Bear wants desperately to see snow, though he knows bears must hibernate all winter. He’s also worried that his friends Squirrel and Mole will forget about him while they’re having seasonal fun. He does finally sleep, and in springtime the pals have a happy reunion. Edgson’s soft, cuddly-looking animals are a natural fit with White’s simple, relatable text. sjw

Wright, Maureen *Sneeze, Big Bear, Sneeze!*

32 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5959-0 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Will Hillenbrand. One blustery fall day, Big Bear (*Sleep, Big Bear, Sleep!*) thinks his sneezes are causing seasonal changes (e.g., leaves falling from the trees, geese flying away). It’s really the wind, who doesn’t hesitate to set Big Bear straight: “I DO IT ALL—I’M THE AUTUMN BREEZE!” The clueless bear’s misunderstandings are endearing, and Hillenbrand’s autumnal mixed-media illustrations are reliably eye-pleasing. ERG

Wyatt, Valerie *Welcome to the World*

24 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-593-4 \$14.95

(3) Photographs by Lennette Newell. Wyatt welcomes babies by telling them what they can expect to see, hear, and feel as they grow up (“You will feel the sun on your skin and be warmed by it”). The photographs show close-ups of wide-eyed infants of different ethnicities with big smiles. Youngsters may recognize themselves (or their baby friends) in the pictures and be soothed by the text. sjw

Yamashita, Haruo *Seven Little Mice Go to School*

32 pp. North-South ISBN 978-0-7358-4012-6 \$16.95

Yamashita, Harou *Seven Little Mice Have Fun on the Ice*

32 pp. North-South ISBN 978-0-7358-4048-5 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Kazuo Iwamura. Seven little mice share adventures that require cooperation and creative problem solving. In *School*, they form a “Mouse Train” to travel to school. In *Ice*, they build a special sled to help their mother overcome her fear of slipping on the ice. Both stories end abruptly, but the charmingly detailed illustrations and engaging characters have lots of appeal. BTK

Yolen, Jane *Creepy Monsters, Sleepy Monsters: A Lullaby*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4201-3 \$14.99

(3) Illustrated by Kelly Murphy. Two youngsters fill their day with familiar school, play, and bedtime routines. Accompanying illustrations depict the not-so-familiar: bulging-eyed, horny-headed, worm-eating monsters. This playful lullaby will entertain bed-goers, as the adorable (in their own way) pair say their “monster prayers, / And into bed / But toss and turn / And bounce instead” before succumbing to sleep. CHS

▲ Yum, Hyewon *The Twins’ Blanket*

40 pp. Farrar/Foster ISBN 978-0-374-37972-8 \$16.99

(2) The twins in this story have always shared everything, including a special blanket. Now that they’re five, the blanket is too small. Which girl will get it? Yum neatly differentiates the sisters by giving each one her own side of the book; she also uses the gutter brilliantly. The text varies its direct narration effortlessly, pulling the book’s audience into the drama. Review 9/11. MVP



PICTURE BOOKS

Achebe, Chinua *How the Leopard Got His Claws*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4805-3 \$16.99

(4) With John Iroaganachi. Illustrated by Mary GrandPré. Achebe tells how the dog's greedy behavior sowed discord among the animals of the jungle, forever destroying their blissful existence and resulting in the leopard sprouting claws and the dog allying with Man. The tale, with its elements of fable, allegory, and just-so story, is unfocused. Luminous acrylic illustrations in jungle hues are eye-pleasing. **MLB**

▲ Agee, Jon *My Rhinoceros*

32 pp. Scholastic/di Capua ISBN 978-0-545-29441-6 \$16.95

(2) A kid gets a rhinoceros as a pet. A rhinoceros expert tells him that rhinos only do two tricks: pop balloons and poke holes in kites. During a robbery, the rhino pops and pokes and saves the day. Cartoonist Agee's wry, understated paintings and a relaxed, spacious page design—along with the text's tough-as-rhino-hide structure—provide great durability for multiple retellings. Review 11/11. **SE**

Alexander, Kwame *Acoustic Rooster and His Barnyard Band*

32 pp. Sleeping Bear ISBN 978-1-58536-688-0 \$15.95

(4) Illustrated by Tim Bowers. A bass-guitar-strumming rooster dreams that he'll win the annual Barnyard Talent Show; his jazz-playing bandmates and competitors include Thelonius Monkey, Mules Davis, Duck Ellington, and Ella Finchgerald. The hokey story and middling rhymes, accompanied by rambunctious art, are informed by a mind that knows this subject cold, as evidenced by Alexander's back-of-book jazz timeline, bios, and glossary. **NB**

Al-Ghani, K. I. *Ronnie Raven Recycles*

48 pp. Schiffer ISBN 978-0-7643-3840-3 \$16.99

(5) Illustrated by Haitham Al-Ghani. Ronnie Raven raids the trash to obtain colorful bags and wrappers to build a very original nest. His ingenious idea causes great trouble for the people of St. Richard's-by-the-Sea. The mother and son author-illustrator team have their environmental hearts in the right place, but the text of this modern-day fable is didactic and the cartoon pictures are amateurish. Learning activities are appended. **MG**

Alko, Selina *Every-Day Dress-Up*

32 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86092-8 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96092-5 \$19.99

(4) A girl who "used to only play princess" until her mom introduced her to "real, great women" shows off a week's worth of dress-up looks, from Amelia Earhart to Frida Kahlo. The book's cause is so noble that it's a drag the narrator's voice is so unconvincing. The illustrations go all out, right down to the girl's Kahlo-esque unibrow. Reading list. **NB**

Alrawi, Karim *The Mouse Who Saved Egypt*

24 pp. Crocodile ISBN 978-1-56656-856-2 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Bee Willey. In this takeoff of Aesop's "Lion and the Mouse," the part of the lion is played by an unnamed prince (historical events point to Thutmose IV). The prince frees a trapped mouse who promises to help him in the future. The synthetic-looking illustrations offer mixed results, as the humans don't fit well with the background scenery. **AMT**

Andersen, Hans Christian *The Nightingale*

32 pp. North-South ISBN 978-0-7358-4029-4 \$16.95

(3) Illustrated by Pirkko Vainio. When faced with death, the Chinese emperor finally realizes that the bird from the natural world sings far more beautifully than the artificial, jewel-encrusted music machine he has embraced. Richly

detailed watercolors bring the luxurious court to life, including the little kitchen maid who first finds the night-ingle. It's an attractive presentation of the well-known tale. **MC**

Anderson, Brian *The Prince's New Pet*

32 pp. Roaring Brook/Porter ISBN 978-1-59643-357-1 \$16.99

(4) After Queen Perylene dies, King Cerulean appoints a "royal color catcher" to strip every trace of color from the kingdom—a rule challenged by a birthday gift received by Prince Viridian. Anderson's black-and-white art, which is clearly indebted to the work of Edward Gorey and Tim Burton, enhances the too-obvious story. **NB**

Armand, Glenda *Love Twelve Miles Long*

32 pp. Lee ISBN 978-1-60060-245-0 \$17.95

(3) Illustrated by Colin Bootman. This poignant story, based on Frederick Douglass's childhood, tells how his mother, a slave, would walk twelve miles at night for a brief visit with her son. Soothing text describes how she overcomes the monotony and loneliness through songs (joyful and sad), the solace of prayer, and love. Emotional paintings capture moods, especially the joy of reunion that wipes away weariness. **HMS**

Armstrong, Matthew S. *Jane & Mizmow*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-117719-4 \$16.99

(3) This amiable book introduces Jane and her best friend Mizmow, a large, fluffy monster. Beginning with Mizmow's magical arrival, it chronicles the ups and downs of their friendship, including a quarrel and reconciliation. Small panel illustrations with generous white borders (some on wordless pages) zoom in on the interactions between the two characters, expanding the spare text in amusing ways. **MFS**

Arthur Christmas: The Movie Storybook

48 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-9241-0 \$9.95

(5) Adapted by Justine Fontes and Ron Fontes. Arthur Claus, Santa's son, takes over Santa's duty, delivering a bicycle to six-year-old Gwen. This picture book adaptation of the 2011 movie is essentially a competently illustrated summary; there's little dialogue and no attempt at evocative language. The book is too long to hold most readers' interest in a single sitting, and it's doubtful whether anyone will want to give it a second look. **BES**

Ashburn, Boni *I Had a Favorite Dress*

32 pp. Abrams ISBN 978-1-4197-0016-3 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Julia Denos. A girl wears her "favorite" dress on her favorite day, Tuesday. When she outgrows the dress, Mama, with a "SNIP, SNIP, sew, sew" makes a shirt for the girl's new favorite day, Wednesday. The garment's subsequent iterations are each cherished until just one scrap—used creatively—remains. Though Ashburn's rhymes occasionally falter, their lightness is mirrored by Denos's girly mixed-media illustrations. **KEH**

▲ **Ashman, Linda** *No Dogs Allowed!*

40 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-5837-9 \$14.95

(2) Illustrated by Kristin Sorra. Faced with a restaurant's "NO DOGS ALLOWED" sign, a boy and his dog sit at a fountain across the street. Soon there's a crowd of people with pets enjoying the hospitality of a nearby lemonade and ice cream stand. Sorra's digital art, filled with an outrageous assortment of animals, is both energetic and amusing, telling Ashman's short, nearly wordless story with heart. Review 11/11. **R. SMITH**

▲ **Ashman, Linda** *Samantha on a Roll*

40 pp. Farrar/Ferguson ISBN 978-0-374-36399-4 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Christine Davenier. Samantha tries out her new roller skates, at first gingerly, then more confidently, then *too* confidently, skating out the door. She hurtles down a hill, disrupting activities and gathering up objects as she goes. Davenier's effervescent pencil and watercolor illustrations are a match for Ashman's engaging light-as-air verse, propelling the action forward and conveying the madcap quality of the chaos. Review 11/11. **MVP**

Ashman, Linda *The Twelve Days of Christmas in Colorado*

32 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-7463-8 \$12.95

Illustrated by Dawn Beacon.

Nez, John Abbott *The Twelve Days of Christmas in Washington*

32 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-7068-5 \$12.95

Illustrated by John Abbott Nez.

(4) In each book, a kid visiting an out-of-state cousin receives state-specific gifts, one per day, during the twelve days of Christmas (both books include "skiers swooshing"). Chatty, overly explanatory letters written home to Mom and Dad expand the information; additional state facts are appended to the stories. The books' cheerful illustrations get ever more crowded as the presents accumulate. **ERG**

Baca, Ana *Tía's Tamales*

32 pp. New Mexico ISBN 978-0-8263-5026-8 \$16.95

(3) Illustrated by Noël Chilton. Published spring 2011. Luz's *abuela* arrives for a visit and to teach her granddaughter how to make tamales (recipe appended). While the two prepare the dish, Abuela tells the story of how Luz's great-grandfather learned to make tamales from a favorite aunt. The story, in both English and Spanish, is wordy, but the family connection comes through. Chilton's layered illustrations reflect the multigenerational dynamic. **Glos. ERG**

Badescu, Ramona *Pomelo Begins to Grow*

48 pp. Enchanted Lion ISBN 978-1-59270-111-7 \$16.95

(3) Illustrated by Benjamin Chaud. In this French import, a miniature elephant notices he's getting bigger and begins to ponder a variety of questions about the nature of growth and growing up. The odd little elephant and his fellow garden inhabitants, as shown in the large, spacious illus-

trations, have great child appeal. Some of Pomelo's more abstract meditations may spark discussion (or go over readers' heads). MFS

Baeten, Lieve *Happy Birthday, Little Witch!*

32 pp. North-South ISBN 978-0-7358-4043-0 \$16.95

(3) When Lizzy the Little Witch returns home from the bakery with her birthday cake, her beloved cat is missing. So Lizzy heads back to town to search for her pet, not suspecting that all the other witches are brewing up a surprise. Baeten's illustrations include lots of eye-pleasing details. Readers will enjoy peeking through the lift-the-flap doors and searching for the cat in each spread. HRB

Bandy, Michael S., and Eric Stein *White Water*

40 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-3678-4 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Shadra Strickland. Young Michael didn't question much about his segregated life, but once he starts ("I just had to know what that white water tasted like") his mind opens to possibility: "Maybe everything I thought I couldn't do was just in my imagination." While message-laden, the simply told story is effective; the loosely rendered sepia-tinted illustrations evoke a past era. HMS

Banks, Kate *Max's Castle*

40 pp. Farrar/Foster ISBN 978-0-374-39919-1 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Boris Kulikov. Young Max (*Max's Words, Max's Dragon*) surprises and entertains his two older brothers by creating an ever-changing world of words with his alphabet blocks. Banks's text creates an adventure in anagrams while Kulikov follows along with his comic-action castle-themed landscapes. An entertaining ride for readers who can follow the wordplay. HRB

Bardhan-Quallen, Sudipta *Hampire!*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-114239-0 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Howard Fine. Despite the cloaked and fanged pig known to prowl the farm at night, Duck's rumbling tummy sends him out for a midnight snack. Fear builds as the rhyming text tells of Duck's escape from Hampire, concluding with a humorous vegetarian twist. Rich-hued illustrations set in deep-night blues add suspense to the silly barnyard tale. CHS

Bardhan-Quallen, Sudipta *The Worst Twelve Days of Christmas*

32 pp. Abrams/Amulet ISBN 978-1-4197-0033-0 \$15.95

(3) Illustrated by Ryan Wood. Joy's new baby brother is wrecking her Christmas: "7 flattened snowmen, / 6 shredded cards, / 5 shattered ornaments . . . and a stinky baby messing with the tree." However, baby Sam's exclamation of "Joy!" shifts her perspective: "7 rebuilt snowmen, / 6 cards' confetti . . . and a LOVELY baby stinking up the tree." Digitally enhanced illustrations humorously capture the growing pains of having a new family member. CHS

Barnett, Mac *Mustache!*

40 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-1671-4 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Kevin Cornell. Instead of fixing his kingdom's roads and playgrounds, vain and clueless King Duncan keeps presenting his people with cheesy art and banners bearing his self-satisfied likeness, upon which his royal subjects finally paint mustaches in retaliation. The plot escalates deliciously from there—and then fizzles out in an anticlimactic denouement. The caricaturish illustrations recall *Mad* magazine at its best. NB

Barrett, Mary Brigid *Shoebox Sam*

24 pp. Zonderkidz ISBN 978-0-310-71549-8 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Frank Morrison. On Saturdays, siblings Delia and Jesse help Shoebox Sam at his shop. They fetch coffee for customers, listen to Sam's stories, and learn from Sam's example that every person deserves to be treated with dignity. Barrett's worthy message comes through loud and clear; Morrison's lithe illustrations show a vibrant African American community. HMS

Barron, T. A. *Ghost Hands*

40 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-25083-5 \$18.99

(4) Illustrated by William Low. Barron has imagined an explanation for the Tehuelche artwork in the Patagonian "Cave of the Hands." The slight narrative tells of a boy anxious to participate in the annual hunt with his elders. He first gets into trouble, then proves his courage by helping another person. Low's expressive illustrations are suitably dramatic for Barron's tale (and sometimes portentous writing). MLB

Base, Graeme *The Jewel Fish of Karnak*

40 pp. Abrams ISBN 978-1-4197-0086-6 \$19.95

(4) After they're caught stealing, Ibis and Jackal are sent by the Cat Pharaoh to retrieve her Jewel Fish from the Crocodile Prince. Of course, things go wrong for these tricksters. Highly detailed illustrations include hieroglyphics that retell the wordy story and contain a hidden code (clues can be found on Base's website). KA

Bastin, Marjolein *Christmas with Vera*

32 pp. North-South ISBN 978-0-7358-4044-7 \$16.95

(4) In short chapters, mouse Vera prepares her house for Christmas. Directions are provided for many of her crafts including "marzipan snowballs," "Christmas dough ornaments," and "Christmas cracker" toys; this is the book's main draw as the story line fizzles. Tidy illustrations show woodland animals enjoying the season. PR

Bateman, Teresa *The Christmas Pups*

32 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-1160-2 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by John Kanzler. Three puppies abandoned by the roadside worry about their fate even after being put in a rescue shelter. Will all of the dogs find homes in time for Christmas? The bright illustrations don't do much more than reflect what's already in the sweet but simplistic text, though they do succeed in capturing the pups' liveliness and their emotions. BLS

Baum, L. Frank *The Wizard of Oz*

32 pp. North-South ISBN 978-0-7358-4042-3 \$19.95

(3) Illustrated by Lisbeth Zwerger. New ed. (1996). An edition of Baum's classic fantasy first published in 1996 is reissued in a slightly altered format. The illustrations, many of them full-page paintings, showcase Zwerger's distinctive quirky style in a way that fits the text. Libraries with the earlier edition need not replace it, but this is a successful re-imagining of a well-loved story. MVK

▲ **Beaumont, Karen** *Where's My T-R-U-C-K?*

32 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3222-3 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by David Catrow. "Tommy's not himself today. / He's lost his T-R-U-C-K!" When a boy's favorite truck goes missing, the whole household gets dragged into the drama. With their wild proportions and perspectives, Catrow's illustrations kick Beaumont's bouncy, rhyming text up a notch. Sharp-eyed viewers might guess who's responsible for the truck's disappearance before the mystery's solved, but knowing whodunit doesn't detract from the fun. Review 11/11. KF

Beck, Andrea *Pierre in the Air!*

32 pp. Orca ISBN 978-1-55469-032-9 \$19.95

(4) In Pierre Le Poof's third adventure, the golden-haired poodle flies to Paris with his owner, Miss Murphy, for a poodle show. In watercolor and pencil-crayon illustrations we see the intrepid canine escape his hotel, climb the Eiffel Tower, and parachute to safety after grabbing an errant umbrella. The slim but entertaining tale ends with an Australia trip in the offing. SMG

Beck, Glenn *The Snow Angel*

40 pp. Simon/Aladdin/Mercury ISBN 978-1-4424-4448-5 \$17.99

(6) With Nicole Baart. Illustrated by Brandon Dorman. Two siblings resent having to eat lots of macaroni and cheese and having both parents work night shifts—the results of a bad economy. But then Nana teaches them about the magic of snow angels, which solves everything. Nothing here works, from the kids' preposterously quick change of heart to the wall-to-wall-cliché writing to the mannequin-like looks of the characters. NB

▲ **Becker, Bonny** *The Sniffles for Bear*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4756-8 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Kady MacDonald Denton. In this fourth Mouse and Bear book, Bear doesn't feel well. Mouse tries reading him a story, singing him a song, and playing the banjo; finally Mouse helps his melodramatic friend write his will. This comedic duo's exaggerated repartee continues to be funny; the soothing washes of color in Denton's delicately lined illustrations temper Bear's hysteria and Mouse's enthusiasm. Review 9/11. KF

Berenstain, Jan *The Berenstain Bears Say Please and Thank You*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-057437-6 \$12.99

(5) Illustrated by Mike Berenstain. This collection of eight brief stories relays the importance of manners—such as saying "I'm sorry" and "excuse me." Each four-page tale features a humdrum plot with a didactic lesson at the end. There is little character development and no depth. The bears' legions of fans will be drawn to the familiar illustrations and unsubtle stories. BLS

Bertrand, Diane Gonzales *The Park Our Town Built*

32 pp. Raven Tree ISBN 978-1-936299-14-0 \$16.95

Bertrand, Diane Gonzales *The Park Our Town Built / El parque que nuestro pueblo construyó*

32 pp. Raven Tree ISBN 978-1-936299-12-6 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Tanja Bauerle. Published spring 2011. Using a "House That Jack Built" structure, Bertrand describes how a town comes together to build a park. In the bilingual version, the building materials are first introduced in English then later repeated in Spanish. The conceit works well; a vocabulary page is appended in the bilingual edition. Stiff illustrations accompany the texts. TW

Biedrzycki, David *Me and My Dragon*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-58089-278-0 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-58089-279-7 \$7.95

(4) In a familiar scenario, a boy shares how he would care for a dragon ("I'd take him for a walk every day"), what they'd do together ("We could clear neighbors' driveways in the winter"), and unexpected benefits ("you don't need to worry about bullies"). The text effectively plays straight man to Biedrzycki's humorous but synthetic-looking digital illustrations. PIH

Biedrzycki, David *Santa's New Jet*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-58089-291-9 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-58089-292-6 \$7.95

(3) A broken old sleigh and out-of-shape reindeer prompt an elf to create the Super Santa Sleigh 3000 Jet. Its speed and strength show promise, but the onboard computer proves unreliable, leading Santa to call for a reindeer rescue. Glossy digital cartoons play up the humor in this modern Christmas tale. CHS

▲ **Blexbolex** *People*

208 pp. Enchanted Lion ISBN 978-1-59270-110-0 \$19.95

(2) Translated by Claudia Bedrick. Like Blexbolex's *Seasons*, this French import is another graphically distinguished compendium of two hundred or so creatively paired words and phrases in block capitals. The accompanying poster-style art features flat areas of color on near-white backgrounds enlivened by subtle stippling. Conceptually, this isn't as creatively organized; still, it makes a visually and intellectually stimulating companion. Review 9/11. JRL

▲ Bliss, Harry *Bailey*

32 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-23344-6 \$16.99

(2) Bailey loves school. Then again, he's the only dog at Champlain Elementary. Straightforward sentences tell a day-in-the-life story while pithy speech and thought bubbles bring on the giggles. Children will love watching Bailey read and write, put his own spin on arithmetic, and try to trade food at lunch. Most of the spreads have details that will be revealed upon rereading. Review 11/11. R. SMITH

Bloch, Serge *Snowed Under and Other Christmas Confusions*

32 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-7131-6 \$12.95

(4) In this story, about a boy's fear that Santa Claus will be deterred by a snowstorm, each page spotlights one idiom (he helped his sister "trim the tree . . ." / ". . . and deck the halls"). Cursory sketchlike illustrations of people commingle with what appear to be color photos reflecting each idiom's literal meaning. There's some fun to be had, but Peggy Parish handled the conceit better. NB

Bloomfield, Kevin *Mr. Biggs in the City*

32 pp. Raven Tree ISBN 978-1-936299-26-3 \$16.95

Bloomfield, Kevin *Mr. Biggs in the City / El Sr. Grande en la ciudad*

32 pp. Raven Tree ISBN 978-1-936299-24-9 \$16.95

(5) Published spring 2011. Mr. Biggs (a sasquatch) goes to the city looking for fun. Nothing he does is enjoyable until he's befriended by a group of children on the playground. The story line is one-note, and while Mr. Biggs, with his friendly smile and oversize teeth, is kind of cute, many of the illustrations showing "not-fun" activities just don't make sense. TW

Bonwill, Ann *Naughty Toes*32 pp. Tiger Tales ISBN 978-1-58925-103-8 \$15.95
PE ISBN 978-1-58925-430-5 \$7.95

(4) Illustrated by Teresa Murfin. Chloe's sister, Belinda, is a natural ballerina; Chloe, on the other hand, has "naughty toes" and a more flamboyant style. Mr. Tiempo, the piano player for the class, inspires Chloe to "follow her feet" in tap shoes. The loose illustrations capture the sisters' differences and the story's humor, but at times it's difficult to tell the characters apart. AK

▲ Bottner, Barbara *An Annoying ABC*32 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86708-8 \$17.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96708-5 \$20.99

(2) Illustrated by Michael Emberley. In this disorderly classroom, Adelaide annoys Bailey who blames Clyde, etc.; the pandemonium continues through Z, then Adelaide apologizes for starting it all. The students engage in refreshingly childlike actions, which add up to a whole lot of slapstick fun. Cartoon line art with watercolor expertly draws eyes across the pages while offering pictorial clues about what might happen next. Review 11/11. KTH

▲ Brett, Jan *Home for Christmas*

32 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-25653-0 \$17.99

(2) Rollo, a wild and misbehaving young troll, runs away from home. After months living with owls, bears, and moose, he realizes he fits in best with his family. Just in time for Christmas, Rollo returns home a changed troll. Brett's signature borders surround her detailed illustrations of Rollo's journey. A visually appealing Scandinavian holiday story designed for repeat visits. Review 11/11. CR

Bright, Paul *The Not-So-Scary Snorklum*

32 pp. Good ISBN 978-1-56148-728-8 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Jane Chapman. The horrible Snorklum monster is on his way home, late, as evening falls. He can't resist stopping to catch every animal he meets, to eat later for dinner. Energetic illustrations grow darker as time passes—but the animals grow bolder since they've heard that after sunset the Snorklum shrivels. With a satisfying "Pooffft!" the story ends and the animals escape. PR

Brokamp, Elizabeth *The Picky Little Witch*

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-58980-882-9 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Marsha Riti. On Halloween a witch mama prepares pre-trick-or-treat dinner for her ungrateful girl. "Yuck." "Gross." "Barf." Even picky eaters may find the little witch's brattiness too much. There's some humor in Mom's ingredient list ("Eye of newt, toe of sock, heel of boot, salted rock"), but readers' patience may be tested by the text's wordiness. The soft-focus green-tinged illustrations have some flair. ERG

Brown, Monica *Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match / Marisol McDonald no combina*

32 pp. Children's ISBN 978-0-89239-235-3 \$17.95

(3) Translated by Adriana Domínguez. Illustrated by Sara Palacios. Spirited text in English and Spanish describes the ways the mixed-race narrator "doesn't match," from clothing choice to physical appearance ("My cousin Tato . . . says, 'Marisol, your skin is brown like mine, but your hair is the color of carrots. You don't match!'"). Palacios's illustrations capture Marisol's exuberant style and wacky fashion sense, as does Domínguez's thoughtful Spanish translation of Brown's text. TW

Brown, Peter *You Will Be My Friend!*

40 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-07030-0 \$16.99

(3) Lucy, the overly enthusiastic, tutu-clad bear from *Children Make Terrible Pets* tries to make a new friend. Forcing herself upon each critter, she insists, "Start liking me RIGHT NOW." It's not until Lucy believes all hope is lost that a new pal appears. Playful mixed-media illustrations include comical characters and word balloons that extend the humor (e.g., Lucy to an egg: "I can wait"). CHS

Brown, Tricia *Musher's Night Before Christmas*

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-58980-843-0 \$16.99

(5) Illustrated by Debra Dubac. Rudolph's worn-out nose falls short of guiding Santa to his last stop, Nome, Alaska. This prompts Santa to enlist the help of musher Tom and his dogsled team. Keeping to the rhyme of "The Night Before Christmas" feels labored; facts about Alaska and dog racing enhance the story somewhat. The illustrations have traces of humor but they're amateurishly done. *Glos.* CHS

▲ **Bruel, Nick** *A Bad Kitty Christmas*

40 pp. Roaring Brook/Porter ISBN 978-1-59643-668-8 \$15.99

(2) In this "Night Before Christmas" parody, Bad Kitty ruins an entire alphabet's worth of Christmas presents then runs away from home. A kindly old lady takes Kitty in and shares her holiday spirit. Once reunited with her family, Kitty returns the favor in a satisfying conclusion. Bruel slyly adapts the familiar poetic structure; Kitty's over-the-top expressions make her bad behavior even funnier. *Review* 11/11. *KLB*

Bruins, David *Ninja Cowboy Bear Presents the Call of the Cowboy*

32 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-748-8 \$16.95

(3) Illustrated by Hilary Leung. Bear and Ninja's fun-loving friend Cowboy can be a very loud companion. When Cowboy's ruckus disturbs Bear's bird photography and Ninja's reading time, the pals are forced to "call it quits." In their third story, time apart for this trio again helps bring the members together. Computer-generated, anime-inspired illustrations capture the continuing balance of friendship. *CHS*

Bunting, Eve *Pirate Boy*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2321-7 \$16.95

(3) Illustrated by Julie Fortenberry. A boy who imagines himself sailing on a pirate ship wants to make sure Mom is standing by in case of trouble. The two have an amusing (and reassuring) discussion; for every problem the boy invents, the resourceful mom comes up with a solution, including a magic spray to shrink sea monsters. Childlike digital paintings echo the playful tone of the conversation. *MFS*

Buonanno, Graziella Pacini *Dancing on Grapes*

32 pp. Boyds ISBN 978-1-59078-833-2 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Gina Capaldi. Six-year-old Claudia wants to join "the big kids" in the yearly ritual of stomping the grapes, but she's afraid of heights. With wise and sympathetic advice from her grandmother, aunt, and mother, Claudia overcomes her fears and climbs the ladder to the roof of the cantina. Lush, occasionally awkward, illustrations help establish the Italian vineyard setting of this warm family story. *Glos.* *AK*

Burton, Linda *Pay Attention, Emily Brown!*

32 pp. Woodbine ISBN 978-1-60613-027-8 \$16.95

(5) Illustrated by Carl Burton. An offstage narrator (presumably a parent) entreats her daughter to pay her some attention: "You've looked at that sunbeam, / that bird, / and this bee . . . / Now, Emily Brown, would you please look at me?" The appended author's note describes her experience raising children who have "attention/behavioral deficits," providing some context for the un-kid-friendly perspective. Unconvincing faux-childlike pictures illustrate the singsongy rhymes. *ERG*

▲ **Buzzeo, Toni** *Lighthouse Christmas*

32 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3053-3 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Nancy Carpenter. Frances and her brother worry Santa won't find them on their isolated island home (their father is the lighthouse keeper). When Dad, venturing out into a nor'easter, needs Frances's help to keep the lighthouse lit, she begins to accept her situation. Homey, old-fashioned illustrations, in the cool colors of a wintry island, are appropriately weathered and windblown in this feel-good holiday story. *Review* 11/11. *MVP*

Campbell, Nicola I. *Grandpa's Girls*

32 pp. Groundwood ISBN 978-1-55498-084-0 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Kim LaFave. A girl describes the fun she has visiting her grandfather's farm with her cousins. The writing is acute and the art is lovely in its simplicity; the children's happiness is palpable throughout. The vignettes are based on the author's childhood, and the story line is most likely to appeal to nostalgic adults. *NB*

Carle, Eric *Eric Carle Classics*

112 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-3988-7 \$19.99

(3) This compendium includes three Carle picture books: *The Tiny Seed* (1970), a melancholy plant life cycle story; *Pancakes, Pancakes!* (1970), a cheerful breakfast tale of hard work rewarded; and *Walter the Baker* (1972), a folklore-style story about the invention of a fortuitous snack. *ERG*

Carrer, Chiara *Otto Carrotto*

24 pp. Eerdmans ISBN 978-0-8028-5393-6 \$15.99

(3) "Rabbits are strange!" reflects rabbit Otto. "They all have their own quirks." In an effort to do his part, Otto decides to eat—and think about—nothing but carrots, which leads to an unexpected development. The skewed story line will speak to similarly laser-focused readers. Creatively composed mixed-media illustrations comprising drawings, sketch art, and collage accompany the text. *NB*

Cars 2: The Essential Guide

48 pp. DK ISBN 978-0-7566-7504-2 \$12.99

(5) Text by Steve Bynghall. Published spring 2011. This guide for young *Cars 2* watchers is mostly plot summary of the movie and character profiles, illustrated with digital images and movie screen shots. Fans may enjoy revisiting the film, but the information is all straight from the movie, without any extra treats for loyal viewers. Younger readers may have difficulty with some of the vocabulary. *BES*

Casanova, Mary *Utterly Otterly Night*

40 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-7562-5 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Ard Hoyt. While frolicking in the snow one winter night, Little Otter spots a host of animals—including a pack of wolves—just in time to warn his family. Casanova spices up her text by playing with rhyme and invented words: “Moose towers. Little Otter cowers. Then—*chompity, whompity, STOMP*—off Moose clomps.” Hoyt’s pen-and-ink illustrations reflect the energy of the lively otters. MFS

▲ Castillo, Lauren *Melvin and the Boy*

40 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-8929-5 \$16.99

(2) A boy desperately wants a pet. His parents veto every suggestion until, remarkably, they approve his acquisition of a wild turtle from the park. Castillo’s expressive art sets the boy in a friendly, bustling cityscape and deftly conveys his longing for an animal friend, joy at achieving that goal, and realization that a wild animal shouldn’t be cooped up in an apartment. Review 9/11. DJF

Chabon, Michael *The Astonishing Secret of Awesome Man*40 pp. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray
ISBN 978-0-06-191462-1 \$17.99

(4) Illustrated by Jake Parker. Broad-shouldered, square-chinned Awesome Man has awesome powers and an awesome dog sidekick. But he still needs to relax and refuel after a hard day battling evil. There’s some satisfaction after the one-note story line reveals Awesome Man’s alter ego (a little boy). Rich-hued 1950s-comic-style art includes subtle clues to the story’s twist. RRW

Child, L. Maria *Over the River and Through the Wood: The New England Boy’s Song about Thanksgiving Day*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-2790-4 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Matt Tavares. Tavares’s illustrations bring Child’s 1844 poem to life, from the New England town at the beginning to Grandfather’s farmhouse at the end. Some details in the pictures, such as a bridge “over the river,” match the text, while others, such as a dog running alongside the sleigh, extend it thoughtfully. The nostalgic mood and the generally impressionistic style are offset by the characters’ detailed and mobile faces. FFB

Child, Lauren *My Best, Best Friend*

32 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3586-6 \$16.99

(3) Lola is worried when Lotta is charged with looking after new classmate Evie. Maybe swapping lunches and watching tadpoles won’t be their exclusive “best, best friend” rituals anymore. With Charlie’s help, Lola finds a unique way to remind Lotta of their special friendship. Young readers will relate to Lola’s best friend worries. Child’s wacky mixed-media art is up to its usual standard. RRW

Choldenko, Gennifer *A Giant Crush*

32 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-24352-3 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Melissa Sweet. Worried that Cami will reject him because he’s tall, bunny Jackson anonymously leaves her flowers and candy. The enormous Valentine’s Day card he makes tips her (and rival Carter Corey) off, to Cami’s delight. Sweet’s charming mixed-media illustrations featuring rabbit characters will draw readers into this lovey-dovey Valentine’s tale. RRW

Churchill, Ginger *Wild Rose’s Weaving*

32 pp. Tanglewood ISBN 978-1-933718-56-9 \$15.95

(3) Illustrated by Nicole Wong. Wild Rose runs through meadows and rivers, playing with sheep and frolicking in the wind and rain while her grandmother entreats her to learn to weave. When she finally does, she sees that Grandmother has put all of her own experiences into her weaving. Life and art become intertwined in this poetic (if purposeful) book, illustrated with gentle paintings that portray idyllic rural life. MG

Clark, Mary Higgins *The Magical Christmas Horse*

40 pp. Simon/Wiseman ISBN 978-1-4169-9478-7 \$17.99

(4) Illustrated by Wendell Minor. Arizona native Johnny, eight, and his family spend Christmas at his grandparents’ house in Connecticut. Johnny remembers riding an antique wooden rocking horse during his last visit and excitedly promises the toy to his little brother. But when they arrive the horse is nowhere to be found. Minor’s paintings add a distinctive sense of place to the wordy and sentimental story. SMG

Codell, Esmé Raji *The Basket Ball*

32 pp. Abrams ISBN 978-1-4197-0007-1 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Jennifer Plecas. When the boys won’t let Lulu play basketball, she issues a call around the world to host a grand “Basket Ball.” Teams of dressed-up girls in “jerseys sequined for the fete” and “high-top heels” shoot hoops all day. The rhyming text doesn’t always scan, but high energy carries the story. Ink, watercolor, and gouache illustrations marry girliness with jockishness. Glos. AK

Cohn, Scotti *Big Cat, Little Kitty*32 pp. Sylvan Dell ISBN 978-1-60718-124-8 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-60718-134-7 \$8.95

(4) Illustrated by Susan Detwiler. Published spring 2011. Tiger chases a gibbon up a tree; Tiggy chases a spider off her porch. Cheetah stakes out her savannah territory; little Chessie scares a mouse in her house. This slight book explores the similarities between wild cat and domestic “little kitty” behavior; the richly colored illustrations reinforce cats’ predatory nature, though the cutesy dialogue doesn’t. Additional activities are appended. FFB

▲ Cole, Brock *The Money We’ll Save*

32 pp. Farrar/Ferguson ISBN 978-0-374-35011-6 \$16.99

(1) Cole’s blithe illustrations set this entertaining story in nineteenth-century New York. A tiny flat is no place for a live turkey, but Pa brings one home to fatten up for Christ-

mas. It proves to be a noisy, scowling glutton; however, when Pa announces it's time to visit the butcher: "We can't eat Alfred!" shout the children. A brilliant solution satisfies everyone, including Alfred. Review 11/11. JMB

▲ Cole, Henry *The Littlest Evergreen*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Tegen ISBN 978-0-06-114619-0 \$16.99

(2) Cole's narrator, the littlest evergreen, is dug out of the earth late one autumn by men searching for Christmas trees. A young family purchases it and, after Christmas, replants the small pine, which thrives. Through a clear, engaging text and lush yet lively illustrations, Cole celebrates embracing that which makes us unique in a narrative that also focuses on respecting nature. Review 11/11. LSM

Colección de oro Jorge el curioso / A Treasury of Curious George

192 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-52310-1 \$11.99

(5) This bilingual collection features eight of the more recent Curious George books illustrated "in the style" of H. A. Rey. While the volume's design makes the read-aloud-ready Spanish translation accessible, the commercialization and branding of the little monkey doesn't do the story lines any favors. TW

Colón, Edie *Good-Bye, Havana! Hola, New York!*

32 pp. Simon/Wiseman ISBN 978-1-4424-0674-2 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Raúl Colón. In this story based on her childhood, Edie Colón describes leaving Cuba and coming to America to live in the Bronx. The text is an evocative depiction of the immigrant experience from a child's perspective. Raúl Colón's distinctive stippled watercolor and pencil illustrations perfectly convey the wonder of seeing New York for the first time and the joy of family reunited. TW

▲ Compestine, Ying Chang *Crouching Tiger*

40 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4642-4 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Yan Nascimbene. Vinson is his American name, but his grandfather, visiting from China, calls him by his Chinese name, Ming Da. Grandpa teaches his impatient grandson the slow, careful exercises of tai chi, and eventually he and Ming Da play a pivotal role in the Chinese New Year parade. Realistic, luminous watercolor illustrations show the family's balance of the traditional and the modern. Review 1/12. R. SMITH

Connick, Harry, Jr. *The Happy Elf*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-128879-1 \$17.99

(5) Illustrated by Dan Andreasen. The entire town of Bluesville is on Santa's naughty list. Irrepressibly happy elf Eubie defies Santa's rules to show the townspeople that love, togetherness, and goodwill are what make a happy Christmas. That's Connick's goal, too, and he attempts it through preachy text and a Christmas music CD (included). Andreasen's figures, with their doll-like faces, are cute but vapid. RRW

Cook, Lisa Broadie *Peanut Butter and Homework Sandwiches*

32 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-24533-6 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Jack E. Davis. All week long, Martin MacGregor disappoints the substitute teacher with his far-fetched homework excuses—which just happen to be true. Cartoon-style illustrations play up the exaggerated humor of the drawn-out story. When Martin's regular teacher returns, along with his pet tarantula, so does Martin's enthusiasm for school and homework. RRW

Cox, Judy *Haunted House, Haunted Mouse*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2315-6 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Jeffrey Ebbeler. In the third book featuring Mouse in a holiday-themed story, the adventurous rodent finds himself in a jostling sack of Halloween candy carried by a "little bitty ghost." Large-scale illustrations picture the chaotic journey through rain and thunder and a spooky house until he returns home. The cluttered, dark-hued illustrations, while creatively composed, can be difficult to discern. SMC

Crane, Carol *The Christmas Tree Ship*

32 pp. Sleeping Bear ISBN 978-1-58536-285-1 \$15.95

(4) Illustrated by Chris Ellison. A grandfather tells his grandchildren about a ship that carried Christmas trees across Lake Michigan until it sank in a storm. The captain's wife, the children learn, continues the tradition of bringing trees by boat to Chicago. The sentimental story is illustrated with soft, old-fashioned paintings for strong adult appeal; the whole has less attraction for child readers. MVK

Crimi, Carolyn *Rock 'n' Roll Mole*

32 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3166-0 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Lynn Munsinger. Confident offstage, Mole dreams of becoming a rock star. But a terrible case of stage fright keeps him from performing in his friend Pig's talent show. When a broken iPod jeopardizes Pig's own dance number, Mole overcomes his fear to help his friend and "rock the house." Munsinger's illustrations add humor to the easily resolved story. RRW

Cronin, Doreen *M.O.M. (Mom Operating Manual)*

56 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4169-6150-5 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Laura Cornell. From "a brief historical overview" to malfunction trouble-shooting, this guide offers tips, rules, and advice for the care and maintenance of a mom. Readers may get a kick out of the text, which equates mothers with pets or household appliances, but the whole thing likely holds more appeal for adults in the know. Pen, ink, and watercolor illustrations evoke the rigors of motherhood. RRW

Crosby, Jeff *Wiener Wolf*

32 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-3983-6 \$15.99

(3) Wiener Dog's life with Granny is cozy and calm, bland and boring. Hitching a ride, he embarks on a wilderness adventure, joining a pack of wolves and becoming "Wiener

Wolf." He soon discovers that a little bit of excitement goes a long way. Crosby's tale of self-perception and stretching one's (short) legs is illustrated with realistic-looking illustrations that incorporate some humor. CAL

Cunnane, Kelly *Chirchir Is Singing*

40 pp. Random/Schwartz & Wade
ISBN 978-0-375-86198-7 \$17.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96198-4 \$20.99

(3) Illustrated by Jude Daly. In rural Kenya, Chirchir tries to help with each family member's chore. But she only hinders them—dropping the water bucket, ruining the chai tea, and spilling potatoes. Finally, Chirchir helps by singing to calm her crying baby brother. Cunnane's poetic text effectively incorporates both Kalenjin tribal and Swahili words. Daly's delicate figures, in vibrant clothing set against earthy background tones, add appeal. BTM

Curious George: Stories to Share

208 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-59529-0 \$10.99

(5) Be advised that this compendium includes eight of the latter-day stories about the curious monkey (i.e., done "in the style" of the Reys). Titles include: *Curious George and the Firefighters*, *Curious George's First Day of School*, and *Curious George Plants a Tree*. Other than filling out a George collection, there's not much point. Stick to the originals. ERG

Danneberg, Julie *The Big Test*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-58089-360-2 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-58089-361-9 \$6.95

(4) Illustrated by Judy Love. It gradually dawns on teacher Mrs. Hartwell that her test-preparation drills are freaking out the students, making her (not them) the one who ultimately learns a lesson. The text strains for a child's voice ("Double, triple, quadruple yuck"), the art for humor—but the story line shows that both author and illustrator respect kids. Maybe test-obsessed educators will take the hint. NB

Davis, Aubrey *Kishka for Koppel*

32 pp. Orca ISBN 978-1-55469-299-6 \$19.95

(4) Illustrated by Sheldon Cohen. This three-wishes tale speaks with a Yiddish accent. When Koppel the junkman finds an old meat-grinder, he is astonished that it will grant him three wishes. Although the wishes are wasted, the couple realizes they are lucky to have each other (and a delicious *kishka*). The text is wordy and the caricature illustrations go over the top, but there's some in-the-know humor. Glos. AK

Davis, David *The Twelve Days of Christmas—in Texas, That Is*

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-58980-924-6 \$16.99

(5) Illustrated by Candace Camling. Following the traditional "Twelve Days of Christmas" pattern, a young maiden is presented with typical Texas gifts by her "darlin'." Among the items are a mockingbird, silver spurs, oil wells, javelinas, and armadillos. Texans may respond to the zaniness in the text and illustrations; the amateurishness of both won't draw fans from other regions. LBC

Deacon, Alexis *A Place to Call Home*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5360-6 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Vivane Schwarz. Some hamster-like creatures have outgrown their junkyard birthplace, so they set off on a perilous and amusing search for a new home. The brave band sticks together to triumph over obstacles—such as a puddle—that are small for humans but large for them. Witty illustrations, including some comic panels and speech balloons, depict the journey from the inexperienced critters' point of view. MFS

de Beer, Hans *Little Polar Bear and the Submarine*

32 pp. North-South ISBN 978-0-7358-4030-0 \$16.95

(3) In his latest adventure, polar bear Lars rescues two smaller cubs from a submarine, with the promise that his parents will help them get home next spring. The story, with its nod to global warming, is child-friendly, with light suspense. The personified animals are affectionately drawn, and the submarine includes realistic details. Lars's bravado, fears, and need for help are handled well. FFB

de Brunhoff, Laurent *Babar's Celesteville Games*

48 pp. Abrams ISBN 978-1-4197-0006-4 \$18.95

(5) When Celesteville hosts an international athletic festival, Babar's daughter Flora, now grown, falls in love with an elephant from another country. Both sets of parents overcome their prejudices to support Flora's marriage to Cory. The illustrations (by de Brunhoff *files*) have their usual charm, but only the most devoted Babar fans will be interested in the wordy text's messages about love and cultural tolerance. MVK

de Haas, Rick *Peter and the Winter Sleepers*

32 pp. North-South ISBN 978-0-7358-4033-1 \$16.95

(3) After a colossal storm drops several feet of snow, a parade of animals arrives at Peter's lighthouse looking for shelter. All goes well until a fox falls under suspicion of having eaten Peter's pet gull. In this entertaining Dutch import, the unusual setting is a draw, and readers will enjoy spotting small animals in the attractive illustrations. MFS

De Kockere, Geert *Willy*

32 pp. Eerdmans ISBN 978-0-8028-5395-0 \$14.00

(4) Illustrated by Carll Cneut. Willy the elephant's thick legs, large size, and big ears are, the narrator explains, useful. So, the reader is told, if you have thick legs or a big rear end, remember Willy: "He had it all." Less a story than a self-esteem lesson, this Belgian import features well-paired offbeat illustrations and text. MVK

Demas, Corinne *Halloween Surprise*

32 pp. Walker ISBN 978-0-8027-8612-8 \$12.99

(3) Illustrated by R. W. Alley. It's almost trick-or-treat time and Lily can't decide what to be for Halloween. After several attempts she comes up with the perfect costume, revealed in a foldout spread at the end of the book. Demas's well-paced text matched with Alley's seasonal watercolor

and gouache illustrations showing endearing Lily and (spoiler alert) her humorous kittens make this an enjoyable holiday read. CR

Demas, Corinne *Pirates Go to School*

32 pp. Scholastic/Orchard ISBN 978-0-545-20629-7 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by John Manders. Rhyming text describes how pirates add up skulls in math class, swear on the playground (“Aargh!”), and attempt mutiny at school before settling down for storytime. Watercolor, gouache, and colored-pencil illustrations show the pirates as eager students who just can’t contain their enthusiasm. There’s humor to be found in the premise, but it’s a little less uproarious than advertised. SF

DePalma, Mary Newell *Uh-Oh!*

32 pp. Eerdmans ISBN 978-0-8028-5372-1 \$14.00

(3) A young dinosaur jumps on the couch, which disturbs a pillow that destroys the dino’s siblings’ building-block towers. With every subsequent move the chain reaction continues; no wonder “Uh-oh!” is practically the only text in this cheeky, inventive book. With her easy-to-follow storyboard panels, DePalma has us right where she wants us: rooting for the little catastrophe maker. NB

▲ dePaola, Tomie *Strega Nona’s Gift*

32 pp. Penguin/Paulsen ISBN 978-0-399-25649-3 \$16.99

(2) To mark Italy’s feast days, Strega Nona is busy cooking, as usual—and sorting out Big Anthony’s troubles, also as usual. From the Feast of San Nicola (December 6) to the Feast of Epiphany (January 6), Strega Nona’s Calabrian village celebrates the season. Glowing watercolors in warm Mediterranean colors capture the details of each feast day and of Big Anthony’s foibles. Review 11/11. MVP

deRubertis, Barbara *Sammy Skunk’s Super Sniffer*

32 pp. Kane Press LE ISBN 978-1-57565-352-5 \$22.60
PE ISBN 978-1-57565-344-0 \$7.95

deRubertis, Barbara *Tessa Tiger’s Temper Tantrum*

32 pp. Kane Press LE ISBN 978-1-57565-353-2 \$22.60
PE ISBN 978-1-57565-345-7 \$7.95

deRubertis, Barbara *Umma Ungka’s Unusual Umbrella*

32 pp. Kane Press LE ISBN 978-1-57565-354-9 \$22.60
PE ISBN 978-1-57565-346-4 \$7.95

deRubertis, Barbara *Victor Vicuna’s Volcano Vacation*

32 pp. Kane Press LE ISBN 978-1-57565-355-6 \$22.60
PE ISBN 978-1-57565-347-1 \$7.95

deRubertis, Barbara *Walter Warthog’s Wonderful Wagon*

32 pp. Kane Press LE ISBN 978-1-57565-356-3 \$22.60
PE ISBN 978-1-57565-348-8 \$7.95

deRubertis, Barbara *Xavier Ox’s Xylophone Experiment*

32 pp. Kane Press LE ISBN 978-1-57565-357-0 \$22.60
PE ISBN 978-1-57565-349-5 \$7.95

deRubertis, Barbara *Yoko Yak’s Yakety Yakking*

32 pp. Kane Press LE ISBN 978-1-57565-358-7 \$22.60
PE ISBN 978-1-57565-350-1 \$7.95

deRubertis, Barbara *Zachary Zebra’s Zippity Zooming*

32 pp. Kane Press LE ISBN 978-1-57565-359-4 \$22.60
PE ISBN 978-1-57565-351-8 \$7.95

(5) Illustrated by R. W. Alley. Animal Antics A to Z series. These last volumes in the series about twenty-six classmates and their various issues and adventures continue to be overly packed with words that include the feature letter. Forced vocabulary choices make for a distracting reading experience, but letter-sound overkill may possibly have some positive effect on students’ phonemic awareness. Tangential animal facts and phonics activities are appended. SRA

Desrosiers, Sylvie *Hocus Pocus*

32 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-577-4 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Rémy Simard. The rabbit from Mister Magic’s hat must resort to all sorts of trickery to outsmart the dog that stands between him and some delicious carrots. Wacky, expressive cartoon-style illustrations tell Rabbit and Dog’s (wordless) tale; parts of the story line may escape younger viewers. RRW

Devernay, Laëtitia *The Conductor*

72 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-1-4521-0491-1 \$18.95

(4) In this wordless book, a music conductor, from his perch atop a tall tree, awakens the leaves. They turn into birds and swirl across the pages, finally settling back as the conductor plants his baton like a seedling. The striking art invites readers to think about music, nature, and creativity, but the story has limited child appeal. MVK

Diggs, Taye *Chocolate Me!*

40 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-60326-7 \$16.99

(5) Illustrated by Shane W. Evans. An African American boy feels alienated from the other (white) kids in the neighborhood (not surprising given their bordering-on-racist comments). The boy’s mother helps him “look in the mirror and love what you see!” Evans does a good job channeling the boy’s emotions. However, the story is facile and its ending’s too quick and easy. No doubt well-intentioned, the volume misses the mark. HMS

DiPucchio, Kelly *Zombie in Love*

32 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4424-0270-9 \$12.99

(3) Illustrated by Scott Campbell. Lonely Mortimer the zombie tries hard to woo a sweetheart using chocolates (with worms), a heart (real), and a shiny ring (still on a finger). A unique personal ad—“If you like taking walks in the graveyard . . .”—builds tension as Mortimer waits for a match. Muted watercolor illustrations take the edge off the macabre by infusing humorous details throughout the zombie love story. CHS

Dockray, Tracy *The Lost and Found Pony*

48 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-59259-2 \$16.99

(3) When the pony narrating this heartwarming picture book is outgrown by his beloved girl, he's sold but finds a new home in a circus. When the circus is broken up years later, the pony faces auction again—but ends up with the girl (now grown) he's missed all this time. Warm illustrations expand on the emotions in the concise text. ALB

Downing, Johnette *Why the Oyster Has the Pearl*

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-4556-1460-8 \$16.99

(5) Illustrated by Bethany Hill. Downing creates a pour-quoi tale about a devious snake and a generous oyster who allows the snake to take jewel after jewel from a seemingly endless supply. It doesn't quite come together in the end. In Hill's illustrations, the swirling paintings are so full of gems and sea creatures that the eponymous oyster is difficult to discern. MG

Droyd, Ann *Goodnight iPad: A Parody for the Next Generation*

32 pp. Blue Rider ISBN 978-0-399-15856-8 \$14.95

(5) Adults may appreciate (or cringe at) this parody of Margaret Wise Brown's *Goodnight Moon* in which a grandmother forces everyone to shut off their electronics for a quiet night's sleep. Few children will care about the text's "three little Nooks with ten thousand books" or other techie gadgets that must all be silenced. Clear-eyed cartoons play up the electronic humor. MVK

Dunklee, Annika *My Name Is Elizabeth!*

24 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-560-6 \$14.95

(3) Illustrated by Matthew Forsythe. Elizabeth, who could be a poster child for self-esteem, vents about her irritation at friends, family members, and neighbors for shortening her name ("Yo, Liz, what's up?!"; "Hi, Beth!"). This artless slip of a book is note-perfect to the end. Forsythe's pictures—black and white with some orange-y red and powder blue—are retro-style but nevertheless his own. NB

▲ Dunrea, Olivier *A Christmas Tree for Pyn*

32 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-24506-0 \$16.99

(2) In this heartfelt tale, Little Pyn lives in a desolate cottage with her father, Oother, a gruff, unsentimental mountain man. Pyn wants a Christmas tree; determined, she sets out in a snowstorm to find one. Dunrea's simple pencil and gouache pictures depict the father-daughter pair's differences (both in size and demeanor) and, gradually, their quiet mutual affection. Review 11/11. KEH

Dylan, Bob *Blowin' in the Wind*

32 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-8002-8 \$17.95

(4) Illustrated by Jon J Muth. Muth offers thought-provoking illustrations for this famous song and the questions it poses about life, though its child appeal is doubtful. He suggests that the "answer blowin' in the wind" is written on paper airplanes gliding through the paintings (but read-

ers aren't privy to what's inscribed). An informative essay provides historical context and explains the song's relevance today. A CD is included. MFS

Emmett, Jonathan *The Princess and the Pig*

32 pp. Walker ISBN 978-0-8027-2334-5 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-8027-2335-2 \$17.89

(3) Illustrated by Poly Bernatene. A piglet is mistakenly switched for a newborn princess. Believing a fairy has transformed their daughter, the king and queen raise the pig as a princess while a poor, loving farmer raises the real princess. The story, with its references to other tales ("Sleeping Beauty," "Thumbelina," "The Frog Prince") and deliciously absurd turns, reminds readers that wealth and advantage don't equal self-worth. RRW

Engelbreit, Mary *Mary Engelbreit's Nutcracker*

40 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-088579-3 \$17.99

(5) The text of Engelbreit's version of the Hoffmann classic can be jerky and confusing; readers may think they've skipped a few pages by mistake. The illustrations are what Engelbreit fans will expect: bright and sweet, even during (lightly suspenseful) scenes. ERG

Ernst, Lisa Campbell *The Gingerbread Girl Goes Animal Crackers*

32 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42259-4 \$16.99

(3) In her second adventure, no sooner does the Gingerbread Girl greet her new animal cracker friends than they're "off to explore!" Catchy rhyme introduces each character as the story progresses toward its climax: the crackers run into a fox. Luckily, the Gingerbread Girl comes to their rescue, bringing a happy ending to the tale. Gingham backgrounds tone down the pictures of stampeding cookies. SJW

Errico, Daniel *The Journey of the Noble Gnarble*

32 pp. Emerald ISBN 978-1-934572-89-4 \$14.95

(5) Illustrated by Tiffany Turrill. The gnarble (a fish) dreams of swimming to the ocean's surface. His *Little Mermaid*-esque story is told in rhyming verse that frequently doesn't scan, even when Errico shoehorns in the names of additional fantastical sea creatures. Turrill's digital-looking cartoons, though garishly hued (and with some scary pointy teeth), offer some liveliness, but they can't revive the story. BES

Esbaum, Jill *Tom's Tweet*

32 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-85171-1 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-95171-8 \$19.99

(3) Illustrated by Dan Santat. Despite his tough-cat façade, feline Tom doesn't pounce when he finds a helpless baby bird; instead, he goes to great lengths to take care of it, grumbling loudly all the way. Esbaum's creative use of language and rhyme makes this comical book a pleasure to read. Santat's illustrations play up the humorous contrast between the scrawny bird and the beefy cat. MFS

Falkenstern, Lisa *A Dragon Moves In*

32 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5947-7 \$16.99

(4) When the dragon hatchling they bring home grows too big for their small cottage, Rabbit and Hedgehog solve the problem by building a bigger house: a castle. The thin plot serves only as a vehicle for the book's oil illustrations with fanciful elements calling to mind the strange world of Alice's Wonderland. RRW

Falwell, Cathryn *Gobble, Gobble*

32 pp. Dawn ISBN 978-1-58469-148-8 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-58469-149-5 \$8.95

(4) From spring through winter, young Jenny observes the wild turkeys in her yard. Expressive illustrations with the look of block prints show the toms and hens nesting, raising babies, roosting in trees, etc. The appended "Jenny's Journal" provides more information than the clunky rhyming text. Suggestions for activities and an animal-tracks guessing game conclude the book. PIH

Felix, Monique *The Rumor*

32 pp. Creative Editions ISBN 978-1-56846-219-6 \$16.99

(4) After rabbit Rupert hears that a wolf is coming, he alerts cat Cleo, and so on, until they get to wolf Wallace, who invites them into his home and . . . doesn't eat them. The story has vitality, but it's frustratingly unclear if Wallace is the wolf in question. Felix's boisterous illustrations make up for the child-repelling newspaper-clipping cover. NB

Ferguson, Sarah *Get Well Soon, Adam*

24 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-7401-0 \$7.95

Ferguson, Sarah *Healthy Food for Dylan*

24 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-7400-3 \$7.95

Ferguson, Sarah *Lauren's Moving Day*

24 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-7398-3 \$7.95

Ferguson, Sarah *Zach Gets Some Exercise*

24 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-7399-0 \$7.95

(5) Illustrated by Ian Cunliffe. Helping Hand Books series. These books written by the Duchess of York continue to suffer from ponderous prose, with messages that are laid on with a trowel; each subject has been treated with more wit and a defter touch by others. Cunliffe's cheerily colored but stiffly composed illustrations are well matched to the texts. "Ten Helpful Hints" for parents are appended to each story. MLB

Fisher, Colleen Murray *Miss Martin Is a Martian*

32 pp. Charlesbridge/Mackinac ISBN 978-1-934133-38-5 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-934133-39-2 \$7.95

(3) Illustrated by Jared Chapman. Convinced that his teacher, Miss Martin, is a Martian, Melvin Eugene Baxter records her extraterrestrial-type behavior (e.g., her super memory and brainwashing abilities) in his journal. After an act of kindness, he concludes that she's not a Martian after all but a "Superhero from Saturn." The pages, set up to look like Melvin's journal entries, feature humorous, childlike caricatures of his teacher. JB

▲ Fisher, Valorie *Everything I Need to Know Before I'm Five*

40 pp. Random/Schwartz & Wade

ISBN 978-0-375-86865-8 \$17.99

(2) This brightly colored, lively encyclopedia is a lot of fun for the youngest readers. Amusing photographs of elementary concepts (numbers, opposites, shapes, colors and color mixing, weather, and the alphabet) fill each well-laid-out spread. Though most four-year-olds don't know the words *sphere* or *cylinder* or how to mix colors, this book is just the one to introduce the concepts to them. Review 7/11. R. SMITH

Foggo, Cheryl *Dear Baobab*

24 pp. Second Story ISBN 978-1-897187-91-3 \$15.95

(4) Illustrated by Qin Leng. After his parents' death, Maiko moves from Africa to North America to live with his aunt and uncle. He misses his baobab tree but finds solace in a small spruce growing (too) close to his relatives' home. When his uncle decides to cut it down, Maiko runs away. The story is wordy but heartfelt. Expressive, uncluttered illustrations help convey emotion. PR

Franco, Betsy *Double Play!: Monkeying Around with Addition*

32 pp. Tricycle ISBN 978-1-58246-384-1 \$15.99

LE ISBN 978-1-58246-396-4 \$18.99

(3) Illustrated by Doug Cushman. During recess, monkey schoolkids Jack and Jill model the mathematical concept of doubling in various ways: with parts of their bodies ("2 knees + 2 knees = 4 knees"), with their friends ("3 kids + 3 kids = 6 kids"), etc. Franco's rhyming text presents the concept cleanly and engagingly. Cushman's assorted animals are child stand-ins, wearing human clothes and solving human arithmetic. NB

Fraser, Mary Ann *Heebie-Jeebie Jamboree*

40 pp. Boyds ISBN 978-1-59078-857-8 \$15.95

(4) Big sis Daphne and little brother Sam spend Halloween at a one-night-only jamboree. Textured backgrounds in the illustrations create eerie shadows, while the use of both cool and warm colors evokes a vibrantly spooky air. The text, at times cleverly ghoulish but mainly lackluster, plays second fiddle to the rich acrylic pictures. SJW

▲ Freedman, Deborah *Blue Chicken*

40 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01293-0 \$15.99

(2) An almost-finished watercolor picture of a farm is the setting for some fowl high jinks when one of the chickens pops out of the picture and upends the paint, covering herself and the picture in blue. The apologetic chicken then attempts to set things right. Metafiction fans will appreciate the sheer joy of this book that celebrates color and innocent mischief. Review 1/12. R. SMITH

Freymann-Weyr, Garret *French Ducks in Venice*

56 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4173-3 \$16.99

(5) Illustrated by Erin McGuire. In Venice, California, two duck siblings try to revive the spirit of dressmaker Polina after her movie-director beau leaves her. The story, though imaginative, is all over the place (*why* do the ducks think they're French?), and the wistful text, while lyrical, will prove head-scratching to kids. Slick digital illustrations recall stills from an animated movie. NB

Friedman, Laurie *Back-to-School Rules*

32 pp. Carolrhoda ISBN 978-0-7613-6070-4 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Teresa Murfin. From "do NOT show up late" to "do NOT do unto others," Percy Isaac Gifford offers his rules for success in school. Unfortunately, all the rules are for what not to do, so when he lists the last one, "don't forget to have lots of fun," it's hard to imagine what he means. Playful illustrations enhance the levity in the occasionally uneven rhyming text. RRW

Frisch, Aaron *The Lonely Pine*

32 pp. Creative Editions ISBN 978-1-56846-214-1 \$17.99

(4) Illustrated by Etienne Delessert. A pine tree in the Arctic north observes the seasons changing around it along with the animals that come and go. Frisch's text, while lyrical, takes itself too seriously in its earnestness. Delessert's illustrations are refreshingly subdued. A calendar, inexplicably from 1945 and with someone's scribbled appointments on it (a musical theater lover) tracks the seasons. ERG

Gal, Susan *Into the Outdoors*

40 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86958-7 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96958-4 \$19.99

(4) In this up-with-nature/preposition-learning concept book, a family of four camps in the woods overnight; a good time is had by all. Cheery, relaxed digital-collage and charcoal illustrations contain details of the forest and fields (the toddler showing his teddy bear to a black bear may horrify experienced campers). All of the text's prepositions are in a different-color type for a superfluous educational component. FFB

Gall, Chris *Substitute Creacher*

40 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-08915-9 \$16.99

(3) At first the story's misbehaving students don't flinch at the appearance of their substitute "creacher," a green multi-tentacled type who speaks in lugubrious rhyme. But when he shares the fates of former students that he punished for misdeeds, the kids start gulping and the cartoony art gets fiendish. The final twist of this teacher-creature story line earns an A-plus. NB

Garland, Michael *Oh, What a Christmas!*

40 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-24210-3 \$16.99

(4) Santa's all set to deliver the presents—but the reindeers' harness snaps, leaving him and the sleigh (sans reindeer) near a barn. No problem; Santa uses magic to hitch up cows, pigs, and sheep instead. After the problem is solved, the story fizzles. Some humor comes across in the exaggerated illustrations of the chubby, hapless farm animals. PR

Gay, Marie-Louise *Caramba and Henry*

40 pp. Groundwood ISBN 978-1-55498-097-0 \$17.95

(3) In this sequel to *Caramba*, the titular "only cat in the world who couldn't fly" is upset: his little brother runs him ragged and, worse, is learning how to fly (*Caramba*: "I thought he would be like me"). The path that leads to the siblings' final-page embrace is enchanting. Accompanying illustrations, in jubilant color combinations, exhibit Gay's light but sure touch. NB

George, Lucy M. *Back to School Tortoise*

24 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-0510-6 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Merel Eyckerman. With the close of summer comes school, and Tortoise is uneasy as he anticipates his first day. He thinks of all kinds of embarrassing problems. What if he falls down? Or if his classmates (a menagerie of smiling animals) are mean? On the other hand, what if school is fun? A clean palette and soft black lines reflect the spare, reassuring text's warmth. BC

Gibala-Broxholm, Scott *Maddie's Monster Dad*

40 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5846-3 \$16.99

(4) When Maddie's father is too busy to play with her, she busts open her "Build-a-Beast" kit and creates a monster dad (who's a dead ringer for Frankenstein's monster). The story is formulaic but offers insight into the way kids may feel about getting their parents' undivided attention. Gouache and pencil art makes plain that Maddie is a regular kid beneath her ghoulish costume. NB

Ginn, Jennifer *Lobsters on the Loose*

48 pp. Schiffer ISBN 978-0-7643-3826-7 \$16.99

(6) Illustrated by Eric T. Krackow. While at the grocery store with his mother, a boy is compelled by the personality-rich lobsters' pleas to free them from the seafood department tank. The creatures then make their way to the beach to be reunited with the boy who helped them. The text's agonizingly awkward rhyme and meter along with amateurish cartoon illustrations are cause to throw this one back. RRW

Gleeson, Libby *The Great Bear*

40 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5136-7 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Armin Greder. A circus bear must dance for crowds that often ill-treat her. Finally she rebels: she runs away (here the story becomes wordless) and climbs a pole that takes her to the sky, where, in a terrific turn, she becomes the constellation Ursa Major. Greder's blacks and browns capture the coldness of the medieval milieu and the townspeople's hearts. NB

Graham, Georgia *Where Wild Horses Run*

32 pp. Red Deer ISBN 978-0-88995-448-9 \$18.95

(4) Born into a band of wild horses, Brown Foal learns to run and escape predators. After twisting her leg in a stream, she's targeted by a cougar, until Gray Colt, an exiled bachelor stallion, appears (from nowhere) to drive the cougar off. The text can be melodramatic, and a few of the horse drawings look awkward, but there's some light excitement to the tale. ALB

Grandits, John *Ten Rules You Absolutely Must Not Break If You Want to Survive the School Bus*

32 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-618-78822-4 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Michael Allen Austin. Kyle's older brother gives him ten rules to endure the school bus ride (e.g., "Never make eye contact"). It turns out Kyle does just fine by (inadvertently) disobeying them. This spunky tale of self-reliance can be a little wordy. Austin's quasi-realistic, semi-grotesque style shows the theoretical bullies as ferocious beasts while the human characters have rubbery, blue-tinted faces. NB

Grogan, John *Trick or Treat, Marley!*

40 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-185755-3 \$17.99

(5) Illustrated by Richard Cowdrey. While his family gets ready for Halloween fun, pup Marley makes his usual mess: getting his head stuck in a pumpkin, destroying decorations, and eating all the candy. Yet by the end Marley is left home alone to hand out the goodies as the family goes off to trick-or-treat. The tired story line is marginally enhanced by well-executed (albeit generic-looking) illustrations. RRW

Gutman, Dan *The Day Roy Riegels Ran the Wrong Way*

32 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-494-8 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Kerry Talbott. A grandfather narrates the true story of Roy Riegels, the football player who ran the wrong way and cost his team the 1929 Rose Bowl championship. Digitally enhanced illustrations reflect the juxtaposition of past and present as Grandpa's story alternates with an old-time radio announcer's call of the game. An author's note reveals how "Wrong-Way Riegels" moved on from his famous mistake. CHS

Hague, Michael, and Kathleen Hague *Michael Hague's Treasury of Christmas Carols*

48 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-7812-4 \$9.95

(4) New ed. (1990, 1991, Holt). The texts of four traditional carols, without music, are bound in red flocking and illustrated with Hague's signature sentimental paintings. The material was originally published as four small stocking-stuffer books. It's all very festive, but this one volume offers little to attract any but Hague's devoted collectors. MVK

Hallowell, George, and Joan Holub *Wagons Ho!*

32 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-8612-9 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Lynne Avril. Two fictional girls who must move west to Oregon—Jenny, from 1846, whose family faces great hardship, and Katie, from today, whose biggest challenge is an annoying brother—present their experiences side by side, in a nifty comics-style format. The initially revelatory aspect of the book fizzles out somewhere on the Oregon Trail: like Jenny's move, this book takes ages. NB

Hänel, Wolfram *Merry Christmas, Mr. Snowman!*

32 pp. North-South ISBN 978-0-7358-4045-4 \$16.95

(3) Illustrated by Judith Rossell. On Christmas Day, mouse children Pip and Squeak build a snowman and sneak him inside the family's warm and cozy mountain house. That's not a good place for a snowman to be, so everyone ends up outside spreading Christmas cheer. This winsome European import, illustrated with playful drawings in subdued hues, is a nice alternative to the standard Santa Claus fare. SMG

Harper, Charise Mericle *Henry's Heart: A Boy, His Heart, and a New Best Friend*

40 pp. Holt/Ottaviano ISBN 978-0-8050-8989-9 \$16.99

(3) Factual information about hearts, particularly that of a boy named Henry, is presented with help from dialogue balloons: "Inside Henry's body, Henry's heart started beating at 112 beats a minute. 'Yay! I'm getting some exercise.'" The narrative arc explains why Henry's heart quickens and slows (among other reasons, he's "in love with a puppy"). Lots of jokes and visual puns populate Harper's cartoons. NB

Harper, Lee, Adapter *The Emperor's Cool Clothes*

32 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5948-4 \$16.99

(3) In this retelling of the Andersen classic, the emperor is a penguin, his foils are two seal brothers, and the climate is frigid, giving the titular "cool" two meanings. An author's note posits the timelessness of the story's concerns (vanity, excess); the slangy text and the illustrations, featuring modern-day gadgets and hip-hop garb, are all about today. NB

▲ Harris, John *Jingle Bells: How the Holiday Classic Came to Be*

32 pp. Peachtree ISBN 978-1-56145-590-4 \$16.95

(2) Illustrated by Adam Gustavson. Based on a true story, Harris's brisk text uses invented conversation to embellish the tale of songsmith John Lorn Pierpont. In 1850s Savannah, Georgia, the northern-born choir director longs for a snowy winter. Gustavson's accomplished paintings, realistic yet folksy, reveal small dramas not in the text. An author's note with photos at the end provides more information. Review 11/11. LR

Harris, Trudy *Say Something, Perico*

32 pp. Millbrook ISBN 978-0-7613-5231-0 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Cecilia Rébora. At the pet shop, parrot Perico, who speaks Spanish, is repeatedly misunderstood: when he says *agua*, a woman thinks he wants to go to the opera; *mal* results in a (disastrous) trip to the mall. Perico ultimately finds a home with a bilingual child. The humor can be a stretch, but cheerful illustrations ably reflect the confusion. TW

▲ Hassett, Ann, and John Hassett *Too Many Frogs!*

32 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-36299-1 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by John Hassett. No sooner has the plumber de-flooded Nana Quimby's cellar than frogs emerge . . . first ten, then twenty, thirty (count 'em), and more. For each escalation, children playing outside have a solution (e.g., put them in a goldfish bowl). The ultimate answer? Reflood the cellar. Delicious to look at—with its explosion of acrobatic frogs, primitivist-detail décor, and confectionery colors—and a treat to listen to. Review 7/11. B. BADER

Head, Mat *Warduff and the Corncob Caper*

32 pp. Andersen ISBN 978-0-7613-8095-5 \$16.95

(3) Word at the farm is that a fox is out to eat the animals, so the frightened critters enlist cat Warduff's help. Warduff thinks up—and everyone successfully executes—Operation Corncob. The story's crisp writing and humorous digital art (an image of the animals in a tower formation illustrates "they seemed a little tense") carry the day. NB

▲ Heller, Linda *How Dalia Put a Big Yellow Comforter Inside a Tiny Blue Box: And Other Wonders of Tzedakah*

32 pp. Tricycle ISBN 978-1-58246-378-0 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-1-58246-402-2 \$19.99

(2) Illustrated by Stacey Dressen McQueen. Dalia teaches her little brother, Yossi, about *tzedakah*, the Jewish custom of collecting money or otherwise supporting those in need. While tagging along on some special errands, Yossi realizes the satisfaction in helping others. Heller's text effectively gets across the idea of *tzedakah* without spelling things out too much. McQueen's rich-hued acrylic and oil pastel illustrations radiate warmth. Review 9/11. ERG

Henrichs, Wendy *When Anju Loved Being an Elephant*

32 pp. Sleeping Bear ISBN 978-1-58536-533-3 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by John Butler. This fictional account of fifty-year-old elephant Anju's transfer from zoo to animal sanctuary tacitly criticizes the confinement and use of wild animals for entertainment. The sentimental text, which incorporates information about real-life elephant behavior, is supported by soft-focus illustrations that play up emotions. "Elephant Facts" and "Ways You Can Help Elephants" are appended. FFB

Henry, Kristina *The Rat Tank*

40 pp. Schiffer ISBN 978-0-7643-3842-7 \$16.99

Henry, Kristina *The Turtle Tank*

32 pp. Schiffer ISBN 978-0-7643-3843-4 \$16.99

(5) Illustrated by Laura Ambler and Amanda Brown. Henry presents two tales of captive animals finding new meaning in their lives: the rat through friendship and the turtle through a change of scenery. Awkward vocabulary, weird sentence fragments, and convoluted sentence structure bog down the stories. Digital-looking illustrations, while unpolished, add some personality to the characters. PIH

Hilton, Perez *The Boy with Pink Hair*

32 pp. Penguin/Celebra ISBN 978-0-451-23420-9 \$17.99

(6) Illustrated by Jen Hill. The Boy with Pink Hair (inexplicably "born that way") is taught that eventually he'll discover his "difference makes a difference." Unrelated to hair, he also loves to cook (pink) food, which somehow saves the day when the school kitchen malfunctions. Uniqueness and acceptance *might* be themes, but they're completely buried beneath the nonsensical plot, clunky writing, and haphazard pink-heavy illustrations. KEH

Himmelman, John *Cows to the Rescue*

32 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-9249-3 \$16.99

(3) This third book featuring Farmer Greenstalk and his family naturally begins with trouble: the car won't start. Not to worry; six exuberant cows helpfully "rescue" the family, ensuring everyone has fun at the county fair. Watercolor and pencil illustrations provide the story's forward thrust (the cows virtually run right off the pages) and keep lively pace with the humorous text. SMG

Hodgkinson, Leigh *Introducing Limelight Larry*

32 pp. Tiger Tales ISBN 978-1-58925-102-1 \$15.95

(5) Peacock Larry hopes to be the exclusive star of this book, but his animal friends have other ideas. This meta-heavy offering oversells itself from the start and will exhaust readers with its dotty, blabbering cast and overly busy pages (including who knows how many fonts). Like Larry, the chunky, textured art calls out for attention; unlike Larry, it deserves it. NB

Hoffman, Don *Sparky the Fire Dog*

32 pp. Charlesbridge/Imagine ISBN 978-1-936140-62-6 \$7.95

(5) Illustrated by Todd Dakins. This narrative has dalmatian Sparky, for sixty years the "spokesdog" for the National Fire Protection Association, going from (animal) house to house teaching residents about fire safety. The book's value is as a teaching tool (as storytelling it's deadly dull). The accompanying illustrations are strangely mottled and amateur-looking. NB

Hoffman, Mary *Grace at Christmas*

32 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3577-4 \$17.99

(3) Illustrated by Cornelius Van Wright and Ying-Hwa Hu. Grace is excited for Christmas, “her favorite day of the year.” It’s usually just her, her mom, and her grandmother celebrating together, but this year they’re hosting friends of the family. Grace helps a girl (who’s her age) overcome sadness and homesickness by participating in the Nativity play. As usual, Grace’s warmth and creativity shine, all reflected in the accompanying illustrations. HMS

Hopkins, Lee Bennett *Full Moon and Star*

32 pp. Abrams ISBN 978-1-4197-0013-2 \$16.95

(3) Illustrated by Marcellus Hall. Kyle writes a play about a moon; Katie writes a play about the stars. The play they write together about both moon and stars is best. (All three short plays are included in the book.) Emergent readers may appreciate the basic vocabulary and the encouragement to keep writing. Muted illustrations with a retro-1950s feel support the simplicity of the message. SF

Ingis, Joanne F. *Diary of a Pet Turkey: Based on a True Story*

32 pp. Blue Apple ISBN 978-1-60905-091-7 \$11.99

(3) Illustrated by Binny. This diary (told from a pet turkey’s perspective) describes the animal’s domesticated life, from egg to egg-layer. Entertaining cartoon illustrations (including a well-labeled turkey diagram) accompany the touching, funny, and information-rich anecdotes about her upbringing. Turkey facts abound: sidebars that look like taped-on paper cover topics such as sounds, habitat, and diet. A small write-your-own pet diary is included. SRA

▲ James, Simon *George Flies South*

40 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5724-6 \$16.99

(2) Bird George isn’t interested in learning to fly. But while his mother is off getting worms, a gust of wind turns his stationary nest into a flying saucer. He’s flung into the air—then up to a skyscraper, where his only option is down unless he chooses to fly. James’s airy pen-and-ink style is the perfect foil for the cheerful, unflappable George. Review 11/11. R. SMITH

Jane, Pamela *Little Goblins Ten*32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-176798-2 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-06-176800-2 \$17.89

(3) Illustrated by Jane Manning. This Halloween version of the “Over in the Meadow” rhyme stars ghosts, zombies, witches, bats, and other spooky creatures. Within the rhyming and counting framework, young monsters are also instructed on how to behave: little werewolves howl, skeletons rattle, etc. Comical illustrations full of shading and texture provide warmth for these typically fearsome creatures. CR

Jarkins, Sheila *The Adventures of Marco Flamingo in the Jungle*

32 pp. Raven Tree ISBN 978-1-936299-22-5 \$16.95

Jarkins, Sheila *The Adventures of Marco Flamingo in the Jungle / Las aventuras de Marco Flamenco en la jungla*

32 pp. Raven Tree ISBN 978-1-936299-20-1 \$16.95

(5) Published spring 2011. On his birthday, Marco Flamingo gets an invitation to visit his friend, E. E. Elephant. After a storm at sea (irrelevant to the plot), Marco arrives in the jungle and meets all the animals. And that’s it. This barely passes for a story, in either English or Spanish. The illustrations just miss displaying enough character or charm to overcome the weak text. TW

Jeffers, Oliver *Stuck*

32 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-25737-7 \$16.99

(3) Floyd’s kite is stuck in a tree. He throws his shoe to knock the kite loose, setting off a humorously absurd chain of events. A random assortment of increasingly larger objects gets tossed up in his attempts to knock down the previous item. Jeffers’s spare illustrations have plenty of kid appeal, meshing nicely with the comical story line. CR

Johnson, Angela *Lottie Paris Lives Here*

32 pp. Simon ISBN 978-0-689-87377-5 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Scott M. Fischer. Lottie Paris, energetic, imaginative, and filled with positive self-worth, invites readers to share her joy in living. The text touches on moments with Papa Pete (whose boots she wears just for fun), dizzying rides on park swings, sloppy dog kisses, and finally a rest. No heavy thoughts here, just a fun-filled story of peace and warmth. Purple-heavy mixed-media illustrations capture Lottie’s ceaseless verve. HMS

Johnston, Lynn, and Beth Cruikshank *Farley and the Lost Bone*

32 pp. Andrews ISBN 978-1-4494-0306-5 \$14.99

(4) Published spring 2011. Farley the dog searches for his long-ago buried bone in the flower bed, under a train set, in the sandbox, and in a fort, succeeding only in making his human family mad. When he slinks off to his “Special Place” to escape their ire, he remembers where the bone is. The text is plodding, but goofy Farley’s predictable antics liven up the energetic illustrations. RRRW

Johnston, Tony *Levi Strauss Gets a Bright Idea: A Fairly Fabricated Story of a Pair of Pants*

32 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-15-206145-6 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Stacy Innerst. During the California gold rush, everyone’s pants disintegrated, giving Levi Strauss an idea that precipitated the “Great Pants Rush.” This semi-tall tale isn’t for biography seekers; an author’s note explains which story elements are tomfoolery, and the omniscient narrator capably wields regional color (“Yessir, all of California was mining in the vanilla”—i.e., naked). The cloudy-edged illustrations are paintings on, yes, denim. NB

Joyce, William *The Man in the Moon*

56 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4424-3041-9 \$17.99

(4) Guardians of Childhood series. An arduously constructed creation story for Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, etc., posits that the Man in the Moon (whose own biography takes up most of this volume) enlisted them to make life better for Earth's children. The neo-retro art is as extravagant as the text is belabored, but its sentimental lushness will appeal to Joyce's many fans. RS

Juan, Ana *The Pet Shop Revolution*

40 pp. Scholastic/Levine ISBN 978-0-545-12810-0 \$17.99

(4) When Mr. Walnut kidnaps her rabbit, Mina sneaks into his dreadful pet shop and liberates all the animals. Left by himself, nasty Mr. Walnut changes his ways and decides to create plush animals; his depressing pet shop becomes a cheerful toy store. Imaginative illustrations add amusing touches—such as Mr. Walnut's exaggerated bushy eyebrows—to this wordy but quirky and agreeably bizarre tale. MFS

Judge, Chris *The Lonely Beast*

32 pp. Andersen ISBN 978-0-7613-8097-9 \$16.95

(3) "There is only one Beast in each country . . . and they don't even know one another." A Lonely Beast sets off to find someone like him. In a series of humorous episodes, he hitches a ride on a whale, beautifies a park, becomes a media darling, etc. This original story is paired with illustrations recalling a large-scale Sunday comic strip. NB

▲ Juster, Norton *Neville*

32 pp. Random/Schwartz & Wade

ISBN 978-0-375-86765-1 \$17.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96765-8 \$20.99

(2) Illustrated by G. Brian Karas. A lonely boy stands at the end of his street and yells, "Neville!" Soon every kid in the neighborhood is adding his or her voice to the cry, even though no one knows who Neville is. Juster's clean narrative gives enough backstory to feel the protagonist's isolation, while Karas's art perfectly re-creates the sense of life on a suburban block. Review 9/11. KTH

Kann, Victoria *Pinkalicious: The Princess of Pink Treasury*

208 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-210236-2 \$19.99

(5) This volume includes two picture books (*Pinkalicious and the Pink Drink*, *Pinkalicious: Tickled Pink*) and three easy readers (*Pinkalicious: School Rules!*, *Pinkalicious: Pink Around the Rink*, *Pinkalicious: Pinkie Promise*) in addition to games and activities geared toward the cutesy character's girly-girl fans. That demographic may thrill to the collection; others will be less enthralled by the not-very-urgent conflicts and pink-heavy illustrations. ERG

Kargman, Jill, and Sadie Kargman *Pirates & Princesses*

32 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42229-7 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Christine Davenier. Ivy and Fletch have been besties since their diaper days. Preschool was child's play but kindergarten is "different," with girls and boys playing on opposite teams. Davenier's effortless sketchlike illustrations show the kids at recess. The authors' peppy text smoothly introduces the issue of gender at the playground. SJW

Kaufman, Jeanne *Young Henry and the Dragon*

32 pp. Shenanigan ISBN 978-1-934860-11-3 \$15.95

(4) Illustrated by Daria Tessler. Published spring 2011. A boy named Henry looking for fire entices a grumpy dragon to produce some for him. The way Henry manages it—by making the dragon laugh—provides some giggles for readers. A few stumbly rhymes detract from the narrative flow. Textured mixed-media illustrations show the budding comedian trying out his best material. (The dragon turns out to be a fan of physical comedy.) ERG

▲ Kay, Verla *Hornbooks and Inkwells*

32 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-23870-3 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by S. D. Schindler. A portrait of a mid-eighteenth-century one-room school is animated by the ongoing feud between brothers Peter and John Paul. Kay's text is minimal, consisting of staccato quatrains: "Girls' side, boys' side, / John in front. / Peter snickers, / 'Yer a runt!" Schindler's well-composed scenes evoke the period through the characters' dress, the school's minimal appurtenances, and students helping one another learn. Review 9/11. JRL

Ketteman, Helen *If Beaver Had a Fever*

32 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5951-4 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Kevin O'Malley. Little Bear asks Mama Bear, "If you were a doctor / in charge of a zoo / what would you do / if Gnu had the flu?" So begins a series of silly questions and answers in rhymed text that is both humorous and reassuring. Mixed-media illustrations star cartoon bears, with scribbly pictures by Little Bear given center stage on the pages. SMG

Kimmel, Eric A., Adapter *The Golem's Latkes*

40 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5904-0 \$17.99

(3) Illustrated by Aaron Jasinski. Rabbi Judah needs help preparing for Hanukkah, so he allows his housemaid to enlist the aid of the Golem. She doesn't follow the Rabbi's warnings, though, and the Golem gets out of control while making latkes. Kimmel's entertaining retelling was inspired by versions of the Golem legend and *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. Jasinski's acrylic illustrations show a creature that's both friendly and a little creepy. MJS

▲ Klassen, Jon *I Want My Hat Back*

40 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5598-3 \$15.99

(2) A bear has lost his red hat. He questions a fox, frog, rabbit, turtle, snake, and armadillo before giving up. “What’s the matter?” asks Deer, knocking free a recent memory (something that young readers are sure to have noticed) and leading the bear to a red-hot conclusion. Klassen’s animation and design skills are evident on every page of this sly, subversive tale. Review 11/11. R. SMITH

Kleven, Elisa *The Friendship Wish*

32 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42374-4 \$17.99

(3) New to the neighborhood, Farley, a golden-colored dog, is lonely. His attempts at friendship are spurned, but he does take comfort from a dream in which a sparkly angel delights him with pancakes, song, and dance. Inspired, the neighborhood animals re-create Farley’s dream experience, suggesting the beginning of lasting friendships. Playful mixed-media illustrations reflect the imaginative tale. SMG

Kling, Kevin *Big Little Brother*

48 pp. Minnesota/Borealis ISBN 978-0-87351-844-4 \$17.95

(4) Illustrated by Chris Monroe. The four-year-old narrator (who sounds much older) resents his younger brother for being the larger of the two—until the toddler protects him from a bully. Lots of the story’s humor (some adult-aimed) is implied rather than voiced. The illustrations have a shaky look that’s a good match for the rather high-strung narrator. NB

Koch, Ed, and Pat Koch Thaler *Eddie Shapes Up*

48 pp. Zagat ISBN 978-1-60478378-0 \$16.95

(5) Illustrated by Jonathan Hofer. Eddie, tired of being overweight, starts a diet and exercise regimen. The characters, who resemble cartoons in appearance and behavior, talk as if they’re reading a script (“Cookies can be a sometimes food”), and it’s laughable when getting-in-shape Eddie stops a runaway baby carriage. Still, the book could be helpful to some readers. NB

Kohuth, Jane *Estie the Mensch*

32 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86778-1 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96778-8 \$19.99

(3) Illustrated by Rosanne Litzinger. Antisocial Estie, overwhelmed by people, would rather imitate animals. As a result, everyone tells her to “be a mensch” (“that means be a person, Es”). During a trip to the zoo, Estie makes a friend by acting like a mensch (in this sense, a kind and selfless person). Colorful round-edged illustrations showing the feisty green-eyed redhead reflect Estie’s personal growth. AK

▲ Könnecke, Ole *Anton Can Do Magic*

32 pp. Gecko ISBN 978-1-877467-37-0 \$17.95

(2) Anton’s magic hat really can make things disappear, at least to Anton. The oversized orange turban falls over his eyes, leading him to believe he’s turned his friend into a bird. Superb interplay between the short declarative sen-

tences and the cartoon-style illustrations allows the true story to take place in the spaces between the words and pictures. Review 1/12. KTH

▲ KostECKI-Shaw, Jenny Sue *Same, Same but Different*

40 pp. Holt/Ottaviano ISBN 978-0-8050-8946-2 \$16.99

(2) In this joyful celebration of transcontinental pen-pal friendship, Kailash, from India, and Elliot, from the United States, exchange letters and drawings. The boys learn about each other’s families, abodes, schools, alphabets, and ways of greeting; simple repeated text makes the story easy to read. Brilliantly colored illustrations created with collage, acrylics, crayon, pencil, and tissue paper help highlight the two worlds. Review 11/11. R. SMITH

Kroll, Virginia *Mosquito*

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-58980-883-6 \$16.99

(5) Illustrated by Betsy LePlatt. An insouciant mosquito annoys various animals in turn, until she’s finally handed her comeuppance by a bat (in an illustration that’s rather terrifying). The text is repetitive; some onomatopoeia helps allay boredom. Soft illustrations in delicate hues clash with the bloodsucking expression on Mosquito’s face. A page of “Mosquito Facts” is appended. FFB

Krosoczka, Jarrett J. *Ollie: The Purple Elephant*

40 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86654-8 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96654-5 \$19.99

(3) When purple elephant Ollie comes to live with the McLaughlins, the family cat and their downstairs neighbor conspire to oust him. After being tricked into joining the circus, Ollie ends up right back where he belongs. The old-fashioned-seeming story benefits from its swift plotting, subtle humor, and bouncy acrylics. NB

Lachlan, Kieran *The Ballad of Nessie*

32 pp. Disney ISBN 978-1-4231-2218-0 \$14.99

(4) Illustrated by Andy Harkness. Published spring 2011. Based on a Disney animated short film, this is the tale of how sea monster Nessie is forced from her home by a mini-golf-course developer. This sad event leads to many tears, which results in formation of her own loch. It’s not much of a story, but Nessie’s pluck and the Scots-inflected rhymes are uplifting. The Disneyfied art is smooth, assured, and obviously made by pros. NB

LaCroix, Debbie Bernstein *It’s Almost Time*

32 pp. Kane/Miller ISBN 978-1-935279-85-3 \$14.99

(4) Illustrated by Sarah Chalek. Presenting a wide assortment of timepieces, this book begins with rhymed text—sometimes a bit forced—then moves to onomatopoeic descriptions of specific clocks (“Bzzzzz cries the buzzer clock angrily”). Humor comes through in the illustrations, which feature a cartoon horse wearing multiple watches and his blue jay pal. From grandfather clocks to cuckoos, it’s a pleasant, if somewhat pointless, catalog of timekeepers. FFB

LaFaye, A. *Walking Home to Rosie Lee*

32 pp. Cinco ISBN 978-1-933693-97-2 \$16.95

(3) Illustrated by Keith D. Shepherd. “War’s over. Government say we free.” A young boy, Gabe, searches for his mother, who was “sold . . . away from me.” Along the way he’s aided by other free black people. Just as he’s about to give up, his story, lyrically told, takes a joyous turn. Emotion-filled illustrations capture the intense focus of young Gabe. An author’s note is appended. HMS

Langdo, Bryan *Tornado Slim and the Magic Cowboy Hat*

32 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5962-0 \$17.99

(3) In this Western tall tale, Tornado Slim goes from poky cowboy to honored hero with the help of a magical hat and a mysterious letter. Langdo’s watercolor illustrations are filled with humorous details (e.g., a man dressed just in a barrel and cowboy boots) and his read-aloud-friendly text is sprinkled with cowboy lingo (“Better high-tail it outta here, stranger!”). LB

LaReau, Kara *Otto: The Boy Who Loved Cars*

32 pp. Roaring Brook/Porter ISBN 978-1-59643-484-4 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Scott Magoon. Otto loves cars. He eats “Wheelies” for breakfast, plays “Race Around the Playground,” and even counts Jeeps to fall asleep. When Otto somehow turns into a car, he realizes that reading, eating, and swinging are now impossible. Heeding Mom’s advice to “switch gears,” Otto finds a comfortable balance as a car-loving boy. Colorful and stylish illustrations play up the automobile obsession. CHS

▲ LaRochelle, David *The Haunted Hamburger and Other Ghostly Stories*

40 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42272-3 \$16.99

(1) Illustrated by Paul Meisel. Ghost siblings Franny and Frankie demand a story—a *scary* story—from Father Ghost before they’ll go to sleep. Of course, one bedtime story is never enough, and Father Ghost is persuaded to tell three. The book’s humor is freewheeling and perfectly calibrated for its audience; it should evoke both sniggers and belly laughs. Meisel’s illustrations have an exaggerated tongue-in-cheek goofiness. Review 9/11. MVP

Lehman-Wilzig, Tami, and Nicole Katzman *Nathan Blows Out the Hanukkah Candles*

32 pp. Kar-Ben LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6657-7 \$17.95
PE ISBN 978-0-7613-6658-4 \$7.95

(4) Illustrated by Jeremy Tugeau. Jacob’s autistic brother Nathan sometimes embarrasses and exasperates him (like when Nathan blows out the Hanukkah candles). However, Jacob stands up for his brother when a neighbor makes fun of him. The story is message-y; an unfortunate typo (“you’re brother”) is included. Textured illustrations reflect the tale’s holiday-themed warmth. AK

Lester, Helen *Wodney Wat’s Wobot*

32 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-36756-9 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Lynn Munsinger. Wodney Wat loves his new talking robot—it helps him pronounce his Rs. Then bullying classmate Camilla Capybara returns, making life miserable for Wodney and his friends. When the robot malfunctions and starts to roar (“like tigers . . . or grizzly bears . . . or lions”), Camilla skedaddles—again. With its humor, action-packed illustrations, and staunch defense of the underdog, this is a welcome sequel to *Hooway for Wodney Wat*. MVP

Lewis, Kevin *Not Inside This House!*

40 pp. Scholastic/Orchard ISBN 978-0-439-43981-7 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by David Ercolini. Livingstone’s mom forbids him from bringing bugs into the house. He lugs home progressively larger and more intrusive animals (mouse, pig, moose, etc.), until she’s only too happy to accommodate an insect. The book’s pacing is excellent, with the rhymes tumbling along (Livingstone, deliciously, doesn’t say a word throughout). Ercolini is especially good at showing the cringe-inducing damage leveled inside the house. NB

Lichtenheld, Tom, and Ezra Fields-Meyer *E-Mergency*

40 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-0-8118-7898-2 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Tom Lichtenheld. When *E* tumbles down the stairs, *O* is elected to fill in while his fellow vowel recuperates. What follows is mass confusion (“That’s it, *PORIOD*”; “I’m *OXCITOD*!!”) The joke is one note, but plenty of visual humor in the lively cartoon illustrations carry the story along until *E* goes home at “thE End.” BTK

Lindbergh, Reeve *Homer, the Library Cat*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-3448-3 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Anne Wilsdorf. Accustomed to peace and quiet, house cat Homer suddenly finds himself out on the street, bounding from post office to firehouse to train station until he discovers his owner reading aloud to children at the library. Watercolor and collage illustrations, alongside satisfying rhymed text, picture the feline’s erratic journey and his “purr-fect” new daytime haunt. SMG

Lindman, Maj *Flicka, Ricka, Dicka and Their New Skates*

32 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-2496-1 \$14.99

(4) Reissue (1950). This reissue is one of an extensive series about Swedish triplets Flicka, Ricka, and Dicka. While trying out their new skates, the resourceful sisters rescue a boy who has fallen through the ice. Despite this excitement, the narrative sounds wordy and stilted. Some of the illustrations look stiff, though the identical girls have a certain appeal. Paper dolls are included. MFS

Litwin, Eric *Pete the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes*

40 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-191024-1 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-06-191025-8 \$17.89

(4) Illustrated by James Dean. Guitar-playing Pete of *Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes* goes to school, introducing readers to the library, the lunchroom, the playground, etc. Without musical accompaniment the text can be numbing (“I’m reading in my school shoes, / I’m reading in my school shoes, / I’m reading in my school shoes”). The joyful art bursting with color rocks, though. NB

Lodding, Linda Ravin *The Busy Life of Ernestine Buckmeister*

32 pp. Flashlight ISBN 978-0-9799746-9-4 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Suzanne Beaky. One day overscheduled Ernestine bails on her lessons to do something outrageous: play. The book has a capital M message but also lots of heart. Plus, there’s amusement in Lodding’s text (e.g., a yodeling teacher named “Little Old Lady Hoo”) and in Beaky’s acrylics (e.g., Ernestine’s fully clothed mother holds up a sign underwater asking Ernestine’s swimming instructor where her daughter is). NB

London, Jonathan *Froggy Builds a Tree House*

32 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01222-0 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Frank Remkiewicz. Froggy enlists the help of his animal friends to build a tree house where they can play cards and eat pizza. Frogilina wants to help, but it’s strictly “No Girls Allowed!” After repeatedly saving the day, Frogilina is allowed into the club. Sound effects throughout the story, along with Remkiewicz’s dependably lighthearted illustrations, make this a good choice for a read-aloud. JB

Long, Ethan *The Book That Zack Wrote*

40 pp. Blue Apple ISBN 978-1-60905-060-3 \$11.99

(4) “This is the pig that inked in the book that Zack wrote.” In this spirited cumulative tale, characters appear as if drawn by a child’s hand in a composition book. (A blank mini composition book for readers accompanies this title.) The final twist is funny but dark; readers who would appreciate it might find the leading-up-to-it repetition babyish. NB

Long, Laurel, Illustrator *The Twelve Days of Christmas*

32 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3357-2 \$16.99

(3) The traditional Christmas carol is illustrated with elaborate paintings as sumptuous as the gifts in the song. Each spread includes, hidden in the foliage and ribbons, all the items listed in previous verses. A helpful key to the hidden objects is included on the back of the dust jacket. Music and an artist’s note are appended. MVK

Long, Loren *Otis and the Tornado*

40 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-25477-2 \$17.99

(3) In his latest adventure, little tractor Otis and his farm-animal friends elicit nothing but scowls from a bull. But when a tornado leaves the bovine vulnerable, it’s Otis to the rescue. For truck-loving young readers this is a perfect no-twists hero fantasy. Long’s fine illustrations exhibit old-fashioned reserve: they’re black-and-white but for occasional color indulgences. NB

Lopez, Mario *Mario & Baby Gia*

32 pp. Penguin/Celebra ISBN 978-0-451-23417-9 \$17.99

(5) Illustrated by Maryn Roos. On his birthday Mario is saddled with the task of baby-sitting his rambunctious little cousin, Gia. At the end of the book he remembers it’s Gia’s birthday as well. The didactic story exists solely to hammer home the message that “family is the best gift of all.” Cutesy cartoon illustrations incorporate some humor. TW

Lord, Cynthia *Happy Birthday, Hamster*

40 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-25522-6 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Derek Anderson. “Best day, bake day, candles on a cake day!” A chipper text, along with dialogue balloons, tells of Hamster’s surprise birthday party. While Hamster accompanies his bulldog best friend on mundane errands, preparations for the party are ongoing. The festive, cartoony acrylic illustrations are thoughtfully composed. NB

Love, Donna *The Glaciers Are Melting!*

32 pp. Sylvan Dell ISBN 978-1-60718-126-2 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-60718-136-1 \$8.95

(5) Illustrated by Shennen Bersani. Published spring 2011. When Peter Pika notices that the glaciers in his alpine habitat are melting, he and his animal friends seek out the wise “Mountain Monarch” for answers. They don’t get any, as the story abruptly ends without a single satisfying explanation. Several pages at the back contribute some facts, but overall this garishly illustrated “Chicken Little”-inspired cautionary tale is only marginally informative. DJF

Ludwig, Trudy *Better Than You*

32 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-1-58246-380-3 \$15.99
LE ISBN 978-1-58246-407-7 \$18.99

(4) Illustrated by Adam Gustavson. “My neighbor Jake can be a real jerk,” says Tyler. Jake is constantly belittling Tyler’s accomplishments and boasting about his own. With the help of his uncle, Tyler learns that Jake’s bragging is no reflection of Tyler’s abilities. Story line takes a backseat to the heavy moral lesson, but the book (with foreword and backmatter aimed at adults) accomplishes its goal. MVK

▲ Lyon, George Ella *Which Side Are You On?: The Story of a Song*

40 pp. Cinco PE ISBN 978-1-933693-96-5 \$17.95

(2) Illustrated by Christopher Cardinale. The narrator of this fictionalized tale lives in Kentucky “in a coal company house on coal company land . . . [Pa] says the company owns us sure as sunrise.” When company thugs harass the family, Ma, unfazed, scribbles words for the song that

would become the union anthem. Lyon's text captures the family's sympathetic plight while Cardinale's woodcuts display drama and energy. Author's note. Bib. Review 1/12. JH

Lyon, Tammie *Olive and Snowflake*

32 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5955-2 \$16.99

(4) Olive and her dog Snowflake enjoy playing, but their boisterousness results in household damage. Mom threatens to send Snowflake away if he doesn't behave; Olive worries that she too could be sent away (a real childhood concern made light of in the text), but dog obedience school is the answer. Prosaic pencil and acrylic illustrations adequately reflect the story's events. SMG

Maccarone, Grace *Miss Lina's Ballerinas and the Prince*

40 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-64963-0 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Christine Davenier. In this follow-up to *Miss Lina's Ballerinas*, the girls are excited that a boy will be joining their end-of-the-year show. Faced with nine pink-clad ballerinas, the "non-princely" lad dances right out of the building. The young ladies track him down at the zoo, and they all dance happily back to the studio. Maccarone's lilting rhymes and Davenier's elegant illustrations are full of movement. AK

Mackintosh, David *Marshall Armstrong Is New to Our School*

32 pp. Abrams ISBN 978-1-4197-0036-1 \$16.95

(3) When Marshall arrives at school, the unnamed narrator of this amusing story declares the boy to be just too different to fit in. After an eye-opening party at Marshall's house, the narrator changes his opinion and even has an open mind about the next new student. Large-scale, quirky illustrations reflect Marshall's eccentricity and help deliver the message about tolerance with a light touch. MFS

MacLachlan, Patricia *Your Moon, My Moon: A Grandmother's Words to a Faraway Child*

32 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-7950-0 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Bryan Collier. A grandmother reminds her grandchild of times they have shared and describes the ways their lives are the same and different. She explains that both are looking at the same moon. Collier's handsome illustrations alternate between images of Africa and images of the United States. The text, soothing and sentimental, may have greatest appeal to grandparents missing their distant grandchildren. MVK

MacRae, Tom *When I Woke Up I Was a Hippopotamus*

32 pp. Andersen ISBN 978-0-7613-8099-3 \$16.95

(3) Illustrated by Ross Collins. Imaginative rhymed text and energetic mixed-media illustrations depict a day in the life of a boy who changes into whatever creature or thing best represents his mood: a lazy hippo who won't get out

of bed; a monkey who's cheeky at school. The tables are turned when his parents make a transformation of their own: dragons. Satisfying silliness. LB

Manders, John *The Really Awful Musicians*

32 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-32820-1 \$16.99

(4) After the king banishes musicians from his kingdom, five refugees who sound terrible individually discover there's (artistic) strength in numbers. The story, though slight and obvious, is well told and funny, with no small thanks to the caricaturish art. An author's note explains how "some things in this story are almost true." NB

Mariconda, Barbara *Ten for Me*

32 pp. Sylvan Dell ISBN 978-1-60718-074-6 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-60718-085-2 \$8.95

(5) Illustrated by Sherry Rogers. Over eleven days, two kids capture ten butterflies a day. Unfortunately, as a math lesson, butterfly information book, or story in verse, this volume's diffuse focus misses its mark. The rhyming text is tedious, and the arithmetic is intrusive. While garish overall, the illustrations of the butterflies are appealingly realistic. Additional math activities and butterfly facts are appended. MLB

Markle, Sandra *Butterfly Tree*

32 pp. Peachtree ISBN 987-1-56145-539-3 \$16.95

(3) Illustrated by Leslie Wu. A mysterious cloud advances as a girl and her dog enjoy the onset of fall along Lake Erie. The girl, both curious and apprehensive, calls for her mother, and the three give chase into the woods. Muted pastels in autumnal colors enhance the story's tension—until the dog's bark triggers a golden explosion of Monarch butterflies. Useful appended information enhances the lyrical tale. Reading list, websites. TLD

Markle, Sandra *Race the Wild Wind: A Story of the Sable Island Horses*

32 pp. Walker ISBN 978-0-8027-9766-7 \$17.99

(4) Illustrated by Layne Johnson. A band of wild horses is abandoned on Sable Island off Nova Scotia. At first the animals thrive, but then they face a harsh winter and an even harsher storm. Thanks to a stallion, they find shelter near a dune. Markle's descriptive text is accompanied by oil-on-canvas illustrations, which, though impassioned, can favor melodrama. An author's note is appended. Reading list, websites. ALB

Marley, Cedella, Adapter *One Love*

24 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-1-4521-0224-5 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Vanessa Brantley-Newton. The lyrics to "One Love," by reggae great Bob Marley (the adapter's father), accompany a smiling girl who spends her day participating in a multi-generational neighborhood cleanup and ensuing celebration. Like most lyrics flowed into a picture book format, these are listless on the page, burdening the illustrator to supply the music. Brantley-Newton's pictures have the spirit (if not the depth). NB

Martin, David *Little Bunny and the Magic Christmas Tree*

40 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-3693-7 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Valeri Gorbachev. On Christmas Eve, as Little Bunny's siblings hang ornaments high on the tree, they tease him for being the smallest one in the family. That night he dreams of cavorting with the ornaments-come-alive, who appreciate him; humorous scenes show the small rabbit socializing with the toys in the tree. Gorbachev's sketchlike, effortless-looking ink and watercolor illustrations bring the endearing characters to life. PR

Mayer, Mercer *Too Many Dinosaurs*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2316-3 \$16.95

(4) When Mom vetoes a puppy, the narrator buys a tag-sale dinosaur egg. It hatches with disastrous results; by the end of the story, the puppy seems like a good option, so Mom buys one. Effective comic pacing and colorful illustrations with an engaging mixture of fantasy and reality help bolster the familiar story line. FFB

Mayhew, James *Ella Bella Ballerina and Swan Lake*

32 pp. Barron's ISBN 978-0-7641-6407-1 \$14.99

(4) In this third book about the imaginative ballet student, a music box draws Ella into *Swan Lake*. She tags along as the Swan Princess watches her prince being tricked by the evil magician. In this version, all's well that ends well. The text can be plodding, but delicate pink-hued illustrations capture the story's fairy-tale quality. An author's note discusses Tchaikovsky's ballet. AK

McGhee, Alison *Making a Friend*

40 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4169-8998-6 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Marc Rosenthal. A lonely boy becomes very attached to his snowman. When the snowman disappears in warm weather, the boy takes comfort in seeing his friend as the rain, fog, and frost throughout the year. In winter, he lovingly restores his friend to proper snowman form. The delicate digitally manipulated pencil illustrations tenderly depict the boy's patient vigil. SRA

▲ McKee, David *Elmer's Christmas*

32 pp. Andersen ISBN 978-0-7613-8088-7 \$16.95

(2) After a day of Christmas preparation, patchwork elephant Elmer and seven young elephants spy on Papa Red (complete with Santa hat and whiskers). While watching him gather gifts from under their tree, Elmer explains, "this is the season for giving." McKee's story sends a friendly reminder about the importance of generosity during the holidays. Playful, vividly colored illustrations complement the cheery tone. Review 11/11. KBC

McKee, David *Six Men*

40 pp. North-South ISBN 978-0-7358-4050-8 \$16.95

(4) This book, originally published in England in 1972, features the heavy-handed story of six men looking for a peaceful place to live. Prosperity leads to fear, which leads to war. The allegory ends as the men leave in search of a new peaceful place. Stark black-and-white art suits McKee's equally stark view of humanity. MVK

▲ McKissack, Patricia C. *Never Forgotten*

48 pp. Random/Schwartz & Wade

ISBN 978-0-375-84384-6 \$18.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-94453-6 \$21.99

(2) Illustrated by Leo Dillon and Diane Dillon. In 1725 Mali, Dinga the Blacksmith calls upon the Mother Elements to help him raise his boy, Mustafa. When Mustafa disappears, Wind, with help from Earth, Fire, and Water, travels to a blacksmith shop in Charleston, South Carolina, where Mustafa has been enslaved. The Dillons' rousing illustrations—at once bold, complex, and lucid—impart dramatic conviction to McKissack's free-verse text. Review 9/11.

B. BADER

▲ McNamara, Margaret *The Three Little Aliens and the Big Bad Robot*

40 pp. Random/Schwartz & Wade

ISBN 978-0-375-86689-0 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96689-7 \$19.99

(2) Illustrated by Mark Fearing. Mama Alien sends her children off to find a planet of their own, warning against the Big Bad Robot. When the Big Bad Robot comes, Bork and Gork seek refuge at Nklxwcyz's sturdy self-made house. Funny details abound in Fearing's digital collage illustrations and in McNamara's text, which concludes with the aliens deciding to "phone home" to Mama for a bedtime story. Review 11/11. AW

McPhail, David *Pig Pig Returns*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-58089-356-5 \$15.95

(3) Pig Pig (*Pig Pig Gets a Job*) reluctantly goes on a cross-country trip with his aunt and uncle. The trio sees many wonderful things and Pig Pig begins to enjoy himself, but he worries about what might have changed back home. McPhail's soft pen-and-ink and watercolor illustrations add a feeling of comfort and familiarity to the pleasantly told story. KA

Meddaugh, Susan *Martha Speaks: Story Time Collection*

196 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-57967-2 \$10.99

(3) This compendium, published for the twentieth anniversary of *Martha Speaks*, includes six stories about the communicative canine. A two-page introduction by Meddaugh discusses the genesis of her idea and shows two pictures of the real Martha. The book's square shape scales the illustrations down a bit. A two-page removable sticker sheet is included. ERG

Meddaugh, Susan *A Winter's Tail*

24 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-62913-1 \$12.99

(5) Adapted by Karen Barss. Martha Speaks series. While watching a hockey playoff game on TV, Skits flashes back to the day when he almost fell through thin ice into a pond. There's a tiny bit of tension in this story, based on an episode of the TV show and with slick illustrations to match, but it's mostly a lot of setup for a mediocre resolution. ERG

Menchin, Scott *What If Everything Had Legs?*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4220-4 \$15.99

(4) A girl and her mom playfully muse about how life would be different if things like apples, worms, and leaves had legs. Wordplay and alliteration add to the silliness. The cartoony digital illustrations are whimsical yet slightly freakish—some things just look bizarre with legs—reinforcing the wacky fun you can have with your imagination. SRA

Meng, Cece *I Will Not Read This Book*

32 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-04971-7 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Joy Ang. A boy says he'll read after performing routine bedtime tasks. But then: "WAIT." He changes his mind because "reading is hard and I don't read fast and . . ." His anxiety takes over, and he lists the many tortures he'd endure before reading. The saccharine resolution to the goofy cumulative story feels slightly superficial; Ang's cartoony digital illustrations humorously reflect each spread's addition. KEH

▲ Messner, Kate *Over and Under the Snow*

40 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-0-8118-6784-9 \$16.99

(1) Illustrated by Christopher Silas Neal. An adult and child cross-country ski through a forest. They catch glimpses of animal activity below the snow in the crevasses that trap warmer air; above the snow, predators wait for signs of dinner. The subnivean zone and above-ground scenes are beautifully rendered through Messner's spare, poetic words and Neal's blockprint-looking mixed-media illustrations. Further details about the animals is appended. Reading list, websites. Bib. Review 1/12. DJF

Messner, Kate *Sea Monster's First Day*

32 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-0-8118-7564-6 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Andy Rash. It's not easy for Ernest the sea monster to fit in at school since he's so much bigger than the other fish-students. He keeps a positive attitude and makes a few pals; a seaside amusement park then gives him an idea for how to really wow the crowd. The story's humor and watery blue- and green-tinged illustrations have appeal. PR

Metzger, Steve *The Dancing Clock*

32 pp. Tiger Tales ISBN 978-1-58925-100-7 \$12.95
PE ISBN 978-1-58925-429-9 \$7.95

(4) Illustrated by John Abbott Nez. When the bronze animals on the Delacorte Clock start to "dance," Milo, a snow monkey in nearby Central Park Zoo, longs to join them. After his cage is left open he gets his chance; he's then horrified to learn he's been locked out. Metzger's rhyming text,

while cheery, stumbles in places. Nez's cartoony illustrations have verve. More information about the Delacorte Clock is appended. PR

▲ Metzger, Steve *Detective Blue*

32 pp. Scholastic/Orchard ISBN 978-0-545-17286-8 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Tedd Arnold. Little Boy Blue is trying to keep a handle on crime in Storytown. He tracks down the Dish and the Spoon, nabs Mary's little lamb—but where is Miss Muffet? In this Mother Goose takeoff, one iconic character after another advises and distracts Detective Blue. Comic-strip panels illustrate the investigation, with Arnold's goggle-eyed characters alert to the quest and the humor. Review 9/11. RS

Mock, Chara Dillon *The Cajun Nutcracker*

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-58980-978-9 \$16.99

(5) Illustrated by Jean Cassels. This adaptation substitutes Cajun parallels for main elements of *The Nutcracker*: a Christmas *fais-do-do* is marred when Merrae's brother, Parrish, breaks the nutcracker given by her *parrain* (godfather). Meanwhile, Parrish's toy soldiers battle nutria and the Gator King. The text, with its definition of Cajun words, jerkily stops and starts. The illustrations' backdrops are more appealing than the static-looking people. FFB

Monroe, Chris *Monkey with a Tool Belt and the Seaside Shenanigans*

32 pp. Carolrhoda ISBN 978-0-7613-5616-5 \$16.99

(4) In tool-wielding monkey Chico Bon Bon's latest outing, an elephant friend summons him to a beachside resort to fix a mysterious string of broken things. Unless the reader is enamored of watching fix-it projects, parts of the book will be slow going. Monroe knows tools, as evidenced by the detail-drenched art. NB

The Monstrous Book of Monsters

16 pp. Candlewick/Templar ISBN 978-0-7636-5756-7 \$17.99

(4) This mock-serious book, purportedly a missing monster-expert's unfinished field guide, introduces various monsters (they're everywhere) and advises readers how to survive meeting one (run away). The heavily illustrated presentation includes lots of flaps, tabs, and die-cut pages. The busy pages and tiny type are frustrating; not a necessary purchase, but monster fans will probably eat this up. BTK

Moore, Inga *A House in the Woods*

48 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5277-7 \$16.99

(3) This story (with a nod to "The Three Little Pigs") stars two pigs, a bear, and a moose that build a home for themselves with the help of some industrious beavers. Charming illustrations in pencil, pastel, and wash display detailed woodland scenes, with busy animals working, resting, and, finally, enjoying the fruits of their labors (by eating peanut-butter sandwiches). SMG

Moore, Julianne *Freckleface Strawberry: Best Friends Forever*

32 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-551-8 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-1-59990-552-5 \$17.89

(3) Illustrated by LeUyen Pham. Freckleface Strawberry is now best friends with former bully Windy Pants Patrick. When kids at school point out how dissimilar they are (e.g., girl and boy), they stop playing together—until realizing that their similarities outweigh their differences. Pham's illustrations highlight the kids' opposite physical appearances while amusingly emphasizing the importance of their mutual hobbies, such as playing monsters. SJW

Morrissey, Dean, and Stephen Krensky *The Wizard Mouse*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-008066-2 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Dean Morrissey. Rollie, a small field mouse with big dreams, leaves home and discovers an ailing wizard. By finding a magical fish, Rollie restores the wizard's powers and protects the kingdom. The story has potential, but its resolution comes too easily. Lack of much conflict robs the small hero of any real achievement. Morrissey's luminous illustrations, however, are dazzling. BTK

Mortimer, Anne *Pumpkin Cat*

24 pp. HarperCollins/Tegen ISBN 978-0-06-187485-7 \$14.99
LE ISBN 978-0-06-187486-4 \$15.89

(3) In May, Cat wonders how pumpkins grow. Mouse knows, and he demonstrates step by step for Cat in the garden. In October, their work is rewarded, and they pick their pumpkin. Mouse has one more surprise for his friend: he carves the pumpkin into a jack-o'-lantern. Mortimer's vivid, clear illustrations include realistic details and texture. Instructions for growing pumpkins are appended. CR

Mortimer, Rachael *The Three Billy Goats Fluff*

32 pp. Tiger Tales ISBN 978-1-58925-101-4 \$15.95

(3) Illustrated by Liz Pichon. Mr. Troll doesn't really want to eat those billy goats; he just wants to sleep without the clapping of hooves overhead. Mother Goat saves the day with hoof-muffling knitted booties and a housewarming gift for the appeased troll. Pichon's energetic illustrations effectively complement the text, which "trip-traps" nicely off the tongue. A light and humorous folklore take-off that's well suited for group sharing. BTK

Moundlic, Charlotte *The Scar*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5341-5 \$14.99

(4) Illustrated by Olivier Tallec. A little boy has just lost his mother "this morning." The portrayal of childhood grief and healing is authentic, albeit via a very adult articulation. Although the absence of religious comfort in favor of the dead parent being "in your heart" is notable, it's hard to know who this book might be for. Simple pencil and red acrylic illustrations suit the single-minded text. RS

Muir, Leslie *Gibbus Moony Wants to Bite You!*

40 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4169-7905-0 \$15.99

(4) Illustrated by Jen Corace. Now that he has "grown-up fangs," vampire boy Gibbus is seeking "the perfect bite." He gets diverted by a neighborhood kid who holds the promise of something tastier than blood: friendship. The text strains for its puns; the nectarine/nectarian/necktarian distinction—vital to the story's premise—may be lost on readers. There are some droll moments, and the illustrations seem pointedly fright-free. NB

Muir, Leslie *The Little Bitty Bakery*

32 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-1640-0 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Betsy Lewin. An elephant pastry chef bakes her birthday away. She wakes in the night to a smell as "sweet as crème brûlée" only to find that her mice friends have baked her a "jumbled-up surprise!" (recipe included). Pastel-hued daytime illustrations along with the blue-purple nighttime scenes complement the thoughtful story's smooth rhymes. Sprinklings of French words are unobtrusively defined on the pages. SJW

Mullin, Michael, and John Skewes *Larry Gets Lost in Alaska*

32 pp. Sasquatch ISBN 978-1-57061-728-7 \$16.99

(5) Illustrated by John Skewes. Pete and his dog, Larry, explore Alaska, taking in the sights from glaciers to totem parks to wildlife. When Larry ends up lost on Kodiak Island, he has his own adventures until he's miraculously reunited with worried Pete. The cartoonlike illustrations are engaging, but the design makes it difficult to follow the narrative and the singsongy text is most unfortunate. PIH

Murphy, Claire Rudolf *Marching with Aunt Susan: Susan B. Anthony and the Fight for Women's Suffrage*

40 pp. Peachtree ISBN 978-1-56145-593-5 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Stacey Schuett. It's 1896, and young Bes-sie (who is based on a real child) meets legendary suffragist Susan B. Anthony, who convinces her to participate in an upcoming suffrage rally. The wooden dialogue is unconvincing, but the historical revelations (girls and women who rode bikes used to be considered unladylike) and gouache paintings are successful at conveying setting. NB

▲ Murray, Laura *The Gingerbread Man Loose in the School*

32 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-25052-1 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Mike Lowery. Elementary schoolers stir up ingredients and bake. Gingerbread Man springs out . . . into an empty classroom. The cookie then embarks on a voyage to find the kids (they're at recess). Murray's rhyming text features some great cookie-centric lines, and the refrain offers enough variation to keep readers on their toes. Lowery's cartoon-panel illustrations imbue the highly sympathetic cookie with an abundance of personality. Review 9/11. ERG

Offill, Jenny *11 Experiments That Failed*

40 pp. Random/Schwartz & Wade
ISBN 978-0-375-84762-2 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-95762-8 \$19.99

(4) Illustrated by Nancy Carpenter. A mischievous girl presents questions, hypotheses, methodology, and results of kooky experiments that go awry. Some are a riot (yodeling *doesn't* "speed up a boring car ride"), but others fall flat ("Would gerbils like bigger wheels?" yields inconclusive results—they're too short for the Ferris wheel). Carpenter's striking pen-and-ink and digital art will elicit chuckles throughout. KEH

Oldland, Nicholas *The Busy Beaver*

32 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-749-5 \$16.95

(3) A careless beaver is inadvertently decimating the forest (and injuring his friends) by chewing on too many trees. After one such tree falls on him, he resolves to change his ways. The story, with its unobtrusive ecological message, is a hoot, as are the crisp digital illustrations showing the beaver—a toothy dolt—wreaking havoc then making amends. NB

O'Malley, Kevin *Desk Stories*

32 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-1562-4 \$16.99

(4) O'Malley (*Backpack Stories*) provides six brief tales that ensure readers will never look at their school desks the same way again. In "It Came from Within," a test-taker is flustered by something in her desk. "Desktec" introduces the desk of the future. The stories, presented as comics, contain silliness and fright (sometimes both) but can be difficult to follow. NB

Orbach, Ruth *Acorns and Stew, Too*

32 pp. Kane/Miller ISBN 978-1-61067-017-3 \$15.99

(3) New ed. (1975, Collins). Winter is coming, and Lenore's duck friends, whom she routinely feeds, will be flying away. Using creativity and elbow grease, she finds a clever way to keep them close. This new edition, with revised text, features spare black-line illustrations shaded with bright, quintessentially 1970s-hues: yellow, orange, red, and pink. NB

Otto, Gina *Cassandra's Angel*

32 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-8743-0 \$14.95

(6) Illustrated by Trudy Joost. Reissue (2001, Illumination). The adults and children in Cassandra's life do not value her, but Cassandra's angel teaches her to create her own story about who she is so that she can "shine brightly." Clunky rhyme; shallow, heavy-handed messages; and amateurish digital-looking illustrations combine for an entirely forgettable lesson on self-esteem. MVK

Page, Gail *How to Be a Good Cat*

32 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-474-0 \$16.99

(3) In dog Bobo's third outing he volunteers to mind a neighbor's kitten, whose angelic look hides its devilish personality. Out of desperation, Bobo calls in an expert for help: another cat. The droll text is bolstered by airy candy-colored acrylics that depict Bobo as a canine biped with the posture and preoccupations (including yoga) of a person. NB

Palatini, Margie *Stuff*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Tegen ISBN 978-0-06-171921-9 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Noah Z. Jones. Rabbit Edward loves "stuff," to the exclusion of his friends. (Anthony: "Want to do something today?" Edward: "Can't . . . Doing stuff with my stuff.") After being trapped beneath an avalanche of knickknacks, he realizes how much he misses his friends—who coincidentally show up to dig him out. The text's light tone and the cartoon illustrations' playfulness make the story's antihoarding message go down easily. ERG

Parish, Herman *Amelia Bedelia's First Day of School*

32 pp. Greenwillow ISBN 978-0-06-203274-4 \$9.99

New ed. (2009).

Parish, Herman *Amelia Bedelia's First Field Trip*

32 pp. Greenwillow ISBN 978-0-06-196413-8 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Lynne Avril. In *School*, young Amelia takes her teacher literally; for example, gluing herself to her seat. *Trip* follows the girl's antics while visiting a farm with her classmates. The jokes are amusing (though a couple are forced). Cheerful illustrations reflect Amelia Bedelia's headlong enthusiasm. This new edition of *School* is a paper-over-board version. ERG

Park, Linda Sue *The Third Gift*

32 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-20195-5 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Bagram Ibatoulline. A boy learns from his father how to collect "tears" ("the pearls of sap that seep out of a tree when the bark is cut . . . maybe they are called tears because it seems as if the tree is crying"). Three wise men take one of them as a gift to the Baby Jesus. Textured acrylic-gouache illustrations set the scene nicely in this lyrically told story. CR

Patten, Brian *The Big Snuggle-Up*

32 pp. Kane/Miller ISBN 978-1-61067-036-4 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Nicola Bayley. In this cumulative tale, a child invites a scarecrow and its mouse friend in out of the snow. Soon more and more animals fill the warm house. The animals in the gentle illustrations look soft, cuddly, and furry, and the snowy cottage is invitingly still, quiet, and serene. PR

Pearce, Clemency *Frangoline and the Midnight Dream*

32 pp. Scholastic/Chicken House
ISBN 978-0-545-31426-8 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Rebecca Elliott. Frangoline is “good as gold” all day, but at night she’s a mischief-maker. While the moon watches worriedly—“Little ones should be in bed!”—Frangoline sneaks out of the house. A romp through the graveyard ends in a ghostly confrontation before bedtime. Rhyming text relates the raucous adventure, while sketchy pen drawings, digitally layered with colors and textures, add to the story’s mild spookiness. CHS

Petersen, David *Snowy Valentine*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-146378-5 \$14.99

(4) Jasper Bunny can’t think of the right Valentine gift for his wife. He tramps through the snow to his neighbors’ houses looking for ideas. Finally, he discovers he has inadvertently created the best Valentine of all: a huge heart-shaped path in the snow. Petersen uses a strong black line and rich colors in his wintry illustrations for this tale with primarily grown-up appeal. MFS

Pfister, Marcus *Snow Puppy*

32 pp. North-South ISBN 978-0-7358-4031-7 \$16.95

(5) Pet dog Rascal, intrigued by the “white flecks” outside, manages to escape from the house. He has a ball chasing a rabbit in the snow—until he discovers he’s lost. In a too-pat turn, a chance encounter leads to a reunion with his human family. The straining-for-cuteness art looks as though it’s been photographed through a soft-fade lens. NB

Plourde, Lynn *Dino Pets Go to School*

32 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42232-7 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Gideon Kendall. The kid from *Dino Pets* parades his various dinosaurs into school for pet day. The creatures—tallest, spikiest, widest—wreak havoc; only “the youngest dino” (i.e., an egg) is acceptable. The text’s choppy meter may trip up readers, but the cheerful tone and riotous illustrations will entertain dinosaur fans. RRW

Plourde, Lynn *Only Cows Allowed!*

32 pp. Down East ISBN 978-0-89272-790-2 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Rebecca Harrison Reed. The cows set up shop in the barn and won’t let the other animals in. They go over the cows’ heads to the clueless farmer; eventually, the cows retreat to the house. Illustrations chronicle the antics with playfulness and humor. However, the text, with its hit-or-miss puns, is frustratingly hard to follow. SRA

Polacco, Patricia *Bun Bun Button*

40 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-25472-7 \$17.99

(3) Paige loves Bun Bun Button, the stuffed rabbit Gramma made just for her, so she’s devastated when Bun Bun, attached to a helium balloon, accidentally floats away. Expressive illustrations show the rabbit’s aerial adventures, until—miraculously—she tumbles out of the sky into

Gramma’s tree. The lively, distinctive personalities Polacco creates for her characters—animal, human, and toy—draw readers into the tale. MFS

Primavera, Elise *Louise the Big Cheese and the Back-to-School Smarty-Pants*

40 pp. Simon/Wiseman ISBN 978-1-4424-0600-1 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Diane Goode. As the school year starts, Louise hopes for As from her new teacher. Mrs. Pearl, however, has high expectations: “You can do better, Miss Cheese.” A substitute takes over for a day; she has no expectations and makes no demands, and Louise realizes she misses Mrs. Pearl. Pink-tastic watercolor illustrations humorously capture Louise’s wild imagination and her energetic mood swings. PR

Puttock, Simon *Little Lost Cowboy*

32 pp. Egmont ISBN 978-1-60684-259-1 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Caroline Jayne Church. Cowboy Coyote is lost and lonesome. Advice from the moon, a snake, and a bird leaves him a little worse off each time. Finally, a toad tells him to stay put and howl loudly, and “I’m sure you will be found.” And he is. Church’s textured illustrations give the lightweight story some heft. KA

Puybaret, Eric, Illustrator *When You Wish upon a Star*

24 pp. Charlesbridge/Imagine/Yarrow
ISBN 978-1-936140-35-0 \$17.95

(4) The well-known song from Disney’s *Pinocchio* provides the text of this lavishly illustrated picture book. The art features fairies, rainbows, a smiling star, and a cast of children of different ethnicities. It’s all very pretty (in an overblown sort of way), but it may not engage children. An accompanying CD of Judy Collins performing the song is included. MVK

Quattlebaum, Mary *The Hungry Ghost of Rue Orleans*

32 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86207-6 \$15.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96207-3 \$18.99

(4) Illustrated by Patricia Castelao. Pierre and his daughter Marie transform Fred the ghost’s dusty, creaky old New Orleans home into a bright and busy restaurant. His dinner-time hauntings, rather than scaring diners away, are outrageously original, and they turn the restaurant into a five-star success. Hazy, Disneyesque illustrations are more successful than the text at evoking New Orleans both of old and today. RRW

Raczka, Bob *Fall Mixed Up*

40 pp. Carolrhoda LE ISBN 978-0-7613-4606-7 \$17.95

(4) Illustrated by Chad Cameron. Rhyming, uneven verse enumerates some of the characteristics and pleasures of fall, except that things are a bit topsy-turvy: “Bears gather nuts / Geese hibernate. / Squirrels fly south in / big figure eights.” Illustrations rendered in warm colors capture the silliness of

the brief text. Kids will have fun following the final instructions to “Go back and find all the / things that aren’t right.”
CLS

▲ Ramsey, Calvin Alexander, and Bettye Stroud *Belle, the Last Mule at Gee’s Bend*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4058-3 \$15.99

(2) Illustrated by John Holyfield. Alex asks Miz Pettway why a mule, Belle, is allowed to eat collards from her garden. Turns out Belle is a civil rights hero who helped transport African Americans to vote; she also pulled the wagon holding Dr. King’s coffin through the streets of Atlanta. Soft acrylics, textured to look antiqued, are effective in illustrating this little-known true story of the civil rights movement. Review 9/11. R. SMITH

Ray, Jane *The Twelve Days of Christmas*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5735-2 \$16.99

(3) Ray’s lush double-page spreads illustrate the classic Christmas carol’s well-known lyrics. Her palette is rich and warm, emitting a soft glow throughout the playful scenes; “nine ladies dancing” cavort, in 1920s garb, aboard the deck of a ship while the “eleven pipers piping” portray several different cultures. This festively detailed interpretation is fresh and familiar at the same time. SJW

▲ Ray, Mary Lyn *Stars*

40 pp. Simon/Beach Lane ISBN 978-1-4424-2249-0 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Marla Frazee. Ray’s quiet, friendly narrative begins and ends with stars in the night sky. In between are musings about other kinds of stars: the ones you cut out of shiny paper and those found in nature (snowflakes, dandelion seeds), for example. Frazee’s illustrations feature her signature spot-art vignettes that alternate with expansive full- and double-page spreads. A contemplative and lovely book. Review 11/11. JMB

Regan, Dian Curtis *The Snow Blew Inn*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2351-4 \$16.95

(3) Illustrated by Doug Cushman. Anxiously awaiting her cousin’s visit, little cat Emma and her mother welcome a stream of guests to their inn as the snow relentlessly falls. After every nook and cranny—including Emma’s own room—is filled by weary travelers, cousin Abby finally arrives for the sleepover. Cozy watercolor and pen-and-ink illustrations reflect the text’s message of hospitality and community that a storm can elicit. RRW

▲ Reid, Barbara *Perfect Snow*

32 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-6492-9 \$16.99

(2) Two boys celebrate the joys of a big snowfall. Reid’s visually inventive illustrations create lively winter scenes. Comic panels alongside help move the action forward, as the smaller boy struggles to build a snowman while the bigger boy tries to build a fort; the two end up combining forces. Reid captures their exuberance, with Plasticine providing a three-dimensional effect. Review 1/12. SDL

Reynolds, Peter H. *I’m Here*

32 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4169-9649-1 \$15.99

(3) A boy feels alone on a crowded playground until he creates a paper airplane “friend” upon which he imagines flying. Satisfyingly, he makes a *real* friend when a girl returns the plane. Reynolds’s lyrical, dreamy text and his simple pen, ink, and watercolor illustrations touchingly portray the boy’s painful isolation, then his joyful companionship. KEH

Richmond, Marianne *I Believe in You*

32 pp. Sourcebooks/Jabberwocky

ISBN 978-1-4022-6344-6 \$15.99

(5) Focused on fostering self-esteem, Richmond celebrates positive character traits—such as honesty and playfulness—as she offers children encouraging words for days when life is difficult. “I believe in your awesome skills . . .” she says, “I believe in your brave spirit . . .” Unfortunately, clumsy writing mars the well-intentioned verses, and the faux-childlike illustrations are functional but bland. MFS

Rim, Sujean *Birdie’s Big-Girl Dress*

40 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-13287-9 \$16.99

(4) In *Birdie’s Big-Girl Shoes*, Birdie is keen to grow up; in this follow-up, all she wants is a dress that’s the right size, the right style, and suitable for her birthday party. Birdie’s difficulty plays like a manufactured problem: the book seems principally a forum for Rim’s illustrations. Fortunately, her watercolor and collage art, which ripples with color, is terrific. NB

Robey, Katharine Crawford *Where’s the Party?*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-58089-268-1 \$15.95

PE ISBN 978-1-58089-269-8 \$6.95

(3) Illustrated by Kate Endle. A cardinal’s morning birdcall—“*Par-ty! Par-ty! Par-ty!*”—prompts Kate to rush outside in search of a celebration. Indeed, she finds a “birthday party for ducklings!” Spare cut-paper collage illustrations feature ten common birds. In the accessible text, bold font marks various birdcalls: “The meadowlark bursts out, ‘*Party is ne-ar! Party is ne-ar!*’” Additional details about the birds and their sounds are appended. Reading list, websites. Glos. SMG

Robinson, Barbara *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*

40 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-089074-2 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Laura Cornell. Robinson retells her classic Christmas story for a picture book audience. The much shortened text focuses on the pageant itself, but the entertaining Herdman children manage to shine nevertheless. Cornell’s sketchy ink and watercolor illustrations play up the lovable messiness and chaos of the church pageant. This is not a replacement for the original novel but a suitable addition to holiday collections. MVK

Rockwell, Anne *First Day of School*

40 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-050191-4 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Lizzy Rockwell. These children aren't preparing for their first day of school ever but rather for the beginning of a new school year. The kids reminisce about the previous year's first day, compare how they're getting ready for the upcoming day, and look forward to a new year. Both the text and illustrations are somewhat bland, but that may reassure some anxious students. MLB

Rodriguez, Béatrice *Rooster's Revenge*

32 pp. Enchanted Lion ISBN 978-1-59270-112-4 \$14.95

(3) In this book in a series that includes *The Chicken Thief* and *Fox and Hen Together*, Rooster, Rabbit, and Bear find themselves shipwrecked. After Rooster discovers a glowing orb, it brings a life-changing surprise. Like its wordless predecessors, this entry uses a squat and wide format to show off Rodriguez's steady illustrative hand and creative storytelling. NB

▲ Rohmann, Eric *Bone Dog*

32 pp. Roaring Brook ISBN 978-1-59643-150-8 \$16.99

(1) Gus, trick-or-treating past a graveyard dressed as a skeleton, has a secret weapon against the *real* skeletons that taunt him: the ghost of his dog Ella. Rohmann's relief prints, with forceful black lines and high contrast, accentuate the weight of the story's emotion—Gus's grief after Ella dies as well as the poignancy of boy and dog's fleeting moonlit reunion. Review 7/11. CMH

▲ Root, Phyllis *Scrawny Cat*

40 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4164-1 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Alison Friend. A once-loved stray cat takes refuge in a moored dinghy. It breaks free, and he's blown over the sea to an island home owned by Emma, a lonely former sailor. Root paces her story expertly, lingering for pathos and subtly repeating sounds. In expansive gouache illustrations, Friend represents the cat's affecting emotions with verve and Emma herself in welcoming curves. Review 11/11. JRL

Rose, Naomi C. *Tashi and the Tibetan Flower Cure*

40 pp. Lee ISBN 978-1-60060-425-6 \$18.95

(4) When her grandfather, Popola, becomes ill, Tashi remembers his story about sick people in his Tibetan village using flower pollen to get better. Tashi insists he sit outside Wong's nursery to try it, and after many visits sharing tea and cookies with friends who wish him well, Popola recovers. Though sentimental, the story, with its congenial textured art, is heartwarming. BTM

▲ Rosen, Michael J. *Chanukah Lights*

16 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5533-4 \$34.99

(2) Illustrated by Robert Sabuda. This satisfying pop-up travels around the globe and through the ages showing places where menorahs have been lit. On each spread, the background is brightly painted while the pop-up elements are white—except for a cleverly hidden lit menorah. Rosen's

brief text takes readers from the first night of Hanukkah to the last throughout this uplifting volume, which demands repeat viewings. Review 11/11. LR

Rosen, Michael J. *Night of the Pumpkinheads*

32 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3452-4 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Hugh McMahon. Growing "plump and restless" in their patch, bored pumpkins transform into scary characters. Elaborate dinosaurs, mummies, killer bees, and even Frankenstein's monster come alive as crisp photographs of skillfully carved creations (digitally assembled) appear within the patch. The text is forced, but it provides a serviceable prop for McMahon's impressive pumpkin carvings. Step-by-step "Carve Your Own Scaredy-Cat Pumpkin" directions are included. CHS

Ross, Fiona *Chilly Milly Moo*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5693-5 \$15.99

(3) Cow Milly Moo is too hot to make milk. After some melodramatic moping—and a temperature shift—she delivers the goods . . . in the form of ice cream. In this ode to being different, the prose is punchy ("NOPE / ZILCH / NADA / DIDDLY-SQUAT") and the illustrations accommodate: text occupies the barn's stones and slats, and even the farmer's considerable posterior. NB

Ross, Tony *I Want a Party!: A Little Princess Story*

32 pp. Andersen ISBN 978-0-7613-8089-4 \$16.95

(4) In her latest outing, Little Princess and her staff prepare to throw a spectacular party, but on the big day she realizes that she forgot to send out invitations. While the coincidence-dependent resolution detracts from the capably told story, Ross's energetic watercolors are full of good gags. NB

▲ Rubel, David *The Carpenter's Gift*

48 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86922-8 \$17.99

(2) Illustrated by Jim LaMarche. During the Depression, kindly construction workers build Henry's impoverished family a new home. Later, an enormous tree Henry planted becomes the Christmas tree in Rockefeller Center, and its lumber is used to build a house for a similarly needy family. Rubel's story of compassion hits all the right holiday notes while LaMarche's lush, warm illustrations drive home the central message of charity. Review 11/11. KEH

St. Romain, Rose Anne *Monsieur Durand's Grosse Affaire*

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-58980-808-9 \$16.99

(5) Illustrated by Joan C. Waites. This story describes how the wealthiest plantation owner in St. Martinville, Louisiana, outdid himself by having the three-mile drive to his house decorated in gold and silver spider webs for the double wedding of his daughters; Waites's illustrations, bland throughout, rise to the occasion for the party. There may be some regional interest, but the stilted telling holds little other appeal. FFB

Salten, Felix *Bambi*

32 pp. North-South ISBN 978-0-7358-4011-9 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Maja Dusíková. Translated by Kristy Koth. A slim picture book version of Salten's classic novel gives young readers an outline of the story but lacks the original's emotional depth and language. "Bambi knew at that moment that he would never see his mother again," and he must learn the ways of the forest without her help. Illustrator Dusíková creates a warm woodland setting with her full-page watercolors. MVK

▲ Sarcone-Roach, Julia *Subway Story*40 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-85859-8 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-95859-5 \$19.99

(1) Subway car Jessie begins service during the 1964 New York World's Fair. After approximately fifty years she's dismantled and dumped into the ocean. There she happily resides as an artificial reef, home to myriad sea animals. Sarcone-Roach allows her theme of reuse and recycling to emerge naturally from a fine tale. Cozy-looking illustrations emphasize the story's tone. An author's note is appended. Bib. Review 11/11. BC

Schachner, Judy *Skippyjon Jones: Class Action*

32 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42228-0 \$17.99

(5) In this outing, the Siamese cat (who's convinced that he's a Chihuahua) disobeys his mother and goes to school. Between the font changes, periodic rhymes, Spanish words, song lyrics, *dudes*, and other stabs at humor, this manically illustrated book is a visual and textual ambush. A CD of the story read by the author is included. NB

▲ Schimel, Lawrence *Let's Go See Papá*

40 pp. Groundwood ISBN 978-1-55498-106-9 \$18.95

(2) Translated by Elisa Amada. Illustrated by Alba Marina Rivera. The narrator's father has been working in the United States while she lives with her mother and grandmother in an unspecified Spanish-speaking country. When Papá sends money for his wife and daughter to join him, there's both elation and sadness as the narrator realizes what she's leaving behind. Conversational text and expressionistic illustrations detail life in a family of three generations of women. Review 1/12. KTH

Schmid, Paul *Hugs from Pearl*

40 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-180434-2 \$14.99

(3) Sweet-natured porcupine Pearl is a hugger. Because her classmates don't like to feel "ouchy," she makes several attempts to solve her prickly problem. Her ultimate solution is obvious but effective. Schmid's confiding, understated narration ("Pearl was perhaps a little discouraged") prevails. Pearl's quills are further softened by the unfussy illustrations' diluted-pastel-color backdrops. NB

Schoettler, Joan *Good Fortune in a Wrapping Cloth*

32 pp. Shen's ISBN 978-1-885008-40-4 \$17.95

(4) Illustrated by Jessica Lanán. Published spring 2011. *Bojangi* (specially crafted wrapping cloths) are an ancient Korean folk-art form. In this story, young Ji-su strives to

sew well enough to join her mother as a seamstress at the emperor's court. Schoettler illuminates the originality and craftsmanship involved in creating *bojangi*, but her telling is ponderous; more compelling are the beautiful cloths in Lanán's warm illustrations. MLB

Schubert, Ingrid, and Dieter Schubert *The Umbrella*

32 pp. Lemniscaat ISBN 978-1-9359-5400-2 \$16.95

(3) Published spring 2011. The wind whips an umbrella-clutching canine into the air. The dog journeys above the clouds, into the jungle, and so on; at moments of danger it is reliably saved by one animal or another who then ushers it to a safer setting. The art is so fully realized that the choice of wordlessness for this book was a good one. NB

▲ Schubert, Leda *The Princess of Borscht*

32 pp. Roaring Brook/Porter ISBN 978-1-59643-515-5 \$17.99

(2) Illustrated by Bonnie Christensen. Ruthie's grandmother is laid up with pneumonia. Unsatisfied by hospital food, she sends Ruthie home to prepare borscht. Luckily (or is it?) Grandma's neighbors offer their culinary expertise. Schubert's characters and their interactions feel entirely authentic. Christensen's illustrations, with sketchlike dark lines and subdued hues enhanced by beet-colored accents, reflect the comfortable disarray of Ruthie's family life. A recipe is included. Review 11/11. ERG

Schubert, Leda *Reading to Peanut*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2339-2 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Amanda Haley. Lucy asks her parents to teach her to read and write—for a secret reason. Bright, unfailingly cheery illustrations show her learning how by drawing pictures and studying the labels her parents make. At the end, readers discover why Lucy is so industrious (it has to do with her misbehaving dog). There's not a lot of tension, but the story is pleasant enough. MFS

Schwartz, Roslyn *The Vole Brothers*

32 pp. Owlkids ISBN 978-1-926818-83-2 \$15.95

(3) On the heels of Schwartz's Mole Sisters scamper these hungry rodent sibs, who think they've got it made when they steal a piece of pizza from a cat. Cartoonish textured illustrations and witty all-dialogue-balloon storytelling combine for an entertaining read. NB

▲ Sendak, Maurice *Bumble-Ardy*

40 pp. HarperCollins/di Capua ISBN 978-0-06-205198-1 \$17.95

(2) For his birthday, pig Bumble-Ardy, defying his sweet aunt Adeline, sends party invitations to nine grubby swine. They arrive in costume, ready to make mischief. Sendak deals with the psychological reality of anarchy unleashed while acknowledging that breaking the rules can be fun. The art draws much from Sendak's theatrical work and references many of his classic picture books. Review 9/11. KTH

Seuss, Dr. *The Bippolo Seed and Other Lost Stories*

69 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86435-3 \$15.00

(3) Seuss scholar Charles D. Cohen reintroduces seven Seuss stories originally published in magazines (never before in book form). Youngsters can enter the recognizable Seuss world complete with staccato rhymes and familiar (color-enhanced) illustrations. Here they'll find a trickster, a(nother) feisty feline, and more. Listeners and beginning readers—as well as their caregivers—will appreciate the opportunity to revisit an old beloved friend. BC

Shannon, Molly *Tilly the Trickster*

32 pp. Abrams ISBN 978-1-4797-0030-9 \$16.95

(4) Illustrated by Ard Hoyt. Tilly loves playing tricks on her family, friends, and teachers. The tricks are classic—poked hole in a cup, red-hot candy—and Tilly gains pleasure (too much? she's a little overly gleeful) from her victims' discomfort. When she sickens her brother with toothpaste-filled cookies, her family gives Tilly a taste of her own medicine. Watercolor and ink illustrations reflect the incorrigible girl's energy. CHS

Shapiro, Lindy *Moon Mangoes*

40 pp. BeachHouse ISBN 978-1-933067-42-1 \$14.95

(4) Illustrated by Kathleen Peterson. Ānu asks her mother what would happen if she ate too many mangoes and changed into a mango tree, a *kolohe 'ilio* (dog) who gets into mischief, or a wise *honu* (tortoise). The Hawaiian words are explained in context or by the paintings, in textured tropical colors, which are stronger than the sentimental text. MG

Shields, Gillian *Library Lily*

32 pp. Eerdmans ISBN 978-0-8028-5401-8 \$16.00

(3) Illustrated by Francesca Chessa. Lily loves to read and she finds the library to be an adventure. She meets Milly, a girl who hates to read and who loves to go exploring. Initially aghast, Lily realizes Milly's outdoor exploits are adventures too. Large-scale double-page spreads, warm, rich-hued, and vibrant, make this a good read-aloud for an audience of both book-lovers and the reading-averse. SMG

Shireen, Nadia *Good Little Wolf*32 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86904-4 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96904-1 \$19.99

(3) A mild-mannered young wolf encounters the Big Bad Wolf, who challenges him to "howl at the moon," "blow houses in," and "eat people up"—in short, to behave like a "proper wolf." Shireen's illustrations make the most of the contrast between the toothy villain and the virtuous youngster in this humorous tale, which ends with a sly surprise. MFS

Siegel, Mark *Moving House*

32 pp. Roaring Brook ISBN 978-1-59643-635-0 \$16.99

(3) Joey and Chloe's parents decide to leave gloomy Foggytown. Lamentably, this means vacating their beloved house—until the house intervenes by coming to life and relocating to a hilltop. Others follow, and a satisfying spread depicts a colorful town above the fog. Fantastical words pair with animation-like art showing personified buildings and an awestruck family in this lively tale. KEH

Sierra, Judy *Zoozical*40 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86847-4 \$17.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96847-1 \$20.99

(4) Illustrated by Marc Brown. The zoo-animal cast from Sierra and Brown's *Wild About Books* beats the "midwinter doldrums" by putting on a musical. There's not much story after they decide to perform, but the rhymes are quite expert ("awoke, he" begets "karaoke" and "Hokey Pokey"), and as he's proved before, Brown can imbue even the homeliest of animals with remarkable humanity. NB

Slate, Jenny, and Dean Fleischer-Camp *Marcel the Shell with Shoes On: Things About Me*

40 pp. Penguin/Razorbill ISBN 978-1-59514-455-3 \$18.99

(3) Illustrated by Amy Lind. From YouTube hit to children's book: Marcel the Shell humorously describes his *Borrowers*-esque life (e.g., he jumps into a sock drawer to dry himself off). Eschewing stills, this spin-off book uses realistic paintings that retain the hipster charm that helped make the videos so popular. Fans will miss Slate's quirky voicing of Marcel, but they can hear her narrate the book online. JMB

Smallman, Steve *Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Bunny?*

32 pp. Good ISBN 978-1-56148-725-7 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Caroline Pedler. Four hungry little bunnies take turns searching for carrots, but each returns empty-handed. The last—and littlest—bunny won't be deterred by the "Big Bad Bully Bunny." Soft pastel-hued illustrations portraying a peaceful garden where the little bunnies gather carrots (and teach the bullying bunny a lesson) soften the blow of the BBBB's nasty words ("You're really, really ugly!"). SJW

▲ Smith, Lane *Grandpa Green*

32 pp. Roaring Brook ISBN 978-1-59643-607-7 \$16.99

(2) As his "great-grandkid" narrates Grandpa Green's life, the old man himself depicts its major events in his own felicitous medium: topiary, rendered by Smith in multimedia shades and shadows of evergreen. Meanwhile, Grandpa creates a new work that's revealed—in a double fold that recapitulates the book—to be the boy. A thoughtful, eloquent, and elegantly illustrated book to explore, consider, and read again. Review 9/11. JRL

Smith, Michael *Relativity / Relatividad*

32 pp. East West ISBN 978-0-9832278-3-0 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-0-9832278-9-2 \$8.95

(5) Illustrated by Octavio Oliva. Awkward rhymed English-language text (“Trees go slow, / don’t you know? / Trees grow high, / oh my, oh my”) attempts to encourage children to ponder the idea that everything is relative. Some of the Spanish translations rhyme, some of them don’t. The illustrations look like bad digital photos that have gone through the wrong end of Photoshop. TW

Smith, Michael *Thomas el T. rex: The Journey of a Young Dinosaur to Los Angeles / Thomas the T. rex: El viaje de un joven dinosaur a Los Angeles*

40 pp. East West ISBN 978-0-9832278-2-3 \$19.95

(5) Illustrated by Gayle Garner Roski. Thomas and Rita accompany an archaeologist to Montana to search for dinosaur fossils. Improbably, Thomas makes a major find within moments of arrival. This book was written for an exhibit at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County; with its preposterous plot and amateurish illustrations, it may not even sell in their bookstore. The appended photographs and notes are more interesting. TW

▲ Sneve, Virginia Driving Hawk *The Christmas Coat: Memories of My Sioux Childhood*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2134-3 \$16.95

(2) Illustrated by Ellen Beier. It’s a harsh winter in Virginia’s Sioux village. When donated clothing arrives, Virginia (the Episcopal priest’s daughter) gets last pick, and a flashy coat she covets goes to another girl. With its authentic portrait of a Sioux childhood and Christmas traditions (captured in watercolor and gouache illustrations) and its eventual happy ending, this is a quiet but affecting picture book. Review 11/11. MVP

Soman, David, and Jacky Davis *The Amazing Adventures of Bumblebee Boy*

40 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3418-0 \$16.99

(4) In this Ladybug Girl spin-off, Sam doesn’t want little brother Owen to mess up Sam’s imaginary adventures as alter-ego Bumblebee Boy. While Owen accumulates his own superhero accessories, Sam rejects his help until realizing it’s more fun to save the world with a partner. The illustrations are dynamic, but the text is wordy (and Owen’s baby-talk dialogue won’t win over older kids). HRB

Spalding, Andrea *Seal Song*

32 pp. Orca ISBN 978-1-55469-242-2 \$19.95

(3) Illustrated by Pascal Milelli. After Finn, a young fisher, rescues a magical shape-shifting seal (or selkie), she takes the form of a human girl to join him on land. When a sudden storm comes up, she saves Finn’s life but then must return to the sea forever. Dramatic oil paintings, particularly effective in their portrayal of the ocean and the selkie, illustrate the bittersweet, evocative story. MFS

Spinelli, Eileen *Do You Have a Dog?*

32 pp. Eerdmans ISBN 978-0-8028-5387-5 \$16.00

(4) Illustrated by Geraldo Valério. Rhyming text presents dogs that played important roles in the lives of historical figures (e.g., Meriwether Lewis, Annie Oakley, Billie Holiday). Each canine is described in a few pithy sentences; endpapers give slightly more information. Young readers may be inspired to create similar odes to their own four-legged friends. Acrylic illustrations with broad-textured brush strokes add life to the slight premise. CAL

Spinelli, Eileen *Miss Fox’s Class Shapes Up*

32 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-5171-4 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Anne Kennedy. In her fourth book, Miss Fox observes her students aren’t in good physical shape. She launches an exercise and healthy eating initiative, and with their families’ help the animals change their bad habits. The cartoon-style illustrations bring the lively (if slight) story to life. Health and fitness tips are featured on the endpapers. AK

▲ Spinelli, Eileen *The Perfect Christmas*

32 pp. Holt/Ottaviano ISBN 978-0-8050-8702-4 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by JoAnn Adinolfi. Abigail Archer (*The Perfect Thanksgiving*) and her family do Christmas Martha Stewart-style. Taking a less-manicured approach, the narrator’s family pulls out the old fake tree and the bargain bin decorations. A Christmas snowfall brings both families outside “together / laughing and dancing / through the snow.” Jolly collage art ties it all together, depicting each family’s traditions with finesse. Review 11/11. KF

Star Wars: Battles for the Galaxy

96 pp. DK ISBN 978-0-7566-7315-4 \$12.99

(4) Written by Daniel Wallace. Published spring 2011. Highlighting characters, weapons, and battlefield strategies from the six Lucas films, this *Star Wars* tie-in will engage fans of various ages. Photographs, diagrams, and sidebars combine with a narrative that reads like a military exercise manual. While newcomers will be put off by the chaotic design, the book may help die-hards better understand the layout of the galaxy. Glos., ind. TLD

Stein, David Ezra *Love, Mouserella*

32 pp. Penguin/Paulsen ISBN 978-0-399-25410-9 \$15.99

(3) After Grandmouse returns home to the country, Mouserella writes her a terrifically animated and funny letter (this book’s content). Though Mouserella’s sense of loss following her grandmother’s departure is the focus, the story isn’t maudlin. The pages of the vertically oriented volume are designed to resemble lined paper and feature Mouserella’s drawings and mementos: photographs, food smudges, a ketchup packet, etc. NB

Sutton, Benn *Hedgehog: A Sharp Lesson in Love*

40 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-196101-4 \$9.99

(4) Illustrated by Dan Pinto. Ready to find a sweetheart on Valentine’s Day, a hedgehog goes looking for someone to hug. Unfortunately, the other animals reject him because his

prickles make hugging painful. Then Hannah the armadillo, who's impervious to prickles, writes him a note, "I like your spikes," and he gets his hug at last. Textured illustrations in vivid colors complete this brief, amusing, adult-gear story. MFS

Tillman, Nancy *The Crown on Your Head*

32 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-64521-2 \$16.99

(5) In effusive, heavy-handed rhyming verses, Tillman assures children that everyone is born with a crown, symbolic of his or her unique nature and special abilities. The vivid illustrations show a child with a shimmering crown in various surreal settings—riding on a cheetah, for example, or sitting in a vast field of flowers. The sentimental offering has little child appeal. MFS

Torrey, Richard *A Hockey Story*

32 pp. Kane/Miller ISBN 978-1-61067-053-1 \$10.99

(4) A boy describes his first day on a new hockey team. Anxious what-if questions flood his thoughts: "What if no one talks to me?" Worries are assuaged by the friendly coach and teammates. Though the text is stilted, the familiar routine ("waking up really, really early," suiting up, breakfast after the game) will ring true to hockey families. Amiable illustrations temper the anxiety. CHS

Tuck, Justin *Home-Field Advantage*

40 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-0369-7 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Leonardo Rodriguez. In a conversational style, New York Giants defensive end Tuck relates the story of a traumatizing haircut—a reverse Mohawk—his twin sisters gave him in childhood. It's a slim premise for a story, but it's told with affection. Lively watercolor illustrations capture the feisty nature of the family; exaggerated expressions add to the humor of this slice-of-life scenario. CLS

Uhlberg, Myron *A Storm Called Katrina*

40 pp. Peachtree ISBN 978-1-56145-591-1 \$17.95

(4) Illustrated by Colin Bootman. Ten-year-old Louis Daniel remembers to grab his brass cornet when his family flees after Hurricane Katrina. In the overcrowded Superdome, Daddy gets separated from the group; Louis plays his horn midfield, and the family is reunited before the book's hopeful ending. The text is stiff, but it uses some powerful imagery; somber oils (and an appended author's note) help convey the storm's devastation. Reading list, websites. Bib. KEH

▲ Ungerer, Tomi *Christmas Eve at the Mellops'*

32 pp. Phaidon ISBN 978-0-7148-6250-7 \$12.95

Reissue (1960, Harper). Review 12/60.

▲ Ungerer, Tomi *The Mellops Go Diving for Treasure*

32 pp. Phaidon ISBN 978-0-7148-6248-4 \$12.95

Reissue (1957, Harper). Review 10/57.

▲ Ungerer, Tomi *The Mellops Strike Oil*

32 pp. Phaidon ISBN 978-0-7148-6249-1 \$12.95

Reissue (1958, Harper). Review 4/58.

(2) Three of Ungerer's books about the amusingly indefatigable pig family have been reissued. *Treasure* takes Mr. Mellop and the boys, Felix, Isidor, Casimir, and Ferdinand, to the high seas. In *Oil* they decide to build an oil rig (Mom's almost a casualty). *Christmas Eve* finds the piglets spreading holiday cheer. In storytelling and pictures, Ungerer's books have great originality and appeal. ERG

Urdahl, Catherine *Polka-dot Fixes Kindergarten*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-57091-737-0 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-57091-738-7 \$7.95

(4) Illustrated by Mai S. Kemble. Before Polka-dot's first day of kindergarten, fix-it king Grandpa gives her a fix-it kit, which comes in handy after she tussles with (implausibly nasty) classmate Liz. The germ of a good idea—Grandpa's influence sees Polka-dot through a rough patch—is hampered by some unconvincing dialogue. Watercolor, colored-pencil, and graphite illustrations show characters with Raggedy Ann-ish patches on their cheeks. NB

Vande Griek, Susan *Loon*

48 pp. Groundwood ISBN 978-1-55498-077-2 \$18.95

(3) K-3 Illustrated by Karen Reczuch. Written in loosely rhyming verse, this story follows a pair of common loons as they first incubate two eggs then help their hatchlings find food and avoid predators. Solid information about loons (e.g., migration, maturity, conservation details) is included in the backmatter. Handsome acrylic paintings showcase the birds' plumage. Reading list. BTM

Van Dusen, Chris *King Hugo's Huge Ego*

40 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5004-9 \$16.99

(3) An entire village puts up with its megalomaniacal king. When he gets on the wrong side of a maiden (who's really a sorceress), she decides to teach him a lesson to suit his crime. Well-built rhymes sustain the plot to the fabulous finish. The gouache art is loud and busy, but then again, demure and refined this story isn't. NB

van Mol, Sine *Meena*

32 pp. Eerdmans ISBN 978-0-8028-5394-3 \$17.00

(3) Illustrated by Carianne Wijffels. In this Belgian import, Christa, Klaas, and Thomas taunt Meena, an old woman whom they believe to be a witch. Even Meena's granddaughter can't persuade them otherwise. After the friends send a letter saying "go away or else!!!!" Meena reacts with compassion; friendship follows. The compelling illustrations add psychological depth to an honest story of childhood's fevered imaginings and inflicted cruelties. CLS

Vasilovich, Guy *The 13 Nights of Halloween*

40 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-180445-8 \$16.99

(3) This spooky-funny twist on "The Twelve Days of Christmas" presents thirteen nights of Halloween tricks and

treats. A huge-eyed, witchlike girl narrates the list of gifts “my mummy gave to me,” including a “2-headed snake,” “5 singing skulls,” “6 corpses caroling,” and “10 demons dancing.” Glossy, animated illustrations balance the ghoulish gifts with cartoon humor. CHS

Veldkamp, Tjibbe *Tom the Tamer*

32 pp. Lemniscaat ISBN 978-1-9359-5405-7 \$16.95

(3) Illustrated by Philip Hopman. In this zany tale, Tom cures his father’s fear of animals by secretly training exotic pets to pose as pieces of furniture. When the trick comes to light, Dad admits the animals aren’t so dangerous after all. A matter-of-fact narrative makes the preposterous seem possible, and the detailed tongue-in-cheek illustrations demonstrate how a polar bear, for example, can pretend to be an armchair. MFS

Vernick, Audrey *Teach Your Buffalo to Play Drums*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray
ISBN 978-0-06-176253-6 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Daniel Jennewein. In this follow-up to *Is Your Buffalo Ready for Kindergarten?*, an offstage narrator spends the book cajoling a girl to indulge her pet buffalo’s yen for drum lessons (“Encourage him!”). The book owes a nod to the *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* franchise, but Vernick sustains her riff nicely. Jennewein gets it and makes the characters harmless-looking, fun-loving goofballs. NB

Wagner-Robertson, Garry *The Evil Mailbox and the Super Burrito*

96 pp. Schiffer ISBN 978-0-7643-3856-4 \$16.99

(6) Illustrated by Connie Wagner. Brought to life by Professor I. Gotta G.O. Pee, a mailbox pursues a burrito that’s been abducted by creatures in a flying disk. Plot, prose, copyediting—in each case the quality is remarkably poor. Whether the amateurish art, created by the elementary-school-age author’s mother, is intended to look like the work of a child is immaterial: either way, it doesn’t succeed. NB

Wahl, Jan *The Art Collector*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-58089-270-4 \$15.95

(3) Illustrated by Rosalinde Bonnet. Oscar discovers he’s not skilled at *creating* art, but he develops a passion for *collecting* it. As he grows up, his collection expands until a museum is built to house it. Wahl promotes art appreciation for young children without didacticism (technical vocabulary—*etching*, *woodcut*—may need explanation). Bonnet’s illustrations mimic an array of stylistic movements within Oscar’s framed pictures. KEH

Waldman, Debby, and Rita Feutl *Room Enough for Daisy*

32 pp. Orca ISBN 978-1-55469-255-2 \$19.95

(4) Illustrated by Cindy Revell. Daisy’s mom is keen to convince her possessions-rich caricature of a daughter to donate some room-cluttering toys. (Daisy’s unsympathetic

opinions include “I need a bigger room!” and the classic “Life was so unfair.”) Upbeat digital art helps downplay the story’s message somewhat, but it’s still front-and-center. An appended “What’s Mitzvah Day?” page tells more about the Jewish practice of *tzedakah*. NB

Wallace, Nancy Elizabeth *Ready, Set, 100th Day!*

32 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5956-9 \$17.99

(4) Rabbit Minna tries to come up with the perfect collection to celebrate the one hundredth day of school. With help from her family, she gathers ten sets of different things for a picture-perfect project. The quality of some of the mixed-media illustrations is poor, but the art does help readers visualize the math concepts covered in the accessible text. BTK

Wallace, Nancy K. *The Christmas Cats*

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-58980-979-6 \$16.99

(5) Illustrated by Cathren Housley. Siblings Elizabeth Ann and Miss Mollie host a Christmas celebration for their friends. The girls’ eight rambunctious cats crash the party, pouncing onto the sweets-laden table; all is forgiven once they settle down. The text’s rhymes stumble, and the illustrations are stiff (though there’s some humor in them when the cats are running amuck). SMG

Walsh, Barbara *Sammy in the Sky*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4927-2 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Jamie Wyeth. When the tomboy narrator’s dog Sammy dies, she and her parents discover that they can remember him by looking at clouds and seeing the things Sammy loved. Walsh’s text about coming to terms with loss is comforting and accessible. Wyeth’s soft watercolor paintings create the quiet emotional context of the story. MVK

Wargin, Kathy-jo *S Is for Snowman: God’s Wintertime Alphabet*

40 pp. Zonderkidz ISBN 978-0-310-71661-7 \$15.99

(5) Illustrated by Richard Johnson. Children are invited to enjoy all of God’s winter creations (e.g., snow, frost, and hot chocolate) in this simple rhyming alphabet book. Bland art and undistinguished text assure that the book will appeal only to those searching for stories that bring God into every aspect of life. MVK

Warwick, Dionne, and David Freeman
Wooley *Little Man*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-57091-731-8 \$19.95

(4) Illustrated by Fred Willingham. A boy nicknamed Little Man has dreams of becoming a drummer and also earning money to buy a bike. He sticks with practicing his instrument even though his friends and brother make fun of him. Little Man is able to prove his skills at a neighborhood block party. The text is didactic but encouraging. Pastel and air-brush illustrations reflect the boy’s determination. HMS

▲ Weber, Elka *One Little Chicken*

32 pp. Tricycle ISBN 978-1-58246-374-2 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-1-58246-401-5 \$19.99

(2) Illustrated by Elisa Kleven. Leora takes care of an errant chicken while waiting for its owner to appear. One thing leads to another, and her family ends up with a herd of goats to present to the grateful chicken-misplacer. Weber's text is straightforward and humorous. Kleven's varied mixed-media illustrations, depicting an indeterminate Old Country setting, are full of texture and patterns. An author's note is appended. Review 9/11. ERG

Weitzman, Jacqueline Preiss *Superhero Joe*

32 pp. Simon/Wiseman ISBN 978-1-4169-9157-1 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Ron Barrett. Because his parents need his help, Joe—with his "Torch of Radiance" (flashlight), "Shield of Invincibility" (trash-can lid), and "Cape of Confidence" (bath towel)—overcomes his fear of the "Darkest Depths" (basement) to retrieve the "Staff of Power" (mop). The text is a little self-aware, but the setup is entertaining. Menacing furniture and clothing populate the shadowy corners of the comic book–style illustrations. RRW

Wells, Rosemary *Hands Off, Harry!*

40 pp. HarperCollins/Tegen ISBN 978-0-06-192112-4 \$14.99
LE ISBN 978-0-06-192113-1 \$15.89

(4) Kindergators series. Alligator Lola tells her parents about kindergarten classmate Harry, who can't keep his hands to himself at school. Harry first sits in time-out and then has a classroom intervention before learning to respect others' personal space. Wells's mixed-media collages, characteristically expressive and colorful, add welcome pep to the text that, while useful for lesson-teaching, doesn't sound like a kindergartner is narrating. BTK

Whelan, Gloria *The Boy Who Wanted to Cook*

32 pp. Sleeping Bear ISBN 978-1-58536-534-0 \$16.95
Illustrated by Steve Adams.

Whelan, Gloria *Megan's Year: An Irish Traveler's Story*

32 pp. Sleeping Bear ISBN 978-1-58536-449-7 \$16.95
Illustrated by Beth Peck.

(3) Tales of the World series. *Cook* focuses on a boy in the south of France who dreams of following in his chef father's footsteps. *Year* is about an Irish girl whose family members are nomadic Travelers. Whelan aptly describes the children's attitudes toward their unusual lives. Both books' illustrations are eye-pleasing and highlight unique aspects of each culture. Glos. SJW

Willis, Jeanne *I'm Sure I Saw a Dinosaur*

32 pp. Andersen ISBN 978-0-7613-8093-1 \$16.95

(3) Illustrated by Adrian Reynolds. An empty beach soon becomes crowded with townspeople, news crews, and even the military when one young boy cries dinosaur. Maybe he really did see a dinosaur—or perhaps it's just a clever (dia-

bolical, really) ploy to sell ice cream treats from his dad's beachside stand. Willis's rhymes are airtight, and Reynolds's cloudy illustrations set an appropriately foggy cold-weather scene. RRW

Wilson, Karma *Bear's Loose Tooth*

40 pp. McElderry ISBN 978-1-4169-5855-0 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Jane Chapman. When nervous Bear discovers his first loose tooth, his friends try (gently) to extract the wobbly bicuspid. In the end, it's Bear's own wiggling tongue that does the job. The text has some minor missteps in cadence. Chapman's illustrations include cute details, including a tooth fairy that leaves blueberries as payment. RRW

Witte, Anna *Lola's Fandango*

32 pp. Barefoot ISBN 978-1-84686-174-1 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-1-84686-681-4 \$9.99

(3) Illustrated by Micha Archer. Papi teaches Lola the fandango, a traditional Spanish dance. The story culminates in a surprise party for Mami, who dances with her daughter. Witte's text reproduces the sounds and rhythm of the dance, also reflected in the patterns and energy of Archer's rich collage illustrations. A CD includes an audio version. Paperback edition concurrently published in Spanish. Glos. AK

Wolfe, Myra *Charlotte Jane Battles Bedtime*

32 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-15-206150-0 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Maria Monescillo. Little pirate Charlotte Jane likes "to get all the juice out of my days! . . . Sleep is for landlubbers." Or so she thinks until staying up all night takes the swashbuckle out of her. When she grudgingly succumbs to bed, the "juicy" side of bedtime is revealed: dreams. Hearty text is well paired with digitally enhanced watercolors showing a household heavy on the pirate decor. RRW

Wortche, Allison *Rosie Sprout's Time to Shine*

40 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86721-7 \$17.99

(3) Illustrated by Patrice Barton. Rosie is so fed up with a constantly one-upping classmate that she does something unconscionable to the girl's plant-growing project—and then finds a way to make things right. There's not a misstep in sight, from Wortche's sure plotting to her subtle ending. Barton is uncanny at capturing the body language that says so much about children's moods and attitudes. NB

Wright, Johanna *Bandits*

32 pp. Roaring Brook/Porter ISBN 978-1-59643-583-4 \$16.99

(3) An omniscient narrator warns readers about bandits supposedly terrorizing a neighborhood: "They sneak and they creep. / Doing just what they please." Telling a different story are the illustrations, which depict a family of raccoons making nonthreatening nighttime mischief as neighbors look on. The text is tongue-in-cheek without going overboard, and there's much to look at in the starlit scenes. NB

Yazzie, Seraphine G. *Beauty Beside Me, Stories of My Grandmother's Skirts*

32 pp. Salina ISBN 978-1-893354-07-4 \$21.95

(5) Illustrated by Baje, Sr. Whitethorne. In this fictionalized text, Yazzie describes many of the activities her own grandmother performed: making fry bread, herding sheep, etc. Each task is accomplished while wearing a different-colored Navajo skirt, all shown in stiff illustrations. The text (in Navajo and English) is repetitive, hitting readers over the head with admiration for the “knowledge, wisdom, and love” imparted by Yazzie’s elders. **MLB**

Young, Cybèle *A Few Blocks*

48 pp. Groundwood ISBN 978-0-88899-995-5 \$18.95

(4) A little girl encourages her brother on their walk to school by inventing elaborate games for him to play along the way. Shades of gray become swirling colored illustrations as they enter the creative worlds Viola conjures up. The message about the power of imagination isn’t new, but the siblings’ relationship and the detailed illustrations are both engaging. **MVK**

Ziefert, Harriet *My Dog Thinks I’m a Genius*

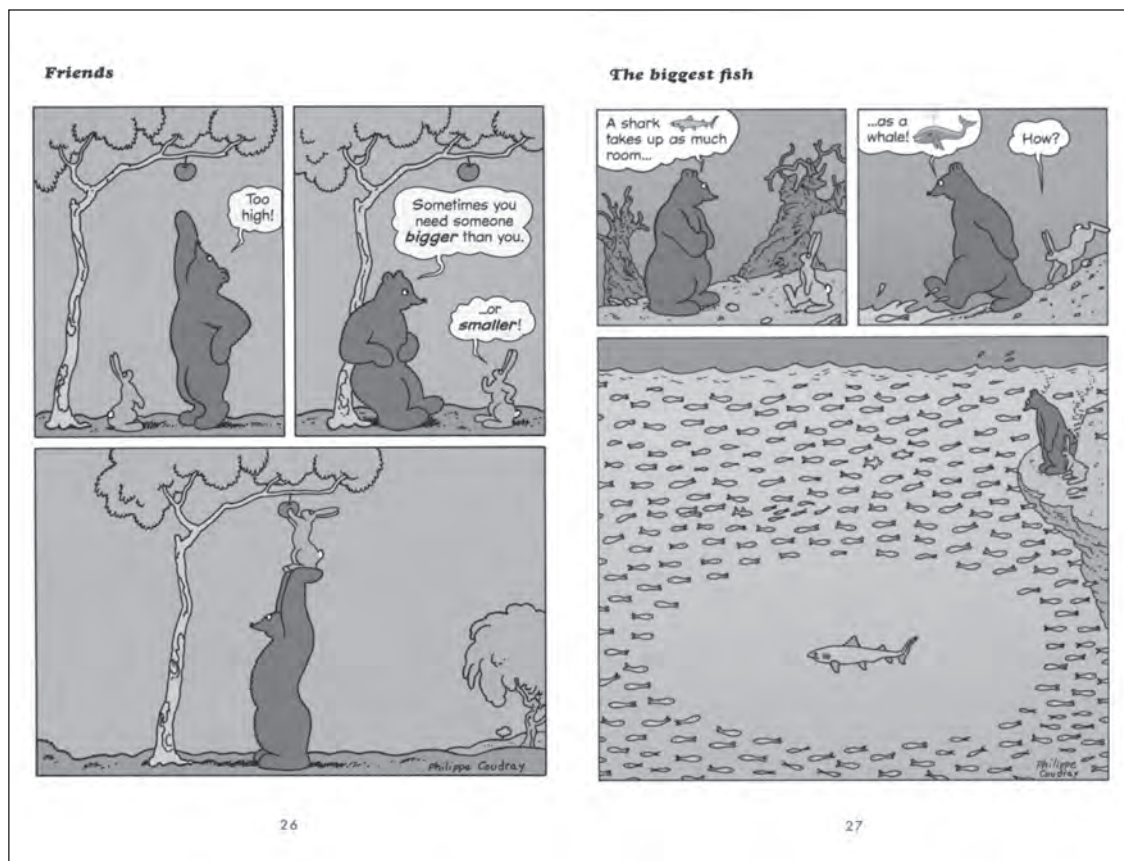
40 pp. Blue Apple ISBN 978-1-60905-059-7 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Barroux. A boy shares his artistic vision with his dog Louie, an appreciative admirer who watches from the sidelines. But Louie has untapped talent of his own; one day he takes advantage of his owner’s absence to explore his canine creative instincts. The illustrations reflect the explosion of color that comes with both artists’ inventiveness. **CAL**

Ziefert, Harriet *Puppy Is Lost*

40 pp. Blue Apple ISBN 978-1-60905-089-4 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Noah Woods. When Puppy doesn’t appear in time for dinner, Max embarks on a search that takes him here, there, and everywhere, but with no results; not even his “Lost Dog” posters do the trick. In the meantime, Puppy wanders the city looking in vain for Max. Busy, colorful drawings elevate the familiar story line. **CAL**



EASY READERS

Arnold, Tedd *Fly Guy vs. the Flyswatter!*

30 pp. Scholastic/Cartwheel ISBN 978-0-545-31286-8 \$6.99

(3) Buzz and Fly Guy are excited to embark on a school field trip, only to find out they're visiting a fly swatter factory. Readers will appreciate the hilarity that naturally ensues when the gregarious fly encounters his arch nemesis: Super Swatter 6000. Easy-to-read font, simple vocabulary, and a humorous story line provide ample entertainment for emergent readers. APF

Berenstain, Jan, and Mike Berenstain *The Berenstain Bears and the Shaggy Little Pony*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-168972-7 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-057419-2 \$3.99

(5) I Can Read Book series. At Farmer Ben's farm, Brother and Sister Bear help take care of Oscar, a "shaggy little pony." They learn how to ride and enter a horse show. In an unlikely twist, the other horses are scared of some leaves blowing in the wind (really?), but Oscar is steady as a rock. The cursory plot gives an unrealistic portrayal of horseback riding. ALB

Berenstain, Stan, and Jan Berenstain *The Berenstain Bears Reap the Harvest*

32 pp. Zonderkidz ISBN 978-0-310-72277-9 \$6.99
Reissue (1994, Reader's).

Berenstain, Stan, and Jan Berenstain *The Berenstain Bears: The Trouble with Secrets*

32 pp. Zonderkidz ISBN 978-0-310-72713-2 \$6.99
Reissue (1992, Reader's).

(6) With Mike Berenstain. Living Lights series. In *Reap*, Brother and Sister finagle summer jobs from Farmer Ben. In *Secrets* (told in terrible rhyme), Lizzy and Fred stalk the Berenstain sibs through the woods, convinced they have a secret. Both books link Christian values with good behavior in a way that is convoluted and forced (and, especially in *Secret*, confusing: "Secrets are fun. / But it's more fun to share!"). ERG

Björkman, Steve *Dinosaurs Don't, Dinosaurs Do*

24 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2355-2 \$14.95

(3) I Like to Read series. This easy-reader picture book features entertaining patterned text about good—and bad—manners. The dos and dont's are explained in simple terms, and the humorous cartoon illustrations (some with speech-bubble dialogue) effectively show how each dinosaur's good or bad behavior makes others feel. The familiar words and text repetition will help new readers gain confidence. SRA

Brown, Jeff *Flat Stanley and the Firehouse*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-143006-0 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-143009-1 \$3.99

(5) Written by Lori Haskins Houran. Illustrated by Macky Pamintuan. I Can Read Book series. Flat Stanley and his family head to the fire station after Stanley and his brother win a fire safety poster contest. The digital illustrations are engagingly bright and cheerful, but the text is distractingly choppy; sentences don't always follow one another in a logical way. (And why must Mrs. Lambchop offer to "tidy up" for the firefighters?) ERG

Bunting, Eve *Frog and Friends*

37 pp. Sleeping Bear ISBN 978-1-58536-548-7 \$9.95
PE ISBN 978-1-58536-689-7 \$3.99

(3) Illustrated by Josée Masse. I Am a Reader! series. In three stories about friendship, cute-as-can-be Frog and his friends try to identify a mysterious object in the pond, re-gift an imperfect—or is it perfect?—scarf, and help an escaped hippo appreciate zoo life. The thoughtful placement of the illustrations supports the easy-to-read text well, giving new readers a good foundation for more challenging books. SRA

Caple, Kathy *Duck & Company Christmas*

48 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2239-5 \$15.95

(3) The Duck & Company bookstore is preparing for Christmas. In seven brief chapters, quirky characters stop by, each adding to the comical mishaps. When a snowstorm strands everyone in the store overnight, the gang turns the event into the makings of a memorable Christmas. Festive ink and gouache illustrations add to the merriment. CHS

Capucilli, Alyssa Satin *Starring Katy Duck*

24 pp. Simon Spotlight ISBN 978-1-4424-1975-9 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4424-1974-2 \$3.99

(4) Illustrated by Henry Cole. New ed. (2008). Ready-to-Read series. Published spring 2011. Katy Duck is thrilled to dance in the class show. But when the curtain goes up, Katy feels shy and has to gather her courage to perform. The art is bright and lively (though Katy occasionally falls into the gutter). The text is revised from *Katy Duck, Center Stage*, and the illustrations come from several other Katy Duck stories. JB

Catrow, David *Max Spaniel: Best in Show*

32 pp. Scholastic/Orchard ISBN 978-0-545-12277-1 \$6.99

(3) Charismatic and humorously overconfident dog Max Spaniel brings readers along to his dog show where Max does anything but bark, shake hands, and roll over: "There are many dogs in the show, but there is only one me." Zippy jokes and wild-and-crazy illustrations will make readers root for the wacky pup. APF

Cleary, Daniel *Prickles vs. the Dust Bunnies*

40 pp. Blue Apple ISBN 978-1-60905-080-1 \$10.99
PE ISBN 978-1-60905-185-3 \$4.99

(3) Balloon Toons series. Uptight housecat Prickles demands that mouse Squeeky get rid of his friends—some dust bunnies who have taken up residence under the couch—before the "Big Cheese" comes home. There's lots of hilarity in the speech-bubble text (a bunny: "We're real. We're interesting. We're organic") and the art (the bunnies look like smudgy fingerprints with oversize humanlike eyeballs). NB

▲ Coudray, Philippe *Benjamin Bear in "Fuzzy Thinking"*

32 pp. Candlewick/TOON ISBN 978-1-935179-12-2 \$12.95

(1) Translated by Leigh Stein. Toon Book series. In these twenty-seven single-page stories, Coudray creates a set of visual haiku for emerging readers featuring Benjamin Bear and a variety of his friends. The koan-like content suggests something akin to lateral thinking for tots—an introduction to fuzzy logic. The book is original, deep-down funny, and, most important, the adventures are steeped in the rare quality of imaginative kindness. Review 11/11. SE

Day, Alexandra *Carl and the Kitten*

32 pp. Square Fish ISBN 978-0-312-68196-8 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-0-312-68197-5 \$3.99

(3) My Readers series. In this easy reader starring the beloved rottweiler, "One of Carl's friends needs help. Who can it be?" It's Mama Cat; her mischievous kitten has climbed up a tree and can't get down. Large print, controlled vocabulary, simple sentences and story arcs, supportive pictures, and plentiful white space make this a good choice for the newest readers. ERG

Dungy, Tony, and Lauren Dungy *Ruby's New Home*

32 pp. Simon Spotlight ISBN 978-1-4424-2948-2 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4169-9784-9 \$3.99

(4) Illustrated by Vanessa Brantley Newton. Ready-to-Read series. A family happily welcomes home its new puppy, Ruby. At bedtime, however, each child claims, "Ruby is my dog." Mom's gentle reminder about sharing works, as everyone learns, "We can share taking care . . . share playing," and "Share Ruby's love, too!" Colorful illustrations of the perky puppy and loving family support the sappy story. CHS

Farley, Robin *Mia and the Dance for Two*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-173304-8 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-173303-1 \$3.99

(3) Illustrated by Aleksey Ivanov and Olga Ivanov. I Can Read Book series. Dancing kitten Mia (*Mia and the Too Big Tutu*) stars in another ballet-themed story. When her dancing partner gets sick, Mia finds herself with two new partners and ends up in a ballet trio. Muted illustrations catch the movement of ballet and the expressions of dismay and happiness in the simple story. Glos. AK

Feldman, Thea *Harry Cat and Tucker Mouse: Starring Harry*

32 pp. Square Fish ISBN 978-0-312-68168-5 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-1-312-68169-2 \$3.99

(4) Illustrated by Olga Ivanov and Aleksey Ivanov. My Readers series. Night owl Harry Cat's new lifestyle—as a celebrated actor—causes jealousy in homebody Tucker Mouse (“Harry is a star now . . . I have to let him go”). When Harry realizes Tucker's feelings, he quits the play to spend time with his friend. These aren't the Tucker and Harry that George Selden fans know, but the story, with its imitation-Garth-Williams illustrations, is mildly diverting. ERG

Gilman, Grace *Dixie Loves School Pet Day*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-171912-7 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-171911-0 \$3.99

(3) Illustrated by Sarah McConnell. Color by Joe Merkel. I Can Read Book series. Emma brings Dixie, her trying-to-be-well-behaved dog, to school on pet day. In an act of exuberance, oh-so-friendly Dixie accidentally sets two birds free. When the whole class tries without success to recapture them, Dixie comes to the rescue. Expressive, lively illustrations pair well with the accessible, child-friendly text. BB

Gravel, Elise *A Day in the Office of Doctor Bugspit*

40 pp. Blue Apple ISBN 978-1-60905-092-4 \$10.99
PE ISBN 978-1-60905-182-2 \$4.99

(4) Balloon Toons series. Watch Dr. Bugspit (who resembles a pink slug) treat all sorts of patients at his “outer-space clinic.” His “modern equipment” includes an electric train set, and among his reference books is *How to Sleep at Work*. The jokes (punning, silly, gross-out) are good but go on for too long. Creature-populated comics-style art illustrates the tale. NB

Grindley, Sally *Queen Ella's Feet*

24 pp. New Forest LE ISBN 978-1-84898-513-1 \$24.25
Illustrated by Sandra Aguilar.

Grindley, Sally *Snail Trail*

24 pp. New Forest LE ISBN 978-1-84898-512-4 \$24.25
Illustrated by Mike Phillips.

Hay, Sam *Chuck and Duck*

24 pp. New Forest LE ISBN 978-1-84898-509-4 \$24.25
Illustrated by Ann Johns.

Hay, Sam *Wish Fish*

24 pp. New Forest LE ISBN 978-1-84898-508-7 \$24.25
Illustrated by Katie May.

Ryan, Anne Marie, and Francis Opuminji *A Duck in Luck!*

24 pp. New Forest LE ISBN 978-1-84898-506-3 \$24.25
Illustrated by Florencia Denis.

Ryan, Anne Marie *Top Dog*

24 pp. New Forest LE ISBN 978-1-84898-505-6 \$24.25
Illustrated by Vian Oelofsen.

(4) My Phonics Readers series. These easy readers begin by introducing the stories' focus sounds as well as highlighting difficult exceptions (pronunciation guides are appended). Because the texts are phonics-based, the sentences can be stilted or contrived; however, the books will likely boost a new reader's confidence. The variety of illustration styles are each eye-catching and appropriate. Additional information about phonics is included for adults. SH

Grogan, John *Marley: Messy Dog*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-198940-7 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-198939-1 \$3.99

(5) Text by Susan Hill. Illustrated by Richard Cowdrey and Lydia Halverson. I Can Read Book series. Published spring 2011. In another easy reader centered on Grogan's well-known pet Lab, Marley escapes from the garage and causes trouble when Mommy leaves off room-painting to answer the phone. Cutesy illustrations and prosaic text depict the none-too-creative antics. BB

Hapka, Catherine *Pony Scouts: At the Show*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-125542-7 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-125544-1 \$3.99

(3) Illustrated by Anne Kennedy. I Can Read Book series. Published spring 2011. Pony Scouts Meg, Annie, and Jill, go to a horse show where Jill competes against a girl in fancy riding clothes on a fancy bay pony. While going over poles the bay pony gets scared, but Jill's pony, Apples, takes it in stride. Friendship and good sportsmanship mark this naturally paced easy reader, which is supported by cheery illustrations. Glos. ALB

Hayes, Geoffrey *A Poor Excuse for a Dragon*

48 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-87180-1 \$12.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96867-9 \$14.99
PE ISBN 978-0-375-86867-2 \$3.99

(3) Step into Reading series. Fred the dragon leaves home with a list of dragon-esque tasks (e.g., “run amok,” “eat people”). It turns out Fred is not so great at—or interested in—these things, so he makes his own path. Short, simple sentences; light humor; and colorful, silly illustrations make this a solid choice for newly independent readers. The book would also work well as a read-aloud. EJM

Kann, Victoria *Pinkalicious: The Pinkerrific Playdate*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-192884-0 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-192883-3 \$3.99

Kann, Victoria *Pinkalicious: Pinkie Promise*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-192888-8 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-192887-1 \$3.99

(5) I Can Read Book series. In *Promise*, Pinkalicious uses all her friend's pink paint even though she said she wouldn't. *Playdate* finds the pink one with a new pal. The texts are gratingly cutesy ("Jelly does not taste pink-a-yummy if you are eating all by yourself"), and the illustrations are one-note (there are a couple of cute pictures in *Playdate*). ERG

Knight, Hilary, and Steven Kroll *Nina in "That Makes Me Mad!"*

32 pp. Candlewick/TOON ISBN 978-1-935179-10-8 \$12.95

(3) Toon Book series. In this collection of short, comic-style vignettes, feisty Nina capably describes situations that drive her crazy. While some tales vent personal frustrations (misplacing a toy, having trouble getting dressed, picking a boring activity), many of her pet peeves are directed at her parents' rules, broken promises, and blow-offs. Children will identify with Nina in these humorously depicted and emotion-packed situations. SRA

Lewis, J. Patrick *Tugg and Teeny: Jungle Surprises*

37 pp. Sleeping Bear LE ISBN 978-1-58536-515-9 \$9.95
PE ISBN 978-1-58536-686-6 \$3.99

(4) Illustrated by Christopher Denise. I Am a Reader! series. Published spring 2011. In three short stories, the gorilla and monkey buds help their friends track down some missing possessions, judge a zebra race, and investigate a "kite bird." There's not a lot at stake in the episodic tales, but they're diverting for new readers. Cheerful digital-looking illustrations (some a little out of focus) have a cartoony *Lion King*-esque look. ERG

Mayer, Mercer *Just Helping My Dad*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-083564-4 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-083563-7 \$3.99

(4) My First I Can Read Book series. Published spring 2011. Mayer's Little Critter is excited to help his dad do chores around the house and run some errands. As always, Little Critter tries his best, but he somehow manages to make things more difficult for his ever-patient parent (perhaps the book's real audience). Mayer's familiar pictures extend the easy-to-read text. BB

McMahon, Kara *Friday the Scaredy Cat*

24 pp. Simon Spotlight ISBN 978-1-4424-3612-1 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4424-2293-3 \$3.99

(4) Illustrated by Maddy McClellan. Ready-to-Read series. Published spring 2011. Goofy-looking Friday the black cat is proud of his fangs but scared of things like thunder, lightning, doorbells, and car horns, all of which make him jump, run, and hide. He's not afraid of ghosts at all, but ghosts are scared of scaredy-cat Friday. Humorous, off-kilter illustrations enliven the somewhat random story line. SH

McNamara, Margaret *Class Picture Day*

32 pp. Simon Spotlight ISBN 978-1-4424-3611-4 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4169-9173-1 \$3.99

(3) Illustrated by Mike Gordon. Ready-to-Read: Robin Hill School series. Published spring 2011. Emma is not happy about having to wear an eye patch on class picture day. Her confidence is boosted after her dad and teacher surprise everyone by having two pictures taken: one with just Emma in the eye patch, the other with everyone wearing one. Gordon's dependable illustrations add humor and kid-appeal to McNamara's insightful story. BB

McPhail, David *Boy, Bird, and Dog*

24 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2346-0 \$14.95

(4) I Like to Read series. In this easy-reader picture book, a boy attaches a rope to a pot and, with help from a bird, pulls his dog up into his tree house. He then hauls up a yummy snack from Mom. New readers will appreciate the repetition of familiar words in this simple story; a couple of awkward vocabulary-controlled sentences ("They saw and saw") are distracting. SRA

Meisel, Paul *See Me Run*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2349-1 \$14.95

(3) I Like to Read series. In this easy-reader picture book, a dog is having fun playing chase with his canine friends. Soon they start digging, only to uncover an entire dinosaur skeleton—which then gets up, gets mad, and starts chasing the dogs: "And now we run again!" New readers will appreciate the repetition in the easy-to-read text and the humorous pictures of the playful pups. SRA

Mozelle, Shirley *Zack's Alligator and the First Snow*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-147370-8 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-147372-2 \$3.99

(3) Illustrated by James Watts. I Can Read Book series. When snow accidentally falls into Zack's pocket, his alligator key chain, Bridget, who "grew when she got wet," comes alive. Zack introduces Bridget (who's never seen snow) to the wonders of snow angels, snowmen, and sledding before their adventurous day draws to a close. Cheerful, unfussy illustrations reinforce the text's energy and humor. JB

Naujokaitis, Pranas T. *The Totally Awesome Epic Quest of the Brave Boy Knight*

40 pp. Blue Apple ISBN 978-1-60905-099-3 \$10.99
PE ISBN 978-1-60905-183-9 \$4.99

(4) Balloon Toons series. A boy and his Bigfoot-like friend named Butterscotch imagine they're knights. They confront a monster that's destroying a princess's kingdom and seek out hidden treasure before the boy heads off to dreamland. The fast-paced cartoon-format adventures and slang-heavy text won't be every new reader's cup of tea, but some will be hooked. DE

Olivia Becomes a Vet

24 pp. Simon Spotlight ISBN 978-1-4424-2860-7 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4424-2859-1 \$3.99

Olivia Goes Camping

24 pp. Simon Spotlight ISBN 978-1-4424-2253-7 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4424-2135-6 \$3.99

(5) Adapted by Alex Harvey. Illustrated by Jared Osterhold. Ready-to-Read series. Published spring 2011. In *Vet*, when the veterinarian cures Julian's pet lizard, Olivia daydreams about a future healing animals. *Camping* is more disjointed: Olivia teaches her squeamish best friend five things for a great camping trip. The texts, based on screenplays, are easy to read, but the soulless illustrations and slight stories don't offer much reward. SH

Parish, Herman *Amelia Bedelia Makes a Friend*

32 pp. Greenwillow ISBN 978-0-06-207516-1 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-207515-4 \$3.99

(3) Illustrated by Lynne Avril. I Can Read Book series. When young Amelia Bedelia's best friend, Jen, moves out of the neighborhood, Amelia is bummed. But after an elderly woman moves into Jen's old house, Amelia learns that best friends can be any age. Colorful and detailed gouache and pencil illustrations complement and expand the story, showing Amelia's trademark literal-mindedness. LB

Peyo *The Snow Giant*

32 pp. Simon Spotlight/Nickelodeon
ISBN 978-1-4424-3610-7 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4424-2892-8 \$3.99

(6) Ready-to-Read: The Smurfs series. To heal Papa's foot, the Smurfs head to Ice Mountain in search of the elusive scarlet snow flower. Unbeknownst to them, the mountain is also home to the Snow Giant (part abominable snowman, part King Kong), who saves Smurfette from the edge of a cliff. Cartoon illustrations accompany the pointless and banal plot. CHS

Ries, Lori *Aggie Gets Lost*

48 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-57091-633-5 \$12.95

(3) Illustrated by Frank W. Dormer. Ben and his dog Aggie's fourth adventure begins with the two playing in the park. Aggie runs away, and Ben, with the same determination and care he's always shown for his pet, vows to find her. Ries's hallmarks—predictable, natural language; defined structure (with chapter-break markers)—continue here. Dormer's gray watercolor washes effectively reflect Ben's despair, while touches of bright orange signal his determination. BC

Rylant, Cynthia *Annie and Snowball and the Thankful Friends*

40 pp. Simon Spotlight ISBN 978-1-4169-7200-6 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Suçie Stevenson. Annie loves Thanksgiving and wants to fill her house to celebrate, but with such a small family, she and cousin Henry have to brainstorm about whom to invite. She makes beautiful sparkly invita-

tions for friends and neighbors who are alone on the holiday. This warm episode in the popular series is a satisfying story for new readers. SH

Rylant, Cynthia *Mr. Putter and Tabby Ring the Bell*

44 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-15-205071-9 \$14.99

(3) Illustrated by Arthur Howard. One "crispy fall" day, Mr. Putter, nostalgic for the sights and smells of school, encourages his neighbor and her "showy" dog to accompany Tabby and himself as show-and-tell guests in a first-grade classroom. The pets don't actually know any tricks, but the comical illustrations, filled with humorous details, take full advantage of the mayhem they cause at school. SH

Schaefer, Lola M. *Mittens, Where Is Max?*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-170227-3 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-170226-6 \$3.99

(3) Illustrated by Susan Kathleen Hartung. My First I Can Read Book series. Mittens the cat wants to play with his friend Max the dog, but Mittens can't find him anywhere. He checks the doghouse and the back steps, then discovers that while he's been looking for Max, Max has been looking for him. New readers will appreciate the simple and repetitive text alongside the warm and friendly illustrations. JB

Scieszka, Jon *Kat's Maps*

24 pp. Simon Spotlight ISBN 978-1-4169-4159-0 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4169-4148-4 \$3.99

(4) Illustrated by David Shannon, Loren Long, and David Gordon. Ready-to-Read: Jon Scieszka's Trucktown series. Published spring 2011. Truck Kat loves to make maps of everything including her room and town. When Kat gives a surprise map to her friend Jack, he follows it precisely over highways and under Race Bridge to "an art show of all . . . Kat's maps." Though the text is easy to read, the payoff is lackluster compared to all that buildup. CHS

Scotton, Rob *Splat the Cat and the Duck with No Quack*

32 pp. HarperCollins ISBN 978-0-06-197858-6 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-197857-9 \$3.99

Scotton, Rob *Splat the Cat: Good Night, Sleep Tight*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-197856-2 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-197855-5 \$3.99

Text by Natalie Engel.

(4) Illustrated by Robert Eberz. I Can Read Book series. Published spring 2011. In *Sleep Tight*, Splat spends a restless night camping with annoying cat Spike, who eats Splat's food and rips his sleeping bag. In *No Quack*, Splat discovers "a duck lacking in quacking"; nothing works to resuscitate its quack—not food, funny faces, music—until Mrs. Wimpy-dimple uncovers the problem. As usual, logic is secondary to bouncy texts and silly situations. CHS

Sierra, Judy *Never Kick a Ghost: And Other Silly Chillers*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-143519-5 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-143521-8 \$3.99

(3) Illustrated by Pascale Constantin. I Can Read Book series. Five very short stories, some adapted from folklore, alternate between laughing at fear and reveling in it. Kicking a ghost turns out deadly in one story, but a monster in another does nothing but slobber. New readers who can handle ghosts that stay ghostly will tell their spooky new stories with pride. Illustrations let in enough light to comfort trepidatious readers. SF

Steinke, Aron Nels *The Super-Duper Dog Park*

40 pp. Blue Apple ISBN 978-1-60905-093-1 \$10.99
PE ISBN 978-1-60905-184-6 \$4.99

(4) Balloon Toons series. Four friends grab their pets and spend a day at the Super-Duper Dog Park. The place features scads of entertainment options, including a bouncy house for dogs and their owners. There's not much story here; instead, it's a pleasant-enough tour of Steinke's rich, dog-centric imagination. The energetic pictures do well by being calmly outlined in black and colored in understated hues. NB

Thompson, Lauren *Mouse Loves School*

24 pp. Simon Spotlight ISBN 978-1-4424-2899-7 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4424-2898-0 \$3.99

(3) Illustrated by Buket Erdogan. New ed. (2003). Ready-to-Read series. Published spring 2011. In this easy reader version of the picture book *Mouse's First Day of School*, Thompson describes what Mouse finds when he rides to school in a backpack: "Mouse finds juice. Mouse finds fruit and cookies. It is snack time! *Sip, slurp, crunch!*" Mouse also finds "his favorite thing. Mouse finds friends!" Illustrations in glowing colors provide appealing close-ups of Mouse and his discoveries. ERG

Willems, Mo *Happy Pig Day!*

57 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-4342-0 \$8.99

(3) Elephant & Piggie Book series. While Piggie ecstatically explains why Happy Pig Day "is the best day of the year," Gerald feels increasingly dejected; he's not a pig so he doesn't belong. The story ends humorously as Piggie clarifies how Gerald can participate. Willems's masterful, spare illustrations focus on the characters' changing emotions and include some humorous surprises (see: costumed "pigs" at the end). CR

Yee, Wong Herbert *Mouse and Mole: A Perfect Halloween*

48 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-55152-4 \$14.99

(3) In their sixth book, friends Mouse and Mole have rather different feelings about Halloween. Gung-ho Mouse enjoys scaring nervous Mole, but when Mole is too afraid to go trick-or-treating, Mouse realizes it's time to change tactics. The four chapters also include a silly story about a pumpkin contest. Yee's appropriately challenging text and amusing illustrations continue to engage new readers. JMB

Auntie Fine-Fine started to dance right there in the market!

Then Auntie Fine-Fine came towards me. Grandfather gripped my shoulder.

"Cleva boy!" Auntie Fine-Fine shouted.

"Go buy me one!" Mama B demanded.

"Red one! I want red one!" yelled Mama Coca-Cola.

"Cleva boy!" Auntie Fine-Fine repeated, squeezing my cheek.



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She pressed some money in my hand. It was enough to buy sweets *and* fritters! I smiled my No. 1 smile.

Now all the aunties were pressing money on me. "Go and buy! Go and buy!" they shouted.

I looked up at Grandfather. His eyebrows were raised. Mama was laughing. Grandmother shaking her head. Trouble had been shaking me with its teeth, now it was throwing me back to that stall.



YOUNGER FICTION

▲ Atinuke *The No. 1 Car Spotter*

112 pp. Kane/Miller PE ISBN 978-1-61067-051-7 \$5.99

(2) Illustrated by Warwick Johnson Cadwell. Oluwalase Babatunde Benson, called No. 1, sits with his grandfather calling out the makes and models of passing cars. No. 1 faces challenges of life in a modern-day African village where the men have left to seek work in the city. Atinuke's story has humor while introducing serious topics. Energetic black-and-white illustrations, with frequent perspective changes, add movement. Review 11/11. R. SMITH

Atwood, Margaret, and Joyce Barkhouse *Anna's Pet*

32 pp. Lorimer ISBN 978-1-55277-718-3 \$14.95

(5) Illustrated by Ann Blades. Reissue (1980). City child Anna, who is visiting her farm-dwelling grandparents, hopes to leave with a pet. There is some useful information about animal habitats, but Anna's ignorance is eye-roll-worthy ("Snakes like places where it's hot and dry. So I'm going to put my snake into the oven"). The illustrations, like the text, are stiff and also somewhat dated. NB

▲ Barrows, Annie *Ivy + Bean: No News Is Good News*

127 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-0-8118-6693-4 \$14.99

(2) Illustrated by Sophie Blackall. Ivy and Bean start a neighborhood newspaper, selling subscriptions to afford their own fancy cheese; as Bean's mom says, "Lowfat Bell-deloon cheese in a special just-for-you serving size costs five dollars for six little bitty pieces of cheese, so if you want it, you can pay for it yourself." Barrows and Blackall continue to feed off each other's creativity with hilarious results. Review 1/12. JMB

Bauer, Marion Dane *The Very Little Princess: Rose's Story*

122 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-85692-1 \$12.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-95692-8 \$15.99

PE ISBN 978-0-375-85694-5 \$4.99

(3) Illustrated by Elizabeth Sayles. Loner Rose finds a tiny china doll in her attic. Her tears bring the doll to life, and at first the surprise is enchanting. But Princess Regina considers Rose her servant, and it becomes trying to be at Regina's constant beck and call. Magic, independence, and growth are at the heart of this charmingly told story illustrated with black-and-white drawings. SH

Bently, Peter *Casketball Capers*

91 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-8462-0 \$13.99
PE ISBN 978-0-8075-8463-7 \$4.99

Bently, Peter *Ghoul Trip*

91 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-8464-4 \$13.99
PE ISBN 978-0-8075-8465-1 \$4.99

(3) Illustrated by Chris Harrison. Vampire School series. Lee and his friends attend vampire school. In these first two series entries, they have exciting adventures with werewolves, bats, and Fangless folk. The harmless ghouls also form solid friendships and model a good work ethic. Easy-to-read texts, with occasional changes in font and cheerful black-and-white drawings, make the books approachable and engaging. MJS

Brown, Jeff *The Australian Boomerang Bonanza*

91 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-157435-1 \$15.99

(4) Illustrated by Macky Pamintuan. Flat Stanley's Worldwide Adventures series. Flat Stanley and his brother have a blast surfing and snorkeling at the Great Barrier Reef after winning a trip to the land down under. But when the siblings fashion Stanley into a boomerang, a gust of wind blows him deep into the Outback. This mildly amusing adventure will please fans of the series. Cartoonish drawings appear throughout. CLS

▲ **Cameron, Ann** *Spunky Tells All*

106 pp. Farrar/Foster ISBN 978-0-374-38000-7 \$15.99

(2) Illustrated by Lauren Castillo. Newly independent readers see Julian and Huey (*The Stories Julian Tells*; *The Stories Huey Tells*) from the point of view of Huey's dog in this beginning chapter book. Short, near-episodic chapters give voice to Spunky's life with humans; magical realism and mythology take young readers beyond the everyday occurrences usually covered in books for them. There's much to contemplate and enjoy here. Review 11/11. BC

▲ **Crowley, Joy** *Friends: Snake and Lizard*

126 pp. Gecko ISBN 978-1-877579-01-1 \$16.95

(2) Illustrated by Gavin Bishop. The beguiling pair introduced in *Snake and Lizard* now share a burrow and are business partners, too. They bicker constantly; still, the outcomes are fair, reasonable, and often capped with a delightfully ironic twist. Their unobtrusively philosophical debates are nifty blends of fact, hearsay, and comic misconstruction. Bishop's colorful spot art nicely reinforces the affectionate characterizations and the humor. Review 1/12. JRL

Duey, Kathleen *The Full Moon*

115 pp. Simon/Aladdin ISBN 978-1-4169-8462-7 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4169-8463-4 \$4.99

(3) Illustrated by Sandara Tang. Faeries' Promise series. Alida's faerie colony adjusts to living in hiding in the meadow while making preparations for the upcoming winter using both old and new magic. The faeries and their human neighbors take one step closer to living in harmony, and Alida's path becomes unexpectedly entwined

with Ellen, daughter of the evil Lord Dunraven. The stakes are thus gently raised in this unassuming, entertaining series. SH

Enderle, Dotti *Curses!*

80 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-626-3 \$25.65

Enderle, Dotti *Honk!*

80 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-624-9 \$25.65

Enderle, Dotti *Never! Never! Never!*

80 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-625-6 \$25.65

Enderle, Dotti *Pop!*

80 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-623-2 \$25.65

(4) Illustrated by Howard McWilliam. Calico Chapter Books: Ghost Detectives series. In books seven through ten, young ghost detectives Malcolm and Dandy encounter bubblegum that tries to chew them up, a haunted school bus, a not-so-sweet sugar-factory ghost bent on revenge, and a pharaoh's curse. Stilted dialogue aside, the large print, simple plots, and comic-style illustrations make these light books accessible for those not ready for Goosebumps. LCF

English, Karen *Nikki & Deja: Election Madness*

108 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-43558-9 \$14.99

(4) Illustrated by Laura Freeman. Deja decides to run for student body president with a reluctant Nikki as her campaign manager. The story arc is familiar—the best friends come to odds in all the expected ways before reconciling—but the book's ending is realistic (and somewhat surprising). Occasional black-and-white illustrations reflect the friends' personalities. MJS

Fields, Jan, Adapter *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*

112 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-610-2 \$17.95
Illustrated by Antonio Javier Caparo.

Mullarkey, Lisa, Adapter *Johanna Spyri's Heidi*

112 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-613-3 \$17.95
Illustrated by Mike Lacey.

Mullarkey, Lisa, Adapter *L. M. Montgomery's Anne of Green Gables*

112 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-612-6 \$17.95
Illustrated by Patricia Castelao.

(5) Calico Chapter Books: Calico Illustrated Classics series. These abridged editions retain some of the flavor of the original books while removing dialects and unfamiliar words; many of the details and vibrancy that make these works classics are lost. With these glorified plot summaries, young readers may not seek out the originals (almost within their grasp in the case of *Anne* and *Heidi*). The black-and-white illustrations are also bland. MJS

Galante, Cecilia *Willa Bean's Cloud Dreams*

103 pp. Random LE ISBN 978-0-375-96947-8 \$12.99
PE ISBN 978-0-375-86947-1 \$4.99

(4) Illustrated by Kristi Valiant. Stepping Stone: Little Wings series. Willa Bean doesn't mind being different from most cupids: she has freckles, purple wings, and wild, curly hair. What really worries her is that she has never flown, and her first day at Cupid Academy is fast approaching. Encouraged by her family and best friend, she succeeds. Willa's got pluck, but some readers will find her cutesy interjections ("Ring-a-ding-doodad") annoying. GBH

Giff, Patricia Reilly *Star Time*

71 pp. Random/Lamb ISBN 978-0-385-73888-0 \$12.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90755-2 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Alasdair Bright. Zigzag Kids series. In this fourth book about the kids at the Zigzag Afternoon Center, Gina longs to be the star of the center's play. However, she faces stiff competition from her friend Destiny. The small but relatable drama, along with some silly antics from secondary characters—all shown in Bright's eye-pleasing black-and-white drawings—contribute to the story's appeal. EJM

Greene, Stephanie *Princess Posey and the Next-Door Dog*

85 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-25463-5 \$12.99

(3) Illustrated by Stephanie Roth Sisson. In her third book, Posey once again dons her princess costume and wields her wand for courage—this time to face the scary-sounding dog next door. The dog turns out to be as sweet and gentle as the humor in this short chapter book's text and art. Even young readers who aren't dog-phobic will relate to Posey, an authentically portrayed first-grader. JMB

Gutman, Dan *Miss Child Has Gone Wild!*

105 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-196917-1 \$15.89
PE ISBN 978-0-06-196916-4 \$3.99

Gutman, Dan *Mr. Harrison Is Embarrassin'!*

105 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-196919-5 \$15.89
PE ISBN 978-0-06-196918-8 \$3.99

(4) Illustrated by Jim Paillot. My Weirder School series. In *Wild*, the third graders of Ella Mentary School visit a zoo run by an eccentric zookeeper. In *Embarrassin'*, the kids become convinced that the school's IT guy, George Harrison, is the Beatle. This frenetic My Weird School spin-off series teems with teacher disses and poop references; in short, it'll be hilarious for reluctant readers. Cartoony black-and-white art has more sloping angles than a skate park. NB

▲ Harper, Charise Mericle *Just Grace and the Double Surprise*

167 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-37026-2 \$14.99

(2) Grace's best friend has been awaiting the arrival of an adopted little sister. In this seventh series entry, the big day finally comes. Things don't go as planned, but thoughtful Grace uses her powers of empathy to save the day. Readers

are treated to another entertaining story filled with Grace's insightful, humorous commentary and amusing cartoon drawings, charts, and lists. Review 9/11. JMB

Hart, Alison *Risky Chance*

161 pp. Random LE ISBN 978-0-375-96833-4 \$12.99
PE ISBN 978-0-375-86833-7 \$6.99

(3) Illustrated by Ruth Sanderson. Horse Diaries series. A Thoroughbred colt in Depression-era California, Chance has the spirit to be a winning racehorse but he won't obey his trainers. With the right trainer and jockey he becomes a champion—until an injury throws him out of contention. Chance's compelling narrative voice and his special connection with his jockey's daughter make this a particularly sympathetic series entry. ALB

Holm, Jennifer L., and Matthew Holm *Squish: Brave New Pond*

94 pp. Random LE ISBN 978-0-375-93784-2 \$12.99
PE ISBN 978-0-375-84390-7 \$6.99

(3) Squish series. In his second adventure, amoeba Squish escapes into superhero dream sequences to help him deal with the start of a new school year. Varied panel sizes and informational asides let the authors (creators of Babymouse) take full advantage of their graphic novel format, complete with Day-Glo-green highlights in the entertaining illustrations. BLM

▲ Holm, Jennifer L., and Matthew Holm *A Very Babymouse Christmas*

93 pp. Random LE ISBN 978-0-375-96779-5 \$12.99
PE ISBN 978-0-375-86779-8 \$6.99

(2) Babymouse feels she simply cannot live without the Whiz Bang, this Christmas's must-have gift. The graphic novel's single-minded focus reflects Babymouse's all-consuming obsession, a condition with which readers are likely to be familiar. Her holiday-classic-inspired, pink-hued daydreams allow Babymouse to switch off the mania for a while. The sentimental lesson is obvious, but it's one that fits the season and bears repeating. Review 11/11. KF

Jenkins, Emily *Toys Come Home: Being the Early Experiences of an Intelligent Stingray, a Brave Buffalo, and a Brand-New Someone Called Plastic*

133 pp. Random/Schwartz & Wade
ISBN 978-0-375-86200-7 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96200-4 \$19.99

(3) Illustrated by Paul O. Zelinsky. This third book about StingRay, Lumphy, and Plastic explains how the three toys came to belong to the Little Girl. As in *Toys Go Out* and *Toy Dance Party*, the characters have distinct personalities, and their small adventures are well suited to emergent readers and read-aloud audiences. The text's gentle, humorous tone is enhanced by Zelinsky's soft black-and-white illustrations. MVK

Kit, Katy *Jasmine and the Treasure Chest*

91 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-5088-9 \$13.99
PE ISBN 978-0-8075-5081-6 \$4.99

Kit, Katy *Rosa and the Water Pony*

91 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-5088-5 \$13.99
PE ISBN 978-0-8075-5089-2 \$4.99

(5) Illustrated by Tom Knight. Mermaid Mysteries series. Five young mermaids take part in a carnival after locating their stolen magical pony (*Rosa*); in *Jasmine*, they try to track down a legendary mermaid's lost treasure. These uninspired illustrated tales feature a sometimes illogical undersea setting and stock bland characters, including thinly drawn adversaries that flit in momentarily to add conflict. SH

▲ Landry, Leo *Grin and Bear It*

48 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-57091-745-5 \$12.95

(2) "Bear had a dream . . . to make his friends laugh." But poor Bear has stage fright, and his debut flops. When hummingbird Emmy finds Bear's joke list, she entertains the crowd; a symbiotic partnership begins. Seven chapters divide the narrative into small segments, while numerous pencil and watercolor illustrations (both full-page and spot art) clarify the action and add depth to characterization. Review 9/11. BC

Laurence, Margaret *Six Darn Cows*

32 pp. Lorimer ISBN 978-1-55277-719-7 \$14.95

(4) Illustrated by Ann Blades. Reissue (1979). Tod and Jen hate doing their farm chores, but when the cows escape, the sibs step up to find them. The straightforward story line may attract transitional readers. However, awkward dialogue detracts from the most appealing point: the children sincerely, refreshingly dislike caring for the cows and never change that opinion. Stiff pictures display the action. LAL

▲ Look, Lenore *Alvin Ho: Allergic to Dead Bodies, Funerals, and Other Fatal Circumstances*

199 pp. Random/Schwartz & Wade
ISBN 978-0-375-86831-3 \$15.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96831-0 \$18.99

(2) Illustrated by LeUyen Pham. Alvin's classmates mistakenly think GungGung (his grandfather) has died; the principal even plans a memorial service at school. All's well that ends well, and Alvin, along with readers, learns a lot about funerals, bucket lists, and mourning loved ones. Pham's copious illustrations capture moments both silly and sad as Look tackles real-kid worries in another truly funny story about Alvin. Review 9/11. JMB

▲ Lowry, Lois *Gooney Bird on the Map*

125 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-55622-2 \$15.99

(2) Illustrated by Middy Thomas. February break is on everyone's mind in Gooney Bird Greene's class, and conversation constantly turns to three students' vacation destinations. In this fifth book in the series, Lowry deals with the

ticklish classroom issue of students gloating about vacations. She handles it well, helping readers to reflect on the competitive chatter that often strains the fabric of a class right before holidays. Review 11/11. R. SMITH

Montgomery, Lewis B. *The Case of the Purple Pool*

96 pp. Kane Press LE ISBN 978-1-57565-343-3 \$22.60
PE ISBN 978-1-57565-342-6 \$6.95

(4) Illustrated by Amy Wummer. Milo & Jazz Mysteries series. It's a hot summer day and everyone's looking forward to swimming at the neighborhood pool—except for the person who's turned it purple. It's up to Milo and Jazz to figure out who dyed the water and why. The vocabulary and simplicity of the clues are perfect for early chapter book readers, but those new to the series might be confused by the story's many characters. LCF

Olmstead, Kathleen, Reteller *Journey to the Center of the Earth*

151 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-7313-6 \$5.95

(5) Illustrated by Eric Freeberg. Classic Starts series. This inexpensive condensed version of Jules Verne's classic sci-fi adventure competently delineates plot points. However, the retelling sacrifices complexity of language and depth of theme in the name of age-appropriateness. Occasional black-and-white illustrations highlight suspenseful scenes and help depict the journey. Discussion questions and a "Note to Parents and Educators" are appended. ERG

Orr, Wendy *Lost!: A Dog Called Bear*

104 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-8931-8 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-0-8050-9381-0 \$5.99

Orr, Wendy *Missing!: A Cat Called Buster*

117 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-8932-5 \$15.99
LE ISBN 978-0-8050-9382-7 \$5.99

(4) Illustrated by Susan Boase. Rainbow Street Shelter series. Logan's dog gets lost when Logan moves; Hannah wants a pet more than anything (*Lost!*). When old Mr. Larsen becomes ill, his quirky cat runs away; Josh, grieving the loss of his rabbit, claims he doesn't want another pet (*Missing!*). The coincidences that bring the stories together are contrived, but the appealing subjects and frequent sketches may attract young readers. MVP

Osborne, Mary Pope *Dogs in the Dead of Night*

115 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86824-5 \$12.99

(4) Illustrated by Sal Murdocca. Magic Tree House series. This time around, sibs Jack and Annie time-travel backward two centuries to the Swiss Alps. The snowy milieu doesn't bode well for their quest to find a rare white and yellow flower to help save Merlin's penguin. Despite stale writing, the series continues to be reliable at making history lessons mildly entertaining. Black-and-white art reinforces the text's straightforwardness. NB

▲ Pennypacker, Sara *Clementine and the Family Meeting*

163 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-2356-9 \$14.99

(2) Illustrated by Marla Frazee. Clementine knows that a family meeting means trouble. She's unprepared for her parents' bombshell—a new baby—and her reaction is less than enthusiastic ("Four is the perfect number for a family!"). Clementine is becoming a more complex character, and fans of this fine series will enjoy the nuanced way she has become more trustworthy and grown-up while staying true to herself. Review 9/11. R. SMITH

Regan, Dian Curtis *The Dragon Stone*

83 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5974-3 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Stacy Curtis. Rocky Cave Kids series. Dinosaurs, mammoths, and cave people coexist in this accessible story for young readers. Miggy, a cave child, finds a lucky dragon stone. She must keep it a secret lest it lose its magic. When forced to protect her clan, she realizes her own power. Adventure and magic delivered in short chapters will entice beginning readers. LB

Schoenberg, Jane *The One and Only Stuey Lewis: Stories from the Second Grade*

115 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-37292-7 \$15.99

(4) Illustrated by Cambria Evans. Schoenberg provides a cheerful series of upbeat vignettes about second-grader Stuey's trials and tribulations with reading, soccer, and friends. Although he overcomes his problems far too easily (and the children in the black-and-white illustrations could be more ethnically diverse), readers will find Stuey believable and the positive messages reassuring. CJ

Spires, Ashley *Binky Under Pressure*

64 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-504-0 \$16.95

(3) Binky, the accident-prone "space cat," is shaken when Gracie, a perfect foster cat, is brought into his space station (a.k.a. home). Fearing replacement (or worse, an alien invasion), Binky goes undercover only to discover Gracie is—gulp—his Space Boss. This graphic novel series for very young readers continues to be entertaining. DE

Vande Velde, Vivian *8 Class Pets + 1 Squirrel ÷ 1 Dog = Chaos*

67 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2364-4 \$15.95

(3) Illustrated by Steve Björkman. Twitch, a squirrel, runs across a sleeping dog's nose and into school, inadvertently launching a series of calamities. Various classroom pets narrate chapters detailing the disasters in their particular room. The cumulative mayhem results in consequences narrated by the dog. Readers will chuckle at each pet's unique voice and talent (math, poetry, etc.). Spot illustrations enhance the chaotic fun. GBH

Venable, Colleen AF *Fish You Were Here*

48 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5224-2 \$27.93

PE ISBN 978-0-7613-5630-1 \$6.95

(4) Illustrated by Stephanie Yue. Graphic Universe: Guinea Pig, Pet Shop Private Eye series. When Mr. Venezia hires the perfect assistant for his pet shop, she's so good the animals don't seem to need him anymore. It's up to Sasspants, grouchy and unpleasant guinea pig detective, to bring back Mr. Venezia. The story line is supported by crowded cartoon-panel illustrations with touches of humor (especially in the animal characters' facial expressions). BLM

Wells, Kitty *Feline Charm*

194 pp. Random/Fickling ISBN 978-0-385-75212-1 \$13.99

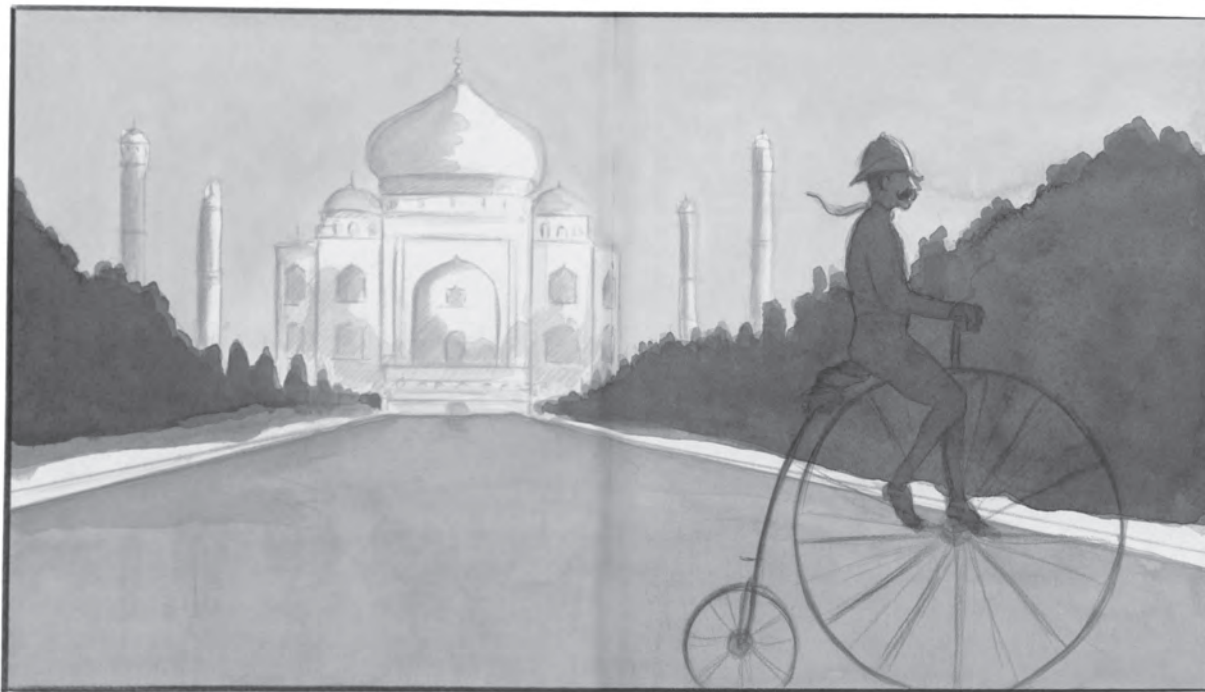
LE ISBN 978-0-385-75213-8 \$16.99

Wells, Kitty *Shadow Magic*

202 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-385-75200-8 \$13.99

LE ISBN 978-0-385-75211-4 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Joanna Harrison. Pocket Cats series. Maddy is delighted when her tiny ceramic cats (from *Paw Power*) work their magic again. Black cat Nibs helps her prevent cousin Chloe from running away (*Shadow*), and tabby Ollie gives Maddy's best friend confidence to show off her ballet skills (*Charm*). These simple, illustrated chapter books are appealing, but Briticisms may be confusing. SH



INTERMEDIATE FICTION

Abbott, Tony *Lunch-Box Dream*

178 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-34673-7 \$16.99

(4) In 1959, Bobby and his family (who are white) are driving from Ohio to Florida, visiting Civil War battlefields along the way. Interspersed with their story are first-person accounts from relatives of African American Jacob, who has gone missing. The two groups converge on a dramatic bus ride. Issues of racism, family, violence, and death swirl through the story, remaining primarily unresolved at the end. JSK

Abela, Deborah *The Ghosts of Gribblesea Pier*

232 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-36239-3 \$16.99

(3) Aurelie Bonhoffen and her eccentric family run an amusement park on a decaying pier. When the pier is threatened by a greedy developer, Aurelie plans a special fundraising show that harnesses her family's supernatural abilities—and brings her uncle together with his long-estranged beloved. Against a creative backdrop, Abela provides an entertaining mix of gothic melodrama and humor. DFB

Acampora, Paul *Rachel Spinelli Punched Me in the Face*

168 pp. Roaring Brook ISBN 978-1-59643-548-3 \$15.99

(3) After his mother leaves, Zachary and his dad move to Connecticut. Zachary meets new neighbor Rachel Spinelli—"part tiny Wonder Woman and part big guard dog"—and her big brother, Teddy. Teddy's disability isn't specified, but his musical ability combines well with Zachary's inter-

est in trumpet, so the three of them hang out. Zachary's relationships are well drawn, with sharp dialogue and funny touches. SDL

Ada, Alma Flor, and Gabriel M. Zubizarreta *Dancing Home*

150 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4169-0088-7 \$14.99

(3) Mexican American fifth-grader Margie tries hard to project an all-American image. This works until her cousin Lupe arrives from Mexico to live with Margie's family. Alternating narration, injected with Spanish-language phrases, brings out the difficulties of language-learning and peer acceptance from each girl's perspective. Ada and Zubizarreta provide a sympathetic view of an immigrant child's experience. RSS

Aguilar, Nadia *Secrets of Tamarind*

374 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-38030-4 \$16.99

(3) In this follow-up to *The Lost Island of Tamarind*, it's been four years since the Nelson children left the mysterious unmapped island of Tamarind, but they know there is still something strange happening there. They return to the island to find it in upheaval and embark on a mission to help save it. This suspenseful sequel can also stand alone. AMM

▲ Almond, David *My Name Is Mina*

300 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-74073-9 \$15.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-98964-3 \$18.99

(2) Mina, a secondary character in *Skellig*, gets her own story. In a journal, the nine-year-old homeschooler relates, in nonlinear fashion, recent events in her life. Her creativity is showcased as the narrative frequently wanders into

poetry and philosophy. Almond's hypnotic prose and ethereal connection between the mundane and magical triumph in this character study of a fiercely intelligent, fiercely independent girl. Review 11/11. JH

Altbacker, EJ *The Battle of Riptide*

240 pp. Penguin/Razorbill ISBN 978-1-59514-377-8 \$12.99

(4) Shark Wars series. In his second unsubtle but entertaining Shark Wars adventure, young shark Gray must navigate the sea with enemies on all sides—including a new group of sharks led by a megalomaniacal leader. Gray continues both his training as a fighter and his growth as a leader, coming closer to developing into the warrior he seems meant to be. AMT

Alvarez, Julia *How Tía Lola Ended Up Starting Over*

147 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86914-3 \$15.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96914-0 \$18.99

(3) Tía Lola and company decide to turn Colonel Charlebois's Vermont house into a bed-and-breakfast. Once they've opened their doors, it quickly becomes clear that someone doesn't want the new business to be successful, so the children set out to solve the mystery. The final chapter wraps the upbeat series into a neat bow. R. SMITH

▲ Anderson, M. T. *Zombie Mommy*

220 pp. Simon/Beach Lane ISBN 978-1-4169-8641-6 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Kurt Cyrus. Pals in Peril Tale series. This fifth book in Anderson's good-humored satirical series gives new life to the paranormal horror novel. Lily, Jasper Dash, Katie, and Drgnan Pghlik must free Lily's mom from the clutches of a ghost—and themselves from the scorn of a snotty it-girl. Luckily, they kill two birds with one stone. Black-and-white illustrations aptly combine the hair-raising with the tongue-in-cheek. Review 11/11. CMH

Angleberger, Tom *Darth Paper Strikes Back: An Origami Yoda Book*

170 pp. Abrams/Amulet ISBN 978-1-4197-0027-9 \$12.95

(3) In this *Strange Case of Origami Yoda* sequel, Dwight's (debatably) wise finger puppet, Yoda, pushes enough of Harvey's buttons that he creates Darth Paper. This results in Dwight almost being sent to remedial school. Narrator Tommy submits a case study to the school board in Dwight's defense filled with sketches, annotations, and anecdotes by classmates, which adds to the goofy, eye-pleasing fun. SH

Appelbaum, Susannah *The Shepherd of Weeds*

447 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-85175-9 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-95175-6 \$19.99

(3) Illustrated by Andrea Offermann. Poisons of Caux series. In this trilogy ender, Ivy Manx's scattered allies regroup to unseat the corrupt Director (Ivy's father) and restore peace to Caux. Ivy's ragtag army of birds and scarecrows pits itself against poison, shifting alliances, and

prophecy in this richly described fantasy. The plot's brief fragments of action weave together in a dense and rewarding narrative. BTK

Auxier, Jonathan *Peter Nimble and His Fantastic Eyes*

386 pp. Abrams/Amulet ISBN 978-1-4197-0025-5 \$16.95

(3) Ravens plucked out Peter Nimble's eyes before the infant was rescued at sea. Blind and orphaned, the boy grew into a miserable life of thievery. When he steals a set of magical eyes, however, Peter is set on a hopeful course to heroism and home. Daring adventures, vivid characters, and a particularly droll narrator bring this inventive story to life. BTK

▲ Avi *City of Orphans*

355 pp. Atheneum/Jackson ISBN 978-1-4169-7102-3 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Greg Ruth. In 1893 New York City, thirteen-year-old Maks hawks newspapers for eight cents a day. A street gang is roughing up the newsies; Maks's sister has been arrested for theft; and his father is about to lose his job. Avi's fast-paced, muscular prose, along with his Dickensian cast of characters and a mystery of comfortable complexity, make this a gratifying adventure. Review 9/11. DS

Baccalario, Pierdomenico *City of Wind*

291 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-85897-0 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-95897-7 \$19.99

(4) Translated by Leah D. Janeczko. Century Quartet series. When information about the Star of Stone emerges, Mistral, Elettra, Harvey, and Sheng meet in Paris. Providing additional backstory, this book moves more slowly than the previous two (*Ring of Fire*, *Star of Stone*). Series fans will pore over the sixteen-page color insert full of clues that allow them to help solve the mystery. JM

Baratz-Logsted, Lauren *Zinnia's Zaniness*

120 pp. Houghton/Sandpiper ISBN 978-0-547-55438-9 \$15.00

(5) With Greg Logsted and Jackie Logsted. Sisters Eight series. Readers who have stuck with the previous seven books in the repetitive series, waiting patiently while each of "the Eights" receives her power, probably expect the payoff to be resolution of the mystery surrounding the girls' missing parents. Fans will either be dismayed or delighted to learn that, although Zinnia's gift is revealed in episode eight, the saga is far from resolved. SH

Barber, Tiki, and Ronde Barber *Goal Line*

167 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-9095-6 \$15.99

(4) With Paul Mantell. As ninth grade begins for the Barber twins, Tiki feels overwhelmed by his responsibilities with the football team, his studies, and his new job as advice columnist for the school paper. Luckily, Ronde steps up to help. Play-by-play game details and overt life lessons continue in this fifth entry from the NFL stars. Glos. CHS

Barnett, Mac *It Happened on a Train*

277 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-7819-0 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Adam Rex. Brixton Brothers series. Steve Brixton has sworn off detecting. His best friend (and trusty sidekick) Dana has a girlfriend, leaving Steve out in the cold. Steve and Dana get lured back into the biz by a mysterious millionaire with a private train compartment and a love of classic automobiles. Rex's black-and-white illustrations heighten exciting moments in the entertaining story. LCF

Barnhill, Kelly *The Mostly True Story of Jack*

323 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-05670-0 \$16.99

(3) Jack goes to stay with his aunt and uncle in Iowa. How do people in this place he's never been seem to know him? Barnhill's novel explores issues of magic, good and evil, and family with an effective sense of visual setting and brisk pacing. The story ends in a narratively satisfying place while leaving some intrigue, suggesting a sequel. NL

Barnholdt, Lauren *Fake Me a Match*

273 pp. Simon/Aladdin ISBN 978-1-4424-2258-2 \$15.99

(3) Avery is in charge of her middle school's fundraiser, a matchmaking service. She rigs it to match Blake (her new stepsister, whom she hopes will become her new best friend) with Sam, the boy Blake has a crush on. However, Avery and Sam are matched instead. There's surprising depth beneath the story's frothy surface. AMM

Barron, T. A. *Merlin: The Book of Magic*

168 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-24741-5 \$17.99

(3) Illustrated by August Hall. This companion guide to Barron's Merlin books covers the stories' various realms and details the characters and places found in each. Within every entry, bold text indicates terms that have their own subentries. As a stand-alone book it lacks context, but it's a useful resource if you've read the series. Illustrations and maps break up the pages. AMT

Barry, Dave, and Ridley Pearson *The Bridge to Never Land*

438 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-3865-5 \$18.99

(4) In 1905, all the starstuff—a magical flying powder—was moved to Never Land. More than a century later, siblings Sarah, seventeen, and Aidan, fifteen, discover a hidden stash and race to protect the powerful dust from evil Ombra. This spin-off of the Starcatchers series is rooted in the modern world, but with dated references. LB

Barton, Zoe *Always Neverland*

308 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-196325-4 \$16.99

(3) When Peter Pan shows up in Ashley's bedroom, she eagerly accompanies him to Neverland. Though the Lost Boys look upon her as a mother figure, Ashley wants to have adventures. She tussles with Never birds, mermaids, fairies, and pirates in this entertaining modern-day take on the classic J. M. Barrie story. AMM

Baum, L. Frank *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*

192 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-7546-8 \$19.95

(3) Illustrated by Robert Ingpen. An appended note describes the illustrator's dissatisfaction with the movie images of Baum's classic. Ingpen's fans will appreciate his attempts to draw "L. Frank Baum's 'Oz' characters and their adventures to be as near to 'real' as I have always wanted them to be." The large book, with its heavy cream-colored paper and approachable pictures, is a handsome version for collectors. ERG

▲ **Bell, Hilari** *The Goblin War*

314 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-165105-2 \$17.99

(2) This trilogy ender (*The Goblin Wood*, *The Goblin Gate*) finds idealistic knight Tobin and hedgewitch Makenna struggling to return to the Realm. Tobin is captured by barbarian invaders while Makenna faces murder charges. Bell's talent for character building along with her illumination of competing factions' motivations are on full display. A thunderous climactic battle brings this series to a highly satisfying close. Review 11/11. ALB

Bemis, John Claude *The White City*387 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-85568-9 \$17.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-95568-6 \$20.99

(3) Clockwork Dark series. In this installment, set at the Chicago World's Fair, the characters seek to destroy the Magog and his evil machine. As each person overcomes his or her own "black clockworks," they build the strength and resolve to defeat the villain together. Bemis continues to unite Southern folklore and steampunk fantasy as readers are carried along on a journey of suspense and intrigue. APF

Bosch, Pseudonymous *You Have to Stop This*

347 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-07626-5 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Gilbert Ford. A stolen mummy with a missing finger leads Cass, Max-Ernest, and Yo-Yoji on a quest to recover the Egyptian relic and to unwrap its connection to the immortality-seeking cult that sparked the trio's earlier escapades. Secrets left unrevealed in this final volume may frustrate readers, but the series' trademark mix of mystery, puzzles, and puns should please them nonetheless. CLS

Bowe, Julie *My Forever Friends*

215 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3513-2 \$16.99

(4) Friends for Keeps series. Ida May gains a new appreciation for bossy Jenna while helping her family out during Jenna's mom's risky pregnancy. Meanwhile, all the fourth-grade girls try to get Jenna and Brooke to mend their rift. Valid truths about the ups and downs of friendship are underwritten by the underdrawn cast of characters that makes it hard to remember which girl is which. SH

Boyce, Frank Cottrell *The Unforgotten Coat*

102 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5729-1 \$15.99

(3) Photographs by Carl Hunter and Clare Heney. Brothers Chingis and Nergui suddenly appear in Julie's classroom. They appoint her their "Good Guide" and learn to blend

in, all the while spinning tales of Mongolia and a demon that's trying to make Nergui disappear. Told from Julie's perceptive, compassionate perspective and accompanied by numerous photographs, the U.K.-set story is poetic, bitter-sweet, and a little bit mystical. MJS

▲ Boyne, John *Noah Barleywater Runs Away*

227 pp. Random/Fickling ISBN 978-0-385-75246-6 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-75247-3 \$19.99

(2) Illustrated by Oliver Jeffers. Published spring 2011. Noah, eight, "couldn't bear to stay [home] any longer." The bulk of the book consists of dialogue between Noah and "the old man," a puppet maker. Noah's troubles emerge in response to the man's parallel experiences; meanwhile, *Pinocchio* references accumulate. Like Collodi's classic, this story is weighed down by its message. Still, it's briskly told and provides a sympathetic take on a sober topic. Review 9/11. JRL

Bracegirdle, P. J. *Sinister Scenes*

314 pp. McElderry ISBN 978-1-4169-3420-2 \$15.99

(3) Joy of Spooking series. Bracegirdle's enigmatic protagonist, Joy, finds herself cast in a movie based on the work of her favorite writer. This sets her at the center of a new mystery involving her old nemeses, Mr. Phipps and Morris Mealey. Fans won't be disappointed, as Bracegirdle's humor carries Joy through this third adventure that has just the right mix of suspense and absurdity. HRB

▲ Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker *Jefferson's Sons: A Founding Father's Secret Children*

364 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3499-9 \$17.99

(1) William Beverly Hemings and his siblings are slaves; they're also Thomas Jefferson's children. Granted freedom at twenty-one, light-skinned Beverly leaves Monticello with plans to pass for white. But cultural differences complicate every aspect of his new life. The voices of the Hemings children give readers a perspective not found in history textbooks. An informative author's note completes this eye-opening and powerful novel. Review 1/12. BC

Broad, Michael *Ghost Diamond!*

143 pp. Darby Creek LE ISBN 978-0-7613-8056-6 \$22.60

Broad, Michael *Zombie Cows!*

143 pp. Darby Creek LE ISBN 978-0-7613-8057-3 \$22.60

(4) Agent Amelia series. Spunky Amelia is a young spy with a special talent for rooting out grownups bent on taking over the world. Each of these volumes features three cases in which Amelia goes up against stock villains. Despite the holes in logic, the mysteries are entertainingly goofy. The texts' humor comes and goes; spirited black-and-white illustrations make a solid attempt at sustaining it. BLS

Brockway, Stephanie, and Ralph Masiello *The Mystic Phyles: Beasts*

137 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-57091-718-9 \$15.95

(3) Illustrated by Ralph Masiello. After receiving a mysterious summons from a "Devoted Friend," thirteen-year-old

Abigail Thaddeus begins learning about mythical beasts (e.g., mermaids and sea monsters), recording the experience in her diary. With the aid of the *Bestiary Masielus*, Abigail puts together an informative and engaging dossier, uncovering closely guarded family secrets along the way. Letters, drawings, and photographs give the book a scrapbook appearance. Websites. Bib. JT

Brown, Tami Lewis *The Map of Me*

152 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-35655-2 \$16.99

(3) Sixth-grader Margie is used to taking the backseat to her genius younger sister. But after seeing a note from their mother that says "I have to go," Margie puts herself in the driver's seat (literally) to find Momma and bring her back. With heartbreaking determination, the twelve-year-old navigates Kentucky in her father's faithful Ford; she finds not her mother but herself in this affecting story. LCF

▲ Bruchac, Joseph *Dragon Castle*

346 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3376-3 \$16.99

(2) Published spring 2011. Rashko, son of a goodhearted but dim king and queen, finds responsibility heavy on his shoulders when his parents are enchanted away to the Silver Lands. Alternating chapters tell the story of Rashko's ancestor Pavol, who defeated a dragon and initiated peace. Gypsy proverbs and frequent interjections add a Slovak flavor to the mountain setting, while humor enlivens the tone. Review 9/11. ALB

Buckley, Michael *NERDS 3: The Cheerleaders of Doom*

255 pp. Abrams/Amulet ISBN 978-1-4197-0024-8 \$14.95

(3) Illustrated by Ethen Beavers. Criminal mastermind Simon has recruited a new villain to join his team. Her name is Gerdie (code name: Mathlete), and she's invented a machine she can use to steal her way through alternate realities. It's up to Matilda (a.k.a. Wheezer) and company to save the day in this over-the-top spy story that's sure to appeal to series fans. LCF

Carman, Patrick *Floors*

261 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-25519-6 \$16.99

(4) Ten-year-old Leo Fillmore lives in the basement of the Whippet Hotel with his father, the building's maintenance man. When the duck-obsessed hotel owner disappears, Leo takes it upon himself to find the man before the hotel falls into the wrong hands. The plot is action-filled but convoluted, with an ending that sets up another volume. JT

Carman, Patrick *Things That Go Bump in the Night*

153 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-38475-9 \$12.99

(5) 3:15 series. The series title refers to the time when "things go bump in the night." It also describes the book's format: ten short horror stories with three components—audio introduction (on a website), text, and story's conclusion (short video on the same website)—all together taking fifteen minutes or less. It's a lot of work for a mildly chilling payoff; the tech gimmick may hook reluctant readers. ERG

Chantler, Scott *The Sign of the Black Rock*

112 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-416-6 \$17.95
PE ISBN 978-1-55453-417-3 \$8.95

(4) Three Thieves series. The second volume in this graphic novel fantasy series jumps right into the action, following the three main characters as they hide from their pursuers at the Black Rock Inn. The characters are rather flat, but the well-drawn illustrations provide a clear setting and add drama. Fans of the first book will be pleased and will look forward to more. BLM

Chari, Sheela *Vanished*

329 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-3163-2 \$16.99

(3) Neela has a hard time reconciling her East Indian heritage with her life in America; playing the *veena*, a traditional Indian stringed instrument, is one way she does so. When the *veena* mysteriously disappears, Neela is desperate to find it, traveling as far as India to solve the mystery. The story engagingly addresses cultural differences and musical aspirations while providing a compelling mystery. NCP

Chick, Bryan *The Secret Zoo: Riddles and Danger*

284 pp. Greenwillow ISBN 978-0-06-198927-8 \$16.99

(4) In their third Secret Zoo book, Noah, Richie, Megan, and Ella continue to learn more about the secrets of the underground zoo. The story turns darker with the dangers of the sasquatches; it doesn't hold as much fancy or delight as the earlier two books. The fast-paced adventures could use more detailed backstory. LAL

Christopher, Lucy *Flyaway*

330 pp. Scholastic/Chicken House
ISBN 978-0-545-31771-9 \$16.99

(3) Isla's annual winter ritual of watching for the whooper swans is interrupted by her father's heart attack. During her anxiety-filled hospital visits she befriends Harry, a boy with cancer. Isla comes through a difficult time as she tries to encourage a lone injured swan to fly while providing Harry with some distracting intrigue. A sad, leisurely paced story filled with metaphor-rich imagery. RSS

Churchyard, Kathleen *Bye for Now: A Wishers Story*

264 pp. Egmont ISBN 978-1-60684-190-7 \$15.99

(4) On her disastrous eleventh birthday, Robin wishes herself somewhere—anywhere—else. She wakes up in the body of an eleven-year-old actress in London. Turns out Robin is hardly alone: there's a whole "Wisher Network" of kids who find themselves in the same (meaning other peoples') shoes. Awkward prose bogs down this lighthearted fantasy. NCP

▲ Clements, Andrew *Troublemaker*

148 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4169-4930-5 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Mark Elliott. Clay can't wait to tell his older brother Mitch—a troublemaker in his day—about his latest trip to the principal's office. But Mitch has just gotten out of jail, and he doesn't want Clay following in his footsteps. How does Clay go about reinventing himself?

Clements has fashioned another fine school story, this time about second chances and the possibility of change. Review 7/11. DS

Conkling, Winifred *Sylvia & Aki*

152 pp. Tricycle ISBN 978-1-58246-337-7 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-1-58246-397-1 \$19.99

(4) In WWII-era California, Aki and her Japanese family are sent to an internment camp. Sylvia and her Latino family lease Aki's farm, and the third-grader is forced to attend the "Mexican school" rather than the closer white school. While purpose-driven, the story, based on actual events, may encourage young readers to seek out other material on internment camps or segregation. Reading list. Bib. BTM

Cooper, Rose *Rumors from the Boys' Room: A Blogtastic! Novel*

192 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-74084-5 \$12.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-98972-8 \$15.99

(4) Sixth-grader Sophia, who writes an anonymous blog (*Gossip from the Girls' Room*), starts spying on the boys in her class to learn their secrets. As in the first book, Sophia harbors a crush, faces an enemy, and spends most of her time fixating on popularity. The handwritten format, including little black-and-white sketches of classmates, speeds the story along. AMM

Cowell, Cressida *How to Break a Dragon's Heart*

300 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-17618-7 \$12.99

(3) A bit heftier and a little scarier than its predecessors, this eighth chronicle of Hiccup and Toothless's misadventures will continue capturing young readers' imaginations. Hiccup faces an impossible task, a Beast, and the Uglithugs, just to name a few of his challenges. The story is action-filled and humorous, with the series' trademark quick pacing and silliness. Energetic sketchlike illustrations enhance the mayhem. EJM

Cowing, Sue *You Will Call Me Drog*

282 pp. Carolrhoda ISBN 978-0-7613-6076-6 \$16.95

(4) Shortly after putting a puppet on his hand, Parker realizes it can speak—and think—for itself. Try as he might Parker can't remove the outspoken thing. Since no one believes him, his daily life and his relationships are dramatically altered. Some characters are flat and the plot meanders, but Parker's emotional turbulence may resonate with readers. RR

Coy, John *Love of the Game*

182 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-37331-3 \$16.99

(3) Jackson relates the many changes middle school brings for him and friends Gig, Isaac, and Diego. Sixth grade begins with school-bus bullying and tons of homework; nonetheless, the friends are determined to make the football team. They do, but the sports action is only one strand in the larger story of social adjustment. Appealing characters and brief chapters will keep readers engaged. CLS

Craddock, Erik *Night of the Living Dust Bunnies*

96 pp. Random LE ISBN 978-0-375-96724-5 \$12.99
PE ISBN 978-0-375-86724-8 \$6.99

(4) Stone Rabbit series. Stone Rabbit and friends return in a Halloween adventure. An atomic lamp interacts with dust, creating rampaging dust bunnies. This graphic novel features potty humor and breakneck action and is bound to appeal to graduates of the Captain Underpants books. The frantic illustrations are busy and the gross-out humor is dumb, but young comics fans won't mind. Glos. BLM

Crilley, Paul *The Fire King*

403 pp. Egmont ISBN 978-1-60684-032-0 \$16.99

(4) Invisible Order series. In this *Rise of the Darklings* sequel, Emily and her friends are transported back to 1666 London. Hoping to prevent the Great Fire—as well as the looming conflagration between fey and humans—Emily allies herself with key historical figures who are members of the Invisible Order. At times the plot threads are too complicated with details, stalling momentum. APF

Cuevas, Michelle *The Masterwork of a Painting Elephant*

136 pp. Farrar/Foster ISBN 978-0-374-34854-0 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Ed Young. When a baby named Pigeon is abandoned, Birch, an elephant, cares for the boy. As he grows, the two search for Pigeon's parents while seeking public recognition for Birch's artistic talent and looking for his lost love, an acrobat. The quirky story, featuring poetic language and imagery, is accompanied by loosely drawn black-and-white sketches. BTM

Dahl, Michael *Dictionary of 1000 Rooms*

71 pp. Capstone/Stone Arch LE ISBN 978-1-4342-3229-8 \$22.65

Dahl, Michael *Killer App*

71 pp. Capstone/Stone Arch LE ISBN 978-1-4342-3231-1 \$22.65

(4) Illustrated by Bradford Kendall. Return to the Library of Doom series. In *Dictionary*, the Librarian faces adversaries including Wordsmith and Forger. In *App*, the Librarian and the Specialist save unsuspecting citizens from a flock of ravens conjured by an app called Ravenwing. There's not a lot of depth, but the format—easy-to-read texts interspersed with comic-style drawings—add interest for reluctant readers. Discussion questions and writing prompts are appended. Glos. LBC

Dale, Anna *Magical Mischievous*

296 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-629-4 \$16.99

(4) Mr. Hardbattle's bookshop has been invaded by magic. Assisted by spinster Miss Quint and bookish young Arthur, Hardbattle tries to oust the inconvenient force. The chaos intensifies when characters from books escape their covers and join the fray. Heavy on shenanigans (and lighter on logic), the energetic story loses steam before the end. SE

Daneshvari, Gitty *The Final Exam*

325 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-18287-4 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Carrie Gifford. School of Fear series. When a nosy reporter threatens to shut down the School of Fear, the fearful fivesome must overcome their phobias to save it. A visit to another bizarre school—the Contrary Conservatory—delivers new comic twists to a familiar story line. The five "besties" (and a bungee-jumping ferret) bring a surprisingly touching solidarity to this third volume in the series. LCF

Davies, Katie *The Great Rabbit Rescue*

220 pp. Simon/Beach Lane ISBN 978-1-4424-2064-9 \$12.99

(3) Illustrated by Hannah Shaw. Anna and friends return in a less gruesome but just as funny sequel to *The Great Hamster Massacre*. When "Joe-down-the-street" goes to live with his dad, Anna takes it upon herself to guard Joe's pet "New Rabbit." When New Rabbit gets sick, Anna, Suzanne, and Tom must find Joe before it's too late. Shaw's kid-friendly black-and-white line drawings enhance Davies's humorous text. LCF

Dávila, Claudia *Luz Sees the Light*

96 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-581-1 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-55453-766-2 \$8.95

(4) Future According to Luz series. When Luz's unnamed city suffers power outages and high fuel costs, she and her friends decide to help the environment by creating a community garden and park. While the environmental message overwhelms the story, Luz and friends are appealing characters. The graphic novel format, with its black-and-white and beige illustrations, moves the story along smoothly while showing kids making a difference. BLM

Deedy, Carmen Agra, and Randall Wright *The Cheshire Cheese Cat: A Dickens of a Tale*

234 pp. Peachtree ISBN 978-1-56145-595-9 \$16.95

(3) Illustrated by Barry Moser. Skilley the cat finds the "purrfect" job at Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese Inn. There he poses as a mouser, but he's actually protecting the large mouse community in exchange for cheese. As he befriends the mice and fights a cruel alley cat, he's drawn into the world of Charles Dickens and even Queen Victoria. Witty wordplay and detailed pencil drawings abound. Glos. LAL

Defoe, Daniel *Robinson Crusoe*

279 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-8406-4 \$9.95

Stevenson, Robert Louis *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

85 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-8402-6 \$9.95

(3) Illustrated by Scott McKowen. These classic stories are presented in unabridged formats with attached ribbon bookmarks. Accompanying the texts are a handful of effectively atmospheric (*Crusoe*) or creepy (*Jekyll*) drawings that

illustrate key details (e.g., Dr. Jekyll's transformation back from Mr. Hyde). The books conclude with some generic open-ended questions. ERG

DeVillers, Julia *Liberty Porter, First Daughter: Cleared for Takeoff*

210 pp. Simon/Aladdin ISBN 978-1-4169-9130-4 \$15.99

(4) Illustrated by Paige Pooler. In this third installment, president's daughter Liberty Porter has settled into her new home, the White House. Now she has a whole new adventure awaiting: her first trip on Air Force One, with her parents, to the country of Georgia. There's not a lot of conflict, but Liberty's glamorous lifestyle and her desire to do the right thing are appealing in themselves. NCP

Dickens, Charles *David Copperfield*

48 pp. Barron's ISBN 978-0-7641-6305-0 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-0-7641-4453-0 \$8.99

Dickens, Charles *Great Expectations*

48 pp. Barron's ISBN 978-0-7641-6304-3 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-0-7641-4452-3 \$8.99

(5) Retold by Jacqueline Morley. Illustrated by Penko Gelev. Graphic Classics series. Using awkward present-tense text, these retellings hit on the classic Victorian tales' major plot points but reduce the narratives to flat descriptions and unconvincing dialogue; some excerpts from the novels are also incorporated. Poorly placed rectangular text boxes and not-always-helpful footnotes can be distracting. Marginally useful information about Dickens and the stories' histories are appended. Ind. ERG

Dooley, Sarah *Body of Water*

327 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-61254-2 \$17.99

(3) Twelve-year-old Ember's losses—material and emotional—are poignantly portrayed in this tale of a family victimized by arson, probably because they practice Wicca. Ember's relationships with her siblings and her desperation to keep the family's homelessness a secret as they spend their summer living in a vacation campground are utterly convincing. Dooley's balance between the pain of poverty and the pull of hope is exquisite. MLI

Draper, Sharon M. *The Buried Bones Mystery*

94 pp. Simon/Aladdin ISBN 978-1-4424-2710-5 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4424-2709-9 \$4.99

Draper, Sharon M. *Lost in the Tunnel of Time*

100 pp. Simon/Aladdin ISBN 978-1-4424-2703-7 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4424-2704-4 \$4.99

Draper, Sharon M. *Shadows of Caesar's Creek*

103 pp. Simon/Aladdin ISBN 978-1-4424-2712-9 \$15.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4424-2711-2 \$4.99

(4) Illustrated by Jesse Joshua Waston. Clubhouse Mysteries series. Four fifth-graders become involved in local mysteries. In *Bones*, they uncover bones near their clubhouse; *Tunnel* finds the gang trapped in a tunnel that was part of the Underground Railroad; in *Caesar's*, a camping trip turns into a Shawnee manhood ceremony. The mysteries aren't all that suspenseful and the black history lessons aren't subtle, but the readable texts are diverting. CJ

Dumas, Alexandre *The Three Musketeers*

372 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-208230-5 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-206013-6 \$7.99

(3) Illustrated by Brett Helquist. This volume, with text abridged and adapted (though not dumbed down) for middle-grade readers, benefits from its inclusion of Helquist's black-and-white illustrations showing the French swash-bucklers in action. ERG

Dunagan, Ted M. *Trouble on the Tombigbee*

203 pp. NewSouth/Junebug ISBN 978-1-58838-270-2 \$21.95

(5) In their third 1940s-set adventure (*A Yellow Watermelon, Secret of the Satilfa*), Ted, who is white, and Poudlum, who is black, take a fishing trip on the Tombigbee River. They soon find themselves in trouble and looking to escape the Ku Klux Klan. There's some excitement to the adventure story, but the rambling narrative makes it hard to pinpoint. ERG

Elish, Dan *The School for the Insanely Gifted*

291 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-113873-7 \$15.99

(3) Prodigious eleven-year-old composer Daphna attends the titular school founded by Ignatious Blatt, mogul of the quirky technology that abounds in the book's unspecified future setting. After Daphna's mother disappears, Daphna and her friends use their widely varied talents in an investigation that reveals secrets about Daphna's past—and Blatt's. Readers willing to suspend their disbelief should enjoy the book's humor and mystery. SF

▲ Ellis, Deborah *No Ordinary Day*

160 pp. Groundwood ISBN 978-1-55498-134-2 \$16.95

(1) Valli, orphaned and homeless, survives Kolkata's mean streets living by her wits. With telltale symptoms of leprosy, Valli encounters a doctor, who lures her, with masterful tact, to a hospital. Terrified, Valli bolts but eventually returns with hopes for the future. Ellis skillfully folds character, attitudes, and other vital information into Valli's narrative, depicting the survival skills of India's poorest with insight and compassion. Review 11/11. JRL

Epstein, Adam Jay, and Andrew Jacobson *Secrets of the Crown*

375 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-196111-3 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Peter Chan and Kei Acedera. Familiars series. In their second story, the three prophesied magical animals—cat Aldwyn, frog Gilbert, and blue jay Skylar—set out on a quest for the only artifact that can stop the evil familiar, Paksahara, from unleashing an animal-zombie uprising. The engaging story line features page-turning action and suspense punctuated by droll humor. BLS

Fagan, Deva *Circus Galacticus*

293 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-547-58136-1 \$16.99

(3) Orphan Trix, daughter of astronauts, struggles to connect with others in her world. When the Circus Galacticus comes to town, Trix, discovering a place she fits in, blasts off on an intergalactic adventure. Fagan's science-fiction tale, complete with space artifacts, a mysterious masked

man, and a bevy of whimsical aliens, also contains family secrets, developing friendships, and lessons in diversity and acceptance. CHS

Falls, Kat *Rip Tide*

314 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-17843-3 \$16.99

(3) A friendly deal between the subsea settlers and township “surfs,” brokered in *Dark Life*, turns ugly when Ty’s settler parents are kidnapped. Unsatisfied with the Sea-guard’s response, Ty and his friend Gemma start their own search party. Along the way, they battle corrupt politicians, evil thugs, and their own fears. This postapocalyptic sea adventure is well paced, with nonstop action and suspense. LB

Fishbone, Greg R. *The Challengers*

348 pp. Lee/Tu ISBN 978-1-60060-660-1 \$15.95

(4) Galaxy Games series. Ty’s Japanese relatives name a star for him. Turns out it’s actually a spaceship headed for Earth. M’Frozza, an alien, is trying to save her planet’s Galaxy Games team from embarrassment, and she recruits Ty to lead Earth’s team in the universe-wide competition. Black-and-white illustrations complement the humorous reluctant-reader-friendly plot, but the book is a little long. An author’s note about Japanese culture is appended. LB

Flanagan, John *The Lost Stories*

422 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-25618-9 \$17.99

(4) Ranger’s Apprentice series. Nine novellas fill in gaps and extend the series arc for Ranger Will and his mentor Halt, including Horace’s and Will’s marriages, Ranger Gilan’s courtship, and the history of Halt’s joining the Ranger Corps. Despite the sometimes sentimental material, Flanagan manages to work considerable intrigue and Ranger cleverness—as well as bandits, wreckers, and (unfortunately stereotyped) gypsy-like Roamers—into the mix. ALB

Flanagan, John *The Outcasts*

434 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-25619-6 \$18.99

(3) Brotherband Chronicles series. In this new companion series to Ranger’s Apprentice, Hal Mikkelson enters Skandian (read: Viking) “brotherband” training as the leader of a group of underdogs. The band’s clever thinking and teamwork—and Hal’s revolutionary sail design—propel them to victory. Flanagan’s sympathetic characters and meticulous descriptions of the band’s training (races, strength tests, military-style discipline, sailing) will gratify boys and tomboys alike. ALB

Flavin, Teresa *The Blackhope Enigma*

281 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5694-2 \$15.99

(3) On a field trip, Sunni is stunned when her stepbrother, Dean, disappears into a painting. Sunni and classmate Blaise follow Dean and find a series of worlds within worlds created by master painter Fausto Corvo. Will they make it home? Can they save the magical paintings from the art thief hot on their trail? The intriguing premise will capture readers’ imaginations. RLIH

Ford, Christopher *Stickman Odyssey, Book One: An Epic Doodle*

201 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-25426-0 \$12.99

(4) Loosely based on Homer’s *Odyssey*, this graphic novel puts its own silly spin on Odysseus’s epic adventure, emphasizing slapstick humor over action or drama. The pictures are easy to follow and are well suited to the manic pace of the storytelling. Most of the characters are stick figures with simple adornments or accessories so readers can tell them apart. AMT

Freeman, Martha *The Case of the Diamond Dog Collar*

136 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2337-8 \$16.95

(4) First Kids Mystery series. President’s daughters Cammie and Tessa (*The Case of the Rock ‘n’ Roll Dog*) investigate a diamond dog collar sent to their dog Hooligan. The First Kids are the only ones who believe it’s real—and they worry when one of the diamonds goes missing. The large cast of characters is difficult to keep straight, but Cammie and Tessa ground the story. LCF

French, Vivian *The Flight of Dragons: The Fourth Tale from the Five Kingdoms*

248 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5083-4 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Ross Collins. In their fourth adventure, Gracie Gillypot and friends face ancient Granpappy Canker, who plans to reverse his banishment through trickery and hypnotic cooking. As usual, humor and hilarity abound. French’s light prose is buoyed by Collins’s black-and-white sketches, which capture the absurd characters at just the right moments. HRB

Friedman, Laurie *Mallory’s Super Sleepover*

160 pp. Darby Creek ISBN 978-0-8225-8887-0 \$15.95

(4) Illustrated by Jennifer Kalis. Mallory, turning ten, decides to mark the occasion with the greatest sleepover party ever. When her best friend Mary Ann gets involved with the planning, things quickly go from super to super-messy. Mallory’s self-absorption can be a little tiresome, but her willingness to accept some blame for the events demonstrates maturity. Humor and happy endings prevail in this sixteenth installment. NCP

▲ Friend, Catherine *Barn Boot Blues*

142 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5827-2 \$16.99

(2) Twelve-year-old Taylor is discombobulated by her family’s move to a farm. A friend devises TEFF (Taylor Escapes From Farm), a plan in which Taylor acts out to convince her parents that moving was a mistake. Meanwhile, readers learn interesting, authentic details about everything from spinning wool to birthing lambs. Plucky Taylor, though lightly sarcastic, never comes off as unlikable or bratty. Review 11/11. RLS

Gallagher, Brad *Escape from Zobadak*

332 pp. Charlesbridge/Mackinac ISBN 978-1-934133-32-3 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-934133-33-0 \$8.95

(4) When Uncle Gary disappears, Billy and Sophie use a magic nightstand he left them to save their family from the creepy, inhuman representatives of the Zobadak Wood Company. While the premise of transdimensional carpentry is intriguing, the writing is stilted in places, and the unresolved ending, clearly intended to set up a sequel, creates more confusion than it resolves. BCM

Ganeshram, Ramin *Stir It Up!*

168 pp. Scholastic ISBN 987-0-545-16582-2 \$16.99

(3) Eighth-grader Anjali loves to create new recipes when she's not working in her family's roti shop. Knowing that it will disappoint her Trinidadian parents, Anjali auditions for a television cooking show instead of taking the Stuyvesant High School entrance exam. Ganeshram's protagonist is modern and passionate; the Trinidadian recipes (interspersed throughout) tastefully bridge Anjali's two worlds. SJW

▲ Gantos, Jack *Dead End in Norvelt*

341 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-37993-3 \$15.99

(1) In 1962 Norvelt, Pennsylvania (a town founded by Eleanor Roosevelt), Jack's summer job keeps him busy. Jack's work—typing up obituaries for his arthritic neighbor—chronicles the history of the community: a “museum of freaks.” There's more than laugh-out-loud gothic comedy here. This is a richly layered semi-autobiographical tale, an ode to a time and place, to history and the power of reading. Review 9/11. DS

Garretson, Dee *Wolf Storm*

275 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-200032-3 \$16.99

(3) Novice actor Stefan is excited to be starring in a science-fiction movie on location in Slovakia. When a blizzard hits the site, Stefan must save himself and three costars—a famous teen actress, a young asthmatic, and an aging star—from avalanches, illness, and vicious wolves; his survival instincts prove strong. The exciting adventure is well paced, and the characters ring true. LAL

George, Jessica Day *Tuesdays at the Castle*

228 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-644-7 \$16.99

(3) Castle Glower makes its preferences known through rooms that appear or change on Tuesdays. The trustworthy building doesn't welcome Prince Khelsh, who arrives after the king and queen have disappeared, so royal siblings Celia and Rolf know they must stop his efforts to rule. A strong sibling alliance adds weight to a light tale in which “crumbs and bits of coarse sugar sprinkles” constitute ammunition. SF

Gibbs, Stuart *The Last Musketeer*

244 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-204838-7 \$16.99

(3) When an immortal villain transports Greg and his parents to seventeenth-century Paris, Greg—alias D'Artagnan—meets the young men who will become the

Three Musketeers. It takes their combined skills and courage to rescue Greg's parents from the Bastille. This entertaining time-travel adventure references its source material with enough detail to stand alone. SF

▲ Giff, Patricia Reilly *R My Name Is Rachel*

167 pp. Random/Lamb ISBN 978-0-375-83889-7 \$15.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-93889-4 \$18.99

(2) During the Depression, Rachel, twelve, is devastated by her family's move from New York City to upstate North Lake. Everything goes wrong, and Pop joins a government-funded road crew, reluctantly leaving his children. The book's strengths are its engaging characters and the immediacy of Rachel's present-tense narrative. Giff provides a realistic picture of goodhearted children empowered by their own competence in hard times. Review 11/11. JRL

Gownley, Jimmy *The Meaning of Life . . . and Other Stuff*

147 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4169-8613-3 \$19.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4169-8612-6 \$10.99

Gownley, Jimmy *Superheroes*

168 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4424-4540-6 \$19.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4169-8606-5 \$10.99

Gownley, Jimmy *What Makes You Happy*

162 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4424-4539-0 \$19.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4169-8605-8 \$10.99

Gownley, Jimmy *When the Past Is a Present*

160 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4424-4541-3 \$19.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4169-8607-2 \$10.99

(3) Amelia Rules! series. Amelia McBride continues to face life's challenges head-on—and with humor. In *Happy* she learns more about her former-rocker aunt's past. *Superheroes* brings a new friend with a secret. *Present* dives into a box of family photos and mementos. *Life* gets philosophical. The humor and tumult of the transitional middle-grade years are tenderly explored in these well-illustrated graphic novels. DE

Grabenstein, Chris *The Black Heart Crypt*

329 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86900-6 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96900-3 \$19.99

(3) Zack Jennings, a boy who can see ghosts, returns in his fourth mystery adventure. It's Halloween, the time when ghosts are the most powerful, and a family of them threatens Zack and his friends. Helpful adults provide support, but it's up to Zack to save the day. Grabenstein mixes humor with action and suspense to create a gripping and entertaining tale. BLM

Graff, Keir *The Other Felix*

169 pp. Roaring Brook ISBN 978-1-59643-655-8 \$16.99

(4) Anxious about his father's job security and a school bully, fourth-grader Felix finds his dreams overrun with terrifying monsters. Then he meets the Other Felix, his dream counterpart, who teaches Felix how to fight his fears in both worlds. The symbolism-heavy story oversells its message, but the book's take on bibliotherapy is creative. DE

Grant, Michael *The Trap*

294 pp. HarperCollins/Tegen ISBN 978-0-06-183368-7 \$16.99

(3) Magnificent 12 series. Picking up where *The Call* left off, the story starts with Grimluck giving Mack cryptic clues to continue his quest. Fellow Magnifica Jarrah and bully-turned-bodyguard Stefan accompany Mack to China, Germany, and Asgard. They seek other Magnifica, the only hope against the Pale Queen. With several humorous viewpoints, Grant's series continues at a fast clip. JM

Graves, Keith *The Orphan of Awkward Falls*

350 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-0-8118-7814-2 \$16.99

(3) Josephine Cravitz expects little excitement in northern Manitoba. However, her new home surprises her with an escaped cannibalistic murderer running around and Thaddeus Hibble, an orphaned mad scientist secretly living next door. The story unfolds with unexpected twists. Funny, suspenseful, and a bit gruesome (in text and shadowy black-and-white illustrations), it's a good pick for sci-fi and horror fans alike. BTK

Green, Tim *Deep Zone: A Football Genius Novel*

265 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-201244-9 \$16.99

(4) Green unites his stars of *Football Hero* and *Football Genius* through a youth seven-on-seven tournament at the Super Bowl. Ty Lewis and Troy White meet as rivals, but they find themselves working together to foil a Mafia kidnapping in the Everglades. Family drama and spot-on football action propel the story to its conclusion that, contrived as it is, will gratify Ty and Troy's fans. CHS

Greenwald, Tommy *Charlie Joe Jackson's Guide to Not Reading*

220 pp. Roaring Brook ISBN 978-1-59643-691-6 \$14.99

(4) Illustrated by J. P. Covert. Middle schooler Charlie Joe Jackson hates reading so much that he enlists friends, siblings, and others in schemes to avoid it. His punishment is writing a book (the one we're reading), and he discovers he likes writing. The narrator's faux I'm-one-of-you tone won't fool reluctant readers. However, his smart-alecky voice—and the lengths he goes in his attempt to escape reading—may entertain them. CJ

Griffiths, Andy *Killer Koalas from Outer Space: And Lots of Other Very Bad Stuff That Will Make Your Brain Explode!*

172 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-36789-3 \$12.99

(3) Illustrated by Terry Denton. Not for the squeamish, this silly book includes a variety of gross and amusingly bad ideas, presented through comics, short stories, jokes, and nursery-rhyme parodies (e.g., "The Old Woman Who Lived in a Poo"). Fans of Captain Underpants and the Wimpy Kid will enjoy the exaggerated illustrations and body-centered humor, including a boy who literally loses his head. BLM

▲ Grimes, Nikki *Planet Middle School*

155 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-284-5 \$15.99

(2) Upon starting middle school, twelve-year-old Joy feels self-conscious about being thought of as a tomboy. She and her best friend are also growing apart. Through breezy prose poems Grimes explores the tension between individuality and gender-role conformity and takes on concerns such as changing friendships and the shift in boy/girl relationships. Her realistic novel has solid middle-school appeal and avoids preaching. Review 9/11. KTH

Grisham, John *Theodore Boone: The Abduction*

217 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42557-1 \$16.99

(3) Published spring 2011. Theo (*Theodore Boone: Kid Lawyer*) returns for another investigative page-turner full of accessible legal jargon and kid-appropriate ethical issues. When best friend April mysteriously disappears, Theo and friends take matters into their own hands, scouring their town for clues and stepping on police toes. Sharp-witted, strong-willed Theo persists as an entertaining protagonist in Grisham's second suspenseful thriller for middle graders. KEH

Gustafson, Scott *Eddie: The Lost Youth of Edgar Allan Poe*

202 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-9764-1 \$15.99

(4) This novel imagines magical mischief inserted into Poe's childhood. Here young Edgar must prove his innocence in connection with the mysterious destruction of a chicken coop. The text's transitions between fact and fantasy can be awkward; roughly shaded drawings are more effective in hinting at the murky distinction between real and fantastical. SF

Haddix, Margaret Peterson *Torn*

345 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-8980-6 \$15.99

(3) Missing series. Jonah and Katherine travel to Henry Hudson's ship in 1611. There they must stop unethical time-traveler Second from changing history and thus ending the world. The text makes both history and time logic accessible and exciting. Haddix's usual thorough and engaging backmatter sheds more light on the historical mysteries of Hudson's last voyage. SF

▲ Hardy, Janice *Darkfall*

421 pp. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray ISBN 978-0-06-174750-2 \$16.99

(2) Healing Wars series. In this concluding volume, Nya is torn between her duty to the underground resistance and her vow to rescue her sister. Hardy's creative fantasy premise, which turns pain into a commodity to be removed, stored, and weaponized, continues to shine as she explores moral questions. Nya is a humble and appealing protagonist even as she becomes the center of a cult of personality. Review 1/12. ALB

Hartley, A. J. *Darwen Arkwright and the Peregrine Pact*

439 pp. Penguin/Razorbill ISBN 978-1-59514-409-6 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Emily Osborne. A Lancashire boy transplanted to Georgia after his parents' deaths, Darwen acquires a mirror from mysterious Mr. Peregrine that allows him to travel to the fantasy world of Silbrica. Trouble there seems connected somehow to trouble in Darwen's new private school. Although the novel's emotional events are either underdeveloped or overdramatic, the plot is still imaginative enough to attract readers. ALB

▲ Hartnett, Sonya *The Midnight Zoo*

217 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5339-2 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Andrea Offermann. During World War II, two Romany boys and their baby sister find themselves in a zoo inhabited by talking animals. They share their stories—of brutality, courage, despair, and hope—then the narrative shifts to an escape journey. Hartnett's particular combination of crystal-edged realism and operatic scope makes for a riveting read, leaving one to examine the whole notion of civilization versus wildness. Review 9/11. SE

Hashimoto, Meika *The Magic Cake Shop*

161 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86822-1 \$15.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96822-8 \$18.99

(3) Illustrated by Josée Masse. After disappointing her perfect parents, Emma is sent to live with her horrible uncle. She finds solace working for the world's best baker, Mr. Crackle. But Uncle Simon has his sights on a magical elixir that will ruin Mr. Crackle's shop. The story's delicious-sounding treats and magical spices, along with light suspense and a smattering of elegant illustrations, create a satisfying adventure. SJW

Haskell, Merrie *The Princess Curse*

325 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-200813-8 \$16.99

(3) Thirteen-year-old Reveka, assistant herbalist of Castle Sylvian, is determined to break the curse that leaves the twelve princesses' shoes in tatters and causes other people to fall unconscious. Unfortunately, the key lies with a terrifying underworld *zmeu* (dragon). Haskell's "Twelve Dancing Princesses" reimagining tantalizingly incorporates classical mythology (most notably Persephone and Hades), historical references, and plant lore within its fictional Romanian context. ERG

Higgins, F. E. *The Lunatic's Curse*

337 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-56682-1 \$16.99

(3) Rex's father is taken away as a raving lunatic, leaving Rex's conniving stepmother in charge of the family estate while Rex tries to clear his father's name. To uncover the truth, he takes a job at Droprock Asylum and builds a submersible after a design stolen from his father. Horror and the macabre are imaginatively employed in this "polyquel" from dark storyteller Higgins. ALB

▲ Hilmo, Tess *With a Name like Love*

250 pp. Farrar/Ferguson ISBN 978-0-374-38465-4 \$16.99

(2) In 1957, thirteen-year-old Ollie wants a friend, but her father's a traveling preacher so they never stay in the same town for long. In Arkansas Ollie meets Jimmy, who needs her help: his mother confessed to murdering her husband, but Jimmy claims she's innocent. The murder mystery is compelling, and sweet, frog-loving Jimmy is a boy any girl would want to save. Review 11/11. JMB

▲ Hobbs, Valerie *Maggie & Oliver, or, A Bone of One's Own*

181 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-9294-3 \$15.99

(2) Illustrated by Jennifer Thermes. Alternating chapters follow dog Oliver, homeless after his owner dies, and orphan Maggie, turned out onto the streets of turn-of-the-last-century Boston with only a mysterious gold locket. Pluck, gumption, and optimism help them both cope with cold, hunger, and loneliness. Things look up when their stories intersect. This is well-orchestrated, straightforward storytelling, with a bonus of warm pencil drawings. Review 11/11. SE

Hoffman, Nina Kiriki *Meeting*

317 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01283-1 \$16.99

(4) Magic Next Door series. As a newly bonded *sissimi* pair, twelve-year-old Maya and her alien companion Rimi have a lot to learn about each other. On top of that, Maya must balance magic classes with piano lessons, and an evil alien race with nosy siblings. As in *Thresholds*, the sci-fi/fantasy plot moves rather slowly, focusing more on Maya's juggling act and less on conflict development. LB

Howe, James *Addie on the Inside*

206 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4169-1384-9 \$16.99

(3) This third Misfits novel focuses on smart, opinionated seventh-grader Addie. Addie finds a gay-straight alliance, treasures her grandmother's visit, deals with an on-again/off-again boyfriend, and struggles with a friend's confusing behavior, all while trying to understand why stating her beliefs is socially problematic. Howe taps into young people's feelings and situations with ease in this verse novel. SH

Hunter, Erin *Crookedstar's Promise*

491 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-198097-8 \$17.99

LE ISBN 978-0-06-198098-5 \$18.89

(4) Warriors series. Readers learn more backstory about the cats of the Warriors series through the history of River-Clan leader Crookedstar. Hunter follows Crookedstar from birth to his eventual leadership, exploring themes of loyalty and responsibility through various dramatic episodes. Series fans will appreciate the revelations and familiar friends; new readers may not have patience for this lengthy tale. BLM

Hyduk, Vallery *Swim to Win*

120 pp. Lorimer ISBN 978-1-55277-698-8 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-55277-666-7 \$9.95

(5) Sports Stories series. Lasha has always been a great swimmer, but now she must deal with a harsh new coach and the rigors of competitive training. Although the swimming details are authentic, the coach's methods border on abusive, making her "kinder" side (revealed at the end) unbelievable. The story may appeal to sports-team members, but the formulaic plotting won't win any medals. CJ

▲ Ibbotson, Eva *The Ogre of Oglefort*

247 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42382-9 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Lisa K. Weber. A hag, troll, wizard, and orphan are told to slay an ogre who holds a princess captive. Turns out the princess is with the ogre by choice: she wants him to change her into a bird so she needn't marry a foolish prince. Ibbotson's playful humor, pungent turns of phrase, and sturdy friendliness toward her child heroes suffuse the fantasy. Review 7/11. DFB

Ignatow, Amy *The Popularity Papers: Words of (Questionable) Wisdom from Lydia Goldblatt & Julie Graham-Chang*

208 pp. Abrams/Amulet ISBN 978-1-4197-0063-7 \$15.95

(4) This third book about sixth-grade friends Lydia and Julie is told in the same lively handwritten journal/letter format. This time, however, the plot is a little more convoluted, and the messages about popularity are a bit muddled. Readers new to the series may be put off, but Lydia and Julie's fans will persevere. CJ

Jobling, Curtis *Wereworld: Rise of the Wolf*

412 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01330-2 \$16.99

(3) In one night, Drew loses his family and discovers that he is a werewolf. Now he is being hunted by other weres because he's the legitimate heir to the throne currently being held by the usurping werelion king. The story's action, fast pace, and mystical setting are reminiscent of traditional high fantasy, but with well-integrated horror elements. LC

Jonell, Lynne *Emmy and the Rats in the Belfry*

372 pp. Holt/Ottaviano ISBN 978-0-8050-9183-0 \$17.99

(4) Illustrated by Jonathan Bean. Emmy Addison and her friends, who happen to be magical rats, are lured to Schemnectady by a rodent villainess determined to regain her human form. This third entry includes many flashbacks, which can slow the action, but the characters continue to have heart, and Bean's flip-book art in the margins is an entertaining bonus. HRB

Jones, Allan *Fair Wind to Widdershins*

164 pp. Greenwillow ISBN 978-0-06-200626-4 \$15.99

(4) Illustrated by Gary Chalk. Six Crowns series. Unlikely hedgehog hero Trundle (*Trundle's Quest*) and his dramatic but brave companion Esmeralda continue their efforts to find the legendary Six Crowns. As they attempt to locate

Aunt Millie for clues and for help, they must escape the pursuit of evil pirates. The story has plenty of adventure but lacks enough detail for readers to fully buy into the fantasy world. LAL

▲ Jones, Traci L. *Silhouetted by the Blue*

200 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-36914-9 \$16.99

(2) Since her mother's death, seventh-grader Serena's depressed father won't leave his bed. Serena is chosen for the school play, but life becomes increasingly stressful as she tries to keep up her grades and care for the family. Jones vividly depicts the strains many students feel under the pressures of school and demands of home. Serena's courage and perseverance make her a compelling character. Review 7/11. SDL

Joyce, William, and Laura Geringer *Nicholas St. North and the Battle of the Nightmare King*

228 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4424-3048-8 \$14.99

(3) Illustrated by William Joyce. Guardians series. Pitch, King of Nightmares, escapes imprisonment. It falls to wizard Ombric and Russian bandit Nicholas St. North to protect the world's children from nightmares wielded by Pitch and his evil troops of Fearlings. A familiar figure is enterprisingly redrawn in this fantasy adventure that supposes a disreputable past for jolly St. Nick. Atmospheric black-and-white drawings illustrate key scenes. rss

▲ Jukes, Mavis *The New Kid*

277 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-85879-6 \$14.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-95879-3 \$17.99

(2) Jukes crafts a moving, hilarious, and artful story of nine-year-old Carson, the new kid at school. Carson is adopted and his dad is single, but there is nary an issue in this story, just real, kind, hugely likable people in situations that ring funny and true. Jukes captures perfectly the loopy, borderline-absurd perceptions of a third-grade boy. Review 1/12. SE

Juster, Norton *The Phantom Tollbooth: The 50th Anniversary Edition*

279 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86903-7 \$24.00
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96903-4 \$27.00

(3) Illustrated by Jules Feiffer. New ed. (1961). This fiftieth-anniversary edition of the fantasy classic, filled with word-play, math puzzles, social satire, and irony, includes an introduction by Juster, an "Appreciation" by Sendak (written in 1996), and appended "Celebrations" by children's literature specialists and writers including Jeanne Birdsall, Suzanne Collins, Philip Pullman, and Mo Willems. ERG

Kang, Hildi *Chengli and the Silk Road Caravan*

178 pp. Tanglewood ISBN 978-1-933718-54-5 \$14.95

(3) In 630 CE China, thirteen-year-old Chengli joins a caravan heading into the desert. When a princess entrusted to his caravan is kidnapped by bandits, Chengli ventures across the desert and mountains to rescue her. The story vividly shares glimpses of city, desert, and mountain life in seventh-century China. A historical note is appended. JSK

Kath, Natalie *The Summer I Lost It*

128 pp. Capstone/Stone Arch LE ISBN 978-1-4342-3316-5 \$25.32

(4) The titular “it” is excess weight. Fourteen-year-old Kat expresses her thoughts and actions in a series of journal entries and calendar snippets (occasional sidebar-ish bubbles contain food calorie counts). In a clichéd non-twist, she also obsesses over a boy. It’s a light read with a worthy (if heavy-handed) message: eat right, exercise, check with your doctor. Recipes and diet tips are appended. GBH

Katz, Farley *Journal of a Schoolyard Bully: Notes on Noogies, Wet Willies, and Wedgies*

202 pp. St. Martin’s Griffin ISBN 978-0-312-68158-6 \$12.99

(5) Niko’s journal is supposed to help him reform his bullying ways. Instead, his acts of sabotage and violence, shown in scribbly illustrations, become increasingly explicit. There’s an element of tongue-in-cheek humor, but Niko is so unpleasant that readers probably won’t want to stick around to see if he gets his comeuppance (he doesn’t). MJS

▲ Kelley, Jane *The Girl Behind the Glass*

184 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86220-5 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96220-2 \$19.99

(2) Twins Anna and Hannah Zimmer move into a creepy, long-uninhabited house. Their normal closeness is disrupted by the book’s narrator, who, it gradually becomes clear, is tethered to the house by an old tragedy. Kelley carries out the supernatural elements well, and the narrative is almost simultaneously mordant and funny. A page-turning plot and astute characterization lift this mystery above the ordinary. Review 11/11. SDL

Kelly, Jenn *Jackson Jones: The Tale of a Boy, a Troll, and a Rather Large Chicken*

248 pp. Zonderkidz ISBN 978-0-310-72293-9 \$11.99

(6) Illustrated by Ariane Elsamak. In his second book, Jackson is magically transported to a huge tree where he has a series of unrelated, random adventures as he tries to understand what “the Author” has planned for him. (“The Author,” readers will quickly recognize, is God.) Like the first book, this is a graceless religious tale that lacks a strong plot and interesting characters. MVK

Kelly, Katy *Melonhead and the Undercover Operation*

247 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73659-6 \$12.99

LE ISBN 978-0-385-90618-0 \$15.99

(4) Illustrated by Gillian Johnson. In this *Melonhead and the Big Stink* follow-up, the title character and his friend Sam are FBI Junior Special Agents. They spy on a suspicious person, botch their investigation, and accidentally solve the wrong mystery. Melonhead continues to be amusing, but this set of misadventures is a little long and convoluted. Elderly friend Mrs. Wilkins steals the show. SH

Kennedy, Emma *Wilma Tenderfoot: The Case of the Frozen Hearts*

337 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3540-8 \$16.99

Kennedy, Emma *Wilma Tenderfoot: The Case of the Putrid Poison*

321 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3541-5 \$16.99

(3) Orphan Wilma Tenderfoot moves next-door to her detective hero, Theodore P. Goodman. She wheedles her way into his good graces by helping him solve two mysteries (involving a jewel heist in *Hearts* and theatrical murders in *Poison*) then becomes his apprentice and ward. Wild characters and humor abound in the first two books of this new series. SH

Kerr, P. B. *The Grave Robbers of Genghis Khan*

440 pp. Scholastic/Orchard ISBN 978-0-545-12660-1 \$18.99

(5) Children of the Lamp series. Djinn twins Philippa and John must find Genghis Khan’s tomb in order to avert worldwide volcanic eruptions. Chinese and Mongolian legends, Icelandic volcanologists, Italian mafia, Australian aborigines, and Moroccan rug merchants all figure into the convoluted plot. An uneven tone veering between comedic mugging and contemplation of death and sacrifice doesn’t improve the by-now-hackneyed character by-play in this series-ender. ALB

Kessler, Liz *A Year Without Autumn*

296 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5595-2 \$15.99

(4) A mysterious elevator brings Jenni a year into the future. As she travels back and forth in time, she glimpses what her world would be like if a tragic accident occurs, including how her relationship with her best friend could change. The space/time musings are repetitive and the story line is predictable, but some thoughtful issues are raised. KA

Khan, Hena, and David Borgenicht *Mars: You Decide How to Survive!*

204 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-0-8118-7124-2 \$12.99

(4) With Robert Zubrin. Illustrated by Yancey Labat. Worst-Case Scenario Ultimate Adventure series. In this Choose-Your-Own-Adventure-style book, readers join an international crew on a journey to Mars. The mission is “Help prepare Mars Base I for its first wave of permanent settlers” then return safely to Earth. Organization is spotty: the appended “Mars Expedition File” should be read before takeoff, as it provides maps, diagrams, and lifesaving information. Comic-style black-and-white illustrations enhance the interactive adventure. CHS

Kinney, Jeff *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Cabin Fever*

217 pp. Abrams/Amulet ISBN 978-1-4197-0223-5 \$13.95

(3) With Christmas right around the corner, Greg Heffley’s just trying to keep his nose clean. Good intentions notwithstanding, Greg finds himself wanted by the police (or so he thinks; it’s sort of true) before a blizzard knocks out power and he’s able to redeem himself (by mistake). Kinney provides more laugh-out-loud silliness from the hapless wimpy kid. ERG

Kirby, Matthew J. *Icefall*

325 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-27424-1 \$17.99

(4) Princess Solveig and her siblings spend winter trapped in a remote settlement. They wait to see if the king's enemies will find them—or if traitors in their midst will do them in. Solveig grows from a timid girl into a young woman who finally finds her voice. It's a slow process, but the courtly intrigue and a vividly realized setting keep things going. AMT

Korman, Gordon *The Medusa Plot*

222 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-29839-1 \$12.99

(3) 39 Clues: Cahills vs. Vespers series. Vesper One, a centuries-old adversary, kidnaps seven members of the powerful Cahill family. Thirteen-year-old Dan and sixteen-year-old Amy, winners of the clue hunt from the first 39 Clues series, must steal a national treasure and deliver it to the Vespers in exchange for the hostages. The fast-paced, action-packed adventure gets this spin-off series started with a bang. LB

LaFleur, Suzanne *Eight Keys*

217 pp. Random/Lamb ISBN 978-0-385-74030-2 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-385-90833-7 \$19.99

(3) Sixth grade isn't going well for Elise. She's behind on assignments, people tease her, and she has hurt her only friend's feelings. When she finds a key with her name on it—and the secret door it opens—Elise discovers a message from her deceased father. Seven keys and seven unlocked rooms later, Elise is equipped to improve her relationships in this emotional, heartfelt story. SJW

Lairamore, Dawn *Ivy and the Meanstalk*

227 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2392-7 \$16.95

(3) Princess Ivy and Elridge the dragon (*Ivy's Ever After*) must save the kingdom from a raging giantess. Jack (of beanstalk fame) stole the giantess's singing harp nearly a thousand years before, and Ivy has to find it in order to restore peace. The story's bright and entertaining characters make this a satisfying romp through a fairy-tale world. BTK

Larsen, Andrew *The Luck of Jude*

109 pp. Lorimer ISBN 978-1-55277-736-7 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-55277-705-3 \$9.95

(3) Canadian fourth-grader Jude Bhandari doesn't get why Terrence, the new kid from England, has to pick fights with everyone, including Jude's best friend Sanjay and even Jude himself. Jude's first-person narration reveals his frustration toward his own deadbeat dad, love for his mother and Nani, and a common link with Terrence. The straightforward story is accessible and entertaining. CHS

Larson, Kirby *The Friendship Doll*

202 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73745-6 \$15.99

LE ISBN 978-0-385-90667-8 \$18.99

(3) Published spring 2011. Miss Kanagawa is one of fifty-eight dolls sent to the United States from Japan as an Ambassador of Friendship. Her purpose is revealed as she travels around during the Great Depression. Readers meet

four young girls who are helped by Miss Kanagawa in desperate times and witness the doll's own growth in compassion and friendship as she carries out her mission. SJW

Lasky, Kathryn *Frost Wolf*

243 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-09316-3 \$16.99

(5) Wolves of the Beyond series. The wolves face famine as the winter weather continues into summer. Watch Wolves Faolan and Esme try to combat a false (wolf) prophet who is encouraging hungry wolves to dance and starve themselves to death. Though there are some exciting moments, the text's one-note portentousness grows wearing, as do the murky plot and tensionless episodes, while the wolf "spirituality" becomes ever more convoluted. ALB

Lasky, Kathryn *Spiders on the Case*

171 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-11682-4 \$15.99

PE ISBN 978-0-545-11731-9 \$4.99

(3) Illustrated by Stephen Gilpin. Deadlies series. This sequel to *Felix Takes the Stage* finds the Deadlies spider family (living in the Boston Public Library) befriend a brown walnut spider named Buster and investigating theft from the rare books room. The series continues to bring a unique mix of kid-friendly adventure and creepy (and/or factual) spider details, all accompanied by humorous black-and-white cartoon illustrations. SH

Lee, Ingrid *Cat Found*

161 pp. Scholastic/Chicken House

ISBN 978-0-545-31770-2 \$16.99

(4) The small town of Clydesdale has a feral cat problem. Lee paints the town's atrocities against the cats with a heavy hand; practically any imagined violence toward strays is detailed here. The kindness of two teens and of protagonist Billy eventually saves the day in a dramatic fashion. The chapters told from the cats' viewpoints are more captivating than the main text. LAL

Lemke, Donnie *Drop In*

123 pp. Capstone/Stone Arch LE ISBN 978-1-4342-3214-4 \$25.32

PE ISBN 978-1-4342-3451-3 \$6.95

(4) Illustrated by Caio Majado. Tony Hawk's 900 Revolution series. Fifteen-year-old Omar Grebes dreams of becoming a professional skateboarder. "The Revolution" has other plans, selecting Omar to protect the magical fragments of Tony Hawk's shattered skateboard. The extreme-sport subject and dude-filled dialogue may attract a reluctant-reader audience. A short graphic-novel-format insert mid-book breaks up the text but adds little to the story. CHS

Levin, Mark, and Jennifer Flackett *The Family Hitchcock*

277 pp. HarperCollins/Tegen ISBN 978-0-06-189394-0 \$16.99

(4) After swapping houses with a French family during their annual holiday, the Hitchcocks find themselves mixed up in high-stakes international crime. Soon they're escaping through chimneys and jumping across roofs, all while evading the Parisian police. This action-adventure tale suffers

from some stock characters, and the humor can be a stretch. However, readers will enjoy the snappy dialogue and fast pacing. LB

Levy, Elizabeth *Parrots & Pirates: A Mystery at Sea*

134 pp. Roaring Brook ISBN 978-1-59643-463-9 \$14.99

(3) Illustrated by Mordicai Gerstein. Philippa and Philip (*Diamonds & Danger*) solve their second mystery aboard their floating home, the cruise ship S.S. *Excalibur*. The theft of Philip's pet causes a rift between the friends that won't be closed until Philippa finds the missing parrot. Gerstein's crosshatched black-and-white illustrations break up the story nicely in this accessible and entertaining light mystery. LCF

Lewis, Josh *Super Chicken Nugget Boy and the Massive Meatloaf Man Manhunt*

169 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-1501-4 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by Stephen Gilpin. Super Chicken Nugget Boy is back for his fourth silly and gross adventure. This time he must stop the (misunderstood) Massive Meatloaf Man who's threatening the school and the whole town. The frantic pace may not be everyone's cup of tea; but with chapter titles like "Clash of the Colossal Freaks of Nature," you know what you're in for. LCF

Little, Kimberley Griffiths *Circle of Secrets*

326 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-16561-7 \$17.99

(3) Shelby Jayne is not happy to be living in the bayou with her mother Mirage, a *traiteur* (healer) who left when Shelby was ten. A tree filled with blue glass bottles and secret messages, a mysterious new friend, and a charm bracelet that seems to hold special powers figure into this lyrical story about fitting in, forgiveness, and understanding. KA

London, C. Alexander *We Dine with Cannibals*

359 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-25488-8 \$12.99

(3) Illustrated by Jonny Duddle. Accidental Adventure series. In their second story, couch potatoes Oliver and Celia Navel take a trip to the Amazon (with a reality TV star) to find their missing explorer parents and the Lost Library of Alexandria. Despite a questionable cover and title, London consistently subverts stereotypes (spoiler: the cannibals aren't cannibals). His reluctant heroes are resourceful and engaging, their adventures well-paced and perilous. BES

Lorentz, Dayna *Dogs of the Drowned City: The Pack*

225 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-27644-3 \$16.99

(3) Shep, reluctant leader of a pack of former pet dogs, struggles to keep himself and his friends alive in their hurricane-ravaged city. Fighting off wild curs and avoiding toxic conditions, Shep's pack grows increasingly large and more confident. The depiction of natural destruction from a domesticated animal's point of view makes for an intriguing narrative. LAL

Loughead, Deb *Just Run*

103 pp. Lorimer ISBN 978-1-55277-699-5 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-55277-668-1 \$9.95

(4) Sports Stories series. Eighth-grader Daisy Howson feels like her world is falling apart. Her father is out of work, and her fellow track team members are turning against one another. Daisy tries earnestly to make everything better, yet her attempts only complicate things. The formulaic story's fast pace, along with Daisy's fix-it attitude, may attract readers. CHS

Lovric, Michelle *The Undrowned Child*

445 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73999-3 \$17.99

LE ISBN 978-0-385-90814-6 \$20.99

(3) In 1899, eleven-year-old Teo discovers a mysterious book in Venice. The book communicates with her about a plot to destroy the city to which Teo is inexplicably drawn. Venice's history, well researched by Lovric, is carefully woven into the story's complex and rewarding mythology. The whole package will please fans of Cornelia Funke, Zizou Corder, and Kai Meyer. NCF

Lupica, Mike *The Underdogs*

280 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-25001-9 \$17.99

(3) After the local sneaker factory closes, many of the residents of twelve-year-old footballer Will's town leave—along with their booster money. Determined to save his season, Will contacts the CEO of New Balance for sponsorship while rallying the few kids who are still around to field a team. Strong character development and sports details create a solid, satisfying, feel-good story. CHS

MacColl, Michaela *Promise the Night*

264 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-0-8118-7625-4 \$16.99

(4) The story of early aviator Beryl Markham's childhood in Kenya is interspersed with newspaper articles and diary entries detailing her pioneering 1936 trans-Atlantic flight. The fictionalized story is well researched; some heavy-handed dialogue and uncontextualized colonialism (along with a bratty-sounding protagonist) mar the offering. A useful author's note is appended. Reading list. ALB

MacLachlan, Patricia *Waiting for the Magic*

143 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4169-2745-7 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Amy June Bates. William's father leaves; his mother is about to have a baby; and his little sister Elinor is talking with the family's new pets—four dogs and a cat. Soon William starts hearing the animals, too, and when his father returns, the pets help keep the family together. Emotions ring true in this poignant story about family dynamics. LAL

Magnin, Joyce *Carrying Mason*

153 pp. Zonderkidz ISBN 978-0-310-72681-4 \$14.99

(4) After her best friend Mason's death, thirteen-year-old Luna moves in with Mason's mentally disabled mother, Ruby Day. Luna matures quickly as she cares for the

woman. The readable Christian-themed novel is less a story than it is a lesson in standing up for what is morally right. MVK

Margolin, Phillip, and Ami Margolin Rome
Vanishing Acts

170 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-188556-3 \$16.99

(3) Madison Kincaid Mystery series. Seventh-grader Madison Kincaid is used to being independent; her mom passed away and her father is a busy lawyer. However, when her best friend and soccer teammate vanishes, Madison feels lost. Lots of intrigue and just the right amount of light romance will keep kids reading until the triumphant Madison solves not one, but two mysteries. LCF

Marsden, Carolyn ***Starfields***

209 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4820-6 \$15.99

(3) Rosalba, nine, lives in a Mayan community in rural Mexico. She worries about her group's way of life when bulldozers invade the forest and its wildlife—not to mention when she finds out that the Mayan calendar predicts the end of the world in 2012. Rosalba draws her strength from traditional culture in an uncertain new world throughout this thoughtful book. An author's note is appended. Glos. LCF

▲ Martin, Ann M. ***Ten Rules for Living with My Sister***

228 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-36766-4 \$16.99

(2) When their grandfather, Daddy Bo, moves in, Pearl (nine) and Lexie (thirteen) must share a room. Pearl knows she can be a pain, so she comes up with ten self-imposed guidelines to help keep the peace. The story's drama and humor are well balanced. Martin knows the ins and outs of Pearl's demographic, and the nine-year-old's travails will resonate with readers. Review 9/11. ERG

▲ Mason, Simon ***Moon Pie***

328 pp. Random/Fickling ISBN 978-0-385-75235-0 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-75237-4 \$19.99

(2) When Martha's alcoholic dad hits rock bottom, she and her brother are sent to live with their strict maternal grandparents. Martha escapes her dreary new life by acting in her flamboyant friend's brief remakes of famous movies. Mason shows keen insights into human foibles and family dynamics in this humorous and poignant portrait of a believable girl and her imperfect but loving family. Review 11/11. MVP

Mass, Wendy ***13 Gifts***

343 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-31003-1 \$16.99

(3) After getting suspended from school, Tara is sent to stay with relatives. They live in a strange town where an eccentric shopkeeper demands Tara obtain thirteen seemingly random items before her thirteenth birthday. As Tara completes the list, she learns surprising secrets about the townspeople. Her rewarding journey from bystander to active participant shows communities can be built in the strangest of ways. AMM

McDonough, Yona Zeldis ***The Cats in the Doll Shop***

140 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01279-4 \$14.99

(3) Illustrated by Heather Maione. In this sequel to *The Doll Shop Downstairs*, Anna and her family await the arrival of cousin Tania, fleeing Russia during WWI. When Tania arrives, she's as skittish as the stray cats in the neighborhood; caring for the cats helps her acclimate. McDonough's straightforward text and Maione's cheery *All-of-a-Kind-Family*-esque illustrations show the small details of one family's life during a turbulent time. ERG

McElligott, Matthew, and Larry Tuxbury ***Benjamin Franklinshtein Meets the Fright Brothers***

150 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-25480-2 \$12.99

(3) Illustrated by Matthew McElligott. The reanimated founding father (*Benjamin Franklinshtein Lives!*), with Victor's help, aims to determine whether he was awakened intentionally. He's also puzzling out the similarly undead Wright brothers' connection with vampire bats terrorizing Philadelphia. Fast-paced, humorous, and just shy of too ridiculous, the series continues to be entertaining while also teaching a tiny bit of real history. EJM

McGrath, Alister ***Darkness Shall Fall***

214 pp. Zondervan ISBN 978-0-310-71814-7 \$14.99

(5) Aedyn Chronicles series. English teenagers Peter, Julia, and Louisa must save the people of Aedyn on behalf of the Lord of Hosts. However, Peter is led astray by the Shadow's representative of science and reason. Filled with flat characterizations and overt didacticism, the novel's strong religious message will appeal primarily to readers who enjoy explicitly Christian fiction. BCM

McMann, Lisa ***The Unwanteds***

390 pp. Simon/Aladdin ISBN 978-1-4424-0768-8 \$16.99

(3) Creativity is a death sentence in Quill, but unbeknownst to Quill's leaders, the locked execution area is actually Artimé, a magical world that nurtures purged citizens' talents. All the secrecy is catastrophically undone by Unwanted Alex, who desperately misses his Wanted twin. Quill is a caricatured dystopia, but Artimé sparkles with magic, action, and newly liberated teenage creativity. BTK

McMullan, Kate ***Get to Work, Hercules!***

199 pp. Capstone/Stone Arch LE ISBN 978-1-4342-3196-3 \$23.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4342-3440-7 \$5.95

McMullan, Kate ***Nice Shot, Cupid!***

199 pp. Capstone/Stone Arch LE ISBN 978-1-4342-1985-5 \$23.99
PE ISBN 987-1-4342-3435-3 \$5.95

(3) Myth-O-Mania series. Using Hades as an observer and holder of the narrative thread, McMullan has rewritten famous Greek myths in a modern style. Plentiful humorous dialogue, including jokes, puns, and pop-culture references, ups the appeal. The author does take artistic license with the source material, but the core of the myths remains. AMT

McNamee, Eoin *The Ring of Five: The Unknown Spy*

313 pp. Random/Lamb ISBN 978-0-385-73820-0 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90713-2 \$19.99

(4) Ring of Five series. Danny's Christmas break from Wilson Academy of the Devious Arts is cut short when he's summoned to join a mission team tasked to find and protect the Treaty Stone before the Ring of Five destroys it. Though most of the story is predictable, subplots propel the action toward a somewhat surprising conclusion. LB

Meloy, Colin *Wildwood*

541 pp. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray
ISBN 978-0-06-202468-8 \$17.99

(3) Illustrated by Carson Ellis. Wildwood Chronicles series. When her baby brother is carried by crows into the Impassable Wilderness, plucky twelve-year-old Prue follows—and Prue's friend Colin follows her. Prue and Colin are soon separated, then both are entangled in ongoing hostilities between bandits, forest creatures, and the witchy Dowager Governess. Meloy's witty prose and Ellis's nuanced black-and-white illustrations create an alluring arboreal society. KLB

Meloy, Maile *The Apothecary*

357 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-25627-1 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Ian Schoenherr. In 1952, Janie's family moves to London. When her new friend Benjamin's father—the titular apothecary—goes missing, the kids discover he's more of an alchemist; they develop magic elixirs that help them free the man and avert nuclear war. Janie's first-person narrative is engaging, the characters are well drawn, and the historical details nail the Cold War setting. JH

Mills, Claudia *Mason Dixon: Fourth-Grade Disasters*

161 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86874-0 \$12.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96874-7 \$15.99

Mills, Claudia *Mason Dixon: Pet Disasters*

157 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86873-3 \$12.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96873-0 \$15.99

(4) Illustrated by Guy Francis. Mason is an only child who likes his room clean, his socks brown, and his food plain. His parents have other ideas about what's good for him, and he's nudged further out of the box by his enthusiastic best friend, Brody. The stories' conflicts involve bullies, art projects, choir practice, and hurt feelings. Both books are entertaining, if a little bland. MJS

Monniger, Joseph *Finding Somewhere*

227 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73942-9 \$17.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90789-7 \$20.99

(3) To keep their beloved Speed from being put down, Hattie and Delores kidnap the elderly horse, put him in a trailer, and head for the Western prairie. The friendship between the girls and each one's struggle to choose a direction for her life sustain the arc of the road journey. Horse lovers will empathize with the girls' emotions and cheer Speed's eventual release into a wild herd. ALB

Moodie, Craig *Into the Trap*

199 pp. Roaring Brook ISBN 978-1-59643-585-8 \$16.99

(4) Eddie, twelve, and Briggs, thirteen, find themselves chasing down lobster thieves while being accused of the same crime. After a slow start, the story's action picks up with the boys setting a trap to catch the criminals. The entire cast of characters fits into well-worn stereotypes, but the protagonists make a likable pair of amateur detectives. AMT

Moriarty, Chris *The Inquisitor's Apprentice*

345 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-547-58135-4 \$16.99

(3) Magic is common but illegal in this book's alternate-history Lower East Side. When Sacha discovers his rare ability to see it, the police put him to use. Soon Sacha is embroiled in an investigation that pits witchcraft against turn-of-the-twentieth-century technology, with an undercurrent of class and ethnic tensions. Suspense along with cheeky historical revision provide plenty of incentive to keep reading. SF

Morpurgo, Michael *An Elephant in the Garden*

201 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-59369-8 \$16.99

(3) Lizzie, now an old woman, recounts how, on the eve of the 1945 Dresden bombing, an elephant protected her German family. After escaping the destroyed city, sixteen-year-old Lizzie, her brother and mother, and Peter, a Canadian RAF bomber, trek westward with elephant Marlene seeking refuge. Inspired by true events (conflated), Marlene's ability to aid the family throughout its journey is inspiring. CR

Moskowitz, Hannah *Zombie Tag*

229 pp. Roaring Brook ISBN 978-1-59643-720-3 \$15.99

(3) Wil would do *anything* to bring back his brother, Graham, who died during an asthma attack. When Wil discovers a bell that revives (but then destroys) the dead, he rings it with unexpected results. Zombie-Graham returns, but as an emotionless shell of his former self. Wil's realistic struggle with loss anchors this sometimes absurd yet funny and honest exploration of grief. BTK

▲ Murphy, Sally *Pearl Verses the World*

73 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4821-3 \$14.99

(2) Illustrated by Heather Potter. In this extended free-verse monologue, Pearl tells of her grandmother's last days and dementia-related death. The voice is unpretentious, and Murphy accords Pearl real dignity in her grief. Personality-rich pencil-and-ink drawings support the gentle tone. The book's comfort, the truth that bereavement changes relationships, and sometimes for the better, is at just the right pitch for Pearl and for her readers. Review 9/11. SE

Myers, Walter Dean *The Cruisers: Checkmate*

133 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-439-91627-1 \$16.99

(3) In the second Cruisers book, the kids are asked to help a classmate who is suspected of using drugs. Sidney, a chess star at their elite school in Harlem, is not a stereotypical drug user, and Zander and his Cruiser friends get glimpses of how intense the pressure to succeed can be. School essays by the kids are interspersed throughout the reluctant-reader-friendly text. KA

Myklusch, Matt *The Secret War*

529 pp. Simon/Aladdin ISBN 978-1-4169-9564-7 \$16.99

(4) Jack Blank Adventure series. In his second book, budding superhero Jack has come off his stunning victory over an arch-nemesis only to find himself back in training. When a new menace arises, he and his fellow trainees must save the day again. The story provides the thrills and action of a comic book with increased background and exposition adding pages and pages. AMT

Napoli, Donna Jo *Lights on the Nile*

288 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-166793-0 \$16.99

(3) In ancient Egypt, Kepi and her pet baboon are kidnapped and taken aboard a ship bound for the capital. Kepi, initially scared, then indignant, seizes on the chance to confront the pharaoh about his cruel treatment of workers such as her father. A fantastical eleventh-hour plot twist brings the story into fairy-tale realm, gratifying fans of Napoli's previous like-themed novels. ERG

Nelson, D. A. *The Witch's Revenge*

261 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73631-2 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-385-90601-2 \$19.99

(4) DarkIsle series. Safely settled in the magical city of Marnoch Mor after destroying the wicked warlock Devlish, young Morag and her animal friends must save the city once again—this time from the wizard's diabolically clever daughter Mephista. The characters, swept along by the brisk story line and easy resolutions, lack depth, but the vivid setting offers a diverting backdrop. BTK

▲ Newman, John *Mimi*

188 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5415-3 \$15.99

(2) This Irish import follows a family through the year following the death of the mother, as described by primary school-aged Mimi. A rich cast of deftly drawn supporting characters and a couple of subplots (one focusing on Mimi as a child adopted from China) all add up to a warm, believable, and optimistic portrait of grief and connection. Review 11/11. SE

Noe, Katherine Schlick *Something to Hold*

250 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-55813-4 \$16.99

(3) In 1962, Kitty's family moves to the Warm Springs Reservation where her father is working for the government fighting fires. As one of only a few white girls on the reservation, Kitty feels like an outsider. Her experiences making friends and finding a home in a Native community are well evoked by Noe, who based the story on her own childhood experiences. Glos. NL

Nykko *Book Five: The Parting*

48 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6632-4 \$27.93

PE ISBN 978-0-7613-7524-1 \$6.95

(4) Illustrated by Bannister. Graphic Universe: The Elsewhere Chronicles series. This graphic novel series grows even darker in its fifth volume. While trying to rescue their friends from the evil Master of Shadows, Grandpa Gabe and Max face a variety of monsters and dangers. The action

can be hard to follow, but the panel art creates striking and detailed images that bring the world of Elsewhere to life. BLM

▲ O'Dell, Kathleen *The Aviary*

341 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-85605-1 \$15.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-95605-8 \$18.99

(2) Clara tries to avoid the aviary beside the spooky old mansion where she lives with her housekeeper mother. When she realizes one of the birds is talking to her, Clara starts asking questions. With its early-twentieth-century setting, this story contains locked doors, a magician, and a neat supernatural twist. Clara's character is well developed and interesting as we watch her growing independence. Review 11/11. SDL

Odyssey, Shawn Thomas *The Wizard of Dark Street*

345 pp. Egmont ISBN 978-1-60684-143-3 \$16.99

(3) After an errant spell causes her mother's death, wizard's apprentice Oona Crate forswears magic in favor of a detective business with her raven Deacon. When a new apprentice candidate is suspected of kidnapping Oona's wizard uncle, Oona tackles the case. A well-developed setting, intriguing secondary characters, taut action, and subtle humor combine to create this complex and satisfying mystery puzzle. ALB

Oliver, Lauren *Liesl & Po*

314 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-201451-1 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Kei Acedera. Liesl, locked away by an evil stepmother, befriends Po, a ghost who helps her escape to put her father's ashes to rest. She crosses paths with an alchemist's apprentice, and the two flee pursued by adults hungry for magic and power. Appropriately shadowy black-and-white illustrations accompany the suspenseful tale. NL

Oliver, Lin, and Theo Baker *Sound Bender*

262 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-19692-5 \$16.99

(3) When recently orphaned Leo turns thirteen, he learns that he can hear the past when he touches certain objects. The discoveries of a strange artifact and a recording made by his musicologist father lead him to the South Pacific to right a decades-old wrong. A far-out, fast-paced tale that will appeal to music lovers and middle-grade boys. BCM

Paley, Jane *Hooper Finds a Family: A Hurricane Katrina Dog's Survival Tale*

138 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-201103-9 \$15.99

(4) Jimmy, a young Labrador, is left behind when his family evacuates during Hurricane Katrina. Rescued and placed in a shelter, he's soon adopted. His new family lives in New York, and he must adjust to big-city life. Jimmy/Hooper's voice can sound forced, still, the text effectively highlights the work of animal rescue groups. LAL

Paquette, A. J. *Nowhere Girl*

244 pp. Walker ISBN 978-0-8027-2297-3 \$16.99

(3) Luchi Ann has spent her thirteen years in the Thai prison where she was born. After her mother's death, she is free to navigate the outside world and explore the mystery of her mother's past. Paquette captures Luchi's wonder and confusion through thoughtful narration and vivid setting descriptions. HRB

▲ Paterson, Katherine, and John Paterson *The Flint Heart*

294 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4712-4 \$19.99

(2) Illustrated by John Rocco. At the core of Eden Phillpotts's 1910 original fairy tale *The Flint Heart* lies a marvelous modern fantasy; the Patersons' abridgment allows that tale to emerge. They've eliminated much unnecessary detail and playfully incorporated direct address and lighthearted asides. The book is illustrated with full-color pictures and silhouette spot art, and the page design is generous; best of all, the story delivers. Review 9/11. BC

▲ Patron, Susan *Lucky for Good*

209 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4169-9058-1 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Erin McGuire. Just as things are going smoothly for Lucky and Brigitte (*The Higher Power of Lucky*, *Lucky Breaks*), trouble arrives in the form of restaurant inspector Stu Burping. Meanwhile, Lucky must draw up a family tree—no mean feat for her—which leads to gratifying, if bittersweet, closure. McGuire's black-and-white spot illustrations beautifully capture moments between characters as Lucky's important relationships are shifting. Review 7/11. ERG

Patten, E. J. *Return to Exile*

503 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-2032-8 \$16.99

(4) Illustrated by John Rocco. Hunter Chronicles series. Sky Weathers's disappointing twelfth birthday—marked with a move and a missing uncle—turns eerie when monsters and a doppelgänger enter the scene. Sky must rescue his uncle and untangle his own identity to save everyone. There's ample humor, action, and world building in this series opener, but a serious overuse of similes drags the story down. BTK

Patterson, James, and Ned Rust *Game Over*

231 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-10178-3 \$16.99

(4) Daniel X series. Alien hunter Daniel X learns that two of the most dangerous aliens on the planet are plotting to use video games to brainwash players. He must recruit the aliens' rebellious son as an ally before it's "game over" for humans. Short chapters (for short attention spans) keep the pace of the story (with its preposterous premise) brisk. DE

▲ Paulsen, Gary *Flat Broke: The Theory, Practice and Destructive Properties of Greed*

119 pp. Random/Lamb ISBN 978-0-385-74002-9 \$12.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90818-4 \$15.99

(2) His allowance discontinued, middle-school entrepreneur Kevin (*Liar, Liar*) is desperate for money (mostly to impress a girl). Kevin sees himself as kingmaker: he'll create

projects for others and take a cut of the profits; his enthusiasm for fame, fortune, and free enterprise is infectious. This is an undemanding read with a nicely underplayed moral, a solid investment for reluctant readers. Review 9/11. BC

Paulsen, Gary *Paintings from the Cave: Three Novellas*

163 pp. Random/Lamb ISBN 978-0-385-74684-7 \$15.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90921-1 \$18.99
PE ISBN 978-0-553-49466-2 \$7.99

(3) In each of the three stories collected here, characters struggle with issues of isolation, desperation, and poverty. Through human (and canine) connections and a love of art, young people find hope in the most dismal of surroundings. Paulsen's raw and honest style creates short but powerful tales of human suffering and triumph. PIH

Peacock, Shane *The Dragon Turn*

220 pp. Tundra ISBN 978-1-77049-231-8 \$19.95

(3) Boy Sherlock Holmes series. In his fifth story, the young "sword of justice" investigates his latest case, involving a dragon hunt near Trafalgar Square and the River Thames. Deceptive magicians and unusual dwellings with hidden rooms complicate both his mission and his rapport with Scotland Yard. Fans of the real thing will continue to be entertained by young Sherlock's recognizable investigation methods. NLH

Pearson, Ridley *Kingdom Keepers IV: Power Play*

436 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-3857-0 \$17.99

(5) Published spring 2011. The Kingdom Keepers, protecting Disney theme parks from cartoon villains, must regain control over their hologram technology and stop the Evil Queen and Cruella De Vil from freeing their leaders. Familiar characters and sheer silliness buy Pearson some points, but the choppy writing, in-poor-taste attempts at humor (waterboarding jokes?), and inconclusive ending take them away. BES

▲ Peck, Richard *Secrets at Sea*

241 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3455-5 \$16.99

(1) Illustrated by Kelly Murphy. In this rollicking comedy of manners, the social-climbing Cranstons (human) take an ocean voyage to Europe hoping to snag a husband for daughter Olive. Observant, careful Helena and her quite-a-bit-less-prudent younger siblings (mice) go, too. Peck's droll take on human and mouse society is exquisite, and Murphy's dandy and detailed pencil illustrations add just the right air of royalty. Review 9/11. R. SMITH

▲ Peirce, Lincoln *Big Nate on a Roll*

216 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-194438-3 \$12.99
LE ISBN 978-0-06-194439-0 \$14.89

(2) Big Nate's third (mis)adventure finds the sixth grader in fierce albeit one-sided competition with all-around good guy Artur for both a new skateboard and the heart of Jenny, Nate's secret crush. The interplay between text and pictures

remains fresh, as does the distinction between Peirce's cartoons and Nate's own cartoons, which make up in chutzpah what they lack in finesse. Review 9/11. RS

Peters, Andrew *Ravenwood*

354 pp. Scholastic/Chicken House
ISBN 978-0-545-30550-1 \$16.99

(4) Ark, a plumber, overhears a treasonous plot to destroy his home of Arborium. A cold world of metal and technology threatens this mile-high tree kingdom, and Ark must first warn—then protect—the land's disbelieving king. There's some solid world building, but awkward botanical puns and potty humor detract from the story. BTK

▲ Phelan, Matt *Around the World*

237 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-3619-7 \$24.99

(2) Jules Verne's classic becomes the springboard for three remarkable narratives about real-life around-the-world journeys: Thomas Stevens's in 1884, Nellie Bly's in 1889, and Joshua Slocum's in 1895. Phelan successfully weaves graphically told stories with third-person narratives and the travelers' own words. The stunning volume's eye-catching illustrations are rendered in pencil, ink, gouache, and watercolor. Review 11/11. DS

Pierce, Tamora *Mastiff: A Tortall Legend*

596 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-81470-9 \$18.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-91470-6 \$21.99

(3) Beka Cooper series. When a noble couple's son is kidnapped into slavery, Beka and her fellow Guards must retrieve him. Their journey reveals—and ultimately ends—the oppression of slaves in Tortall. In her third high-fantasy adventure, Pierce's tough leading lady once again proves her mettle. SF

Pilkey, Dav *Super Diaper Baby 2: The Invasion of the Potty Snatchers: The Third Epic Novel by George Beard and Harold Hutchins*

189 pp. Scholastic/Blue Sky ISBN 978-0-545-17532-6 \$9.99

(4) Published spring 2011. Purportedly written and illustrated by the juvenile main characters in Pilkey's Captain Underpants books, this graphic novel features lots of potty humor ("Into the chimneys / the pee drops they flew..."), kidlike art, and frequent spelling mistakes ("laffing out loud"). Most adults will wince at the one-track jokes, but kids will snatch this up. BLM

Pinkney, Andrea Davis *With the Might of Angels: The Diary of Dawnie Rae Johnson*

333 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-29705-9 \$12.99

(3) Dear America series. In 1954 Virginia, Dawnie Rae wants to be a doctor, to help her brother be "normal," and to meet Jackie Robinson. With her parents' approval, she also wants to attend the all-white Prettyman Coburn School. Harassed by Coburn students and teachers and rejected by lifelong friends, Dawnie Rae, through Pinkney's authentic scenes of boycotts, violence, and familial love, walks the difficult path toward racial equality. NLH

Platt, Chris *Star Gazer*

187 pp. Peachtree ISBN 978-1-56145-596-6 \$14.95

(5) When thirteen-year-old Jordan sees a lame Percheron about to be auctioned off to a meat packer, she bids on the mare and wins. Can she cure Star Gazer in time to compete in the summer's-end log-skidding competition, or will her mom make her sell her beloved horse? Inaccurate horse details, melodramatic writing, and slack plot construction leave the story mostly unconvincing. ALB

Pryor, Bonnie *Captain Hannah Pritchard: The Hunt for Pirate Gold*

160 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3817-2 \$27.93
PE ISBN 978-1-59845-283-9 \$14.95

(4) Historical Fiction Adventures series. Hannah, dressed as a boy pirate, returns in her third and final Revolutionary War-era adventure. She must complete her mission for the Continental navy while foiling the treasure-stealing maneuvers of an evil pirate captain. The pace drags in places, but historical facts woven throughout leave readers with a fair sense of the time period. Reading list, websites. RSS

▲ Raschka, Chris *Seriously, Norman!*

342 pp. Scholastic/di Capua ISBN 978-0-545-29877-3 \$17.95

(2) Twelve-year-old Norman Normann and his friends' madcap journey leads them to various parts of Manhattan, Austria, and Singapore. Don't expect a linear plot here but rather an ode to ten-year-old humor, enthusiasm, and improbable characters and situations. Embellished with Raschka's spot art, this rousing tale contains strong wordplay, a little vocabulary instruction, and a lot of laughs. Review 11/11. BC

▲ Ray, Delia *Here Lies Linc*

309 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86757-6 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96756-6 \$19.99

(2) Twelve-year-old Lincoln has grown up next to Iowa's Oakland Cemetery with his "kind of unusual" mom, a professor specializing in burial customs. His first junior high assignment is to research one of the cemetery's graves. Ray's characters are quirky and relatable, with genuine emotions; Linc, in particular, is an earnest, self-effacing narrator trying to both fit in and do the right thing. Review 9/11. RLS

Rayner, Robert *Total Offence*

125 pp. Lorimer ISBN 978-1-55277-697-1 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-55277-664-3 \$9.95

(5) Sports Stories series. Fat Vinnie's Diner buys uniforms, nets, markers, and meals for the soccer team. It also secretly pays the new coach so Fat Vinnie's not-so-skilled daughter, Maddie, won't get cut. With a new rule demanding team sponsors provide healthy food choices, Brunswick Valley's season is threatened. Flat characters and unrealistic dialogue may cause readers to lose interest in both game and story. NLH

Repka, Janice *The Clueless Girl's Guide to Being a Genius*

218 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42333-1 \$16.99

(3) Thirteen-year-old Harvard graduate student Aphrodite Wigglesmith returns to her hometown to teach remedial math. Middle schooler Mindy, who dreams of becoming a famous baton twirler, is failing math. When their lives intersect, the girls discover they're the perfect complement for each other in friendship. Alternating points of view narrate this lighthearted comedy. LB

▲ Riordan, Rick *The Son of Neptune*

521 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-4059-7 \$19.99

(2) Heroes of Olympus series. In this action-packed *Lost Hero* sequel, Percy Jackson arrives at Camp Jupiter, the camp for half-blood children of the Roman gods, unable to remember his past and pursued by two gorgons who won't stay dead when he kills them. As always, Riordan gives his heroes the last word, supplying them with sardonic quips in the face of unassailable odds. Review 1/12. ALB

▲ Riordan, Rick *The Throne of Fire*

452 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-4056-6 \$18.99

(2) Kane Chronicles series. Published spring 2011. With Apophis, Lord of Chaos, about to break his millennia-long imprisonment, Sadie and Carter (*The Red Pyramid*) must awaken Ra the Sun God to unite the gods and magicians and save the world. Riordan's formula works; globetrotting action and irreverent commentary fly fast and furious as the pair battle gods, evil magicians, and mythical Egyptian monsters in this humorous, lively volume. Review 9/11. ALB

Russell, Krista *Chasing the Nightbird*

201 pp. Peachtree ISBN 978-1-56145-597-3 \$15.95

(3) In 1851 Massachusetts, fourteen-year-old seaman Lucky Valera is waylaid by his older half-brother and forced to work in a mill. Lucky makes a pact with a Quaker girl to assist fugitive slaves in return for her help getting him back on the seas. The blend of history and adventure makes for a compelling read. An author's note is appended. Bib. JSK

Rutkoski, Marie *The Jewel of the Kalderash*

321 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-33678-3 \$16.99

(3) Kronos Chronicles series. Evil Prince Rodolfo of Bohemia turned Petra Kronos's father into a monstrous Gray Man in *The Celestial Globe*, so Petra sets out with her friend Tomik to force the Prince's scientist to invent a cure. Her love interest Neel, now King of the Romany, brings his army to her aid. Picturesque settings, well-plotted action, and steampunk aesthetics keep this darkly magical tale in motion. ALB

Salisbury, Graham *Kung Fooey*

133 pp. Random/Lamb ISBN 978-0-385-73963-4 \$12.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90797-2 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Jacqueline Rogers. Calvin Coconut series. In the sixth book in this Hawaii-set series, fourth-grader Calvin is creeped out by the new kid in class: Benny Obi

wears dark shades, says he knows kung fu, eats bugs, and doesn't seem afraid of sixth-grader bully Tito. This illustrated series continues to feature well-individualized characters, an uncommon and vividly described setting, and plot lines both involving and humorous. JMB

▲ Saller, Carol Fisher *Eddie's War*

194 pp. Namelos ISBN 978-1-60898-108-3 \$18.95
LE ISBN 978-1-60898-109-0 \$9.95

(2) When we meet them in 1934, Eddie is five, Tom ten. Over the next ten years the brothers develop friendships, discover family secrets, and ponder the causes of European conflict and their own community's virulent prejudice. Tom's enlistment also unveils the nature of war. Narrated by Eddie, the book's seventy-six vignettes—beautifully phrased and vividly revealing of character—create an authentic window into the past. Review 9/11. JRL

Sanders, Stephanie S. *Villain School: Good Curses Evil*

228 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-610-2 \$15.99

(3) When villains have children who are disappointingly good, they send their tots to Master Dreadthorn's School for Wayward Villains. Here, Wolf Junior (as in Big Bad), Countess Jezebel Dracula, and Rune (the master's son) must carry out a plot against unsuspecting humans in order to prevent expulsion. The story is creative, irreverent, and action-packed. AMM

▲ Santat, Dan *Sidekicks*

218 pp. Scholastic/Levine ISBN 978-0-439-29811-7 \$24.99
PE ISBN 978-0-439-29819-3 \$12.99

(2) With veteran superhero Captain Amazing holding auditions for a new sidekick, his pets—a dog, hamster, and chameleon—hope to win the role. They train seriously but get into trouble fighting crime. Meanwhile, Captain Amazing's nemesis has stolen a belt that jeopardizes the entire city. Santat's genre-mash-up graphic novel features appealing, cartoonish art with bold geometric shapes and bright primary colors. Review 7/11. JH

Saunders, Kate *Beswitched*

246 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-74075-3 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-98967-4 \$19.99

(3) Modern-day girl Flora nods off on her way to boarding school and wakes up in 1935. Initially horrified at life without modern conveniences, Flora grows to appreciate the friends she makes. It is only upon returning home that she understands the significance of those friendships. Saunders crafts a winning combination of British school story and time-travel adventure. AMM

Scaletta, Kurtis *The Tanglewood Terror*

266 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86758-3 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96758-0 \$19.99

(3) Eric's father moves to Boston to get his college band back together. His mother spends most days searching for a runaway student. And glowing mushrooms are invading his Tanglewood, Maine, town. In this entertaining story,

Eric cleverly conquers the challenges of baby-sitting his brother, caring for a dysfunctional pig, and solving a mystery that has haunted the town for decades. NLH

Scary School

237 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-19602-5 \$15.99

(5) Illustrated by Scott M. Fisher. Derek the Ghost (the book's credited author) narrates a haphazard series of gruesome events at a school taught by monsters. Point-of-view shifts go unexplained, student death is frequent, and most jokes fall flat in this all-over-the-place volume. Black-and-white sketches offer some humor while displaying the mayhem. BES

Schaefer, Laura *The Secret Ingredient*

231 pp. Simon/Wiseman ISBN 978-1-4424-1959-9 \$15.99

(3) Published spring 2011. Annie (*The Teashop Girls*), busily working at her grandmother's teashop, is also trying to create the most delicious scone in order to win a trip to London. She becomes absorbed in her pursuit and ignores her friends; luckily they understand. Recipes are included along with Annie's blog entries (that point readers to the author's website). A light, frothy, entertaining tale. SJW

Schroeder, Lisa *Sprinkles and Secrets*

210 pp. Simon/Aladdin ISBN 978-1-4424-2263-6 \$15.99

(3) Budding actress Sophie gets her first part in a TV commercial for Beatrice's Brownies. Knowing that this popular brand is taking business away from her best friend's family-run cupcake shop, Sophie struggles with accepting the role. Secrets and assumptions do the girls' friendship more harm than good in this story that demonstrates the importance of both honesty and pursuing one's dreams. SJW

Schweizer, Chris *Tricky Coyote Tales*

64 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6601-0 \$27.93

Illustrated by Chad Thomas.

Schweizer, Chris *Tricky Monkey Tales*

64 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6611-9 \$27.93

Illustrated by Chad Thomas.

Schweizer, Chris *Tricky Rabbit Tales*

64 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6607-2 \$27.93

Illustrated by Zack Giallongo.

Schweizer, Chris *Tricky Raven Tales*

64 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6603-4 \$27.93

Illustrated by David Witt.

(5) Graphic Universe: Tricky Journeys series. Legendary trickster characters from Native American (*Raven* and *Coyote*), Chinese (*Monkey*), and African American (*Rabbit*) folk stories star in these Choose-Your-Own-Adventure-type graphic novels. Each volume includes six basic scenarios for readers to follow. Though the vocabulary is accessible, the sentences are stilted or otherwise difficult to follow. Cartoon illustrations depict the rather inane scenes. RSS

Scieszka, Jon *SPHDZ Book #3!*

216 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-7955-5 \$15.99

(4) Illustrated by Shane Prigmore. Spaceheadz series. Nearing their goal of recruiting "3.14 million + 1" earthlings to help save their planet, Major Fluffy and his crew's troubles are about to end. Or not. With their Earth friends' help, the aliens try to find out who betrayed them. Comical, convoluted, and goofy, this series will continue to engage fans and confound the uninitiated. EJM

Scroggs, Kirk *Tales of a Sixth-Grade Muppet*

234 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-18302-4 \$12.99

(5) Mysteriously transformed into a Muppet, Danvers Blickensderfer lands his dream internship at the Muppet Theater where he assists his hero, the Great Gonzo. Danvers also meets a host of Muppet characters, practices death-defying stunts, and joins the band. The lame story line and stilted writing won't draw Muppet fans. Accompanying illustrations, including Danvers's sketches, are acceptable approximations of Henson's characters. CR

▲ Selznick, Brian *Wonderstruck*

639 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-02789-2 \$29.99

(2) Pictures follow a girl, Rose, in 1927; the text is set in 1977 where a boy, Ben, struggles with hearing loss. The two eventually meet: as an adult, Rose works at New York's Museum of Natural History, where Ben also finds himself. Ben's story suffers from an excess of telling rather than showing; nevertheless, there is much technical brilliance and genuine heart here. Review 9/11. RS

Service, Pamela F. *Escape from Planet Yastol*

102 pp. Darby Creek ISBN 978-0-7613-7918-8 \$15.95

PE ISBN 978-0-7613-7921-8 \$5.95

(3) Illustrated by Mike Gorman. Way-Too-Real Aliens series. This first book in a new series by the Alien Agent team is still about extraterrestrials, but with a different twist. Young (human) Josh has been writing stories about an imaginary planet, Yastol, and its alien occupants. Now those creatures have become real, and they want to bring Josh to their planet. Funny, quirky, and action-filled, the story will hold reluctant readers' attention. EJM

▲ Sharp, Margery *The Rescuers*

151 pp. NYRB ISBN 978-1-59017-460-9 \$14.95

(2) Illustrated by Garth Williams. Reissue (1959, Little). Sharp's timeless animal fantasy is rife with humor, adventure, and memorable characters—mouse and human (plus one malevolent cat). Miss Bianca is as elegant, refined, and infinitely charming as ever, Bernard as stouthearted and steady, the Black Castle as daunting and menacing. Williams's inimitable illustrations are a perfect match for the story, adding warmth and atmosphere, and, to the characters, even more personality. Review 2/60. MVP

▲ Sherman, Delia *The Freedom Maze*

272 pp. Big Mouth ISBN 978-1-931520-30-0 \$16.95

(2) It's 1960, and thirteen-year-old Sophie is spending the summer at her grandmother's Louisiana bayou home. After

meeting a mysterious creature, she's transported back in time one hundred years and (with her summer tan) mistaken for a slave. Sophie's coming of age resonates with moral outrage and righteous indignation. Sherman pays homage to classic fantasy tropes while vividly evoking two historical settings. Review 1/12. JH

Shreve, Steve *Stan and the Toilet Monster*

160 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5977-4 \$12.99

(4) Stan goes into the sewer in search of a lost baseball. He soon encounters a "pretty weird" scientist, a mysterious goopy rock, and his missing chameleon, Fluffy—grown to a monstrous size after being accidentally flushed down the toilet. There's little development or depth here, but readers up for a gross-out sewer adventure will enjoy the romp. Digital line drawings add to the comedy. CHS

▲ Shreve, Susan *The Lovely Shoes*

254 pp. Scholastic/Levine ISBN 978-0-439-68049-3 \$16.99

(2) Published spring 2011. Franny Hall, fourteen and crippled in 1950s Ohio, endures teasing because of her awkward gait and clunky shoes. In a dream-come-true turn of events, renowned shoemaker Salvatore Ferragamo offers to make shoes for her if she'll come to Italy. The book's middle-class Ohio setting is unobtrusively authentic, as are the interactions among such realistically flawed characters as Franny and her beautiful Danish mother. Review 9/11. JRL

Sitomer, Alan Lawrence *The Downside of Being Up*

215 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-25498-7 \$16.99

(4) This middle-grade book about a boy named Bobby who gets "eighteen boners a day" will undoubtedly rub people the wrong way. The penis jokes and euphemisms (some laugh-out-loud funny, others truly tasteless) just keep coming. The only person sympathetic to Bobby's plight is his potty-mouthed grandfather. A surprisingly sweet romance helps soften the rough edges, but don't say you haven't been warned. ERG

Skye, Obert *Wonkenstein*

229 pp. Holt/Ottaviano ISBN 978-0-8050-9268-4 \$12.99

(3) Creature from My Closet series. Robert Columbo Burnside is a self-proclaimed "pretty average kid . . . who can't play piano with my rear like that one genius kid, Todd, who lives down the street." He comically documents his daily mishaps, including the appearance of a half-Willy-Wonka, half-Frankenstein's-monster man who escapes from his closet. Rob's offbeat, stream-of-consciousness narration moves quickly; Wimpy Kid-esque cartoons and speech bubbles extend the jokes. CHS

Slavin, Bill *Big City Otto*

80 pp. Kids Can LE ISBN 978-1-55453-476-0 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-55453-477-7 \$7.95

(4) With Esperança Melo. Illustrated by Bill Slavin. Elephants Never Forget series. In their first graphic novel adventure, elephant Otto and his parrot sidekick Crackers leave their African jungle home to find Otto's chimp friend Georgie, who was kidnapped and brought to America. The

story's humor can fall flat, but the caricatured animals in a human world make for an engaging study in contrasts along with the tale's danger and adventure. BLM

Smith, Roland *Storm Runners: The Surge*

133 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-08179-5 \$16.99

(3) In this second *Storm Runners* book, Chase, Nicole, and Rashawn have found shelter at Nicole's family farm, winter home of a circus. But they're not safe yet: now they must find a way to survive both a surging flood and a hungry circus leopard that's on the loose. Fast pacing and weather and animal-behavior facts combine in a satisfyingly entertaining way. LCF

Snyder, Laurel *Bigger than a Bread Box*

227 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86916-7 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96916-4 \$19.99

(3) Whisked away from home by her unhappy mother, twelve-year-old Rebecca is still reeling when she finds a magic bread box in her grandmother's attic. What seems like a gift quickly turns into a burden, and Rebecca must find a way to set things right. Snyder brings a fresh eye to an all-too-typical fragmented family, and Rebecca's despair and determination are compelling. HRB

Sobol, Donald J. *Encyclopedia Brown and the Case of the Carnival Crime*

86 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42211-2 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by James Bernardin. Young mystery fans can join Encyclopedia Brown in solving another ten puzzles, from "The Case of the Glittering Diamonds" and "The Case of the Home-Run Hitter" to "The Case of the Arrowhead Hunter" and "The Case of the Courageous Camper." The mysteries' solutions and how Encyclopedia arrived at them are provided at the end of the book. Black-and-white line drawings accent the stories. ERG

Soto, Gary *Hey 13!*

197 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2395-8 \$16.95

(3) Thirteen realistic stories limn poignant, provocative, mundane, and perspective-changing moments in the lives of mostly Latino thirteen-year-olds. The stories are brief, and the voices of both male and female protagonists feel authentic. (The cover design mimics a tween magazine, which will likely—and unfortunately—keep many boys away.) CLS

▲ Springstubb, Tricia *Mo Wren, Lost and Found*

250 pp. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray
ISBN 978-0-06-199039-7 \$15.99

(2) This sequel to *What Happened on Fox Street* starts with the family's move from its idyllic cul-de-sac followed by Mr. Wren's woeful attempts to fix up the restaurant they've purchased. Springstubb's lively prose and unique combination of mundaneness and melodrama make her characters believable and create an engaging story that challenges readers to consider their own world as carefully as Mo does. Review 11/11. NL

Starmer, Aaron *The Only Ones*

323 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-74043-2 \$17.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90839-9 \$20.99

(3) During one afternoon, everyone in the world disappears—except for a small group of children. Martin believes his father's unfinished machine is connected to the event, but he needs the help of the other kids to complete it. With a colorful cast of characters and a unique setting, the story will appeal to sci-fi fans on their way to Robert Heinlein. LC

Steinhöfel, Andreas *The Spaghetti Detectives*

167 pp. Scholastic/Chicken House
ISBN 978-0-545-28975-7 \$16.99

(3) Translated by Chantal Wright. Rico's mom calls him a "child proddity": "I think an awful lot, but I need a lot of time to figure things out." Nevertheless, he manages to save his new friend from the mysterious kidnapper Mr. 2000. Rico's likable and compelling voice combined with the contemporary Berlin setting make this selection stand out from other middle-grade mysteries. LCF

Stewart, Kiera *Fetching*

298 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-3845-7 \$16.99

(4) Tired of being "Marcies," a.k.a. losers, Olivia and her friends use dog-training techniques on the popular kids to change their bad behavior. Like true alpha-dogs, Olivia and company gain attention and respect from the cool crowd—until events lead Olivia to regret her actions. It's a clever setup and the parallels work well, but the story's outcome is entirely predictable. SJW

Stine, R. L. *It's the First Day of School . . . Forever!*

185 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-64954-8 \$15.99

(4) On Artie's first day of middle school, he alienates the star football player, the prettiest girl in school, and the principal, all in the first hour. What's worse is that subsequent school days duplicate the first. Creepy school basements and mysterious janitors heighten the tension of this very slight, humor-filled light horror tale. NLH

Sullivan, Laura L. *Guardian of the Green Hill*

295 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-8985-1 \$16.99

(3) Meg must protect her family and keep peace with the fairies while deciding whether she will become the next Guardian. If the mystic painter, Gwidion, has his way, the choice won't be Meg's to make. Meg's emotional anguish will resonate with readers trying to find their place in the world, as will the tearful (verging on melodramatic) ending. LC

▲ Tak, Bibi Dumon *Soldier Bear*

147 pp. Eerdmans ISBN 978-0-8028-5375-2 \$13.00

(2) Translated by Laura Watkinson. Illustrated by Philip Hopman. In 1941, Polish soldiers escaped to Iran where they joined the British army—and adopted a bear cub who became a functioning member of their group. Tak makes a fascinating tale of the wartime progress of the clever animal.

First published in Holland in 2008, this fictionalized account of one of World War II's happier oddities includes appealing drawings and clear historical maps. Review 11/11. JRL

▲ Tanner, Lian *City of Lies*

278 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73906-1 \$17.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90769-9 \$20.99

(2) Keepers Trilogy series. On the trail of Toadspit's kidnapped sister, Goldie Roth (*Museum of Thieves*) must navigate a strange city during the Festival of Lies, when everything is topsy-turvy—especially the truth. Tanner's storytelling remains just as accomplished as in the first book, and the series' tantalizing mysteries deepen; a cliff-hanger ending concludes the volume. Review 9/11. JH

Tashjian, Janet *My Life as a Stuntboy*

259 pp. Holt/Ottaviano ISBN 978-0-8050-8904-2 \$13.99

(3) Illustrated by Jake Tashjian. In this sequel to *My Life as a Book*, Derek still doesn't feel any love for school or reading, but he's having a blast with his athleticism. Noticed by a Hollywood stuntman while skateboarding, Derek's hired as a body double for the latest teen sensation (a girl, no less!). This fast-moving story, with Derek's copious doodles in the margins, is a fine diversionary read. BC

TenNapel, Doug *Bad Island*

218 pp. Scholastic/Graphix ISBN 978-0-545-31479-4 \$24.99
PE ISBN 978-0-545-31480-0 \$10.99

(4) Shipwrecked on an island when their boating trip goes awry, Reece and his family soon find themselves confronting unusual creatures, weird plants, and strange symbols carved in the rocks. Escaping the island ultimately reveals a connection with an imprisoned guardian from another universe who Reece and his family help release. This graphic novel is short on characterization; instead, action-packed illustrations keep things moving. DE

Toft, Di *The Twilight Circus*

375 pp. Scholastic/Chicken House
ISBN 978-0-545-29492-8 \$17.99

(4) Wolven series. Nat and Woody, a unique Wolven, have finally joined up with Nat's father and the circus that hides many supernatural creatures. But while searching for Woody's pack, they run into a vampire coven and must fight to save themselves and the local children. The story is full of fast-paced adventure but fewer of the intriguing details that made the first Wolven book appealing. LAL

Towell, Katy *Skary Childrin and the Carousel of Sorrow*

265 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86859-7 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96860-0 \$19.99

(3) Adelaide, Maggie, and Beatrice are outcasts at Madame Gertrude's School for Girls. When a new teacher, along with some townspeople, start disappearing, the girls—each with a special supernatural ability—decide to investigate. An inventive boy, an unexplained carousel, and some ghosts help contribute to a well-told and layered mystery/adventure story. KA

▲ Urban, Linda *Hound Dog True*

152 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-547-55869-1 \$15.99

(2) Shy Mattie and her mama come to live with Uncle Potluck, the custodian of the school where, in one week, Mattie will enter fifth grade. Mattie helps Uncle Potluck get the school ready and takes a sense of security from keeping her Custodial Wisdom notebook; in doing so, she begins to find her voice. Her slow and painful self-examination is honest and true. Review 9/11. BC

▲ Ursu, Anne *Breadcrumbs*

312 pp. HarperCollins/Walden Pond
ISBN 978-0-06-201505-1 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Erin McGuire. In Ursu's riff on *The Snow Queen*, Hazel is demoralized when her friend Jack refuses to have anything to do with her, instead playing with his male schoolmates. Then he disappears altogether. But fantasy-reading Hazel knows a fairy tale when she sees one: she heads into the woods and successfully negotiates the duplicitous characters she meets. Ursu's prose is pungent, humorous, and vivid. Review 1/12. DFB

▲ Uttley, Alison *A Traveller in Time*

333 pp. NYRB ISBN 978-1-59017-388-6 \$17.95

(2) Illustrated by Phyllis Bray. Reissue (1964, Viking). Published spring 2011. This book, first published in England in 1939, is beloved by connoisseurs of British children's fantasy. Penelope, a "fey" child, finds herself transported back to Elizabethan times and in the midst of a plot to rescue Mary Queen of Scots. The novel smoothed the way for such time-slip classics as *The Children of Green Knowe* and *Tom's Midnight Garden*. Review 12/64. MVP

Van Draanen, Wendelin *Sammy Keyes and the Night of Skulls*

305 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86108-6 \$15.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96108-3 \$18.99

(3) Grave robbers, vampires, murderers, and human skulls might seem over the top for most trick-or-treaters, but not for Sammy Keyes. The eighth-grade super sleuth and her friends find themselves in the midst of another mystery while navigating the usual challenges of family, friendship, and school. Fans will welcome this fourteenth series entry with its familiar well-developed characters and page-turning suspense. TLD

Van Leeuwen, Jean *The Great Cheese Conspiracy*

88 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5972-9 \$15.99

(3) New ed. (1969, Random). This reissue of the first book about Merciless Marvin the Magnificent, Fats the Fuse, and Raymond the Rat (minus illustrations from the original) follows the rodent gang's attempts to jack a cheese shop. There's loads of humor in the mouse-centric details (e.g., sneaking around under a popcorn bucket) and the would-be hard-boiled dialogue (much talk about "loot" and "casing the joint"). ERG

Varon, Sara *Bake Sale*

158 pp. Roaring Brook/First Second
ISBN 978-1-59643-740-1 \$19.99
PE ISBN 978-1-59643-419-6 \$16.99

(3) In this graphic novel, Cupcake (a cupcake with a round pink head and cherry on top) has a bakery in New York City, a friend named Eggplant (a big purple eggplant), and a dream of meeting his idol, pastry chef Turkish Delight. When business is slow, Eggplant helps Cupcake expand his offerings. Readers will eat up Varon's cleanly illustrated, nicely detailed tale of friendship. sjw

Vernick, Audrey *Water Balloon*

312 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-59554-2 \$16.99

(3) Thirteen-year-old Marley is having a terrible summer: her parents have separated; her longtime best friends have abandoned her; and she must spend her mornings watching five-year-old twins. Predictably, Marley makes new friends (including her adorable neighbor, Jack), wins over the twins, and comes to terms with the changes to her family. Standard middle-grade fare, but Marley is a sympathetic character. MVP

Vernon, Ursula *Dragonbreath: No Such Thing as Ghosts*

201 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3527-9 \$12.99

(3) Danny Dragonbreath and friends embark on a Halloween adventure, complete with haunted house and a real ghost. The story, with its many cartoon panels interspersed in the main text, has strong appeal in its welcoming format, many illustrations, and abundant humor. Fans of the previous books will find a lot of familiar action in this fifth entry. BLM

Wagner, Hilary *The White Assassin*

242 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2333-0 \$17.95

(3) Nightshade Chronicles series. Three years after Nightshade City's victory, the community of rats once again faces a foe from the Catacombs: Billycan the assassin has built up a new following. After an undercover agent foils another plot against the city, the hunt is on for a traitor. Earnest rodent characters, dramatic secrets, political intrigue, and the promise of more keep these chronicles fresh. BLS

Walden, Mark *H.I.V.E.: Rogue*

294 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-2187-5 \$16.99

(3) Otto, our hero who's been missing from the Higher Institute of Villainous Education since the last installment, fills his long-intended purpose as the next human vessel for the artificially intelligent but sentient Overlord. Otto's erstwhile allies face a dilemma: destroy Otto or let him destroy humanity? Followers of the series will find the action, moderate violence, and occasional humor they anticipate. SF

Wardlaw, Lee *101 Ways to Bug Your Friends and Enemies*

284 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3262-9 \$16.99

(4) In this third 101 Ways to Bug . . . book, Steve “Sneeze” Wyatt and his friends face the eighth-grade struggles of first love. While Steve falls for Hayley, she falls for the new kid (and golfer) Cullen. A modern-day *Cyrano de Bergerac* twist only complicates matters. There’s not much new here, but Wardlaw’s take on those awkward first-love moments will appeal to the previous books’ fans. CHS

Warner, Penny *The Secret to the Skeleton Key*

212 pp. Egmont ISBN 978-1-60684-162-4 \$15.99

(3) Code Busters Club series. Cody, Quinn, Luke, and M.E. have fun breaking codes in their club, but when their elderly neighbor’s house burns down, code-breaking becomes more than a hobby. The kids must decode a message from their neighbor to save his fortune—and his life. Cliffhanger chapter endings propel the action forward in this very readable mystery. An answer key for all the codes is appended. LCF

Warner, Sally *EllRay Jakes Is a Rock Star!*

116 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01158-2 \$14.99

(4) Illustrated by Jamie Harper. The star of *EllRay Jakes Is Not a Chicken!* tries to become more popular at school by giving away his geologist father’s crystals. When his plan backfires, EllRay must dig his own way out of a hole. The third-grader’s narrative voice isn’t believable (he sounds much older), but fans of the first book will appreciate his inventiveness. Black-and-white spot art appears throughout. MJS

Webb, Philip *Six Days*

341 pp. Scholastic/Chicken House
ISBN 978-0-545-31767-2 \$17.99

(3) A century after cataclysmic wars obliterated life in London, young Cass is a scavenger hired to comb the city in search of an elusive artifact. When two strangers appear, Cass must find the relic to prevent imminent world destruction. The story’s driving plot, grim dystopian setting, and creative sci-fi machines and technology will draw readers in. BTK

Weeks, Sarah *Pie*

183 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-27011-3 \$16.99

(3) Alice’s beloved Aunt Polly dies, leaving her award-winning pie crust recipe to her cat, Lardo. When Lardo, a pie, and a key disappear, Alice decides to investigate. Her active imagination propels this small-town 1955-set mystery, resulting in an appreciation for family and friends. A slew of recipes calling for premade crusts—not one for the hyped pie dough—are included. sjw

Welch, Sheila Kelly *Waiting to Forget*

170 pp. Namelos ISBN 978-1-60898-114-4 \$18.99

(3) As he waits in the ER with his adoptive parents for news of his sister’s condition, T.J. looks through the “life book” that he kept while in foster care. His pictures and drawings trigger memories that slowly reveal his troubled past. Using a spare, poetic narrative voice, Welch percep-

tively crafts a story of children struggling to understand their mother’s neglect. RR

West, Jacqueline *Spellbound*

295 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3441-8 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Poly Bernatene. Books of Elsewhere series. Olive’s quest to free Morton from Elsewhere, located inside the paintings in Olive’s house, involves a search for a spell book and family connections obscured by time. Though this installment gives Olive less Elsewhere time than *The Shadows*, it generates plenty of magical creepiness by exploring the idiosyncrasies of the house—and the neighbors. Shadowy (but not scary) black-and-white illustrations enhance the mystery. SF

White, Ruth *A Month of Sundays*

168 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-39912-2 \$16.99

(3) In this earnest middle-grade novel, Garnet, fourteen, finds faith, love, and family when her mother sends her to live with estranged relatives in rural Virginia. Garnet’s evocative first-person narrative voice draws readers in as she seeks stability, rewardingly found in the unlikely home of her church-hopping aunt. Be prepared: a surprising eleventh-hour death tempers the sweetness of salvation everyone has found. BLS

Wiersbitzky, Shannon *The Summer of Hammers and Angels*

155 pp. Namelos ISBN 978-1-60898-111-3 \$18.95
PE ISBN 978-1-60898-112-0 \$9.95

(4) Delia was barely hanging on already, but when a lightning strike lands her mother in a coma, Delia is left on her own to bring their ramshackle house up to code or face eviction. She learns to rely on small-town neighbors—and faith—rather than foundering on her own. Although the dialogue can be stilted, the book’s message of community and cooperation is strong. NCP

Willingham, Bill *Down the Mysterly River*

335 pp. Tor/Starscape ISBN 978-0-7653-2792-5 \$15.99

(3) Illustrated by Mark Buckingham. Boy Scout Max “the Wolf” wakes up in a forest unable to remember how he got there. He’s soon joined by a trio of talking animals; they combine their skills to make a startling—and creative, on Willingham’s part—realization about who they are. This fantasy adventure dips into the metaphysical in a way that’s organic to the story. DE

Wilson, N.D. *The Dragon’s Tooth*

487 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86439-1 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96439-8 \$19.99

(3) Ashtown Burials series. Siblings Cyrus and Antigone Smith abruptly become heirs of a dangerous man with dangerous tools. Bewildered and beleaguered by shadowy villains, they’re whisked away to a secretive, barely less-treacherous society for world explorers—which they must survive to save their family. Quirky characters, adventure, murder, and magical artifacts are just a few highlights in this breathlessly paced series opener. BTK

Winters, Ben H. *The Mystery of the Missing Everything*

264 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-196544-9 \$16.99

(3) The students of Mary Todd Lincoln Middle School (*The Secret Life of Ms. Finkleman*) return to solve another mystery. When a trophy is stolen, Principal Van Vreeland cancels the eighth grade's beloved trip to Taproot Valley, and it's up to Bethesda to save it. The story's many different points of view work well to heighten tension and explore motivation. LCF

Wolitzer, Meg *The Fingertips of Duncan Dorfman*

297 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42304-1 \$16.99

(3) Twelve-year-old Duncan's unexplained ability to read printed material by touch makes him good at cheating while picking Scrabble tiles. When he meets April and Nate at a Scrabble tournament, they all discover there is more at stake than their need to win. This story of unique friendships, with its mild supernatural bent, is entertaining and engaging. DE

▲ Woods, Brenda *Saint Louis Armstrong Beach*

137 pp. Penguin/Paulsen ISBN 978-0-399-25507-6 \$16.99

(2) This spare, moving novel voiced by an almost-twelve-year-old African American narrator covers five days before, during, and after Hurricane Katrina. Packing, boarding up windows, checking on neighbors, making and unmaking plans as the situation changes—all are perfectly captured by Woods. The authentic New Orleans setting works as a powerful character, adding an extra dimension to the compelling story. Review 11/11. BC

▲ Yelchin, Eugene *Breaking Stalin's Nose*

154 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-9216-5 \$15.99

(1) Ten-year-old Sasha Zaichik loves Stalin and the Communist party. He's especially proud of his father, a member of the secret police. Sasha's worldview shifts after his father is arrested. Although the story takes place over just two days, it is well paced, peeling off the layers of Sasha's naiveté. Appropriately menacing illustrations add a sinister tone. Review 9/11. R. SMITH

▲ Yep, Laurence *Dragons of Silk*

341 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-027518-1 \$16.99

(2) Golden Mountain Chronicles series. In 1835, hard-working Swallow, with her mother and sister Lily, raises silkworms. In 1881, Lily's granddaughter learns of the great-aunt (Swallow) who sold herself into slavery so her family could survive. As the story continues, each generation of women, silk workers all, sacrifices for the sake of family. It all comes together to build a coherent and affecting portrait. Review 11/11. SDL

Yomtov, Nel, Reteller *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

85 pp. Capstone/Stone Arch LE ISBN 978-1-4342-2605-1 \$26.65
PE ISBN 978-1-4342-3449-0 \$6.95

(5) Illustrated by Berenice Muniz. Color by Fares Maese. Shakespeare Graphics series. Brevity and simplicity are the operating principles in this greatly reduced graphic novel retelling. Only the colorful and competent (but hardly memorable) art lends the tale life in this version. Although this abridgment may be harmless, it's difficult to see the point in introducing children to a master of language by removing all the verbal flare and variety from his work. MLI

▲ Yoo, David *The Detention Club*

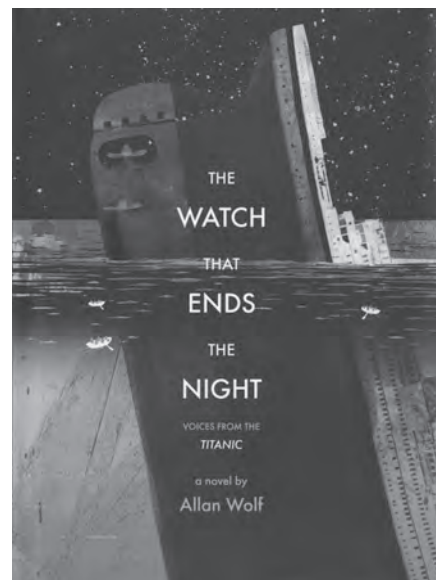
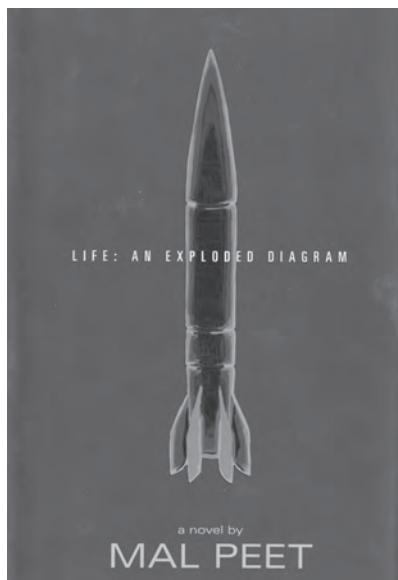
300 pp. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray
ISBN 978-0-06-178378-4 \$16.99

(2) On their first day of middle school, sixth-grader Peter Lee and his best pal Drew discover their popular elementary-school antics (e.g., speaking in robot voices) are "so fifth grade." Determined to be among the "kings of the school" again, Peter brainstorms a series of schemes. Yoo adds engaging subplots and realistic conflict to his laugh-out-loud, spot-on portrayal of middle-school life. Review 9/11. TDA

The Zombie Project

117 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-9492-6 \$14.99
PE ISBN 978-0-8075-9493-3 \$4.99

(5) Created by Gertrude Chandler Warner. Illustrated by Robert Papp. Boxcar Children Mysteries series. The newest addition to this revived series continues as a blend of traditional and modern elements. The children never age, but the scenery and props are updated as the Boxcar children figure out the source of rumors about zombie sightings at a vacation inn. Characters are flat, and the plot is far-fetched; any appeal lies in the familiar. MVK



OLDER FICTION

Abbott, Ellen Jensen *The Centaur's Daughter*

320 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5978-1 \$17.99

(4) Exiled from Watersmeet by its xenophobic leader, Abisina travels south with her loyal centaur, faun, dwarf, and human companions to try to build a more inclusive home in once-repressive Vranlyn. Along the way she discovers she herself is a centaur shape-shifter. The messages of tolerance are heavy-handed, but readers invested in the *Watersmeet* characters will enjoy their progress. ALB

Ackley, Amy *Sign Language*

394 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01318-0 \$16.99

(3) Ackley chronicles several years in the lives of the Norths, examining how one family copes with cancer, death, and grief. The book focuses mainly on Abby's transformation from awkward and naive twelve-year-old, to prickly, stricken teen, to a young woman willing to love. Abby's experiences are well paced and believable. RLH

Adornetto, Alexandra *Hades*

425 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-65627-0 \$17.99

(4) Bethany (*Halo*), an angel living on Earth, is kidnapped and taken to Hell by an old enemy, a demon known as Jake. As her angelic "siblings" and human boyfriend Xavier search for Bethany, she keeps tabs on their progress through astral projection. Sarcastic Jake provides some relief from Bethany's wearisome goodness and naiveté; the depiction of Hell is imaginative, though not fully realized. KLB

Alexander, Jill S. *Paradise*

250 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-60541-4 \$16.99

(3) Paisley is keeping a secret from her controlling mother: she's the drummer in a country rock band that's about to play at Texapalooza. When Gabe (a.k.a. Paradise) joins the

band, Paisley falls hard for him. The story takes a devastating turn for the couple; romance-minded readers will likely need a few hankies on hand. AMM

Allen, Elise *Populazzi*

394 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-547-48153-1 \$16.99

(4) Starting at a new school gives Cara a chance to reinvent herself. Determined to date her way up the popularity ladder, she accidentally falls for her first target, Archer. However, she ditches him to date "better" boys, including a self-absorbed druggie and a closeted gay guy. Cara's inevitable fall, as well as the story's lesson, are unsurprising, but her narrative voice adds punch. AMM

Anderson, Jessica Lee *Calli*

185 pp. Milkweed ISBN 978-1-57131-702-5 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-57131-699-8 \$8.00

(4) Calli is having trouble getting along with Cherish, the foster child her moms have welcomed into the family home. When an argument between the girls escalates into a physical altercation, Cherish is taken to a juvenile center. Calli feels guilty and wonders if it's too late to clear the air. Though her introspection weighs down the plot, Calli's redemption is rewarding (if not suprising). AMM

Anderson, R. J. *Ultraviolet*

306 pp. Carolrhoda Lab ISBN 978-0-7613-7408-4 \$17.95

(3) Sixteen-year-old Alison wakes up in a mental institution after seeing a classmate literally disintegrate before her eyes. Is she a misunderstood synesthete, or are her mixed-up senses an indicator of more sinister abilities? Part psychological thriller and part paranormal mystery, Alison's compelling story will draw readers in as it challenges them to question their perceptions of reality. BCM

Armstrong, Kelley *The Gathering*

359 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-179702-6 \$17.99

(3) Darkness Rising series. Published spring 2011. Maya is disturbed by supernatural changes to her body and her senses. Unexpectedly, intriguing new bad boy Rafe has information on Maya's emerging abilities. Together they uncover connections among their small town's laboratory, their own identities, and several suspicious deaths. A cliff-hanger ending and unresolved plot threads suggest sequels to follow. Fans of supernatural series will appreciate the suspense and romantic tension. KLB

▲ **Asher, Jay, and Carolyn Mackler** *The Future of Us*

359 pp. Penguin/Razorbill ISBN 978-1-59514-491-1 \$18.99

(2) It's 1996. When Emma loads an AOL disk into her computer, she's surprised to see something called "Facebook" pop up. After some investigation, Emma and her best friend, Josh, discover Facebook allows them to see what happens fifteen years in the future. The story works on many levels: identity quest, romance, cultural commentary. Emma and Josh's alternating narration keeps the plot moving. Review 1/12. RLS

Atkins, Catherine *The File on Angelyn Stark*

250 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86906-8 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96906-5 \$19.99

(3) Fifteen-year-old Angelyn feels friendless and alone. She takes comfort from the kindness of her teacher, but their relationship turns complicated. Disbelief, gossip, and lies (sometimes her own) batter the protagonist as she struggles with the sexual molestation she suffered as a child. Strong scenes, built almost entirely on dialogue, and conflicted characters with complex and realistic problems give this fast-moving novel heft. MLI

Austen, Catherine *All Good Children*

305 pp. Orca ISBN 978-1-55469-824-0 \$19.95

(3) A witty, artistic teenage boy named Max resists the government of his city when he notices his fellow students becoming docile and obedient. The strengths of this dystopian novel include a creepy premise and Max's strong first-person narrative voice pointing out wry humor in the most dire of situations. JH

Baer, Marianna *Frost*

398 pp. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray

ISBN 978-0-06-179949-5 \$17.99

(3) At boarding school, Leena loves living in her Victorian-style dorm Frost House—until unusual things start happening to her roommate. Either her new roommate has a serious mental illness or the house is haunted. Baer's eerie modern-set gothic-style horror story will leave readers guessing whether madness or the supernatural is at work. LC

Balog, Cyn *Starstruck*

245 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73850-7 \$15.99

LE ISBN 978-0-385-90734-7 \$18.99

(4) Gwen should be excited that her boyfriend, Wish, is moving back to town, but all she can think about is how fat she's become. Gorgeous, popular Wish still likes her, but another boy is convinced Wish is part of the Luminati, a cult that can control the stars. The concept is intriguing, but Gwen's self-loathing distracts from the story's momentum. AMM

Banks, Tyra *Modelland*

569 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-74059-3 \$17.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-98956-8 \$20.99

(5) Gawky "Forgetta-Girl" Tookie De La Crème gains admittance to magical Modelland. There she learns about poise, couture, and accessorizing, all while avoiding the haters and retaining her individuality. Banks's first novel, a fantasy loosely based on her life, is unfocused and overstuffed. There are some imaginative elements, but unless you're in Tyra's head, they're hard to place within the confusing world. ERG

Baratz-Logsted, Lauren *Little Women and Me*

321 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-514-3 \$16.99

(5) For a class assignment, Emily must decide what she would change about her favorite novel, *Little Women*. While rereading it she gets sucked into the book's world: suddenly she's a fifth March sister. Emily's (and Baratz-Logsted's) changes to the original novel border on absurd. Emily is rather unlikable, and the connections drawn between her two worlds are mostly contrived. CR

Barba, Rick *The Gemini Agent*

195 pp. Simon Spotlight ISBN 978-1-4424-1961-2 \$14.99

PE ISBN 978-1-4424-1342-9 \$7.99

(4) Star Trek Starfleet Academy series. Published spring 2011. The (future) *Enterprise* command crew members (including Chekov, here introduced for the first time) find themselves trying to clear Kirk's name when he is accused of serious crimes at the Academy. As in the previous novels, the characters are played exactly to type, with another flavor-of-the-month female lead for Kirk to love and lose. AMT

Barker, Clive *Abarat: Absolute Midnight*

573 pp. HarperCollins/Cotler ISBN 978-0-06-029171-6 \$24.99

(5) Candy Quackenbush discovers that her inner voice is Princess Boa. After Candy frees her, Boa becomes her newest enemy, along with vicious would-be empress Mater Motley and Candy's father. Barker's surrealistic world, shown in his "vast array of paintings" interspersed throughout the story, is imaginative. However, the book is visually and conceptually crowded; there's too much going on to follow or care about. BES

Barnes, Jennifer Lynn *Every Other Day*

329 pp. Egmont ISBN 978-1-60684-169-3 \$17.99

(3) Kali D'Angelo hunts creatures from Hell—but only every other day. The rest of the time she's a normal high

school girl. To save herself and a classmate, Kali and some unexpected new friends face down the corporation that created her. Well-formed characters and skillfully executed plot twists will keep readers on the edge of their seats. JM

Barnholdt, Lauren *Sometimes It Happens*

312 pp. Simon Pulse ISBN 978-1-4424-1314-6 \$16.99

(4) Hannah's first day of senior year is shaping up to be stressful. Seeing ex-boyfriend Sebastian will be bad enough, but worse is facing her best friend, Ava, and Ava's boyfriend, Noah—who Hannah just kissed. First-person narration flashing between the daunting school day and the months prior explains the messy situation. Generic plotting is buoyed by fresh dialogue and entertaining dramatics. KEH

Barrett, Tracy *Dark of the Moon*

310 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-547-58132-3 \$16.99

(3) Reimagining the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur, Barrett gives new life to Ariadne as a lonely priestess with a disfigured and disabled brother: a wholly human Minotaur. Using a rich historical framework, the story alters events and characters enough to build fiction from mythology. Complex characters and relationships guide the plot to the preordained but still satisfying conclusion. BTK

Bennett, Cherie, and Jeff Gottesfeld *Amen, L.A.*

261 pp. Random/Ember LE ISBN 978-0-385-90225-0 \$12.99
PE ISBN 978-0-385-73188-1 \$8.99

(4) Because her mom is a minister, Natalie Shelton holds herself to high standards. Called to a pulpit in L.A., the Sheltons make compromises, even moral ones. When Natalie befriends a celeb, she learns the true definitions of faith and goodness. While it's refreshing to see a well-rounded Christian protagonist, the otherwise flat characterizations—and excessive brand-name-dropping—take some shine off the story. BLS

Berk, Ari *Death Watch*

527 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-9115-1 \$17.99

(4) Undertaken Trilogy series. With his father missing, Silas and his mother return to the family's ancestral home of Lichport, a place haunted by ghosts, graves, and talking corpses. Silas learns of his magical birthright, but he must contend with a murderous relative. Berk's gothic novel is slow paced, but it's filled with intriguing ideas and genuine creepiness. BES

Bernobich, Beth *Fox & Phoenix*

326 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01278-7 \$17.99

(3) When the king mysteriously falls ill, Kai—sarcastic former street-urchin boy turned wizard's apprentice—sets off to find and bring back the princess before the throne is seized by another. The story is full of fast-paced adventure and lush descriptions of magic that will appeal to both male and female fans of Lloyd Alexander and Tamora Pierce. LC

Bick, Ilsa J. *Ashes*

468 pp. Egmont ISBN 978-1-60684-175-4 \$17.99

(3) An electromagnetic pulse kills most of the country's population instantly; many of those left become zombie-like, "brain-zapped" cannibals. Survivor Alex teams up with eight-year-old Ellie and soldier Tom to search for other people. The trio's deepening bond adds to the already high tension. This horror/survival story (with extremely graphic violence) presents an intriguing take on zombie fiction. KLB

Blackstone, Matt *A Scary Scene in a Scary Movie*

249 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-36421-2 \$16.99

(4) Rene, a socially immature fourteen-year-old boy with obsessive-compulsive disorder, navigates high school life. This includes making a friend, visiting the school psychologist, noticing a girl, and dealing with an absentee father. Blackstone's protagonist has a distinctive voice; some unconvincing characterizations and occasional didacticism weaken the offering. JH

Bloor, Edward *A Plague Year*

307 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-85681-5 \$15.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-95681-2 \$18.99

(3) Tom recounts the events in a year during which methamphetamine addiction ravishes his small Pennsylvania town, located near the site of the 9/11 crash and a coal mining disaster. Tom and his friends struggle with trying to figure out how to help those around them deal with addiction and loss. Layered main characters make for an engaging story. RR

▲ **Booth, Coe** *Bronxwood*

328 pp. Scholastic/Push ISBN 978-0-439-92534-1 \$17.99

(2) Now that his father is out of prison, Tyrell (from *Tyrell*) has a whole new set of problems. He's drawn into his friends' drug-dealing and finds his new romance complicated by an old girlfriend. It's a simultaneously busy and torpid story, reflective of Tyrell's day-to-day life in the Bronxwood projects, kept in line by Booth's uncompromising adherence to Tyrell's point of view. Review 11/11. RS

Bowler, Tim *Buried Thunder*

215 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2397-2 \$16.95

(3) This chilling British import opens with fourteen-year-old Maya inexplicably alone in deep woods with three dead bodies and a mysterious fox—and that's just the start of many strange and haunting occurrences after she and her family move to quaint Hembury Village. Spare backstory ups the mysteriousness, and ominous third-person limited narration keeps readers guessing alongside terrified Maya. KEH

Brewer, Heather *First Kill*

311 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3741-9 \$17.99

(3) Slayer Chronicles series. After a vampire kills Joss's sister, his mysterious uncle invites him to join the Slayer Society. When extenuating circumstances require Joss's training to begin years earlier than planned, he is pushed to his physical, mental, and emotional limits in preparation for

a life of violence and bloodshed. Intriguing characters and an eleventh-hour twist create an entertaining origins story for the Chronicles of Vladimir Tod character. RR

▲ Brezenoff, Steve *Brooklyn, Burning*

202 pp. Carolrhoda Lab ISBN 978-0-7613-7526-5 \$17.95

(2) Tossed out by a narrow-minded father, sensitive narrator Kid finds an alternate family with the street kids of Greenpoint, Brooklyn. Kid falls hard for entrancing Felix, a junkie living in an abandoned warehouse. When fire destroys the building, Kid becomes an arson suspect. A moving, personal story of friendship, loss, and love, Brezenoff's novel is also a tender tribute to all LGBTQ youth. Review 11/11. LA

Brooks, Kevin *iBoy*

288 pp. Scholastic/Chicken House
ISBN 978-0-545-31768-9 \$17.99

(4) A brutal act of violence results in an iPhone being lodged in narrator Tom's brain. Now armed with mental access to all of cyberspace, Tom takes vengeance on the people who raped his friend, Lucy. The premise requires much suspension of disbelief, but the moral ambiguities inherent in such power and Tom and Lucy's tentative journeys back from their trauma are compelling. KLB

▲ Brooks, Martha *Queen of Hearts*

214 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-34229-6 \$17.99

(1) In the early 1940s, Marie-Claire's uncle, then her siblings, and finally Marie-Claire herself contract TB. Over the course of two and a half years Marie-Claire grows up in ways that are both particular to her sanatorium environment and universal to adolescence. Much like a play in its discrete, focused scenes, this novel is that rarest of birds, a happily ending, nonsappy YA romance. Review 7/11. SE

Bruchac, Joseph *Wolf Mark*

377 pp. Lee/Tu ISBN 978-1-60060-661-8 \$17.95

(3) His father's sudden and mysterious abduction confirms Lucas King's lifelong suspicions about Dad's career in covert operations. With the help of new vampiric friends and the discovery of his own lycanthropic abilities, Lucas dives into the headquarters of an ominous local corporation. Lucas's witty and informative voice is entertaining, and the book offers unique portrayals of werewolves and vampires. RR

▲ Bunce, Elizabeth C. *Liar's Moon*

357 pp. Scholastic/Levine ISBN 978-0-545-13608-2 \$17.99

(2) This *StarCrossed* sequel finds Lord Durrel Decath accused of murdering his wife. Petty thief Digger uses all her eavesdropping, forging, and lock-picking skills to identify the real murderer and save Durrel from execution. Bunce's confection of romantic fantasy, light and speedy in the reading, also offers up the ins and outs of courtly intrigue and marriage- and power-brokering. Review 11/11. DFB

Burns, Laura J., and Melinda Metz *Sacrifice*

264 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-3900-9 \$17.99
PE ISBN 978-1-4424-0818-0 \$9.99

(4) Shay (*Crave*) discovers she's half human, half vampire. She and love Gabriel are confident in their relationship—until Shay meets Gabriel's vampire family. Gabriel must face the ultimate decision whether to choose family or love. Touching on themes of hope, rejection, and the power of love, the story is satisfying, if melodramatic. KC

▲ Burtenshaw, Jenna *Shadowcry*

312 pp. Greenwillow ISBN 978-0-06-202642-2 \$16.99

(2) Secrets of Wintercraft series. Kate, fifteen, discovers she's a Skilled, able to see and manipulate the "veil" between life and death. Moreover, she learns her ancestors wrote the coveted tome *Wintercraft*, which explains the veil's secrets. Elegant, complex prose sweeps readers along to a dark world teeming with creepy underground passageways, abandoned buildings, and graveyards. Kate is a bright spot, facing each obstacle with defiance and determination. Review 7/11. RLS

Carey, Anna *Eve*

322 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-204850-9 \$17.99

(4) Sixteen years after a plague wiped out most of the population, Eve discovers she and her friends will be forced to repeatedly give birth to help repopulation efforts. Fleeing toward a safe haven called Califia, Eve encounters various friendly—and nefarious—characters along the way. While the writing is engaging, there are some plot holes (perhaps to be addressed in future installments?). CR

Carman, Patrick *Dark Eden*

316 pp. HarperCollins/Tegen ISBN 978-0-06-200970-8 \$17.99

(5) Seven teens afflicted by phobias are taken to an isolated rehabilitation center for experimental therapy. Will escapes and slowly learns of the procedure's devastating effects. The premise has potential, but in practice it's too bizarre to be truly scary. Final notes (ostensibly by Will) explaining the novel's symbols and illusions are condescending. There's an associated multimedia app. KLB

Carson, Rae *The Girl of Fire and Thorns*

424 pp. Greenwillow ISBN 978-0-06-202648-4 \$17.99

(3) Soon after Princess Lucero-Elisa marries King Alejandro of Joya d'Arena, she is kidnapped by desert nomads. She then discovers that the blue Godstone in her navel does not just indicate a great destiny, but it may also help her two kingdoms win an impending war. Fantasy fans will enjoy the Spanish-influenced world and Elisa's journey from self-conscious teen to powerful queen. BCM

Carter, Ally *Uncommon Criminals*

299 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-4795-4 \$16.99

(3) Heist Society series. Published spring 2011. Katarina, fifteen, and her con artist crew are tasked with stealing the Cleopatra Emerald—a well-secured and supposedly cursed gem—and returning it to its rightful owner . . . or so they think. When the team members discover *they've*

been conned, they race to steal the emerald back before it's lost forever. Carter's chatty, humorous voice and cinematic prose bolster this jewel-thief thriller. LB

Castan, Mike *The Price of Loyalty*

151 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2268-5 \$17.95

(4) As a joke, Manny and his friends begin calling themselves the Conquistadors. As the other boys begin to take their gang more seriously, Manny wavers between wanting to maintain his friendships and trying to avoid participation in their illegal activities. Manny's situation presents a thought-provoking moral conundrum, but his relationships with his friends aren't developed enough to make the internal conflict convincing. RR

▲ Castellucci, Cecil *First Day on Earth*

150 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-06082-0 \$17.95

(2) Not only does sixteen-year-old Mal believe he was abducted by aliens four years ago, he also meets Hooper, who claims to be an alien yearning to go home. This mystery is at the heart of the novel: are their stories true? With its strong voice and aura of mystery, Castellucci's brief novel offers a unique take on finding a place in the world. Review 11/11. DS

Castle, Jennifer *The Beginning of After*

426 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-198579-9 \$17.99

(3) Laurel's parents and brother are killed in a car accident that also kills her friend David's mother and critically injures his father (who was driving). As a result, Laurel and David's relationship takes on dramatic new dimensions. Laurel's grief is genuine and palpable as she struggles to cope with and accept her new reality in the aftermath of tragedy. NCP

▲ Chandler, Kristen *Girls Don't Fly*

300 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01331-9 \$16.99

(2) Girls don't fly, and neither do flightless cormorants, the species seventeen-year-old Myra intends to study if she wins a research scholarship to the Galápagos Islands. Myra is a likable, level-headed narrator from a sympathetically drawn working-class Utah family. Chandler's depiction of small-town dynamics, high-school breakups, crappy after-school jobs, and Myra's growing desire to break free from limited expectations is both fresh and relatable. Review 1/12. CMH

Childs, Tera Lynn *Fins Are Forever*

261 pp. HarperCollins/Tegen ISBN 978-0-06-191468-3 \$16.99

(4) When mer-princess Lily (*Forgive My Fins*) turns eighteen, she plans to renounce her right as heir to the throne of her underwater kingdom to live on land. But when a friend from the past presents an offer she almost can't refuse, Lily starts second-guessing her future. Fans of the first book will appreciate the dynamic characters and mermaid-speak, but Lily's constant self-doubt becomes grating. LB

Childs, Tera Lynn *Sweet Venom*

345 pp. HarperCollins/Tegen ISBN 978-0-06-200181-8 \$17.99

(3) A descendant of Medusa living in San Francisco, Gretchen Sharpe fights mythical monsters and vaporizes them with a single bite from her venomous fangs. Her newly discovered sisters, Grace and Greer, share Gretchen's monster-fighting fate, but the characters' acceptance of their heritage—and their new family structure—isn't easy. Percy Jackson fans will appreciate the sardonic commentary as myth mixes with modern life in this well-voiced novel. ALB

▲ Chima, Cinda Williams *The Gray Wolf Throne*

519 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-1825-1 \$17.99

(2) Seven Realms series. With her mother's unexpected death, Raisa's life and throne depend on her swift return to the Fells, before the wizards crown her younger sister and the hostility between the Spirit Clans and flatlanders tear her country apart. Chima's tour-de-force world building keeps readers rapt, with cutthroat action sequences running parallel to the political ones. Unresolved issues galore point toward a crackerjack concluding volume. Review 9/11. ALB

Choyce, Lesley *Gone Bad*

149 pp. Lorimer ISBN 978-1-55277-710-7 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-55277-709-1 \$9.95

(3) SideStreets series. When Cody starts drumming in a band, he hopes to turn his back on his violent past. His actions return to haunt him when his old compatriots track him down. The story's anti-bullying message is well integrated into the plot, and Cody's gritty past is honestly portrayed. NCP

Clare, Cassandra *City of Fallen Angels*

425 pp. McElderry ISBN 978-1-4424-0354-3 \$19.99

(4) Mortal Instruments series. Published spring 2011. Now that Valentine is dead, Shadowhunter Clary and company face a new threat: a demonic cult that's killing human infants. Meanwhile, Jace has violent dreams about hurting Clary, and Simon is having trouble adapting to life as a vampire. The reliance on grandiloquent literary devices and overblown romantic anguish distracts from (and inflates) this otherwise absorbing urban fantasy. RLS

Clare, Cassandra *The Clockwork Prince*

510 pp. McElderry ISBN 978-1-4169-7588-5 \$19.99

(3) Infernal Devices series. As she strives to learn the secrets of the villainous Magister and unravel the mystery of her past, sixteen-year-old shapechanger Tessa finds herself caught between two Shadowhunters who love her: sweet, fragile Jem and caustic yet powerfully attractive Will. Dropping references to popular Victorian fiction left and right, Clare's steampunk adventure draws readers in with engrossing romantic drama. ABZ

Clark, Sherryl *Dying to Tell Me*

219 pp. Kane/Miller ISBN 978-1-61067-063-0 \$15.99

(4) After she moves with her father and brother to the Australian bush, Sasha experiences a traumatic fall—and the resultant ability to foresee deaths and to communicate with

one-time police dog King. Soon Sasha and King are solving mysteries together in this fast-paced novel that tries to pack a whole series' worth of plot points into a single story. NCP

▲ **Clement-Moore, Rosemary** *Texas Gothic*

408 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73693-0 \$17.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90636-4 \$20.99

(2) Striving for normality in her magic-practicing family, Amy is happy for a summer of hard work at her aunt's Texas ranch. But the deathly cold apparition in Amy's bedroom pulls her into a dangerous mystery. Clement-Moore mixes suspense, humor, and lots of local flavor in this lively teen ghost story—with sex appeal—that's one part Texas history and one part *CSI*. Review 9/11. LA

Coakley, Lena *Witchlanders*

440 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4424-2004-5 \$16.99

(3) Ryder doesn't believe witches can tell the future until his mother's final prophesy comes true. When he meets an enemy Baen, the two have to overcome their prejudices and combine their powers to survive. Secrets, magic, and action are the heart of this book. While the end clearly sets up a sequel, the story is rewarding enough in itself. LC

Coben, Harlan *Shelter: A Mickey Bolitar Novel*

307 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-25650-9 \$18.99

(3) New in town, his father dead, his mother in rehab, Mickey (from Coben's Myron Bolitar series for adults) doesn't see how things can get worse—until his girlfriend vanishes. Following leads, Mickey stumbles into an underworld of human trafficking and learns that nothing, not even his family, is what it seems. Coben piles twists upon mysteries, keeping readers guessing throughout. DE

Cochran, Molly *Legacy*

419 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-1739-7 \$17.99

(4) Shipped off to boarding school, contemporary teen Katy discovers she's descended from powerful witches. While dealing with her dead mother's complicated heritage, Katy uses her newfound powers to fight the Darkness threatening the townspeople (including her love interest). The characters and relationships could have benefited from further fleshing out, but it's still an appealing paranormal romance. CR

Collins, Tim *Prince of Dorkness: More Notes from a Totally Lame Vampire*

332 pp. Simon/Aladdin ISBN 978-1-4424-3388-5 \$12.99

(3) Illustrated by Andrew Pinder. Vampire Nigel (*Notes from a Totally Lame Vampire*) is happily dating Chloe—until new super-bully Jason arrives with his sights set on stealing her away. Nigel uncovers a secret about Jason that he hopes will help win back Chloe's affection. Like in the first book, humor and angst commingle with horror tropes throughout the diary format, complete with black-and-white doodles. DE

Condie, Ally *Crossed*

371 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42365-2 \$17.99

(3) In this sequel to *Matched*, Cassia risks losing citizenship to find Ky, an outcast because of his Aberration status. After an emotional reunion, they find the Rising together. Upon joining the rebellion, Cassia is unexpectedly assigned back to the Society and Ky to the Outer Provinces. Their departures are sure to leave readers eagerly anticipating the third book in Condie's gripping dystopian trilogy. SJW

Cremer, Andrea *Wolfsbane*

391 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-25483-3 \$17.99

(3) In *Nightshade*, werewolf Calla defied her pack by falling in love with human Shay; they uncovered the dark truth behind the Keepers who enslave werewolves. Now Calla, Shay, and their teen packmates join a rebellion to overthrow the Keepers. In this intriguing fantasy, tension is kept high by shifting alliances, the many dangers of insurrection, and Calla's guilty attraction to her former betrothed. KLB

Croall, Marie P. *Under His Spell*

128 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5602-8 \$29.27
PE ISBN 978-0-7613-7076-5 \$9.95

Illustrated by Hyeondo Park.

Jolley, Dan *My Boyfriend Bites*

128 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5599-1 \$29.27
PE ISBN 978-0-7613-7078-9 \$9.95

Illustrated by Alitha E. Martinez.

(4) Graphic Universe: My Boyfriend Is a Monster series. In *Bites*, Vanessa learns from sharp-toothed boyfriend Jean-Paul that she's a foreordained monster hunter; the story has some depth and a few surprising twists. The human-faerie romance in *Spell* raises less excitement, but a visual shift into full color makes scenes in the fae realm seem more magical. Both graphic novels are one-time reads that series fans will enjoy. SF

▲ **Cumyn, Alan** *Tilt*

271 pp. Groundwood ISBN 978-1-55498-119-9 \$16.95

(2) Sixteen-year-old Stan is driven to make the basketball team, but a couple of distractions enter his life. First, Stan develops a crush on Janine Igwash. And second, Stan's home life—already complicated by his high-strung mother—gets more so when his deadbeat dad shows up. Cumyn's third-person narrative presents his teenage characters in an especially endearing light, capturing the absurdities and impossibilities of adolescence. Review 11/11. JH

Dashner, James *The Death Cure*

327 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73877-4 \$17.99

(3) WICKED claims it's close to discovering a cure to the epidemic Flare—but it needs Thomas. Distrustful, Thomas and several friends escape from the compound and plot to subvert the seemingly evil organization. This morally ambiguous and dark story brings the series (*The Maze Runner*, *The Scorch Trials*) to a thought-provoking conclusion. RR

Davies, Jocelyn *A Beautiful Dark*

392 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-199065-6 \$17.99

(4) On Skye's seventeenth birthday her eyes turn silver and she attracts the attention of two very different boys. Or are they actually angels competing for her allegiance? There are some engaging elements to this paranormal romance (complete with a cliffhanger twist), though it doesn't rise very far above the many others like it. RLH

Davies, Stephen *Outlaw*

289 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-39017-8 \$16.99

(3) Jake and his sister, children of the British ambassador to Burkina Faso, are kidnapped by someone who appears to be the notorious outlaw and alleged terrorist Yakuuba Sor. But when they meet the real Sor and discover he's more akin to Robin Hood, they help try to clear his name. The story offers a nuanced look into political complexities. RR

Davis, Heather *Wherever You Go*

313 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-547-50151-2 \$16.99

(3) Holly longs to grieve for her dead boyfriend Rob; however, she's too busy caring for her little sister and her grandfather who has Alzheimer's disease. Rob is a ghost who can only interact with Holly's grandpa and who isn't happy that his best friend, Jason, is getting close to Holly. Poignant prose explores the many ways people see, communicate with, and love one another. BLS

de la Cruz, Melissa *Lost in Time: A Blue Bloods Novel*

343 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-2129-9 \$16.99

(5) In three stories that don't connect, newlywed vampires Schuyler and Jack are searching for the Gates of Hell; Mimi goes to Hell to trade Oliver's life for her lover Kingston; and Schuyler's mother pursues her human love, Ben. Lack of consistency in cosmology, characterization, and consequences makes this histrionic vampire/fallen angel soap opera only appealing to existing fans. ALB

Delaney, Joseph *The Spook's Bestiary: The Guide to Creatures of the Dark*

228 pp. Greenwillow ISBN 978-0-06-208114-8 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Julek Heller. Last Apprentice series. This volume presents the characteristics of mythical creatures encountered in the Last Apprentice series and how to defeat them, including notes and anecdotes from the Spook and his apprentices. Series fans, especially those who enjoy non-fiction, will be entertained by the handbook format. Illustrations are softer-edged than those in previous volumes, but the stark and eerie are well represented. SF

Delsol, Wendy *Frost*

377 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5386-6 \$15.99

(4) Katla is wary of a gorgeous lady scientist's interest in her snow-conjuring boyfriend. Is it jealousy or intuition? Perhaps she should follow them to the Arctic to find out. In this *Stork* sequel, Katla's voice remains strong, and the story

line is slightly more cohesive than in the first installment. However, readers drawn to Katla's powers from the previous book may be disappointed. RLH

Denman, K. L. *Stuff We All Get*117 pp. Orca LE ISBN 978-1-55469-821-9 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-55469-820-2 \$9.95

(4) Orca Currents series. Geocaching becomes a metaphor for finding one's way in this slight but entertaining novel. Zack and his single mom move too often for him to make friends. When he takes up geocaching, Zack—who has sound-color synesthesia—finds more than just a box of "swag." The themes and morals are a little too obvious, but Zack's story is engaging nonetheless. NCP

Derting, Kimberly *The Pledge*

323 pp. McElderry ISBN 978-1-4424-2201-8 \$16.99

(3) Language is one of many ways Ludania's social classes are divided. Charlaina Hart understands all languages, a deadly secret that grows more dangerous as rebel tensions rise and she meets a mysterious boy named Max who speaks a language she has never heard before. This supernatural dystopia features intriguing twists and turns and a little romance. BCM

Dionne, Erin *Notes from an Accidental Band Geek*

282 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3564-4 \$16.99

(3) Ninth-grade French-horn player Elsie, spunky and driven, attends the elite Shining Birches summer music camp. She's aghast to discover marching band is her "ensemble diversity" requirement. Through a string of comical mishaps, Elsie is indoctrinated into the plume-wearing, chicken-clucking band she eventually comes to love. An entertaining story of family, friendship, first crushes, and a marching band. CHS

Dolamore, Jaclyn *Between the Sea and Sky*

232 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-434-4 \$16.99

(3) Mermaid Esmerine wants to become a siren just like her sister Dosinia. When Dosinia goes to the mainland, Esmerine must find her and bring her home. Along the way, Esmerine crosses paths with an old friend, Alandare, and before long infatuation takes hold. The pair's differences (he's one of a winged species) can't keep them apart in this fantasy love story. PIH

▲ Downham, Jenny *You Against Me*416 pp. Random/Fickling ISBN 978-0-385-75160-5 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-75161-2 \$19.99

(2) Mikey and Ellie are drawn together despite circumstance: Mikey's sister has accused Ellie's brother of rape. While Mikey knows who Ellie is from the beginning, she's initially unaware of his identity. Downham provides an intriguing look at the crisis from the siblings' perspectives. Omniscient narration describes their separate thoughts and feelings, sharing a united experience as unlikely partners, equal victims, and parallel protagonists. Review 11/11. KEH

▲ Dowswell, Paul *The Ausländer*

296 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-633-1 \$17.99

(2) Thirteen-year-old Polish orphan Piotr (renamed Peter) is fostered by a family in Berlin. Rather than embracing their Nazi ideology, he and his friends engage in rebellious behavior, including hiding Jews. In Dowswell's portrait of Nazi Germany, the characters are rich and nuanced; the action is swift and suspenseful; and the juxtaposition of wartime nobility and cruelty is timeless. Review 9/11. JH

Dudley, David L. *Caleb's Wars*

263 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-23997-2 \$16.99

(4) Growing up in Georgia during World War II, fifteen-year-old Caleb, who is African American, struggles to find his way. Working at a white-owned restaurant, he meets a German POW imprisoned nearby. Their ensuing friendship is idealized, but Caleb's inner battles over family and loyalty are compelling. JSK

Duff, Hilary *Devoted*

353 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-0855-5 \$17.99

(4) With Elise Allen. Clea (*Elixir*) must find her immortal soulmate Sage, a prisoner of the Saviors of Eternal Life. With the help of a centuries-old entity; the creepy group Cursed Vengeance; and her ex-friend Ben, she finally locates him. The many groups and motives can be confusing, but this well-paced second volume by the celebrity author features plenty of action and an unexpected ending. RLS

▲ Durst, Sarah Beth *Drink, Slay, Love*

386 pp. McElderry ISBN 978-1-4424-2373-2 \$17.99

(2) After being impaled by a unicorn, sixteen-year-old vampire Pearl is delighted to discover she can withstand sunlight. "The Family" makes use of her ability by sending her to high school to procure refreshments (i.e., students). The novel oozes ironic humor as Pearl's subterranean society crashes up against the high school scene. Fierce, smart, and sarcastic, Pearl is a lively antihero. Review 1/12. LA

Edwards, Eve *The Other Countess*

335 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-74089-0 \$17.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-98974-2 \$20.99

(3) Ellie wins the heart of William Lacey, Earl of Dorset, even though her father is responsible for Will's family's financial problems. Court intrigue and familial obligations abound, preventing the match for most of the story. Told from multiple viewpoints, this captivating Elizabethan England period novel introduces a host of real historical figures. CR

▲ Edwardson, Debby Dahl *My Name Is Not Easy*

249 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5980-4 \$17.99

(2) Edwardson sets her ambitious novel in 1960–1965 Alaska, primarily at a Catholic boarding school drawing indigenous children from all over the state. She juggles a large cast of characters and addresses a host of issues, from racism to the institutional abuse of Native Alaskan children to the ingrained animosity between Eskimo and Indian students. The story is powerful and poignant. Review 1/12. MVP

Elkeles, Simone *Chain Reaction*

310 pp. Walker ISBN 978-0-8027-2087-0 \$17.99

(4) Perfect Chemistry series. Like his older brothers Alex (*Perfect Chemistry*) and Carlos (*Rules of Attraction*), Luis falls hard for a beautiful girl, Nikki, with whom he has little in common. Also, Nikki has trust issues, and Luis's involvement in a gang threatens their relationship. Series fans will gladly look past the artificial writing to find that the romance is just as passionate and tempestuous as in the previous books. RLS

Elliott, Patricia *The Traitor's Smile*

308 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2361-3 \$17.95

(3) In this sequel to *The Pale Assassin*, aristocrat Eugénie flees the French Revolution to live with her English cousin Hetta until anxiety about her brother pulls Eugénie back to Paris. With courage and luck, the cousins navigate the political factions dividing the country as well as the vicious plots of Raoul Goulet. The story is rich in historical detail and adventure. MLI

Ellsworth, Loretta *Unforgettable*

257 pp. Walker ISBN 978-0-8027-2305-5 \$16.99

(3) Baxter Green used his photographic memory to help his mother's ex-boyfriend perform a credit card scam. Having secretly hoarded the stolen money, Baxter's nervous now that the ex-boyfriend's parole date approaches. Meanwhile, he reconnects with a former childhood crush who has no recollection of him. Baxter's condition is fascinating, and the way his story plays out is satisfying. JH

Ely, Scott *The Elephant Mountains*

205 pp. Orca ISBN 978-1-55469-406-8 \$19.95

(3) In this disaster survival story, multiple hurricanes have resulted in high waters along the Gulf of Mexico. Fifteen-year-old Stephen faces a dangerous journey through lawless regions of flooded land to find his mother in New Orleans. Stephen's struggles to balance survival with the violent acts required to save himself provide an intriguing look at human nature in the face of extreme disaster. JSK

Emond, Stephen *Winter Town*

331 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-13332-6 \$17.99

(4) Lucy and Evan are childhood friends. Ever since Lucy's parents' divorce, the teens have only seen each other for winter vacation. When Lucy arrives transformed one year, Evan is left trying to make sense of their relationship. Told through both characters' perspectives, and bolstered by some comics and illustrations, the story can be overly angsty but also sweet and funny. RR

Evans, Richard Paul *Michael Vey: The Prisoner of Cell 25*

326 pp. Simon Pulse ISBN 978-1-4516-5650-3 \$17.99

(3) Michael and Taylor discover they have inexplicable powers of electricity. They enlist the help of their hyperintelligent friend Ostin to investigate their origins. But when Michael's mother and Taylor are kidnapped, Michael and

Ostin must travel to California to confront the ominous organization that's seemingly behind everything. The story line is standard for the genre, but well-developed characters elevate it. RR

Faegen, Trinity *The Redemption of Ajax*

438 pp. Egmont ISBN 978-1-60684-170-9 \$17.99

(4) Mephisto Covenant series. Seeking news about her father's murder, Sasha discovers she's an Anabo, a descendant of Eve. Jax, a son of Mephisto, thinks Sasha is destined to be his love and to save him from life as an immortal son of Hell. A fast-paced supernatural love story ensues (with occasionally confusing or contradictory mythology) alongside graphic violence and sex. JM

Falkner, Brian *The Project*

279 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86945-7 \$17.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96945-4 \$20.99

(3) In an effort to evade a book report, friends Luke and Tommy do some research on the most boring book in the world. When the only remaining copy of that self-same book turns up in their local library, the boys embark on an adventure involving kidnapping, henchmen, and space- and time-travel to Nazi-era Germany. Falkner presents a complex, inventive, and well-crafted escapade. RLH

50 Cent *Playground*

314 pp. Penguin/Razorbill ISBN 978-1-59514-434-8 \$17.99

(4) With Laura Moser. Thirteen-year-old bully Butterball is on a path toward full-fledged juvenile delinquency. An understanding therapist helps him change his behavior while coming to terms with his parental issues (including the discovery that his mom is a lesbian). The character, loosely based on the author/gangster rapper's own life, is surprisingly sympathetic, and the text, despite its issues-book themes, is generally nondidactic. ERG

Fisher, Catherine *The Hidden Coronet*

414 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3675-7 \$16.99

Fisher, Catherine *The Margrave*

443 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3676-4 \$16.99

(3) Relic Master series. In these third (*Coronet*) and fourth (*Margrave*) series entries (first published in Britain over a dozen years ago), Galen and Raffi continue their quest to seek out and harness the relics' powers. Solid plotting, interesting characters, and provocative themes should provide a pleasant diversion for ardent Fisher fans. JH

Fitzpatrick, Becca *Silence*

440 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-2664-1 \$18.99

(4) Nora (*Hush, Hush; Crescendo*) awakens to find she has been missing for months, but she cannot remember what happened. As her memory returns, Nora recalls her discomfiting role in the conflict between fallen angels and the half-human Nephilim—and her relationship with angel Patch. Though its high-drama plot twists can be difficult to follow, the book offers suspense and swoony romance. KLB

Flack, Sophie *Bunheads*

295 pp. Little/Poppy ISBN 978-0-316-12653-3 \$17.99

(3) Nineteen-year-old Hannah is torn between her demanding, sequestered life as a ballet dancer and the wider world outside the theater. Two very different love interests, a wealthy balletomane and a passionate musician, embody her options. Hannah's journey to self-actualization and her determination to choose her own destiny are relatable regardless of readers' familiarity with the high-pressure ballet world. KLB

Fletcher, Ralph *Also Known as Rowan Pohl*

199 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-57208-6 \$16.99

(4) As a joke, Bobby and his friends submit a fake application to a private school under the name Rowan Pohl. After Rowan is admitted, Bobby assumes the fictional identity. He struggles to maintain his friendships and his place at the school while dealing with family secrets. Though the premise and many plot points are glaringly implausible, Bobby's travails may entertain readers. RR

Ford, Michael *The Poisoned House: A Ghost Story*

319 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-6589-6 \$16.99

(3) After her mother dies, fifteen-year-old Abi is forced to be a servant in Greave Hall, a mansion governed by decrepit Lord Greave and his tyrannical housekeeper. Abi senses a lurking supernatural presence in the house; when a dark family secret is unveiled, everything Abi knows is transformed. With crisp prose and suspenseful drama, Ford weaves a straightforward yet chilling Victorian London ghost story. KC

Frederick, Heather Vogel *Home for the Holidays*

348 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-0685-8 \$15.99

(4) Mother-Daughter Book Club series. As the holidays approach, the book club's plans for getaway fun go awry, leading to plot-furthering arguments and misunderstandings. The girls' choice of the Betsy-Tacy series seems timely as they navigate the issues (as usual, they're pretty small and bland) that crop up within their crowd. The story may encourage a new generation of fans to seek out Lovelace's books. AMM

▲ Freitas, Donna *The Survival Kit*

355 pp. Farrar/Foster ISBN 978-0-374-39917-7 \$16.99

(2) Since her mother's death, sixteen-year-old Rose has lost all interest in cheerleading, friends, and her football-captain boyfriend. Though her mother left her a "Survival Kit," Rose hides it away, too overcome with grief. When Grandma Madison visits, her no-nonsense attitude helps Rose begin to unravel the meaning behind the items in the Survival Kit. An involving, emotionally true tale of love and loss. Review 1/12. JMB

García, Cristina *Dreams of Significant Girls*

238 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-7920-3 \$16.99

(3) Vivien, Shirin, and Ingrid form unlikely and complicated friendships when they meet at an exclusive Swiss boarding school in 1971. Over three summers, García tracks

each girl's transition from innocence to independence as the mature-acting characters face an abundance of coming-of-age issues: dating, sexuality, family drama, etc. The young women come alive through crisp dialogue and vivid details. HRB

Garcia, Kami, and Margaret Stohl *Beautiful Chaos*

519 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-12352-5 \$18.99

(4) After Lena's Claiming as Light and Dark, the Mortal and Caster worlds are in turmoil. Someone must be sacrificed to make things right, and Ethan, the Wayward, must figure out who. Like its predecessors (*Beautiful Creatures*, *Beautiful Darkness*), this volume is too long. But it intriguingly blurs the lines between good and evil and culminates in an ambiguous ending that invites discussion. RLS

▲ Garvey, Amy *Cold Kiss*

226 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-199622-1 \$17.99

(2) The women in Wren's family manifest magical powers when they reach puberty. Wren uses hers to bring her boyfriend back from the dead, but the Danny who returns is a shadow of the boy she loved. Then Wren meets Gabriel, who's drawn by her gift. Though romance takes center stage, Garvey weaves female familial relationships as intricately as Wren creates her spell. Review 1/12. KLB

▲ Gensler, Sonia *The Revenant*

326 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86701-9 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96701-6 \$19.99

(2) Published spring 2011. In 1896, seventeen-year-old Willie Hammond steals her classmate's identity and becomes a teacher at the Cherokee National Female Seminary. She's housed in the room of a student who died under mysterious circumstances and who appears to be returning as a ghost. The mystery is nicely played out, and the romance element is deliciously restrained. An author's note reveals more about the seminary. Review 11/11. BC

Gilman, David *Blood Sun*

417 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73562-9 \$17.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90548-0 \$20.99

(3) A classmate's death catapults Max Gordon (*The Devil's Breath*, *Ice Claw*) into more danger. Max's adventures take him to the steamy jungles of Central America where he braves a cold-hearted killer and bloodthirsty warriors. The story blends mysticism and mythology with modern action thriller as Max fights for his life while seeking the truth behind his mother's death. AMT

Godbersen, Anna *Beautiful Days: A Bright Young Things Novel*

361 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-196268-4 \$17.99

(4) Having found their feet in NYC, the three heroines of *Bright Young Things* strike out in search of their futures. Cordelia fronts a speakeasy; Letty shoots toward stardom on the stage; and Astrid plays with domesticity—all amidst romantic entanglements enabled by gorgeous wardrobes.

Prohibition never looked more alluring than in this unreflectively self-indulgent novel about wealth, beauty, and booze. MLI

Goerzen, Christy *Farmed Out*

123 pp. Orca LE ISBN 978-1-55469-911-7 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-55469-910-0 \$9.95

(4) Orca Currents series. Fifteen-year-old Maddie hates her flighty single mother's latest idea for a mother-daughter summer "adventure"—a week working at an organic farm—especially since it interferes with an art contest that could take Maddie to New York City. Once on the farm, Maddie is surprised to make new friends and gain inspiration. A quick, predictable read filled with clichés but nevertheless entertaining. SH

Golding, Julia *The Glass Swallow*

304 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5979-8 \$17.99

(3) Stubborn Rain, a stained-glass designer, is robbed and abandoned far from home, in a troubled foreign city where her talents are useless. Calm Peri, a falconer and one of society's "untouchables," must determine if and how to help her. Their romance shines at the center of Golding's believable depiction of a society on the verge of disintegration in this engrossing fantasy adventure. ABZ

Goode, Laura *Sister Mischief*

367 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4640-0 \$16.99

(4) Seventeen-year-old Esme, a.k.a. MC Ferocious, is part of an all-female hip-hop group called Sister Mischief. The novel begins with Esme's coming out as a lesbian, then follows the ensuing drama as she develops a crush on a group member. The snappy dialogue smacks of trying too hard, but vibrant characterization brings the idiosyncratic subculture to life. NG

Grant, K. M. *Belle's Song*

300 pp. Walker ISBN 978-0-8027-2275-1 \$16.99

(3) Determined to pray for her invalid father, Belle sets out on a pilgrimage to Canterbury, England, with Geoffrey Chaucer. The story draws from historical information about Chaucer's life; some *Canterbury Tales* characters also wander in and out. Still, the strongest narrative thread is a romantic one, as Belle is caught in an intriguing (if contemporary-seeming) love triangle. Timeline. BC

Grant, Sara *Dark Parties*

313 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-08594-6 \$17.99

(3) Neva and her friends, desperate to fight government pressure to conform and reproduce, begin staging small rebellions that reveal government conspiracies and a quiet, determined resistance movement. Faced with both adolescent and adult concerns, Neva must make increasingly difficult decisions about friendship, love, and defiance. The story's ambiguous ending will likely provoke strong feelings—and much discussion—from readers, especially dystopia fans. BCM

Gray, Claudia *Fateful*

328 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-200620-2 \$17.99

(3) Tess is a servant for the Lisles, upper-class Brits traveling to the States—aboard the *Titanic*—to marry off bashful daughter Irene. Steel heir Alexander Marlowe seems a likely candidate for a match. Unfortunately, he's a werewolf—a secret Tess discovers while falling in love with him. Gray (keeping a remarkably straight face) creates a compelling story line around the seemingly doomed lovers. ERG

Greenman, Catherine *Hooked*

277 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-74008-1 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-385-90822-1 \$19.99

(4) Teen Thea, desperately in love with Will, finds herself pregnant. She decides to keep the baby despite the challenges. After an accident with baby Ian, the couple splits up; Thea is surprised to find support from her workaholic father. She also starts a business, hires a nanny, gets a day job, and possibly reconciles with Will, all of which is a little unbelievable. AMM

Greenwald, Lisa *Reel Life Starring Us*

298 pp. Abrams/Amulet ISBN 978-1-4197-0026-2 \$16.95

(3) New girl Dina feels like an outcast in middle school. She hopes getting paired up on a video project with popular Chelsea will change this. She quickly discovers that Chelsea's friends are mean, and that Chelsea is hiding a secret. Dina's boldness and Chelsea's willingness to examine her popularity help them learn (in a nondidactic way) that things, and people, are always changing. AMM

▲ Griffin, Paul *Stay with Me*

293 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3448-7 \$16.99

(1) She's a bright student, he's a high school dropout; her family is loving, while his dad is abusive. Despite apparent differences, fifteen-year-olds Céce and Mack fall in love. Their romance is cut short when volatile Mack makes an impetuous decision. Griffin subtly maintains a level of optimism in this painful story, creating in readers a mixture of emotions that won't soon leave them. Review 1/12. KEH

Haddix, Margaret Peterson *The Always War*

199 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-9526-5 \$16.99

(3) When traumatized war hero Gideon Thrall flies a stolen plane into enemy territory with two stowaways—including his neighbor, Tessa—on board, none of the teens imagine that they will uncover a startling truth about the war their country has waged for generations. This well-written, ultimately hopeful dystopian novel is a good introduction to the genre. BCM

Haines, Kathryn Miller *The Girl Is Murder*

342 pp. Roaring Brook ISBN 978-1-59643-609-1 \$16.99

(3) Iris wants to help her father, who was wounded at Pearl Harbor, with his detective work. When her classmate disappears, Iris takes it upon herself to track him down. It's 1942 New York—zoot suits and the jitterbug are in vogue—and the historical setting comes vividly to life in this fast-paced mystery, with its likable (but naive) heroine. CR

Hall, Teri *Away*

235 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3502-6 \$16.99

(3) Rachel, having crossed the Line into Away, is installed in the Others' camp. She's eager to free her father from the savage Roberts and to reunite her family. Meanwhile, her mother and the enigmatic Ms. Moore anxiously await her return. Much like its predecessor (*The Line*), this book will leave dystopia-craving fans looking forward to the next entry. RLH

Hamilton, Kiki *The Faerie Ring*

249 pp. Tor ISBN 978-0-7653-2722-2 \$17.99

(3) When sixteen-year-old pickpocket Tiki steals a ring from Buckingham Palace, she doesn't realize it could start an all-out war with the Fey. To protect her makeshift orphan family and return the ring to its rightful owners, Tiki teams up with Rieker, a fellow thief. Both Rieker's and Tiki's pasts are full of captivating secrets in this spirited Victorian-era fantasy. CR

▲ Handler, Daniel *Why We Broke Up*

355 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-12725-7 \$19.99

(1) Illustrated by Maira Kalman. Min is a quirky aspiring filmmaker; Ed's a popular jock. Their breakup centers this unique novel, posed as a letter Min is writing to Ed. She's also planning to leave a box of items—tiny tokens of their relationship—on his doorstep. Min's narration is poetic, eloquent, and honest. Kalman's spare illustrations perfectly complement Handler's accomplished prose, and thick glossy pages make the book satisfyingly hefty. Review 1/12. KEH

▲ Hannan, Peter *My Big Mouth: 10 Songs I Wrote That Almost Got Me Killed*

235 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-16210-4 \$16.99

(2) After his mother's death, Davis Delaware's new rock band, the Amazing Dweebs, gets him through his ninth-grade year. Davis's lively first-person narrative is driven by dialogue, cartoons and doodles, and song lyrics. Hannan delivers the requisite giggles while capturing the melodrama and frenzy of high school life, all through the perspective of a likable protagonist. Review 11/11. DS

Harris, Carrie *Bad Taste in Boys*

202 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73968-9 \$17.99

LE ISBN 978-0-385-90801-6 \$20.99

(3) Future MD and student trainer to the world's worst high school football team, Kate Grable stumbles across vials in the coach's office that she suspects contain steroids. When the players who have been injected develop a taste for human flesh, her theory changes. Kate's sharp, funny narration guides readers through this entertaining, winking zombie tale. CMH

Harrison, Lisi *Monster High: Where There's a Wolf, There's a Way*

239 pp. Little/Poppy ISBN 978-0-316-09919-6 \$17.99

(5) After a video revealing their true identities is exposed, Salem's monsters go into hiding. Frankie pines for Brett, Melody develops her talent for persuasiveness, and werewolf Clawdeen is determined to have her Sassy Sixteen party. With little substance (except a self-acceptance message reinforced by Lady Gaga and Ke\$ha lyrics), this entry will appeal only to the series' most devoted fans. RLS

Harrison, Mette Ivie *Tris & Izzie*

267 pp. Egmont ISBN 978-1-60684-173-0 \$16.99

(3) The legend of Tristan and Isolde gets a contemporary treatment when Harrison reimagines it in a high school setting. The romantic tensions among Tris, Izzie, Mark, and Branna translate well; witches, love potions, monsters, and a quest to rescue Izzie's father push the book toward supernatural fantasy. MLI

Harvey, Sarah N. *Shattered*

124 pp. Orca LE ISBN 978-1-55469-846-2 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-55469-845-5 \$9.95

(5) Orca Soundings series. After catching her boyfriend having sex with another girl, teen queen March shoves him so hard that he ends up in a coma. Questioning her "perfect life," she stops wearing makeup, dons ugly glasses, and dresses in dowdy clothes. The impetus behind March's identity crisis—"You wanted the outside to match the inside. And you felt ugly inside"—is unsubtle and overblown. ERG

Haston, Meg *How to Rock Braces and Glasses*

328 pp. Little/Poppy ISBN 978-0-316-06825-3 \$16.99

(4) Popular Kacey loses her friends, her role in the play, and her gig as school newscaster thanks to getting braces and glasses. Kacey attempts to regain her status by using and manipulating people. Eventually she realizes her exile has more to do with her attitude than her appearance. Though Kacey is generally insufferable, her quest to discover her true self is redeeming. AMM

Healey, Karen *The Shattering*

314 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-12572-7 \$17.99

(3) The town of Summertown follows many happy traditions, but one is awful: each year a boy who spends New Year's Eve there will kill himself. Is this a tragic coincidence or is a serial killer on the loose? Told in the distinct voices of three friends, the story is a complex and well-wrought tale of suspense, grief, and possibly dark magic. Glos. RLH

Heltzel, Anne *Circle Nine*

263 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5333-0 \$16.99

(4) When Abby wakes up with amnesia outside a burning building, she welcomes the protection and love of a mysterious boy named Sam. As her memories begin to return and Sam becomes more erratic, Abby wonders if she should continue to trust him. The story starts strong, suspenseful and engaging, but readers may find the ending drawn-out and anticlimactic. BCM

Henderson, Jason *Voice of the Undead*

297 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-195101-5 \$16.99

(4) Alex Van Helsing series. In his second supernatural adventure, Alex, descendant of the great Van Helsing vampire-hunter line, is embroiled in another fight between good and evil. He and his friends are again attacked at their boarding school, facing off against an insidious new enemy (and a few old ones as well). The occult and modern technology are well combined in this action-packed (if familiar-seeming) tale. AMT

Hill, C. J. *Slayers*

373 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-61414-0 \$16.99

(3) Dragons are real, deadly, and must be stopped. The teenagers at St. George and the Dragon Camp know this and have been training for the day when newly hatched dragons will attack. However, they are not the only ones who know about dragons and have plans for them. A mix of action and romance keep the plot moving. LC

Hirsch, Jeff *The Eleventh Plague*

282 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-29014-2 \$17.99

(4) Stephen and his father are wanderers in a post-apocalyptic world. After a run-in with slave traders ends in violence (and Dad in a coma), some townspeople take the two in—to mixed reception. What's more, Stephen must decide if he can be part of a community larger than his father and himself. Though some characters remain undeveloped, the narrative itself moves swiftly. JM

Hodkin, Michelle *The Unbecoming of Mara Dyer*

456 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-2176-9 \$16.99

(3) Mara can't remember the night a building collapsed on top of her and three friends, killing everyone but her—and not remembering is literally driving her insane. Her life is spiraling downward when handsome, mysterious Noah takes an interest in her. Mara's fears for her sanity and her intense guilt are beautifully balanced against a romance with Noah, creating a complex and twisting story. LC

Hoffman, Mary *David*

260 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-700-0 \$16.99

(3) An imagined explanation of Michelangelo's construction of the David statue is woven here through the eyes of Gabriele, the young man who serves as the model. Unfamiliar with city life, Gabriele explains much about the artistic trends, political factions, and scandals of Florence. The text is very well researched, with many facts and details inserted into the story. Glos. MLI

Holder, Nancy, and Debbie Viguié *Damned*

509 pp. Simon Pulse ISBN 978-1-4169-9804-4 \$16.99

(4) Jenn (*Crusade*) and her team of hunters seek other vampire-fighting resistance groups. Jenn struggles to hold onto hope while supernatural soldiers attack and reformed vampire/love interest Antonio returns to his old murderous ways. Many backstories and perspective shifts sometimes

cause the plot to lag, though the previous volume's unusual but organic blend of mysticism and Catholicism continues to be effective here. KLB

Holder, Nancy, and Debbie Viguié *Unleashed*

387 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-74098-2 \$18.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-98979-7 \$21.99

(4) Wolf Springs Chronicles series. After her mother's death, Katelyn moves to Wolf Springs, Arkansas, to live with her grandfather. As Katelyn adapts to small-town life, the supernatural secrets of Wolf Springs are unveiled after a student is killed. Crisp narration keeps the book going, but quicker plotting would have raised the stakes. KC

Hopkins, Ellen *Perfect*

627 pp. McElderry ISBN 978-1-4169-8324-8 \$18.99

(5) In Hopkins's latest verse novel, four self-obsessed characters (each with his or her own verse form) express concerns about achieving success. While the novel is supportive of one young woman coming out as a lesbian, female heterosexual activity mostly ends in rape or prostitution. Fans of Hopkins's style will appreciate this volume, but she breaks no new ground in style or content. MLI

Hubbard, Mandy *Ripple*

261 pp. Penguin/Razorbill ISBN 978-1-59514-423-2 \$16.99

(4) Lexi is a siren whose curse caused her to kill her first boyfriend, Steven. After that, she shunned all relationships. Now Lexi faces a difficult decision: true love with Cole, Steven's best friend, or a faked connection with Erik, a nix. While the story uses several teen romance clichés, the characters are likable and the mythology connection is engaging. JM

▲ Jablonski, Carla *Defiance*

124 pp. Roaring Brook/First Second
ISBN 978-1-59643-292-5 \$16.99

(2) Illustrated by Leland Purvis. Color by Hilary Sycamore. Resistance series. In this sequel to *Resistance*, danger escalates when Paul joins the Maquis (freedom fighters in the forests) and Sylvie uncovers Nazi plans to raid their hideouts. The graphic novel format effectively portrays the layers of story and emotion, words and visuals working in tandem to bring the tale to life. Historical notes at the beginning and end contextualize the events. Review 9/11. DS

Jay, Stacey *Juliet Immortal*

309 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-74016-6 \$17.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90826-9 \$20.99

(3) Jay turns Shakespeare's play on its head in this contemporary paranormal romance. Romeo and Juliet are revealed to be mystical spirits—and immortal enemies—doomed to eternal conflict as each is repeatedly reincarnated. As their struggle plays out, the characters discover they can make different decisions about forbidden love and self-sacrifice, all in a swoon-worthy manner. MLI

Jeschonek, Robert T. *My Favorite Band Does Not Exist*

327 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-37027-9 \$16.99

(4) Idea Deity and Reacher Mirage live in different realities connected by Youforia, a band that may or may not exist. The protagonists' realities begin to merge as each character continues to read—and become a part of—the same fantasy novel. There's some fun to be had from the inventive premise, but the intertwining elements are more muddled than complementary. RR

Johnson, Christine *Nocturne: A Claire de Lune Novel*

359 pp. Simon Pulse ISBN 978-1-4424-0776-3 \$16.99

(4) Claire (*Claire de Lune*) attempts to balance her werewolf activities (hunting, magic) with her human ones (dating, school dances). An important examination of her abilities puts a strain on Claire, but the real test comes when she must deal with an acquaintance who's discovered her secret. The denouement is predictable, but Claire's moral dilemma and struggle to belong are believable (if familiar). KLB

▲ Johnson, Maureen *The Name of the Star*

374 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-25660-8 \$16.99

(2) Shades of London series. Arriving in London for the school year, Rory is told that someone "pulled a Jack the Ripper." Soon after, Rory starts seeing people her classmates don't and falls in with a group investigating the murders. Smart, breezy, self-deprecating narration and textured boarding school atmosphere provide easy entrance to this increasingly eerie murder mystery. Review 11/11. CMH

Jones, Carrie, and Steven E. Wedel *After Obsession*

308 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-681-2 \$17.99

(3) Terrorized by brutal dreams, Aimee tries to uncover the cause of her mother's death. Alan, who is part-Navajo, taps into his mysterious powers. When Alan's cousin and Aimee's best friend, Courtney, becomes possessed by a river demon, Alan and Aimee come face to face with a terrifying truth. Written in alternating first-person perspectives, the story is a page-turner. KC

Jordan, Sophie *Vanish: A Firelight Novel*

294 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-193510-7 \$17.99

(4) Jacinda and her family (*Firelight*) must return to their pride of dragonlike shapeshifters to escape hunters—separating Jacinda from her human boyfriend Will. Pride life proves excruciatingly restrictive; eventually, Jacinda puts herself and others at risk to be with Will again. The intricacies of the hierarchical draki society are more intriguing than Jacinda's search for her place in it and subsequent love triangle. KLB

Kate, Lauren *Passion: A Fallen Novel*

420 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73916-0 \$17.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90774-3 \$20.99

(3) Published spring 2011. Starting where *Torment* ends, this book follows Luce from war-riddled Europe to early tribal lands as she attempts to understand her romantic destiny. Guided by a gargoyle named Bill, Luce evades the friends and foes who pursue her. Even more so than in the first two books (*Fallen*, *Torment*), Kate makes each setting and character come alive. JM

Kehoe, Stasia Ward *Audition*

458 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01319-7 \$17.99

(3) In this verse novel, sixteen-year-old Sara is a new scholarship student at big-city Jersey Ballet, where she feels “every day / Is an audition.” Unhappy, she falls into an intense sexual and creative relationship with older male dancer Remington. Sophisticated terminology and dance imagery speak to ballet insiders, while Sara’s struggle to define herself and her dreams is relatable to everyone. KLB

Kelly, Tara *Amplified*

293 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-9296-7 \$16.99

(3) Jasmine defers Stanford to try to make it as a musician. She lucks out and is asked by an up-and-coming industrial band to be their guitarist/roommate. However, she might lose it all when her stage fright is revealed. Readers will enjoy watching Jasmine fumble her way through new friendships, a job with a psychic, and a burgeoning romance with a bandmate. AMM

Kenyon, Sherrilyn *Invincible*

420 pp. St. Martin’s Griffin ISBN 978-0-312-59906-5 \$17.99

(3) Chronicles of Nick series. Published spring 2011. Nick has powers that draw the forces of evil to him—and a destiny to destroy the world. But all he wants is to protect his mom and get a date. His demonic football coach and other evil powers have different plans. Kenyon’s fans will love the story’s fast pace and Nick’s snarky, street-smart wit. LC

Kephart, Beth *You Are My Only*

244 pp. Egmont ISBN 978-1-60684-272-0 \$16.99

(3) After her baby is kidnapped, young mother Emmy spends the next fourteen years in a mental institution. In a parallel thread, Sophie’s reclusive mother keeps them on the run; after befriending neighbors, Sophie wants to put down roots. Alternating between Emmy and Sophie’s perspectives, this well-crafted, ripped-from-the-headlines-type story is full of raw emotion and drama. CR

Keplinger, Kody *Shut Out*

276 pp. Little/Poppy ISBN 978-0-316-17556-2 \$17.99

(4) In this story very loosely based on the Aristophanes play *Lysistrata*, intense rivalry between Hamilton High’s football and soccer teams is the catalyst for the players’ girlfriends staging a sex strike until the teams make peace. Some honest conversations and confessions about relation-

ships ensue, but lack of character development and some weak plotting hinder this otherwise provocative battle-of-the-sexes story. CLS

▲ King, A. S. *Everybody Sees the Ants*

282 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-12928-2 \$17.99

(1) Fifteen-year-old Lucky Linderman’s family bears emotional scars. His workaholic dad’s issues stem from having a POW/MIA father and a mother obsessed with finding him. Lucky’s mom’s problems are from being bullied by her husband. Lucky himself has endured years of taunting at school. King’s themes of torture, physical and emotional imprisonment, and bullying connect in satisfying ways in this improbably witty and heartwarming story. Review 1/12. JMB

Kizer, Amber *Wildcat Fireflies: A Meridian Novel*

510 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73971-9 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90803-0 \$19.99

(3) Meridian (*Meridian*) and her boyfriend Tens search out her fellow Fenestras (part-angel beings whose duty is to help dying souls transition to the afterlife). They finally locate Juliet, but must rescue her from an abusive “rehabilitation center” and the demonic Nocti. An unusual paranormal premise and an honest look at first love are engaging; quirky, helpful human characters add humor and balance the darker themes. KLB

Knight, Karsten *Wildefire*

394 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-2117-2 \$16.99

(4) Ashline Wilde leaves home after her sister, Eve, escalates a school fight. At isolated Blackwood Academy, Ash learns she is the latest incarnation of the goddess Pele. Ash must either help with Eve’s dangerous quest or fight alongside her new friends, who are also deities. Eventually invoking a diverse range of mythologies, the story is slow to establish its supernatural roots. JM

Knowles, Jo *Pearl*

216 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-9207-3 \$16.99

(3) Best friends Henry and Pearl (called Bean) are used to their dysfunctional families. Henry’s mother never leaves the house and his father deserted them long ago. Bean never knew her father but suspects she is the product of a rape. When Bean’s grandfather dies, family secrets spill out, changing how Henry and Bean see their families and each other in this emotional, compelling read. AMM

▲ Koertge, Ron *Now Playing: Stoner & Spaz II*

209 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5081-0 \$16.99

(2) In this worthwhile sequel to *Stoner and Spaz*, high school filmmaker Ben is fresh from the success of his documentary debut—but also freshly wounded by on-again/off-again girlfriend Colleen. While sorting out his feelings, Ben spends time with A.J., a popular, preppy, and ambitious girl. The bond with Colleen is tough to break, though, and readers will be pulling for them despite the odds. Review 9/11. LA

Kogler, Jennifer Anne *The Death Catchers*

344 pp. Walker ISBN 987-0-8027-2184-6 \$16.99

(4) Contemporary teen Lizzy Mortimer and her grandmother Bizzy, descendants of Morgan le Faye, have the ability to see death-specters of their loved ones. The tale's weaving in of Arthurian mythos is well done. Other plot twists seem superfluous, as does the book's framing device (the story is Lizzy's letter to her English teacher explaining why she should pass the class). JM

Kogler, Jennifer Anne *The Siren's Cry*

377 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-199443-2 \$16.99

(5) As if bullying from classmates weren't enough, twelve-year-old Fern McAllister (*The Otherworldlies*) must foil her evil vampire father and save another Unusual like herself. Flat characters, frequent point-of-view shifts, and a meandering story line weaken Kogler's blend of everyday middle-school concerns and family drama with mystical mysteries and paranormal adventures. ABZ

Kostick, Conor *Edda*

442 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01218-3 \$18.99

(3) When a portal to another realm opens in the virtual world of Saga, electronic intelligence Ghost asks her human friend, Erik, for his avatar's help locating and negotiating with the portal's creator. The third book in the series (*Epic, Saga*) brings online role-playing games to life with nonstop action and inventive world building that will appeal to gamers and fans of fast-paced fantasy. BCM

Kurlansky, Mark *Battle Fatigue*

244 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-0-8027-2264-5 \$17.99

(3) As kids, Joel Bloom and his friends, children of WWII veteran heroes, played at saving the world from imaginary foes in their backyards. Now with the Vietnam War looming, Joel, eighteen, must decide what role he's willing to play in this real battle. Joel's journey is thoughtfully presented and may resonate with today's teens coming of age during times of conflict. JSK

Lackey, Mercedes, and Rosemary Edghill

Conspiracies

342 pp. Tor ISBN 978-0-7653-2823-6 \$21.99

PE ISBN 978-0-7653-1762-9 \$9.99

(4) Shadow Grail series. Having defeated one set of bad guys in *Legacies*, Spirit and her friends at Oakhurst Academy, a boarding school for young magicians, face another mysterious evil force. The unfolding conspiracy is confusing (involving, for example, Oakhurst alums, a giant oak tree, and the legend of King Arthur), but Spirit is a smart, determined protagonist unwilling to accept the status quo. RLS

Lagos, Alexander, and Joseph Lagos *The Sons of Liberty: Death and Taxes*

176 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-85676-1 \$18.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-95668-3 \$21.99

PE ISBN 978-0-375-85668-6 \$12.99

(4) Illustrated by Steve Walker. Color by Oren Kramek. In their graphic novel series, the Lagoses continue the saga of Graham and Brody, two fugitive slaves with supernatural powers. This fictionalized account of the Stamp Act being imposed on the Colonies—and Ben Franklin's role in its repeal—is shown in dark, often gory drawings. Historical facts are few and far between, but the chaos leading to the American Revolution comes through. LBC

▲ Laird, Elizabeth *The Betrayal of Maggie Blair*

423 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-34126-2 \$16.99

(2) Published spring 2011. In 1680s Scotland, Maggie, falsely accused of witchcraft, seeks refuge with her father's family. But the Blairs are Covenanters, and life with them is also fraught with peril. Laird brings Scottish, English, and Protestant history to life, but even more potently presents a coming-of-age story, a stalwart hero, and a well-paced adventure that shows stubborn human nature in a thought-provoking light. Review 9/11. DFB

Landalf, Helen *Flyaway*

169 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-547-51973-9 \$16.99

(4) In denial about her mom's neglect and meth addiction, Stevie unenthusiastically agrees to move in with her aunt Mindy. Stevie initially resents her aunt's interference, but Mindy, and Stevie's volunteer work at a bird rehabilitation center, help get her life back on track. At times too problem-laden to be believable, this novel nevertheless delivers a heartwarming (if unsurprising) conclusion. RLS

Lansdale, Joe R. *All the Earth, Thrown to the Sky*

229 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73931-3 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-385-90782-8 \$19.99

(3) In the 1930s Dust Bowl, Jack and his two neighbors steal a truck and head for East Texas after sandstorms decimate their land and lead to their parents' deaths. Bumbling along road and rail, the trio meets notorious bank robbers, friendly hoboes, a deranged sheriff, and a peculiar carnival strongman. Quirky characters and authentic-sounding, dialect-heavy narration make for an insightful historical road novel. RR

Larkin, Jillian *Ingenue*

353 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-74036-4 \$17.99

LE ISBN 978-0-385-90836-8 \$20.99

(4) Flappers series. After burning bridges in Chicago, Larkin's teenage flappers head to NYC. Clara's attempts to regain respectability are derailed by tabloid journalism; Lorraine's past betrayals have left her in debt to gangsters; and Gloria's dream of finding romance with Jerome remains elusive. Sparkling dresses, speakeasies, and a touch of Al Capone make up this implausible cocktail about the glamour of Prohibition. MLI

Levine, Ellen *In Trouble*

200 pp. Carolrhoda Lab ISBN 978-0-7613-6558-7 \$17.95

(4) It's 1956, and Jamie's best friend Elaine confides that she is pregnant. Jamie's quest to find out what options might be available for Elaine (including an illegal abortion) becomes even more pressing as she realizes she is in the same fix. Misplaced love, date rape, and sexual ignorance all figure into this sympathetic but didactic novel about the importance of reproductive choice. MLI

Levithan, David *Every You, Every Me*

249 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86098-0 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96098-7 \$19.99

(3) Photographs by Jonathan Farmer. Evan likes logic and patterns, but they cannot assuage his grief for Ariel (a friend lost to mental illness) or explain the haunting, increasingly sinister photographs that appear as reminders of Ariel. Exposing both Evan's polished and uncensored thoughts (shown in struck-through text), Levithan captures the pain of indecision as well as action along with the ability of friendship to transcend suffering. MLI

Lewis, Stewart *You Have Seven Messages*

291 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-74028-9 \$17.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90832-0 \$20.99

(4) A year after her fashion model mother died in an accident, privileged fifteen-year-old Manhattanite Luna finds Mom's cell containing seven unplayed voicemails. Startling details about her mom's life (and death) are revealed, prompting further investigation. The plot is furthered by credulity-stretching details (e.g., Luna's wildly successful photography hobby), but romance and glitzy setting add allure. KEH

Lindsey, Mary *Shattered Souls*

326 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-25622-6 \$16.99

(3) Lenzi is a Speaker who can hear the voices of unsettled souls; Alden is her Protector. Resisting her gift, Lenzi struggles to maintain her normal high school life—until an evil spirit forces her to make a decision. Lindsey's characters are original, and her plot is fast-paced. KC

Littlefield, Sophie *Unforsaken*

277 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73854-5 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90736-1 \$19.99

(3) In *Banished*, Hailey narrowly escaped scientists who tried to exploit her healing abilities to make zombies for military use. Her hard-won chance at normalcy is shattered when her brother and aunt are abducted. This sequel offers few additional insights into the history or gifts of the *Banished*, but suspense and romance (with seer Kaz) introduced in the previous volume continue to develop nicely. KLB

Littman, Sarah Darer *Want to Go Private?*

332 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-15146-7 \$17.99

(3) Abby meets and falls in love with "Luke" online. Then she disappears, leaving everyone to agonize over her whereabouts and safety—but also their own guilt. Perspective switches between Abby and her loved ones; impersonal

police reports help readers understand the danger and trauma of the sexual exploitation Abby undergoes. Littman avoids preachiness in this disturbing cautionary tale about online predators. KEH

Lore, Pittacus *The Power of Six*

406 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-197455-7 \$17.99

(3) Lorien Legacies series. *I Am Number Four's* John Smith and his friends (including Number Six) are trying to figure out their next move while on the run from the law and with the Mogadorians hunting them down. Alternating chapters introduce Number Seven (in Spain) and another mysterious girl Seven befriends. High-octane action sequences along with intriguing new information about the Lorians and Mogadorians will leave fans breathless. CR

Lowry, Lois *The Giver: The Gift Edition*

197 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-42477-4 \$19.99

(4) Illustrated by Bagram Ibatoulline. New ed. (1993). Lowry's austere classic dystopian novel gets a curiously gifty treatment here, complete with bound-in red ribbon bookmark as well as glossy, too-literal, and stiff illustrations by Ibatoulline. Stick with the original and make up the pictures for yourself. Review 7/93. RS

▲ Lu, Marie *Legend*

301 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-25675-2 \$17.99

(2) In the distant future, the western half of the United States has seceded and is ruled by an oppressive totalitarian regime. Fifteen-year-old Day is one of its most wanted criminals. June, also fifteen and one of the Republic's brightest prodigies, is hunting Day down to kill him. The story is written in alternating first-person present-tense narratives with lightning-fast pacing and nonstop action. Review 11/11. JH

Lyga, Barry *Mangaman*

131 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-42315-9 \$19.99

(3) Illustrated by Colleen Doran. A rip in the fabric of the universe brings Ryoko, a character from a Japanese manga comic, into the real, Western world of this graphic novel, where he attempts to pass as normal in a typical high school. Ryoko is illustrated using manga conventions and style which not only causes him to be the ultimate outsider but makes for humorous metafiction to readers familiar with Japanese comics. DE

Lynch, Chris *I Pledge Allegiance*

185 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-27029-8 \$16.99

(4) Vietnam series. This first series entry introduces four Boston boys with a strong friendship. They make a pact: if one is drafted to Vietnam the others will volunteer. The inevitable happens, and all four head for war. Narrator Morris (this book's star) believes his job is to look out for the others. The characters are disappointingly two-dimensional in this otherwise solid offering. BC

Maberry, Jonathan *Dust & Decay*

521 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-0235-5 \$17.99

(3) Following the zombie apocalypse, fifteen-year-old Benny and his friends (*Rot & Ruin*) venture forth in hopes of finding a better future. They're unprepared to encounter the Gameland horror-sport in which humans battle zombies as entertainment. The story is full of violent, visceral action; subtext subtly suggests the living may be worse than the undead. DE

MacCullough, Carolyn *Always a Witch*

276 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-22485-5 \$16.99

(3) Tamsin (*Once a Witch*) is destined to make a "terrible choice" that will forever affect her family of witches. When she travels back to 1887 to save her ancestors from the dangerous Knights, her choice is revealed. This clever, skillfully written sequel introduces new deliciously sinister villains galore, making Tamsin's eventual triumph all the more satisfying. RLS

Mackall, Dandi Daley *The Silence of Murder*

329 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86896-2 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96896-9 \$19.99

(5) When her developmentally disabled brother Jeremy, who hasn't spoken in nine years, is accused of murdering the popular high school basketball coach, Hope is determined to clear his name. Hope's dedication to her brother is inspiring, but the novel suffers from uneven pacing and flat characterizations of Jeremy and the adults in the siblings' lives. NCP

Mafi, Tahereh *Shatter Me*

344 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-208548-1 \$17.99

(4) Juliette's dangerous power—her touch is fatal—leads to a life of ostracism. When a military leader tries to seduce her, she discovers reserves of personal strength and unexpected allies. The story's setting is an intriguing near-future dystopia; however, Mafi is more interested in romance than world building, leading to an implausible conclusion. MLI

Malkin, Nina *Swear*

471 pp. Simon Pulse ISBN 978-1-4424-2110-3 \$17.99

(5) Six months after the events of *Swoon*, Dice's best friend's boyfriend, Crane, disappears, followed by the reappearance of Dice's centuries-old boyfriend, Sin. They're connected by a petulant spirit named Antonia, who won't release Crane unless Sin marries her. The oblique, affected writing style makes it difficult to feel any sympathy for Dice and company—or to figure out what's going on. RLS

Mantchev, Lisa *So Silver Bright*

357 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-38098-4 \$16.99

(4) Readers will either glory in the book's stylistic creativity or throw their hands up in confusion as love triangle, comic romp, and fantastical adventure collide in the continuing theatrical and magical escapades of Beatrice Shakespeare Smith. Mantchev's preference for description and

characterization over exposition and world building may frustrate readers unfamiliar with the first two volumes (*Eyes like Stars*, *Perchance to Dream*). MLI

Marino, Andy *Unison Spark*

233 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-9293-6 \$16.99

(4) Unison is the virtual social networking group that rules the world. The newest upgrade is due soon, and Mistletoe and Ambrose, two teens from vastly different economic backgrounds, suspect it will have devastating consequences for users. The story can be convoluted and confusing, but conspiracy theory fans will enjoy it. LC

▲ **Martin, C. K. Kelly** *My Beating Teenage Heart*

277 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86855-9 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96855-6 \$19.99

(2) Seventeen-year-old Breckon is barely functioning after his sister's death. Newly deceased Ashlyn has no idea who or where—or even what—she is. Chapters alternating between their points of view convey much about the ways people feel after losing a loved one. Martin gradually pieces together the puzzle of how the two stories intersect and shows that, in whatever form, life goes on. Review 9/11. CMH

Martinez, Jessica *Virtuosity*

294 pp. Simon Pulse ISBN 978-1-4424-2052-6 \$16.99

(3) With the biggest violin competition of her life only weeks away, the last thing Carmen needs is a distraction; and Jeremy King is definitely a distraction. How can two violin prodigies competing for the same prize make a friendship—or even something more—work? The well-paced and compelling story explores overbearing parents, questionable motives, and self-confidence. KA

Mayer, Julia *Eyes in the Mirror*

217 pp. Sourcebooks/Fire ISBN 978-1-4022-4040-9 \$9.99

(4) When Dee discovers she can use mirrors to cross into a parallel universe, she switches places with her counterpart, Samara, for a day. The switch causes more problems than it solves, and the girls find their friendship tested as they try to repair the damage. While the story's emotional authenticity will resonate with teens, the story line drags. BCM

McCall, Guadalupe Garcia *Under the Mesquite*

224 pp. Lee ISBN 978-1-60060-429-4 \$17.95

(3) Lupita leads her seven younger siblings through the uncertainty of their mother's cancer. Lupita endeavors to keep her Mexican American family together while attempting to reach her own goals for college and a career. First-person free verse with Spanish carefully sprinkled throughout project this young woman's thoughts, fears, and triumphs with grace and resolve. Glos. RSS

McClain, Lee *Sizzle*

190 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5981-1 \$16.99

(4) Teen foodie Linda goes to live with a distant relative: a local celebrity chef who specializes in canned goods. By book's end Linda learns to appreciate her foster family (despite dissing them on her food blog), and even begins to appreciate canned cooking. No surprises in the story line itself, but the details therein are creative. SH

McCullough, Kathy *Don't Expect Magic*

248 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-74012-8 \$17.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-90824-5 \$20.99

(3) After her mom's death, Delaney is less than thrilled about living with her dad, a famous life coach, in Southern California. Then Delaney discovers that not only is her dad an "f.g." (fairy godfather), she has inherited the f.g. gene. As her magic improves, so does her attitude—though, thankfully, she never loses her edge—in this satisfying unconventional fairy tale. RLS

McDaniel, Lurlene *Reaching Through Time: Three Novellas*

229 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73461-5 \$15.99

LE ISBN 978-0-385-90460-5 \$18.99

(5) In "What's Happened to Me?" Sarah wakes up with amnesia and in the care of a mysterious man. In "When the Clock Chimes," Drake's love interest is a time-traveler. "The Mysteries of Chance" finds Maura going back in time to before her boyfriend's car accident. Each novella is long on melodrama and short on character development. ERG

McEntire, K. D. *Lightbringer*

323 pp. Pyr/Prometheus ISBN 978-1-61614-539-2 \$16.95

(4) As a Lightbringer, Wendy sends ghosts to the afterlife. With the evil ghosts getting stronger, she has little time for love. Then Wendy meets Piotr; too bad he died centuries ago. Some plot elements are introduced then annoyingly dropped, never to be addressed. Despite this discontinuity, fans of dark paranormal romance will devour the story. LC

McKinty, Adrian *Deviant*

361 pp. Abrams/Amulet ISBN 978-0-8109-8420-2 \$16.95

(5) Avid skateboarder Danny Lopez is uprooted from Las Vegas to Cobalt, Colorado, with his mother and stepfather. There he discovers a myriad of strangeness, including a school that forbids students from speaking to one other and a cat killer. While the creepiness may hook some horror fans, the story introduces too many characters and subplots without resolution. JM

McLaughlin, Lauren *Scored*

229 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86820-7 \$17.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96820-4 \$20.99

(3) In McLaughlin's dystopic future, teens receive monthly "scores": numbers (presumably based on behavior) that dictate their futures, as determined by an omniscient, corporate-owned software program. Imani is devastated when her score dramatically drops, until a partnership with

an "unscored" makes her question the system she takes for granted. This is a thought-provoking, eerily plausible critique of society—and a riveting story, too. RLS

McNeil, Gretchen *Possess*

380 pp. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray

ISBN 978-0-06-206071-6 \$17.99

(3) With the help of a priest at her Catholic school, Bridget develops her ability to communicate with—and exorcise—demons. As she practices this power, she discovers the truth about her identity and her father's murder. This supernatural thriller features a witty protagonist, some romance, and lots of truly creepy moments—as when Bridget confronts a shop full of demonically possessed dolls. RLS

McWhirter, Teresa *Skank*

141 pp. Lorimer ISBN 978-1-55277-716-9 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-55277-715-2 \$9.95

(5) SideStreets series. This overstuffed issues book touches on poverty, prostitution, pornography, drugs, and other problems. Eleventh-grader Ariel deals with bullying at school, "downward mobility," a mother disabled by arthritis, a bad neighborhood, and her "38DD" chest that attracts a lot of unwanted attention. The story's dialogue rings false, and while Ariel is a sympathetic character, everyone else is entirely two-dimensional. CJ

Mead, Richelle *Bloodlines*

423 pp. Penguin/Razorbill ISBN 978-1-59514-317-4 \$18.99

(3) Alchemist Sydney usually protects humans from vampires; her new mission is to hide Jill, the vampire queen's only surviving relative, from assassins at a human boarding school. Straight-laced Sydney, a secondary character from the Vampire Academy series, is more staid than butt-kicking Rose, but those books' engaging elements of magic, romance, and suspense carry over well. KLB

Meyer, L. A. *The Mark of the Golden Dragon: Being an Account of the Further Adventures of Jacky Faber, Jewel of the East, Vexation of the West, and Pearl of the South China Sea*

378 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-547-51764-3 \$16.99

(3) After being washed overboard during a typhoon, Jacky Faber lands in the Far East. She gains treasure and sails to England with hopes of buying herself and Jaimy a pardon. In the meantime, Jaimy, seeking revenge against those he blames for Jacky's death, becomes the legendary Black Highwayman. Jacky's adventures continue to entertain readers with the historical flourishes characteristic of the series. JSK

Michaels, Rune *Fix Me*

149 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4169-5772-0 \$16.99

(4) Traumatized by her past, her parents' deaths, and an abusive brother, a sixteen-year-old girl who calls herself Leia runs away to the zoo. There she finds refuge, the beginning of a friendship, and a break from her destructive cutting. The relief is short-lived, and there is little resolution in this harrowing (if occasionally confusing) psychological drama. TLD

Miles, Elizabeth *Fury*

375 pp. Simon Pulse ISBN 978-1-4424-2224-7 \$17.99

(4) High school dramas turn, literally, into Greek tragedies when three mysterious girls wreak revenge on selfish students. Chase, the quarterback desperate to maintain his image, and Em, the nice girl pining for her BFF's guy, try to elude modern incarnations of the Furies. Strong descriptive writing helps Miles overcome dependence on stereotyped characters in this creative supernatural-meets-contemporary-realism tale. MLI

Miller, Kirsten *All You Desire: An Eternal Ones Novel*

423 pp. Penguin/Razorbill ISBN 978-1-59514-323-5 \$17.99

(3) When her best friend is kidnapped, Haven Moore is drawn back into the inner circle of the Ouroboros Society, a group of reincarnated souls led by a man who's been stalking Haven through the centuries. Haven's shifting loyalties may be difficult to follow for those who haven't read *The Eternal Ones*; however, existing fans will appreciate Miller's take on reincarnation and ancient mythology. HRB

Morris, Paula *Dark Souls*

295 pp. Scholastic/Point ISBN 978-0-545-25132-7 \$17.99

(3) When Miranda, sixteen, and her family visit York, England, she meets potential love interest Nick, but she's more interested in a mysterious ghost boy across the street. As the connection between the boys is revealed, Miranda discovers that only she can prevent a deadly plan. The straightforward plot, accessible writing, and supernatural elements ensure appeal to a range of readers. KC

Moulton, Courtney Allison *Angelfire*

455 pp. HarperCollins/Tegen ISBN 978-0-06-200232-7 \$17.99

(4) Published spring 2011. Seventeen-year-old Ellie learns she is an angelic being called the Preliator whose duty is to protect humans from demonic reapers. Her cute Guardian, Will, helps her recover memories of past incarnations; together they take on the Enshi, a reaper capable of catalyzing the apocalypse. Ellie's skeptical, sarcastic attitude is by turns amusing and annoying, while stoic Will is two-dimensional. KLB

Muchamore, Robert *Maximum Security*

302 pp. Simon Pulse ISBN 978-1-4169-9942-3 \$16.99

(4) CHERUB series. The son of an arms dealer who's been selling U.S. missiles to terrorists is imprisoned in an Arizona jail. If CHERUB's elite force of teen agents can break him out, they have a chance to stop the weapons trading. Absurd plot holes aside (escaping a maximum security jail through a fire exit?), the series continues to offer fast-paced entertainment. DE

▲ Mullin, Mike *Ashfall*

466 pp. Tanglewood ISBN 978-1-933718-55-2 \$16.95

(2) The end of the world comes when a giant rock is thrown 900 miles from the exploding supervolcano under Yellowstone National Park. Mullin's debut novel is carefully

researched and vividly realized, a post-apocalyptic backdrop for a suspenseful tale with adventure, graphic violence, and two teenagers learning to love. For readers who like intense action, a believable narrator, and an imaginable dystopia. Review 1/12. DS

▲ Murdock, Catherine Gilbert *Wisdom's Kiss*

293 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-56687-0 \$16.99

(2) Murdock's gleeful nontraditional fairy tale stars feisty Princess Wisdom; loyal inn-worker-turned-lady-in-waiting Trudy; and gallant acrobat Tips, who captures both girls' hearts. Letters, diaries, a biography, and—most amusingly—a play are incorporated into the distinctive narrative structure. Royal politics, magic, a nasty villain, and a narcissistic cat combine for a witty, unconventional tale that's highly original. Review 9/11. ME

Nadol, Jen *The Vision*

232 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-597-6 \$16.99

(3) In this sequel to *The Mark*, Cassie starts anew outside Chicago, hoping the city's large Greek community can provide answers about her role as a Fate. Meanwhile, brooding love interest Zander reveals how his interactions with death intertwine with hers. Cassie's job at a funeral home allows for musings about her talent (while upping the creepiness factor). A cliffhanger ending increases suspense. BLS

Nance, Andrew *Return to Daemon Hall: Evil Roots*

240 pp. Holt/Ottaviano ISBN 978-0-8050-8748-2 \$16.99

(3) Illustrated by Coleman Polhemus. A year after the first fatal writers' competition in Daemon Hall, author Ian Tremblin again hosts an ill-advised horror story challenge. The haunted mansion snatches the group back into its grip as the contestants desperately tell stories to earn their escape. The macabre tales—filled with inventively chilling plots—keep readers engrossed right to the cliffhanger ending. BTK

Nayeri, Daniel *Straw House, Wood House, Brick House, Blow*

406 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5748-2 \$19.99

(4) In four novellas, each more successful than the previous one, Nayeri presents an unconventional take on various genres from the Western to science fiction to detective story and, finally, romantic comedy. Though it starts off slowly, this ambitious and intriguing project may find an audience if readers can patiently make it to the final two stories. JH

▲ Ness, Patrick *A Monster Calls*

206 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5559-4 \$16.99

(2) Inspired by an idea from Siobhan Dowd. Illustrated by Jim Kay. A monster spirit visits Conor to tell him three stories before Conor must tell him a fourth—the story of his recurring nightmare. The mysterious content of the nightmare physically affects Conor in ways that are both organic to the story and emotionally powerful. Kay's drawings effectively enhance Ness's heart-wrenching and thought-provoking narrative. Review 9/11. CR

Nolan, Han *Pregnant Pause*

340 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-15-206570-6 \$16.99

(4) Pregnant and married at sixteen, Elly goes to work at a summer camp for overweight kids. Her boozing and cheating husband, a tragedy at camp, and the birth of her daughter force her to grow up fast. Elly is a complex character, difficult to like at times. It's worth sticking around for the satisfying (if melodramatic) conclusion to her journey. CR

▲ Nye, Naomi Shihab *There Is No Long Distance Now: Very Short Stories*

202 pp. Greenwillow ISBN 978-0-06-201965-3 \$16.99

(2) The protagonists of each of these thirty-nine very short stories (one thousand words or fewer) are intelligent, articulate adolescents. We enter each story quickly, get a flash of insight or two, then exit, often wanting to know more about the characters' lives. The tales, persistently hopeful, will resonate most deeply with teens who, like the protagonists, crave meaningful connection with the wider world. Review 11/11. KTH

O'Brien, Caragh M. *Prized*

357 pp. Roaring Brook ISBN 978-1-59643-570-4 \$16.99

(3) Apprentice midwife Gaia (*Birthmarked*) escaped the totalitarian Enclave with her baby sister Maya. Now living in female-ruled Sylum, Gaia tries to adapt to unyielding gender roles while weighing two potential romances and researching the infertility of Sylum men. The fresh dystopian premise of the first volume takes on a new, equally compelling aspect here, with environmental concerns at the forefront. KLB

O'Connell, Mary *The Sharp Time*

231 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-47048-7 \$17.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-98948-3 \$20.99

(3) Alone after her mother's death, Sandinista reaches a breaking point under her teacher's cruelty. She ditches school, gets a job at a vintage clothing store, and comes to terms with her grief with the help of another lost soul, Bradley, recently rebuffed by his ex-boyfriend. Sharp narration, unique characters, and strong emotional resonance give the story staying power. BLS

Olsen, Gregg *Envy*

285 pp. Sterling/Splinter ISBN 978-1-4027-8957-1 \$17.95

(5) Empty Coffin series. Twin sisters Hayley and Taylor, reeling from their childhood friend Katelyn's sudden death, investigate her possible murder. Clues gleaned from Katelyn's internet activity—and the siblings' extrasensory powers (neither consistent nor clearly defined)—eventually indicate that cyberbullying may have pushed Katelyn to suicide. Various perspectives on the characters' soap-opera-worthy behaviors and motivations do little to add logic. KLB

▲ Oppel, Kenneth *This Dark Endeavor: The Apprenticeship of Victor Frankenstein*

298 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-0315-4 \$17.99

(1) Konrad and Victor Frankenstein, sixteen-year-old twins, live near Geneva in the late 1700s. When Konrad contracts a mysterious illness, Victor searches for answers through alchemy. Secrecy, deception, and a love triangle complicate the quest. Written from Victor's perspective and filled with his believable internal moral struggles, Oppel's novel is a gripping tale of undying devotion, mixing hope with foreboding. Review 7/11. CR

Paolini, Christopher *Inheritance*

860 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-85611-2 \$27.99

(3) Inheritance Trilogy series. Plot lines following dragonrider Eragon, his cousin Roran Stronghammer, and leader-of-the-resistance Nasuada interweave in this series climax, building to an epic battle against the despotic Galbatorix. Paolini ably sustains tension throughout the eight-hundred-fifty-page tome (despite several diversions) thanks to well-constructed cliffhangers, rock-solid world building, and his infectious enthusiasm. ALB

Papademetriou, Lisa *Siren's Storm*

261 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-84245-0 \$15.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-94245-7 \$18.99

(4) Will's brother, Tim, is presumed dead after a boating accident. Now Will and his childhood-friend-cum-crush Gretchen wonder whether the oddly compelling new girl in town, Asia, is connected to Tim's drowning and several others. The Calypso myth isn't fully explored (lengthy expository narrative in a sea captain's log aside), but the mystery is engaging. KLB

Paratore, Coleen Murtagh *From Willa, With Love: From the Life of Willa Havisham*

202 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-09405-4 \$16.99

(4) Picking up where *Wish I Might* ended, Willa awaits the summer's-end return of her boyfriend, JFK. Wedding planning, a creative book-lending scheme, issues with friends and her recently discovered half-brother, and a new romance amount to plenty of drama for the introspective teen to gush about. Willa's passion and spunk will continue to please fans in this predictable installment. KEH

Pearce, Jackson *Sweetly*

314 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-06865-9 \$17.99

(4) Twelve years after her twin sister disappeared, Gretchen and brother Ansel arrive in Live Oak, South Carolina, where they befriend Samuel, an outcast, and Sophia, a candymaker. A witch and werewolves are targeting teen girls, and it's up to Gretchen to uncover the truth before she becomes the next victim. Gratuitous insertion of werewolves aside, this "Hansel and Gretel" reimagining is intriguing. CR

Pearson, Joanna *The Rites and Wrongs of Janice Wills*

220 pp. Scholastic/Levine ISBN 978-0-545-19773-1 \$16.99

(4) Budding anthropologist Janice is studying adolescent culture in her hometown of Melva, North Carolina. For research purposes, she enters the town's annual Miss Livermush pageant; she ends up enjoying participating rather than hiding behind constant observation. Janice's single-mindedness and disparaging comments grow tiresome, though her transformation into a less judgmental (but still sharp) pageant contestant is gratifying. RLS

▲ Pearson, Mary E. *The Fox Inheritance*

295 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-8829-8 \$16.99

(2) In this *Adoration of Jenna Fox* sequel, an unscrupulous scientist restores Locke and Kara's minds into new, improved bodies. They escape into an alien future world with one target: finding Jenna. Locke is the main character, and it's through his viewpoint that we experience the story's thrilling suspense, the friends' charged reunion, and the admirably complex playing out of trust, ethics, and betrayal. Review 9/11. JH

▲ Peet, Mal *Life: An Exploded Diagram*

387 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5227-2 \$17.99

(1) In this story spanning 1945 through the present, Clem Ackroyd tells of his clandestine relationship with upper-class Frankie Mortimer. While in 1962 Clem and Frankie move ever deeper into love, the Americans and Russians are facing off—a backdrop that charges the book's plot and themes. Peet's subtle, literary play with narrative voice, style, and chronology makes this a satisfyingly sophisticated novel. Review 11/11. DFB

Perera, Anna *Guantanamo Boy*

363 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-3077-1 \$17.99

(4) Six months after 9/11, fifteen-year old Brit Khalid is apprehended as an enemy combatant while vacationing in Pakistan. Held at Guantánamo Bay for two years before his parents secure his release, Khalid undergoes beatings and torture while trying to understand how he ended up there. While the story is compelling and the questions it raises important, the book suffers from stilted prose and slow pacing. Timeline. DE

Perkins, Stephanie *Lola and the Boy Next Door*

343 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42328-7 \$16.99

(3) Seventeen-year-old Lola, an aspiring costume designer living with her two dads in San Francisco, struggles to define who she is under all her glittery get-ups. She also wants parental approval of her twenty-two-year-old rocker boyfriend—until former boy-next-door Cricket moves back to the neighborhood, laying claim to her heart. Well-developed characters and lively dialogue characterize this sassy romance. CLS

Pfeffer, Susan Beth *Blood Wounds*

248 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-547-49638-2 \$16.99

(3) After her estranged father brutally kills his new family, sixteen-year-old Willa, her mom, and her happy stepfamily are thrown into turmoil. The once-normal family dynamic is further tested when Willa returns to her Texas hometown for memorial services with long-forgotten family. Pfeffer's tense prose is well paced, and Willa's brave confronting of secrets in her history—and present life—is stirring. KEH

▲ Pixley, Marcella *Without Tess*

281 pp. Farrar/Ferguson ISBN 978-0-374-36174-7 \$16.99

(2) Lizzie was always the follower in her older sister Tess's fantastical games, but as Tess fell deeper into mental illness, her behavior grew more disturbing. Now, five years after Tess's death, Lizzie tries to find a way up from the depths of mourning and guilt. Pixley's intense, lyrical novel floats gracefully between present and past, painting a portrait of Tess's "magic." Review 1/12. CMH

Plum-Ucci, Carol *Following Christopher Creed*

405 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-15-204759-7 \$16.99

(3) This sequel to *The Body of Christopher Creed* finds college reporter Mike Mavic avidly following each new lead in the previous book's case. When a body is found, Mike sets off to investigate. Some suspension of disbelief is necessary (would a police chief really hand over evidence to an amateur reporter?), but the story rewards readers by solving its mysteries, including Christopher Creed's fate. JH

▲ Porter, Pamela *I'll Be Watching*

282 pp. Groundwood ISBN 978-1-55498-095-6 \$18.95

(2) It's 1941 in Argue, Saskatchewan. Nora, Jim Ran, and Addie are orphans unsure how to get through winter with no real survival skills beyond ghostly parents doing their best to watch over them. Porter's verse novel presents multiple voices acting as oral histories of characters recording moments in a desperate time. The siblings' concluding measure of hope is well earned and welcome. Review 11/11. DS

Porter, Sarah *Lost Voices*

291 pp. Harcourt ISBN 978-0-547-48250-7 \$16.99

(3) After Luce's transformation from human to mermaid, she learns all mermaids were once abused girls who are now seeking revenge for humans' innate cruelty. By singing a beautifully sad death song, Luce and her tribe cause shipwreck after shipwreck, a practice that never feels right to Luce. The gratifying story charts one girl's physical and emotional journey toward finding her own strength and voice. SJW

Powell, Laura *The Game of Triumphs*

269 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86587-9 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96587-6 \$19.99

(3) Londoner Cat stumbles into a deadly game based on the Tarot. The Arcanum, the "game board," is a parallel reality inside the cards' allegorical images; the stakes are coveted supernatural boons. Hoping to win Justice, Cat

joins three other teens in a plot to undermine the game. A fresh fantasy premise with strong world building will leave readers hoping for more adventures. **KLB**

Price, Charlie *Desert Angel*

236 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-31775-1 \$16.99

(3) Angel is used to relying on no one. But when her mother is murdered by her boyfriend—who then comes after Angel—she needs a place to hide. Though she is putting others in danger by accepting their help, Angel learns that the people you let in become the people you love. Stark narrative voice echoes the desert setting in this survival tale. **RLH**

Priestly, Chris *Mister Creecher*

390 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-703-1 \$16.99

(3) In 1818, teen pickpocket Billy thinks he's seen everything the streets of London have to offer—until the day he encounters monstrous Mr. Creecher. Soon their mutually beneficial partnership evolves into a hunt for Mr. Creecher's creator, Victor Frankenstein, who is at work on a new project. The team-up of Shelley's monster with a Dickensian-type urchin makes for an engaging literary-themed adventure. **DE**

Proimos, James *12 Things to Do Before You Crash and Burn*

121 pp. Roaring Brook ISBN 978-1-59643-595-7 \$14.99

(4) After his self-help writer/TV personality dad dies, Hercules is sent to visit Uncle Anthony, who assigns him twelve daily tasks for his stay. Though seemingly random, they're (mostly) eye-opening experiences prompting vague understanding of himself, his father, and their relationship. Some elements feel disjointed in this brief and sketchy novella, but Hercules's humorous narrative voice will appeal to reluctant older readers. **KEH**

Ray, Michelle *Falling for Hamlet*

358 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-10162-2 \$17.99

(4) This creative reimagining of *Hamlet* casts Ophelia as the celebrity girlfriend of the Danish king's paparazzi-pestered son. The narrative is from Ophelia's perspective; this time around, she lives to tell her tale (the plot otherwise adheres to the original, more or less). There's fun in the parallels, but setting the story against a backdrop of shallow celebrity culture does diminish its psychological depth. **CLS**

Rayburn, Tricia *Undercurrent: A Siren Novel*

350 pp. Egmont ISBN 978-1-60684-075-7 \$17.99

(4) Having confronted murderous sirens—and beginning to transform into one herself—Vanessa (*Siren*) struggles to understand her identity and new powers. An unexpected connection to a classmate threatens Vanessa's romance, while a new rash of deaths suggests the sirens haven't been vanquished entirely. Relationships are more superficial here than in the preceding volume; the quick denouement feels anticlimactic after so much build-up. **KLB**

Reed, Amy *Clean*

275 pp. Simon Pulse ISBN 978-1-4424-1344-3 \$16.99

(3) "I'm the nerdy guy, Kelly's the pretty girl, Jason's the tough guy, and Eva's the emo/goth girl, like we're some drug addict version of that movie *The Breakfast Club* . . ." Alternating narration, personal essays, and transcribed conversations are woven together to relate the inpatient rehab experience of five people. Voice and character development feel authentic and distinct in this story of individual growth. **RLH**

Reed, MK *Americus*

216 pp. Roaring Brook/First Second

ISBN 978-1-59643-768-5 \$18.99

PE ISBN 978-1-59643-601-5 \$14.99

(4) Illustrated by Jonathan Hill. Reed and Hill explore one teen's reaction when townspeople call for removal of his favorite fantasy series from the public library. The graphic novel format (incorporating excerpts from the fictional series) keeps the confrontations vivid, emphasizing the universality of Neil's struggle to be heard. Teens may relate to Neil, even though treatment of the censorship debate is simplistic. **RB**

▲ Reeve, Philip *A Web of Air*

293 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-22216-7 \$17.99

(2) Fever Crumb series. In this *Fever Crumb* sequel, Fever learns of enigmatic Arlo Thursday's attempts to construct a flying machine. When word leaks out that Arlo's close to powered flight, villains come calling and Fever gets caught up in the intrigue—murder and kidnapping. Reeve's distinguished world building and remarkable storytelling gifts, coupled with a trenchant understanding of human nature, are on full display. Review 9/11. **JH**

Reichs, Kathy *Seizure: A Virals Novel*

492 pp. Penguin/Razorbill ISBN 978-1-59514-394-5 \$17.99

(3) Detective story meets *Goonies*-style treasure hunt in this second book featuring Tory Brennan and her fellow Virals. The teens use their wolflike abilities to track a fabled pirate treasure in hopes of keeping their parents' lab running and their group together. Though this *Virals* sequel has (disappointingly) less forensic science than the previous novel, its suspense and fast-paced adventure will hook readers. **KLB**

▲ Reinhardt, Dana *The Summer I Learned to Fly*

216 pp. Random/Lamb ISBN 978-0-385-73954-2 \$15.99

LE ISBN 978-0-385-90792-7 \$18.99

(2) Thirteen-year-old Drew's pet rat, Hum, leads her to Emmett, a runaway on a quest to help his little brother. Drew's first meaningful friendship gives her a deeper understanding of the other relationships in her life. The 1986 small-town California setting is well delineated and fitting, in its remoteness and size, for Drew and her soft-spoken, low-key loneliness. Review 7/11. **JMB**

▲ Rennison, Louise *Withering Tights*

275 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-179931-0 \$16.99

(2) Fourteen-year-old Tallulah Casey (Georgia Nicolson's younger cousin) attends a performing arts summer school in the Yorkshire Dales. She quickly makes friends—all as boy-obsessed as she—while garnering self-confidence and discovering her hidden talents. Lullah's madcap adventures, her literary musings, and her naive inner monologues are all highly entertaining. An amusing glossary of Briticisms and Tallulah's own made-up phrases is appended. Review 9/11. CR

Roberts, Jeyn *Dark Inside*

329 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-2351-0 \$17.99

(4) Earthquakes cause a large proportion of the earth's population to become raging maniacs bent on homicide. Four teens who seem unaffected gradually come together in order to survive. Though the characters are generally indistinguishable, an intriguing premise and the story's fast pacing will attract sci-fi fans. The book's many unanswered questions may be addressed in sequels. JH

Rodman, Sean *Infiltration*

133 pp. Orca LE ISBN 978-1-55469-986-5 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-55469-985-8 \$9.95

(3) Orca Soundings series. Bex is an "urban explorer." He gets into abandoned buildings and places, takes pictures, and gets out. When new-to-school Kieran convinces Bex to push his personal limits and moral boundaries with the promise of money, adrenaline-inducing events occur. Tight, concise writing, along with a fast-moving plot, makes this a good choice for struggling and reluctant readers. KA

Russell, Randy *Dead Rules*

376 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-198670-3 \$16.99

(4) After dying in a freak bowling accident—or *was it?*—Jana is forced to attend Dead School. Determined to be reunited with her (living) boyfriend, Jana attempts to get expelled; meanwhile, cute bad-boy Mars tries to tell her the truth about her demise. Character motivations (especially of those responsible for Jana's death) are implausible, but the well-defined afterlife world is engaging. KLB

Ryan, Amy Kathleen *Glow*

307 pp. St. Martin's Griffin ISBN 978-0-312-59056-7 \$17.99

(3) As two spaceships travel to New Earth, the first one attacks the second, separating teenage fiancés Waverly and Kieran. In alternating chapters, the protagonists find themselves tested not only by the story's twists and turns but also by the themes of power and morality. Fans of *The Hunger Games* and *Across the Universe* will be drawn in by this sci-fi world. JH

▲ Sales, Leila *Past Perfect*

306 pp. Simon Pulse ISBN 978-1-4424-0682-7 \$16.99

(2) Every summer Chelsea's family works as living history interpreters at Colonial Essex Village. Things get awkward when she traitorously falls for a boy working at the village's rival across the street, Civil War Reenactment-land. The

story, narrated in Chelsea's acerbically funny voice, is filled with specifics about Colonial life (and the lives of the interpreters) and meditations on history, memory, heartbreak, and love. Review 11/11. RLS

Sandler, Karen *Tankborn*

373 pp. Lee/Tu ISBN 978-1-60060-662-5 \$17.95

(3) Kayla, a genetically engineered non-human (or GEN), is assigned to care for an upper-class patriarch. With the help of a childhood friend and her employer's great-grandson, she discovers that her status at the bottom of Loka's caste system is not as immutable as it appears. Sci-fi fans will appreciate the detailed world building and the diverse, engaging cast of characters. BCM

Scarrow, Alex *TimeRiders: Day of the Predator*

405 pp. Walker ISBN 978-0-8027-2296-6 \$16.99

(3) This book returns Sal, Liam, and Maddy to their 2001 NYC hideout. Exploring Foster's files, the trio creates a new support unit, Becks. Liam and Becks travel forward to save the originator of time travel, but a scientific snafu sends them to the Cretaceous period. Scarrow puts together unlikely people and situations and somehow makes them seem plausible. JM

▲ Schmatz, Pat *Bluefish*

229 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5334-7 \$15.99

(1) Eighth-graders Travis and Vida ("Velveeta") are hurting from losses in their lives: Travis's beloved dog has disappeared and his alcoholic grandfather has summarily moved them from their old house; Velveeta's friend and mentor has just died. Schmatz eloquently brings two ordinary young people to life on the page. The book is powerful: unique and original, believable and poignant. Review 11/11. DS

▲ Schreiber, Joe *Au Revoir, Crazy European Chick*

190 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-57738-8 \$16.99

(2) Perry's parents make him take awkward Lithuanian exchange student Gobi to the prom. Turns out she's actually a trained assassin, and Perry's forced at gunpoint to trek through New York with her as she completes her mission. Perfect for action-adventure junkies, Schreiber's novel also contains enough humor, sexual tension, and character development to make this more than just a quick thrill read. Review 11/11. CR

▲ Schwab, Victoria *The Near Witch*

284 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-3787-0 \$16.99

(2) Lexi sees a stranger who is there "and yet, he is not all there." He's a witch, she discovers, and she names him Cole. When the village children start disappearing, people think Cole is a criminal. Schwab's story has fairy-tale qualities, with its rural village, moorside setting, and folkloric witch. Her descriptive powers are strong, and the story has a vivid visual component. Review 9/11. DFB

▲ Scott, Elizabeth *As I Wake*

271 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42209-9 \$16.99

(2) Ava has no memory of her current life as a more-or-less average teen. In fleeting visions, she remembers being trained as an informer by the government, then falling in love with the boy she was assigned to monitor. In this purposefully disorienting novel, Scott allows readers to immerse themselves in Ava's dizzying, seductive back-and-forth between parallel worlds. Review 11/11. CMH

▲ Sedgwick, Marcus *White Crow*

234 pp. Roaring Brook ISBN 978-1-59643-594-0 \$16.99

(2) Rebecca and her father move to the dilapidated cliff-top village of Winterfold. Lonely Rebecca is befriended by morbid and manipulative Ferelith, and the two begin an escalating series of dares. Sedgwick skillfully weaves Ferelith's confessional first-person narrative with Rebecca's reserved, third-person perspective—and the chilling journal entries of a long-ago minister. The atmospheric story presents thoughtful (if disturbing) explorations of betrayal and redemption. Review 7/11. KLB

Selzer, Adam *Extraordinary: The True Story of My Fairy Godparent, Who Almost Killed Me, and Certainly Never Made Me a Princess*

325 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73649-7 \$15.99

LE ISBN 978-0-385-90612-8 \$18.99

(3) In this quirky, original tale, Jennifer Van Der Berg tells the *real* story of her life, not the one Eileen Codlin wrote in her bestselling (but baloney) book. Jennifer *did* have a fairy godfather and had to kiss a vampire to stay alive, but Eileen never mentioned that the fairy godfather ruined Jenn's life. A snarky, witty narrative voice enhances the story. KC

Shan, Darren *Palace of the Damned*

247 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-07870-2 \$17.99

(4) Saga of Larten Crepsley series. On the lam after committing murder, Larten retreats to Paris to give up his vampiric ways and pass as human. He falls in love and seems to be heading toward a happier life until the darkness inside him drives him back to Vampire Mountain. Chock full of the grime and gore of its predecessors, Crepsley's saga keeps building the *Cirque du Freak* backstory. DE

Shaw, Susan *Tunnel Vision*

257 pp. McElderry ISBN 978-1-4424-0839-5 \$16.99

(4) "Life still felt so unreal. Mom was dead, someone had attacked me with a knife, and now we were living in Kansas." Readers will find themselves deep within Liza's shell-shocked mind as she and her father enroll themselves in the witness protection program. There are some underdeveloped characters, but the unsettling story line may draw readers to Liza's tale. RLH

▲ Shecter, Vicky Alvear *Cleopatra's Moon*

356 pp. Scholastic/Levine ISBN 978-0-545-22130-6 \$18.99

(2) Cleopatra Selene, daughter of Cleopatra VII, is taken to Rome when Egypt is invaded and her parents die. There she carves out a life for herself, confronts hatred, finds love, and always seeks the power to reclaim Egypt as her rightful land. The large, complex story is an intelligently written and stately meditation on fate, free will, and political power. Review 9/11. DS

Sheehan, Anna *A Long, Long Sleep*

342 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5260-9 \$16.99

(4) In this future-set "Sleeping Beauty," Rose, heiress to a massive interplanetary corporation, awakens from more than sixty years in stasis. Manipulated by greedy employees and hunted by an assassin, Rose copes by painting and befriending another outcast, an alien named Otto. Passive, self-deprecating Rose's abrupt transformation into self-assured, confident heroine is difficult to believe, but the fairy-tale elements are creatively reimaged. KLB

Sheinmel, Alyssa B. *The Lucky Kind*

202 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86785-9 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96785-6 \$19.99

(4) Published spring 2011. Brooding, introspective Nick, a Manhattan high school junior, has trouble coming to terms with the recent discovery that his father has a twenty-nine-year-old son from a previous relationship. While Nick's voice isn't always believable and the lessons he learns are contrived, the exploration of issues surrounding adoption is sensitively handled. CMH

Sheldon, Dyan *The Crazy Things Girls Do for Love*

345 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5018-6 \$16.99

(4) When a cute new boy joins the Environmental Club, hipster Maya, popular Sicilee, and apathetic Waneeda all sign up. As they get more involved, their interest in the environment becomes real, to everyone's surprise. The worthy topic is handled in a unique way (though the characters' single-pointed focus flattens things out). Books, websites, and documentaries about environmentalism are appended. AMM

Shepard, Sara *Never Have I Ever*

312 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-186972-3 \$16.99

(4) Lying Game series. Emma is still impersonating her deceased twin Sutton (*The Lying Game*)—and also trying to identify her murderer. As ghost Sutton looks on, Emma becomes increasingly suspicious of a set of ditzy twins in their group. The book is well-paced and suspenseful, but with few revelations about the day of Sutton's death, it serves only to introduce the next series entry. RLS

Shepard, Sara *Ruthless*

341 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-208186-5 \$17.99

Shepard, Sara *Twisted*

309 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-208101-8 \$16.99

(4) Pretty Little Liars series. Aria, Spencer, Hanna, and Emily are back and hiding a secret from a spring break trip. Of course, an all-knowing (different?) “A” threatens to expose them. *Twisted* focuses on the PLL’s crime, while *Ruthless* identifies a possible “A.” The twists are familiar—it’s now expected that nothing is as it appears—but Shepard still delivers conclusions that makes readers want more. RLS

Shields, Gillian *Eternal*

359 pp. HarperCollins/Tegen ISBN 978-0-06-200039-2 \$16.99

(4) Sarah (sidekick in *Immortal* and *Betrayal*) here takes center stage. Sarah, Evie, and Helen must rely on their friendship—and their powers of elemental magic—to fight a coven obsessed with immortality. Sarah’s Gypsy heritage (embodied in ancestress Maria) helps guide her. A new protagonist with a fresh perspective, plus dangers specific to Sarah’s earth magic, somewhat enliven this formulaic entry. KLB

Showalter, Gena *Twisted*

575 pp. Harlequin Teen ISBN 978-0-373-21038-1 \$18.99

(4) At the end of *Unraveled*, Aden’s vampire princess girlfriend, Victoria, saved his life by turning him into a vamp. Now they’re being pursued by a host of paranormals seeking vengeance. As the pair drinks each other’s blood and Aden’s vampiric powers grow, Victoria weakens, becoming more human. Overly long, overpopulated, and overplotted, this supernatural soap opera will likely please fans anyway. CLS

Sitomer, Alan Lawrence *Nerd Girls: The Rise of the Dorkasaurus*

220 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-3996-6 \$16.99

(4) Three nerdy eighth graders—Maureen, Alice, and Barbara—form an alliance to take down the popular mean-girls of Grover Park Middle School. Their plan: win first prize in the annual talent show and upset the social rankings. What begins as a no-strings-attached pact blossoms into long-lasting friendship. In this self-acceptance story, Maureen’s humorous voice (heavy on the sarcasm) helps distract from the caricature-heavy cast. LB

Skovron, Jon *Misfit*

269 pp. Abrams/Amulet ISBN 978-1-4197-0021-7 \$16.95

(3) Jael Thompson is half-demon on her mother’s side. She and her father, a former priest, have been on the run from demons since she was eight. Jael’s sixteenth birthday brings her powers and destiny; she decides to fight against evil, training with her uncle. Skovron provides an engaging twist on demon mythology through multifaceted characters and some everygirl humor. JM

Skuse, C. J. *Pretty Bad Things*247 pp. Scholastic/Chicken House
ISBN 978-0-545-28973-3 \$17.99

(4) Twins Paisley and Beau discover that their missing, previously incarcerated father has been trying to reach them. To get on TV so he’ll track them down, the “Wonder Twins” rob Las Vegas businesses at gunpoint—and become an anarchic symbol of hope for teenagers everywhere. Two-dimensional characters, including a cartoonishly evil grandmother, detract from the otherwise intriguing (and profanity-laden) story. RLS

Slade, Arthur *Empire of Ruins*295 pp. Random/Lamb ISBN 978-0-385-73786-9 \$15.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90696-8 \$18.99

(3) Hunchback Assignments series. Modo’s latest spy mission for the British Empire takes him to the Australian rainforest, where he must reconcile the rights of the natives with his beloved master’s interests. This dilemma and others, including fellow spy Octavia’s feelings about Modo’s shapeshifting, create the character depth typical of this suspenseful sci-fi/steampunk series. SF

Slater, Adam *Hunted*

193 pp. Egmont ISBN 978-1-60684-261-4 \$16.99

(3) Shadowing series. Callum has been able to see ghosts for as long as he can remember. Lately he sees visions of brutal murders as well—and something has begun following him home from school. The creepy story has a palpable sense of rising tension that fans of supernatural and horror stories will enjoy. LC

Sleator, William, and Ann Monticone *The Phantom Limb*

211 pp. Abrams/Amulet ISBN 978-0-8109-8428-8 \$16.95

(4) When Isaac’s hospitalized mother inexplicably gets worse, he grows distrustful of her doctor and nurses. His suspicions only intensify after discovering a mirror box illusion through which a deceased boy communicates with Isaac about seemingly connected deaths. The concept is eerie and intriguing; the plot contains some noticeable holes. RR

▲ Smiley, Jane *True Blue*298 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86231-1 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96229-5 \$19.99

(2) Illustrated by Elaine Clayton. True Blue, sweet-tempered but easily spooked, needs a home. Horse-wise Abby (*The Georges and the Jewels, A Good Horse*) takes him on. Abby’s story develops in satisfying ways, from her new job as a riding instructor to her estranged brother’s reconciliation with their dad. It’s gratifying to see good things come into the life of the likable, older-than-her-thirteen-years protagonist. Review 11/11. ALB

Smith, Alexander Gordon *Death Sentence: Escape from Furnace 3*

264 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-32494-0 \$15.99

(4) More death and destruction surround Alex (*Lockdown, Solitary*) as he's subjected to biological transformations by the warden. As one of the silver-eyed, black-suited monsters, he must decide how to use his power. Thin on character development and moral complexity, the book thrives on violent battles between good and evil, ornamented with a few nods to the value of friendship. MLI

▲ Smith, Andrew *Stick*

292 pp. Feiwel ISBN 978-0-312-61341-9 \$17.99

(2) Thirteen-year-old "Stick" was born with only one ear and secretly sadistic parents; for the slightest infraction, Stick's father will beat him and his older brother Bosten. After Dad finds out Bosten is gay, both boys, separately, run away. The violence of the story is intense, but so is the deep loyalty between the brothers. Review 1/12. RS

Smith, Cynthia Leitich *Tantalize: Kieren's Story*

189 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4114-6 \$19.99

(3) Illustrated by Ming Doyle. Smith's popular novel (*Tantalize*) gets a new graphic novel format and different point of view. Shapeshifter Kieren's awareness of his imminent return to the wolfpack impedes his relationship with Quincie. Disappearances surrounding Quincie's vampire-themed family restaurant, Sanguini's, make Kieren worry for Quincie's safety. Expressive panel art succeeds at conveying the high stakes for both characters. SF

Smith, L. J. *Phantom*

408 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-201768-0 \$17.99

(4) Vampire Diaries: The Hunters series. This new Vampire Diaries series is tighter than previous books. Yet another supernatural entity—this time a phantom that feeds on jealousy—stalks Elena and her friends; they must confront their own petty resentments to defeat it. Elena's endless dithering over vampire brothers Stefan and Damon takes a backseat while this particular paranormal threat is dealt with (blessedly quickly for these books). KLB

Spiegler, Louise *The Jewel and the Key*

456 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-14879-3 \$16.99

(4) Addie struggles to find her niche in the theater and prevent a friend from enlisting in the military. An earthquake jolts her back to 1917 where she meets a female theatrical entrepreneur and a young man determined to join the WWI military campaign. Parallels between the eras are a little blunt in this ambitious time-travel-meets-political-activism tale. MLI

Springer, Kristina *Just Your Average Princess*

199 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-36150-1 \$15.99

(4) Jamie's snobby cousin Milan, the daughter of movie stars, comes to work at the family pumpkin patch. Furious at Milan for campaigning to be Pumpkin Princess, Jamie spreads a rumor about her. Jamie has a change of heart

when she finds out the truth about Milan, learning the worthy (if unsurprising) lesson that there can be more to someone than meets the eye. AMM

Staunton, Ted *Power Chord*

115 pp. Orca LE ISBN 978-1-55469-904-9 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-55469-903-2 \$9.95

(4) Orca Currents series. Budding musician Ace starts a band with his friends only to realize that there's more to it than choosing the perfect name. With a battle of the bands contest coming up, Ace discovers his bandmates may not have as much motivation as he does. The quick and straightforward story, while entirely superficial, benefits from Staunton's laid-back narrative style. PIH

Stiefvater, Maggie *Forever*

390 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-25908-8 \$17.99

(3) Newly turned wolf Grace and her newly human boyfriend Sam (*Shiver, Linger*) must find a way to relocate their pack before a large-scale wolf hunt; the solution exacts a terrible sacrifice from Sam. Meanwhile, Cole (wolf) and Isabel (human) struggle with their mutual attraction. Lyrical, atmospheric language and complex relationships give this paranormal trilogy ender depth. KLB

▲ Stiefvater, Maggie *The Scorpio Races*

409 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-22490-1 \$17.99

(1) This novel, inspired by legends of beautiful but deadly fairy horses, begins rivetingly . . . and gets better. The narrative alternates between Sean Kendrick, in tune with the magic horses, and Kate "Puck" Connolly, orphaned by the creatures and desperate enough to enter the famed Scorpio Races. Stiefvater sets not one foot wrong as she takes readers on an intoxicating ride of their own. Review 11/11. MVP

Strasser, Todd *Kill You Last*

225 pp. Egmont ISBN 978-1-60684-024-5 \$16.99

(4) Shelby thinks nothing of the weird emails she receives until three teen models photographed by her father go missing and her family faces a media spotlight nightmare. Spurred by her true-crime-loving BFF and a seemingly concerned reporter, Shelby decides to seek answers. Sharp dialogue, red herrings, and mature content will keep pages turning in this overwrought but entertaining mystery. RLH

Strieber, Whitley *Melody Burning*

215 pp. Holt/Ottaviano ISBN 978-0-8050-9327-8 \$16.99

(4) Melody is a teen rock star. Beresford can't remember his past or why he hides in the crawl spaces of an apartment building. When Melody moves to the building, Beresford falls in love. As they grow closer, they discover deadly secrets all around them. Strieber sets up a dramatic mystery but the solution is over the top. KC

Tate, Nikki *Fallout*

161 pp. Orca LE ISBN 978-1-55469-976-6 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-55469-272-9 \$9.95

(4) Orca Soundings series. Tara copes with her sister Hannah's suicide by performing slam poetry. Her poems are presented in italics throughout the book; first-person narration describes performance aspects ("Here's where I speed up and get louder") and tells Tara's story. The dialogue occasionally strains for a teen voice, but detailed descriptions of the competitive slam poetry world are vivid and engaging. KEH

▲ Taylor, Laini *Daughter of Smoke & Bone*

422 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-13402-6 \$18.99

(1) Except for blue hair and an air of secrecy, art-student Karou is a seemingly normal teenager. No one knows that the figures from Karou's sketchbook—the *chimaera*—are her family. Taylor builds a fantasy realm with mythic creatures, human desires, and battles of biblical scale. Taut plotting moves Karou's quest briskly along while developing deeper mysteries, leaving readers both satisfied and eagerly anticipating a sequel. Review 11/11. LA

Testa, Dom *Cosmic Storm: A Galahad Book*

269 pp. Tor ISBN 978-0-7653-2111-4 \$16.99

(4) After Triana Martell's disappearance, the teenage crew of the spaceship *Galahad* must elect a new Council Leader amidst increasingly violent social angst and a potentially deadly radiation shield malfunction. Although some of the characters seem unrealistically self-aware, this book's diverse cast of exceptional yet relatable narrators will continue to appeal to fans of the first four volumes. BCM

▲ Thor, Annika *The Lily Pond*

218 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-74039-5 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-90838-2 \$19.99

(2) Translated by Linda Schenck. It's been a year since Stephie and her little sister left their home in Nazi-occupied Vienna for the safety of a remote Swedish island. As this sequel to *A Faraway Island* opens, Stephie, now thirteen, is moving to the mainland to continue her education. Her story of adjustment to a new school and of a first crush is both specific and universal. Review 1/12. MVP

Tiernan, Cate *Darkness Falls: An Immortal Beloved Novel*

392 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-03593-4 \$17.99

(3) Cynicism and self-doubt drive Natasya to leave the refuge for the immortals that welcomed her in *Immortal Beloved*. But rejoining her wastrel friends and Innocencio brings no relief. A growing suspicion that her history of destruction might be due to more than her own dark past leads to violent revelations. Natasya's sardonic voice and relatable struggle toward change are at the book's core. MLI

Van Tol, Alex *Redline*

129 pp. Orca LE ISBN 978-1-55469-894-3 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-55469-893-6 \$9.95

(4) Orca Soundings series. After her only friend dies in a snowboarding accident, Jenessa (who blames herself) finds a way to escape the pain through thrill-seeking. Her fast driving and careless behaviors soon lead her into real danger, and she begins to spiral out of control. The repetitive text just skims the surface of Jenessa's motivations and emotions, but her risk-taking personality comes through. PIH

Vaught, Susan *Going Underground*

325 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-640-9 \$16.99

(3) Three years ago Del was a straight-A student athlete; all that changed when sexting turned him into a felon. Now seventeen, his interest in a new girl is complicated by his parole officer's pressure and his job as a gravedigger. Del's not always likable, and the story presents his actions realistically, allowing readers to decide whether his punishment fit the crime. DE

Venkatraman, Padma *Island's End*

228 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-25099-6 \$16.99

(3) In the Andaman Islands hundred of miles off India's coast, fifteen-year-old Uido has been chosen as her tribe's spiritual leader. Threats of the human and natural varieties pose challenges Uido could never have foreseen. The lyrical story, a portrayal of a fictional tribe and island, is based on actual peoples largely removed (by choice) from mainstream twenty-first century civilization. NCP

Verday, Jessica *The Hidden*

391 pp. Simon Pulse ISBN 978-1-4169-7897-8 \$17.99

(4) Abbey (*The Hollow*, *The Haunted*), destined to become a Shade like her ghostly soulmate Caspian, desperately tries to delay her death. A group of Revenants protects her, but rogue Revenant Vincent just wants to use Abbey. Scenes of Abbey and Caspian enjoying the one day a year he becomes corporeal are a bit long and indulgent, but romance fans won't mind. KLB

Vernick, Shirley Reva *The Blood Lie*

160 pp. Cinco ISBN 978-1-933693-84-2 \$15.95

(4) In 1928, Jack Pool is excited to celebrate his sixteenth birthday. When a little girl disappears, Jack, who is Jewish, is accused of wrongdoing by a townspeople who also spreads ignorant rumors about Jews and their rituals—notably their need for a Christian child's blood. The dialogue is forced, but the plot (based on true events) is dramatic. An author's note is appended. RSS

Violi, Jen *Putting Makeup on Dead People*

330 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-3481-7 \$16.99

(3) Published spring 2011. Donna has lived a lonely, vacant life since her dad died four years ago. After attending a classmate's funeral, she makes a revelatory decision to forego plans for college and become a mortician. As Donna comes to terms with death—and finds peace therein—per-

sonal and familial relationships blossom. Violi successfully turns a bizarre premise into a highly affecting, well-crafted story. KEH

Vrettos, Adrienne Maria *Burnout*

195 pp. McElderry ISBN 978-1-4169-9469-5 \$16.99

(3) Nan thought she was getting better, overcoming her tendency to drink too much, act out, and wake up who-knows-where. But when she comes to on a subway train the morning after Halloween with no recollection of the night before, she panics. Mainly through flashbacks, Nan (and readers) moves from utter disorientation toward a chance of understanding in this suspenseful character study. NCP

Walker, Melissa *Small Town Sinners*

276 pp. Bloomsbury ISBN 978-1-59990-527-3 \$16.99

(4) Lacey is eager to participate in her church's "Hell House" and to make her father—the children's pastor—proud. However, some unexpected developments (including a cute new boy) conspire to undermine Lacey's faith. Walker handles her characters' religious convictions with respect, depicting Hell House without condescension or judgment. However, Lacey's naiveté may make it difficult for readers to connect with her. HRB

▲ Warman, Jessica *Between*

455 pp. Walker ISBN 978-0-8027-2182-2 \$17.99

(2) Protagonist Liz Valchar is dead and witnessing events from limbo between life and whatever comes after. Also stuck there is Alex, a classmate who was killed in a hit-and-run. The two are tied in a mysterious way. A complex character, Liz is sometimes loathsome and other times relatable. Pacing is suspenseful and tense in this exploration of innocence, guilt, and morality. Review 9/11. KEH

Watson, Cristy *Living Rough*

111 pp. Orca LE ISBN 978-1-55469-888-2 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-55469-434-1 \$9.95

(4) Orca Currents series. Edgar (a.k.a. Poe) and his father are homeless. A new housing development and a new female student complicate his life even more. Then an encounter with bullies, followed by a class discussion on homelessness, force him to reveal his fears. Though stock characters and a predictable outcome lessen the impact of the narrative, the story's themes are thought-provoking. NLH

Watson, Paul E. *The Robot*

265 pp. Penguin/Razorbill ISBN 978-1-59514-372-3 \$16.99

(4) When his parents leave for the weekend, Gabe and Dover break into Gabe's dad's top-secret laboratory. There they discover an extremely realistic—and attractive—robot. When she escapes, two NSA agents reveal she's programmed as an assassin and enlist Gabe and Dover to help find her. The story, while superficial (and seemingly ripped off from 1980s flick *Weird Science*) has its entertaining moments. RR

Wells, Robison *Variant*

376 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-202608-8 \$17.99

(3) Benson's new boarding school is . . . unusual. There are no adults; student gangs teach, cook, clean, etc., under the gaze of security cameras. And students can't leave, unless they're given "detention" (i.e., killed). When Benson discovers another of the school's menacing secrets, he knows he must escape. Readers won't be able to break away from this tense (and exceedingly violent) sci-fi thriller. RLS

▲ Westerfeld, Scott *Goliath*

545 pp. Simon Pulse ISBN 978-1-4169-7177-1 \$19.99

(2) Illustrated by Keith Thompson. Leviathan Trilogy series. In this satisfying trilogy ender (*Leviathan*, *Behemoth*), Alek and Deryn wrestle with their forbidden feelings for each other while trying to stop the war. Westerfeld has meticulously crafted his alternate history of World War I, bringing it to a hopeful if not entirely peaceful ending. Detailed black-and-white illustrations visually capture the book's crucial moments, steampunk machinery, and fabricated beasts. Review 11/11. CR

White, Kiersten *Supernaturally*

342 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-198586-7 \$17.99

(3) Evie (*Paranormalcy*) reluctantly reestablishes ties with the International Paranormal Containment Agency, resuming "bag and tag" missions despite danger and her (paranormal) boyfriend's misgivings. Faerie Reth and Jack, a human raised by faeries, reveal the brewing tensions between the two Faerie Courts and the implications of Evie's own supernatural abilities. Spunky, straightforward Evie nicely balances the inscrutable realm of Faerie and its inhabitants. KLB

Wiggins, Bethany *Shifting*

356 pp. Walker ISBN 978-0-8027-2280-5 \$16.99

(4) Foster kid Maggie Mae is sent across New Mexico to finish high school. The desert brings out her tendency to shift into animal form—not to mention the hordes of other shapeshifters out to get her. Meanwhile, she just wants to attend prom with the hottest guy in town. The Navajo Skinwalkers legend provides a unique twist on this standard supernatural romance. NCP

▲ Wignall, K. J. *Blood*

264 pp. Egmont ISBN 978-1-60684-220-1 \$16.99

(2) Mercian Trilogy series. Eternally sixteen-year-old William, just awakened from one of his decades-long hibernations, needs lifeblood. He meets Eloise, an unhappy teenager living on the streets, and the two begin an odd yet tender friendship. Readers and Will wind through his history together, the complexities intriguing enough to keep pages turning. The writing is mature, and savvy readers will revel in the surprising ending. Review 11/11. AR

▲ Williams, Michael *Now Is the Time for Running*

235 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-07790-3 \$17.99

(2) The brutal massacre by government soldiers of his small Zimbabwe village sends fourteen-year-old soccer devotee Deo and his mentally disabled older brother, Innocent, fleeing to South Africa. There Deo is invited to join the soccer team that will represent South Africa in the Street Soccer World Cup. This incisive portrait of sub-Saharan Africa is a compelling mix of suspense, sports, and social injustice. Review 7/11. JH

Willocks, Tim *Doglands*

309 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86571-8 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96571-5 \$19.99

(4) In overly dramatic fashion, the story of Furgul unfolds from his birth in a greyhound racing farm under a cruel owner to his triumphant rescue of his mother and the end to the facility. Along the way, Furgul experiences life as a pet, stray, and even thieves' helper. At times the violence seems gratuitous, but Willocks makes his animal-rights point. LAL

Withers, Pam *First Descent*

265 pp. Tundra ISBN 978-1-77049-257-8 \$17.95

(3) Rex, an American teen, travels to Colombia to attempt a "first descent" kayaking down the formidable river *El Furioso*. He meets Myriam, an indigenous teen who speaks English and longs to attend college. Together their lives and plans converge, despite political and drug-cartel threats. An adventurous, descriptive plunge into Colombia's modern-day violence amidst the backdrop of nature's beauty. RSS

▲ Wolf, Allan *The Watch That Ends the Night: Voices from the Titanic*

467 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-3703-3 \$21.99

(1) Wolf's novel in verse gives voice, through first-person accounts, to a cross section of *Titanic* passengers and crew. Hovering over all is the omniscient "Iceberg," providing a menacing voiceover throughout the narrative. The themes of natural disaster, technology, social class, survival, and death all play out here. Explanatory character notes separate verifiable fact from fiction and address conflicting reports. Websites. Bib. Review 9/11. BC

Wood, Maryrose *The Poison Diaries: Nightshade*

279 pp. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray
ISBN 978-0-06-180242-3 \$17.99

(4) Under the influence of the evil Oleander, Prince of Poisons, Jessamine (*The Poison Diaries*) commits murder and then flees. She is searching for Weed (who's also looking for her), but as she travels she begins to forget both Weed and who she once was. The prose is elegant, though too little happens—the opening killings excepted—to keep readers engaged throughout. RLS

Wrede, Patricia C. *Across the Great Barrier*

339 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-03343-5 \$16.99

(3) Frontier Magic series. Eff (*Thirteenth Child*) joins a scientific expedition collecting flora and fauna (magical and otherwise). Her experiences involve a shootout with sabre cats

and a magic-and-revolver tussle with a creature that turns its prey to stone. Wrede continues her story of Eff's maturation in an alternate magical U.S. frontier; some of the enjoyment lies in recognizing geographical and cultural features adapted from our world. DFB

Wright, Bil *Putting Makeup on the Fat Boy*

223 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-3996-2 \$16.99

(3) When he starts working at the Macy's cosmetics counter, Carlos thinks his career as a celebrity makeup artist is finally beginning. It is, but he still faces pressures at home (his mother has a temper) and school (he has a crush on a sweet but straight guy). Carlos's snappy, sassy narration is buoyant but honest about the vagaries of real life and fabulousness. RS

Wunder, Wendy *The Probability of Miracles*

360 pp. Penguin/Razorbill ISBN 978-1-59514-368-6 \$17.99

(3) Despite growing up at Disney World, sixteen-year-old Cam doesn't believe in magic; she believes in the cancer she's been fighting for seven years. Then Cam's mother drags her to Promise, Maine, a remote town renowned for its miracles, and Cam struggles to reconcile reality with dogged optimism. Wunder's heroine is witty and endearing as she faces her uncertain future. HRB

▲ Yancey, Rick *The Isle of Blood*

538 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-8452-8 \$18.99

(2) Monstrumologist series. In their third (and darkest) adventure, Pellinore Warthrop and Will Henry's hunt for the *Magnificum* takes the monstrumologist and his apprentice to the Socotra, the Isle of Blood. Along the way they dodge spies, befriend literary icons, and test the boundaries of their complex relationship. One final book should bring the series—a wonderful mix of period fiction and gothic horror—to a satisfying conclusion. Review 11/11. JH

Yee, Paul *Money Boy*

184 pp. Groundwood ISBN 978-1-55498-094-9 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-55498-093-2 \$12.95

(3) Since Ray's family emigrated from China to Canada, the teen hasn't been able to live up to his father's expectations. After Dad finds out Ray is gay, he gets kicked out of the house. In his brief time on the streets, he's beaten, robbed, and introduced to prostitution. Ray is a strong and sympathetic protagonist making his way through problem-novel territory. RR

▲ Yolen, Jane *Snow in Summer*

243 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-25663-9 \$16.99

(2) Yolen's "Snow White" retelling is set in Depression-era West Virginia. There's a calculating Stepmama and a magic mirror; the magic is tilted toward Pentecostal snake handling and country beliefs. The details of Appalachia, including narrative language both poetic and specifically mountain, are so authentic and true that, far from being a European-tale offshoot, this branches out into its own American inflorescence. Review 1/12. ALB

Young, Janet Ruth *The Babysitter Murders*

327 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4169-5944-1 \$16.99

(4) When Dani, a popular teenager, begins to envision herself stabbing the boy she babysits, she confesses to the child's mother. While no charges are filed, rumors rapidly spread, accusing her of being a child killer. She seeks mental help but finds her own life threatened. The squirm-worthy third-person narration uncomfortably forces readers to experience Dani's horrifying thoughts as they brew in her mind. SJW

Young, Suzanne *A Need So Beautiful*

268 pp. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray
ISBN 978-0-06-200824-4 \$16.99

(3) Charlotte wants to shop with her dramatic best friend and cuddle with her devoted boyfriend; Charlotte does not want to be different. Yet she is increasingly overwhelmed by "the Need" to deliver messages of hope to complete strangers. What is she destined to become? And what will happen if she fights it? An enjoyable and satisfying read for fans of paranormal romance. RLH

▲ Yovanoff, Brenna *The Space Between*

364 pp. Penguin/Razorbill ISBN 978-1-59514-339-6 \$17.99

(2) Daphne, daughter of a demon and a fallen angel, leaves Hell to search for her favorite sibling, who's missing on Earth. She ascertains that a self-destructive mess of a boy, Truman, is the likeliest candidate to help. Alternating perspective shows how dissimilar their worlds are, and romantics will find their eventual, hard-earned love even more compelling for the many distances between them. Review 1/12. AS

▲ Zarr, Sara *How to Save a Life*

343 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-03606-1 \$17.99

(2) Pregnant eighteen-year-old Mandy agrees to live in the home of the woman, Robin, who is adopting her baby. Robin's daughter Jill hates the idea, still grieving her father's death. Mandy and Jill's distinct voices tell their intertwined stories. The girls' growth is made realistic through small inroads and slow progress. The depth of characterization is exceptional in this rewarding read. Review 1/12. LA

▲ Zevin, Gabrielle *All These Things I've Done*

354 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-30210-8 \$16.99

(2) Birthright series. In 2083, Anya and Win are "star-crossed lovers and all of that." She's the daughter of a New York City crime boss; he's the assistant district attorney's son. Anya looks back on the year, recounting a time of food rationing, infectious outbreaks, power-grid issues, and family power struggles. Her earnest voice and blend of strength and innocence will attract readers. Review 9/11. DS

Ziegler, Jennifer *Sass & Serendipity*

371 pp. Delacorte ISBN 978-0-385-73898-9 \$15.99
LE ISBN 978-0-385-95668-3 \$18.99

(3) A contemporary update sets Jane Austen's classic sister story, *Sense and Sensibility*, in small-town Barton, Texas. Romance-minded fifteen-year-old Daphne and down-to-earth older sister Gabby couldn't be less alike, but both end up finding their soulmates. The siblings are far less emotionally restrained than Austen's heroines (and the story lacks the original's sly social commentary), but teen romance fans will find it appealing. CLS

Zielin, Lara *The Implosion of Aggie Winchester*

282 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-25411-6 \$16.99

(4) High school junior Aggie is caught between her mother (the school principal) and her pregnant friend who's vying for prom queen. Aggie embarks on the classic YA quest to sort out who she seems to be from who she really is. The mother-daughter conflict is overwrought, and Aggie's boy-related naiveté is hard to buy. Nevertheless, snappy dialogue keeps things moving at a good clip. HRB

Zink, Michelle *Circle of Fire*

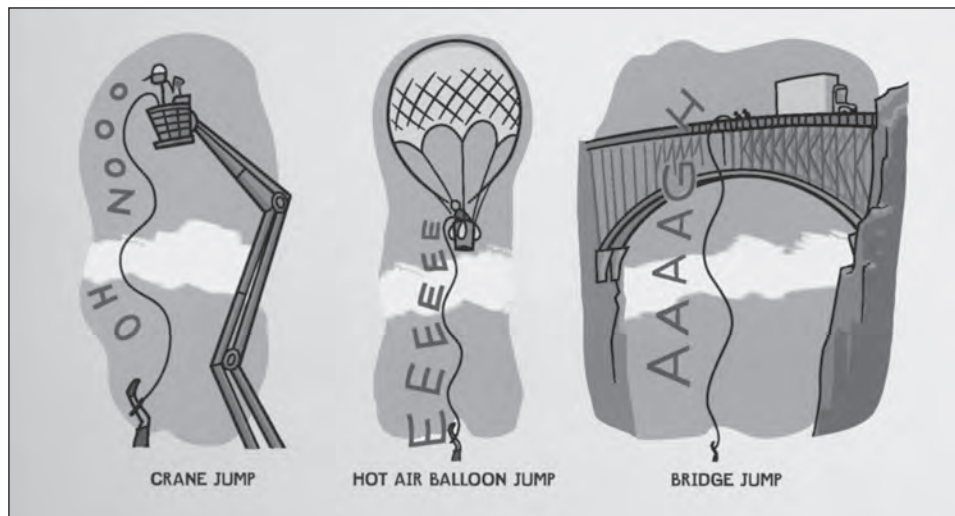
362 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-02737-3 \$17.99

(4) In this trilogy ender (*Prophecy of the Sisters, Guardian of the Gate*), Lia, accompanied by devoted Dimitri, continues her search for magical clues. She also makes a stand against Samael and comes to terms with her sister's apparent betrayal. Episodic plotting and an uninspired narrative voice work against the story, but its Victorian society setting and matrilineal mythology are intriguing. MLI

Zusak, Markus *Underdogs: Three Novels*

499 pp. Scholastic/Levine ISBN 978-0-545-35442-4 \$19.99

(3) This omnibus edition includes a trilogy of novels—*The Underdog, Fighting Ruben Wolfe, Getting the Girl*—about brothers Cameron and Ruben Wolfe. The first volume is not as strong as the others, but fans of Zusak will welcome it in print in the U.S. for the first time. Fans of Chris Lynch will also find much to like. JH



GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Boothroyd, Jennifer *From Typewriters to Text Messages: How Communication Has Changed*

32 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6745-1 \$25.26

(4) K–3 Lightning Bolt Books: Comparing Past and Present series. Boothroyd provides simple then-and-now comparisons of communication methods. It's a kid-friendly approach, but the comparisons are cursory, and the examples are dumbed-down ("TV communicates with sound and pictures. Radio just uses sound.") Stock photos show present-day people (in color) and people of the past (in black and white) communicating with one another. Mini-biographies are appended. Reading list. Glos., ind. SRA

Borgenicht, David, Molly Smith, Brendan Walsh, and Robin Epstein *The Worst-Case Scenario Survive-o-Pedia: Junior Edition*

142 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-0-8118-7690-2 \$16.99

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Chuck Gonzales. This amusing volume describes various disasters and tips for how to survive them. Topics are arranged in alphabetical order from *airplanes* to *woods*, with a double-page spread devoted to each. Ample graphics and colorful pages enhance the presentation. Students will be entertained and informed as they browse. Ind. BLM

Currie, Stephen *Online Privacy*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-194-1 \$27.95

Marcovitz, Hal *Online Gaming and Entertainment*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-191-0 \$27.95

Marcovitz, Hal *Online Information and Research*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-192-7 \$27.95

Mooney, Carla *Online Predators*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-193-4 \$27.95

Mooney, Carla *Online Security*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-195-8 \$27.95

Whiting, Jim *Online Communication and Social Networking*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-190-3 \$27.95

(4) YA Issues in the Digital Age series. From research and entertainment to communication and consumerism, this series explores the continuing development, variety, and impact of online resources and usage, including the challenges and dangers that accompany instant access to people and information. Sidebars and photographs provide additional facts and commentary but fail to enliven the dry (but instructive) text. Websites. Bib., ind. TLD

Dorman, Jennifer, Editor *Are Newspapers Becoming Extinct?*

92 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5143-7 \$33.71

Hunnicut, Susan, Editor *Media Bias*

121 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5159-8 \$33.71

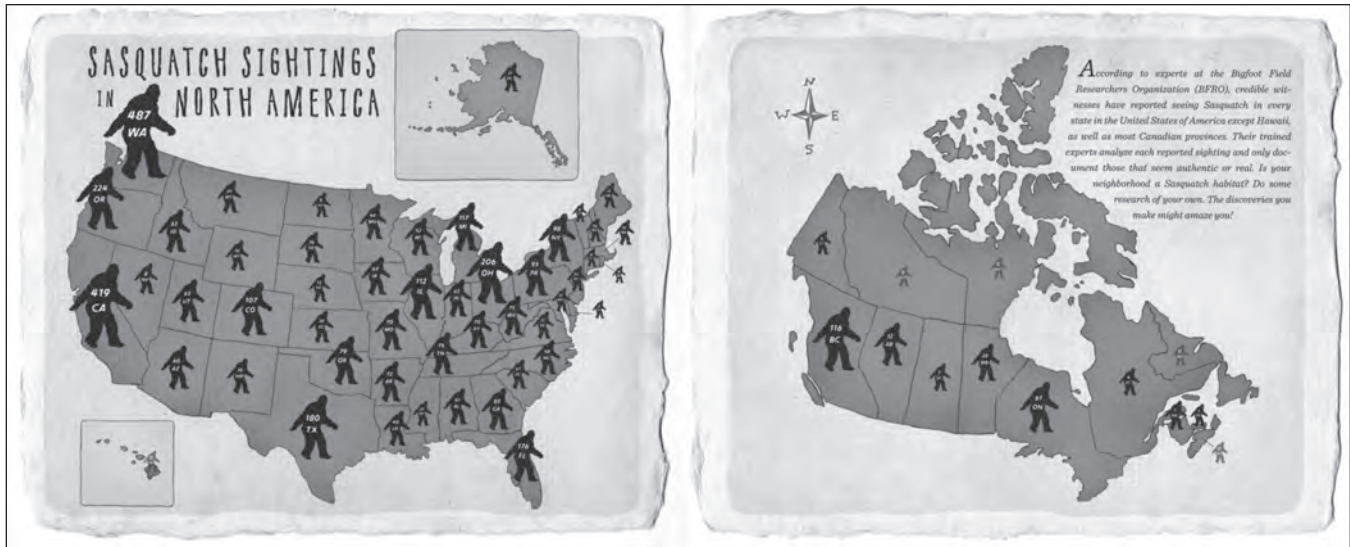
(5) YA At Issue series. These volumes present articles from a variety of sources (mostly agenda-driven), including newspapers, journals, and websites. The books' structure puts opposing viewpoints in close proximity but provides little background or context (e.g., mainstream media leans toward Democrats; or is that Republicans?). Debate teams may find these volumes useful for piecing together spin-filled arguments. The densely packed text pages are off-putting. Bib., ind. ERG

Ultimate Weird but True

192 pp. National ISBN 978-1-4263-0864-2 \$24.95

LE ISBN 978-1-4263-0895-6 \$33.95

(5) 4–6 This Ripley's-Believe-It-or-Not-meets-Guinness-Book volume is crammed full of unusual and eye-opening facts about a random assortment of topics. Examples include: "an octopus has three hearts" and a "sea otter [has] 800 million hairs." Browsers may find engaging tidbits, but the lack of organization is frustrating. Photographs of various sizes placed at different angles, along with many fonts in several colors, add to the confusion. Ind. LBC



PSYCHOLOGY

GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY

Burns, Jan *Friendship: A How-To Guide*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3442-6 \$31.93

Wroble, Lisa A. *Dealing with Stress: A How-To Guide*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3439-6 \$31.93

(4) YA Life: A How-To Guide series. These volumes teach teens about how common human experiences—making friends and dealing with stress—affect their age group in particular. The information is more a general overview than something that provides a cohesive thread. Personal stories interspersed throughout add a human face but often sound canned; stock photos are similarly hit-or-miss. *Stress* includes hotlines to contact. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. BLS

Martineau, Susan *Being Honest*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-489-5 \$27.10

Martineau, Susan *Caring for Others*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-490-1 \$27.10

Martineau, Susan *Dealing with Bullying*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-491-8 \$27.10

Martineau, Susan *Dealing with Differences*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-492-5 \$27.10

Martineau, Susan *Respecting Others*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-493-2 \$27.10

Martineau, Susan *Understanding Feelings*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-494-9 \$27.10

(4) K–3 Positive Steps series. This series presents social skills and basic ethical concepts geared toward early-elementary-school-aged readers. Some explanations are age-

appropriate, but others oversimplify problems (“racism is against the law”). Activity suggestions like “practice saying sorry” may seem babyish to readers. The flat illustrations (including speech bubbles) are less effective than the photographs in supporting concepts. Websites. Glos., ind. sf

PARAPSYCHOLOGY

Allman, Toney *Are Extraterrestrials a Threat to Humankind?*

80 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-170-5 \$27.95

Kallen, Stuart A. *The Search for Extraterrestrial Life*

80 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-171-2 \$27.95

Marcovitz, Hal *Aliens in Pop Culture*

80 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-154-5 \$27.95

Netzley, Patricia D. *Alien Encounters*

80 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-169-9 \$27.95

Whiting, Jim *UFOs*

80 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-172-9 \$27.95

(4) YA Extraterrestrial Life series. Aliens as fact and fiction and the basis for their existence (or lack thereof) are recounted in painstaking detail in this series. The books are generally accessible. For some (especially *Search*), strong interest and aptitude in astronomy and physics would help comprehension. Some drawings and photographs, along with sidebars, help liven up these textbooklike volumes. Reading list, websites. Ind. LC

Arnosky, Jim *Monster Hunt: Exploring Mysterious Creatures with Jim Arnosky*

32 pp. Hyperion ISBN 978-1-4231-3028-4 \$16.99

(3) 4–6 Inviting readers to join him on a “monster hunt,” Arnosky ponders the existence of “mysterious creatures” and compares real animals once thought to be folkloric

(or extinct) with legendary creatures Bigfoot, Nessie, and Champ from Lake Champlain. Characteristic Arnosky illustrations support a conversational narrative that questions what's real or possible, making this a friendly outing intended to inspire further research. Resources not included. TLD

Green, Carl R., and William R. Sanford *Amazing Out-of-Body Experiences*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3822-6 \$23.93

Green, Carl R., and William R. Sanford *Astonishing Mind Powers*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3820-2 \$23.93

Green, Carl R., and William R. Sanford *Discovering Past Lives*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3818-9 \$23.93

Green, Carl R., and William R. Sanford *The Mysterious Secrets of Dreams*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3821-9 \$23.93

Green, Carl R., and William R. Sanford *The Mystery of Fortune-Telling*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3819-6 \$23.93

Green, Carl R., and William R. Sanford *Sensing the Unknown*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3823-3 \$23.93

(4) 4–6 New ed. (1993). Investigating the Unknown series. With brief nods to science and skepticism, these updated editions (with slightly different titles) investigate paranormal abilities with a largely uncritical eye. Recorded experiences are scattered throughout the chapters to pique readers' interest. Most titles include suggestions for experiments. Archival photographs and reproductions along with stylistically inconsistent cartoons accompany the slim texts, which may appeal to reluctant readers. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. BTK

Halls, Kelly Milner *In Search of Sasquatch*

48 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-25761-7 \$16.99

(3) 4–6 Referencing Native American tales and artifacts, personal accounts, notable film footage, and scientists from varying specialties, this engaging discussion presents the history of the search for Bigfoot and the probability of proving its existence through advancing technologies. Color photographs, diagrams, and maps add credibility and substance, providing both the skeptic and believer with the tools to sift fact from fiction. Reading list, websites. Bib., glos., ind. TLD

Hawes, Jason, and Grant Wilson *Ghost Hunt 2: More Chilling Tales of the Unknown*

400 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-09958-5 \$16.99

(4) 4–6 With Cameron Dokey. The Atlantic Paranormal Society founders (and *Ghost Hunters* reality TV stars) present a new batch of case studies in ten short stories. Featuring fewer young ghost hunters (and child ghosts) than the preceding volume, the stories are less engaging but creepy

enough. An extensive "Ghost Hunt Expert Guide" reiterates and expands upon the TAPS team's previous tips for paranormal investigation. KLB

Kallen, Stuart A. *Atlantis*

48 pp. KidHaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5534-3 \$27.50

Pearce, Q. L. *Mysterious Disappearances*

48 pp. KidHaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5840-5 \$27.50

Redmond, Shirley Raye *Oak Island Treasure Pit*

48 pp. KidHaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5140-6 \$27.50

(4) 4–6 Mysterious Encounters series. *Atlantis* gives background on the mythical undersea place. *Oak Island* discusses the Nova Scotia locale's supernatural pirate history. *Disappearances* touches on the lost colony of Roanoke, the Bermuda Triangle, UFOs, etc. Stock photos and illustrations—some adequate, some cheesy, some unhelpful—break up the texts. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. ERG

Kallen, Stuart A. *Prophecies and Soothsayers*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-184-2 \$27.95

(4) 4–6 Mysterious & Unknown series. Five chapters—from "Peering into the Future" to "Failed Prophecies"—discuss the history of future-telling. The Bible, Nostradamus, and modern-day sources are included, along with any basis in fact (or not). Photos, illustrations, pull-quotes, and sidebars break up the dense text. Reading list, websites. Ind. ERG

ETHICS

Fisanick, Christina, Editor *Animal Welfare*

225 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5187-1 \$38.45

Henningfeld, Diane Andrews, Editor *Medical Ethics*

243 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5195-6 \$38.45

(5) YA Global Viewpoints series. Previously published pieces from newspapers, magazines, websites, and other sources of varying repute examine questions related to medical ethics and animal rights around the world. Attempting to summarize entire cultures' viewpoints through articles with inflammatory headings ("India Is a Prime Destination for Unethical Clinical Trials," "The Prohibition of Ritual Animal Slaughter Throughout the World Is Cultural Discrimination") leads to generalizations. Websites. Bib., ind. ERG

Szumski, Bonnie, and Jill Karson *Is Animal Experimentation Ethical?*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-174-3 \$27.95

(4) YA In Controversy series. After providing background on the issue ("What Are the Origins of the Animal Experimentation Debate?"), the text examines questions surrounding medical testing, classroom use (e.g., dissection), and feasibility of alternative methods (in vitro testing, human studies, etc.) for advancing scientific research. Some of the photos aren't for the squeamish. Informative sidebars and summaries of facts ending each chapter complement the dense narrative. Reading list, websites. Ind. ERG



It was not such a silent night.
Hear the *moo! moo! moo!* of a cow or two.
And the rooster crowed, "Cock-a-doodle-doo!"
Mary settled in by this noisy crew,
Keeping watch for the dawning of light.

RELIGION

GENERAL RELIGION

Baggini, Julian *Really, Really Big Questions About God, Faith, and Religion*

64 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6678-0 \$16.99

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Nishant Choksi. Baggini's book poses plenty of questions for readers: "Can a baby have a religion?" "Could there be more than one God?" "Can we criticize religion?" "What is the Devil?" He doesn't offer any definitive answers, allowing for intriguing discussion possibilities for receptive readers. Cartoon illustrations contribute to the lightness of tone. **MLB**

Burpo, Colton, Todd Burpo, and Sonja Burpo *Heaven Is for Real for Kids*

32 pp. Nelson ISBN 978-1-40031-870-4 \$14.99

(6) PS Illustrated by Wilson Ong. Spun off from the adult bestseller *Heaven Is for Real*, this pint-sized version details what three-year-old Colton experienced while being briefly dead. Heaven is apparently filled with all the wonderful things the Bible promises and more, the main point being that "Jesus really, really loves children!" The literalness of Colton's Heaven (wings, puppies, three distinct Gods) is echoed in awkwardly figured illustrations. **RS**

Lehman-Wilzig, Tami *Green Bible Stories for Children*

48 pp. Kar-Ben ISBN 978-0-7613-5135-1 \$17.95

PE ISBN 978-0-7613-5136-8 \$7.95

(4) 4–6 Illustrated by Durga Yael Bernhard. Old Testament stories are retold to highlight ecological themes. Some of the interpretations make easy, logical connections, while others are too much of a stretch and are told in an awkward way. Activities follow the stories and make tangible connections to the tales' lessons. An appended "Potpourri" section describes other earth-friendly Jewish traditions. Desert-set illustrations accompany each story. **MJS**

Lotz, Anne Graham *Heaven: God's Promise for Me*

40 pp. Zonderkidz ISBN 978-0-310-71601-3 \$16.99

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Laura J. Bryant. A sister and brother ask God to tell them about heaven, and God describes a place where "you can swim with a shark" and it will "never get dark." Illustrations show smiling, serene children running through castles and playing in parks (curiously, there are few elderly people in heaven). Clunky rhyme, a literal biblical translation, and a purposeful ending limit the audience. **MVK**

▲ Singh, Rina *Guru Nanak: The First Sikh Guru*

64 pp. Groundwood ISBN 978-0-88899-958-0 \$24.95

(2) 4–6 Illustrated by Andrée Pouliot. Sikhism's founder (1469–1539) was a fine poet and tradition-challenging philosopher whose principles were notably monotheistic and caste free: "Worship one God, treat everyone [including women] equally . . . share with the less fortunate." The dozen stories here illuminate such ideas while recounting Nanak's legendary life, starting with his laughter at birth. Pouliot's gouache and watercolor art, recalling traditional Indian illustrations, completes an attractive introduction to Sikhism. Review 1/12. **JRL**

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

▲ Adler, David A. *The Story of Hanukkah*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2295-1 \$14.95

(2) K–3 Illustrated by Jill Weber. Adler's straightforward, accessible retelling of the Hanukkah story details King Antiochus IV's coronation, his oppression of Jews, and triumphant revolt by the Maccabees. The narrative concludes with modern-day observances of events; a recipe for latkes and instructions for the dreidel game are appended. Acrylic illustrations richly accented with deep blues and luminous golds recall ancient friezes and ceramics. Review 11/11. ERG

Cohen, Deborah Bodin *Engineer Ari and the Hanukkah Mishap*

32 pp. Kar-Ben ISBN 978-0-7613-5145-0 \$17.95

PE ISBN 978-0-7613-5146-7 \$7.95

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Shahar Kober. When Engineer Ari's train breaks down, he ends up in Modi'in ("The ancient home of the Maccabees . . . Where the miracle of Hanukkah began"). There he celebrates Hanukkah with Kalil, a Bedouin who offers to help. The text, while wordy, provides a fresh take on the story. Illustrations emphasize the lush greenery of a Middle Eastern winter. An author's note is appended. Glos. SF

Dalton, Pamela, Illustrator *The Story of Christmas: From the King James Bible*

32 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-1-4521-0470-6 \$17.99

(3) K–3 Dalton (*Brother Sun, Sister Moon*) illustrates the King James version of the Nativity story with cut-paper art. The folk medium is well suited to the old-fashioned language; the result is a handsome, homey Christmas book that ends not with the Wise Men but with Jesus growing up in Nazareth "and the grace of God was upon him." MVK

Korngold, Jamie *Sadie's Sukkah Breakfast*

24 pp. Kar-Ben LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5647-9 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-0-7613-5648-6 \$7.95

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Julie Fortenberry. Excited for Sukkot, siblings Sadie and Ori wake up early and bring breakfast out to their *sukkah*. After some (very minor) mishaps, breakfast is ready, and a few stuffed-animal friends help share the special meal. The somewhat dull story is buoyed by peaceful, slightly blurred illustrations. An explanatory note about Sukkot is appended. RLS

Lloyd-Jones, Sally *Song of the Stars: A Christmas Story*

32 pp. Zonderkidz ISBN 978-0-310-72291-5 \$15.99

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Alison Jay. Animals all over the earth announce the arrival of "Heaven's son" in a simple, reverent Christmas story. Jay's jewel-like paintings, framed by white space, take readers around the world where desert animals, ocean creatures, and insects all anticipate the birth of a special baby, "God's great gift." MVK

▲ Mackall, Dandi Daley *Listen to the Silent Night*

32 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42276-1 \$16.99

(2) K–3 Illustrated by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher. This narrative poem relates the Nativity through its sounds: the *flip, flap, flap* of Joseph's sandals; the *flut-flut-flutter* of descending angels. Mackall's carefully constructed verse emphasizes that while the first Christmas may not have been a "silent night," it was a "miraculous" one. Peaceful illustrations eloquently capture the range of emotions from Mary's weariness to the joy of Jesus' birth. Review 11/11. KLB

Manushkin, Fran *Many Days, One Shabbat*

24 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5965-1 \$12.99

(3) PS Illustrated by Maria Monescillo. A family's preparation for Shabbat is told through simple pairs of two-word sentences: "One house. Many rooms" (as the family cleans); "One car. Many people" (as visitors arrive). The repetitive, gentle text conveys the family members' love for one another—the day begins and ends with kisses—and the watercolor and digital illustrations bring out the warmth of celebration. RLS

Marshall, Linda Elovtiz *Talia and the Rude Vegetables*

24 pp. Kar-Ben ISBN 978-0-7613-5217-4 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-0-7613-5218-1 \$6.95

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Francesca Assirelli. Talia is confounded by her grandmother's request for some "rude vegetables" (carrots, turnips, potatoes, etc.) for the Rosh Hashanah stew. While digging up an "ornery onion" and "garish garlic," she thinks about her own behavior; all ends with holiday sweetness. The joke goes on a little long, but the end is rewarding. Autumnal colors and rounded shapes evoke comfortable family scenes. SF

Meltzer, Amy *The Shabbat Princess*

32 pp. Kar-Ben LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5142-9 \$17.95

PE ISBN 978-0-7613-5106-1 \$7.95

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Martha Avilés. Tradition says that Jewish families welcome the Shabbat Queen into their homes on Friday nights. Rosie decides to create her own tradition by dressing as the Shabbat Princess. The story is slight but mildly informative. Double-page-spread illustrations are dominated by pinks, purples, and browns. AK

Murray, Julie *Easter*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-038-9 \$25.65

Murray, Julie *Passover*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-040-2 \$25.65

Murray, Julie *Ramadan*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-041-9 \$25.65

(5) K–3 Buddy Books: Holidays series. Following a short description of the featured holiday, Murray discusses its religious origin (presented as history), its evolution, and the way it is celebrated today. The texts are superficial and selective: for example, *Easter* includes prominent mention of

PEEPS brand bunny candy and *Passover* contains a nonstandard interpretation of vegetables on the Seder plate. Color photographs add some interest. *Glos., ind. CJ*

Ofanansky, Allison *What's the Buzz?: Honey for a Sweet New Year*

32 pp. Kar-Ben LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5640-0 \$15.95

(4) K–3 Photographs by Eliyahu Alpern. A group of students visit an Israeli bee farm and learn about how honey is made, just in time for Rosh Hashanah. Sharp color photographs against autumn-hued backdrops show the children enjoying the day. The text, though bland, delivers copious facts about bees and honey, which may be interesting to Jewish children preparing for the holiday. “Fun Facts” are appended. *RLS*

▲ Summers, Susan, Reteller *The Greatest Gift: The Story of the Other Wise Man*

32 pp. Barefoot ISBN 978-1-84686-578-7 \$16.99

(2) K–3 Illustrated by Jackie Morris. When Artaban stops to heal a man, he's left behind by the three other Magi. After years of helping the distressed, Artaban arrives in Jerusalem just as Jesus is about to be crucified. He's faced with one final dilemma: try to free Jesus or release a girl from captivity. The heartwarming story, told with appropriately formal language, is accompanied by rich, saturated watercolors. *Review 11/11. LK*

▲ Thompson, Lauren *One Starry Night*

32 pp. McElderry ISBN 978-0-689-82851-5 \$16.99

(2) PS Illustrated by Jonathan Bean. “One starry night / a sheep watched over her lamb / *I am here.*” Thompson's poetic, reverent text tells of the night Jesus was born. Bean's digitally colored pencil illustrations portray the calm nighttime scenes. The gentle words are beautifully matched by the strikingly composed art; both are infused with meaning and are powerful in their simplicity. *Review 11/11. KF*



SOCIAL SCIENCES

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FAMILIES, CHILDREN, AND SEXUALITY

Berlatsky, Noah, Editor *Homosexuality*
 219 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5191-8 \$38.45
 (5) YA Global Viewpoints series. Previously published pieces from newspapers, magazines, websites, and other sources of varying repute examine questions related to homosexuality around the world. Attempting to summarize entire cultures’ viewpoints through articles with inflammatory or non-sequitur headings (“In the United States, Hate Crime Laws Protecting Homosexuals Violate Freedom of Speech,” “In Iran, Homosexuals Are Not Forced to Become Transsexuals”) leads to generalizations. Websites. Bib., ind. ERG

Butcher, Tami *My Bonus Mom*
 56 pp. Little Five Star ISBN 978-1-58985-081-1 \$16.95
 (6) K–3 Illustrated by Feras Nouf. An adult narrator looking back on her childhood describes her parents’ divorce (“What seemed a sad story / Turned out really swell”) and her dad’s subsequent remarriage with little emotion and plenty of therapeutic clichés. Terrible rhymes, shallow characterizations, and garish digital-looking pictures trivialize the subject. Children deserve better. MVK

▲ Harris, Robie H. *Who Has What?: All About Girls’ Bodies and Boys’ Bodies*
 40 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-2931-1 \$15.99
 (2) PS Illustrated by Nadine Bernard Westcott. Harris explains how boys and girls are a lot alike but also anatomically different. A brother and sister start the conversation on their way to the beach. Harris gradually moves from personality traits to physical characteristics, very naturally introducing differences as the siblings, separately, change into their swimsuits. Enhanced by Westcott’s friendly ink and watercolor illustrations, the tone is lighthearted but never too silly. Review 11/11. CMH

▲ Rotner, Shelley, and Sheila M. Kelly *I’m Adopted!*
 32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2294-4 \$16.95
 (2) PS Photographs by Shelley Rotner. Simple, conversational text and loads of colorful, engaging photos broadly cover how families are formed through adoption. The authors approach the subject in very general terms, allowing children to impose their own experiences. While most of the book is upbeat, the loss inherent in adoptions is also acknowledged. Children touched by the subject will find the straightforward discussion reassuring and easy to understand. Review 9/11. KF

ADOLESCENCE

Plaisted, C. A. *Boy Talk: A Survival Guide to Growing Up*
 48 pp. QEB LE ISBN 978-1-60992-085-2 \$23.95
 Plaisted, C. A. *Girl Talk: A Survival Guide to Growing Up*
 48 pp. QEB LE ISBN 978-1-60992-084-5 \$23.95
 (4) 4–6 Illustrated by Chris Dickason. Growing Up series. Brief chapters dispense advice and cover the stages of puberty in an accessible but superficial manner. Organized into short paragraphs, bulleted lists, and Q&As, topics range from hair growth and acne to body odor and healthy eating. A busy design and cartoonish illustrations lend these introductions to growing up a chaotic look. Glos., ind. CLS

IMMIGRATION

Marcovitz, Hal *How Should America Respond to Illegal Immigration?*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-173-6 \$27.95

(4) YA In Controversy series. After providing background on the issue (“What Are the Roots of the Controversy over Illegal Immigration?”), the text examines questions surrounding border control, policing, and paths toward citizenship. Informative sidebars, stock photographs, and summaries of facts ending each chapter complement the dense narrative. Reading list, websites. Ind. ERG

OCCUPATIONS AND CAREERS

Goldish, Meish *Doctors to the Rescue*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-285-1 \$25.27

Goldish, Meish *Firefighters to the Rescue*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-284-4 \$25.27

White, Nancy *Paramedics to the Rescue*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-282-0 \$25.27

White, Nancy *Police Officers to the Rescue*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-283-7 \$25.27

(3) 4–6 Work of Heroes: First Responders in Action series. This well-organized series explores the education, specialized training, and daily responsibilities of the featured first responders. Photographs capture the action and enhance the accessible texts, which include details about routine as well as extraordinary incidents, notable rescues, and first-hand accounts. Rescue fans will find much to pore over in these engaging and age-appropriate volumes. Reading list, websites. Bib., glos., ind. TLD

Graham, Amy *Choosing a Community Service Career: A How-To Guide*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-1-59845-147-4 \$31.93

(4) YA Life: A How-To Guide series. Each of eleven chapters gives an overview of a community-helper job (e.g., firefighter, social worker, librarian, etc.). Text covers a day in the life, rewards and drawbacks, advancement opportunities, salary, and reasons to do the jobs. Personal stories interspersed throughout add a human face but often sound canned; stock photos and illustrations are similarly hit-or-miss. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. BLS

Pipe, Jim *Seriously Risky Jobs*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-517-5 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 On the Edge series. Pipe briefly glosses over eleven dangerous careers, including firefighting, deep sea rescue, and bomb disposal. For some, specific cases are highlighted (e.g., the “Perfect Storm” ship, 2009’s Chinese coal mine rescue). Photographs provide clear images of the people in action, while short sidebars add interest. A “Would You Risk It?” quiz is appended. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. JM

Tieck, Sarah *Astronauts*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-024-2 \$28.50

Tieck, Sarah *Commercial Fishermen*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-025-9 \$28.50

Tieck, Sarah *Miners*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-026-6 \$28.50

Tieck, Sarah *Smoke Jumpers*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-027-3 \$28.50

(4) K–3 Big Buddy Books: Extreme Jobs series. From necessary education and training to the tools and equipment employed, these simple texts provide brief, superficial introductions to the title professions. Clear photographs and bright (distracting) background patterns underscore the excitement and danger that define the “extreme job.” A “When I Grow Up . . .” feature suggests activities for development required occupational skills. Websites. Glos., ind. TLD

GOVERNMENT, ECONOMICS,
AND EDUCATIONAnderson, Jennifer Joline *The Civil Rights Movement*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-098-3 \$23.95

(4) YA Essential Events series. This book chronicles the struggles of African Americans to achieve equality since the abolition of slavery. Key components include laws related to voting, school attendance, access to public buildings and transportation, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Figures such as Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr. are also discussed. Photographs and sidebars enhance the text but crowd the pages. Reading list, timeline. Bib., glos., ind. LBC

Aretha, David *Black Power*

128 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-164-3 \$28.95

Aretha, David *With All Deliberate Speed: Court-Ordered Busing and American Schools*

128 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-181-0 \$28.95

Esty, Amos *Plessy v. Ferguson*

112 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-182-7 \$28.95

Miller, Calvin Craig *Backlash: Race Riots in the Jim Crow Era*

128 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-183-4 \$28.95

(4) YA Civil Rights Movement series. This series continues to delineate specific moments and submovements within the civil rights era. *Plessy* and *Speed* contextualize the court cases within civil rights history. *Backlash* provides analysis and discussion of violence during the times. *Black Power* looks at that movement’s emergence. Copious well-chosen photographs help break up the informative but dense texts. Timeline, websites. Bib., ind. RLH

Boothroyd, Jennifer *From Chalkboards to Computers: How Schools Have Changed*

32 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6744-4 \$25.26

(4) K–3 Lightning Bolt Books: Comparing Past and Present series. Boothroyd provides simple then-and-now examinations of schools. It's a kid-friendly approach, but the comparisons are cursory, and the examples are dumbed-down ("Computers help us learn new things." "These days, some people call cafeterias lunchrooms"). Stock photos show present-day people (in color) and past people (in black and white) learning. Mini-biographies are appended. Reading list. Glos., ind. SRA

Brimner, Larry Dane *Black & White*

112 pp. Boyds/Calkins ISBN 978-1-59078-766-3 \$16.95

(3) YA Brimner's well-researched text, centered on Birmingham, Alabama, chronicles the often bloody confrontations between the forces of freedom fighter Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth and segregationist Eugene "Bull" Connor. Sidebars include additional historical details (e.g., Emmett Till's murder, McCarthyism). Many well-captioned archival photographs and pull-quotes enhance the presentation. Reading list. Ind. HMS

Brush, Jim *Armed Services*

32 pp. Sea to Sea LE ISBN 978-1-59771-291-0 \$28.50

Brush, Jim *Special Forces*

32 pp. Sea to Sea LE ISBN 978-1-59771-294-1 \$28.50

Gilpin, Dan *Police Units*

32 pp. Sea to Sea LE ISBN 978-1-59771-293-4 \$28.50

Hyland, Jim *Border Defense*

32 pp. Sea to Sea LE ISBN 978-1-59771-292-7 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Action Force series. This series takes a cursory look at national, state, and local units intended to protect citizens. Each book presents brief vignettes related to specific categories; for example, *Police* includes such topics as highway patrols, dog squads, crime scene investigators, and SWAT teams. The numerous photographs and sidebars, while eye-catching, make the pages difficult to navigate. Websites. Glos., ind. LBC

Buckley, A. M. *Anarchism*

160 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-788-3 \$24.95

Marcovitz, Hal *Dictatorships*

160 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-791-3 \$24.95

Vander Hook, Sue *Communism*

160 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-789-0 \$24.95

Vander Hook, Sue *Democracy*

160 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-790-6 \$24.95

(4) YA Exploring World Governments series. Published spring 2011. While describing the ideas, histories, policies, and economics behind the title political ideologies, these overviews vary widely in their assessments. *Democracy* focuses mainly on its strengths; *Communism* and *Dictatorships* emphasize their political unfairness and the human

misery they have caused; and *Anarchism* concentrates on the impact of its ideas on other ideologies. Photographs and sidebars break up the texts. Reading list. Bib., glos., ind. JF

Foran, Racquel *Developing Nations' Debt*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-132-4 \$23.95

(4) YA Essential Issues series. This book presents a brief history of economic problems facing developing countries, from the establishment of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in 1944 to the present. Foran focuses especially on the poverty and hardships placed upon poorer countries that have incurred unsustainable debts; possible solutions are suggested. Photographs and sidebars enhance the text but crowd the pages. Reading list, timeline. Bib., glos., ind. LBC

Gerdes, Louise I., Editor *National Service*

244 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5233-5 \$39.70

Haugen, David, and Susan Musser, Editors *Unemployment*

203 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5247-2 \$39.70

(5) YA Opposing Viewpoints series. These books compile previously published essays, articles, and website excerpts about the title subjects. Without context it's hard to determine what's true; for example, is "The Economic Stimulus Plan . . . Reducing Unemployment" (per Congressional Budget Office) or "Increasing Unemployment" (per Louis Woodhill, member of a "conservative advocacy organization")? Questions of varying degrees of superficiality are presented for students to consider as they read. Bib., ind. ERG

Hamilton, John *Green Berets*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-066-2 \$18.95

Hamilton, John *Navy Seals*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-067-9 \$18.95

Hamilton, John *United States Air Force*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-068-6 \$18.95

Hamilton, John *United States Army*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-069-3 \$18.95

(4) 4–6 United States Armed Forces series. These books identify four groups within the U.S. military. *Army* and *Air Force* provide background on these two service branches, including history, specialized vehicles, and types of artillery. *Seals* and *Berets* present two elite Special Forces, giving readers some insight into the basic operations and training involved in each. Photographs enhance the cursory texts. Glos., ind. LBC

Nardo, Don *The Women's Movement*

104 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0592-4 \$33.45

(4) YA World History series. Beginning with a clear definition of the women's movement, Nardo presents the history, significant events, and prominent individuals that have influenced and changed the social and political status of women since the 1600s. Archival and contemporary photographs, artwork reproductions, and sidebars add interest to the dry but informative text. Reading list, timeline, websites. Ind. TLD

Uschan, Michael V. *The March from Selma to Montgomery*

104 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0571-9 \$33.45

(4) YA Lucent Library of Black History series. Uschan provides background about race relations in the South and the civil rights movement before delving into the details and significance of the voting-rights march between Selma and Montgomery, Alabama. Particular attention is given to historical, social, and political contexts and challenges faced by the activists. The text is dense but informative. Illustrations and photographs break up the pages. Reading list, timeline, websites. Ind. ERG

Watkins, Angela Farris *My Uncle Martin's Words for America*

40 pp. Abrams ISBN 978-1-4197-0022-4 \$19.95

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Eric Velasquez. Watkins, niece of Martin Luther King Jr., provides background on the civil rights movement. Her text incorporates King's own words and explains them in context ("Uncle Martin said, 'Let justice roll down like waters.' He meant that *everyone* should be treated fairly"). Velasquez's illustrations include close-up portraits and crowd scenes, all conveying the movement's scope. Reading list. Bib., glos., ind. HMS

SOCIAL ISSUES

Anderson, Judith *Kidnapping and Piracy*

48 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-398-0 \$34.25

Anderson, Judith *People Trafficking*

48 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-397-3 \$34.25

Flint, Dirk *Drug Crime*

48 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-393-5 \$34.25

Flint, Dirk *Gun Crime*

48 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-395-9 \$34.25

Flint, Dirk *Policing and Justice*

48 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-399-7 \$34.25

Hynson, Colin *Cyber Crime*

48 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-396-6 \$34.25

Hynson, Colin *Forensics*

48 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-394-2 \$34.25

Vaughan, Jenny *Juvenile Crime*

48 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-400-0 \$34.25

(4) YA Inside Crime series. This series introduces various crimes and law-enforcement tactics. Clearly delineating perpetrators and victims, Vaughan explores the causes and consequences of illegal activity. Advancements in evidence-gathering and prosecution are also discussed. Sidebars highlight specific crimes and laws, and in-depth case studies provide more comprehensive examples for criminal justice fans. Photographs and maps enhance the texts but crowd the pages. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. TLD

Andryszewski, Tricia *Same-Sex Marriage: Granting Equal Rights or Damaging the Status of Marriage?*

128 pp. Twenty-First Century LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6435-1 \$35.93

Doeden, Matt *Gun Control: Preventing Violence or Crushing Constitutional Rights?*

128 pp. Twenty-First Century LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6433-7 \$35.93

(4) YA USA Today's Debate: Voices and Perspectives series. These volumes present opposing sides of the title issues. Brief introductions are followed by histories, arguments (and details about the organizations that espouse them), and legislative action. Conversational writing style and numerous anecdotes make the volumes' small font and two-column, textbooklike design more approachable; photos, graphs, and excerpts from *USA Today* add interest. Timeline. Bib., glos., ind. FFB

Borus, Audrey *Volunteering: A How-To Guide*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3440-2 \$31.93

(4) YA Life: A How-To Guide series. Following a you-can-make-a-difference pep talk, this volume provides information for teens about various volunteer opportunities. Personal stories interspersed throughout add a human face but often sound canned; stock photos are similarly hit-or-miss. A brief quiz to discern strengths and interests as a volunteer may be useful. Organizations to contact are appended. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. BLS

Buckley, A. M. *Homelessness*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-134-8 \$23.95

Kenney, Karen Latchana *Domestic Violence*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-133-1 \$23.95

(4) YA Essential Issues series. *Domestic Violence* presents a brief historical overview of abuse (mostly of women), including ill-conceived laws originally designed to protect abusive husbands; statistical data and preventive procedures are also discussed. *Homelessness* looks at causes, describes situations, and discusses possible solutions to the problem. Photographs and sidebars add immediacy but crowd the pages. Reading list, timeline. Bib., glos., ind. LBC

Eldridge, Stephen *Trace Evidence: Dead People Do Tell Tales*

104 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3664-2 \$31.93

Faulk, Michelle *Gun Crimes: Dead People Do Tell Tales*

104 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3763-2 \$31.93

Latta, Sara *Bones: Dead People Do Tell Tales*

104 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3669-7 \$31.93

Latta, Sara *Cybercrime: Data Trails Do Tell Tales*

104 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3668-0 \$31.93

Latta, Sara *DNA and Blood: Dead People Do Tell Tales*

104 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3667-3 \$31.93

Stiefel, Chana *Fingerprints: Dead People Do Tell Tales*

104 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3689-5 \$31.93

(3) 4–6 True Forensic Crime Stories series. This series uses real-life examples from the eighteenth century through today to introduce readers to forensic science. Case studies demonstrate how investigators use chemistry, biology, and good detective skills to solve crimes. The science is generally accessible and the accompanying photographs are well used. Ignore the pages' hokey blood spatters. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. BCM

Fisanick, Christina, Editor *Discrimination*

261 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5189-5 \$38.45

Haerens, Margaret, Editor *Human Rights*

243 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5193-2 \$38.45

(5) YA Global Viewpoints series. Previously published pieces from newspapers, magazines, websites, and other sources examine questions related to human rights and discrimination around the world. Attempting to summarize entire cultures' viewpoints through articles with inflammatory headings ("Israel Violates Human Rights and the European Union Is Complicit," "Yemeni Culture Is Still Dominated by Discrimination") leads to generalizations. Websites. Bib., ind. ERG

Friedman, Lauri S., Editor *Social Networking*

122 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5135-2 \$35.75

Watkins, Heidi, Editor *Teens and Employment*

120 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5208-3 \$35.75

(5) YA Issues That Concern You series. This series attempts to delve into issues relevant to teens' lives by offering different viewpoints on the topics. Each book includes excerpts from previously published periodicals or websites of varying repute (not all of which are up to date). They're all bolstered by facts and figures that supposedly prove the author's argument, making it difficult to judge their validity. Websites. Bib., ind. ERG

Friedman, Lauri S., Editor *Universal Health Care*

116 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5539-8 \$31.80

(4) YA Writing the Critical Essay series. After introducing the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, this volume presents previously published articles arguing issues related to health care in America. Three content questions precede each piece, and two superficial analysis questions follow. The book then provides model essays for students, with sidebar comments (some helpful) explaining the writing process. Many photographs and charts of varying usefulness illustrate the text. Websites. Bib., ind. ERG

MacKay, Jenny *Teen Pregnancy*

112 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0479-8 \$33.45

(4) YA Hot Topics series. This volume provides a broad overview of its teen-relevant topic. The main text is supported by sidebars, many focusing on pop culture (*Juno*, Lady Gaga); pull-quotes add interest. Though a good number of stock photographs are included, readers will have trouble taking some of them seriously (e.g., a few of the pregnant girls look like they're from the '80s). Reading list, websites. Ind. ERG

Miller, Debra A., Editor *The Uninsured*

185 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5638-8 \$39.70

(5) YA Current Controversies series. This volume attempts to show opposing sides of the arguments regarding health insurance in America. The book lumps together newspaper, magazine, and website articles from supposed experts, some of whom have credentials, some whose authority is more dubious (the distinction is not necessarily evident). The volume is more a lesson in spin and propaganda than useful for research. Websites. Bib., ind. ERG

Parks, Peggy J. *Teenage Sex and Pregnancy*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-168-2 \$27.95

Parks, Peggy J. *Teenage Suicide*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-156-9 \$27.95

(5) YA Compact Research series. Two-page "At a Glance" and "Overview" chapters introduce four sections describing the title "teenage problem" (suicide, sex and pregnancy), its causes, and prevention. Each chapter is followed by quotations from primary and secondary sources and a bulleted list of facts with charts and graphs. The topics are of interest to teens, but the quotes lack context, making it difficult to judge speakers' biases. Reading list, timeline, websites. Bib., ind. ERG

Stewart, Gail B. *Missing Persons*

96 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0534-4 \$33.45

(4) YA Crime Scene Investigations series. This volume focuses on the collaborative efforts of science and law enforcement to investigate missing persons cases. Stewart examines the skills, determination, resources, and technologies used to solve this type of crime. Sidebars and photographs combine with the text to highlight evidence gathering and interpretation, statistics, and career information. The writing is dense, but criminal justice enthusiasts will appreciate the presentation. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. TLD

POLLUTION AND CONSERVATION

Aitken, Stephen *Earth's Fever*

32 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-670-6 \$28.50

Aitken, Stephen *Fever at the Poles*

32 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-671-3 \$28.50

Aitken, Stephen *Fever in the Oceans*

32 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-672-0 \$28.50

Aitken, Stephen *Fever on the Land*

32 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-673-7 \$28.50

(5) K–3 Looking Glass Library: Climate Change series. These books introduce climate change and the current and future effects of a rise in global temperature on Earth's environments and inhabitants. Brief sentences and fact-box asides present only surface-level concepts, failing to build ideas or explain the underlying science. Mediocre cartoonlike illustrations portray people and animals (lots with weird long eyelashes) enduring the effects of climate change. Glos., ind. DJF

Birds

64 pp. Brown Bear LE ISBN 978-1-936333-31-8 \$35.65

Fish

64 pp. Brown Bear LE ISBN 978-1-936333-32-5 \$35.65

Invertebrates

64 pp. Brown Bear LE ISBN 978-1-936333-33-2 \$35.65

Mammals of the Northern Hemisphere

64 pp. Brown Bear LE ISBN 978-1-936333-34-9 \$35.65

Mammals of the Southern Hemisphere

64 pp. Brown Bear LE ISBN 978-1-936333-35-6 \$35.65

Reptiles and Amphibians

64 pp. Brown Bear LE ISBN 978-1-936333-36-3 \$35.65

(3) YA Facts at Your Fingertips: Endangered Animals series. Each volume begins with background information about the title animal group, including consideration of the specific dangers faced by that type of animal. Profiles of various endangered species (classified by threat level) follow on double-page spreads with solid factual information (in very small type), accompanied by a field guide–like data summary, color photographs, illustrations, and habitat maps. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. DJF

Bullard, Lisa *Earth Day Every Day*

24 pp. Millbrook LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6109-1 \$23.93

PE ISBN 978-0-7613-8512-7 \$6.95

Illustrated by Xiao Xin.

Bullard, Lisa *Go Easy on Energy*

24 pp. Millbrook LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6107-7 \$23.93

PE ISBN 978-0-7613-8513-4 \$6.95

Illustrated by Wes Thomas.

Bullard, Lisa *Power Up to Fight Pollution*

24 pp. Millbrook LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6108-4 \$23.93

PE ISBN 978-0-7613-8515-8 \$6.95

Illustrated by Wes Thomas.

Bullard, Lisa *Watch Over Our Water*

24 pp. Millbrook LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6106-0 \$23.93

PE ISBN 978-0-7613-8517-2 \$6.95

Illustrated by Xiao Xin.

(4) K–3 Cloverleaf Books: Planet Protectors series. This series fills a need for accessible books about energy, pollution, and the environment through clear text, cartoony pictures, and suggestions for ways to effect changes in our carbon footprints. The child-narrator voices don't sound authentic and the implication that our environmental problems can be resolved by nagging is simplistic, but kids may be inspired to action. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. MLB

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes *Bull Trout's Gift: A Salish Story About the Value of Reciprocity*

64 pp. Nebraska ISBN 978-0-8032-3491-8 \$21.95

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Sashay Camel. Published spring 2011. Students enjoy a field trip to Montana's Flathead Indian Reservation. A tribal elder and a biologist teach them about the Jocko River's significance to Native American culture and the importance of its restoration and conservation. The text is wordy and the field-trip framing is awkward, but the story is useful. The illustrations of the natural world are more effective than those showing people. TLD

Ferguson, Rebecca *The Role of the Individual*

144 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-4853-6 \$38.21

Henningfeld, Diane Andrews *Nature and Wildlife*

136 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5174-1 \$38.21

Langwith, Jacqueline *Population, Resources, and Conflict*

124 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5175-8 \$38.21

Miller, Debra A. *Farming and the Food Supply*

135 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5173-4 \$38.21

Streissguth, Tom *The Role of Industry*

158 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5176-5 \$38.21

(3) YA Confronting Global Warming series. These books consider the current and potential future consequences of global warming on the human, animal, and plant populations and the resources we need to survive. *Individual* provides detailed recommendations for changes that readers and their families can make now to reduce their carbon

footprints and potentially mitigate future problems. Color photographs and diagrams adequately illustrate the concepts. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. DJF

Friedman, Lauri S., Editor *Energy Alternatives*

154 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5198-7 \$36.82

Friedman, Lauri S., Editor *Oceans*

143 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5200-7 \$36.82

(5) YA Introducing Issues with Opposing Viewpoints series. These volumes present previously published articles and essays from journals, magazines, and websites to provide opposing viewpoints about alternative energy sources and environmental threats to Earth's oceans. Though the many photographs, sidebars, and charts make the books visually approachable, the lack of contextual information about primary sources makes for texts that are more inflammatory than useful. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. ERG

Newland, Sonya *Desert Animals*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-655-4 \$28.50

Newland, Sonya *Grassland Animals*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-656-1 \$28.50

Newland, Sonya *Mountain Animals*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-657-8 \$28.50

Newland, Sonya *Ocean Animals*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-658-5 \$28.50

Newland, Sonya *Polar Animals*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-659-2 \$28.50

Newland, Sonya *Rain Forest Animals*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-660-8 \$28.50

Newland, Sonya *Wetland Animals*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-661-5 \$28.50

Newland, Sonya *Woodland and Forest Animals*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-662-2 \$28.50

(3) 4–6 Saving Wildlife series. This series focuses on endangered species in a variety of habitats. Each book presents a different ecosystem, examines its native animals and how they're threatened, and explains conservation efforts. The short paragraphs of text are accompanied by fact boxes, sidebars, and vivid photos with brief captions. A quiz and activism suggestions are included. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. LB

Silhol, Sandrine, and Gaëlle Guériver *Extraordinary Endangered Animals*

157 pp. Abrams ISBN 978-1-4197-0034-7 \$24.95

(4) 4–6 Illustrated by Marie Doucedame. Select endangered species from six continents and the oceans are presented in spreads that include large photographs and small color sketches of the animals, habitat maps, and additional facts in notebooklike text boxes. The profiles include details about each species and the threats they face from humans, as well as conservation efforts. There's some anthropomorphism throughout. Glos., ind. DJF

Thomas, Tulani *Tutu Goes Green*

32 pp. Amare ISBN 978-0-9846012-0-2 \$15.95

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Seitu Hayden. Tutu, a young African American girl interested in helping the earth, introduces readers to the classic conservation terms *reduce*, *reuse*, and *recycle*. Each word is first defined then accompanied by not-groundbreaking but easy-to-copy examples such as reusing shopping totes and promptly turning off lights. Stiff, bright digital-looking illustrations show Tutu and her parents practicing good green habits in their home and community. DJF

Underwood, Deborah *101 Ways to Save the Planet*

56 pp. Raintree LE ISBN 978-1-4109-3898-5 \$32.00

PE ISBN 978-1-4109-4385-9 \$8.99

(4) 4–6 101 series. After describing changes to the planet over the past two hundred years, Underwood follows with tips on going green, grouped by category: food and clothing selection, trash disposal, water/air quality, power sources, and threats to animals. Informative paragraphs, stories of individual efforts, definitions, question-and-answer boxes, and color photos vie for attention on jam-packed pages. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. GBH

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Currie-McGhee, Leanne K. *Teenage Alcoholism*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-164-4 \$27.95

Currie-McGhee, Leanne K. *Teenage Drug Abuse*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-165-1 \$27.95

(5) YA Compact Research series. Two-page "At a Glance" and "Overview" chapters introduce four sections describing the title "teenage problem" (drug or alcohol abuse), its dangers, treatment, and prevention. Each chapter is followed by quotations from primary and secondary sources and a bulleted list of facts with charts and graphs. The topics are of interest to teens, but the quotes lack context, making it difficult to judge speakers' biases. Reading list, timeline, websites. Bib., ind. ERG

Watson, Stephanie *Binge Drinking*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-131-7 \$23.95

(4) YA Essential Issues series. This book provides basic information about alcohol use and abuse with emphasis on the dangers of overindulgence by teens and young adults. A brief history of alcohol is presented, as well as laws and statistics related to its consumption; programs designed to help young people make wise decisions are also identified. Photographs and sidebars extend the text but crowd the pages. Reading list, timeline. Bib., glos., ind. LBC

CUSTOMS AND HOLIDAYS

Behnke, Alison Marie *The Little Black Dress and Zoot Suits: Depression and Wartime Fashions from the 1930s to the 1950s*

64 pp. Twenty-First Century LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5892-3 \$31.93

Bix, Cynthia Overbeck *Petticoats and Frock Coats: Revolution and Victorian-Age Fashions from the 1770s to the 1860s*

64 pp. Twenty-First Century LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5888-6 \$31.93

Havelin, Kate *Hoopskirts, Union Blues, and Confederate Grays: Civil War Fashions from 1861 to 1865*

64 pp. Twenty-First Century LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5889-3 \$31.93

(3) YA Dressing a Nation: The History of U.S. Fashion series. This series documents women's and men's clothing, hairstyles and accessories, designers, and inventions of the different periods. Well-researched texts provide clear explanations of the ways important historical events, people, and technology of the times influenced how clothes were designed, made, purchased, and worn. Numerous archival photos and entertaining sidebars contribute to a lively read. Reading list, timeline, websites. Bib., glos., ind. SRA

Krull, Kathleen *Big Wig: A Little History of Hair*

48 pp. Scholastic/Levine ISBN 978-0-439-67640-3 \$18.99

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Peter Malone. The history of hair is told chronologically through strands of facts grouped by time period, from "Prehistory, Africa" ("One day, cave painters notice that their paintbrushes aren't bad at grooming hair") through "2007, England" ("Someone gets the most expensive haircut ever—\$16,300.00"). The conversational tone and humorous (while also gallery-worthy) paintings bolster the volume's kid-friendliness. Bib. NB

Landau, Elaine *What Is Christmas?*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3702-1 \$21.26

Landau, Elaine *What Is Halloween?*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3700-7 \$21.26

Landau, Elaine *What Is St. Patrick's Day?*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3704-5 \$21.26

Landau, Elaine *What Is Thanksgiving?*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3701-4 \$21.26

Landau, Elaine *What Is the 4th of July?*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3703-8 \$21.26

Landau, Elaine *What Is Valentine's Day?*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3699-4 \$21.26

Landau, Elaine *What Is Veterans Day?*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7760-3705-2 \$21.26

(5) K–3 I Like Holidays! series. Stock photos illustrate very simple and bland introductions to familiar holidays celebrated in the United States: "Lights are hung on trees. What time of year is this? It must be Christmas!" "You do not

have to be Irish to love this day. On this day, everyone is Irish." A related project is appended in each volume. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. PMC

▲ Laroche, Giles *If You Lived Here: Houses of the World*

32 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-23892-0 \$16.99

(2) K–3 Laroche's bas-relief cut-paper collages illustrate sixteen different dwellings that people call home, from log cabins and tree houses to pueblos and yurts. Each is introduced with a paragraph that begins with the phrase, "If you lived here," enticing readers to imagine how it might be. Facts and additional comments on each page stimulate curiosity and expand and broaden readers' worldview. Review 9/11. JH

Lewis, Anne Margaret *What Am I?: Christmas*

24 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-8958-8 \$9.99

Lewis, Anne Margaret *What Am I?: Halloween*

24 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-8959-5 \$9.99

(4) PS Illustrated by Tom Mills. My Look and See Holiday Book series. These volumes introduce the title holidays to preschoolers. Each spread presents a symbol, person, animal, or object connected to the holiday, then asks "What am I?" on a foldout flap that, when lifted, reveals the answer. Friendly digital-looking illustrations will help hold viewers' and listeners' interest in these superficial holiday novelty books. BLM

Murray, Julie *Juneteenth*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-039-6 \$25.65

(5) K–3 Buddy Books: Holidays series. Following a short description of the holiday, Murray discusses its historical origins and the way it is celebrated today. The text is superficial and selective; photographs add some interest but a few are poorly chosen. Glos., ind. CJ

Niven, Felicia Lowenstein *Fabulous Fashions of the 1920s*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3551-5 \$23.93

Niven, Felicia Lowenstein *Fabulous Fashions of the 1930s*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3824-0 \$23.93

Niven, Felicia Lowenstein *Fabulous Fashions of the 1940s*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3552-2 \$23.93

Niven, Felicia Lowenstein *Fabulous Fashions of the 1950s*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3825-7 \$23.93

Niven, Felicia Lowenstein *Fabulous Fashions of the 1960s*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3553-9 \$23.93

Niven, Felicia Lowenstein *Fabulous Fashions of the 1970s*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3826-4 \$23.93

Niven, Felicia Lowenstein *Fabulous Fashions of the 1980s*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3554-6 \$23.93

Niven, Felicia Lowenstein *Fabulous Fashions of the 1990s*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3827-1 \$23.93

(4) 4–6 Fabulous Fashions of the Decades series. Each volume provides an entertaining (if superficial) tour of the decade’s trademark hairstyles, shoes, and accessories; women’s and men’s clothing and “looks”; fashion fads and trends; and influential events in pop culture at the time. Numerous photos support the texts, which will provide readers with a brief glimpse into the fashions of the twentieth century and possibly help elucidate their popularity. Reading list, timeline, websites. Glos., ind. SRA

Petrie, Kristin *Food Culture: Celebrating Diverse Traditions*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-083-9 \$25.65

(4) 4–6 Checkerboard Science Library: Mission: Nutrition series. Ten chapters provide superficial introductions to staple foods of the world. The texts examine how and why traditional foods from many nations are found in New World countries and touch on celebrations involving food. The book concludes with hints for healthy eating and information on First Lady Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move! Campaign. Vibrant photos show people around the world preparing and enjoying meals. Glos., ind. GBH

Streissguth, Tom *Getting the Hang of Fashion and Dress Codes: A How-To Guide*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3444-0 \$31.93

(4) YA Life: A How-To Guide series. This volume takes a casual, cursory look at fashion from a supposedly teen-friendly point of view. The text provides superficial treatment of the history of fashion, marketing, labor practices, and school dress codes. Personal stories interspersed throughout add a human face but often sound canned; stock photos are similarly hit-or-miss. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. BLS



FOLKTALES AND NURSERY RHYMES

Folktales, Myths, and Legends 134
 Nursery Rhymes 138

FOLKTALES, MYTHS, AND LEGENDS

▲ **Aesop *Mouse & Lion***

32 pp. Scholastic/di Capua ISBN 978-0-545-10147-9 \$17.95
 (2) K–3 Retold by Rand Burkert. Illustrated by Nancy Ekholm Burkert. Nancy Ekholm Burkert brings her meticulous style to Aesop’s classic, setting it—as did Jerry Pinkney in *The Lion and the Mouse*—in Africa. Rand Burkert’s character-revealing, story-advancing dialogue is the sort to captivate a group. It’s an admirable complement to the matchless Pinkney volume, sure to invite productive comparison. Author’s and illustrator’s notes are appended. Review 11/11. JRL

Aesop’s Fables: A Pop-Up Book of Classic Tales

14 pp. Little Simon ISBN 978-1-4169-7146-7 \$27.99
 (4) K–3 Illustrated by Chris Beatrice and Bruce Whatley. Paper engineering by Kees Moerbeek. In this complex pop-up book, a crow hovers a foot above the page and a goose lays a life-sized golden egg. The illustrations, in great contrast to the spare stories themselves, are lush (verging on garish). Children will certainly be attracted to the elaborate paper engineering. MVK

Altman, Linda Jacobs *African Mythology Rocks!*

112 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3896-7 \$31.93
 New ed. (2003).

Bernard, Catherine *Celtic Mythology Rocks!*

104 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3895-0 \$31.93
 New ed. (2003).

Collier, Irene Dea *Chinese Mythology Rocks!*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3898-1 \$31.93
 New ed. (2001).

Houle, Michelle M. *Gods and Goddesses in Greek Mythology Rock!*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3897-4 \$31.93
New ed. (2001).

Schuman, Michael A. *Maya and Aztec Mythology Rocks!*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3899-8 \$31.93
New ed. (2001).

Spies, Karen Bornemann *Heroes in Greek Mythology Rock!*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3900-1 \$31.93
New ed. (2002).

(4) 4–6 Mythology Rocks! series. Each of these volumes (revised and with slightly different titles—without “Rocks!”) begins with a brief introduction to the title culture. Several myths important to that culture follow; a short question-and-answer section, along with “expert commentary,” appears after each story. Stippled illustrations break up the dense texts but otherwise don’t add much. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. AMT

Anaya, Rudolfo *La Llorona: The Crying Woman*

40 pp. New Mexico ISBN 978-0-8263-4460-1 \$19.95

(3) K–3 Translated by Enríque Lamadríd. Illustrated by Amy Córdova. New ed. (1997, Hyperion). In this book, originally called *Maya’s Children: The Story of La Llorona*, the father of Chicano literature retells the classic Latino folktale of the woman who cries at night for her children. In Anaya’s version, *La Llorona* is an immortal girl named Marisol who is tricked by Father Time. The new illustrations in this bilingual edition appropriately evoke Mexican folk art. rw

Carle, Eric, Reteller *Tom Thumb*

56 pp. Scholastic/Orchard ISBN 978-0-545-27009-0 \$17.99

(3) K–3 Carle leaves his mark on “Tom Thumb,” “The Fisherman and His Wife,” “Hans in Luck,” and “The Seven Swabians.” Portions of the book appeared in *Eric Carle’s Storybook: Seven Tales by the Brothers Grimm* (1976) and *Eric Carle’s Treasury of Classic Stories for Children by Aesop, Hans Christian Andersen, and the Brothers Grimm* (1988). ERG

▲ Crews, Nina *Jack and the Beanstalk*

32 pp. Holt/Ottaviano ISBN 978-0-8050-8765-9 \$16.99

(2) PS As in other versions of the folktale, Jack gets paid in magic beans. In this modern interpretation, he lives in the city and wears shorts and sandals. Crews uses photographs and Adobe Photoshop to create pictures where a real child seems to climb a real beanstalk. There’s an interesting twist ending, and children may be able to envision themselves as brave beanstalk climbers. Review 7/11. SDL

de Las Casas, Dianne *Blue Frog: The Legend of Chocolate*

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-4556-1459-2 \$16.99

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Holly Stone-Barker. According to Aztec legend, when Sun God refuses to share his chocolate, Wind God turns himself into a blue frog to tell people the

secret of the cocoa bean. De Las Casas’s retelling is accessible but stilted due to awkwardly incorporated Spanish-language phrases (repeated in English). The cut-paper illustrations, while unfinished-looking, have some appeal. A recipe for Mexican hot cocoa is appended. rw

Emberley, Rebecca *The Lion and the Mice*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2357-6 \$14.95

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Ed Emberley. I Like to Read series. This easy-reader picture book version of the Aesop fable uses simple sentences to make the story crystal clear. The digitally enhanced paper-collage pictures, by contrast, are abstract, with a dark urban background and indistinct characters that have creepy-looking, jagged-edged multicolored eyes. Unappealing pictures together with a spelled-out ending (“See? . . . Little mice can be big friends”) make this one to pass up. SDL

Fields, Jan, Adapter *Aesop’s Fables*

112 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-611-9 \$17.95

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Eric Scott Fisher. Calico Chapter Books: Calico Illustrated Classics series. This abridged edition retains some of the flavor of Aesop’s fables while dumbing-down vocabulary and losing many of the details and vibrancy that have made the tales endure. Young readers would be better off with the already child-friendly originals. The black-and-white illustrations are also bland. mjs

▲ Galdone, Paul *The Gingerbread Boy*

48 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-59940-3 \$8.99
New ed. (1975, Seabury).

▲ Galdone, Paul *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*

48 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-57655-8 \$8.99
New ed. (1973, Seabury).

(2) K–3 Folk Tale Classic series. These two books from the 1970s appear in a uniform paper-over-board edition. Galdone was a refreshingly modest illustrator: his retellings are straightforward and his unassumingly loose-lined, color-separated pictures provide just enough embellishment. Plenty of white space gives the stories all the room they need. rs

Gavin, Jamila *Tales from India: Stories of Creation and the Cosmos*

88 pp. Candlewick/Templar ISBN 978-0-7636-5564-8 \$19.99

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Amanda Hall. Ten stories of Hindu gods and goddesses, kings and queens, including “How Ganesh Got His Elephant’s Head” and “The Birth of Lord Krishna,” are lyrically told. Highly detailed gouache paintings, inspired by eighteenth-century Indian miniatures, highlight both magical elements and earthly life. Decorative borders and golden elements enhance the attractive book, but no sources are provided. Glos. MG

Grimm, Jakob, and Wilhelm Grimm *Hansel & Gretel*

32 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-42221-1 \$17.99

(3) K–3 Retold by Amy Ehrlich. Illustrated by Susan Jeffers. New ed. (1980, Dial). Here's a handsomely designed version (slightly updated) of the favorite tale by an illustrator who draws and paints with equal artistry and skill. With superb use of color, the dramatic action is shown chiefly in half-page pictures, while the serene forest scenes overspread two pages and give the volume a definitive atmosphere. It's a book of considerable beauty. Review 12/80.

Gurney, Stella, Reteller *Puss in Boots*

24 pp. Barron's ISBN 978-0-7641-6485-9 \$17.99

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Gerald Kelley. A wordy pop-up retelling of Perrault's classic tale of a cat and his master emphasizes the silliness of the story at the expense of developing Puss in Boots's skill or loyalty. Though the paper-engineering is eye-catching, most of the flaps add little, revealing a frog wearing a crown, a goose laying a golden egg, and other ephemera. The cartoony illustrations are uneven. MVK

Hague, Michael *Michael Hague's Treasured Classics*

133 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-0-8118-4904-3 \$19.99

(3) K–3 This anthology, including traditional European folktales and fairy tales along with some Aesop and Andersen, doesn't break any new ground in terms of text selection. However, its handsomely drawn and digitally painted illustrations are full of smiling people, magical creatures, animals, and landscapes that will intrigue viewers. MG

Henrichs, Wendy *I Am Tama, Lucky Cat: A Japanese Legend*

32 pp. Peachtree ISBN 978-1-56145-589-8 \$16.95

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Yoshiko Jaeggi. Tama herself narrates the story of how she first came to live with a poor Buddhist monk in Japan, then persuaded a wealthy samurai to take shelter from a storm in their crumbling temple by lifting her paw. Cat lovers will especially enjoy this story's delicate watercolor illustrations showing dainty Tama in the temple and outside surrounded by luscious cherry blossoms. SDL

Hirschmann, Kris *Medusa*

80 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-181-1 \$27.95

Robson, David *The Mummy*

80 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-182-8 \$27.95

Stewart, Gail B. *Trolls*

80 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-183-5 \$27.95

(4) YA Monsters and Mythical Creatures series. Blurring fact and fiction, each volume begins with an overview of the historical and cultural origins of the featured creature, followed by an analysis of that monster in literature, film, and other media. Some of the many supporting pictures

(photographs, illustrations, movies stills) are poorly placed. "Did You Know?" boxes add interest. Reading list, websites. Ind. BCM

Husain, Shahrukh *The Wise Fool: Fables from the Islamic World*

64 pp. Barefoot ISBN 978-1-84686-226-7 \$16.99

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Micha Archer. As explained in the informative introduction, stories about Mulla Nasruddin appear throughout the Islamic world. The twenty-two short tales presented here (in tiny font) always have a kernel of humanistic wisdom, whether the protagonist pronounces judgment upon the foolish behavior of others or even laughs at his own actions. Brightly patterned collages accompany the tales. A pronunciation guide is appended. Bib., glos. MG

Kimmel, Eric A., Reteller *The Flying Canoe: A Christmas Story*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-1730-8 \$16.95

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Daniel San Souci and Justin San Souci. Some fur traders accept a mysterious stranger's offer to be magically transported home for Christmas Eve . . . provided they don't speak until they arrive. They break the promise but outwit the stranger for a happy ending in this variant of a Canadian tale. The conflict is too-easily resolved, but the chilly illustrations and smattering of French provide a strong sense of place. Glos. MVK

Kimmel, Eric A. *Joseph and the Sabbath Fish*

32 pp. Kar-Ben ISBN 978-0-7613-5908-1 \$17.95

PE ISBN 978-0-7613-5909-8 \$7.95

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Martina Peluso. Joseph is a generous, humble man who always helps his neighbors and shares his Sabbath meal. In contrast, his neighbor Judah is selfish and closed-off. This Jewish folktale's lessons about the benefits of sharing and the detriment of greed are evident without resorting to preachiness. Warm, rich-hued illustrations flow elegantly from page to page. MJS

▲ Lunge-Larsen, Lise *Gifts from the Gods: Ancient Words and Wisdom from Greek and Roman Mythology*

96 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-15229-5 \$18.99

(2) 4–6 Illustrated by Gareth Hinds. From *Achilles' heel to victory*, Lunge-Larsen explores how words have been derived from myths. Each entry begins with a definition plus a quote that incorporates it. Next comes the relevant myth, along with graphic novel-style art, its pencil and watercolor renditions enlivening the straightforward text with eloquent gestures and expressions. The classic tales and lively pictures make an effective lure to etymology's dramatic possibilities. Bib., ind. Review 1/12. JRL

▲ MacDonald, Margaret Read, Reteller *The Boy from the Dragon Palace*

32 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-7513-0 \$16.99

(2) K–3 Illustrated by Sachiko Yoshikawa. A poor flower-seller receives a gift from the Dragon King: a boy “who had the snottiest nose you ever did see!” After being fed, the boy blows his nose and gold covers the floor. The man then makes demand after demand. Bright, digitally enhanced watercolor collage sets the story in Japan, with traditional clothing contrasting nicely with the icky but funny details. Review 11/11. SDL

▲ Manna, Anthony L., and Soula Mitakidou *The Orphan: A Cinderella Story from Greece*

40 pp. Random/Schwartz & Wade

ISBN 978-0-375-86691-3 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96691-0 \$19.99

(2) K–3 Illustrated by Giselle Potter. Melding and modernizing a couple of traditional versions, Manna and Mitakidou fashion a lyrical Cinderella variant. The girl known here as “the orphan” seeks help at her mother’s grave. Mother Nature and her children bring the girl gifts, including “delicate blue shoes.” Potter grounds the action with figures whose faces convey universal emotions, their expressive body language arrayed on minimal, richly hued backgrounds. Review 11/11. JRL

McFadden, Deanna, Reteller *Grimm’s Fairy Tales*

153 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-7311-2 \$5.95

Namm, Diane, Reteller *Greek Myths*

153 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-7312-9 \$5.95

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Eric Freeberg. Classic Starts series. These inexpensive condensed versions of eleven Grimm’s tales and fifteen Greek myths (“retold from the classic originals”) competently delineate plot points. However, the retellings are flat and, especially in the Grimm volume, rather superfluous. Occasional black-and-white illustrations highlight main characters and notable moments from the tales. Discussion questions and a “Note to Parents and Educators” are appended in each volume. ERG

McLimans, David *Big Turtle*

32 pp. Walker ISBN 978-0-8027-2282-9 \$17.99

(3) K–3 In this capable retelling of a Native American creation myth, there is only Sky World (where people are) and Water World (where animals are) until Sky Girl falls through a hole in the sky, forcing the water animals to find a way for her to live. Unfussy mixed-media illustrations consisting of flat geometric shapes recall cut-paper collage. Websites. Bib. NB

▲ Morpurgo, Michael *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*

64 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4824-4 \$16.99

(2) K–3 Illustrated by Emma Chichester Clark. In Morpurgo’s Hamelin Town, the children starve while the “rich and the greedy lived like kings and queens.” Then comes a “plague of rats,” who eat all the food and begin hunting in packs. Before its happy ending, the book is pretty grim;

Clark’s watercolors lighten the mood with lots of patterns and by depicting the rats as slightly comical. Review 1/12. SDL

▲ Napoli, Donna Jo *Treasury of Greek Mythology: Classic Stories of Gods, Goddesses, Heroes & Monsters*

192 pp. National ISBN 978-1-4263-0844-4 \$24.95

LE ISBN 978-1-4263-0845-1 \$33.90

(2) 4–6 Illustrated by Christina Balit. Napoli follows Greek mythology’s evolution from its creation story and elemental early deities to the psychologically resonant lives of later heroes. Her language is animated and thoughtful, her characters fully equipped with histories and emotions that propel their behavior. Twenty-five deities and mortals get full chapters that include Balit’s gloriously star-spangled double page-spread portraits—boldly expressive, large-eyed, muscled figures in a handsome saturated palette. Reading list, timeline, websites. Bib., ind. Review 1/12. JRL

Noble, Trinka Hakes *A Christmas Spider’s Miracle*

32 pp. Sleeping Bear ISBN 978-1-58536-602-6 \$16.95

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Stephen Costanza. This retelling of a Ukrainian tale pairs two mothers—spider and human—doing the best for their families on a cold Christmas Eve. The story’s sentiments are moving, though the self-conscious narrative veers toward saccharine. The folksy illustrations are much more successful: varying perspectives, delicate lines, and frosty scenes imbue the tale with holiday magic. BLS

O’Connor, George *Hera: The Goddess and Her Glory*

79 pp. Roaring Brook/First Second/Porter

ISBN 978-1-59643-724-1 \$16.99

PE ISBN 978-1-59643-433-2 \$9.99

(3) 4–6 Olympians series. O’Connor’s author’s note states, “Hera is my favorite goddess . . . I really like her style.” This series entry focuses on the queen of the Greek gods, Zeus’s wife, who usually plays a supporting role in the myths. In this graphic novel version, Hera’s sassy ‘tude and no-nonsense sensibility bring a modern flair to the ancient tales. AMT

Ollhoff, Jim *Indian Mythology*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-722-7 \$27.07

Ollhoff, Jim *Japanese Mythology*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-723-4 \$27.07

Ollhoff, Jim *Mayan and Aztec Mythology*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-724-1 \$27.07

Ollhoff, Jim *Middle Eastern Mythology*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-725-8 \$27.07

(4) 4–6 World of Mythology series. This series provides a glimpse at mythologies of ancient cultures from around the world. After a short introduction to the specific civilization, various gods and heroes are presented. Each deity is given a short section, so only the most cursory treatment is pro-

vided. Reproductions of ancient artwork as well as modern illustrations provide colorful portraits of the featured gods. Glos., ind. AMT

Stewart, Gail B. *Urban Legends*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-185-9 \$27.95

(4) 4–6 Mysterious & Unknown series. Stewart discusses the history of urban legends: their origins, transmission, and basis in fact (or not). Several well-known urban legends—e.g., the black-market kidney-removal victim in the bathtub—along with “Celebrity Urban Legends” (“Is Paul McCartney Dead?”) are used as examples. Photos, illustrations, pull-quotes, and sidebars break up the dense text. Reading list, websites. Ind. ERG

Williams, Marcia, Reteller *Ancient Egypt: Tales of Gods and Pharaohs*

48 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5308-8 \$16.99

(4) 4–6 A selection of Egyptian myths and stories (and even some history, though it’s hard to distinguish) are retold in accessible, humorous text. Comic panels help contain the tales, with the illustrations applying a cartoon aesthetic to ancient Egyptian art styles. A running story line following a cat’s adventures provides additional levity (but doesn’t add much to the stories themselves). AMT

Yolen, Jane, Adapter *Sister Bear: A Norse Tale*

32 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5958-3 \$17.99

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Linda Graves. While traveling to Denmark with her pet white bear, Halva comes to the rescue of poor Gusterson, whose house is invaded every Christmas Eve by trolls. Details abound in the pastel, colored-pencil, and watercolor illustrations, including intricate embroidery-like patterns and a varied—and frightful—tribe of trolls. Yolen’s introductory note discusses her sources. MFS

NURSERY RHYMES

Nursery Rhyme Comics: 50 Timeless Rhymes from 50 Celebrated Cartoonists

120 pp. Roaring Brook/First Second
ISBN 978-1-59643-600-8 \$18.99

(3) K–3 The compilation includes fifty nursery rhymes, all in panel format, from an impressive variety of cartoonists. Each of the rhymes—some of which are well known, others less so—is presented in a one- to three-page sequence. The artists find unexpected humor and drama in the classic stories. There’s not a lot of cohesion, but the volume’s variety provides great entertainment. BLM

Pinkney, Jerry *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*

40 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-05696-0 \$16.99

(3) PS A curious chipmunk follows an object “like a diamond in the sky” up to a nest, over some water, and, lofted by the wind, close to the moon. The wonderstruck creature splashes down in a pond and is rescued by a swan before finally making its way home. “Twinkle, Twinkle” lyrics are interspersed unobtrusively throughout the lush, warm, mostly wordless spreads. ERG



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GENERAL LANGUAGE

Basher *Grammar: The Bill of Writes!*

64 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6630-8 \$12.99
PE ISBN 978-0-7534-6596-7 \$7.99

(5) 4–6 Written by Mary Budzik. Basher Basics series. Using hard-to-follow, pun-heavy text, this breezy little volume introduces parts of speech, sentence structure, possessive versus plural construction, and subject/verb agreement. Sections start with three facts or definitions and end with “Do/Don’t” sentences. A cursory punctuation page is included. Manga-style illustrations add little; in some cases, their relevance is mystifying. A removable poster is attached. Glos., ind. GBH

Berkes, Marianne *Animalogy: Animal Analogies*

32 pp. Sylvan Dell ISBN 978-1-60781-127-9 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-60718-137-8 \$8.95

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Cathy Morrison. This animal-themed book introduces analogies: “Amphibian is to frog / as mammal is to moose.” Whether illustrating verbs or nouns, the crisp language features accurate syntax, and rhymes on the

alternate pages work well. Vivid illustrations of animals in natural settings are eye-catching. Six pages of learning activities based on information in the book are appended. FFB

Cleary, Brian P. *“Miss Pell Would Never Misspell”: And Other Painless Tricks for Memorizing How to Spell and Use Wily Words*

48 pp. Millbrook LE ISBN 978-0-8225-7822-2 \$16.95

(5) 4–6 Illustrated by J. P. Sandy. Adventures in Memory series. Cleary uses mnemonics, rhymes, visualization, and other tricks to try to cement in readers’ memories the spelling of difficult words. It’s a good idea, but the examples are generally too convoluted (even for mnemonic devices) to be useful. Goggle-eyed characters overwhelmingly crowd the pages. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. ERG

Cleary, Brian P. *Thumbtacks, Earwax, Lipstick, Dipstick: What Is a Compound Word?*

32 pp. Millbrook LE ISBN 978-0-7613-4917-4 \$16.95

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Brian Gable. Words Are Categorical series. Cleary begins with a very general definition of his terms—“Compound Word: A word made up of two or more shorter words”—then proceeds full steam ahead with examples that fit the description but may or may not actually be compounds (*horsemanship? fourteen?*). As usual, the cartoon cats careen around the pages. ERG

Fogarty, Mignon *Grammar Girl Presents the Ultimate Writing Guide for Students*

296 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-8943-1 \$19.99
PE ISBN 978-0-8050-8944-8 \$12.99

(3) YA Illustrated by Erwin Haya. This clear and accessible guide to a wide range of writing and grammar topics will be useful to student writers. A variety of examples and tips combined with clear organization will help them find answers to specific questions and apply what they've learned to their own writing. Teachers will also gain many ideas and examples to enhance their lessons. Bib., glos., ind. BLM

Katirgis, Jane *Back and Front*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3916-2 \$21.26

Katirgis, Jane *Big and Little*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3911-7 \$21.26

Katirgis, Jane *Day and Night*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3915-5 \$21.26

Katirgis, Jane *Over and Under*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3914-8 \$21.26

Katirgis, Jane *Tall and Short*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3912-4 \$21.26

Katirgis, Jane *Up and Down*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3913-1 \$21.26

(4) PS All About Opposites series. Each leveled-reader volume consists of antonym pairs, with most books including only those two words (*Day and Night* includes "good day" and "good night"). Photographs show the examples, but it's not always clear what's being illustrated; comparison spreads (e.g., two boys, one "up," the other "down" on a seesaw, work best). Reading list, websites. Ind. KA

Riggs, Ann *Adjectives and Prepositions*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-091-2 \$34.25

Riggs, Ann *Common Grammatical Mistakes*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-092-9 \$34.25

Riggs, Ann *Nouns and Pronouns*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-093-6 \$34.25

Riggs, Ann *Phrases, Clauses, and Conjunctions*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-094-3 \$34.25

Riggs, Ann *Sentence Types and Punctuation*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-095-0 \$34.25

Riggs, Ann *Verbs and Adverbs*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-096-7 \$34.25

(4) 4–6 Understanding Grammar series. This series of over-size books introduces grammar concepts in an accessible presentation. Ample white space and crisp images enhance the texts' many examples and specific tips; some design elements are overly distracting. These volumes will be useful to teachers looking for enrichment materials, but they're not likely to appeal to the target middle-grade audience. Bib., glos., ind. BLM

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Martin, Bill, Jr, and John Archambault *Chica Chica Bum Bum ABC*

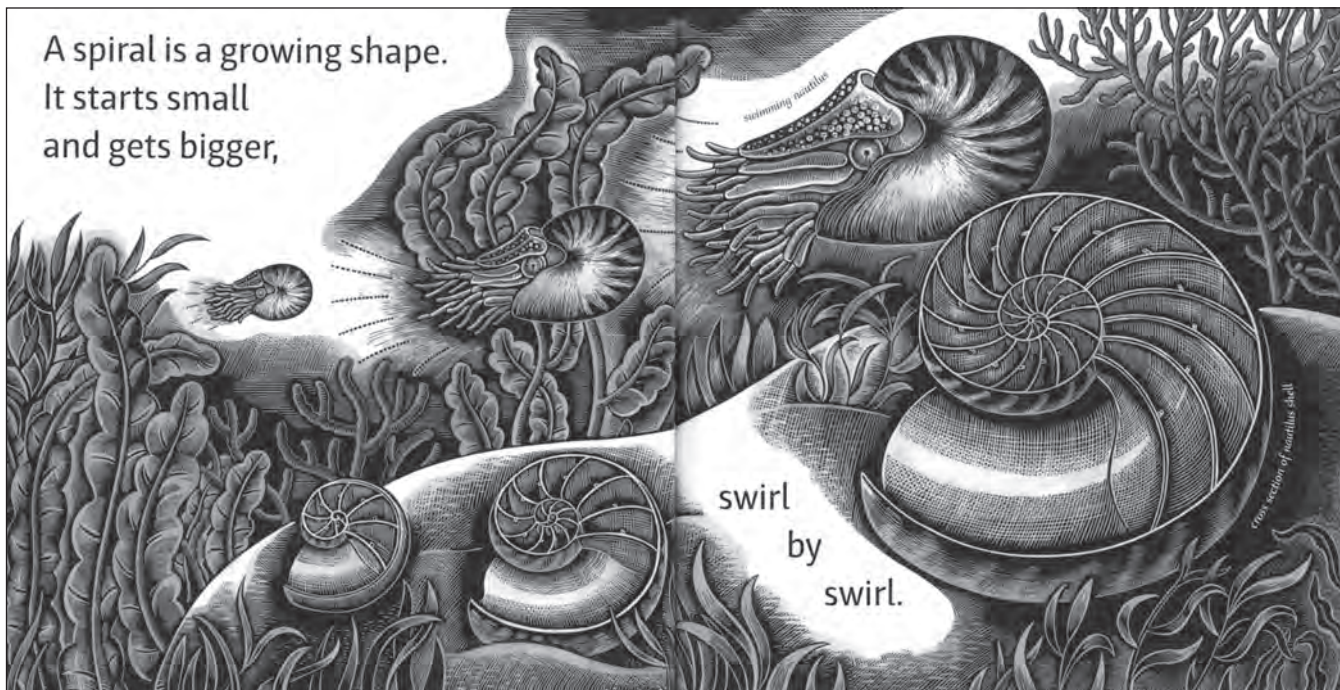
16 pp. Simon/Libros para niños ISBN 978-1-4424-2292-6 \$6.99

(6) PS Illustrated by Lois Ehler. Published spring 2011. This board book version of the perennially popular preschool classic fails in many respects. First is the unfortunate translation of "boom boom" as "bum bum." Second is the fact that the Spanish alphabet's double *l* and *ñ* are not included here, diminishing the book's usefulness for Spanish-speaking children. Finally, as with *Chicka Chicka ABC* it ends in the middle of the original story. TW

Padmanabhan, Manjula *I Am Different!: Can You Find Me?*

40 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-57091-639-7 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-57091-640-3 \$7.95

(4) K–3 Each of sixteen spreads teaches readers how to say "Can You Find Me?" in a different language; lucid accompanying text briefly expands on each language. To add visual interest, spreads feature strikingly colored "picture puzzles" and direct readers to "find one item that's different from all the rest"—a frustrating exercise, given that no two images are quite identical. NB



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GENERAL SCIENCE AND EXPERIMENTS

Jenkins, Steve *Just a Second: A Different Way to Look at Time*

40 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-618-70896-3 \$16.99

(3) K–3 Jenkins’s trademark cut-paper illustrations portray time in the context of animal (and a few technological and earth-related) movements, such as the number of wing flaps and heartbeats in a second, distances traveled in minutes, and growth over years. The facts are interesting and will reward browsers looking for animal trivia or trying to get a handle on time. Reading list, timeline. DJF

Mason, Adrienne *Motion, Magnets and More: The Big Book of Primary Physical Science*

128 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-707-3 \$18.95

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Claudia Dávila. Children can develop basic understanding of physical science through this collection of well-designed experiments on materials, structures, matter, and motion. The concepts carefully build across the activities and are appropriately targeted to the intended audience. Cartoonlike children in the illustrations model the experiments or demonstrate the ideas. Tips for adults to help deepen learning are appended. Glos., ind. DJF

Miller, Ron *Is the End of the World Near?: From Crackpot Predictions to Scientific Scenarios*

120 pp. Twenty-First Century LE ISBN 978-0-7613-7396-4 \$33.26

(3) YA Miller examines doomsday scenarios for their scientific merit or lack thereof. First he debunks religious and cultural myths and twentieth-century pseudoscience predictions, then he digs into more probable ways that the earth or the human race could end: through radiation bursts, asteroid impacts, disease, global warming, or nuclear war. Stock color photographs and illustrations round out the compelling volume. Reading list, timeline, websites. Bib., glos., ind. DJF

Nardo, Don *The Scientific Revolution*

104 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0613-6 \$33.95

(4) YA World History series. Archival drawings, photographs, paintings, and sidebars combine with dry but informative text to introduce the scientific events and discoveries that began with Copernicus and spanned two centuries. Early beliefs, changing environments, and prominent indi-

viduals are presented. The dense text will be useful for science and history buffs. Reading list, timeline, websites. Glos., ind. TLD

Walker, Sally M. *Investigating Electricity*

40 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5772-8 \$27.93

Walker, Sally M. *Investigating Light*

40 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5774-2 \$27.93

Walker, Sally M. *Investigating Magnetism*

40 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5775-9 \$27.93

Walker, Sally M. *Investigating Sound*

40 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5777-3 \$27.93

(3) K–3 Searchlight Books: How Does Energy Work? series. Each volume covers basic facts about its physical science topic as well as examining technological applications. The books encourage interactivity, as readers are directed to perform simple experiments along with the children shown in captioned illustrations and photographs; accompanying texts provide guidance on what to look for and describe the scientific concepts. Clear explanations, relatable examples, and effective visuals make these solid selections. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. DJF

Walker, Sally M., and Roseann Feldmann *Put Inclined Planes to the Test*

40 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5324-9 \$27.93

Walker, Sally M., and Roseann Feldmann *Put Levers to the Test*

40 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5321-8 \$27.93

Walker, Sally M., and Roseann Feldmann *Put Pulleys to the Test*

40 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5322-5 \$27.93

Walker, Sally M., and Roseann Feldmann *Put Wheels and Axles to the Test*

40 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5326-3 \$27.93

(3) K–3 Searchlight Books: How Do Simple Machines Work? series. These books start with definitions of *force*, *work*, and *machines*, then explain how machines reduce the amount of force needed to do work. Interactivity is encouraged, as readers are directed to perform simple experiments along with children shown in accompanying pictures; the texts provide guidance on what to look for. Clear explanations, relatable examples, and effective visuals make these solid selections. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. DJF

MATHEMATICS

Adler, David A. *Mystery Math: A First Book of Algebra*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2289-0 \$16.95

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Edward Miller. Children are introduced to algebra through a haunted house full of mysteries. Spooky word problems demonstrate how addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division are used to solve simple

algebraic equations. Halloween-themed illustrations punch up the subject's fun factor. A create-your-own balance scale activity is included. JB

Basher *Algebra & Geometry: Anything but Square!*

128 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6627-8 \$14.99
PE ISBN 978-0-7534-6597-4 \$8.99

(4) 4–6 Written by Dan Green. Basher Science series. Section titles including “Cranium Crackers” and “Graph Gang” demonstrate the tone of this breezy little book. From number systems (Roman and Arabic numerals) to advanced mathematical concepts, the pun-heavy text touches on a wide variety of topics. Each section contains bulleted facts, definitions, tips, and examples. Manga-type illustrations add little clarity to the text. A removable poster is included. Glos., ind. GBH

Caron, Lucille, and Philip M. St. Jacques *Geometry Smarts!*

64 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3935-3 \$27.93

Caron, Lucille *Percent and Ratio Smarts!*

64 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3940-7 \$27.93

Wingard-Nelson, Rebecca *Data, Graphing, and Statistics Smarts!*

64 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3942-1 \$27.93

Wingard-Nelson, Rebecca *Problem Solving and Word Problem Smarts!*

64 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3943-8 \$27.93

Wingard-Nelson, Rebecca *Trigonometry Smarts!*

64 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3944-5 \$27.93

(4) 4–6 Math Smarts! series. Each of these dense, textbook-like volumes, purportedly intended to let students “learn . . . at your own speed,” includes twenty-eight subtopics on the title math concept. Even with some overlap (geometry/trigonometry) the organization is clear, and helpful graphics and embedded definitions are plentiful. The level varies greatly, from simple word problems to complex statistics. There are five other fall 2011 books in this series. Websites. Bib., ind. FFB

Cleary, Brian P. *A Fraction's Goal—Parts of a Whole*

32 pp. Millbrook LE ISBN 978-0-8225-7881-9 \$16.95

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Brian Gable. Math Is Categorical series. Cleary starts with pizza slices as an example of fractions in action. He also talks about cooking (“Fractions come in handy / if you ever help with baking. / You'll see them in the recipes / for breads and cakes you're making”) then touches on terminology (*numerator*, *denominator*). Information is limited, but it's an entertaining starting point. ERG

Enslow, Brian *Counting Ants 1-2-3*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3919-3 \$21.26

Enslow, Brian *Counting Bees 1-2-3*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3917-9 \$21.26

Enslow, Brian *Counting Butterflies 1-2-3*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3921-6 \$21.26

Enslow, Brian *Counting Ladybugs 1-2-3*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3922-3 \$21.26

(4) PS All About Counting Bugs 1-2-3 series. Each book in this leveled reader series offers a very simple lesson in beginning reading and counting one through ten. Right-hand pages print numerals directly above spelled-out number words and insect names (e.g., “1 / one ladybug”). Left-hand digital images are nearly identical but for sequential accumulation of critters. There’s not much content here, but the books could be useful. Reading list, websites. Ind. ERG

Glover, David *The Cavern of Clues*

48 pp. QEB LE ISBN 978-1-60992-087-6 \$34.25

Glover, David *The Mansion of Mazes*

48 pp. QEB LE ISBN 978-1-60992-089-0 \$34.25

Glover, David *The Museum of Mysteries*

48 pp. QEB LE ISBN 978-1-60992-086-9 \$34.25

Glover, David *The Planet of Puzzles*

48 pp. QEB LE ISBN 978-1-60992-088-3 \$34.25

(4) 4–6 Illustrated by Tim Hutchinson. Math Quest series. These Choose-Your-Own-Adventure-style books cover topics including numerical operations (*Clues*), geometry (*Mazes*), patterns (*Mysteries*), and data analysis (*Puzzles*). There is an abundance of text on every page, making the spreads appear unapproachable. However, the math problems and methods are clear, and the inviting spot illustrations reinforce the adventure theme. “Notes for Parents and Teachers” are appended. Glos. LCF

Marzollo, Jean *Help Me Learn Numbers 0-20*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2334-7 \$15.95

(3) PS Photographs by Chad Phillips. Number-themed rhymes encourage readers to fill in the blanks (“Not one thing. / This box is clear-o. / How many inside? / I count . . . ”); while many counting books stop at ten, this one usefully goes to twenty. Accompanying well-composed photographs consist of animal figurines and various tchotchkes. A letter to parents and teachers is appended. KA

McGrath, Barbara Barbieri *Teddy Bear Math*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-58089-283-4 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-58089-284-1 \$7.95

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Tim Nihoff. Rhyming verses ask readers to follow along as brightly colored teddy bears are first estimated then sorted, graphed, added, subtracted, multiplied, and divided. The hand-drawn digital pictures illustrate each stanza as well as the directions and outcomes. Great for small group instruction and could be used for multiple class sessions. KA

Slade, Suzanne *Multiply on the Fly*

32 pp. Sylvan Dell ISBN 978-1-60718-128-6 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-60718-138-5 \$8.95

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Erin E. Hunter. This insect-themed multiplication book features crisp, colorful illustrations, a rhyming text, and eleven equations. The accompanying quatrains, some more effective than others, prompt readers to solve questions: “Six sturdy soldier ants . . . each uses five small eyes. / How many eyes stand guard? $6 \times 5 = ?$ ” This slight cross-disciplinary effort ends with six pages of learning activities. FFB

ASTRONOMY

Abramson, Andra Serlin *Inside Stars*

48 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-7709-7 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-4027-8162-9 \$9.95

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Mordecai-Mark Mac Low. Inside series. Clear prose and striking visuals combine to explain stellar matters such as classification and formation of stars and how astronomers work. The book conveys accessibility and immediacy through a conversational style. Foldout pages (some horizontal, some vertical) are generally used to excellent effect. Photos, drawings, charts, and other visuals are well chosen and well documented. Reading list, websites. Bib., glos., ind. FFB

Cosson, M. J. *Your Mission to Mars*

32 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-679-9 \$28.50

Higgins, Nadia *Your Mission to Jupiter*

32 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-678-2 \$28.50

Zuchora-Walske, Christine *Your Mission on Earth*

32 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-677-5 \$28.50

Zuchora-Walske, Christine *Your Mission to Mercury*

32 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-680-5 \$28.50

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Scott Burroughs. Looking Glass Library: The Planets series. In this series, a girl or boy space traveler, accompanied by a pet dog or cat, undertakes a space mission to explore the title planet. The information, though selective, is succinct and easy to understand. Digital cartoon illustrations look 1950s retro-ish. Not a required purchase for libraries, but the format may engage readers to seek out meatier information. Reading list. Glos., ind. CJ

Goldsmith, Mike *Earth: The Life of Our Planet*

48 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6625-4 \$17.99

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Mark A. Garlick. This tour of geologic time begins with the formation of the solar system and progresses through Earth’s history, stopping to highlight events such as the dinosaur age, ice ages, and the activities of humans. Each step is illustrated with a dramatic interpretive picture that’s accompanied by a brief textual description. More specific details are found in the timelines that complete the volume. Websites. Glos., ind. DJF

McGranaghan, John *Meet the Planets*

32 pp. Sylvan Dell ISBN 978-1-60718-123-1 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-60718-133-0 \$8.95

(6) K–3 Illustrated by Laurie Allen Klein. Published spring 2011. The eight planets in the solar system are introduced through a gimmicky beauty-pageant-type “Favorite Planet Competition.” A creepy anthropomorphized planet trots across each double-page spread, announcing random (and sometimes in poor taste) facts; Venus: “She’s bright, she’s beautiful, and she’s smoking hot.” The illustrations try, but there are a lot of similarities among the smiley-faced space bodies. DJF

Silverman, Buffy *Exploring Dangers in Space: Asteroids, Space Junk, and More*

40 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5446-8 \$27.93

Waxman, Laura Hamilton *Exploring Black Holes*

40 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5442-0 \$27.93

(3) K–3 Searchlight Books: What’s Amazing About Space? series. The volumes provide basic information about space phenomena such as asteroids (and their impacts on Earth), meteors, and black holes, as well as the related—and quite complicated—concepts of the birth and death of stars, gravity, and density. Well-captioned photographs, artists’ renditions, and historical images provide important details that support the solid titles. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. DJF

Sparrow, Giles *Earth and the Inner Planets*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-663-9 \$28.50

Sparrow, Giles *The Outer Planets*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-664-6 \$28.50

Sparrow, Giles *The Sun and Stars*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-666-0 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Space Travel Guides series. Each of these volumes focuses on a portion of the solar system. Double-page spreads cover a particular topic (e.g., red giants, supernovae, Earth’s surface) and feature stunning photos and colorful graphics. The busy layout is distracting, but the information provided is plentiful and accessible. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. AMT

PHYSICS

Adams, Tom *Super Science: Feel the Force! Full of Pop-Up Physics Fun!*

20 pp. Candlewick/Templar ISBN 978-0-7636-5566-2 \$18.99

(5) 4–6 Illustrated by Thomas Flintham. A hodgepodge of physics concepts are loosely organized on crowded double-page spreads. Each features a physical science concept, such as force, sound, light, or friction, and includes facts, information on historical figures, experiments, and various pull-tabs, pop-ups, and other paper constructs. The book may catch browsers’ eyes, but the zany illustrations and multicolor layouts just add to the clutter. DJF

EARTH SCIENCE

Baltzer, Rochelle *Earthquakes*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-031-0 \$28.50

Baltzer, Rochelle *Hurricanes*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-032-7 \$28.50

Baltzer, Rochelle *Landslides*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-033-4 \$28.50

Baltzer, Rochelle *Tsunamis*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-034-1 \$28.50

(4) K–3 Big Buddy Books: Natural Disasters series. Baltzer covers basic information about the title natural disasters. Scientific terms are defined (partially); topics then include concepts associated with each phenomenon, their effects on humans, safety and prediction, and case studies of recent examples. Large photographs and mediocre diagrams of the events and ensuing destruction accompany the texts. Glos., ind. DJF

Bredeson, Carmen *Weird but True Rocks*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3864-6 \$21.26

Bredeson, Carmen *Weird but True Weather*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3862-2 \$21.26

(4) K–3 Weird but True Science series. These books highlight unusual earth science phenomena. Beginning with a brief “Words to Know” glossary, each volume then delineates its subject matter (types of rocks or the hydrologic cycle) and offers eight double-page spreads about specific weirdnesses (e.g., geodes, fulgurites). Excellent color photos and accessible but limited texts are not well served by the constant refrain, “It’s weird, but it’s true!” Reading list, websites. Ind. FFB

Carson, Mary Kay *Inside Weather*

48 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-5881-2 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-4027-8948-9 \$9.95

Stewart, Melissa *Inside Earthquakes*

48 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-5877-5 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-4027-8163-6 \$9.95

Stewart, Melissa *Inside Lightning*

48 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-5878-2 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-4027-8949-6 \$9.95

Stewart, Melissa *Inside Volcanoes*

48 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-5876-8 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-4027-8164-3 \$9.95

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Cynthia Shaw. Inside series. Clear prose and striking visuals combine to explain the title natural occurrences and their effects. The books are cautionary without being hysterical, conveying immediacy through a conversational style and occasional personal recollections. Foldout pages (some horizontal, some vertical) are generally used to excellent effect. Photos, drawings, charts, and other visuals are well chosen and well documented. Reading list, websites. Bib., glos., ind. FFB

Chancellor, Deborah *Planet Earth*

56 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6604-9 \$9.99
New ed. (2006).

Pellant, Chris *Rocks and Fossils*

56 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6606-3 \$9.99
New ed. (2003).

(4) K–3 Discover Science series. *Rocks* covers topics such as basic rock types, weathering, and a variety of fossils; the photos include both large-scale landforms and close-ups of rock and fossil samples. *Earth* touches on weather, natural resources, and conservation, with many photos and a few diagrams supporting the text. Both revised books (originally part of the Kingfisher Young Knowledge series) contain a quiz and some simplistic activities. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind.

Enslow, Brian *Fall Colors*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3909-4 \$21.26

Enslow, Brian *Spring Colors*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3906-3 \$21.26

Enslow, Brian *Summer Colors*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3907-0 \$21.26

Enslow, Brian *Winter Colors*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3908-7 \$21.26

(4) PS All About Colors of the Seasons series. With just twenty-eight to thirty words per book (word count listed at the end), beginning readers should find this series very accessible; whether they'll think it's interesting is another story. Vivid photographs show items associated (some loosely) with the season. A secular holiday from that season ends each book. Reading list, websites. Ind. BB

Ganeri, Anita *Canyon Hunters*

32 pp. Raintree LE ISBN 978-1-4109-4139-8 \$29.32

(4) K–3 Landform Adventurers series. Clear photographs of impressive landforms grab the spotlight in this introduction to exploring canyons. Simple text in large font explains colossal and underwater canyons, as well as the rocks, fossils, and wildlife within them. While lacking depth, the book provides a solid start that may pique the interest of young scientists. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. CHS

Gibbons, Gail *It's Snowing!*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2237-1 \$17.95

(3) K–3 Well-captioned, colorful illustrations in Gibbons's trademark style combine with accessible text to introduce snow. From water evaporation to the formation of ice crystals and snowflakes, the information is easy to understand. Responses to wintry weather conditions, including clean-up, safety, and play, provide additional significance for children. Tips for staying warm, being prepared, and experimenting with snow round out the friendly volume. TLD

Gilpin, Dan *Planet Earth*

32 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6591-2 \$10.99

(4) K–3 Explorers series. After an introduction, crowded double-page spreads explore our planet. Captioned photos and digital illustrations support the text (which appears in short paragraphs all over the pages) as it describes the sun and moon's effects on Earth; its composition, landscape, and habitats; and people's impact on the planet. Icons intended to link common themes throughout the book can be more confusing than helpful. Ind. SRA

Maass, Robert *A Is for Autumn*

32 pp. Holt/Ottaviano ISBN 978-0-8050-9093-2 \$16.99

(4) K–3 Large vivid photos of nature and people are featured in this colorful alphabetical autumnal walk-through. One to two sentences describe each key word in a bright, color-coordinated bar to the left of each photo or series of photos. While several key words are not particularly associated with fall, the photos for these words bring fall into the picture. SRA

Mogil, H. Michael, and Barbara G. Levine *Extreme Weather*

64 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-3274-1 \$16.99

(4) 4–6 Insiders series. Boldly illustrated with computer-assisted art and full of information in paragraphs, sidebars, charts, and captions, this book introduces weather and its extreme forms (e.g., supercell thunderstorms), then gives specific examples of weather-caused disasters, such as Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar. Mostly declarative sentences, sometimes in very small type, solidly explain the excited headings ("Weather Goes Wild"). Glos., ind. FFB

Morgan, Sally *Earth's Energy Sources*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-522-9 \$28.50

Morgan, Sally *Earth's Water Cycle*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-523-6 \$28.50

Morgan, Sally *Rocks*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-525-0 \$28.50

Morgan, Sally *Seasons*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-526-1 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Earth Cycles series. These volumes examine some of Earth's natural resources (water, rocks) and processes in nature (seasons, energy source creation) in terms of interconnected cycles. The very basic main texts are supplemented with captioned photographs and somewhat random "Q and A" sidebars. The information is very selective, but the volumes could make for decent introductions to the subjects. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. LC

Pipe, Jim *Terrifying Storms*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-518-2 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 On the Edge series. Pipe superficially touches on notable storms from around the world (most during the twentieth century), including hurricanes, tornadoes, blizzards, hailstorms, and dust storms. Photographs show clear

images of the storms' aftermaths; short sidebars provide details. A "Would You Survive?" quiz is appended. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. JM

Tomecek, Steve *Everything Rocks and Minerals*

64 pp. National LE ISBN 978-1-4263-0801-7 \$25.90
PE ISBN 978-1-4263-0768-3 \$12.95

(4) 4–6 With Carsten Peter. Tomecek covers factual information about rock types, rock formation, and mineral properties, with a great deal of emphasis on human uses for a variety of earth materials. The overly bright, busy layouts include good color photographs and text boxes with commentary from "extreme" photographer Peter, who has experienced many of the geologic phenomena. Several basic experiments are also included. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. DJF

PREHISTORIC LIFE

Hartland, Jessie *How the Dinosaur Got to the Museum*

40 pp. Blue Apple ISBN 978-1-60905-090-0 \$17.99

(3) K–3 Hartland traces the preparation of a diplodocus fossil for exhibition at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. With each step, from discovery of the dinosaur remains through transport to the museum to assembly of the fossil and production of its installation, the text provides accessible information about the overall process. Eye-pleasing illustrations incorporate humor while detailing the behind-the-scenes work. DJF

Hughes, Catherine D. *National Geographic Little Kids First Big Book of Dinosaurs*

128 pp. National ISBN 978-1-4263-0846-8 \$14.95
LE ISBN 978-1-4263-0847-5 \$21.90

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Franco Tempesta. Descriptions of dinosaurs, arranged by size from small to "gigantic," are presented in double-page spreads. Details on pronunciation and the geologic period in which each lived, along with size guides, extend the information. Illustrations of the various dinosaur species in action appear on garishly colored pages. Parents' tips and a dinosaur map are appended. Glos., ind. DJF

Kirkpatrick, Katherine *Mysterious Bones: The Story of Kennewick Man*

60 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2187-9 \$17.95

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Emma Stevenson. The discovery of the titular ninety-five-hundred-year-old skeleton led to important findings about human migration but also sparked a legal battle and ignited conflict with Native Americans. Kirkpatrick sensitively delves into concepts of race and ancestry alongside thoughtful discussions of what we can learn about peoples' lives through study of their bones. Detailed color illustrations portray the skeleton and related artifacts. Reading list, timeline, websites. Bib., glos., ind. DJF

Loxton, Daniel *Ankylosaur Attack*

32 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-631-3 \$16.95

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Daniel Loxton and Jim W. W. Smith. Tales of Prehistoric Life series. A young ankylosaur goes about his regular day: wandering through his forested North American habitat, eating plants, and encountering an older, sicker member of his species. When a Tyrannosaurus rex attacks the older dinosaur, the younger helps to fend her off. The digitally composed illustrations are just this side of garish but will please dino-lovers. DJF

Sloan, Christopher *Baby Mammoth Mummy: Frozen in Time*

48 pp. National ISBN 978-1-4263-0865-9 \$17.95
LE ISBN 978-1-4263-0866-6 \$26.90

(3) 4–6 Engaging text supported by maps, diagrams, photographs, and illustrations captures the excitement and significance of the 2007 discovery of a fully preserved baby woolly mammoth. Firsthand accounts, scientific details, and even mythology blend well, effectively demonstrating the collaborative efforts that yielded new insight into the Ice Age in general and the creature itself, along with predictions for its present-day descendants. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. TLD

NATURAL HISTORY

Aronin, Miriam *Saving Animals from Volcanoes*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-291-2 \$25.27

Markovics, Joyce *Saving Animals After Earthquakes*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-289-9 \$25.27

Markovics, Joyce *Saving Animals After Floods*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-292-9 \$25.27

Person, Stephen *Saving Animals from Fires*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-293-6 \$25.27

Person, Stephen *Saving Animals from Hurricanes*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-290-5 \$25.27

Person, Stephen *Saving Animals from Oil Spills*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-288-2 \$25.27

(4) 4–6 Rescuing Animals from Disasters series. This series recounts specific disasters and the rescue efforts made to save the animals affected, using accessible but stilted language, brief personal stories, and evocative (sometimes cute [baby turtles], sometimes disturbing [severely burned cows]) photographs. Though successes are highlighted, harsh realities are not ignored (especially in *Oil Spills*). Well-known examples of the specific types of disasters are appended. Reading list. Bib., glos., ind. RLH

Boothroyd, Jennifer *Scales*

24 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5787-2 \$21.27

Boothroyd, Jennifer *Skin*

24 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5789-6 \$21.27

(4) K–3 First Step Nonfiction: Body Coverings series. Simple, easy-to-read sentences describe different animals and the functions of their body coverings (with potentially difficult words in bold print). Bright, uncluttered photographs accompany each page. A longer paragraph at the end of the book describes one topic in more depth; additional facts (that use but don't explain new topics or vocabulary) are appended. Glos., ind. MJS

Bredeson, Carmen *Weird but True Animal Homes*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3861-5 \$21.26

(4) K–3 Weird but True Science series. This book highlights the unusual habitats of animals including Antarctic shrimp, cactus wrens, naked mole rats, and Mount Everest choughs. Beginning with a brief "Words to Know" glossary, the volume then offers eight double-page spreads about specific weirdnesses. Excellent color photos and accessible but limited text are not well served by the constant refrain, "It's weird, but it's true!" Reading list, websites. Ind. FFB

Callery, Sean *Grasslands: Discover Earth's Ecosystems*

32 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan LE ISBN 978-0-7534-6692-6 \$12.99

Callery, Sean *Polar Lands: Discover Earth's Ecosystems*

32 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan LE ISBN 978-0-7534-6691-9 \$12.99

(3) K–3 Life Cycles series. After a brief introduction to the title ecosystem, examples of three actual food chains within that ecosystem are presented (e.g., from *Grassland*: zebra, hyena, lion, vulture). Well-designed double-page spreads (including useful tab-charts on left-hand pages) provide brief information about each creature and its place on the chain. Vivid photos and vibrantly colored pages are eye-catching. Useful food-web charts summarizing content are appended. Websites. Glos., ind. SRA

▲ **Chin, Jason** *Coral Reefs*

40 pp. Roaring Brook/Flash Point/Porter ISBN 978-1-59643-563-6 \$16.99

(2) K–3 Chin's text is a straightforward description of corals, their growth into reefs, and interesting inhabitants; his illustrations show a girl in the library pulling out this very book and embarking on an adventure where the contents come to life. Detailed pictures capture the dappled light of shallow water and the bright tropical colors and patterns in the featured flora and fauna. Review 9/11. DJF

Claybourne, Anna *Weird Creatures*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-519-9 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 On the Edge series. Claybourne superficially touches on a variety of unique animals, from giant squids to hagfish, mole rats, and blue-footed boobies. A "Weird Animal Awards" section highlights superlatives (e.g., "Slimiest," "Most Leggy," "Loudest"). Photographs provide clear

images of the creatures, while short sidebars add interest. A "Weird Creature Finder" lists very general habitat locales. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. JM

Cusick, Dawn *Cool Animal Names: Porcupinefish, Zebra Eels, Leopard Geckos, Owl Monkeys, Giraffe Beettles, & 251 Other Bizarre Creatures*

80 pp. Charlesbridge/Imagine ISBN 978-1-936140-39-8 \$14.95

(3) 4–6 Cusick introduces over two hundred fifty animals with unusual names; they're grouped according to nomenclature rather than species (for example, readers will find leopard frogs with leopard sharks and leopard moths). Clear photographs accompany brief descriptions of habitats, behavior, and/or unique characteristics. Nature enthusiasts will appreciate the variety of familiar and unfamiliar animals and will return for multiple browsing experiences. Ind. TLD

Davies, Nicola *Monsters of the Deep*

32 pp. National ISBN 978-1-4263-0860-4 \$16.95

(3) 4–6 An array of unusual sea animals is presented for readers who find scary-looking undersea creatures thrilling. Topics include whales (orca, blue, and sperm), Japanese spider crabs, sunfish, box jellyfish, giant tube worms, colossal squid, and blackdevil angler fish. Removable 3-D action cards are included for those with the ability to download the necessary software. Vivid photographs and sidebars with facts related to each creature add interest. LBC

Davies, Nicola *Oceans and Seas*

56 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6602-5 \$9.99

(4) K–3 New ed. (2004). Discover Science series. This volume contains basic facts about oceans, tides, fish, sea birds, and water pollution. The information could be better organized; it's all rather random. Many photographs, a quiz, and several activities (some of which—e.g., making sea slugs out of marzipan—are more silly than scientific) are included. This revised edition was originally part of the Kingfisher Young Knowledge series. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind.

▲ **Davies, Nicola** *Talk, Talk, Squawk!: A Human's Guide to Animal Communication*

64 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5088-9 \$14.99

(2) 4–6 Illustrated by Neal Layton. Davies presents the ways in which animals communicate through the use of color and pattern recognition, smells, sounds, and chemical exchanges; she also discusses how humans are researching all this. Her friendly tone makes the complex ideas remarkably clear and understandable, and Layton's cartoon illustrations, complete with humorous communications from the anthropomorphized creatures, neatly underscore the important scientific messages. Review 1/12. DJF

Donald, Rhonda Lucas *Deep in the Desert*

32 pp. Sylvan Dell ISBN 978-1-60718-125-5 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-60718-135-4 \$8.95

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Sherry Neidigh. Published spring 2011. This effort to convey information about worldwide deserts in verse that not only rhymes but may be sung to melodies like “Yankee Doodle” is inventive but falters at such a difficult (and, arguably, pointless) challenge. Detailed illustrations are the book’s strongest feature, and appended activity pages reinforce content—but even they can’t lift the volume from its self-inflicted awkwardness. FFB

Fielding, Beth *Animal Tails*

36 pp. Charlesbridge/EarlyLight ISBN 978-0-9797455-8-4 \$14.95

(3) K–3 Conversational text supported by photographs and sidebars introduces the diverse types and purposes of animal tails, from defense and protection to communication and mobility; animals are grouped according to how their tails support survival. Suggested activities add an element of fun. The last section further explores how animals communicate via their tails. Glos., ind. TLD

Ganeri, Anita *Rainforests*

32 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6590-5 \$10.99

(4) K–3 Explorers series. After an introduction, crowded double-page spreads explore the rainforest habitat. Captioned photos and digital illustrations support the text (which appears in short paragraphs all over the pages) as it describes the rainforest’s layers, its flora and fauna, people who live there, and its endangered status. Icons intended to link common themes throughout the book can be more confusing than helpful. Ind. SRA

Ham, Catherine *Animal Fights*

32 pp. Charlesbridge/EarlyLight ISBN 978-0-9832014-0-3 \$14.95

Ham, Catherine *Animal Naps*

32 pp. Charlesbridge/EarlyLight ISBN 978-0-9832014-1-0 \$14.95

(4) K–3 Colorful photos of animals fighting or sleeping engage readers. Every page has its own background color, its own tag (“Seal Naps”), and an associated word (“Dreaming?”). Each animal also has its own poem, but the verse can be awkward and it sometimes personifies the animals (“Do you think they [giraffes] might cry?”). Photos of additional animals fighting or sleeping end the books. Ind. FFB

Holing, Dwight *Incredible Journeys: Amazing Animal Migrations*

126 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6726-8 \$19.99

(3) 4–6 Animal Planet series. This volume is organized by land, air, and water routes of migrating animals. Most are covered in double-page spreads (wildebeests rate a poster-size foldout). All pages are packed with useful facts and dramatic photos, occasional artwork reproductions, and some charts. The sections progress naturally, but entries may also be studied separately. Ind. FFB

Hulbert, Laura *Who Has These Feet?*

40 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-8097-3 \$16.99

(3) PS Illustrated by Erik Brooks. Published spring 2011. This engaging question-and-answer volume explains how the feet of nine animals have adapted to suit their environments. For each creature, a double-page spread shows an impressively detailed close-up of the mystery feet; the next spread reveals the animal in its habitat, succinctly describing the purpose of its unique feet features (sticky pads, claws, toes, scales, etc.). An appended gatefold shows all the animals. SRA

Johnson, Jinny *Coral Reef Life*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-502-1 \$27.10

Johnson, Jinny *Deep Sea Life*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-503-8 \$27.10

Johnson, Jinny *Ocean Life*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-504-5 \$27.10

Johnson, Jinny *Polar Sea Life*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-505-2 \$27.10

Johnson, Jinny *River and Lake Life*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-506-9 \$27.10

Johnson, Jinny *Seashore Life*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-501-4 \$27.10

(3) 4–6 Watery Worlds series. In brief, accessible texts, Johnson provides a good amount of information about a variety of life forms in and around bodies of water. The books’ highlights are the vivid photographs, well matched to the subject matter. Different sidebars (“Amazing!” “Guess What?” “Watch Out!”) provide details about individual animals or specific issues. Useful for browsing. Glos., ind. LC

Kapchinske, Pam *Hey Diddle Diddle: A Food Chain Tale*

32 pp. Sylvan Dell ISBN 978-1-60718-130-9 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-60718-140-8 \$8.95

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Sherry Rogers. Rhymed text provides examples of three chains in a riparian food web. The verse, spoken by each creature (gratuitously and randomly dropping *gs* and adding *as*: “a hissinn’ and a grinninn’”) is forced as it attempts to provide small, random tidbits about animal behavior. Illustrations that look slightly out of focus show animal bodies and human facial expressions. Learning activities are appended. FFB

Kelly, Irene *Even an Octopus Needs a Home*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2235-7 \$16.95

(4) K–3 From temporary leafy nests for chimpanzees to giant long-lasting reefs for corals; from lofty termite towers to deep badger burrows, all animals need some kind of a home. Appealing watercolor, gouache, and pen-and-ink illustrations, including some cross-sections of the dwellings, clearly show the animals and their shelters. The text, while informative, is set in distractingly wavy paragraph blocks. PR

Kieber-King, Cynthia *Habitat Spy*

32 pp. Sylvan Dell ISBN 978-1-60718-122-4 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-60718-132-3 \$8.95

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Christina Wald. Published spring 2011. “Let’s spy in the backyard . . . / maples stretch, / bumblebees bump . . .” This simple introduction to habitats features over a dozen, including swamp, desert, mountain, and ocean. Bright realistic illustrations are accessible and engaging. The brief rhyming text is sometimes clever (“otters flip”) and sometimes forced (“deer stride”); overall there’s not much information imparted. Back matter delves deeper and suggests activities. FFB

Lee, Dora *Biomimicry: Inventions Inspired by Nature*

40 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-467-8 \$18.95

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Margot Thompson. Lee’s engaging text introduces the concept of biomimicry, the use of natural structures and processes as models for human-produced materials. Explanations of various design elements are accompanied by examples from nature and their human-produced counterparts, such as the creation of fabric similar to sharkskin for swimmers and robots with features including mechanical whiskers and wings. Textured illustrations highlight the examples. Glos., ind. DJF

▲ Lunde, Darrin *After the Kill*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-57091-743-1 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-57091-744-8 \$7.95

(2) K–3 Illustrated by Catherine Stock. In this blunt portrayal of animal life in the Serengeti, a lioness stalks and kills a zebra. Vultures, hyenas, jackals, and meat-eating beetles arrive until all that remains of the zebra is bones. Given the topic’s inherent grisliness, the text is notably matter-of-fact. The pictures, expansive horizontal spreads, are almost impressionistic, focusing more on the predators’ ferocity than details of their prey. Review 7/11. RS

McPhee, Margaret *Show-Offs*

64 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6722-0 \$12.99

Riley, Kathy *Attack and Defense*

64 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6723-7 \$12.99

(4) K–3 Animal Planet: Weird and Wonderful series. With topics covering everything from the hunting habits of the platypus to why a peacock is so brightly colored, these books are filled with interesting facts about animal defense or appearance. The downside of the breadth of information is that each creature/topic is only given very brief, cursory coverage. Dynamic (but busy) layouts include many photographs and computer-generated illustrations. Glos., ind. PIH

Morgan, Sally *Animal Life Cycles*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-521-2 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Earth Cycles series. This volume examines the lives of a selection of animals in terms of interconnected cycles. The very basic and general main text is supplemented with captioned photographs and somewhat random “Q and A”

sidebars. The information is very selective, but the book could make for a decent introduction to the subject. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. LC

Nardi, James *In Mouse’s Backyard*

40 pp. Schiffer ISBN 978-0-7643-3833-5 \$16.99

(5) 4–6 In sing-songy rhyming verse, Nardi examines the territory of a white-footed mouse from above and below, the flora and fauna within, and changes over the seasons. The detailed nature illustrations are accompanied by too-small photographs and photomicrographs. A good dose of science is included, but the tiny pictures and small fonts make much of the information hard to discern. DJF

Pattison, Darcy *Prairie Storms*

32 pp. Sylvan Dell ISBN 978-1-60718-129-3 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-60718-139-2 \$8.95

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Kathleen Rietz. This yearlong celebration of the prairie features twelve double-page-spread illustrations (one for each month) and lyrical descriptions of animals responding to seasonal weather changes. Both text and illustrations vary from being effective and engaging to overly earnest and pseudo-poetic. Appended pages include additional information and classroom activities. No resources for further study are included. TLD

▲ Pringle, Laurence *Billions of Years, Amazing Changes: The Story of Evolution*

102 pp. Boyds ISBN 978-1-59078-723-6 \$17.95

(2) 4–6 Illustrated by Steve Jenkins. Pringle traces scientific developments that led to Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species* as well as subsequent discoveries that have contributed to understanding of species change. Straightforward explanations of such concepts as natural selection, genetic mutations, and speciation are woven through the historical timeline, making even the most complex ideas understandable. Copious illustrations include photographs, diagrams, and Jenkins’s wonderfully detailed cut-paper illustrations. Review 1/12. DJF

Rissman, Rebecca *Teeth*

24 pp. Heinemann LE ISBN 978-1-4329-5042-2 \$21.50

(4) PS Animal Spikes and Spines series. This volume gives youngsters a basic introduction to various animals’ teeth, focusing mostly on appearance (“Some teeth are long and orange. What animal is this?”). Vivid, close-up photographs (e.g., of a beaver, to answer the question above) are more engaging and instructive than the repetitive text. Human teeth are mentioned at the end. A gratuitous “Can You Remember?” page is appended. Glos., ind. EJM

Rustad, Martha E. H. *Animals in Fall: Preparing for Winter*

24 pp. Millbrook LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5066-8 \$23.93

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Amanda Enright. Cloverleaf Books: Fall’s Here! series. A round-faced, bundled-up child narrator tells readers how animals prepare for the colder months. Migration, hibernation, and camouflage are approachably explained; sidebars shaped like leaves supplement the main

text with additional facts about the creatures. Autumnal illustrations portray animals in the ocean, woods, sky, and underground. An activity is appended. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. sjw

Salzmann, Mary Elizabeth *Home Sweet Burrow*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-815-6 \$14.95

Salzmann, Mary Elizabeth *Home Sweet Cave*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-816-3 \$14.95

Salzmann, Mary Elizabeth *Home Sweet Den*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-817-0 \$14.95

Salzmann, Mary Elizabeth *Home Sweet Nest*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-818-7 \$14.95

(4) K–3 SandCastle: Animal Homes series. Each volume begins with a very brief introduction, helping explain what types of animals call the title dwelling home. Several examples are provided; the texts, while easy to read, usually give just one or two details about the creatures. Vivid close-up photographs are eye-catching. The last page pointlessly asks: “Could *you* live in a [name of animal home]?” Quizzes are appended. Glos. PIH

Schriemer, Peter *Ocean Adventures*

32 pp. Zonderkidz ISBN 978-0-310-72141-3 \$16.99

Schriemer, Peter *Wilderness Discoveries*

32 pp. Zonderkidz ISBN 978-0-310-72142-0 \$16.99

(5) 4–6 Nature of God series. Readers are invited to explore “God’s creations” in the ocean and wilderness. Both books include attractive photos and some kid-friendly factual information about a variety of animals. However, the science is buried under intelligent-design-type descriptions: “God designed most owls to be nighttime hunters.” Difficult-to-follow page design further confuses things. MVK

▲ Sidman, Joyce *Swirl by Swirl: Spirals in Nature*

40 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-31583-6 \$16.99

(1) PS Illustrated by Beth Krommes. “A spiral is a snuggling shape . . . coiled tight, warm and safe . . .” Krommes’s scratchboard illustrations, vividly depicting spirals in nature, suffuse every page with color, shape, and movement. Each spread presents an entire landscape in varying palettes, with a treasure trove of details that will captivate the youngest readers. Sidman’s very simple text is powerful, poetic, and good for reading aloud and reading again. Review 9/11. NL

▲ Webb, Sophie *Far from Shore: Chronicles of an Open Ocean Voyage*

80 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-618-59729-1 \$17.99

(2) 4–6 Published spring 2011. Naturalist Webb provides a richly detailed journal of her experiences as a birder on a four-month-long research cruise. The volume combines scientific information, field guide-like illustrations, and a thorough account of day-to-day life. Throughout, Webb captures the science and also the real-life minutiae of the trip. The illustrations—intricate marine-hued watercolors—take readers all over the ship and above and below the ocean. Glos., ind. Review 9/11. DJF

Woop Studios *A Zeal of Zebras: An Alphabet of Collective Nouns*

64 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-1-4521-0492-8 \$17.99

(4) K–3 This alphabet book features twenty-six striking graphic illustrations, each accompanied by a brief paragraph or two about the particular animal group. “An embarrassment of pandas,” “a movement of moles,” and “an exaltation of larks” (for X, of course) are impressively represented. This is less a book than a collection of prints. MVK

Worth, Bonnie *Safari, So Good!: All About African Wildlife*

40 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86681-4 \$8.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96681-1 \$12.99

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Aristides Ruiz and Joe Mathieu. Cat in the Hat’s Learning Library series. “I’m the Cat in the Hat. / Pack your bag. Come with me. / We’re going to Africa / on safari!” The rhymes don’t get much better than that in this all-over-the-place look at African animals; it’s part educational, part jokey, and neither works well. The illustrations are serviceable impostors of Seuss’s work. Reading list. Glos., ind. ERG

BOTANY

Morgan, Sally *Plant Life Cycles*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-524-3 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Earth Cycles series. This volume examines a selection of plant life in terms of interconnected cycles. The very basic and general main text is supplemented with captioned photographs and somewhat random “Q and A” sidebars. The information is very selective, but the book could make for a decent introduction to the subject. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. LC

Rustad, Martha E. H. *Fall Leaves: Colorful and Crunchy*

24 pp. Millbrook LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5062-0 \$23.93

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Amanda Enright. Cloverleaf Books: Fall’s Here! series. This approachable book describes leaves throughout the seasons, from buds in spring to healthy leaves to falling leaves in autumn. Changes in color and (audible) changes in texture are compared and discussed. Round-faced cartoon children share their observations with readers while red leaves act as sidebars, supplying further details and “fun facts.” A leaf print activity is appended. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. sjw

Sterling, Kristin *Exploring Flowers*

24 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7316-5779-7 \$21.27

Sterling, Kristin *Exploring Leaves*

24 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5780-3 \$21.27

Sterling, Kristin *Exploring Roots*

24 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5781-0 \$21.27

(4) K–3 First Step Nonfiction: Let's Look at Plants series. Simple, easy-to-read sentences describe different plant parts and the functions of each (with potentially difficult words in bold print). Bright photographs accompany the texts; some of the pictures of people interacting with plants are awkwardly staged. An "All Kinds of . . ." spread summarizes each category; additional facts (that use but don't explain new topics or vocabulary) are appended. Glos., ind. MJS

INSECTS AND INVERTEBRATES

Glaser, Linda *Not a Buzz to Be Found: Insects in Winter*

32 pp. Millbrook LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5644-8 \$25.26

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Jaime Zollars. Glaser details the winter survival techniques of a dozen different insects. Short, rhythmic lines explain each insect's adaptations (field cricket: "Safely hidden, you'd wait and wait"). Evocative paintings move from colorful fall to icy winter and finally burst into spring. The insects' point of view is emphasized in text and pictures, with nearby children also engaged in typical winter activities. FFB

Hibbert, Clare *Beetles*

32 pp. Arcturus LE ISBN 978-1-84837-957-2 \$28.50

Hibbert, Clare *Butterflies and Moths*

32 pp. Arcturus LE ISBN 978-1-84837-959-6 \$28.50

Hibbert, Clare *Spiders*

32 pp. Arcturus LE ISBN 978-1-84837-962-6 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Really Weird Animals series. In each of these books, single- or double-page spreads feature a few random facts about a particular insect or arachnid, mostly focusing on what makes the animal "really weird." Text bubbles, "Weird or What?" boxes, and close-up, detailed photos will draw readers in. The coverage is minimal, but what's there is often engaging. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. KA

Johnson, Jinny *Insects and Creepy-Crawlies*

32 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6592-9 \$10.99

(4) K–3 Explorers series. After an introduction, crowded double-page spreads explore the lives of insects and other "creepy-crawly" creatures (earthworms, spiders, scorpions, etc.). Captioned photos and digital illustrations support the text (which appears in short paragraphs all over the pages) as it describes life cycles, homes and habitats, diet, and defenses. Icons intended to link common themes throughout the book can be more confusing than helpful. Ind. SRA

Markle, Sandra *Black Widows: Deadly Biters*

48 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5038-5 \$29.27

Markle, Sandra *Harvestmen: Secret Operatives*

48 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5042-2 \$29.27

Markle, Sandra *Scorpions: Armored Stingers*

48 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5037-8 \$29.27

Markle, Sandra *Ticks: Dangerous Hitchhikers*

48 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5041-5 \$29.27

(3) 4–6 Arachnid World series. Published spring 2011. These volumes discuss the title animals' physical characteristics, life cycles, and danger to humans. Markle's clear and detailed narratives, along with instructive close-up photographs of the exterior and interior anatomies of the title arachnids, will fascinate readers and make them instant experts on the creatures. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. JF

Marsh, Laura *Spiders*

32 pp. National LE ISBN 978-1-4263-0852-9 \$12.90

PE ISBN 978-1-4263-0851-2 \$3.99

(3) K–3 National Geographic Readers series. This leveled reader offers very basic information about various types of spiders. Clearly delineated headings introduce each subtopic (e.g., "A Spider's Body," "Web Builders," "Super Spiders!"). Simple sentence structures, along with corny jokes ("What does a spider do on a computer? It works on its own web site!"), excellent well-captioned photos, and sidebars, increase accessibility. Glos. ERG

Silverman, Buffy *Can You Tell a Bee from a Wasp?*

32 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6730-7 \$25.26

Silverman, Buffy *Can You Tell a Butterfly from a Moth?*

32 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6713-4 \$25.26

(3) K–3 Lightning Bolt Books: Animal Look-Alikes series. These easy-to-read and informative texts highlight the differences between animals that may look alike but are actually unique in terms of feeding, habitat, growth, and predatory behavior. Dissimilarities in appearance are also covered. Close-up photographs, large type, and brightly colored pages along with descriptive sidebars and "Fun Facts" enhance accessibility. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. CAL

▲ Simon, Seymour *Butterflies*

32 pp. HarperCollins/Collins ISBN 978-0-06-191493-5 \$17.99

(2) K–3 Simon begins his clear and friendly explanations with the monarch butterfly and its remarkable migration. He then moves to a more general discussion of moth and butterfly life cycles, structure and function, species similarities and variations, and importance to humans. The outstanding full-page color photographs are perfectly in sync with the text, with each focused sharply on the pertinent details. Glos., ind. Review 11/11. DJF

Singer, Marilyn *Caterpillars*

40 pp. Charlesbridge/EarlyLight ISBN 978-0-9797455-7-7 \$14.95

(3) K–3 A lighthearted poem begins the book and forms the organizational basis for this appealing volume. Double-page spreads of well-crafted prose follow, each focusing on a line of poetry (for example, “Hiding on a tree outside” sets up a section on juniper hairstreak and other caterpillars specializing in camouflage). Numerous colorful photos, carefully labeled, decorate the pages. Back matter includes a quiz and matching game. Reading list, websites. *Glos.*, ind. *FFB*

Siy, Alexandra *Bug Shots: The Good, the Bad, and the Bugly*

40 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2286-9 \$16.95

(3) 4–6 Photomicrographs by Dennis Kunkel. Siy employs a detective theme to lead readers through an investigation of insect facts, with profiles of familiar insect species such as beetles, butterflies, bees, and flies. The insects’ “mug shots” are brightly colored photomicrographs at various levels of magnification. The visually stunning use of false color in the photomicrographs highlights important features of the insects. *Websites*. *Bib.*, *glos.*, ind. *DJF*

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

Hibbert, Clare *Snakes and Lizards*

32 pp. Arcturus LE ISBN 978-1-84837-961-9 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Really Weird Animals series. From chameleons to king cobras, twenty-one different reptiles are featured on single- or double-page spreads. A few random facts, mostly about what makes the animal “really weird,” are spotlighted in text bubbles. The close-up, detailed photos will draw readers in. The coverage is minimal, but what’s there is often engaging. Reading list, websites. *Glos.*, ind. *KA*

Hutchinson, Mark *Reptiles*

64 pp. Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-3276-5 \$16.99

(4) 4–6 Insiders series. Boldly illustrated with dramatic computer-assisted art and full of information in paragraphs, sidebars, charts, and captions, this book introduces the four main branches of reptiles, then gives specific examples of some of the more noteworthy ones (“Nile Crocodile: Death Roll”). Mostly declarative sentences, sometimes in very small, hard-to-read type, solidly explain the attention-grabbing headings (“Burmese Python: Squeeze Tight”). *Glos.*, ind. *FFB*

Jordan, Christina *I Wish I Were a Komodo Dragon*

24 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-659-1 \$28.50

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Gabhor Utomo. Looking Glass Library: I Wish I Were . . . series. Subdued illustrations show a village-dwelling boy imagining life as a komodo dragon. Although he thinks of lots of up-sides, he realizes he’d miss his friends and his vegetarian diet. The text is in rhyme, which makes the incorporation of facts a stretch. The huge reptile’s tongue is erroneously shown as pink rather than yellow. *Glos.* *BB*

Markle, Sandra *The Case of the Vanishing Golden Frogs: A Scientific Mystery*

48 pp. Millbrook LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5108-5 \$29.27

(3) 4–6 Panamanian golden frogs are dying off, and scientists want to know why. Markle leads readers through a series of questions, carefully examining the evidence collected by researchers to answer each one. Cause of the deaths (a fungus) is eventually uncovered, then steps taken to preserve the remaining population are detailed. Vivid photographs feature scientists and frogs in the field. Reading list, websites. *Glos.*, ind. *DJF*

Marsh, Laura *Sea Turtles*

32 pp. National LE ISBN 978-1-4263-0854-3 \$12.90

PE ISBN 978-1-4263-0853-6 \$3.99

(3) K–3 National Geographic Readers series. This leveled reader offers very basic information about sea turtles. Clearly delineated headings introduce each subtopic (e.g., “Nestbuilding,” “Sea Turtle Rescue”). Simple sentence structures, along with corny jokes (“What kind of phone does a sea turtle have? A shell phone!”), excellent well-captioned photos, and sidebars, increase accessibility. *Glos.* *ERG*

Silverman, Buffy *Can You Tell an Alligator from a Crocodile?*

32 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6733-8 \$25.26

(3) K–3 Lightning Bolt Books: Animal Look-Alikes series. This easy-to-read and informative text highlights the differences between two animals that may look alike but are actually unique in terms of feeding, habitat, growth, and predatory behavior. Dissimilarities in appearance are also covered. Close-up photographs, large type, and brightly colored pages along with descriptive sidebars and “Fun Facts” enhance accessibility for young readers. Reading list, websites. *Glos.*, ind. *CAL*

Weber, Belinda *Reptiles*

56 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6605-6 \$9.99

(4) K–3 New ed. (2006). Discover Science series. This book presents random information about the title creatures. Browsers may enjoy the small details, including facts about tortoise-shell ridges and the independent movement of a chameleon’s eyes; however, the text could be better organized and more in-depth. Many engaging photos in addition to a quiz and craft projects are included. This revised edition was originally part of the Kingfisher Young Knowledge series. Reading list, websites. *Glos.*, ind.

FISH

Hibbert, Clare *Fish*

32 pp. Arcturus LE ISBN 978-1-84837-960-2 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Really Weird Animals series. From the fangtooth to the sarcastic fringehead, twenty-three different fish are featured on single- and double-page spreads. A few random facts, mostly about what makes the animal “really weird,” are spotlighted in text bubbles. The close-up, detailed

photos will draw readers in. The coverage is minimal, but what's there is often engaging. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. KA

Swinney, Geoff *Fish Facts*

48 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-58980-908-6 \$17.99

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Janeen Mason. New ed. (1994). The book's title says it all: fish lovers will find a wealth of information. Others might liken the experience to drinking from a taxonomic fire hose; there's a lot to take in on crowded pages. Bright illustrations, full color in this new edition, closely match the text; both provide general information (such as habitat) and details (such as the three types of male sunfish). Ind. FFB

BIRDS

Boothroyd, Jennifer *Feathers*

24 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5785-8 \$21.27

(4) K–3 First Step Nonfiction: Body Coverings series. Simple, easy-to-read sentences describe different birds and the uses of their feathers (with potentially difficult words in bold print). Bright, uncluttered photographs accompany each page. A longer paragraph at the end of the book describes feathers' parts and functions in more depth; additional facts (that use but don't explain new topics or vocabulary) are appended. Glos., ind. MJS

Costain, Meredith *Penguin: A Life Cycle Book*

32 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6724-4 \$9.99

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Gary Hanna. Animal Planet: My Life in the Wild series. A young emperor penguin relates the story of its life, from egg to egg-keeper ("After laying our egg, my partner sets off on her long trek back to our feeding ground . . ."). The text is easy to follow, with accessible vocabulary and an engaging narrative voice. Accompanying digital-looking illustrations are lifelike and vivid. Additional facts and a quiz are appended. Glos. PIH

Hibbert, Clare *Birds*

32 pp. Arcturus LE ISBN 978-1-84837-958-9 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Really Weird Animals series. From the common (pelican) to the more exotic (potoo), one of twenty different birds is featured on a single- or double-page spread. A few random facts, mostly about what makes the animal "really weird," are spotlighted in egg-shaped text bubbles. The close-up, detailed photos will draw readers in. The coverage is minimal, but what's there is often engaging. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. KA

London, Jonathan *Little Penguin: The Emperor of Antarctica*

32 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5954-5 \$17.99

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Julie Olson. This book relates a young penguin's first year, from hatching atop his father's feet to learning to swim and escaping a leopard seal. Although the text and illustrations are somewhat anthropomorphic, the details represent authentic behavior. Effec-

tively varying perspective, the pictures exploit the sharp contrast between black-and-white penguins and blue-white snow and ice. FFB

Lunis, Natalie *Mockingbird: Noisy Mimic*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-277-6 \$22.61

(4) K–3 Animal Loudmouths series. This volume covers standard topics including habitat, young, homes, and defense. Focus on animal sounds is not as strong as the series title would suggest (though the concluding "Sound Check" charts help by summarizing scientific findings about the meaning of songs and calls). Large labeled photos, informative fact boxes, and clean design help enhance the bland main text. Reading list. Glos., ind. SRA

Murray, Julie *Emus*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-010-5 \$28.50

(4) K–3 Big Buddy Books: Australian Animals series. This volume provides a brief introduction to the emu, a bird that lives in Australia. The text jumps from topic to topic, but clear writing and simple vocabulary make it a useful choice for independent reading. Occasional "Uncovered!" sidebars along with close-up photos of the friendly looking title animal enhance the volume. Glos., ind. KA

Sill, Catherine *About Hummingbirds: A Guide for Children*

48 pp. Peachtree ISBN 978-1-56145-588-1 \$16.95

(3) K–3 Illustrated by John Sill. In each spread, one simple sentence faces a full-page, detailed painting of a hummingbird. Each plate, numbered and labeled with the specific bird's name, corresponds to an afterword that contains a fact-filled paragraph with information such as distribution, habitat, food, and special capabilities for the pictured animal. The main text is easily accessible for young readers, while older kids will also be interested in the back matter. Reading list, websites. Bib., glos. FFB

MAMMALS

Burnie, David *Mammals*

48 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6610-0 \$12.99

(4) 4–6 Navigators series. Each busy double-page spread is packed with attention-grabbing photos, interesting facts, and accurate information. The book is most suitable for browsing, as the sections are randomly organized: following mammals' births, topics include teeth, hunting, self-defense, and rodents. Websites. Glos., ind. FFB

Costain, Meredith *Cheetah: A Life Cycle Book*

32 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6725-1 \$9.99

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Mick Posen. Animal Planet: My Life in the Wild series. The life of a cheetah in the wild is all about finding food, even as a baby. This volume focuses on a cheetah cub as it learns to hunt with its mother. The first-person text is easy to follow, with accessible vocabulary and

an engaging narrative voice. Accompanying digital-looking illustrations are lifelike and vivid. Additional facts and a quiz are appended. *Glos.* *PIH*

Cowcher, Helen *Desert Elephants*

40 pp. Farrar ISBN 978-0-374-31774-4 \$16.99

(3) K–3 Explaining that the Mali elephants of West Africa follow a three-hundred mile circular route looking for watering holes, this story also focuses on how and why the local Dogon, Fulani, and Tuareg peoples allow the herds to migrate in peace. Cowcher's dramatic art depicts the elephants' journey and the people's welcoming reactions. An appended author's note gives more details. *Websites.* *BTM*

Heos, Bridget *What to Expect When You're Expecting Joeys: A Guide for Marsupial Parents (and Curious Kids)*

32 pp. Millbrook ISBN 978-0-7613-5859-6 \$25.26

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Stéphane Jorisch. Expecting Animal Babies series. This guide to marsupial babies, ostensibly addressed toward expectant parents, answers common questions about joeys (e.g., How do they stay in the pouch? When do they leave?). The questions and answers are conversational and informative (if not very scientific; text and pictures are heavily anthropomorphized). Watercolor illustrations do their part to keep the tone light and playful. *PIH*

Hubbell, Patricia *Horses: Trotting! Prancing! Racing!*

32 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5949-1 \$17.99

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Joe Mathieu. In rhyming couplets, this horse-celebrating volume touches on care, horse behavior, and jobs horses do, though the random arrangement is awkward ("Horses buck and roll and snooze. Some of them wear iron shoes"). Gentle watercolor and pencil illustrations show chunky, oddly-proportioned horses, but the soft colors and textures and the subjects' good humor will appeal to a child's eye. *ALB*

Jordan, Christina *I Wish I Were a Furry Ferret*

24 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-656-0 \$28.50

Jordan, Christina *I Wish I Were a Howler Monkey*

24 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-657-7 \$28.50

Jordan, Christina *I Wish I Were a Humpback Whale*

24 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-658-4 \$28.50

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Gabhor Utomo. Looking Glass Library: I Wish I Were . . . series. Subdued illustrations show children imagining life as the title mammals. Although they think of lots of up-sides, they realize they'd miss things about their own habits (e.g., having friends, playing). The texts are in rhyme, which makes the incorporation of facts a stretch in places. *Glos.* *BB*

Kolpin, Molly *American Black Bears*

24 pp. Capstone LE ISBN 978-1-4296-6131-7 \$23.99

Kolpin, Molly *Polar Bears*

24 pp. Capstone LE ISBN 978-1-4296-6130-0 \$23.99

(4) K–3 First Facts: Bears series. Basic facts about the lives of the title bear species are discussed. Brief paragraphs and "Fact!" text boxes, along with photographs, enhance accessibility. The texts are very selective with details (e.g., no mention is made of the endangered status of polar bears or the threat to black bears in some areas of North America). *Reading list.* *Glos., ind.* *BB*

Lunis, Natalie *Coyote: The Barking Dog*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-279-0 \$22.61

Lunis, Natalie *Hippo: River Horse*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-275-2 \$22.61

Lunis, Natalie *Howler Monkey: Super Loud*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-276-9 \$22.61

Lunis, Natalie *Humpback Whale: The Singer*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-280-6 \$22.61

Lunis, Natalie *Hyena: Who's Laughing?*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-278-3 \$22.61

(4) K–3 Animal Loudmouths series. These volumes cover standard topics including habitat, young, homes, and defense. Focus on animal sounds is not as strong as the series title would suggest (though the concluding "Sound Check" charts help by summarizing scientific findings about the meaning of the different sounds). Large labeled photos, informative fact boxes, and clean design help enliven the bland main texts. *Reading list.* *Glos., ind.* *SRA*

Marsh, Laura *Cheetahs*

32 pp. National LE ISBN 978-1-4263-0856-7 \$12.90
PE ISBN 978-1-4263-0855-0 \$3.99

Marsh, Laura *Ponies*

32 pp. National LE ISBN 978-1-4263-0850-5 \$12.90
PE ISBN 978-1-4263-0849-9 \$3.99

(3) K–3 National Geographic Readers series. These leveled readers offer very basic information about the title animals. Clearly delineated headings introduce each subtopic (e.g., "What Is a Pony?"). Simple sentence structures, along with corny jokes ("On which day do cheetahs eat their prey? Chewsday!"), excellent well-captioned photos, and sidebars, increase accessibility. *Glos.* *ERG*

Murray, Julie *Kangaroos*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-011-2 \$28.50

Murray, Julie *Koalas*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-012-9 \$28.50

Murray, Julie *Platypuses*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-013-6 \$28.50

(4) K–3 Big Buddy Books: Australian Animals series. This series provides brief introductions to animals native to Australia. The texts jump from topic to topic, but clear writing and simple vocabulary make them useful choices for inde-

pendent reading. Occasional “Uncovered!” sidebars along with close-up photos and some drawings of the friendly looking title animals enhance the volumes. *Glos., ind.* KA

▲ O’Connell, Caitlin, and Donna M. Jackson *The Elephant Scientist*

71 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-05344-8 \$17.99

(2) 4–6 Photographs by Caitlin O’Connell and Timothy Rodwell. *Scientists in the Field* series. Scientist O’Connell’s contributions to our understanding of elephant communication propel this account. O’Connell and Jackson describe the findings in a way that lets readers witness the unfolding of a research program, as hypotheses lead to new insights that beget even more questions. The many photographs, predominantly from Namibian field sites, capture the majestic elder elephants, their always-appealing offspring, and dusty, rugged landscapes. *Reading list, websites. Bib., glos., ind.* Review 11/11. DJF

Silverman, Buffy *Can You Tell a Cheetah from a Leopard?*

32 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6735-2 \$25.26

(3) K–3 *Lightning Bolt Books: Animal Look-Alikes* series. This easy-to-read and informative text highlights the differences between two animals that may look alike but are actually unique in terms of feeding, habitat, growth, and predatory behavior. Dissimilarities in appearance are also covered. Close-up photographs, large type, and brightly colored pages along with descriptive sidebars and “Fun Facts” enhance accessibility for young readers. *Reading list, websites. Glos., ind.* CAL

Taylor, Barbara *Apes and Monkeys*

56 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6603-2 \$9.99

(4) K–3 New ed. (2004). *Discover Science* series. This book presents very basic information about the title creatures. The text could be better organized and a little more in-depth (e.g., the statement, “What is an ape? You are one!” is never explained or explored). Many engaging photos, a quiz, and craft projects are included. This revised edition was originally part of the Kingfisher Young Knowledge series. *Reading list, websites. Glos., ind.*

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

Goldish, Meish *Rottweiler: Super Courageous*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-298-1 \$25.27

Lunis, Natalie *German Shepherd: Super Smart*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-299-8 \$25.27

Oldfield, Dawn Bluemel *Newfoundland: Water Rescuer*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-296-7 \$25.27

Person, Stephen *Great Dane: Gentle Giant*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-297-4 \$25.27

Rudolph, Jessica *Labrador Retriever: Most Popular*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-300-1 \$25.27

Rudolph, Jessica *Saint Bernard: Mountain Rescuer*

32 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-295-0 \$25.27

(4) K–3 *Big Dogs Rule* series. Each volume begins with a notable member of the title breed (e.g., Saint Bernard Katie, a therapy dog at a public library). The books then give very broad histories of the breeds, with hit-or-miss information about physical characteristics, personality, intelligence, and suitability as pets. “At a Glance” and “Best in Show” diagrams are also included. Numerous photographs enhance interest for dog lovers. *Reading list. Bib., glos., ind.* CAL

Hengel, Katherine *Amazing American Curls*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-829-3 \$17.95

Hengel, Katherine *Delightful Devon Rexes*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-830-9 \$17.95

Hengel, Katherine *Outgoing Oriental Shorthairs*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-831-6 \$17.95

Hengel, Katherine *Regal Russian Blues*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-832-3 \$17.95

(4) K–3 *Super SandCastle: Cat Craze* series. These volumes contain useful information for cat lovers or cat-owning children who may be responsible for taking care of the family pet. Topics include the history of each breed, physical features, personality traits, and day-to-day needs. The texts are bland, but readers will enjoy the accompanying photos of cats and kittens as well as quizzes and helpful charts. *Glos. ACB*

Mattern, Joanne *American Pit Bull Terriers*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-988-7 \$24.21

Mattern, Joanne *Border Collies*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-989-4 \$24.21

Mattern, Joanne *Catahoula Leopard Dogs*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-990-0 \$24.21

Mattern, Joanne *Irish Red and White Setters*

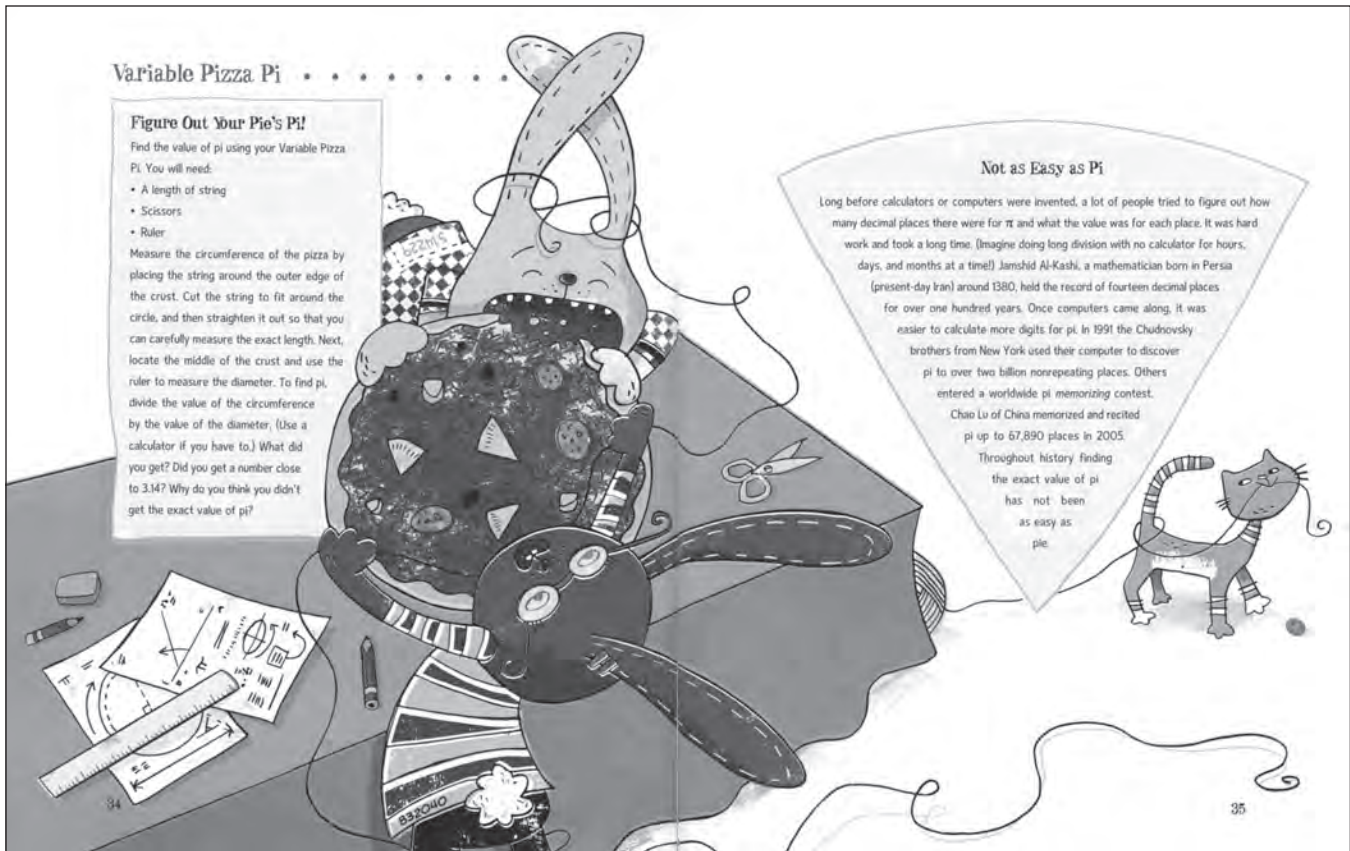
24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-991-7 \$24.21

(4) 4–6 *Checkerboard Animal Library: Dogs* series. Easy-to-read but bland texts help young animal lovers decide which breed of dog is best suited to them. Each title features basic information about the breed’s history, behavior and temperament, coat and color, size, nutrition, and health as well a section on special needs of puppies. The vivid photographs will be winners with dog lovers. *Glos., ind.* CAL

McCarthy, Meghan *The Incredible Life of Balto*

32 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-84460-7 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-94460-4 \$19.99

(3) K–3 McCarthy recounts the engaging tale of Balto, the sled dog that led a team carrying lifesaving medication from Anchorage to Nome, Alaska. The text delves into Balto’s later life, which included starring in a movie, performing on vaudeville, and retiring to the Brookside Zoo in Cleveland, Ohio. McCarthy’s recognizable illustrations, starring big-eyed, big-hearted characters, enhance the journey. *Bib.* CAL



TECHNOLOGY

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 Cookery and Nutrition 161
 Life Skills 163

MEDICINE, HUMAN BODY, AND DISEASES

- Abramovitz, Melissa *Autoimmune Disorders*
 112 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0657-0 \$33.45
 Abramovitz, Melissa *Hepatitis*
 120 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0595-5 \$33.45
 Adams, Jacqueline *Alzheimer’s Disease*
 112 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0553-5 \$33.45
 Kelly, Shannon *Lyme Disease*
 104 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0635-8 \$33.45
 Sheen, Barbara *Asthma*
 104 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0591-7 \$33.45
 (4) YA Diseases & Disorders series. One common foreword and a short volume-specific introduction lead to chapters defining each condition and explaining symptoms, diagno-

sis, treatment, and current research. The writing is straightforward but not particularly engaging. Some photomicrographs and charts are included, but most of the pictures and illustrations are generic (or even anatomically incorrect). Reading list, websites. Bib., glos., ind. GBH

Allman, Toney *Infectious Disease Research*
 96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-177-4 \$27.95
 (4) YA Inside Science series. Allman examines cutting-edge topics in infectious disease research, from antibiotic resistance to global pandemics. After some history of the field, the volume examines current basic and applied research studies, and the historical and contemporary scientists engaged in the work. Color photographs and diagrams supplement the dense text, and unfamiliar words are defined in text boxes. Reading list, websites. Ind. DJF

Bredeson, Carmen *Weird but True Human Body Facts*
 24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3865-3 \$21.26
 (4) K–3 Weird but True Science series. This book highlights unusual facts about the human body. Beginning with a brief “Words to Know” glossary, the volume then offers eight double-page spreads about specific weirdnesses (e.g., the speed of a sneeze; the high percentage of bones in feet and hands). Excellent color photos and accessible but limited text are not well served by the constant refrain, “It’s weird, but it’s true!” Reading list, websites. Ind. FFB

Brill, Marlene Targ *Diabetes*

128 pp. Twenty-First Century LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6085-8 \$34.60

Goldsmith, Connie *Leukemia*

128 pp. Twenty-First Century LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6087-2 \$34.60

Yancey, Diane *STDs*

128 pp. Twenty-First Century LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5456-7 \$34.60

(4) YA USA Today Health Reports: Diseases and Disorders series. In each volume, eight chapters cover the basics of each illness or disorder: definitions, symptoms, treatment, and research. The scientific writing is serviceable; personal stories plus articles, interviews, graphics and other material from *USA Today* provide real-life context. Accompanying photos are generic, but the photomicrographs are clear and specific. Reading lists, websites. Bib., glos., ind. GBH

Cozic, Charles *Teenage Mental Illness*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-167-5 \$27.95

Parks, Peggy J. *Teenage Eating Disorders*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-166-8 \$27.95

(5) YA Compact Research series. Two-page “At a Glance” and “Overview” chapters introduce four sections describing the title “teenage problem” (eating disorders or mental illness), treatment, and prevention. Each chapter is followed by quotations from primary and secondary sources and a bulleted list of facts with charts and graphs. The topics are of interest to teens, but the quotes lack context, making it difficult to judge speakers’ biases. Reading list, timeline, websites. Bib., ind. ERG

Engdahl, Sylvia, Editor *Sleep Disorders*

147 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5255-7 \$37.10

Gillard, Arthur, Editor *Food-Borne Diseases*

153 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5252-6 \$37.10

Langwith, Jacqueline, Editor *Autoimmune Diseases*

145 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5251-9 \$37.10

Naff, Clay Farris, Editor *Influenza*

123 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5253-3 \$37.10

(4) YA Perspectives on Diseases and Disorders series. Each book includes three sections: “Understanding,” “Controversies” (or “Issues”), and “Personal Experiences.” The sections contain previously published essays about the topics, often with conflicting perspectives that are impossible to assess without medical background. “Personal Experiences” could be useful for readers wanting to know more about individual cases. Photos, charts, and graphs are included. Reading list, timeline. Glos., ind. GBH

Guillain, Charlotte *101 Ways to Get in Shape*

56 pp. Raintree LE ISBN 978-1-4109-3897-8 \$32.00

PE ISBN 978-1-4109-4384-2 \$8.99

Townsend, John *101 Things You Didn't Know About Your Body*

56 pp. Raintree LE ISBN 978-1-4109-3896-1 \$32.00

PE ISBN 978-1-4109-4383-5 \$8.99

(4) 4–6 101 series. These volumes present one hundred and one numbered facts that are loosely grouped by topic (human body systems, “embarrassing” functions in *Body*;

eating and exercise in *Shape*). On busy pages, informational paragraphs, quizzes, anecdotes about famous people, case studies, photographs, etc., all vie for attention. *Body* ends with “Top Ten Tips.” Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. GBH

Haugen, Hayley Mitchell, Editor *People with Disabilities*

112 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-4798-0 \$31.80

(4) YA Social Issues Firsthand series. This book presents previously published essays about the issues surrounding physical and mental disabilities. Because the stories are so personal—and varied—they may strike a chord with readers while helping to put faces to the topics. More context and background information about the authors would be useful, and the unillustrated text is dense. A directory of organizations to contact is appended. Reading list. Ind. ERG

Macnair, Patricia *Everything You Need to Know About the Human Body*

160 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6686-5 \$12.99

(3) K–3 An introductory “What Makes a Human Body?” section gives an overview—structures, blood, illness—followed by four sections on human development and major functional systems; appended “Now You Know!” pages summarize information. Readers will be engaged by the volume’s many sidebars, illustrations, and photographs. It’s a lot to look at, but it’s fairly well organized. Vocabulary definitions and websites appear throughout. Ind. GBH

Merino, Noël, Editor *Medical Marijuana*

179 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5424-7 \$39.70

(5) YA Current Controversies series. This volume attempts to show opposing sides of the arguments surrounding medical marijuana: “Should Marijuana Be a Medical Option?” The book lumps together newspaper, magazine, and website articles from supposed experts, some of whom have credentials, some whose authority is more dubious (the distinction is not necessarily evident). The volume is more a lesson in spin and propaganda than useful for research. Websites. Bib., ind. ERG

Platt, Richard *Plagues, Pox, and Pestilence*

48 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6687-2 \$15.99

(4) 4–6 Illustrated by John Kelly. This mash-up of medical science and history presents random information including invention of the microscope, archaic beliefs and modern knowledge of how diseases spread, as well as facts about the plague, leprosy, and more. Text boxes with small type are at right angles and kitty-corner to one another. Illustrations include goggle-eyed mites, rats, flies, and other creatures. May be useful for browsing. Glos., ind. GBH

MACHINES AND TECHNOLOGY

Boothroyd, Jennifer *From the Model T to Hybrid Cars: How Transportation Has Changed*

32 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6743-7 \$25.26

(4) K–3 Lightning Bolt Books: Comparing Past and Present series. Boothroyd provides simple then-and-now comparisons of transportation methods. It's a kid-friendly approach, but the comparisons are cursory, and the examples are dumbed-down ("People travel across water in boats and ships"). Stock photos show present-day people (in color) and people of the past (in black and white) going places. Mini-biographies are appended. Reading list. Glos., ind. SRA

Crowther, Robert *Amazing Pop-Up Trucks*

10 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5587-7 \$17.99

(4) K–3 Crowther (*Cars, Trains, Ships*) takes trucks for a spin. Each double-page spread focuses on one type of vehicle: "Car Transporter," "Concrete-Transport Truck," "Monster Truck," "Garbage Truck," "Truck Trains." Text boxes allow for easy comparison of weight and other stats. The prose is relatively dry; readers will instead be drawn to what makes Crowther's works memorable: the numerous pop-ups, pullouts, and foldouts. ERG

Doman, Mary Kate *Airplanes*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3933-9 \$21.26

Doman, Mary Kate *Big Military Machines*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3932-2 \$21.26

Doman, Mary Kate *Big Trucks*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3929-2 \$21.26

Doman, Mary Kate *Cool Cars*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3930-8 \$21.26

Doman, Mary Kate *Earthmovers and Diggers*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3931-5 \$21.26

Doman, Mary Kate *Rescue Vehicles*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3934-6 \$21.26

(4) PS All About Big Machines series. Each book gives some very basic information about the title subjects, sometimes naming the different types of vehicles in that category or briefly describing what each one does. Young children interested in vehicles will enjoy this series primarily for its clear and engaging photographs; they aren't likely to be deterred by the bland, repetitive texts. Reading list, websites. Ind. EJM

George, Charles, and Linda George *Biotech Research*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-176-7 \$27.95

(4) YA Inside Science series. The authors examine cutting-edge research topics, from the Human Genome Project to genetically modified food. After some history of the field, the volume examines current basic and applied research studies, and the historical and contemporary scientists engaged in the work. Color photographs and diagrams accompany the dense text. Unfamiliar words are defined in text boxes. Reading list, websites. Ind. DJF

Gifford, Clive *Robots*

56 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6607-0 \$9.99

(4) K–3 New ed. (2003). Discover Science series. This volume classifies robots by general information, types, and functions. Some of these classifications overlap, such as service robots and humanoid robots. Though it's interesting, the level of superficiality can cause confusion. Many photographs, a quiz, and a few craft project ideas are included. This revised edition was originally part of the Kingfisher Young Knowledge series. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind.

Gifford, Clive *Things That Go*

32 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6593-6 \$10.99

(4) K–3 Explorers series. After an introduction, crowded double-page spreads feature six categories of transportation or high-powered vehicle. Captioned photos and digital illustrations support the text (which appears in short paragraphs all over the pages) as it describes specific vehicles' purposes and how they work. Icons intended to link common themes throughout the book can be more confusing than helpful. Ind. SRA

Gilbert, Sara *The Story of Apple*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-061-5 \$23.95

Gilbert, Sara *The Story of eBay*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-062-2 \$23.95

Gilbert, Sara *The Story of Wal-Mart*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-064-6 \$23.95

(4) 4–6 Built for Success series. These volumes chronicle the featured corporations' development from modest beginnings to global significance. This includes shining a spotlight on the personalities (CEOs, entrepreneurs) and controversies behind the businesses. The texts include detailed data about pricing, profit revenue, salaries, and other financial information that may interest budding businesspeople. The many photographs are a draw, but the too-small font is off-putting. Bib., glos., ind. CJ

Goldish, Meish *Amazing Amusement Park Rides*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-304-9 \$22.61

(4) 4–6 So Big Compared to What? series. Straightforward text provides very general facts about superlative amusement park rides from around the world. Some of the size comparisons are useful while others seem like filler. There's just enough information to satisfy the most basic requirements of an elementary-school report. Accompanying photographs are generally well produced (some of the action shots are a little blurry). Reading list. Bib., glos., ind. MLB

Gordon, Sherri Mabry *Using Technology: A How-To Guide*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3441-9 \$31.93

(4) YA Life: A How-To Guide series. Teens can learn what they already know: that they really like to use technology. The book focuses disproportionately on texting and cell phones, and the content lacks clear organization. Personal stories interspersed throughout add a human face but

often sound canned; stock photos are similarly hit-or-miss. Quizzes may engage readers. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. BLS

Graham, Ian *Forensic Technology*

46 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-532-8 \$34.25

Graham, Ian *Robot Technology*

46 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-533-5 \$34.25

Oxlade, Chris *Gaming Technology*

46 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-531-1 \$34.25

Ross, Stewart *Sports Technology*

46 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-534-2 \$34.25

(3) YA New Technology series. This up-to-date series examines how technology drives, changes, and otherwise influences the title subject areas, from exponentially increasing the accuracy and speed of forensics to enhancing sports statistics and protecting athletes. The texts are readable (at a fairly high level), with photos, charts, and drawings clarifying and extending them. Sidebars enhance the volumes and offer important ethical pros and cons. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. FFB

Hamilton, John *Abrams Tanks*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-073-0 \$18.95

Hamilton, John *Bradley Fighting Vehicles*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-074-7 \$18.95

Hamilton, John *Cougars*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-075-4 \$18.95

Hamilton, John *Humvees*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-076-1 \$18.95

(4) 4–6 Military Vehicles series. This series identifies four vehicles used in contemporary military conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. The specifications, military uses, statistical data, and materials used in construction of each vehicle are briefly discussed. Reluctant readers and military buffs will appreciate the readable, if selective and superficial, texts enhanced by large captioned photographs. Glos., ind. LBC

Hanson, Anne E. *Ambulances in Action*

24 pp. Capstone LE ISBN 978-1-4296-6827-9 \$23.99

Olien, Becky *Police Cars in Action*

24 pp. Capstone LE ISBN 978-1-4296-6825-5 \$23.99

Schaefer, Lola M. *Semitrucks in Action*

24 pp. Capstone LE ISBN 978-1-4296-6826-2 \$23.99

(3) K–3 First Facts: Transportation Zone series. These slim volumes pack in a good amount of information on their title topics. Car and truck fans may be drawn to the brief texts, including historical background and contemporary examples; they may also find some challenging vocabulary. The many photographs are well labeled. Each volume includes an activity (e.g., “Make a Siren”). Reading list. Glos., ind. BB

Lavery, Brian *Legendary Journeys: Ships*

32 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6681-0 \$19.99

(4) 4–6 Lavery illustrates a history of sea craft including reed boats, Viking crafts, warships, clippers, luxury liners, aircraft carriers, and giant cargo haulers. Some pages employ lift-the-flaps or horizontal slide-outs that increase the page size threefold; it’s a nice effect but the pull-tabs can be cumbersome. The brief but informative text is enhanced by numerous illustrations. LBC

Pearce, Q. L. *Artificial Intelligence*

112 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0384-5 \$34.62

(3) YA Technology 360 series. After presenting the early history of artificial intelligence, Pearce provides thoughtful discussions of the appeal, markets, new developments, risks, and social implications of AI; for example, nanobots to destroy cancer cells or threats to humans from robotic advances. The book is as up-to-date as is possible for print. Photos, sidebars, and other visuals, as well as documented quotations, strengthen the presentation. Reading list, timeline, websites. Glos., ind. FFB

Pipe, Jim *Fantastically Fast Cars*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-516-8 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 On the Edge series. Pipe superficially explores the history of stock car racing along with providing information about specific auto races and types of cars; notable drivers are also spotlighted. Photographs provide clear images of the people, places, and vehicles, while short sidebars add interest. A “Have You Got What It Takes?” quiz is appended. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. JM

Ruck, Colleen *Cars*

24 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-673-8 \$24.25

Ruck, Colleen *Diggers*

24 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-674-5 \$24.25

Ruck, Colleen *Helicopters*

24 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-675-2 \$24.25

Ruck, Colleen *Motorcycles*

24 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-676-9 \$24.25

Ruck, Colleen *Planes*

24 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-677-6 \$24.25

Ruck, Colleen *Submarines*

24 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-678-3 \$24.25

Ruck, Colleen *Tractors*

24 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-679-0 \$24.25

Ruck, Colleen *Trucks*

24 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-680-6 \$24.25

(4) K–3 My Favorite Machines series. This series will attract young readers interested in vehicles of all kinds. Texts touch on different types of each vehicle (e.g., *Trucks* includes tankers, fire trucks, off-road trucks, etc.). The vivid photos are more engaging than the writing, but the basic vocabulary does lend itself to early decoding efforts. Websites. Glos., ind. EJM

Tieck, Sarah *Choppers*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-695-4 \$19.95

Tieck, Sarah *Dragsters*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-696-1 \$19.95

Tieck, Sarah *Helicopters*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-697-8 \$19.95

Tieck, Sarah *Hovercraft*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-698-5 \$19.95

(4) K–3 Big Buddy Books: Amazing Vehicles series. Published spring 2011. Very basic texts provide easy-to-understand information about the title vehicles: history, types (including what differentiates one from another), components (e.g., how they're built), purpose, dangers, etc. The writing is accessible, but it can be choppy and repetitive. Bright color and black-and-white photos are the most engaging features of the series. Glos., ind. JF

SPACE**Bredeson, Carmen** *Weird but True Space Facts*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3863-9 \$21.26

(4) K–3 Weird but True Science series. This book enthusiastically highlights unusual space phenomena. Beginning with a brief "Words to Know" glossary, the volume then offers eight double-page spreads about specific weirdnesses (e.g., the crater left by the Berringer meteor in Arizona; apparently permanent footprints left in moon dust). Excellent color photos and accessible but limited text are not well served by the constant refrain, "It's weird, but it's true!" Reading list, websites. Ind. FFB

Kops, Deborah *Exploring Space Robots*

40 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5445-1 \$27.93

Waxman, Laura Hamilton *Exploring the International Space Station*

40 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5443-7 \$27.93

(3) K–3 Searchlight Books: What's Amazing About Space? series. Space technologies are the focus of these two volumes. Detailed information is provided about the robots and probes used on various space missions, daily life and work aboard the ISS, and the science experiments conducted in the discussed settings. Well-captioned photographs show scientists and astronauts, robots, probes and spacecraft, and planetary surfaces. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. DJF

McMahon, Peter *Space Tourism*

40 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-368-8 \$16.95

(4) 4–6 Illustrated by Andy Mora. Machines of the Future series. Space travel for regular people is now possible (for a price), as explained in this survey of recent and future commercial flights, hotels, and other potential opportunities in space. The technical information about design and flight, with some firsthand reports from astronauts and test pilots, is accompanied by mediocre digital illustrations and several activities exploring related scientific principles. Glos., ind. DJF

Sparrow, Giles *Space Exploration*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-665-3 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Space Travel Guides series. This volume details the history of space exploration from the earliest attempts at rocket-powered flight to modern space stations. Each double-page spread focuses on one topic. Illustrations and photos are plentiful and do well to supplement the various text boxes and sidebars. The busy presentation is somewhat distracting but accessible. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. AMT

FARM LIFE, HUSBANDRY, AND GARDENING**Lawson, Dorie McCullough** *Tex: A Book for Little Dreamers*

40 pp. Trafalgar ISBN 978-1-57076-501-8 \$15.95

(3) PS Luke is a little boy who longs for life on the range. In dreams, he's transformed into alter-ego "Tex," working on Wymont Ranch alongside his trusty cowdog, Sue, and his horse, Thunder. The engaging book begins in black and white; vivid color photographs then show the cowpoke plowing, mending fences, and taking care of the herd as the text gives general information about ranch life. CAL

Malam, John *Grow Your Own Butterfly Farm*

32 pp. Heinemann LE ISBN 978-1-4329-5109-2 \$26.65

Malam, John *Grow Your Own Cat Toy*

32 pp. Heinemann LE ISBN 978-1-4329-5110-8 \$26.65

Malam, John *Grow Your Own Sandwich*

32 pp. Heinemann LE ISBN 978-1-4329-5108-5 \$26.65

(4) K–3 Grow It Yourself series. In this DIY series for outdoorsy kids, minimal texts explain how to grow flowers, catnip, and tomatoes. *Cat Toy* and *Sandwich* end with step-by-step instructions for making the title products. *Butterfly Farm* is less focused, jumping from descriptions of butterflies to information on flowers to planning and care of a garden. Attractive close-up photos will engage readers. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. GBH

Riney-Kehrberg, Pamela *Always Plenty to Do: Growing Up on a Farm in the Long Ago*

127 pp. Texas Tech ISBN 978-0-89672-692-5 \$21.95

(5) 4–6 From food and clothing to daily chores, school, and play, this title explores farm life approximately one hundred years ago. Despite some personal accounts that liven things up, the dry text will challenge even the most diligent reader. Black-and-white archival photographs are too small and indistinct to promote real connection with the experience. Questions for further discussion are appended. Glos. TLD

Rustad, Martha E. H. *Fall Apples: Crisp and Juicy*

24 pp. Millbrook LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5064-4 \$23.93

Rustad, Martha E. H. *Fall Pumpkins: Orange and Plump*

24 pp. Millbrook LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5065-1 \$23.93

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Amanda Enright. Cloverleaf Books: Fall's Here! series. These approachable books describe the basic growth and harvest processes of apples and pumpkins, from seed to table. Round-faced cartoon children guide readers through verdant orchards and bright-orange pumpkin patches. Red leaves act as sidebars, supplying further details about fall produce. Each volume concludes with a recipe. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. sjw

Urbigit, Cat *The Guardian Team: On the Job with Rena and Roo*

32 pp. Boyds ISBN 978-1-59078-770-0 \$16.95

(3) K–3 On a Wyoming ranch, a dog and a wild burro work together as livestock guardians, protecting orphaned lambs from predators. This touching story, bolstered by numerous large photographs, documents how the two develop a great partnership as they learn to establish complementary roles. Explanations of bonding, socialization, and the animals' natural instincts seamlessly support the narrative. An author's note is appended. Bib. SRA

Watterson, Carol *An Edible Alphabet: 26 Reasons to Love the Farm*

48 pp. Tricycle ISBN 978-1-58246-421-3 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-1-58246-422-0 \$19.99

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Michela Sorrentino. Watterson's playful text loosely adheres to agriculture-related topics from crops to manure. Some work well (e.g., the *D*: "Dig in for Dinner" section is about root vegetables and tubers); others stretch the parameters of farming (woolly bear caterpillars for *W*?). Spirited collage art with vivid colors illustrates the selections. BTM

COOKERY AND NUTRITION

Aboff, Marcie *The Fantastic Fruit Group*

24 pp. Capstone LE ISBN 978-1-4296-6090-7 \$22.65

PE ISBN 978-1-4296-7160-6 \$5.95

Aboff, Marcie *The Incredible Vegetable Group*

24 pp. Capstone LE ISBN 978-1-4296-6089-1 \$22.65

PE ISBN 978-1-4296-7163-7 \$5.95

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Kyle Poling. First Graphics: MyPlate and Healthy Eating series. This series introduces smart food choices with comic book–like formats, panels, word balloons, and other graphic features. Three sections discuss the title food group, some basic but scattershot facts about sources, and ways to eat fruits or vegetables. Bright colors and caricatures add interest and humor. Leveled text and declarative sentences enhance accessibility for new readers. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. GBH

Alexander, Heather *Easy Desserts from Around the World*

48 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3765-6 \$23.93

Alexander, Heather *Easy Main Dishes from Around the World*

48 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3766-3 \$23.93

Alexander, Heather *Easy Snacks from Around the World*

48 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3767-0 \$23.93

Llanas, Sheila Griffin *Easy Breakfasts from Around the World*

48 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3707-6 \$23.93

Llanas, Sheila Griffin *Easy Lunches from Around the World*

48 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3708-3 \$23.93

Llanas, Sheila Griffin *Easy Vegetarian Foods from Around the World*

48 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3764-9 \$23.93

(3) K–3 Easy Cookbooks for Kids series. Each book features recipes in the title category from eleven different countries (one recipe per country with some overlap across volumes). With photos of children preparing and enjoying appetizing international foods, cuisine is presented as a way to understand world cultures and tastes. Capsule introductions to the countries, cook's tips, and added facts about food enrich the lively magazine-like presentation. Safety reminders are included. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. PMC

Ancona, George *Come and Eat!*

48 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-58089-366-4 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-58089-367-1 \$7.95

(3) K–3 In this clear, detailed volume, Ancona shows young readers why the things, the ways, and the times of day when we eat are more than mere survival tactics. The significance of people gathering to dine is thoughtfully explored in words and photos showing people from many cultures enjoying food together in ordinary and celebratory times. A warmhearted and useful entry. PMC

Blaxland, Wendy *American Food*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-667-7 \$28.50

Blaxland, Wendy *Chinese Food*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-671-4 \$28.50

Blaxland, Wendy *French Food*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-669-1 \$28.50

Blaxland, Wendy *Mexican Food*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-668-4 \$28.50

Blaxland, Wendy *Middle Eastern Food*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-672-1 \$28.50

(3) 4–6 I Can Cook! series. This series introduces readers to worldwide cuisine. Each book begins with background on the title culture then moves to recipes varying in ease from simple (e.g., blueberry muffins) to complicated (Chinese dumplings). The straightforward step-by-step instructions are supplemented by photographs, "How To" sidebars, and

“Recipe Variations.” Kitchen equipment and safety along with nutritional information are provided in these educational and age-appropriate cookbooks. Glos., ind. sjw

Bredeson, Carmen *Weird but True Food*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3866-0 \$21.26

(4) K–3 *Weird but True Science* series. This volume highlights unusual—putatively—foods. Beginning with a brief “Words to Know” glossary and the food pyramid, the book offers eight double-page spreads about specific weirdnesses (e.g., eating malodorous durian fruit, drinking cow’s blood, using seaweed in ice cream). Excellent color photos and accessible but limited text are not well served by the classification of foreign cultural norms as “weird.” Reading list, websites. Ind. FFB

Dilkes, D. H. *Beans, Nuts, and Oils*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3928-5 \$21.26

Dilkes, D. H. *Bread and Grains*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3923-0 \$21.26

Dilkes, D. H. *Fruit*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3927-8 \$21.26

Dilkes, D. H. *Meat and Fish*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3925-4 \$21.26

Dilkes, D. H. *Milk and Dairy*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3924-7 \$21.26

Dilkes, D. H. *Vegetables*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3926-1 \$21.26

(5) PS All About Good Foods We Eat series. Vibrant stock photographs of smiling children enjoying healthy (usually but not always) treats drive the texts of these volumes. Content can be factually questionable (tomato juice, corn on the cob, mashed potatoes, and pumpkin pie in *Vegetables?* cranberry sauce in *Fruit?*), and it’s not always easy to match text with pictures. “Words to Know” begin each volume. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. ERG

LaPenta, Marilyn *Artful Snacks*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-307-0 \$22.61

LaPenta, Marilyn *Cool Cookies*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-308-7 \$22.61

LaPenta, Marilyn *Super ‘Wiches*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-306-3 \$22.61

LaPenta, Marilyn *Way Cool Drinks*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-163-2 \$22.61

(4) K–3 *Yummy Tummy Recipes* series. Simple recipes are presented alongside health tips and food facts on brightly colored pages. The illustrations appear to be a strange amalgam of photographs and computer-generated pictures that don’t always make the food look very appetizing. Still, young children interested in food creation will likely be able to follow the recipes. Reading list. Bib., glos., ind. SH

McCallum, Ann *Eat Your Math Homework: Recipes for Hungry Minds*

48 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-57091-779-0 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-57091-780-6 \$7.95

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Leeza Hernandez. McCallum makes difficult math concepts more accessible by bringing them into the kitchen. Recipes ranging from easy to complex yield foods in shapes and sizes that can be manipulated to illustrate math ideas (e.g., tortillas are cut into halves, thirds, etc., to better visualize fractions). Illustrations star exuberant and goofy bunny chefs. Glos., ind. sjw

Mendez, Sean *One World Kids Cookbook: Easy, Healthy and Affordable Family Meals*

96 pp. Interlink ISBN 978-1-56656-866-1 \$20.00

(3) 4–6 Vivid full-page close-up photographs of people around the world preparing and enjoying favorite foods make this book a visual feast. Nineteen countries are represented, with just six steps or fewer to the finished dishes. Cuisine is presented as a unifying, participatory family art, with children fully involved in preparation—and consumption. Experimentation with international tastes is celebrated. PMC

Petrie, Kristin *Food and Energy: Striking a Healthy Balance*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-080-8 \$25.65

Petrie, Kristin *Food as Fuel: Nutrition for Athletes*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-081-5 \$25.65

Petrie, Kristin *Food Buzz: Nutrition in the News*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-082-2 \$25.65

(4) 4–6 Checkerboard Science Library: Mission: Nutrition series. Emphasizing the importance of balancing varied food choices over counting calories, short, superficial chapters in each book cover food label decoding, portion control, hydration, local food movements, etc. Two pages with hints for healthy eating and a description of First Lady Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move! campaign end each book. Vibrant photos show kids preparing and enjoying all kinds of food. Glos., ind. GBH

Sheen, Barbara *Foods of Afghanistan*

64 pp. KidHaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5420-9 \$28.75

Sheen, Barbara *Foods of England*

64 pp. KidHaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5881-8 \$28.75

Sheen, Barbara *Foods of Iceland*

64 pp. KidHaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5869-6 \$28.75

Sheen, Barbara *Foods of Morocco*

64 pp. KidHaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5865-8 \$28.75

(3) 4–6 Taste of Culture series. Positing that a nation’s cuisine springs from its geography, history, and traditions, these volumes survey the flavors of the title countries. Availability of fresh ingredients is covered, along with celebratory foods and snacking habits. Culturally specific ingredients are described alongside accompanying recipes

and photos of people enjoying uniquely Icelandic, Afghan, English, or Moroccan dishes. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. PMC

LIFE SKILLS

Apelqvist, Eva *Getting Ready to Drive: A How-To Guide*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3443-3 \$31.93

(4) YA Life: A How-To Guide series. Apelqvist provides a concise yet thorough overview of the considerations made when preparing to drive. Chapters touch on large issues (e.g., rules of the road) along with smaller sub-topics, from learning disabilities to how to take a good driver's license photo. Personal stories interspersed throughout add a human face but often sound canned; stock photos are similarly hit-or-miss. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. BLS

Murphy, Stuart J. *Freda Is Found*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-58089-462-3 \$14.95

PE ISBN 978-1-58089-463-0 \$6.95

Murphy, Stuart J. *Write On, Carlos!*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-58089-464-7 \$14.95

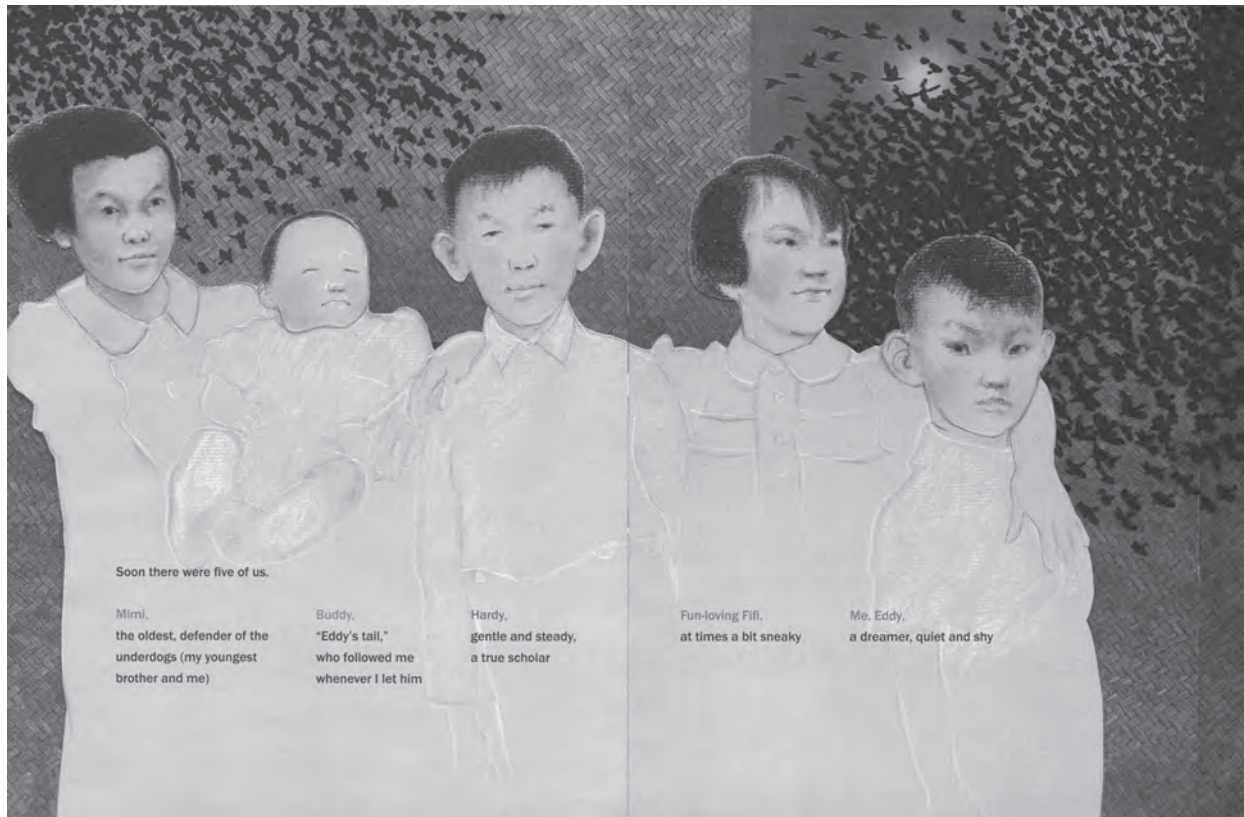
PE ISBN 978-1-58089-465-4 \$6.95

(5) PS Stuart J. Murphy's I See I Learn series. In these life-skills stories, Carlos learns to write his name and Freda gets lost on a field trip but stays calm until she's found. The texts, featuring short sentences, are accessible, but readers may find Freda's story confusing (her teacher is there all the time), and Carlos's writing problems very easily overcome. Pictures aimed at visual learners help tell the stories. CJ

Raatma, Lucia *Staying Safe on the School Bus*

24 pp. Capstone LE ISBN 978-1-4296-6823-1 \$23.99

(4) K–3 First Facts: Staying Safe series. An easy-to-read text presents some of the ways children should behave on or around school buses. Some of the tips are common sense while others are a little ominous ("Once you leave the bus, keep walking") or unrealistic ("At the bus stop, wait in line quietly. Don't push others or run around"). Photographs of kids demonstrating the tips accompany the text. Reading list. Glos., ind. BB



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HANDICRAFTS AND HOBBIES

Kenney, Karen Latchana *Cool Family Parties: Perfect Party Planning for Kids*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-973-3 \$18.95

Kenney, Karen Latchana *Cool Holiday Parties: Perfect Party Planning for Kids*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-974-0 \$18.95

Kenney, Karen Latchana *Cool International Parties: Perfect Party Planning for Kids*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-975-7 \$18.95

Kenney, Karen Latchana *Cool Slumber Parties: Perfect Party Planning for Kids*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-976-4 \$18.95

(3) 4–6 Checkerboard How-To Library: Cool Parties series. The basics of party planning for young hosts are covered, including choosing a theme; making invitations, decora-

tions, and favors; preparing food; and organizing activities for guests. The essentials of a festive occasion—the “who, what, when, and where of the party”—are engagingly explained, imparting useful information to ensure hosting success. Each book contains additional party theme ideas. Gloss., ind. PMC

McGee, Randel *Paper Crafts for Easter*

48 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3723-6 \$23.93

McGee, Randel *Paper Crafts for Mardi Gras*

48 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3724-3 \$23.93

McGee, Randel *Paper Crafts for Presidents' Day*

48 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3726-7 \$23.93

McGee, Randel *Paper Crafts for St. Patrick's Day*

48 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3725-0 \$23.93

McGee, Randel *Paper Crafts for Thanksgiving*

48 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3722-9 \$23.93

McGee, Randel *Paper Crafts for the 4th of July*

48 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3727-4 \$23.93

(4) K–3 Paper Craft Fun for Holidays series. Children use items such as recycled paper, glue, paint, and scissors to make simple holiday-themed craft projects including pop-up cards, hats, and decorations. Easter eggs, shamrocks, and hearts (for example) are the typical holiday fare; step-by-step directions and patterns to copy and enlarge enhance accessibility. Photographs illustrate the crafts in progress and the final products. Reading list, websites. Ind. PMC

Nguyen, Duy *Zombigami: Paper Folding for the Living Dead*

122 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-8646-4 \$9.95

(4) 4–6 Nguyen presents thirteen zombie-centric origami projects (fifty sheets of origami paper are included). Novices may be frustrated by having to look up specific folds and interpret each step's cryptic directions; working with a partner helps. Those with strong stomachs—check out “Seymour Guts”—and lots of patience will enjoy putting their paper-folding to the test. KLB

Scheunemann, Pam *Cool Stuff for Bath & Beauty: Creative Handmade Projects for Kids*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-980-1 \$18.95

Scheunemann, Pam *Cool Stuff for Family & Friends: Creative Handmade Projects for Kids*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-981-8 \$18.95

Scheunemann, Pam *Cool Stuff for Reading & Writing: Creative Handmade Projects for Kids*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-982-5 \$18.95

Scheunemann, Pam *Cool Stuff for School: Creative Handmade Projects for Kids*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-983-2 \$18.95

(4) 4–6 Checkerboard How-To Library: Cool Stuff series. The six to ten unusual craft projects in each of these books will intrigue creative middle schoolers (although they may wonder where to buy some of the required materials, like essential oils for soaps and metallic powder for a pendant). Directions are clear and photos show finished objects. Bland introductions, safety points, and conclusions frame the projects. *School* has a serious printing error. Glos., ind. PMC

VISUAL ARTS

Aston, Dianna Hutts *Dream Something Big: The Story of the Watts Towers*

40 pp. Dial ISBN 978-0-8037-3245-2 \$16.99

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Susan L. Roth. Through the voice of a youngster living in Watts, California (and neighbor to sculptor Simon “Uncle Sam” Rodia), Aston gives a child's-eye view of Rodia's construction of the Watts Towers and the realization of a personal dream. Roth's exquisite collages provide a fitting backdrop for the inspiring narrative. A note about Rodia and the towers and instructions for a craft project are appended. BC

Bodden, Valerie *How to Analyze the Films of George Lucas*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-087-7 \$23.95

Hamen, Susan E. *How to Analyze the Films of James Cameron*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-088-4 \$23.95

Lee, Sun Hee Teresa *How to Analyze the Films of Tim Burton*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-089-1 \$23.95

(3) YA Essential Critiques series. From a clear definition of critical theory and its purpose to practical applications, this series presents well-written introductions to the analysis of film. Each volume begins with a biographical sketch of the title director followed by four critical discussions of his work. A “You Critique It” assignment provides additional guidance. The books are worthy resources for thinking critically and developing and defending a thesis. Reading list, timeline, websites. Bib., glos., ind. TLD

Brockett, Jane *Ruby, Violet, Lime: Looking for Color*

32 pp. Millbrook LE ISBN 978-0-7613-4612-8 \$25.26

(3) K–3 Jane Brockett's Clever Concepts series. “Green is crisp and lively . . . Orange is hot and fiery.” In this energizing exploration of color, brilliant close-up photos are accompanied by rich descriptions, encouraging readers to recognize the wonderful and varied shades of color in the world around them. An inspiring launching point for art projects, the book also offers some straightforward art terminology such as primary and secondary colors. SRA

Butkus, Mike, and Merrie Destefano *How to Draw Vampires: Discover the Secrets to Drawing, Painting, and Illustrating Immortals of the Night*

128 pp. Walter Foster LE ISBN 978-1-936309-64-1 \$48.95

Butkus, Mike, and Merrie Destefano *How to Draw Zombies: Discover the Secrets of Drawing, Painting, and Illustrating the Undead*

128 pp. Walter Foster LE ISBN 978-1-936309-63-4 \$48.95

Rheume, John *How to Draw Wizards: Discover the Secrets to Drawing, Painting, and Illustrating a World of Sorcery*

128 pp. Walter Foster LE ISBN 978-1-936306-65-8 \$48.95

(3) YA Fantasy Underground series. Teens interested in elaborate fantasy art will find step-by-step directions for creating “realistic” ghoulish creatures and their accoutrements, both digitally and with traditional pencil and paint. Historical context for the creatures is given as an aid to creating the look of the page. Gory visuals focus on rendering decaying flesh, dripping blood, and gruesome detail: not for the faint of heart. PMC

▲ **Fillion, Susan** *Miss Etta and Dr. Claribel: Bringing Matisse to America*

84 pp. Godine ISBN 978-1-56792-434-3 \$18.95

(2) YA Born around the time of the Civil War to German Jewish immigrants, the Cone sisters (never married) inherited money from their father's business. Younger Etta discovers a passion for art; she begins collecting and teaches Claribel what she has learned. The book is illustrated with reproductions and original pictures that are strong enough to work side-by-side with those of Picasso and Matisse. Bib. Review 9/11. LR

Goldish, Meish *Spectacular Skyscrapers*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-303-2 \$22.61

Sandler, Michael *Freaky-Strange Buildings*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-305-6 \$22.61

(4) 4–6 So Big Compared to What? series. Straightforward texts provide very general facts about quirky, unusual, and intriguing buildings from around the world. Some of the size comparisons are useful while others seem like filler. There's just enough information to satisfy the most basic requirements of an elementary-school report. Accompanying photographs are generally large, clear, and well-produced (some are a little fuzzy). Reading list. Bib., glos., ind. MLB

Harris, Lois V. *Maxfield Parrish: Painter of Magical Make-Believe*

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-4556-1472-1 \$16.99

(4) 4–6 Parrish's realistically drawn fantasy scenes and figures drew criticism; he remained true to his particular gift, and achieved great commercial success. Liberally illustrated with Parrish's dreamlike posters and paintings, this picture book biography provides a minimal sketch of the artist's early life in order to frame his creative development and style. Notes about the illustrations are appended. PMC

Harvey, Jeanne Walker *My Hands Sing the Blues: Romare Bearden's Childhood Journey*

40 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5810-4 \$17.99

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Elizabeth Zunon. Present-tense rhymes ostensibly voiced by African American artist Bearden describe his childhood move from North Carolina to Harlem, where his past informed what would become his celebrated collage art. The rhymes, which an author's note says reflects Bearden's love of blues and jazz, don't sound kidlike; the oil and collage art, which also salutes Bearden, tells his story better. Reading list, websites. NB

Kallen, Stuart A. *Manga*

112 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0535-1 \$33.45

(3) YA Eye on Art series. Kallen examines Japanese manga in the context of mainstream art history. Manga's roots in Japanese culture, beginning in the early nineteenth century (when the term was coined) and up to modern manifestations in popular literature, are described in detail, with homage paid to significant artists' contributions. "Girl

manga" characters and American versions are also touched on. Useful illustrations and photographs are included. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. PMC

Kérillis, Hélène *A Bird in Winter: Inspired by a Painting by Pieter Bruegel*

32 pp. Prestel ISBN 978-3-7913-7080-4 \$14.95

Illustrated by Stéphane Girel.

Kérillis, Hélène *Little Ballerina: Inspired by a Painting by Edgar Degas*

32 pp. Prestel ISBN 978-3-7913-7081-1 \$14.95

Illustrated by Lucie Albon.

Massenot, Véronique *The Great Wave: Inspired by a Woodcut by Hokusai*

32 pp. Prestel ISBN 978-3-7913-7058-3 \$14.95

Illustrated by Bruno Pilorget. Published spring 2011.

Massenot, Véronique *Journey on a Cloud: Inspired by a Painting by Marc Chagall*

32 pp. Prestel ISBN 978-3-7913-7057-6 \$14.95

Illustrated by Élise Mansot. Published spring 2011.

(3) K–3 A wintry tale of a kindly peasant (*Bird*); a young ballerina transported to nineteenth-century Paris (*Ballerina*); the legend behind a Japanese celebration (*Wave*); a mailman on a dreamy voyage finding love (*Journey*). Four attractive oversize picture books inspired by works of Bruegel, Degas, Hokusai, and Chagall contain homage-paying illustrations, a reproduction of the influential masterpiece, and artist biographical information in question-and-answer format. KEH

Masiello, Ralph *Ralph Masiello's Robot Drawing Book*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-57091-535-2 \$16.95

PE ISBN 978-1-57091-536-9 \$7.95

(3) K–3 Young artists can start with basic shapes and progress through simple sequential steps to create a series of imaginative cartoon robots. The doodling becomes increasingly more complex as the lessons continue, with color and gadgetry added that will delight young technology buffs. Books and websites listed direct readers interested in building actual robots. PMC

Ritchie, Scot *Look at That Building!: A First Book of Structures*

32 pp. Kids Can ISBN 978-1-55453-696-2 \$16.95

(3) K–3 Five young friends discover some elementary principles of architecture. They romp through their town noticing foundations, structural beams, arches, columns, and domes. Simple definitions and cartoon illustrations make the concepts accessible, showing that they're embedded in the children's everyday life. A (slightly babyish) project involving craft sticks, marshmallows, and construction paper is appended. Ind. PMC

Roche, Art *Art for Kids: Comic Strips: Create Your Own Comic Strips from Start to Finish*

112 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-57990-788-4 \$17.95
PE ISBN 978-1-4027-8474-3 \$9.95

(3) 4–6 This guide for a young person interested in drawing comic strips covers the many steps to creating a story in pictorial art. The process is outlined clearly and with copious illustrations. Creating characters, writing funny incidents, organizing design layout, and even publishing advice are included. Cautionary notes about comic publishing on the internet are mentioned. Ind. PMC

Rubalcaba, Jill I. M. *Pei: Architect of Time, Place, and Purpose*

120 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5973-6 \$23.99

(3) YA This handsome volume, extensively illustrated with clear photographs and some architectural drawings, gives a personalized account of the career of the Chinese-born superstar architect. The informative text focuses on Pei's major projects including Boston's Kennedy Library; the National Gallery of Art, East Building, in Washington, D.C.; and the subterranean addition to the Louvre, with its distinctive pyramid entrance. Reading list, timeline, websites. Bib., ind. B. BADER

▲ Say, Allen *Drawing from Memory*

64 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-17686-6 \$17.99

(1) 4–6 This rendering of Say's adolescence—a coming-of-age story within the context of a long life and vocation—takes the form of an album, with text, photographs, drawings, and paintings. At the center of the book is Say's relationship with Noro Shinpei, a popular cartoonist who took Say on as an apprentice at thirteen. Throughout the volume, content is reinforced through canny artistic choices and harmonious design. Review 9/11. RS

Selznick, Brian *The Hugo Movie Companion*

256 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-33155-5 \$19.99

(3) 4–6 Photographs by Jaap Buitendijk. Selznick covers the adaptation of his novel *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* from page to screen in roughly chronological order, with plenty of trivia tidbits along the way. He also provides contextual information on Georges Méliès and early cinema, special-effects secrets, behind-the-scenes pictures, and cast and crew bios. A fan-pleasing extra: Selznick's account of filming his cameo for the final party scene. KLB

Shapiro, J. H. *Magic Trash: A Story of Tyree Guyton and His Art*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-58089-385-5 \$15.95

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Vanessa Brantley-Newton. Growing up poor in Detroit, young Guyton discovered painting (at his grandfather's prompting); as an adult, he incorporated found objects into his art and used his talents to beautify his besieged (by drugs, by bulldozers) neighborhood. It's an amazing, uplifting, ongoing story featuring illustrations—a riot of color, shape, and texture—made with mixed media, i.e., Guyton-style. Bib. NB

Stevesongs *The Shape Song Swingalong*

24 pp. Barefoot ISBN 978-1-84686-671-5 \$16.99

(3) PS Illustrated by David Sim. This volume celebrates the circle, square, and triangle. Bright, appealing gouache, acrylic, and pastel paintings show frolicking animals, dancing children, and their surrounding environment, all made up of the three basic shapes in various combinations. The accompanying CD includes a song version of the text and an animated video of the story. PMC

▲ Young, Ed *The House Baba Built: An Artist's Childhood in China*

48 pp. Little ISBN 978-0-316-07628-9 \$17.99

(2) 4–6 As told to Libby Koponen. Illustrated by Ed Young. In 1934, Ed Young's father built a house in Shanghai's "safest part," and it became a wartime refuge for the family. Young maintains a child's-eye view, focusing on life in the house and the children's games. Collages of beautifully integrated textured materials and family photos are interwoven with hand-drawn portraits, sketches, paintings, architectural diagrams, and gatefolds. Timeline. Review 9/11. JRL

Zuffi, Stefano *Art 123*

32 pp. Abrams ISBN 978-1-4197-0100-9 \$12.95

(4) PS Thirteen artworks—ranging from a Caravaggio painting to a Henry Moore sculpture—are accompanied by short rhymed text, sometimes descriptive, sometimes asking readers to look closely. The art is nicely reproduced, but the counting activity breaks down in places (in a Botticelli piece, nine "people" include one cupid and one specter; Renoir's painting includes more than twelve "guests"). GBH

MUSIC

Basher *Music: Hit the Right Note!*

64 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6629-2 \$12.99
PE ISBN 978-0-7534-6595-0 \$7.99

(5) 4–6 Written by Dan Green. Basher Basics series. Using hard-to-follow, pun-heavy text, this breezy little volume introduces the basic components of musical composition, notation, instruments (including voice), and types of music. The copious manga-style illustrations, while cute, don't add much understanding (particularly not of notation). A removable poster is included. Glos., ind. GBH

Cabrera, Jane *The Wheels on the Bus*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-2350-7 \$16.95

(3) PS Cabrera has set the familiar children's song in a richly textured jungle with a giraffe bus driver and a busload of wild animals. The golden-orange lion goes "roar, roar, roar" while the flamingos go "flap, flap, flap," and the chameleon plays "hide-and-seek, / All day long!" Young readers will enjoy singing along (sheet music appended) while delighting in the animals' antics. sjw

Celenza, Anna Harwell *Duke Ellington's Nutcracker Suite*

32 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-57091-700-4 \$19.95

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Don Tate. In 1960, Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn composed a jazz rendition of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*. They performed it in Las Vegas to amused and enthusiastic audiences. Celenza's text is appropriately jazzy, and Tate's curvy illustrations evoke the swing of the music. The true story is enhanced by the accompanying CD; the Sugar Plum Fairy morphs into Sugar Rum Cherry. PMC

Ganeri, Anita *Brass Instruments*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-477-2 \$28.50

Ganeri, Anita *Drums and Percussion Instruments*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-478-9 \$28.50

Ganeri, Anita *Pianos and Keyboards*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-479-6 \$28.50

Ganeri, Anita *Stringed Instruments*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-480-2 \$28.50

Ganeri, Anita *Voices and Singing*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-481-9 \$28.50

Ganeri, Anita *Wind Instruments*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-482-6 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 How the World Makes Music series. Each book provides several examples of the title instruments and how they are played around the world. Western classical music is consistently featured, but pop, folk, jazz, and religious music are also discussed, as are cultural variations and ancient and historical origins. Many captioned photographs, illustrations, and sidebars provide visual interest but also crowd the pages. Websites. Glos., ind. MJS

Ivanov, Olga, and Aleksey Ivanov, Illustrators *Hanukkah, Oh Hanukkah!*

32 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5845-6 \$12.99

(4) PS In this picture book adaptation of the popular Hanukkah song, a joyful family lights the menorah, plays dreidel, and eats latkes. The acrylic illustrations are unremarkable and busy, though appropriately bright. And while the story's characters are overly cutesy, readers may enjoy following the antics of the (yarmulke-wearing) family dog. Sheet music and a note about the song's origins are included. RLS

Manzella, Teresa Ryan *How to Analyze the Music of Bob Dylan*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-090-7 \$23.95

(3) YA Essential Critiques series. From a clear definition of critical theory and its purpose to practical applications, this title presents a well-written introduction to the analysis of music and lyrics. The biographical sketch, followed by a comprehensive comparison and analysis of Dylan's protest and personal songs, provides a worthy model for thinking critically and developing and defending a thesis. A "You Critique It" assignment provides additional guidance. Reading list, timeline, websites. Bib., glos., ind. TLD

Nunn, Daniel *Brass*

24 pp. Heinemann LE ISBN 978-1-4329-5058-3 \$21.99

Nunn, Daniel *Percussion*

24 pp. Heinemann LE ISBN 978-1-4329-5060-6 \$21.99

Nunn, Daniel *Woodwind*

24 pp. Heinemann LE ISBN 978-1-4329-5063-7 \$21.99

(4) K–3 Instruments and Music series. Colorful photos and very brief texts introduce beginning readers to a variety of musical instruments found around the world. When the texts act as captions, identifying the instruments in the pictures (e.g., "the duduk is a very old reed instrument"), they are useful. Otherwise, their simplicity raises more questions than it answers. Glos., ind. BB

PERFORMING ARTS

Gogerly, Liz *Capoeira: Fusing Dance and Martial Arts*

32 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-7766-5 \$26.60

Gogerly, Liz *Street Dance*

32 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-7761-0 \$26.60

Thomas, Isabel *Latin Dance*

32 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-7762-7 \$26.60

(4) 4–6 On the Radar: Dance series. This series provides engaging introductions to dance forms. The texts cover background and historical influences, dance-specific lingo and gear, influence on popular culture, and step-by-step dance-move instructions. Profiles of several real-life dancers, presented in various formats (interview, week-in-the-life blog, etc.), offer aspiring dancers inspiration and insight. The busy format, with lots of bold colors and photographs, can be hard to follow. Reading list, websites. Ind. SRA

Rodriguez, Sonia, and Kurt Browning *T Is for Tutu: A Ballet Alphabet*

48 pp. Sleeping Bear ISBN 978-1-58536-312-4 \$16.95

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Wilson Ong. Dancer Rodriguez and figure skater Browning partner up for this alphabetic tribute to ballet. Clinging rhymed text ("A is for Anybody— / anybody can dance. / All you have to do / is give yourself a chance") is paired with more detailed—and more interesting—factual explanations. Accompanying paintings, some dramatic, others stiff or muddy, display the dancers in action. ERG

Williams, Ann-Marie *Learn to Speak Dance: A Guide to Creating, Performing, & Promoting Your Moves*

96 pp. Owlkids ISBN 978-1-926818-88-7 \$22.95

PE ISBN 978-1-926818-89-4 \$14.95

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Jeff Kulak. This DIY guide gives a brief introduction to dance as a hobby or career. Topics range from choreography and performance to self-promotion and landing gigs. Sophisticated concepts and accurate terminology are presented clearly and accessibly. Quotes from established dancers/choreographers, recommended

videos, and an appended overview of nine dance styles encourage further exploration. Angular spot art illustrates the text. Ind. KLB

GAMES, MAGIC, AND RIDDLES

Boothroyd, Jennifer *From Marbles to Video Games: How Toys Have Changed*

32 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6746-8 \$25.26

(4) K–3 Lightning Bolt Books: Comparing Past and Present series. Boothroyd provides simple then-and-now examinations of toys and games. It's a kid-friendly approach, but the comparisons are cursory, and the examples aren't always era-exclusive ("In the past, kids played with . . . tin soldiers. These days kids play with action figures"). Stock photos show present-day children (in color) and kids of the past (in black and white) having fun. Mini-biographies are appended. Reading list. Glos., ind. SRA

Horvath, David, and Sun-Min Kim *What Dat?: The Great Big Uglydoll Book of Things to Look At, Search For, Point To, and Wonder About*

32 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86434-6 \$14.99

(5) K–3 Continuing to cross-promote their product, the creators of the popular plush Uglydolls present a search-and-find book. The volume contains a dozen scenes, each devoted to sights and objects found in the "Uglyverse": "Backyard," "Sea," "Outer Space," etc. Featuring the same style of cartoony, high-gloss art as in the picture books, this offering comes off as a poor imitation of Richard Scarry's word books. NB

Stewart, Trenton Lee *The Mysterious Benedict Society: Mr. Benedict's Book of Perplexing Puzzles, Elusive Enigmas, and Curious Conundrums*

147 pp. Little/Tingley ISBN 978-0-316-18193-8 \$12.99

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Diana Sudyka. Profiles of the Society's members, pull-quotes, "archival material," and page after page of Benedict Society-themed brainteasers mingle in this challenging but rewarding volume. Red circles on nearly every page contain clues to a final puzzle, and a hint section in the back will nudge strugglers. Sudyka's copious illustrations add a quirky flavor. ALB

Teitelbaum, Michael *Halloween Howlers: Frightfully Funny Knock-Knock Jokes*

16 pp. HarperFestival ISBN 978-0-06-180891-3 \$6.99

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Jannie Ho. Cheerful Halloween-themed knock-knock jokes appear on every spread, often with a flap to lift in between setup and punch line. Some of the jokes and puns are surprising, others less so, but these groaners may be just the right addition to a Halloween routine. The cartoony illustrations are more humorous than creepy. SF

Turnbull, Stephanie *Card Tricks*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-495-6 \$28.50

Turnbull, Stephanie *Close-Up Tricks*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-496-3 \$28.50

Turnbull, Stephanie *Incredible Illusions*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-497-0 \$28.50

Turnbull, Stephanie *Mind-Reading Tricks*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-498-7 \$28.50

Turnbull, Stephanie *Prop Tricks*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-499-4 \$28.50

Turnbull, Stephanie *Vanishing Tricks*

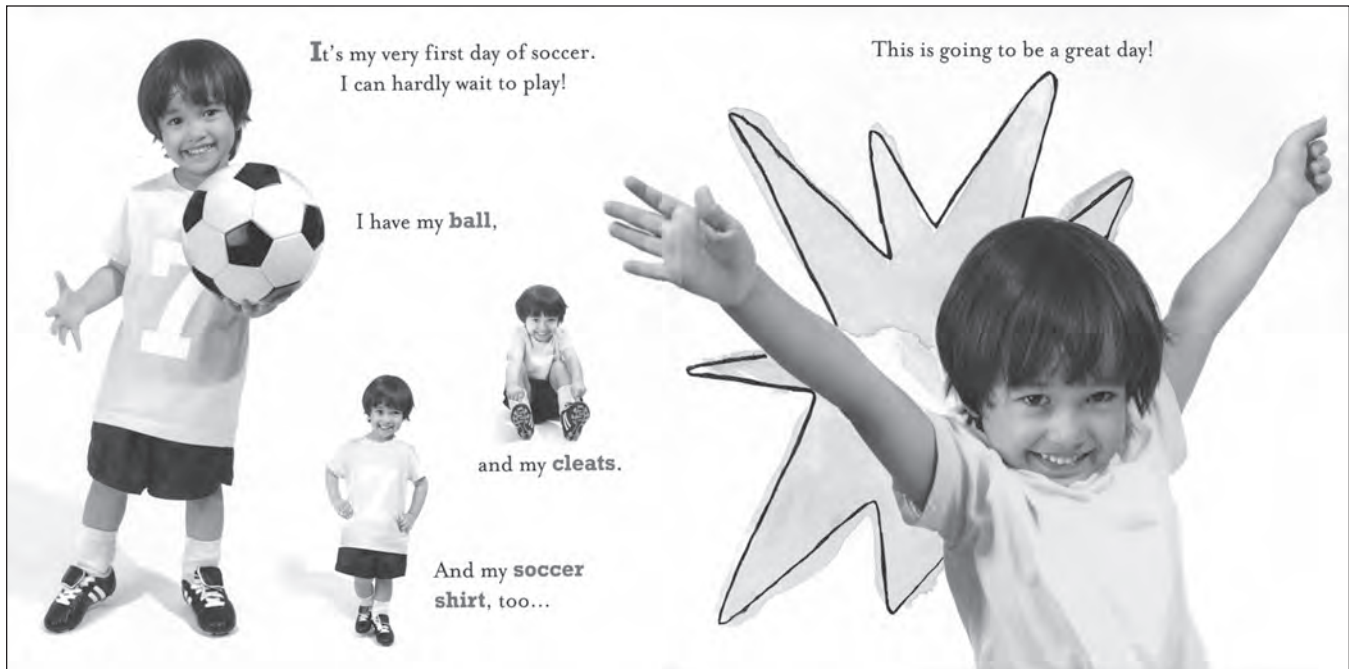
32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-500-7 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Secrets of Magic series. This series introduces readers to the world of illusion, sleight of hand, fakery, mathematical puzzles, and other gimmicks used to amaze and amuse audiences. Step-by-step drawings accompany the instructions, which are easy to follow but crowd the pages. Sidebars add interest, providing insight into "tricks of the trade." Biographical sketches of famous magicians, illusionists, and escape artists—from Houdini to David Copperfield—are included. Websites. Glos., ind. LBC

Wick, Walter *Can You See What I See?: Toyland Express: Picture Puzzles to Search and Solve*

40 pp. Scholastic/Cartwheel ISBN 978-0-545-24483-1 \$13.99

(3) K–3 Each of the book's twelve train-themed spreads is a well-composed picture puzzle in itself. All together they represent a toy's journey: from workshop to toy store to child's bedroom then attic and yard sale—to new home. The clever conceit and attention to detail will engage readers. ERG



SPORTS

Adams, Carly *Queens of the Ice: They Were Fast, They Were Fierce, They Were Teenage Girls*

131 pp. Lorimer ISBN 978-1-55277-721-3 \$16.95
PE ISBN 978-1-55277-720-6 \$9.95

(4) 4–6 RecordBooks series. Adams provides a history of Canada's Preston Rivulettes women's ice hockey team. Hailing from a small Ontario town, the future legends formed an all-female hockey squad in 1931. The athletes drew crowds throughout the Great Depression, playing "about a hundred games and [losing] only two of them!" Short chapters, a compact trim size, and archival photographs enhance the accessible, if slim, package. Glos., ind. CHS

Aretha, David *Top 25 Baseball Skills, Tips, and Tricks*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3859-2 \$23.93

Savage, Jeff *Top 25 Gymnastics Skills, Tips, and Tricks*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3868-4 \$23.93

Savage, Jeff *Top 25 Hockey Skills, Tips, and Tricks*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3869-1 \$23.93

Savage, Jeff *Top 25 Soccer Skills, Tips, and Tricks*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3860-8 \$23.93

Torres, John Albert *Top 25 Basketball Skills, Tips, and Tricks*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3857-8 \$23.93

Torres, John Albert *Top 25 Football Skills, Tips, and Tricks*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3858-5 \$23.93

(3) 4–6 Top 25 Sports Skills, Tips, and Tricks series. Each title presents sport-specific skills, drills, and techniques, including the proper mechanics of passing, shooting, and scoring, as well as defensive strategies and game rules. "Pro Tips and Tricks," mainly work-ethic quotes from such pros as Tom Brady and Mary Lou Retton, are scattered throughout the texts. Instructive action photographs include both professional athletes and kids at play. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. CHS

Basen, Ryan *Charlotte Bobcats*

48 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-151-5 \$31.35

Gitlin, Marty *Boston Celtics*

48 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-150-8 \$31.35

Howell, Brian *Chicago Bulls*

48 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-152-2 \$31.35

Silverman, Drew *Atlanta Hawks*

48 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-149-2 \$31.35

(3) 4–6 SportsZone: Inside the NBA series. Rich with facts, play-by-play game details, and an abundance of archival photographs, these volumes provide engaging histories of four NBA teams. In each book, coaches and players are highlighted (e.g., from Celtics legends Bill Russell and Larry Bird to contemporary stars Paul Pierce and Kevin Garnett). The squads' triumphs and tragedies are supported by stats, quotes, and anecdotes. Reading list, timeline. Glos., ind. CHS

Bringle, Jennifer *Wing Shooting*

64 pp. Rosen LE ISBN 978-1-4488-1241-7 \$29.25

Canino, Kate *Turkey Hunting*

64 pp. Rosen LE ISBN 978-1-4488-1244-8 \$29.25

Peterson, Judy Monroe *Big Game Hunting*

64 pp. Rosen LE ISBN 978-1-4488-1240-0 \$29.25

Peterson, Judy Monroe *Small Game Hunting*

64 pp. Rosen LE ISBN 978-1-4488-1242-4 \$29.25

Peterson, Judy Monroe *Varmint Hunting*

64 pp. Rosen LE ISBN 978-1-4488-1245-5 \$29.25

Wolny, Philip *Waterfowl*

64 pp. Rosen LE ISBN 978-1-4488-1243-1 \$29.25

(4) 4–6 Hunting: Pursuing Wild Game series. Published spring 2011. These overviews emphasize the process of hunting successfully, responsibly, and lawfully. It's categorized as a satisfying sport that provides many benefits both to participants and to society (there's no discussion of its cons). Dense texts examine the target animal population, preparation, details of the hunt itself, and the "harvesting" of meat. Vivid photos of hunters and their equipment accompany the texts. Reading list. Bib., glos., ind. JF

Butterfield, Moira *Events*

32 pp. Sea to Sea LE ISBN 978-1-59771-321-4 \$28.50

Butterfield, Moira *History*

32 pp. Sea to Sea LE ISBN 978-1-59771-319-1 \$28.50

Butterfield, Moira *Records*

32 pp. Sea to Sea LE ISBN 978-1-59771-322-1 \$28.50

Butterfield, Moira *Scandals*

32 pp. Sea to Sea LE ISBN 978-1-59771-320-7 \$28.50

(5) 4–6 Olympics series. Cluttered page design (including many photographs) and poor organization mar these volumes about the Olympics; the various sidebars, including "Amazing Olympics" and "Facts and Stats," are not well differentiated from the main texts' content. More detailed timelines would have been helpful, as would lists for comparison. All four books could easily be in one volume. Websites. Glos., ind. CJ

Capucilli, Alyssa Satin *My First Soccer Game*

24 pp. Little Simon ISBN 978-1-4424-2747-1 \$9.99

(3) PS Photographs by Leyah Jensen. "I have my ball, and my cleats," begins a boy preparing for his first soccer game. The simple text presents a positive experience with an emphasis on teamwork and sportsmanship. The age-appropriate format features crisp photographs on a white background, enhanced with occasional illustrations. Soccer vocabulary—*ball, cleats, dribble, pass*—appear in bold blue letters. CHS

Gilbert, Sara *The Story of the NFL*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-063-9 \$23.95

(4) 4–6 Built for Success series. This dense, statistics-filled look at the business side of professional football may be of interest to avid fans or budding sports journalists. Tracing the beginnings of professional football starting in 1892, the

book goes on to cover commissioners, controversies, and the rise of the Super Bowl. The many photographs are a draw, but the too-small font is off-putting. Bib., glos., ind. CJ

Gitlin, Marty *Drew Brees: Super Bowl Champ*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-743-2 \$18.95

Gitlin, Marty *Kobe Bryant: NBA Champion*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-744-9 \$18.95

Howell, Brian *LeBron James: Basketball Icon*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-746-3 \$18.95

McMahon, Dave *Sidney Crosby: Hockey's Golden Boy*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-745-6 \$18.95

(4) K–3 SportsZone: Playmakers series. Published spring 2011. Focusing on the stars' sports accomplishments and game highlights, these brief, adulatory profiles also touch on the players' childhoods and personal lives along with mentioning charitable contributions to their communities. *Brees* and *Bryant* are slightly better organized than the other two. The many clear photographs will satisfy sports fans. Reading list. Glos., ind. JF

Herzog, Brad *G Is for Gold Medal: An Olympics Alphabet*

48 pp. Sleeping Bear ISBN 978-1-58536-462-6 \$15.95

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Doug Bowles. The volume pairs a pedestrian rhyming text ("Gather 'round the pool. / Not too close or you'll get wet! / The wondrous world of water sports / is *W* in our alphabet") with more detailed—and more interesting—factual explanations, printed alongside the illustrations. Paintings, some dramatic, some stiff, capture athletes in action. (But do competitive female swimmers really wear bombshell-red lipstick in the pool?) ERG

Hunter, Nick *Inside the Olympics*

64 pp. Raintree LE ISBN 978-1-4329-5488-8 \$34.00

(4) 4–6 From its origins and growth to the athletes and hosting countries, this introduction to the Olympics arrives just in time for the 2012 games. Sidebars featuring athletes, technology, and memorable moments add meaning and significance to the information while photographs, maps, and diagrams support the accessible text. The small font and uninspired design may deter some readers. Reading list, timeline, websites. Bib., glos., ind. TLD

Hurley, Michael *Board Sports*

32 pp. Raintree LE ISBN 978-1-4109-4217-3 \$29.32

Hurley, Michael *Wheel Sports*

32 pp. Raintree LE ISBN 978-1-4109-4220-3 \$29.32

(4) K–3 Extreme Sports series. Clear action photographs and large bold-font texts introduce each extreme sport. The volumes include popular wheel and board sports such as BMX racing, NASCAR, snowboarding, and surfing, as well as other thrill rides like mountain boarding and street luge. While each specific sport receives only a few sentences, the daredevil aspect will entice readers. Spreads on safety and staying fit are included. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. CHS

MacKay, Jenny *Soccer*

104 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0572-6 \$34.12

(3) YA Science Behind Sports series. The history and science of this sport are explained in detail, accompanied by diagrams and photographs that illustrate the science underlying the layout of the soccer field, equipment, and rules of play. The explanations are framed as tips for improving one's game, as readers are encouraged to use physics, physiology, and even psychology of competition to become better players. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. DJF

Mason, Paul, and Sarah Eason *Free Running*

32 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-7759-7 \$26.60

Thomas, Isabel *Freestyle BMX*

32 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-7764-1 \$26.60

(4) 4–6 On the Radar: Sports series. In quick bursts of text, these volumes introduce the title sports' histories, moves, gear, and lingo, along with accounts of real-life participants. Many photographs demonstrate moves; some charts list career highlights and other details. While the busy layouts mirror the title sports' intensity and energy, they're still really hard to follow. Reading list, websites. Ind. NLH

Nixon, James *Defending and Goaltending*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-527-4 \$28.50

Nixon, James *Passing and Dribbling*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-528-1 \$28.50

Nixon, James *Rules of the Game*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-529-8 \$28.50

Nixon, James *Shooting and Scoring*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-530-4 \$28.50

(3) 4–6 Soccer File series. Dividing these skills and rules into four volumes allows for clear, accurate descriptions of soccer techniques. Terms such as *penalty box*, *offside*, *playmaker*, and *striker* are explained in context and with examples. Vivid photographs use arrows to depict player placements and proper ball handling. Profiles of world-renowned soccer athletes complete each volume. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. NLH

Pipe, Jim *Extreme Sports*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-515-1 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 On the Edge series. Pipe superficially explores the histories of several dangerous sports, from desert running to skydiving, urban climbing and parkour; notable athletes are also spotlighted. Photographs provide clear images of the people and places, while short sidebars add interest. A "How Extreme Are You?" quiz is appended. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. JM

Robison, Ken *Apolo Ohno*

112 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-186-5 \$28.95

Savage, Jeff *Brock Lesnar*

112 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-185-8 \$28.95

Savage, Jeff *Tito Ortiz*

112 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-184-1 \$28.95

Young, Jeff C. *Michelle Wie*

112 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-187-2 \$28.95

(3) YA Xtreme Athletes series. These volumes detail the athletic achievements of the title champions of golf (*Wie*), speed skating (*Ohno*), and mixed martial arts (*Lesnar* and *Ortiz*); the texts also mention their personal and professional challenges and how they overcame them. Quotes and sidebars enhance the accessible volumes. Clear photographs depict sporting victories and special events in the subjects' lives. Timeline, websites. Bib., glos., ind. NLH

Salzmann, Mary Elizabeth *Balls, Birdies & Pucks*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-822-4 \$14.95

Salzmann, Mary Elizabeth *Bats, Sticks & Rackets*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-823-1 \$14.95

Salzmann, Mary Elizabeth *Boards, Skis & Skates*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-824-8 \$14.95

Salzmann, Mary Elizabeth *Gloves, Mitts & Pads*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-825-5 \$14.95

(3) K–3 SandCastle: Sports Gear series. Each volume introduces equipment used in a variety of sports including baseball, badminton, table tennis, and waterskiing. The format includes an up-close look at the item, explanatory text, and a photograph of the gear in action: "Golfers use sticks called clubs . . . A putter is used when the ball is close to the hole." Attractive, crisp design and easy-to-read texts provide a solid presentation. Glos. CHS

Sandler, Michael *Aaron Rodgers and the Green Bay Packers: Super Bowl XLV*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-309-4 \$22.61

(4) K–3 Super Bowl Superstars series. After a brief preview of the 2011 Super Bowl game, the text backs up to explore quarterback Rodgers's early life and career. It then shifts to the historic big game, showing how Rodgers led the Packers to victory. Other key players are briefly highlighted. Analysis is slight; the clear action photographs are what might attract football fans. Reading list. Bib., glos., ind. ERG

Sandler, Michael *Mark Sanchez*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-310-0 \$22.61

Sandler, Michael *Peyton Manning*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-311-7 \$22.61

Sandler, Michael *Troy Polamalu*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-312-4 \$22.61

(4) K–3 Football Heroes Making a Difference series. Beginning with career anecdotes and brief personal histories, these books then highlight the athletes' impressive on-field statistics and finish with their off-field charity work (e.g., "Troy also likes helping soldiers who have served in Amer-

ica's wars"). The laudatory volumes are well intentioned but information-sparse. Plenty of photographs will appease fans. Reading list. Bib., glos., ind. CHS

Sandler, Michael *Stupendous Sports Stadiums*

24 pp. Bearport LE ISBN 978-1-61772-302-5 \$22.61

(4) 4–6 So Big Compared to What? series. Straightforward text provides very general facts about unusual sports stadiums from around the world; their notable design elements, such as eco-friendly features, unusual lighting, or a movable grass field, are noted. Some of the size comparisons are useful while others seem like filler. There's just enough information to satisfy the most basic requirements of an elementary-school report. Accompanying photographs are generally well produced. Reading list. Bib., glos., ind. MLB

Torsiello, David P. *Read About Alex Rodriguez*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3828-8 \$21.26

Torsiello, David P. *Read About Carmelo Anthony*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3833-2 \$21.26

Torsiello, David P. *Read About Derek Jeter*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3829-5 \$21.26

Torsiello, David P. *Read About Drew Brees*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3831-8 \$21.26

Torsiello, David P. *Read About Eli Manning*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3832-5 \$21.26

Torsiello, David P. *Read About Kobe Bryant*

24 pp. Enslow/Elementary LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3830-1 \$21.26

(5) K–3 I Like Sports Stars! series. This series uses accessible but rather inane texts ("After Alex hits the ball he has to run the bases"; "Kobe is looking forward to winning many more trophies!") to introduce superficial details about the title athletes: birth date and hometown, college career, professional history, championships. Sometimes actual details about the players' sports slip in. Glossy photographs document important moments in their careers. Reading list. Glos., ind. NLH

Tuminelly, Nancy *Super Simple Bend & Stretch: Healthy & Fun Activities to Move Your Body*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-959-7 \$27.07

Tuminelly, Nancy *Super Simple Hop & Jump: Healthy & Fun Activities to Move Your Body*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-960-3 \$27.07

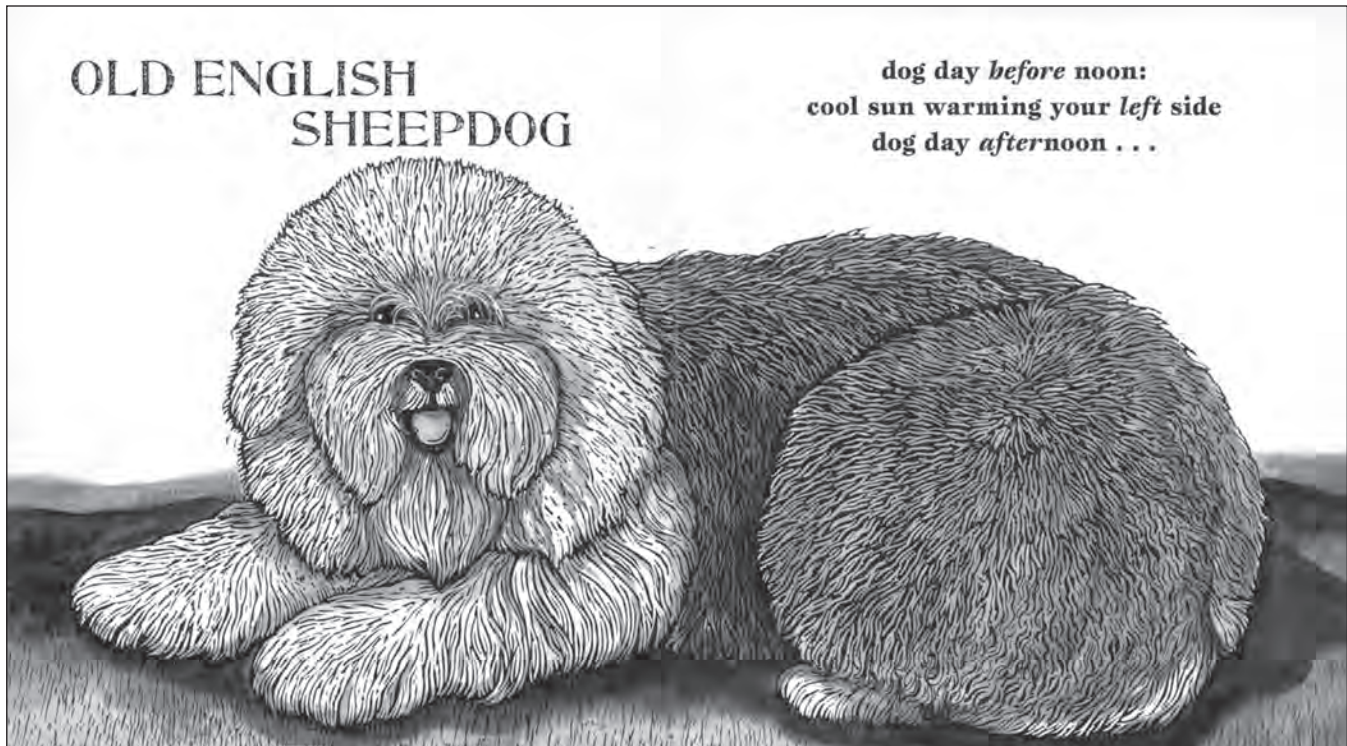
Tuminelly, Nancy *Super Simple Move & Shake: Healthy & Fun Activities to Move Your Body*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-961-0 \$27.07

Tuminelly, Nancy *Super Simple Punch & Kick: Healthy & Fun Activities to Move Your Body*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61714-962-7 \$27.07

(3) K–3 Super SandCastle: Super Simple Exercise series. Introductory sections common to all volumes detail the importance of exercise. Each book then provides step-by-step directions, illustrated with bright photos of smiling kids, for performing simple exercises. Some require equipment (balloons, chalk, bubble wrap) or simple craft projects to make the items (e.g., "Rubberball Soccer"). A pledge to stay active concludes the volumes. Glos. GBH



OLD ENGLISH SHEEPDOG

**dog day *before noon:*
cool sun warming your *left side*
dog day *afternoon . . .***

LITERATURE

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GENERAL LITERATURE

Apuleius, Lucius *The Golden Ass*

86 pp. Godine ISBN 978-1-56792-418-3 \$17.95

(4) 4–6 Adapted by M. D. Usher. Illustrated by T. Motley. Usher provides an adaptation of the comical tale written in Latin by Lucius Apuleius in second-century Rome. After the protagonist is magically transformed into a donkey, readers follow his escapades while he seeks redemption. Some of the in-jokes are lost if you aren't familiar with Latin or Roman comedy (the afterword provides good background information). Occasional black-and-white illustrations punctuate the story's humorous aspects. AMT

Arni, Samhita *Sita's Ramayana*

152 pp. Groundwood ISBN 978-1-55498-145-8 \$24.95

(3) YA Illustrated by Moyna Chitrakar. Bold lines and vivid colors draw readers through the panels of this ancient Hindu epic (even when the text gets a bit long for a graphic novel). Arni presents the story of Queen Sita's abduction by Ravana, the Demon King, and her rescue by Rama, aided by Hanuman the wise monkey. This interpretation's feminist bent is documented in an afterword. MG

Black, Holly, and Ellen Kushner, Editors *Welcome to Bordertown: New Stories and Poems of the Borderlands*

530 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-86705-7 \$19.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96705-4 \$22.99

(3) YA Published spring 2011. After a long absence from "B-town" (first introduced in 1986's shared universe anthology *Borderlands*), authors revisit this magical metropolis straddling our world and Faerie with twenty-two short stories and poems. Contributors include Cory Doctorow, Charles de Lint, editors Black and Kushner, and series creator Terri Windling. Readers unfamiliar with the quirky, ever-evolving city will appreciate the mock info pamphlet "Bordertown Basics." KLB

Currie, Stephen *African American Literature*

112 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0383-8 \$33.45

(4) YA Lucent Library of Black History series. Currie's survey begins with "The Oral Tradition and the First Black Writers: 1600–1800" then continues through the Civil War and Reconstruction, Harlem Renaissance, civil rights era, and up to contemporary times. Particular attention is given to historical, social, and political contexts and challenges faced by the writers. The text is dense but informative. Illustrations and photographs break up the pages. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. ERG

The Exquisite Corpse Adventure: An Episodic Story Game

278 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5149-7 \$17.99
PE ISBN 978-0-7636-5773-4 \$7.99

(4) 4–6 Compiled by The National Children’s Book and Literacy Alliance. Eleven-year-old twins receive a desperate plea for help from their long-lost parents. Thus begins a series of adventures penned and illustrated by an all-star cast of children’s book authors and illustrators including Jon Scieszka, Kate DiCamillo, Lemony Snicket, and James Ransome (the adventures were originally published online serially). Suspension of disbelief is required to enjoy the convoluted, acrobatic volume. CLS

The Family Storybook Treasury: Tales of Laughter, Curiosity, and Fun

292 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-61221-8 \$18.99

(4) K–3 Gathered in this weighty (literally) volume are eight picture books and eight poems. Beloved characters such as Martha the dog, Curious George, Lyle the crocodile, and Mike Mulligan make this an attractive package (not to mention the shiny gold foil book jacket). Not an essential purchase, but a handsome gift edition. A CD of the eight stories is included. KF

Hall, Megan Kelley, and Carrie Jones, Editors **Dear Bully: 70 Authors Tell Their Stories**

369 pp. HarperTeen ISBN 978-0-06-206098-3 \$17.99

(3) YA By sharing their experiences about having been bullied, YA and children’s book authors, including Lisa Yee, Jon Scieszka, Nancy Garden, and R. L. Stine, offer young people the hope—and proof—that things do get better. Empathetic and honest, humorous and heartbreaking, these stories, poems, letters, and cartoons cover a wide spectrum of bullying—a range as broad and different as the list of contributors itself. CLS

Hirschmann, Kris **Frankenstein**

80 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-180-4 \$27.95

(4) YA Monsters and Mythical Creatures series. Beginning with Mary Shelley’s creation of the famous literary monster, this book traces the history of Dr. Frankenstein’s creature through literature, film, and popular culture. While the layout is awkward and pictures often do not match the content on the surrounding pages, the resources, analysis, and overview of media adaptations will be useful for report-writers. “Did You Know?” boxes add interest. Reading list, websites. Ind. BCM

Johnson, Claudia Durst, Editor **Women’s Issues in Alice Walker’s The Color Purple**

163 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5270-0 \$38.45

Johnson, Claudia Durst, Editor **Women’s Search for Independence in Charlotte Brontë’s Jane Eyre**

166 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5450-6 \$38.45

Johnson, Vernon Elso, Editor **Tyranny in William Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar**

180 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5262-5 \$38.45

Mancini, Candice L., Editor **Censorship in Ray Bradbury’s Fahrenheit 451**

159 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5288-5 \$38.45

Wiener, Gary, Editor **War in Tim O’Brien’s The Things They Carried**

222 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5459-9 \$38.45

(4) YA Social Issues in Literature series. Solid but impassive, these collections present short essays and excerpts (usually five to twelve pages) broken down into three categories: background and biography, critical readings of the title topic, and contemporary perspectives that highlight a classic author’s continuing relevance. Selections are up to date, varied, and culled from reputable sources. These volumes are useful, but they’re unlikely to be read for fun. Reading list, timeline. Bib., ind. MLI

Landmann, Bimba **The Fate of Achilles**

32 pp. Getty ISBN 978-1-60606-085-8 \$19.95

(3) 4–6 The text of this illustrated volume is “inspired by Homer’s *Iliad* and other stories of ancient Greece.” The writing, in free verse (and in very small type), is complex and poetic. Angular, imaginative illustrations are visually striking and lend themselves well to emphasizing the theme of the doomed warrior. AMT

▲ Link, Kelly, and Gavin J. Grant, Editors **Steampunk!: An Anthology of Fantastically Rich and Strange Stories**

421 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4843-5 \$22.99

(2) YA Fourteen stories, two in graphic novel form, push the boundaries of steampunk. Settings feature alien worlds, post-apocalyptic America, and colonial Australia; technologies range from biological weapons of mass destruction to miniature zeppelins powered by faerie magic. In a genre based upon the re-imagining of history, these authors—Elizabeth Knox, M. T. Anderson, Cory Doctorow, et al.—take readers to bold new frontiers. Review 9/11. KLB

Marr, Melissa, and Kelley Armstrong, Editors **Enthralled: Paranormal Diversions**

452 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-201579-2 \$17.99

(3) YA Protagonists of these sixteen short stories run the gamut from lovelorn ifrits to vampire rock stars to cannibal Girl Scouts. Humor rules Margaret Stohl’s “IV League,” in which a busload of southern “Drinker” teens embark on a New England college tour; Mary Pearson’s story of a captured gargoyle is deeply poignant; Carrie Ryan’s zombie dystopia “Scenic Route” is both chilling and hopeful. Entertaining and original. MVP

Roy, Jennifer Rozines, and Sherri Mabry
Gordon *Sharpen Your Business Letter Writing Skills*

64 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3972-8 \$27.93
PE ISBN 978-1-59845-377-5 \$7.95
New ed. (2003).

Roy, Jennifer Rozines, and Johanna Haney *Sharpen Your Debate and Speech Writing Skills*

64 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3904-9 \$27.93
PE ISBN 978-1-59845-341-6 \$7.95
New ed. (2003).

Roy, Jennifer Rozines, and Johanna Haney *Sharpen Your Essay Writing Skills*

64 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3903-2 \$27.93
PE ISBN 978-1-59845-342-3 \$7.95
New ed. (2004).

Roy, Jennifer Rozines *Sharpen Your Good Grammar Skills*

64 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3902-5 \$27.93
PE ISBN 978-1-59845-339-3 \$7.95
New ed. (2004).

Roy, Jennifer Rozines *Sharpen Your Report Writing Skills*

64 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3905-6 \$27.93
PE ISBN 978-1-59845-338-6 \$7.95
New ed. (2003).

Roy, Jennifer Rozines *Sharpen Your Story or Narrative Writing Skills*

64 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3901-8 \$27.93
PE ISBN 978-1-59845-340-9 \$7.95
New ed. (2003).

(4) YA Sharpen Your Writing Skills series. These volumes present clear advice for developing writing skills in the title areas. The hints are practical and good-humored, and there are a range of examples, which will make this useful to middle school and high school writers. The page design is accessible if dull; the cartoony writing-implement characters are dorky. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. BLM

Scieszka, Jon, Editor *Guys Read: Thriller*

279 pp. HarperCollins/Walden Pond
ISBN 978-0-06-196376-6 \$16.99
PE ISBN 978-0-06-196375-9 \$6.99

(3) 4–6 Scieszka collects ten thrilling boy-aimed stories (and one comic) from well-known authors including M. T. Anderson, Walter Dean Myers, Margaret Peterson Haddix, and Anthony Horowitz. Subjects encompass ghosts and criminals, supernatural monsters and Somali pirates. All of the protagonists star in suspenseful narratives that will keep readers turning pages. RR

Stein, Gertrude *To Do: A Book of Alphabets and Birthdays*

128 pp. Yale ISBN 978-0-300-17097-9 \$25.00

(4) 4–6 Illustrated by Giselle Potter. Published spring 2011. A manuscript previously published in scholarly collections of Stein's works is illustrated for a young audience (ostensibly). Stein's prose is magnificent to read aloud, and Potter's paintings successfully merge the abstract with the concrete. Still, the length of the book and the lack of narrative will hinder all but the most determined readers from following through. MVK

▲ Van Allsburg, Chris *The Chronicles of Harris Burdick: 14 Amazing Authors Tell the Tales*

202 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-54810-4 \$24.99

(2) 4–6 This companion volume to *The Mysteries of Harris Burdick* adds short stories by various authors (Sherman Alexie, M. T. Anderson, Kate DiCamillo, Jules Feiffer, Lois Lowry, Walter Dean Myers, etc.) inspired by the original illustrations. The stories embrace a range of styles and subjects; like their enigmatic and mysterious inspirations, each touches on the strange, the odd, and the fantastic. Review 9/11. JH

Vinyoli, Joan, and Albert Vinyoli *The Big Book of Pirates*

112 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-8056-1 \$12.95

(5) 4–6 Adapted by Alissa Heyman. Illustrated by José Tomás. Published spring 2011. This book (originally published in Spanish, adapted and abridged by Heyman) includes poems, short stories, and excerpts of classic and well-known pirate tales by Conrad, Pyle, Conan Doyle, Defoe, and others. It's a visually appealing volume, with a sturdy die-cut cover and entertaining brown- and blue-tinted illustrations, but young readers would be more gratified by the original complete texts. JF

What You Wish For: Stories and Poems for Darfur

271 pp. Putnam ISBN 978-0-399-25454-3 \$17.99

(3) YA The theme of wishes unites eighteen stories and poems from well-known authors such as Joyce Carol Oates, Nikki Giovanni, Gary Soto, Cornelia Funke, R. L. Stine, Cynthia Voigt, and others. Created to aid literacy in Darfuri refugee camps, the volume's selections are humorous, poignant, and provocative. This solid collection underscores how wishes and dreams can buoy the human spirit. CLS

Zamorsky, Tania, Reteller *The Odyssey*

153 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-7334-1 \$5.95

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Eric Freeberg. Classic Starts series. This inexpensive condensed version of Homer's epic competently delineates plot points, following Odysseus on his myriad adventures. However, the retelling sacrifices complexity of language and depth of theme ostensibly in the name of age-appropriateness. Occasional black-and-white illustrations highlight the hero's quest and some of the mythical creatures he encounters. Discussion questions and a "Note to Parents and Educators" are appended. ERG

POETRY

Attaboy *You Might Be a Monster & Other Stories I Made Up*

32 pp. Immedium ISBN 978-1-59702-025-1 \$15.95

(5) K–3 Putative author Attaboy, a worm, presents bizarre stories and poems about, among other things, a clown graveyard, a cactus wanting hugs, and the criteria for monsterhood. The poems are unwieldy and hard to follow; the facetious tone succeeds a little better in prose, but even those are a stretch. Bold-hued digital-looking illustrations create a creepy funhouse atmosphere. SF

Dakos, Kalli *A Funeral in the Bathroom: And Other School Bathroom Poems*

48 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-2675-0 \$14.99

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Mark Beech. Forty-one short poems explore all the purposes of a school bathroom, including solitude, fish funerals, and . . . the obvious (non-graphically). The humorous poems tell basically the same joke, and the occasional serious ones feel out of place. Some of the pieces' rhymes and meter are forced. Frequent playful spot art finds variety in the single-scene setting. SF

Durango, Julia *Under the Mambo Moon*

48 pp. Charlesbridge ISBN 978-1-57091-723-3 \$12.99

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Fabricio VandenBroeck. At the narrator's father's music store, "people come . . . to buy dreams and memories." Customers stop by and tell their stories (a series of linked free-verse poems), each connecting to a Latin musical style or dance. Illustrations accompanying the girl's narration are in black and white while the visitors' tales appear in vibrant color. A useful author's note is appended. TW

Gerstein, Mordicai *Dear Hot Dog: Poems About Everyday Stuff*

32 pp. Abrams ISBN 978-0-8109-9732-5 \$16.95

(3) K–3 In twenty-two free-verse poems, three children share thoughts about objects in the world around them. Subjects include toothbrushes, toes, ice-cream cones, crayons, and pillows. Sensitively observed, the imagery is vivid and childlike: the title poem's hot dog is as "snug as a puppy / in your breadly bun." Outlined in black, the loosely rendered illustrations complement the spirit of the verse. CLS

▲ Grady, Cynthia *I Lay My Stitches Down: Poems of American Slavery*

40 pp. Eerdmans ISBN 978-0-8028-5386-8 \$17.00

(2) 4–6 Illustrated by Michele Wood. Grady crafts her fourteen poems to honor the art of quilting. Pieces recall quilt squares by using ten lines of ten syllables each. Working in intensely hued acrylics, Wood bases her quilt-shaped designs on the patterns that give the poems their titles, incorporating forms into carefully composed scenes inhabited by heroic, emotion-charged figures. Author's and illustrator's notes are appended. Reading list. Review 1/12. JRL

Janeczko, Paul B. *Requiem: Poems of the Terezín Ghetto*

102 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4727-8 \$16.99

(3) YA In haunting poems, Janeczko lays bare the strength, hope, and despair of those imprisoned at Terezín during the Holocaust. Most of the pieces, accompanied by drawings from actual inmates, represent fictional characters imagined by Janeczko. Readers are filled with a growing sense of sadness and anger; yet the works sing of the humanity and bravery of those who lived and died at Terezín. B. SCOTTO

Katz, Alan *Poems I Wrote When No One Was Looking*

153 pp. McElderry ISBN 978-1-4169-3518-6 \$17.99

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Edward Koren. Koren's benignly maniacal drawings are a swell fit for Katz's collection of a hundred first-person punch-line poems that riff on such subjects as hapless parents, irritating siblings, and belly-button lint. Unabashed pun pleasure, jaunty titles, and a fresh take on the puzzles and ironies of the ordinary world give this collection its energy. SE

Nash, Ogden *Lineup for Yesterday*

56 pp. Creative Editions ISBN 978-1-56846-212-7 \$19.99

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by C. F. Payne. Handsome, expansive portraits accompany Nash's incisive alphabetic verse about nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century baseball stars (first published in *SPORT* magazine in 1949). Nash's daughter, Linell Nash Smith, contributes thumbnail biographies of each player to round out the proceedings. A witty, informative, and attractively packaged volume. Websites. MLB

▲ Rasmussen, Halfdan *A Little Bitty Man and Other Poems for the Very Young*

32 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-2379-1 \$15.99

(1) PS Translated by Marilyn Nelson and Pamela Espeland. Illustrated by Kevin Hawkes. Thirteen of Danish poet Rasmussen's children's poems are included in this collection, each with a bright burst of humor. Elves, animals, friendship, and bodily functions are common subjects. Hawkes's pencil and acrylic illustrations highlight the humor and the whimsy of the nonsense verses, but they also underscore the poems' innocence and, when called for, childlike dignity. Review 9/11. KTH

▲ Rosen, Michael J. *The Hound Dog's Haiku and Other Poems for Dog Lovers*

56 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4499-4 \$17.99

(2) K–3 Illustrated by Mary Azarian. Twenty haiku portray a range of dog breeds, from Pembroke Welsh Corgi to Samoyed to Border Collie. Accompanying the poems are Azarian's woodcut illustrations, printed in black and hand-colored with acrylics. The meticulously detailed woodcuts sturdily capture every dog and its setting, whether indoors or out, and echo the essential image expressed in each of the poems. Review 9/11. JMB

Salas, Laura Purdie *BookSpeak!: Poems About Books*

32 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-22300-1 \$16.99

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Josée Bisailon. In twenty-one clever, amusing, and spirited poems, books find their voices: an index beckons a reader to look up page numbers, a cover shouts out “Please stop! Take a look!”, a library book compares being checked out to going on vacation. Buoyant mixed-media illustrations celebrate books as concrete objects while reinforcing their role as springboard for imagination. CLS

▲ Silverstein, Shel *Every Thing On It*

202 pp. HarperCollins/Harper ISBN 978-0-06-199816-4 \$19.99
LE ISBN 978-0-06-199817-1 \$20.89

(2) K–3 This posthumously published volume of 140-plus poems is every bit as good as Silverstein’s earlier collections. The book is not just laugh-out-loud funny but demands to be read aloud. Drawings add immeasurably to the entertainment, often providing the punch line. With its share of the slightly creepy, the slightly naughty, and the slightly gross—and also some poignant pieces—the volume has depth and humor. Review 11/11. SDL



On Thanksgiving Day, Tony's creatures, some as high as sixteen feet, spilled into the streets, and the crowds cheered wildly.

Part puppet, part balloon, the air-filled rubber bags wobbled down the avenues, propped up by wooden sticks.

BIOGRAPHIES

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INDIVIDUAL BIOGRAPHIES

Azzarelli, Ally *Justin Bieber: Teen Music Superstar*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3873-8 \$23.93

Azzarelli, Ally *Selena Gomez: Latina TV and Music Star*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3875-2 \$23.93

Azzarelli, Ally *Taylor Lautner: Film Superstar*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3874-5 \$23.93

Burlingame, Jeff *Taylor Swift: Music Superstar*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3870-7 \$23.93

Schuman, Michael A. *Rihanna: Music Megastar*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3871-4 \$23.93

Schuman, Michael A. *Robert Pattinson: Shining Star*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3872-1 \$23.93

(4) 4–6 Hot Celebrity Biographies series. These adulatory biographies cover the rise to fame of some of today's most popular young stars in the music, television, and film industries. The high-interest texts, while superficial, are easy to read; sidebars provide trivia tidbits for fans. Ample publicity photographs and discographies or filmographies are included. Reading list, timeline, websites. Glos., ind. CAL

Bernier-Grand, Carmen T. *Alicia Alonso: Prima Ballerina*

64 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5562-2 \$19.99

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Raúl Colón. Short poems detail the life of the famous Cuban ballerina Alicia Alonso. The text describes her early years, her courage in dancing after

becoming partially blind, creation of the Ballet de Cuba, flight when Batista took power, and her return under Castro; detailed notes are appended. Colón's textured illustrations are full of movement and life. Timeline, websites. Bib., glos. AK

Bernstein, Richard *A Girl Named Faithful Plum*

272 pp. Knopf ISBN 978-0-375-86960-0 \$15.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96960-7 \$18.99

(3) 4–6 This narrative biography of Chinese ballerina Li Zhongmei (written by her husband) follows her difficult childhood journey in 1978 to audition for the Beijing Dance Academy and her first year at the school. Bernstein emphasizes young Zhongmei's persistence against frequently overwhelming odds and her passion for her art. Aspiring dancers will be inspired by Zhongmei's story. An eight-page color insert is included. KLB

▲ Blumenthal, Karen *Mr. Sam: How Sam Walton Built Wal-Mart and Became America's Richest Man*

186 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01177-3 \$17.99

(2) 4–6 This absorbing, accessible biography chronicles the childhood, adolescence, college years, and career of Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton. Positives and negatives are explored, including Walton's personal shortcomings as well as criticisms of his company. Blumenthal has done a splendid job of not only introducing the man but also making his story relevant and timely. Vignettes, sidebars, graphs, and black-and-white photographs are included. Bib., ind. Review 7/11. JH

Bridges, Shirin Yim *Agrippina: "Atrocious and Ferocious"*

28 pp. Goosebottom ISBN 978-0-9834256-1-8 \$18.95

Havemeyer, Janie *Catherine de' Medici: "The Black Queen"*

28 pp. Goosebottom ISBN 978-0-9834256-3-2 \$18.95

Hockinson, Liz *Marie Antoinette: "Madame Deficit"*

28 pp. Goosebottom ISBN 978-0-9834256-4-9 \$18.95

Maurer, Gretchen *Mary Tudor: "Bloody Mary"*

28 pp. Goosebottom ISBN 978-0-9834256-2-5 \$18.95

Pack, Mary Fisk *Cleopatra: "Serpent of the Nile"*

28 pp. Goosebottom ISBN 978-0-9834256-0-1 \$18.95

Yim, Natasha *Cixi: "The Dragon Empress"*

28 pp. Goosebottom ISBN 978-0-9834256-5-6 \$18.95

(4) 4–6 Illustrated by Peter Malone. Thinking Girl's Treasury of Dastardly Dames series. Profiling some of history's most notorious women rulers, this series employs crisp writing along with an appealing mix of dramatic paintings and photographs (mainly of places and items). The main texts deliver plenty of gory details; most volumes include sidebars highlighting cultural specifics. It's a little all over the place, but the series, with its sharp hook, should appeal to a diverse readership. HRB

Brown, Anne K. *Katy Perry*

112 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0609-9 \$33.45

Dougherty, Terri *George Lopez*

104 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0424-8 \$33.45

Emert, Phyllis Raybin *Sonia Sotomayor*

112 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0489-7 \$33.45

Kreger-Boaz, Claire *Lady Gaga*

104 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0426-2 \$33.45

Wagner, Viqi *Hamid Karzai*

112 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0425-5 \$33.45

(4) YA People in the News series. Each title touches on the public figure's early years, later life, and achievements. Though the writing tends to be overly laudatory, difficult issues are occasionally addressed, especially in the Karzai volume (e.g., corruption allegations against him, his increasing criticism of the West). Sidebars cover more general topics, adding some context. Many photographs are included. There are eight other fall 2011 books in this series. Reading list, timeline, websites. Ind. ERG

Colman, Penny *Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony: A Friendship That Changed the World*

256 pp. Holt/Ottaviano ISBN 978-0-8050-8293-7 \$18.99

(3) YA Published spring 2011. "Yes, our work is one, we are one in aim and sympathy," Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote in an 1865 letter to Susan B. Anthony. Colman's biography, rich in quotes from the women, details their respective upbringings and family lives while also showing the strides they made after joining forces to fight for equality. A sixteen-page photographic insert is included. Timeline, websites. Bib., ind. CMH

Demi *Joan of Arc*

56 pp. Cavendish ISBN 978-0-7614-5953-8 \$19.99

(4) 4–6 Demi brings her signature gilded iconography to the story of Joan of Arc, from her childhood in Domrémy to her execution in Rouen at the age of nineteen. Accepting Joan's version of herself and with many (unsourced) quotes from the saint, the book is a good introduction. The pictures are reverent but small and static, only occasionally surprising the eye. RS

Doeden, Matt *Prince William & Kate: A Royal Romance*

48 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-8029-0 \$26.60

(4) 4–6 Gateway Biography series. Doeden touches on the Duke and Duchess of Wales's backgrounds and childhoods (including an explanation of Britain's monarchy) before describing their college friendship, subsequent (rocky) romance, and fairy-tale engagement and wedding. Stock photos of the couple accompany the cursory text; some images are unexpected: "Here [Kate] is in the middle of a shaving cream fight." Reading list, timeline, websites. Bib., ind. RLS

Dunn, Joeming *Bill Clinton: 42nd U.S. President*

32 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-645-4 \$19.95

Illustrated by Ben Dunn.

Dunn, Joeming *John Adams: 2nd U.S. President*

32 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-644-7 \$19.95

Illustrated by Rod Espinosa.

Dunn, Joeming *Richard Nixon: 37th U.S. President*

32 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-647-8 \$19.95

Illustrated by Ben Dunn.

Dunn, Joeming *Ulysses S. Grant: 18th U.S. President*

32 pp. ABDO/Magic Wagon LE ISBN 978-1-61641-646-1 \$19.95

Illustrated by Rod Espinosa.

(5) 4–6 Graphic Planet: Presidents of the United States Biographics series. These comics-format titles gives basic facts about United States presidents. The main events of the subjects' lives are touched on (even the Monica Lewinsky affair in *Clinton*), but the random organization makes it hard for readers to make connections. Distracting boxes containing the large-font text crowd the pages, and the illustrations look stiff or unfinished. Timeline. Glos., ind. RSS

Gerber, Carole *Annie Jump Cannon, Astronomer*

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-58980-911-6 \$16.99

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Christina Wald. This picture book biography traces the life of the woman who developed the classification system currently in use for stars; Annie Jump Cannon (1893–1941) still holds the world record for number of stars classified—over four hundred thousand. Text and illustrations are both a bit static in this catalog of her life. Timeline. Bib. FFB

Gillam, Scott *Sigmund Freud: Famous Neurologist*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-004-4 \$23.95

Herringshaw, DeAnn *Lucille Ball: Actress & Comedienne*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-002-0 \$23.95

Higgins, Melissa *Julian Assange: WikiLeaks Founder*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-001-3 \$23.95

Pratt, Mary K. *Elizabeth I: English Renaissance Queen*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-003-7 \$23.95

(4) YA Essential Lives series. These series entries, with straightforward writing and frequent sidebars and photos, are uneven in quality and interest level. *Elizabeth I* is particularly dry and requires background knowledge. Lucille Ball's colorful personality barely comes through in her volume (the pictures help), and the subtitle for *Freud* is odd (content is fine). *Assange* is current through 2011. Reading list, timeline, websites. Bib., glos., ind. CJ

Griffith, Victoria *The Fabulous Flying Machines of Alberto Santos-Dumont*

32 pp. Abrams ISBN 978-1-4197-0011-8 \$16.95

(3) K–3 Illustrated by Eva Montanari. "Alberto Santos-Dumont loved floating over Paris in his own personal flying machine": a dirigible he designed. This volume describes the eccentric aeronautical engineer's large personality and his twenty-one-second flight in an airplane he built in 1906. Invented dialogue and historical figure cameos (e.g., Santos-Dumont's friend Louis Cartier, rival pilot Louis Blériot) enliven the telling, as do the cloudy, impressionistic mixed-media illustrations. Bib., ind. FFB

Gunderson, Megan M. *Jeff Kinney*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-048-8 \$16.95

Wheeler, Jill C. *Christopher Paul Curtis*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-046-4 \$16.95

Wheeler, Jill C. *Julia Alvarez*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-045-7 \$16.95

Wheeler, Jill C. *Nikki Grimes*

24 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-047-1 \$16.95

(4) K–3 Checkerboard Biography Library: Children's Authors series. These accessible but dry biographies provide introductory overviews of the lives and works of popular children's authors. Many engaging photos of the writers (along with some stock images) are included. There are some interesting facts, but a tighter structure (along with lists of the authors' works) would have helped organize the information. Glos., ind. NLH

Hasday, Judy L. *Facebook and Mark Zuckerberg*

112 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-176-6 \$28.95

Sapet, Kerrily *Google Founders: Larry Page and Sergey Brin*

112 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-177-3 \$28.95

Scally, Robert D. *Jeff Bezos: Founder of Amazon and the Kindle*

112 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-178-0 \$28.95

Smith, Chris, and Marci McGrath *Twitter: Jack Dorsey, Biz Stone and Evan Williams*

112 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-179-7 \$28.95

(4) YA Business Leaders series. These biographies focus on the technologies that their youthful subjects developed—Facebook, Google, Amazon.com, and Twitter—and the way each company has changed from small startup to international phenomenon. The subjects' lives and inventions are explained in clear language with embedded definitions when necessary; some details are more important than others. Numerous photos (mostly relevant, some not) support the texts. Timeline, websites. Bib., ind. FFB

Kallen, Stuart A. *The Beatles: British Pop Sensation*

48 pp. KidHaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5868-9 \$28.75

Redmond, Shirley Raye *Richard Branson: Virgin Megabrand Mogul*

48 pp. KidHaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5536-7 \$28.75

(4) 4–6 Innovators series. *Beatles* breaks no new ground while focusing on the band's formation, the Beatlemania years, and the group's ever-evolving musical style, briefly touching on its lasting influence. *Branson* explores the British entrepreneur's "brash and bold" personality. The texts are accessible but bland. Some photographs of the subjects add interest. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. ERG

▲ Krull, Kathleen *Jim Henson: The Guy Who Played with Puppets*

40 pp. Random ISBN 978-0-375-85721-8 \$16.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-95721-5 \$19.99

(2) K–3 Illustrated by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher. Krull's straightforward text highlights key events and includes anecdotes to round out Henson's motivational life story. Johnson and Fancher's colorful paintings capture the vitality in their subject's life and work. This celebration of Henson and his love of puppetry is a timely way to mark the late artist's seventy-fifth birthday and introduce the man and his puppets to a whole new generation. Bib. Review 11/11. CR

Moses, Will *Mary and Her Little Lamb: The True Story of the Famous Nursery Rhyme*

40 pp. Philomel ISBN 978-0-399-25154-2 \$17.99

(3) K–3 Moses describes how Mary Elizabeth Sawyer nursed a sickly newborn lamb to health, making it a beloved pet—and the star of the nursery rhyme. Working in the folk-art style of his great-grandmother (Grandma

Moses), this book's author-illustrator paints cozy, home-spun farm scenes, including spot art, full-page drawings, and double-page spreads. PMC

▲ Moss, Marissa *The Bravest Woman in America*

32 pp. Tricycle ISBN 978-1-58246-369-8 \$16.99
LE ISBN 978-1-58246-400-8 \$19.99

(2) K–3 Illustrated by Andrea U'Ren. After illness disabled her lighthouse keeper father, Ida Lewis took over his duties. In 1858, at age sixteen, she heroically rescued four boys whose boat had capsized—the first of many rescues during a lifelong career. The stirring events are beautifully visualized in painterly watercolor, ink, and acrylic art. An author's note further highlights the significance of Ida's career. Review 7/11. JRL

New, Jennifer *Dan Eldon: Safari as a Way of Life*

184 pp. Chronicle ISBN 978-0-8118-7091-7 \$24.99

(3) YA Dan Eldon was a twenty-two-year-old Reuter's photographer killed in Somalia in 1993. Using a well-balanced combination of narration and high-quality reproductions of pages from Eldon's journals, the author develops an inspiring portrait of a person driven to travel and create art out of a profound sense of love for humanity and fascination with the world. Removable items include an iron-on decal, postcards, and pictures. Websites. RR

▲ Nivola, Claire A. *Orani: My Father's Village*

40 pp. Farrar/Foster ISBN 978-0-374-35657-6 \$16.99

(1) 4–6 In the 1950s, Nivola's father's Sardinian birthplace, with its modest red roofs, scenic valley, and welcoming relatives, was a mind-opening place to visit. Orani and its people are lovingly evoked in watercolor and gouache paintings, from expansive views to more intimate scenes. It's not a nostalgic picture, but one of children thriving in a close-knit community nurtured by its simple way of life. Review 9/11. JRL

▲ Ottaviani, Jim *Feynman*

266 pp. Roaring Brook/First Second
ISBN 978-1-59643-259-8 \$29.99

(1) YA Illustrated by Leland Myrick. Color by Hilary Sycamore. Richard Feynman was a brilliant theoretical physicist and an individualist of the highest order. The first-person graphic novel format is ideal for telling his story, and Ottaviani and Myrick do a spectacular job presenting their remarkable subject—even unto clear explanations of complex physics. Their enthusiasm infuses every aspect of the book, from the riveting opening scene to the aptly spirited and opinionated bibliography. Review 9/11. MVP

Robbins, Trina *Lily Renée, Escape Artist: From Holocaust Survivor to Comic Book Pioneer*

96 pp. Lerner LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6010-0 \$29.27
PE ISBN 978-0-7613-8114-3 \$7.95

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Anne Timmons and Mo Oh. Graphic Universe series. This graphic novel-style biography introduces comic-book illustrator Lily Renée Wilhelm. The text begins with her happy childhood in Vienna then goes on to

detail the Nazis' rise to power. Lily Renée escaped to England through the *Kindertransport* and eventually immigrated to the United States. Varied panels support and extend the story's drama. Appended notes provide additional facts and "Lily's Photo Album." Glos. BLM

▲ Russo, Marisabina *I Will Come Back for You: A Family in Hiding During World War II*

40 pp. Random/Schwartz & Wade
ISBN 978-0-375-86695-1 \$17.99
LE ISBN 978-0-375-96695-8 \$20.99

(2) 4–6 This companion to *Always Remember Me* is based on Russo's mother's WWII experiences. When Italy joined forces with Nazi Germany, first Papa and then Mamma went into hiding. Saturated gouache paintings in the warm colors of a northern Italian village depict both the joy of family togetherness and the fear of wartime. Photos of Mamma and other family members adorn the endpapers. Review 9/11. MVP

Sawyer, Kem Knapp *Mohandas Gandhi*

144 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-166-7 \$28.95

(4) YA Champion of Freedom series. Sawyer chronicles the life and work of Mohandas Gandhi, paying particular attention to his influences, promotion of self-reliance, and work as an author and political activist; also briefly mentioned are his complicated beliefs regarding family and women. More context or analysis in the text would have been useful. Black-and-white photographs appear throughout. Timeline, websites. Bib., ind. RLH

▲ Spielman, Gloria *Marcel Marceau: Master of Mime*

32 pp. Kar-Ben ISBN 978-0-7613-3961-8 \$17.95
PE ISBN 978-0-7613-3962-5 \$7.95

(2) K–3 Illustrated by Manon Gauthier. Spielman's understated picture book biography covers fascinating events of Marceau's early life. At sixteen, he and his brother fled the Nazis and became active in the French Resistance. Because of his ability to entertain, Marcel was tapped to smuggle Jewish children out of France. Gauthier's softly colored line drawings perfectly capture the gentle spirit of the performer, both off and on stage. Review 11/11. KTH

▲ Sweet, Melissa *Balloons over Broadway: The True Story of the Puppeteer of Macy's Parade*

40 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-19945-0 \$16.99

(1) K–3 Marionette maker Tony Sarg designed mechanical storybook figures for Macy's window displays before inventing the giant balloon characters that would become the signature feature of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Sweet's whimsical mixed-media collages, embellished with little dolls she made herself out of odds and ends, reinforce the theme that, for Sarg, work was play. An author's note and source list are appended. Bib. Review 11/11. CMH

Thomas, Peggy *For the Birds: The Life of Roger Tory Peterson*

40 pp. Boyds/Calkins ISBN 978-1-59078-764-9 \$16.95

(4) 4–6 Illustrated by Laura Jacques. Thomas provides a wordy but fact-filled narrative about the life of naturalist Roger Tory Peterson, creator of the pioneering *Field Guide to the Birds*. Through hard work and encouragement, his childhood interest in nature and art grew into a lifelong commitment to the natural world. Synthetic-looking mixed-media illustrations work better showing the colorful birds than people. Websites. Bib. FFB

Tieck, Sarah *Kate Middleton: Real-Life Princess*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-020-4 \$19.95

Tieck, Sarah *Kyle Massey: Talented Entertainer*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-019-8 \$19.95

Tieck, Sarah *Lady Gaga: Singing Sensation*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-017-4 \$19.95

Tieck, Sarah *Miranda Lambert: Country Music Star*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-018-1 \$19.95

(4) K–3 Big Buddy Biographies series. This series offers very basic biographical information about popular stars and other people in the spotlight. The texts, though very light on content, are easy to read, and their subjects are of interest to children. Many photographs appear throughout; captions and brief “Did you know?” sidebars give additional information on the figures’ lives. Glos., ind. ERG

Vaughan, Marcia *Irena’s Jars of Secrets*

40 pp. Lee ISBN 978-1-60060-439-3 \$18.95

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Ron Mazellan. Promising her dying father that she would help people in need, Irena Sendler joined a Polish underground organization dedicated to assisting Jewish families during the Holocaust. Rich, dark oils add weight and emotion to this story of a woman who risked her own safety to bring thousands of children out of the Warsaw Ghetto. An afterword tells more about Sendler’s life. TLD

▲ Wadsworth, Ginger *First Girl Scout: The Life of Juliette Gordon Low*

210 pp. Clarion ISBN 978-0-547-24394-8 \$17.99

(2) 4–6 In 1912, Low founded the Girl Scouts—a pioneering organization designed to help empower girls of all races and ethnicities. Information is provided about the organization (e.g., origins of cookie-selling) and its continued success after Low’s death in 1927. Wadsworth captures Low’s stubborn but charismatic spirit by blending facts and humorous sketches in this winning biography. Numerous archival photos supplement the text. Reading list, timeline, websites. Bib., ind. Review 11/11. CR

Wallner, Alexandra *J. R. R. Tolkien*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-1951-7 \$17.95

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by John Wallner. This picture book biography emphasizes elements of Tolkien’s life that would influence his writing, such as his fascination with ancient and foreign languages, and allows readers to draw the connections themselves. Illustrations full of pastels and curlicues match the whimsy of Tolkien’s work. (The curious choice to illustrate his life events as a board game, while fairly unobtrusive, goes unexplained.) Timeline. Bib. SF

▲ Warren, Andrea *Charles Dickens and the Street Children of London*

156 pp. Houghton ISBN 978-0-547-39574-6 \$18.99

(2) 4–6 Warren focuses on how Dickens’s impoverished childhood led to a deep sense of empathy that manifested itself in his writing and his life. Young Charles was largely self-educated; when he became a writer, he infused his novels with his own experiences and observations of rundown London. Warren generally sticks to her focus, but the narrative also takes some interesting diversions. Websites. Bib., ind. Review 9/11. JH

Weaver, Janice *Harry Houdini: The Legend of the World’s Greatest Escape Artist*

48 pp. Abrams ISBN 978-1-4197-0014-9 \$18.95

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Chris Lane. Archival photographs, publicity shots, and original illustrations combine with an engaging text to present a well-researched chronological biography of Harry Houdini. Sidebars featuring historical information illuminate the time period, and the frequent use of Houdini’s own words provides a deeper understanding and appreciation of his personal and professional life. This is a solid addition to biography collections. Reading list, websites. Ind. TLD

Wells-Cole, Catherine *Charles Dickens: England’s Most Captivating Storyteller*

32 pp. Candlewick/Templar ISBN 978-0-7636-5567-9 \$19.99

(3) 4–6 This well-produced overview of the life and times of Dickens is replete with flaps, folds, and envelopes, making it an interactive and entertaining experience for readers. Accessible text on double-page spreads focuses on a single topic—family life, school, London, Christmas, etc. Pages also feature abundant reproductions of period illustrations, photos, documents, and more, in color and black and white. CLS

White, Becky *Betsy Ross*

32 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-1908-1 \$16.95

(3) PS Illustrated by Megan Lloyd. “Betsy ripped. / Rip, rip. / Seven rich, / Crimson strips. / Betsy clipped. / Clip, clip . . .” So begins this inventive, onomatopoeia-heavy introduction to Old Glory’s creator. The text is geared to the youngest audience, but the appeal of the visual details in Lloyd’s appliquéd illustrations knows no age limit. A “Make Your Own Betsy Ross Star” activity is appended. NB

COLLECTIVE BIOGRAPHIES

Atwood, Kathryn J. *Women Heroes of World War II: 26 Stories of Espionage, Sabotage, Resistance, and Rescue*

266 pp. Chicago ISBN 978-1-55652-961-0 \$19.95

(3) YA Published spring 2011. Organized by country, the text profiles women throughout Europe and the U.S. who fought back against the Nazis by hiding Jews in their homes, spying for the Resistance, or even working as assassins. Atwood skillfully weaves in personal details about her subjects to give readers a solid feel for who they were and why they risked so much to save others. Bib., glos., ind. CMH

Rosenberg, Aaron *The Civil War: One Event, Six People*

160 pp. Scholastic LE ISBN 978-0-545-28926-9 \$14.99
PE ISBN 978-0-545-23756-7 \$6.99

(3) 4–6 Profiles series. Published spring 2011. This volume profiles six important Civil War figures: Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Clara Barton, George McClellan, Robert E. Lee, and Mathew Brady. Biographical information is well tied to key historical events. Supplemented with black-and-white drawings and photos (some color-tinted), these readable and informative short sketches may motivate readers to do further research on the period. Websites. Bib., ind. JF

Winter, Jonah *Wild Women of the Wild West*

40 pp. Holiday ISBN 978-0-8234-1601-1 \$16.95

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Susan Guevara. Calamity Jane, Annie Oakley, and Belle Starr are three of the fifteen tough-minded Wild West women featured in this book. Winter is so unapologetically enthusiastic about his subjects that it's hard to find fault with occasional editorializing ("Calamity Jane reinvented what it was to be a woman"). Guevara's portraits are sure and unflinching, just like the women they depict. Timeline. Bib. NB



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GEOGRAPHY AND EXPLORATION

Crane, Nick *Barefoot Books World Atlas*

48 pp. Barefoot ISBN 978-1-84686-333-2 \$19.99

(4) K–3 Illustrated by David Dean. This attractive oversize atlas focuses on oceans, continents, and geographic regions rather than countries. The discussion includes contemporary perspectives on environmental concerns, natural resources, and climate in each region. The index lists countries and their capitals, but this same information is difficult to find on the maps. The book is best used in conjunction with more traditional atlases. A world map poster is included. Bib., glos. mvk

Hagglund, Betty *Epic Treks*

64 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6668-1 \$19.99

Hardesty, Von *Epic Flights*

64 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6669-8 \$19.99

(4) 4–6 Epic Adventure series. Photographs, maps, and drawings combine with detail-rich texts to introduce notable land and air explorers and the stories of their adventures. Sidebars and text boxes, along with foldout pages, provide additional context; busy design and the small font of the supplemental information may prove challenging for readers. Timeline. Glos., ind. TLD

Nardo, Don *Polar Explorations*

104 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0360-9 \$33.45

(4) YA World History series. From climate and landscape to the attraction and danger of specific expeditions throughout history, this volume takes a broad look at polar region exploration. Primary sources, photographs, paintings, maps, and sidebars add interest to the dry but informative text. Reading list, timeline, websites. Ind. TLD

Pipe, Jim *Daring Journeys*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-513-7 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 On the Edge series. Pipe briefly glosses over eleven journeys of worldwide exploration, beginning with Marco Polo and ending with late-twentieth-century explorers (e.g., “daredevil explorer Steve Fossett” and his around-the-world balloon attempt). Photographs and reproductions provide clear images of the people and places involved, while short sidebars add interest. A “How Daring Are You?” quiz is appended. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. JM

GENERAL AND WORLD HISTORY

Bingham, Jane *Exciting Escapes*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-514-4 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 On the Edge series. Bingham briefly glosses over eleven “escapes” throughout history, from Devil’s Island and Alcatraz prison breakouts to plane-crash survival. Photographs and reproductions provide images of the people and places involved, while short sidebars add interest. An “Escapee’s Quiz” is appended. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. JM

Chrisp, Peter *Pirates*

48 pp. Kingfisher/Macmillan ISBN 978-0-7534-6611-7 \$12.99

(4) 4–6 Navigators series. This is a straightforward historical survey of “thieves who commit crimes at sea,” with one double-page spread devoted to fictional pirates. Each main topic is divided into digestible subtopics. Vivid illustrations consist of computer-generated pictures, maps, and photos; the busy pages also include informative captions and quotations. Suitable for browsing. Websites. Glos., ind. FFB

Malam, John *The Titanic and Other Lost Ships*

32 pp. QEB LE ISBN 978-1-60992-054-8 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Lost and Found series. This volume focuses on the fates of six sunken ships that were seemingly lost and subsequently rediscovered. Examples begin with a “Lost” section (“Lost: World War II Warship”) that gives background; a “Found” section (“Found: HMS *Edinburgh*”) details the circumstances of rediscovery. Information is sparse, but the organizational hook and copious pictures may whet readers’ appetites. Timeline. Glos., ind. AMT

Mitchell, Susan K. *The Secret World of Spy Agencies*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3714-4 \$23.93

Mitchell, Susan K. *Spies and Lies: Famous and Infamous Spies*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3713-7 \$23.93

Mitchell, Susan K. *Spies, Double Agents, and Traitors*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3711-3 \$23.93

Mitchell, Susan K. *Spy Codes and Ciphers*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3709-0 \$23.93

Mitchell, Susan K. *Spy Gizmos and Gadgets*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3710-6 \$23.93

Mitchell, Susan K. *Spy Tech: Digital Dangers*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3712-0 \$23.93

(3) 4–6 Secret World of Spies series. Archival photographs, sidebars, and multiple fact-filled features (sidebars, text boxes, etc.) combine with accessible texts to present a thorough (albeit busy) introduction to the history and current enterprise of spies and spying. From the famous and the little-known to the resources, gadgets, and skills used to betray or assist governments, these titles provide abundant information for young intelligence gatherers. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. TLD

ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL HISTORY

Boyer, Crispin *Everything Castles*

64 pp. National LE ISBN 978-1-4263-0804-8 \$25.90

PE ISBN 978-1-4263-0803-1 \$12.95

(4) 4–6 With Peter Brown. This book presents a survey of medieval castles including descriptions, construction, defense, habitation, and eventual demise. Topics include “Five Ultimate Castles,” “How to Build a Castle,” “Siege Stories,” “Knight Life,” and “Castle Myths vs. Facts.” Though the spreads are busy, the many photographs and drawings, accompanied by brief vignettes, will appeal to reluctant readers and medieval history buffs. Timeline, websites. Glos., ind. LBC

Bredeson, Carmen *Don’t Let the Barber Pull Your Teeth: Could You Survive Medieval Medicine?*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3693-2 \$23.93

Stiefel, Chana *Sweaty Suits of Armor: Could You Survive Being a Knight?*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3784-7 \$23.93

Stiefel, Chana *There’s a Rat in My Soup: Could You Survive Medieval Food?*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3785-4 \$23.93

Stiefel, Chana *Ye Castle Stinketh: Could You Survive Living in a Castle?*

48 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3786-1 \$23.93

(4) 4–6 Illustrated by Gerald Kelley. Ye Yucky Middle Ages series. This series puts a comedic focus on the smellier, nastier aspects of life in medieval Europe. Each chapter covers a different topic and is balanced between the sensational and the informative. Humorous illustrations keep things lighthearted and fit well with the overall theme. Some of the information is repeated across volumes, with *Castle* being particularly redundant. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. AMT

Kallen, Stuart A. *Ancient Egypt*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-152-1 \$27.95

Marcovitz, Hal *Ancient Rome*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-186-6 \$27.95

Woog, Adam *The Early Middle Ages*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-151-4 \$27.95

Woog, Adam *The Late Middle Ages*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-188-0 \$27.95

(3) YA Understanding World History series. These books chronicle the personalities and events that played principal roles in the development of Western civilization from 3100 BC in ancient Egypt to the end of the Middle Ages, circa 1450. The readable, concise texts are reinforced with numerous illustrations and maps. Readers will appreciate the sidebars that give additional information about particular eras. Timeline, websites. Bib., ind. LBC

Malam, John *Pompeii and Other Lost Cities*

32 pp. QEB LE ISBN 978-1-60992-051-7 \$28.50

Malam, John *The Terracotta Army and Other Lost Treasures*

32 pp. QEB LE ISBN 978-1-60992-052-4 \$28.50

Malam, John *Tutankhamun and Other Lost Tombs*

32 pp. QEB LE ISBN 978-1-60992-053-1 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Lost and Found series. Each volume focuses on a historical artifact (i.e., tomb, city, treasure) that was seemingly lost and subsequently rediscovered. Examples begin with a “Lost” section (“Lost: Han Prince”) that gives background; a “Found” section (“Found: Liu Sheng’s Tomb”) details the circumstances of rediscovery. Information is sparse, but the organizational hook and copious pictures may whet archaeology fans’ appetites. Timeline. Glos., ind. AMT

MODERN HISTORY

Altman, Linda Jacobs *The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising: Striking a Blow Against the Nazis*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3320-7 \$31.93

Byers, Ann *Rescuing the Danish Jews: A Heroic Story from the Holocaust*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3321-4 \$31.93

Byers, Ann *Saving Children from the Holocaust: The Kindertransport*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3323-8 \$31.93

Deem, James M. *Auschwitz: Voices from the Death Camp*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3322-1 \$31.93

Deem, James M. *Kristallnacht: The Nazi Terror That Began the Holocaust*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3324-5 \$31.93

Hoffman, Betty *Liberation: Stories of Survival from the Holocaust*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3319-1 \$31.93

(4) YA Holocaust Through Primary Sources series. This series covers various aspects of the Holocaust. Interspersed throughout the historical narratives are recollections by people who were there; text boxes with handwriting font signals first-person accounts. Some stock photos and occasional pictures supplied by the witnesses add immediacy. The writing and organization of material are uneven, but the volumes are useful nonetheless. Reading list, timeline, websites. Glos., ind. AK

Chrisp, Peter *Explore Titanic: Breathtaking New Pictures, Recreated with Digital Technology*

40 pp. Barron’s ISBN 978-1-4380-7159-6 \$17.99

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Somchith Vongprachanh. From the early stages of *Titanic*’s planning and construction to the ship’s amenities to the dramatic accident and eventual sinking, every detail of the historic ship is presented—visually and with informative text and firsthand accounts—for you-

are-there exploration. Illustrations include archival photographs and stunningly crisp digital re-creations of objects and scenes. Includes a CD for virtual “3D tours.” KEH

Denenberg, Barry *Titanic Sinks!*

72 pp. Viking ISBN 978-0-670-01243-5 \$19.99

(3) 4–6 Denenberg’s handsome volume is formatted to look like a commemorative newspaper. Background information about the ship reads like a travel brochure, emphasizing the *Titanic*’s size and grandeur. The text’s faux journalistic account gives readers a you-are-there sense while an “RMS *Titanic* Hour by Hour” timeline clarifies events. The volume is generously illustrated with archival photographs and appended with source notes. Bib. BC

George, Charles, and Linda George *The Holocaust*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-155-2 \$27.95

Robson, David *The Decade of the 2000s*

96 pp. ReferencePoint LE ISBN 978-1-60152-187-3 \$27.95

(3) YA Understanding World History series. These books give useful background on important periods of modern history. *Holocaust* presents a clear, concise account of the atrocities committed by the Nazis against Jews and other groups leading up to and during World War II. *Decade* recounts major events in the very recent past: 9/11, recessions, natural disasters, etc. Sidebars and photographs enhance the readable texts. Timeline, websites. Bib., ind. LBC

Gunderson, Jessica *Methods of Warfare*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-101-8 \$23.95

Gunderson, Jessica *Pivotal Moments*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-102-5 \$23.95

Wimmer, Teresa *Causes*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-097-4 \$23.95

Wimmer, Teresa *Controversies*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-098-1 \$23.95

Wimmer, Teresa *Ideology and Information*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-099-8 \$23.95

Wimmer, Teresa *Important Figures*

48 pp. Creative Education LE ISBN 978-1-60818-100-1 \$23.95

(3) 4–6 War on Terror series. This series chronicles events surrounding the September 11 terrorist attacks, including activities beginning years prior to 2001 as well as those that have transpired since. Each volume focuses on an individual topic; the books can be read independently or as a unit (there is some repetition). Numerous photographs and sidebars in a clean layout enhance the texts. Bib., glos., ind. LBC

Hamilton, John *Early Battles*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-059-4 \$18.95

Hamilton, John *The Final Years*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-060-0 \$18.95

Hamilton, John *Leaders and Generals*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-061-7 \$18.95

Hamilton, John *Turning Points*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-062-4 \$18.95

(4) 4–6 World War II series. Hamilton presents an abbreviated overview of major topics related to World War II. Although each book is independent, readers must rely on the entire series for continuity. The information provided is very limited, but the simple, straightforward texts may appeal to reluctant readers and military buffs. Archival photographs and maps enhance the volumes. Glos., ind. LBC

Haugen, David, and Susan Musser, Editors *The Holocaust*

250 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5258-8 \$39.70

(4) YA Perspectives on Modern World History series. This collection of essays explores perspectives on the Holocaust. “Historical Background” essays provide overviews; the “Controversies” and “Personal Narratives” sections look at individual viewpoints. The volume is text heavy, with some pictures, sidebars, and pull-quotes providing supplementary information. Reading list, timeline, websites. Ind. AMT

Kent, Deborah *The Vietnam War: From Da Nang to Saigon*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3637-6 \$31.93

Kent, Zachary *World War I: From the Lusitania to Versailles*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3641-3 \$31.93

Stein, R. Conrad *World War II in Europe: From Normandy to Berlin*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3639-0 \$31.93

Stein, R. Conrad *World War II in the Pacific: From Pearl Harbor to Nagasaki*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3640-6 \$31.93

(4) 4–6 United States at War series. Published spring 2011. These overviews focus on history, political significance, and military strategy and action, and how the title wars’ outcomes affected future events. The authors creatively utilize quotes from political leaders, soldiers, and citizens of countries fighting in the wars. Color and black-and-white photographs and maps help spruce up an uninspired design. Reading list, timeline, websites. Glos., ind. JF

Lassieur, Allison *Can You Survive the Titanic?: An Interactive Survival Adventure*

112 pp. Capstone LE ISBN 978-1-4296-6586-5 \$30.65
PE ISBN 978-1-4296-7351-8 \$6.95

(3) 4–6 You Choose: Survival series. In this Choose-Your-Own-Adventure-style book, readers select a persona—surgeon’s assistant, governess, or twelve-year-old boy—and make decisions at narrative crossroad points. Though the

information is limited, the text packs in many details about the ship, supported by archival reproductions. The active-learning approach will engage students while demonstrating how individuals’ choices or social standings made the difference between life and death. Reading list. Bib., glos., ind. ERG

Lusted, Marcia Amidon *The Capture and Killing of Osama bin Laden*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-180-5 \$23.95

(4) YA Essential Events series. Lusted explores Osama bin Laden’s early life and the influences leading to his radicalization. His rise to power in al Qaeda and his role in funding and planning terrorist operations in America are also discussed. The hunt for and eventual killing of bin Laden are not sensationalized. Photographs and maps enhance the text but crowd the pages. Reading list, timeline. Bib., glos., ind. LBC

McPherson, Stephanie Sammartino *Iceberg, Right Ahead!: The Tragedy of the Titanic*

112 pp. Twenty-First Century LE ISBN 978-0-7613-6756-7 \$33.26

(3) YA An introduction describing the earliest moments of an emergency that would become historic tragedy opens this meticulously researched *Titanic* account that focuses on the event’s lesser-known details and devotes ample coverage to its aftermath. Frequent sidebars that further zoom in on small stories within larger ones, striking historical photographs and period illustrations, and extensive back matter complement McPherson’s engaging prose. Reading list, timeline, websites. Bib., glos., ind. KEH

Seiple, Samantha *Ghosts in the Fog: The Untold Story of Alaska’s WWII Invasion*

221 pp. Scholastic ISBN 978-0-545-29654-0 \$16.99

(4) 4–6 Attempting to create a diversion from their 1942 attack on Midway, the Japanese forces invaded the Aleutian Islands, occupying two islands and taking prisoners back to Japan. The facts of the story are undeniably gripping, and Seiple retells individual incidents with immediacy, but the structure of the narrative is disjointed and hard to follow. Extensive source notes are appended. Ind. rs

Shoulders, Debbie, and Michael Shoulders *T Is for Titanic: A Titanic Alphabet*

48 pp. Sleeping Bear ISBN 978-1-58536-176-2 \$17.95

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen. Pedestrian rhyming text (“L is for Lifeboats and Lifebelts / Passengers may use these / as a safe way to float. / If there’s trouble while at sea / find lifebelts and lifeboats”) is paired with more detailed—and more interesting—facts about the *Titanic* itself and the shipwreck disaster. Paintings, dramatic yet stiff, reflect some measure of the boat’s grandeur. ERG

▲ Walker, Sally M. *Blizzard of Glass: The Halifax Explosion of 1917*

141 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-8945-5 \$18.99

(2) 4–6 In Halifax, on December 6, 1917, two ships collided in the harbor, one of them carrying an extraordinary amount of explosives. Walker sets the stage, then focuses on five families that lived in the waterfront neighborhoods. Through their eyes, we experience the explosion, devastating aftermath, and eventual rebuilding. Numerous black-and-white photographs, plus a couple of welcome maps, further chronicle events. Bib. Review 11/11. JH

EUROPE

Burgan, Michael *Germany in Our World*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-387-4 \$28.50

Burgan, Michael *United Kingdom in Our World*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-435-2 \$28.50

Weil, Ann *Italy in Our World*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-389-8 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Countries in Our World series. These volumes provide very general introductions to their title countries. Topics include geographical, economic, environmental, cultural, and political issues, positive and negative, faced by the citizens; useful spreads look ahead to 2020. Abundant photographs (of varying relevance) and sidebars highlight important facts and people. Some of the information is dated (e.g., *Italy* lists Berlusconi as Prime Minister and *U.K.* lists Gordon Brown). Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. BB

Savery, Annabel *France*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-471-0 \$28.50

Savery, Annabel *Italy*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-473-4 \$28.50

Savery, Annabel *Spain*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-476-5 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Been There! series. A girl narrates her journeys to three European countries. Each volume starts with a list of things she already knows about the country and a map of her travel route. Double-page spreads then provide historical and geographical details, along with photographs. Though the information is superficial, the volumes provide accessible introductions to everyday life. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. LB

MIDDLE EAST AND ASIA

Cruden, Alexander, Editor *The Persian Gulf War*

218 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5261-8 \$39.70

Engdahl, Sylvia, Editor *The Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki*

222 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5256-4 \$39.70

(4) YA Perspectives on Modern World History series. These series entries present collections of essays that explore perspectives on the title subjects. Multiple viewpoints are

examined, including those of people who participated in the events or played key roles (two entries from George H. W. Bush appear in *Persian Gulf*). Essays cover background, controversies, and personal narratives. The volumes are text heavy, with some pictures, sidebars, and pull-quotes providing supplementary information. Reading list, timeline, websites. Ind. AMT

Langley, Andrew *Israel in Our World*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-388-1 \$28.50

Langley, Andrew *Pakistan in Our World*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-392-8 \$28.50

Pipe, Jim *Japan in Our World*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-390-4 \$28.50

Pipe, Jim *South Korea in Our World*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-433-8 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Countries in Our World series. These volumes provide very general introductions to their title countries. Topics include geographical, economic, environmental, cultural, and political issues, positive and negative, faced by the citizens; useful spreads look ahead to 2020. Abundant photographs (of varying relevance) and sidebars highlight important facts and people. The volumes will be quickly dated. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. BB

Lusted, Marcia Amidon *The 2011 Japan Disasters*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-179-9 \$23.95

(4) YA Essential Events series. This book recounts three recent disasters suffered by Japan. Lusted describes the effects of Japan's strongest earthquake, the subsequent devastating tsunami, and the initial and long-term results of the nuclear power disasters that followed. The human suffering and the impact on Japan's economy are also discussed in some depth. Photographs and sidebars enhance the text but crowd the pages. Reading list, timeline. Bib., glos., ind. LBC

Pelleschi, Andrea *China*

144 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-107-2 \$24.95

(3) YA Countries of the World series. This travel guide-like volume begins with a tourist's view of the title country: "You eagerly step off the plane in China on your long-awaited vacation." Chapters then cover all the expected details for report-writers: geography, flora and fauna, history, people, culture, politics, economics, and contemporary life. Vivid photographs and useful maps in an eye-pleasing design enliven the presentation. Reading list, timeline. Bib., glos., ind. MG

Savery, Annabel *China*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-470-3 \$28.50

Savery, Annabel *India*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-472-7 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Been There! series. Savery's young narrator shares her journeys to two of the largest countries in Asia. Each double-page spread showcases a different stop and provides geographical and historical information. Though the information is superficial, the volumes provide accessible

introductions to everyday life. Each book includes a full-color map of the narrator's route, photographs, common phrases, and fact boxes. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. LB

Sobol, Richard *The Mysteries of Angkor Wat: Exploring Cambodia's Ancient Temple*

44 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-4166-5 \$17.99

(4) 4–6 Sobol gives a personal, even casual, account of his visit to Cambodia's massive twelfth-century temple complex, the world's largest religious structure. An especially appealing section pairs photos of temple carvings with pictures of contemporary Cambodians engaged in similar activities (e.g., carrying water buckets, playing native instruments). There's some romanticizing of Sobol's experiences—and of historical record—in this otherwise inviting photo-essay. Glos. CMH

AFRICA

Bojang, Ali Brownlie *Egypt in Our World*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-386-7 \$28.50

Bojang, Ali Brownlie *Kenya in Our World*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-391-1 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Countries in Our World series. These volumes provide very general introductions to their title countries. Topics include geographical, economic, environmental, cultural, and political issues, positive and negative, faced by the citizens; useful spreads look ahead to 2020. Abundant photographs (of varying relevance) and sidebars highlight important facts and people. The volumes will be quickly dated. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. BB

Karlsson, Val *Egypt*

144 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-108-9 \$24.95

(3) YA Countries of the World series. This travel guide-like volume begins with a tourist's view of Egypt: "You have just stepped out of a time machine—or so it seems . . . You have just arrived in Cairo." Chapters cover all the expected details for report-writers: geography, flora and fauna, history, people, culture, politics, economics, and contemporary life. Vivid photographs and useful maps in an eye-pleasing design enliven the presentation. Reading list, timeline. Bib., glos., ind. MG

Nardo, Don *The Rwandan Genocide*

104 pp. Lucent LE ISBN 978-1-4205-0567-2 \$33.45

(4) YA World History series. Dry but informative text combines with primary sources, archival photographs, and maps to provide a thorough discussion of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Life prior to the mass killings, growing tensions, and political maneuvers, along with key individuals, are presented. Sidebars provide additional information. Reading list, timeline, websites. Ind. TLD

Reynolds, Jan *Only the Mountains Do Not Move: A Maasai Story of Culture and Conservation*

40 pp. Lee ISBN 978-1-60060-333-4 \$18.95

(3) 4–6 Reynolds discusses environmental changes that have affected the traditional way of life of the Maasai people of Kenya; for example, nomadic herding is giving way to farming as grazing lands shrink and water shortages increase. Vivid photographs appear on every page, elucidating the text's descriptions of the Maasai's adaptation to their shifting world. The handsome volume is useful for its cultural and environmental information. Glos. MLB

Savery, Annabel *South Africa*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-475-8 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Been There! series. The young narrator shares her journey to South Africa, from Johannesburg to Durban to Cape Town. Through text and photographs, readers learn about gold mining, Zulu village life, and Nelson Mandela, along with more general historical, geographical, and cultural details. Though the information is superficial, the volume provides an accessible introduction to everyday life. A map shows the traveler's route. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. LB

NORTH AMERICA

Anderson, Jodi Lynn, Daniel Ehrenhaft, and Andisheh Nourae *Americapedia: Taking the Dumb Out of Freedom*

240 pp. Walker ISBN 978-0-8027-9792-6 \$24.99

PE ISBN 978-0-8027-9793-3 \$16.99

(4) YA Sometimes funny, sometimes serious, but always irreverent, this compendium of information about issues affecting contemporary American life will be most appreciated by those who already have some knowledge of government, religion, history, and current events. Readers can browse through the text, documentary photos, and cartoons to engage intellectually with the many questions the authors bring to the fore. Reading list, websites. Ind. MG

Arato, Rona *Story Voyages Through History 1750–1899*

96 pp. Owlkids ISBN 978-1-926818-91-7 \$24.95

PE ISBN 978-1-926818-92-4 \$17.95

(4) 4–6 Illustrated by Ben Shannon. Nine chronological sections provide snapshots of life in early America. Short fictional narratives are followed by historical information illuminating the issues raised in the tales, from religious freedom to slavery to children's rights. The narratives can be stilted, but they're a good hook for reluctant readers. Cartoon illustrations accompany the stories; archival photographs, illustrations, and maps are included in the history sections. JSK

Battles and Campaigns

112 pp. Brown Bear LE ISBN 978-1-936333-43-1 \$39.95

Behind the Fighting

112 pp. Brown Bear LE ISBN 978-1-936333-44-8 \$39.95

Home Front and the Economy

112 pp. Brown Bear LE ISBN 978-1-936333-45-5 \$39.95

People

112 pp. Brown Bear LE ISBN 978-1-936333-47-9 \$39.95

Politics

112 pp. Brown Bear LE ISBN 978-1-936333-48-6 \$39.95

Weapons, Tactics, and Strategy

112 pp. Brown Bear LE ISBN 978-1-936333-46-2 \$39.95

(4) YA Curriculum Connections: Civil War series. This series presents an abundance of information about the Civil War, with each book following an encyclopedic format. Basic material is listed from A to Z without continuity of content or sequence of events to give readers a sense of chronological order. The textbooklike format is unappealing, but it's enhanced by sidebars and archival photographs. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. LBC

Berlatsky, Noah, Editor ***The Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.***

182 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5259-5 \$39.70

Immell, Myra, Editor ***The McCarthy Era***

170 pp. Greenhaven LE ISBN 978-0-7377-5260-1 \$39.70

(4) YA Perspectives on Modern World History series. These series entries present collections of essays that explore perspectives on the title subjects. Multiple viewpoints are examined, including those of people who participated in the events or played key roles (including the title men themselves). Essays cover background, controversies, and personal narratives. The volumes are text heavy, with some pictures, sidebars, and pull-quotes providing supplementary information. Reading list, timeline, websites. Glos., ind. AMT

▲ Brown, Don ***America Is Under Attack: September 11, 2001: The Day the Towers Fell***

64 pp. Roaring Brook/Flash Point ISBN 978-1-59643-694-7 \$18.99

(1) 4–6 Actual Times series. Brown's approach is solid and journalistic, emphasizing the facts rather than causes or effects. The text is continuous, weaving the events of the morning with the experiences of some of the victims and survivors. Illustrated with line-and-wash pictures that are forthright but never sensational, the book is superbly focused and completely honest. An author's note supplies grim statistics. Bib. Review 11/11. RS

Chemerka, William R. ***The Alamo from A to Z***

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-4556-1461-5 \$16.99

(4) 4–6 Illustrated by Wade Dillon. Chemerka presents brief vignettes of historical figures that played roles in the Texas battle of 1836. Alphabetical entries include both the usual suspects (Bowie, Crockett, and Travis) and those who

are less well known (Losoya, Oury, and Pollard). Amateurish illustrations with stiff, wooden characters accompany the text. Timeline. LBC

Hunt, Nancy Nye ***Aldo Leopold's Shack: Nina's Story***

84 pp. Columbia College Chicago ISBN 978-1-935195-17-7 \$29.95

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Earl J. Madden. This collection of photos and remembrances details the transformation of a rundown Depression-era Wisconsin farm into a National Historic Landmark. The Leopold family collected observations of the land and natural world during each season as they restored the buildings and property during the late 1930s and 1940s. History buffs will enjoy this look at family traditions and natural life. Timeline. JSK

Jones, Rebecca C. ***Captain John Smith's Big and Beautiful Bay***

32 pp. Schiffer ISBN 978-0-7643-3869-4 \$14.99

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Linda Shute. In a tight, lucid narrative, Jones details Captain John Smith's two-thousand-mile Jamestown-based exploration of the Chesapeake Bay during the summer of 1608. Derived largely from primary source material, the exciting account is illustrated with soft-hued drawings and sketches. It's also enlivened by spot-art vignettes of wildlife creatures whose speech balloons help clarify events and add occasional humor. Reading list. FFB

Jurmain, Suzanne Tripp ***Worst of Friends: Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and the True Story of an American Feud***

32 pp. Dutton ISBN 978-0-525-47903-1 \$16.99

(4) K–3 Illustrated by Larry Day. This frothy follow-up to *George Did It* shrinks the title statesmen's rivalry into a personality clash, removing much of the politics from a political story; for all its focus on conflict, the book avoids difficult topics. Day's watercolors are lively caricatures with some fine effects, such as a spread of the Continental Congress crowding around Jefferson as he writes the Declaration of Independence. JLB

Kadair, Deborah Ousley ***I Spy in the Louisiana Sky***

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-58980-885-0 \$16.99

(5) K–3 This Louisiana tribute highlights seven state icons (e.g., state symbol: fleur-de-lis; state reptile: alligator). Awkward rhyming text poses a question with clues to the item; a page turn reveals the answer with a short paragraph of information. The facts are accurate, but the presentation, including cut-paper illustrations that are appealingly spare but confusingly abstract, is off-putting. FFB

Kent, Deborah *The American Revolution: From Bunker Hill to Yorktown*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3642-0 \$31.93

Kent, Zachary *The Civil War: From Fort Sumter to Appomattox*

128 pp. Enslow LE ISBN 978-0-7660-3638-3 \$31.93

(4) 4–6 United States at War series. Published spring 2011. These overviews effectively combine history, political action, and military strategies and tactics, providing a readable view on two wars fought on American soil. The authors creatively utilize quotes from participants in and witnesses of the conflicts. Color and black-and-white photographs and maps help spruce up an uninspired design. Reading list, timeline, websites. Glos., ind. JF

Klobuchar, Lisa *United States in Our World*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-436-9 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Countries in Our World series. Klobuchar provides a very general introduction to the United States, a country whose “wealth and military might make [it] the most powerful country in the world.” Abundant photographs (of varying relevance) and sidebars highlight important facts and people; a useful spread looks ahead to 2020. There’s some out-of-date information (e.g., “there is still a strong U.S. military presence” in Iraq today). Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. BB

Knowlton, Laurie Lazzaro *Cowgirl Alphabet*

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-58980-669-6 \$16.99

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Kathy Coates. Scattershot facts about cowgirls appear throughout this alphabet book. The volume begins with “A is for all-American girls” and concludes with the more-of-a-stretch “Z is for cowgirl Zelda from Zanesville brushing her zebra dun.” Knowlton’s zeal for her subject is evident, but this format for it is dubious. The amateurish art usually gets the horses right. NB

Kostyal, K. M. *Christmas in Williamsburg: 300 Years of Family Traditions*

60 pp. National ISBN 978-1-4263-0867-3 \$17.95
LE ISBN 978-1-4263-0868-0 \$27.90

(3) 4–6 Photographs by Lori Epstein. Kostyal describes Christmas traditions in Colonial Williamsburg; while much less opulent than those of today, they were more elaborate and festive than others in the colonies. Archival artwork and clear photographs of reenactors accompany a few holiday recipes, crafts, and some Christmas history. Those who enjoy investigating old traditions may find some new ideas for their own holiday celebrations. Reading list, timeline. Ind. JSK

Kostyal, K. M. *1862, Fredericksburg: A New Look at a Bitter Civil War Battle*

48 pp. National ISBN 978-1-4263-0835-2 \$17.95
LE ISBN 978-1-4263-0836-9 \$27.90

(3) 4–6 Photographs by Lori Epstein. This book presents an overview of the clashes between the Union and Confederate armies in and around Fredericksburg, Virginia, strategically located between Richmond, VA, and Washington, D.C.

Emphasis is on the devastating battle of December, 1862, during which “the Union loses badly.” Eyewitness accounts, written in letters and diaries, enhance the historical narrative, as do photographs of battle reenactors. Timeline. Bib., ind. LBC

Lake, Matt, and Randy Fairbanks *Weird U.S.: A Freaky Field Trip Through the 50 States*

128 pp. Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-5462-3 \$14.95

(4) 4–6 This compendium of unusual places around the United States is divided into chapters including “Mysterious Museums & Curious Collections” and “Roadside Oddities.” Brief, perky text about each site provides highlights and background; photographs add to the humor and the fun. While there is an index, a listing of sites by state would have been useful to navigate the scattered locales. BLM

Lewis, Anne Margaret *What Am I?: Illinois*

24 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-8960-1 \$9.99

Lewis, Anne Margaret *What Am I?: Michigan*

24 pp. Whitman ISBN 978-0-8075-8961-8 \$9.99

(4) PS Illustrated by Tom Mills. My Look and See State Book series. These volumes introduce the title places to preschoolers. Each spread presents a child-friendly state landmark or symbol, then asks “What am I?” on a foldout flap that, when lifted, reveals the answer. Friendly digital-looking illustrations will help hold viewers’ and listeners’ interest in these superficial novelty books. BLM

▲ Nelson, Kadir *Heart and Soul: The Story of America and African Americans*

108 pp. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray
ISBN 978-0-06-173074-0 \$19.99

(1) 4–6 The unnamed narrator of this graceful and personalized overview of African American history provides a sweeping account that covers history from the Colonial era to the present day. Each page of text is accompanied by a magnificent oil painting, forty-seven in all, including six dramatic double-page spreads. The illustrations, combined with the narrative, give a sense of intimacy. A tour de force. Timeline. Bib., ind. Review 11/11. KTH

Ollhoff, Jim *Ancient America*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-052-5 \$18.95

Ollhoff, Jim *Building a New World*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-053-2 \$18.95

Ollhoff, Jim *Conflicts and Independence*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-054-9 \$18.95

Ollhoff, Jim *The Conquistadors*

32 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-055-6 \$18.95

(4) 4–6 Hispanic American History series. Ollhoff provides brief and simplified histories of the title topics (e.g., the two-sentence description of Columbus’s 1492 voyage in *Conquistadors*; miniscule synopses of the Mexican-American and Spanish-American wars in *Conflicts*). The texts, along with archival reproductions and artwork, could serve as very basic introductions to the subjects. Glos., ind. TW

Pittman, Rickey E. *Confederate Alphabet*

32 pp. Pelican ISBN 978-1-58980-760-0 \$16.99

(5) K–3 Illustrated by Stephanie Ford. Pittman takes an unreconstructed Confederate's point of view on the Civil War, using the alphabet format to celebrate its soldiers (the Fighting Tigers), landmarks (Manassas), and icons (the Rebel Yell). It's an unusual perspective, but the rhyming quatrains for each entry read as if no one even tried to speak them aloud, and the watercolor art is amateurish. RS

Savery, Annabel *Mexico*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-474-1 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Been There! series. A young traveler provides an account of her voyage through Mexico, including visits to Mayan ruins, Guadalajara, and the countryside. Through text and photographs, Mexico's geography, culture, and history are explored. Though the information is superficial, the volume provides an accessible introduction to everyday life. A map shows the traveler's route. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. LB

Schanzer, Rosalyn *Witches!: The Absolutely True Story of Disaster in Salem*

144 pp. National ISBN 978-1-4263-0869-7 \$16.95

LE ISBN 978-1-4263-0870-3 \$27.90

(3) 4–6 Schanzer (*How We Crossed the West: The Adventures of Lewis and Clark*) turns her attention to the Salem Witch Trials to powerful effect. Her small book, complete with scratchboard illustrations and vivid red accents, recounts the horrors of the witch-hunting hysteria. Good organization and effective illustrations are helpful for keeping the complex material manageable for the audience. Bib., ind. MVK

Stein, R. Conrad *Ancient Mexico*

144 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-161-2 \$28.95

Stein, R. Conrad *Emiliano Zapata and the Mexican Revolution*

144 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-163-6 \$28.95

Stein, R. Conrad *The Mexican-American War*

144 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-160-5 \$28.95

Stein, R. Conrad *Modern Mexico*

144 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 978-1-59935-162-9 \$28.95

(3) YA Story of Mexico series. This series covers the history of Mexico from pre-Columbian times to the present. The writing is clear, engaging, and not overly simplified; Stein doesn't shy away from difficult topics such as drug-cartel violence today. Each of the volumes is well designed, with relevant photographs and illustrations. Timeline, websites. Bib., ind. tw

▲ Winter, Jonah *Born and Bred in the Great Depression*

40 pp. Random/Schwartz & Wade

ISBN 978-0-375-86197-0 \$17.99

LE ISBN 978-0-375-96197-7 \$20.99

(2) K–3 Illustrated by Kimberly Bulcken Root. Winter retells his father's tales of growing up poor in East Texas. The family enjoyed good times "learning to love those things that didn't cost a single penny." This window into an era when people took scarcity for granted is effectively visualized in Root's pencil, ink, and watercolor art. Eight vintage snapshots of the family appear on the endpapers. Review 1/12. JRL

▲ Wood, Douglas *Franklin and Winston: A Christmas That Changed the World*

40 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-3383-7 \$16.99

(2) 4–6 Illustrated by Barry Moser. In December 1941, Winston Churchill spent the holidays with Franklin Roosevelt. They formed an alliance to fight the Axis Powers and crafted a charter for the United Nations. Wood's snapshot of this moment in history includes a few humorous anecdotes that add levity to an otherwise solemn text. Moser based his impressive watercolors on photographs from the period. Review 11/11. CR

NATIVE AMERICANS

Capaldi, Gina, and Q. L. Pearce, Adapters *Red Bird Sings: The Story of Zitkala-Ša, Native American Author, Musician, and Activist*

32 pp. Carolrhoda LE ISBN 978-0-7613-5257-0 \$17.95

(3) 4–6 Illustrated by Gina Capaldi. This picture book adaptation of three of Zitkala-Ša's semiautobiographical stories (published in the early 1900s) begins with the Native American girl's 1884 enrollment in a Quaker-run boarding school. Music, along with oratory skills, rekindled her ancestral spirit and prompted a life devoted to Native American rights. Sheet music, maps, and photographs are thoughtfully incorporated into the acrylic illustrations in this emotion-stirring biography. Reading list, websites. Bib. TLD

Zimmerman, Dwight Jon *Saga of the Sioux: An Adaptation from Dee Brown's Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*

208 pp. Holt ISBN 978-0-8050-9364-3 \$18.99

(4) 4–6 Like Brown's 1971 classic, this adaptation covers battles, broken treaties, and discrimination from the Sioux point of view. Attempts to briefly incorporate other Indian nations can be awkward, resulting in little more than a string of names. There are many photographs and art reproductions; some added images serve as little more than filler. Timeline, websites. Glos., ind. BC

SOUTH AMERICA

▲ Aronson, Marc *Trapped: How the World Rescued 33 Miners from 2,000 Feet Below the Chilean Desert*

129 pp. Atheneum ISBN 978-1-4169-1397-9 \$16.99

(1) 4–6 Aronson's well-researched and riveting chronicle of the Chilean mining disaster of 2010 gives readers the sense they're alongside the "thirty-three men, who had disappeared, eaten by the rock." He describes their physical hardships and emotional turmoil; he also details, in depth, the incredible topside rescue efforts. Peppered with engaging quotes, the text is fluid and attention-grabbing. Photographs and diagrams are included. Timeline, websites. Bib., glos., ind. Review 9/11. TDA

Doeden, Matt *Can You Survive the Jungle?: An Interactive Survival Adventure*112 pp. Capstone LE ISBN 978-1-4296-6588-9 \$30.65
PE ISBN 978-1-4296-7349-5 \$6.95

(3) 4–6 You Choose: Survival series. This Choose-Your-Own-Adventure-style book begins with an airplane emergency during which "you" parachute into the Amazon jungle. Readers choose what's next: search for rescuers, build a camp, or look for the plane. Though the information is limited, the text does include a fair bit of detail about the jungle, supported by occasional photographs. The active-learning approach may engage students. Reading list. Bib., glos., ind. ERG

Forest, Christopher *Brazil*

144 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-106-5 \$24.95

Wittekind, Erika *Argentina*

144 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-105-8 \$24.95

(3) YA Countries of the World series. These travel guide-like volumes begin with a tourist's view of the title country: "Your plane touches down at the Ezeiza International Airport in Buenos Aires, Argentina." Chapters then cover all the expected details for report-writers: geography, flora and fauna, history, people, culture, politics, economics, and contemporary life. Vivid photographs and useful maps in an eye-pleasing design enliven the presentation. Reading list, timeline. Bib., glos., ind. MG

Lusted, Marcia Amidon *The Chilean Miners' Rescue*

112 pp. ABDO LE ISBN 978-1-61783-097-6 \$23.95

(4) YA Essential Events series. Lusted chronicles the sixty-nine-day ordeal of the thirty-three men trapped during the 2010 Chilean mining disaster. The events and actions of the miners as well as heroic efforts of the hundreds of rescuers working aboveground are explored. Photographs and sidebars add interest and insight into the dramatic mission but crowd the main text. Reading list, timeline. Bib., glos., ind. LBC

Savery, Annabel *Brazil*

32 pp. Smart Apple LE ISBN 978-1-59920-469-7 \$28.50

(4) 4–6 Been There! series. Readers travel with a young narrator as she tours the largest country in South America, stopping in Brasília, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo. At each locale, readers learn about the culture, geography, and history of Brazil through text and photographs. Though the information is superficial, the volume provides an accessible introduction to everyday life. A map shows the traveler's route. Reading list, websites. Glos., ind. LB

POLAR REGIONS

▲ Dowson, Nick *North: The Amazing Story of Arctic Migration*

56 pp. Candlewick ISBN 978-0-7636-5271-5 \$16.99

(2) K–3 Illustrated by Patrick Benson. Dawson introduces readers to animals that migrate to the Arctic for the warmer summer months. Polar bears (year-round residents) are joined by whales from Mexico, herrings from Norway, and birds from as far away as Antarctica, among others. Luminous watercolor with pen and pencil illustrations capture the icy Arctic winters, the tundra's fleeting midsummer verdancy, and the migrating groups' gracefulness. Review 1/12. DJF

Hanel, Rachel *Can You Survive Antarctica?: An Interactive Survival Adventure*112 pp. Capstone LE ISBN 978-1-4296-6589-6 \$30.65
PE ISBN 978-1-4296-7345-7 \$6.95

(3) 4–6 You Choose: Survival series. In this Choose-Your-Own-Adventure-style book, readers select a persona—"early Antarctic explorer" (with Amundsen or Scott), "modern-day adventurer," or modern-day worker—and make decisions at narrative crossroad points. Though the information is limited, the text packs in many details about the place, supported by maps, photos, and archival reproductions. The active-learning approach may engage students. Reading list. Bib., glos., ind. ERG

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Publishers in the *Guide*

The following is a list of abbreviations for publishers in *The Horn Book Guide*. Entries are followed by the publisher's full name; further information can be found in *Literary Market Place*.

ABDO

ABDO Publishing

ABDO/Magic Wagon

ABDO Publishing

Abrams

Harry N. Abrams, Inc.
Abrams/Amulet

Amulet Books

Harry N. Abrams, Inc.

Amare

Amare Publishing, LLC

Andersen

Andersen Press USA

Andrews

Andrew McMeel Publishing

Arcturus

Arcturus Publishing
Black Rabbit Books

Atheneum

Atheneum Books for Young Readers
Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing

Atheneum/Jackson

Atheneum Books for Young Readers
Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing

Barefoot

Barefoot Books

Barron's

Barron's Educational Series, Inc.

BeachHouse

BeachHouse Publishing, LLC

Bearport

Bearport Publishing Co., Inc.

Big Mouth

Big Mouth House

Bloomsbury

Bloomsbury Children's Books
Bloomsbury Publishing

Blue Apple

Blue Apple Books

Blue Rider

Blue Rider Press

Boys

Boys Mills Press

Boys/Calkins

Calkins Creek
Boys Mills Press

Brown Bear

Black Rabbit Books

Candlewick

Candlewick Press

Candlewick/Nosy Crow

Candlewick Press

Candlewick/Templar

Templar Books
Candlewick Press

Candlewick/TOON

TOON Books
Candlewick Press

Capstone

Capstone Press

Capstone/Picture Window

Capstone Press

Capstone/Stone Arch

Capstone Press

Carolrhoda

Carolrhoda Books, Inc.

Carolrhoda Lab

Carolrhoda Books, Inc.

Cavendish

Marshall Cavendish Children's Books
Marshall Cavendish Corp.

Charlesbridge

Charlesbridge Publishing, Inc.

Charlesbridge/Early Light

Early Light Books
Charlesbridge Publishing, Inc.

Charlesbridge/Imagine/Yarrow

Imagine Publishing/Peter Yarrow Books
Charlesbridge Publishing, Inc.

Charlesbridge/Mackinac

Mackinac Island Press
Charlesbridge Publishing, Inc.

Chicago

Chicago Review Press

Children's

Children's Book Press

Chronicle

Chronicle Books, LLC

Cinco

Cinco Puntos Press

Clarion

Clarion Books

Columbia College Chicago

Center for American Places at
Columbia College Chicago

Creative Editions

The Creative Co.

Creative Education

The Creative Co.

Crocodile

Crocodile Books
Interlink Publishing Group, Inc.

Darby Creek

Darby Creek Publishing

Dawn

Dawn Publications, Inc.

Delacorte

Delacorte Books for Young Readers
Random House Children's Books

Dial

Dial Books for Young Readers

Disney

Disney Editions
Disney Publishing Worldwide

DK

DK Publishing, Inc.

Down East

Down East Books

Dutton

Dutton Children's Books

East West

East West Discovery Press

Eerdmans

Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Egmont

Egmont USA

Emerald

Emerald Books
Emerald Book Co.

Enchanted Lion

Enchanted Lion Books

Enslow

Enslow Publishers, Inc.

Enslow/Elementary

Enslow Elementary
Enslow Publishers, Inc.

Farrar

Farrar, Straus & Giroux Books for
Young Readers

Feiwel

Feiwel & Friends
Macmillan

Flashlight

Flashlight Press

Gecko

Gecko Press

Getty

Getty Publications

Godine

David R. Godine Publisher, Inc.

Golden

Golden Books
Random House Children's Books

Good

Good Books

Goosebottom

Goosebottom Books, LLC

Greenhaven

Greenhaven Press

Greenwillow

Greenwillow Books
HarperCollins Children's Books

Groundwood

Groundwood Books

Harcourt

Harcourt Children's Books
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Trade
& Reference Division

Harlequin Teen

Harlequin Enterprises Ltd.

HarperCollins

HarperCollins Children's Books

HarperCollins/Collins

HarperCollins Children's Books

HarperCollins/Harper

HarperCollins Children's Books

HarperCollins/Walden Pond

Walden Pond Press
HarperCollins Children's Books

HarperFestival

HarperCollins Children's Books

HarperTeen

HarperCollins Children's Books

Heinemann

Heinemann

Holiday

Holiday House, Inc.

Holt

Henry Holt and Company, LLC

Houghton

Houghton Mifflin Books for
Children
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Trade
& Reference Division

Houghton/Sandpiper

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Trade
& Reference Division

Hyperion

Disney-Hyperion Books
Disney Publishing Worldwide

Immedium

Immedium

Interlink

Interlink Books
Interlink Publishing Group, Inc.

Kane Press

Kane Press

Kane/Miller

Kane Miller Books

Kar-Ben

Kar-Ben Publishing

KidHaven

KidHaven Press

Kids Can

Kids Can Press, Ltd.

Kingfisher/Macmillan

Kingfisher Publications
Macmillan

Knopf

Alfred A. Knopf Books for Young Readers
Random House Children's Books

Lee

Lee & Low Books, Inc.

Lee/Tu

Tu Books
Lee & Low Books, Inc.

Lemniscaat

Lemniscaat

Lerner

Lerner Publishing Group, Inc.

Little

Little, Brown Books for Young Readers

Little/Poppy

Little, Brown Books for Young Readers

Little Five Star

Five Star Publications, Inc.

Little Simon

Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing

Lorimer

James Lorimer & Co., Ltd., Publishers

Lucent

Lucent Books

McElderry

Margaret K. McElderry Books
Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing

Milkweed

Milkweed Editions

Millbrook

Millbrook Press

Minnesota/Borealis

Borealis Books
Minnesota Historical Society Press

Morgan

Morgan Reynolds Publishing

Nameslos

Nameslos

National

National Geographic Children's Books
National Geographic Books

Nebraska

University of Nebraska Press

Nelson

Tommy Nelson

New Forest

New Forest Press
Black Rabbit Books

New Mexico

The University of New Mexico Press

NewSouth/Junebug

Junebug Books
New South Books

North-South

North-South Books, Inc.

Norwood

Norwood House Press

NYRB

New York Review Children's Collection
New York Review of Books

Orca

Orca Book Publishers

Owlkids

Owlkids Books, Inc.

Peachtree

Peachtree Publishers, Ltd.

Pelican

Pelican Publishing Co.

Penguin/Celebra

Celebra Children's Books
Penguin Young Readers Group

Penguin/Razorbill

Penguin Young Readers Group

Phaidon

Phaidon Press, Inc.

Philomel

Penguin Young Readers Group

Prestel

Prestel Publishing

Pry/Prometheus

Pry/Prometheus Books

Putnam

G. P. Putnam's Sons (Children's)

QEB

Black Rabbit Books

Raintree

Heinemann

Random

Random House Books for Young Readers
Random House Children's Books

Random/Ember

Random House Children's Books

Raven Tree

Raven Tree Press, LLC

Red Deer

Red Deer Press
Fitzhenry & Whiteside Limited

ReferencePoint

ReferencePoint Press, Inc.

Roaring Brook

Roaring Brook Press

Roaring Brook/First Second

Roaring Brook Press

Roaring Brook/Flash Point

Roaring Brook Press

Rosen

Rosen

St. Martin's Griffin

St. Martin's Press, LLC

Salina

Salina Bookshelf, Inc.

Sasquatch

Sasquatch Books

Schiffer

Schiffer Publishing Ltd.

Scholastic

Scholastic Trade Division

Scholastic/Blue Sky

The Blue Sky Press
Scholastic Trade Division

Scholastic/Cartwheel

Cartwheel Books
Scholastic Trade Division

Scholastic/Chicken House

The Chicken House
Scholastic Trade Division

Scholastic/Graphix

Scholastic Trade Division

Scholastic/Orchard

Orchard Books
Scholastic Trade Division

Scholastic/Point

Scholastic Trade Division

Scholastic/Push

Scholastic Trade Division

Sea to Sea

Sea to Sea Publishing
Black Rabbit Books

Second Story

Second Story Press

Shenanigan

Shenanigan Books

Shen's

Shen's Books

Simon

Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing

Simon/Aladdin

Aladdin Paperbacks
Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing

Simon/Aladdin/Mercury

Aladdin Mercury Radio Arts, Inc.
Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing

Simon/Libros para niños

Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing

Simon Pulse

Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing

Simon Spotlight

Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing

Simon Spotlight/Nickelodeon

Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing

Sleeping Bear

Sleeping Bear Press

Smart Apple

Smart Apple Media
Black Rabbit Books

Sourcebooks/Fire

Sourcebooks, Inc.

Sourcebooks/Jabberwocky

Sourcebooks, Inc.

Square Fish

Macmillan

Sterling

Sterling Publishing Co., Inc.

Sterling/Splinter

Sterling Publishing Co., Inc.

Sylvan Dell

Sylvan Dell Publishing

Tanglewood

Tanglewood Press

Texas Tech

Texas Tech University Press

Tiger Tales

ME Media, LLC

Tor

Tor Books
Tom Doherty Associates, LLC

Tor/Starscape

Tor Books
Tom Doherty Associates, LLC

Trafalgar

Trafalgar Square Books

Tricycle

Tricycle Press
Ten Speed Press

Tundra

Tundra Books of Northern New York

Twenty-First Century

Twenty-First Century Books

Viking

Viking Children's Books

Walker

Walker & Co.

Walter Foster

Walter Foster Library
Black Rabbit Books

Whitman

Albert Whitman & Co.

Woodbine

Woodbine House

Yale

Yale University Press

Zagat

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Zonderkidz

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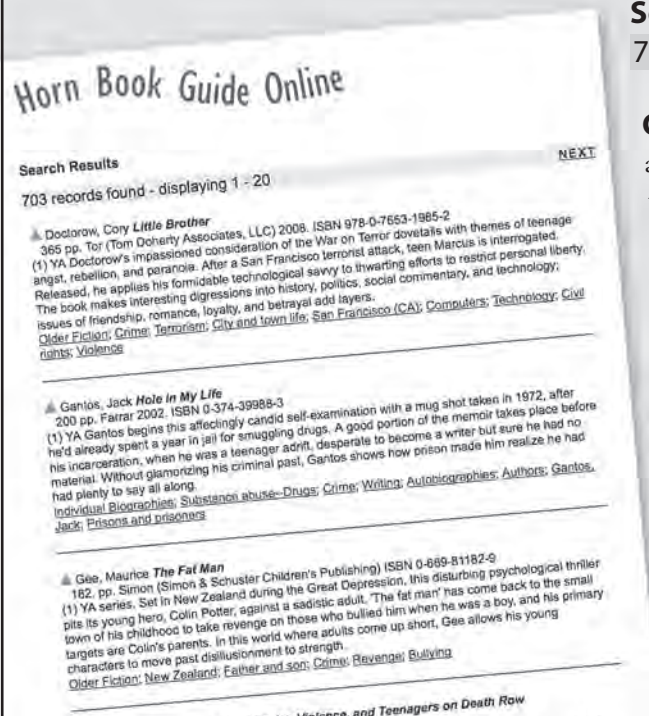
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