

Best Books of 2010

NLA/NEMA Conference



October 15, 2010

presented by Sally Snyder
Nebraska Library Commission

Fiction for Older Teens

Black, Holly & Ted Naifeh ***KITH***

115p. Graphix 2009 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-439-85563-1

(The Good Neighbors series, Bk 2) (Bk 3 – *Kind* - will be out Nov. 1, 2010)

Sequel to *Kin*, Rue Silver continues to try to understand her faerie mother and human father. It seems that the faerie world is working toward taking over the human world. Rue must travel into the faerie world and risk being lost there in an attempt to stop them.

Brewer, Heather ***TWELFTH GRADE KILLS***

325p. Dutton 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-525-42224-2

(The Chronicles of Vladimir Tod series. Vol. 5) The fifth and final book in the saga of half-vampire Vlad. He is in deep trouble – The Elysian Council has given him a death sentence, the Slayer Society is also after him, and he thinks he just saw his supposedly dead father.

Collins, Susanne ***MOCKINGJAY***

390p. Scholastic 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-439-02351-1

(Hunger Games series, Bk 3) The conclusion to the series contains heartbreak, violence, revolution, and pain. District 13 is underground, and has been working on revolution for years. Now the District leader, Coin, asks Katniss to become the Mockingjay, the symbol of revolution to encourage other districts to join them against President Snow. This is another book we will be talking about for years and speculating on other roads that could have been taken. Excellent.

Fisher, Catherine ***INCARCERON***

442p. Dial 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-8037-3396-1

Incarceron is a vast prison, one that no one can enter and no one can leave. Finn, deep inside the prison (and desperate to leave) finds a crystal key. Claudia, daughter of the warden, also finds a crystal key. Finn and Claudia can then communicate via the keys. Finn, and a couple of

companions, continue to seek a way out of Incarceron; Claudia is looking to avoid an arranged marriage. The sequel, *Sapphique*, is out on 12/28/10.

Hoffman, Alice ***GREEN WITCH***

135p. Scholastic 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-545-14195-6
(sequel to Green Angel) The first book tells of Green's despair over the loss of her parents and sister in the explosions that destroyed the city across the river. She eventually recovered. She is now almost 17, this book tells of her strength and abilities as she seeks her love, Diamond, who left her to find his family. She is now making paper and writing down people's stories for them. She seeks the stories of the Sky Witch, the Rose Witch, and the River Witch; all of whom help her determine her path when she sets out to free the prisoners on the island by the city.

Mechner, Jordan ***SOLOMON'S THIEVES***

Illus. by LeUyrn Pham & Alex Puvilland 132p. First Second 2010 \$12.99 (pbk) ISBN 978-1-59643-391-5

The first book of a proposed trilogy, this graphic novel tells a fictional story of the days of the Knights Templar, after the Pope had declared them outlaws. The three main characters are Martin, who still holds steadfast to his vows as a Knight Templar; Dominic, former Templar and now a priest; and Bernard, former Templar and now a bandit. They learn the secret of the location of the Templar fortune, and are determined to keep it from King Philip of France. Swashbuckling sword fights, clearly implied torture, and the hardships of the day are included in the story and the art. May inspire research into that era. Illustrated in color.

Volponi, Paul ***RIKER'S HIGH***

246p. Viking 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-670-01107-0
Martin (17), was accused of 'steering,' telling a police officer where to buy marijuana. He has been waiting for his court date for five months, a long time due to some unusual circumstances. While he waits, he does his best to avoid conflict and ends up going to school on the island. The author has reworked his adult novel *Rikers*, into this book aimed at teen readers. Volponi taught for six years on Rikers Island and much of what is in this book actually happened, though the reader does not know which of the events are true.

Non-Fiction for Teens

Burns, Loree Griffin ***THE HIVE DETECTIVES: Chronicles of a Honey Bee Catastrophe***

Photos by Ellen Harasimowicz 66p. Houghton Mifflin 2010 \$18.00 ISBN 978-0-547-15231-8
(Scientists in the Field series) Great photos and good information continue in this series. The Hive Detectives first discuss how honey bee hives work and then the catastrophe that occurred over the 2006-2007 winter, when about 38% of the nation's honey bees were lost. The author followed four scientists as they worked to learn what had happened and how to prevent it from happening again. Includes index.

Jarrow, Gail ***LINCOLN'S FLYING SPIES: Thaddeus Lowe and the Civil War Balloon Corps***

107p. Calkins Creek (Boyd's Mills Press) 2010 \$18.95 ISBN 978-1-59078-719-9
The story of Thaddeus Lowe and his Balloon Corps during the Civil War. For two years balloonists floated above the trees to spy on the Confederate lines and provide that information to the Union leaders. They often had to dodge bullets. Black and white period photographs and drawings are included, as well as a time line, source notes, bibliography and index.

Krull, Kathleen ***ALBERT EINSTEIN***

Illus. by Boris Kulikov 141p. Viking 2009 \$15.99 ISBN 978-0-670-06332-1
An extremely readable look at the life of Albert Einstein, another excellent title in this series. The author gives a sense of Einstein's genius, and sense of fun, while also letting the reader know some of his faults. Krull does an amazing job of succinctly explaining his most well-known theories so the lay person can understand.

Montgomery, Sy ***KAKAPO RESCUE: Saving the World's Strangest Parrot***

Photos by Nic Bishop 74p. Houghton Mifflin 2010 \$18.00 ISBN 978-0-618-49417-0
(Scientists in the Field series) Join scientists as they travel to a small island of New Zealand to study and assist the threatened Kakapo (KAR-ka-poe) parrot, as of publication totaling 91 birds. Flightless, this largest parrot in the world was brought to near extinction by humans bringing dogs, rats, cats and other predators to the island. Excellent color photographs convey the unusual image of full-grown (and chick) kakapo and the beautiful island that is their home. Includes an index.

Pollan, Michael ***THE ONMIVORE'S DILEMNA: The Secrets Behind What You Eat*** (Young Readers Edition)

298p. Dial 2009 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-8037-3415-9; \$9.99 (pbk) ISBN 978-0-8037-3500-2
Originally published for adults in 2006, this "Young Readers Edition" was adapted by Richie Chevat. The author investigates how four different meals ended up on the dinner plate, and in doing so gives teen readers a lot to think about. Includes occasional photographs, charts, diagrams, and side columns to provide information in an interesting way. Also includes "Some Tips for Eating," "Further Resources," "Sources," and an index.

Reef, Catherine ***ERNEST HEMINGWAY: A Writer's Life***

151p. Clarion Books 2009 \$20.00 ISBN 978-0-618-98705-4
A well-rounded biography that hits on both Hemingway's talents and faults. Sprinkling quotes from the author (and giving source notes for them) gives the title a feeling of connection with Hemingway. Includes black-and-white photos and index.

Walker, Sally ***FROZEN SECRETS: Antarctica Revealed***

104p. Carolrhoda Books 2010 \$20.95 ISBN 978-1-58013-607-5
Opening with a photo of the earth, with Antarctica in the center, this is a look at scientists and the study of Antarctica, from the early days to now. The author discusses how research is conducted today. With photos on every page, I only wish some of them could have been given more than ¼ of a page.

Woolridge, Connie Nordhielm ***THE BRAVE ESCAPE OF EDITH WHARTON: A Biography***
184p. Clarion Books 2010 \$20.00 ISBN 978-0-547-23630-8

“Keeping up with the Joneses” came into being in reference to Edith’s family, she was born in 1862 into the top of society in New York: Edith Jones. Here we learn about society of her time, and how she struggled to maintain the proper air while becoming a novelist – a scandalous act at the time. Period photos and prints help us get to know her and the time period she lived in. Includes Source Notes, Bibliography, and Index.

Fiction for Younger Teens

Boyce, Frank Cottrell ***COSMIC***

311p. Walden Pond Press (HaprerCollins) 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-06-183683-1
Liam is 12 years old but is tall and has some beard fuzz starting. He is frustrated because his height makes people think he is older and “should know better.” A series of circumstances put him on an experimental rocket with four children; he is supposed to be the responsible adult. Something went wrong and they are continuing out into space with no way to get home. Liam is recording the story to his parents on his cell phone. They think he is attending a Gifted and Talented week in the Lake District. Humorous, and at times, touching.

Buckingham, Royce ***THE DEAD BOYS***

201p. Putnam 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-399-25222-8
Teddy (12) and his mom have just moved to Richland. He meets a boy, Albert, but there is something weird going on. When he goes back to the park where he met Albert, everything is different. And why does the big, old sycamore tree in the lot next door seem ominous to him? Are the branches really scratching on and opening his window?

Crilley, Mark ***BRODY’S GHOST*** (Bk 1)

89p. Dark Horse Books 2010 \$6,99 (pbk) ISBN 978-1-59582-521-6]
The author/artist of the “Akiko” series brings the first book in a new graphic novel series. Brody is a down and out young man, he fell apart after his girlfriend left him. One day a ghost, Talia, begins talking to him and wants him to help her. Because he can see her, she is sure he is a ghostseer with psychic powers. He is sure it is a mistake. A good start to the series, with some violence (a member of a street gang beats up Brody). Black-and-white artwork. Book 2 will be out 1/12/11.

Delaney, Joseph ***A COVEN OF WITCHES***

195p. Greenwillow 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-06-196038-3; \$17.89 (PLB) 978-0-06-196039-0
Fans of the series "The Last Apprentice" will enjoy this collection of four stories of witches from the series. Still a little scary, it tells of Meg Skelton, Dirty Dora, Alice, and the Banshee Witch. A companion book to the series.

Draper, Sharon ***JUST ANOTHER HERO***

280p. Atheneum 2009 \$16.99 ISBN 978-1-4169-0700-8

(conclusion to: *The Battle of Jericho* and *November Blues*) Early February, this title is about Arielle, who is alone having lost all her friends through her own foolishness. Her new stepfather is overly controlling, though everyone else only sees how rich he is and all that Arielle has. It is a precarious situation. The students are working toward graduation and are irritated by the almost daily fire drills because one student finds that easier than doing his work. But this time the fire drill isn't what they thought. This time one classroom is in real danger, and in need of a hero. References are made to past events from the previous books and are explained enough to make sense to a new reader (like me).

Garcia, Kami & Margaret Stohl ***BEAUTIFUL CREATURES***

563p. Little, Brown & Co. 2009 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-316-04267-3

Ethan Wate, a sophomore in high school, has lived in Gatlin, S.C. his entire life, knows everyone, is bored with the "in" crowd, and can't wait to leave. Until Lena moves to town and starts school. She is the girl who has been in his dreams/nightmares. Amma, his family's housekeeper, warns him against Lena and prepares protection charms for him. Ethan can't ignore Lena, and he steps up to defend her from his lifelong neighbors and friends at school.

Green, Tim ***THE BIG TIME***

277p. HarperCollins 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-06-168619-1-0

Football Genius series, Bk 4) Troy, 12, has the uncanny ability to know what play the opposing team is going to run before the play occurs. In this 4th book of the series, Troy has agents wanting to represent him (for his ability, not football playing) and his dad turns up for the first time. Is his dad really interested in getting to know him; or does he want a piece of the agent action? Fans of the series will enjoy this addition.

Horowitz, Anthony & Anthony Johnston ***SKELETON KEY: The Graphic Novel***

Illus. by Kanako Damerum & Yuzuri Takasaki Philomel Books 2009 \$14.99 (pap)

ISBN 978-0-399-25418-5

Again action is throughout when Alex is sent to hide out after a reconnaissance mission starts a sequence of events. He goes to an island near Cuba where he encounters a Russian who has some insane plans of his own. Sure to be popular with action and graphic novel fans.

Jay, Stacey ***UNDEAD MUCH?***

306p. Razorbill 2010 \$8.99 (pbk) ISBN 978-1-59514-273-3

(Sequel to *You Are So Undead to Me*) Megan has a new problem, some "super" zombies have been raised and they were extremely hard to kill. It takes a huge amount of power to raise such zombies, so the Settlers Affairs squad suspects Megan since she is an extra-powerful Zombie Settler. Megan must prove she is innocent, and while doing so she is not supposed to spend any time with her boyfriend, Ethan, since he is an Enforcer (Settler cop). And then there is Cliff, a nice, helpful zombie who doesn't "settle." He's pretty nice, too.

Koertge, Ron ***SHAKESPEARE MAKES THE PLAYOFFS***

170p. Candlewick Press 2010 \$15.99 ISBN 978-0-7636-4435-2

A worthy sequel to *Shakespeare Bats Cleanup*, Kevin's dad gives him another notebook and Kevin once again writes poetry about everyday life. His girlfriend, Mira, is jealous of his new poetry friend, Amy, and Kevin isn't sure what to do. Some poetry instruction is included in a painless way.

Lee, Y. S. ***A SPY IN THE HOUSE***

335p. Candlewick Press 2009 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-7636-4067-5

In 1853 London, Mary Quinn was rescued from the gallows at age 12, and educated at a girl's school. Now she is 17 and ready for her first assignment, if she wants it. She will be a spy for the organization that saved her. She is placed as a companion in a well-to-do shipper's house, and told to listen but do nothing else. Of course, she does more than listen. The first of a trilogy. Book 2, *The Body at the Tower*, came out 8/10/10.

Lore, Pittacus ***I AM NUMBER FOUR***

440p. HarperCollins 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-06-196955-3

(Lorien Legacies series, Bk 1) For 10 years John Smith (his newest alias) and his "father," Henri, have been moving from place to place across the U.S. He is one of nine children who escaped their home planet, Lorien, while the Mogadarians were taking over. They are the hope of the future. They are protected by a charm and can only be killed in number order. But now, "the first three are dead, and I am number four."

Lupica, Mike ***THE BATBOY***

246p. Philomel Books 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-399-25000-2

Lots of sports action in this title, both major league ball and the baseball games of a 14-year-old. Brian is thrilled to be chosen as one of four batboys for his hometown ball club, the Detroit Tigers. When he learns his former hero, Hank Bishop, is coming back to the Tigers, he is still rooting for him, even though he was suspended for steroid use. But Hank is a complicated person, and wants nothing to do with Brian.

Meyer, Stephanie ***TWILIGHT: The Graphic Novel, Vol. 1***

Art by Young Kim unp. Yen Press 2010 \$19.99 ISBN 978-0-7595-2943-4

A graphic novel of approximately the first half of the original novel.

Myers, Walter Dean ***LOCKDOWN***

247p. HarperCollins 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-06-121480-6

Reese (14) is in juvy jail and hoping to get out early. He is chosen for a special program, the work program at a senior citizen's home. There he meets Mr. Hooft, a resident who is suspicious of him. Reese tries to stay out of trouble, but at Progress, the juvy jail, he learns Diego is planning to beat up Toon, a small, inoffensive inmate. If Reese steps in, it may blow his chances.

O'Connor, George ***ZEUS: King of the Gods***

66p. First Second 2010 \$9.99 (pbk) ISBN 978-1-59643-431-8

First of a proposed 12 graphic novels of the “Olympians” series, this takes a look at one interpretation of the mythical origin of Zeus and his fellow gods.

Pfeffer, Susan Beth ***THIS WORLD WE LIVE IN***

239p. Harcourt 2010 \$17.00 ISBN 978-0-547-24804-2

The third book, following *Life As We Knew It* and *The Dead and the Gone*. We rejoin Miranda, her mother and brothers, Matt and Jon in May, and soon the first year anniversary of the event is noted. Miranda and her brothers begin to scavenge the empty houses in town for clothing, heaters (sometimes there is electricity) and toiletries. Miranda’s father, step-mother and baby brother appear on their doorstep one day, with some friends in tow, including Alex and Julie Morales.

Prineas, Sarah ***FOUND***

343p. HarperCollins 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-06-137593-4

(Magic Thief series, Bk 3) The city magic from the south is coming to take over Wellmeet, and Conn is still searching for a new locus magicalicus. When a dragon (long thought to be extinct) carries Conn off to the mountains, it looks like there is no hope left for Wellmeet.

Riordan, Rick ***THE RED PYRAMID***

516p. Disney • Hyperion Books 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-1- 4231-1338-6

Carter (14) and his sister Sadie (12) lost their mother six years ago. Since then, Carter has traveled with their father and Sadie has lived with their grandparents. When their father is taken from them, they learn they have a difficult challenge: they are up against an Egyptian god. Adventure, humor, and a lot of action make for exciting reading. Rick Riordan has a terrific new series.

Ryan, Carrie ***THE DEAD-TOSSED WAVES***

404p. Delacorte Press 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-385-73684-8

Sequel to *The Forest of Hands and Teeth*. Gabrielle (Gabry) lives in Vista with her mother, Mary (from *The Forest of Hands and Teeth*). Gabry is frightened of the world outside the village’s walls (it’s full of zombies, called the Mudo), but one night her friends talk her into climbing the wall and exploring with them, with horrible consequences. As a result of this terrible event, Gabry and her mother talk; Gabry is shocked to hear her mother’s whole story, and chides her for not trying harder to find and rescue her friends after she was safe. Mary leaves the next day to do just that. Now Gabry must decide what she will do.

Sachar, Louis ***THE CARDTURNER: A Novel About a King, a Queen, and a Joker***

352p. Delacorte 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-385-73662-6

You may think a YA novel about the card game bridge would be boring and unappealing. This book is a big surprise (except that it is by Louis Sachar). Alton (17) is goaded by his mother to become the card turner for his newly blind great-uncle (who is rich) during the summer before his senior year in high school. Lester Trapp is opinionated, grumpy, but also philosophical and soon Alton and Trapp are connecting. Bridge rules and details are marked by an illustration of a whale (or a fog-horn on the audio version) and readers are invited to skip that section.

Shan, Darren **BIRTH OF A KILLER**

261p. Little, Brown & Co. 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-316-07863-4
(The Saga of Larten Crepsley, Bk 1) The first of four books, this tells the story of Larten as a boy, working in a mill to help his family. When the cruel foreman kills his cousin, Larten kills him. Now he is one the run.

Smith, Alexander Gordon **ESCAPE FROM FURNACE: LOCKDOWN**

273p. Farrar, Strauss, & Giroux 2009 \$14.99 ISBN 978-0-374-32491-9
Alex Sawyer was a thief and a bully, but he was not a murderer. Still, he is sent to Furnace, the ultimate prison, for murdering his friend. Here he learns to survive, to stay out of fights because what happens to trouble-makers is gruesome. Even so, you never know when "they" will come for you. He has to find a way out; but everyone knows there is no way out of Furnace. (I read an ARC of it, sometimes things are changed before publication) (Bk 2, *Solitary*, comes out 12/21/10)

Springer, Nancy **THE CASE OF THE GYPSY GOOD-BYE**

166 p. Philomel Books 2010 \$14.99 ISBN 978-0-399-25236-5
(Enola Holmes Mystery series, Bk 6) The final book in the series, Enola has changed residences and identity to hide from her brothers (Sherlock and Mycroft) and to continue to help people in distress. Enola's newest case is to find a missing noblewoman, while continuing to evade her brother, Sherlock. A fitting mystery story to end the series.

Telgemeier, Raina **SMILE**

214p. Scholastic Graphix 2010 \$7.99 (pbk) ISBN 978-0-545-24182-3
A graphic memoir, this is a true story (told in graphic novel format) from the author's life about the loss of her two front teeth and the years of orthodontia she endures, braces, surgery, temporary false teeth, etc., whew! She also tries to survive the "normal" middle school issues: like puberty, crushes, and friends who are sometimes mean to her. Middle school readers are sure to relate to her life, and hopefully, their dental issues are less involved than hers were.

TenNapel, Doug **GHOSTOPOLIS**

267p. Graphix Scholastic 2010 \$24.99 ISBN 978-0-545-21027-0; \$14.99 (pbk) ISBN 978-0-545-21028-7
Garth has just visited another doctor and for the fifth time he received a fatal diagnosis. Back home, he is accidentally sent to the afterlife by slacker Frank Gallows (of the Supernatural Immigration Task Force). Lots of action, weird creatures, and reminders that the physics that govern life do not govern the afterlife. – *School Library Journal* mentioned a planned Disney movie based on this graphic novel.

THE THIRTY-NINE CLUES series:

Park, Linda Sue **STORM WARNING** (Book 9)
176p. Scholastic 2010 \$12.99 ISBN 978-0-545-06049-3

(Book 9) This trip is to the Bahamas and Jamaica looking for a clue related to the lady pirate, Anne Bonny. They also learn more about their au pair, Nellie. More adventure and danger as they are closing in on the prize.

Haddix, Margaret Peterson ***INTO THE GAUNTLET*** (Book 10)

327p. Scholastic 2010 \$12.99 ISBN 978-0-545-06050-9

(Book 10) The final book in the series brings a fitting conclusion. The hunt intensifies as the final clue is all there is left to solve. Amy, Dan, and Nellie continue to seek the final clue while realizing how unlikely it is that they will be able to unite the Cahill branches, it hasn't happened in 500 years. From London to Shakespeare's birthplace to a little island unmarked on any map. Fans of the series may be happy to know *The 39 Clues: The Black Book of Buried Secrets* by Rick Riordan was released on 10/26/10.

Yolen, Jane ***FOILED***

Illus. by Mike Cavallaro 160p. First Second 2010 \$28.15 (PLB) ISBN 978-0-606-14452-0; \$15.99 (pbk) ISBN 978-1-59643-279-6

Aliera (in high school) is colorblind, so this graphic novel is mostly in grays and greens. Seemingly invisible at school, she shines in fencing class and competitions. Her mother buys her a new foil at a tag sale, it has this huge fake ruby on the end of it. One day, when she meets her lab partner at Grand Central Station for her first ever date, things take a strange turn. She puts on her fencing mask after a bird pulls her hair, and sees creatures she never knew were there, **in color**. The fairy world is now visible to her.

Fiction for Grades 2-5 (or so)

Calkhoven, Laurie ***DANIEL AT THE SIEGE OF BOSTON***

180p. Dutton 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-525-42144-3

First in the "Boys of Wartime" series, Daniel (12) and his parents own a tavern in Boston often frequented by British officers. They listen for information to pass along to the "Sons of Liberty."

Clements, Andrew ***WE THE CHILDREN***

Illus. by Adam Stower 143p. Atheneum 2010 \$14.99 ISBN 978-1-4169-3886-6

(Keepers of the School series, Bk 1) Ben Pratt (6th grade) is given an old gold coin by the school janitor. On it is engraved "First and always, my school belongs, to the children DEFEND IT Duncan Oakes 1783" and Ben has sworn to keep it a secret. The school is to be torn down in June, Ben, and now his friend Jill, will have to fight it. Book 2 will be out in January.

Connor, Leslie ***CRUNCH***

328p. HarperCollins 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-06-169229-1

The parents left on a semi truck delivery route and are now stuck close to Canada since the gas shortage went from being a shortage to nothing – no gas anywhere. It is now a gas 'crunch' according to one character. The kids can handle things at home; Lilly is 18, Dewey (the main character) is 14, Vince is 13, and the twins Angus and Eva are 5. The teens and kids are working hard to keep things together. The family has a bike repair shop; business is booming; and it's

Dewey's responsibility to keep the shop going. A good look at working together, being innovative in trying times, and taking responsibility.

DeLaCroix, Alice ***THE BEST HORSE EVER***

Illus. by Ronald Himler 74p. Holiday House 2010 \$15.95 ISBN 978-0-8234-2254-8
Early Chapter Book. Abby (9) is finally getting her own horse, she's outgrown their pony. She makes a couple of mistakes and Griffen gets away from her twice. Taking care of him takes a lot of time, and her best friend, Devon, is afraid of him and they have a fight. Her mother guides her to doing the right thing. A good early chapter book with a friendship story children can relate to. Includes one illustration per chapter.

DiCamillo, Kate ***THE MAGICIAN'S ELEPHANT***

201p. Candlewick Press 2009 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-7636-4410-9
Peter (10), instead of buying bread, gives the coin to a fortuneteller. She lets him know his younger sister is alive. His father died in the war, his mother died giving birth, his sister did not. Or did the fortuneteller lie? His guardian, Vilna Lutz, a retired soldier, says she did die. Who is lying? As the fortune teller says on page seven, "The truth is forever changing." She also said Peter must follow the elephant to find his sister. There are no elephants in the city of Baltese, what could she mean? Magical writing!

D'Lacey, Chris ***GRUFFEN***

Illus. by Adam Stower 104p. Orchard Bks (Scholastic) 2009 \$9.95 ISBN 978-0-545-16815-1
(The Dragons of Wayward Crescent series, #1) Lucy is scared at night, there's a strange flittery shadow. Her mother, Liz, makes dragons and other things to sell all from a special clay. This time she makes a guard dragon for Lucy and uses a touch of magic and it comes to life. Great fun with a tad of scary.

D'Lacey, Chris ***GAUGE***

Illus. by Adam Stower 105p. Orchard Bks (Scholastic) 2009 \$9.99 ISBN 978-0-545-16831-1
(The Dragons of Wayward Crescent series, #2) Liz, Lucy's mother, creates Gauge after she hears about plans to replace the historic library clock. Fun for readers grades 2-4. [Liz makes dragons and other things to sell from clay. Every once in a while she uses a very special item on the small clay dragon she is creating, and it comes alive to help the household.]

Draper, Sharon M. ***OUT OF MY MIND***

288p. Atheneum 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 9781416971702
(I read an Advanced Readers Copy, some plot elements, etc. can change)
Melody has a sharp brain in a body with cerebral palsy. She is frustrated with learning the alphabet over and over when she has a photographic memory (or nearly so). Since she cannot talk, the neighbor, Mrs. V., first rigs up a word and alphabet board on her wheelchair. Finally Melody is sent to "inclusion classes" where children from room H-5 experience life in a real classroom for certain subjects. Melody loves this chance to learn. But it isn't until she gets her best "gizmo" ever that she really has a chance to become a part of the class.

English, Karen ***NIKI & DEJA: The Newsy News Newsletter***

Illus by Laura Freeman 91p. Clarion Bks 2010 \$15.00 ISBN 978-0-547-22247-9
(Nikki & Deja series, #3) The girls decide to start a neighborhood newsletter, so they take out the first issue and ask people to subscribe. Nikki is a little shy and reluctant to knock on doors at first, but after some sales she feels better. The trouble comes when Nikki and Deja make a couple of assumptions about people in the neighborhood and put it in the newsletter. They feel bad when they find out they were wrong, and they both have to apologize to the people they slandered, and to all the subscribers.

French, Vivian ***THE HEART OF GLASS***

244p. Candlewick Press 2010 \$14.99 ISBN 978-0-7636-4814-5
(The Third Tale from the Five Kingdoms) Prince Markus and Gracie Gillypot go into the Unreliable Forest to try to spot some dwarves, but Gracie disappears (she has fallen into a troll trap set decades ago). Things get complicated since the dwarves have made an agreement with the trolls, and the King of Trolls has some plans of his own. Fun, adventure, and danger will continue to hold readers interest. This 3rd book of the series maintains the quality of the first two.

Gaiman, Neil ***ODD AND THE FROST GIANTS***

Illus. by Brett Helquist 117p. HarperCollins 2009 \$14.99 ISBN 978-0-06-167173-9
Odd, whose father died a Viking, but was also a wood carver, leaves home when his stepfather makes it clear he is unwelcome. Odd has a limp and a weak leg but still ventures off into the woods of Norway. He is soon involved with some of the Norse gods, and his story could become the stuff of legends. Another incredible book by Gaiman.

Hurwitz, Johanna ***AMAZING MONTY***

Illus. by Anik McGrory 106p. Candlewick Press 2010 \$15.99 ISBN 978-0-7636-4154-2
(Bk 3) Monty is a first-grader and he is an excellent reader. He is also quiet and shy but has been developing some confidence in himself. This is the third title about him, following *Mostly Monty* and *Mighty Monty*. They are quiet books with some everyday action. In this one there is a loose tooth, a substitute teacher, class pets, etc. – These titles will appeal to first graders who are also reading well, and slightly older readers who don't mind Monty's age.

Kibuishi, Kazu ***COPPER***

95p. Scholastic Graphix 2010 \$12.99 (pbk) ISBN 978-0-545-09893-9
Originally created as a webcomic, the author/artist of "The Amulet" series now shares his one page to 8 page vignettes of Copper and Fred (Fred is the dog). Unusual adventures highlight Copper's optimism and Fred's inward philosophizing in entertaining ways. Color art throughout adds to the stories. Includes "Behind the Scenes," several pages at the back where Kibuishi takes the reader through the steps of creating a page of Copper adventures.

Kibuishi, Kazu ***THE STONEKEEPER'S CURSE***

217p. Scholastic Graphix 2009 \$10.99 (pbk) ISBN 978-0-439-84683-7
(The Amulet series, Book 2) Emily begins to learn what it means to be the stonekeeper. She and her brother Navin have a lot to face in this ongoing story of good vs. evil. And will they be able to save their mother, who has been poisoned?

Kibuishi, Kazu ***THE CLOUD SEARCHERS***

208p. Scholastic Graphix 2010 \$10.99 (pbk) ISBN 978-0-54520885-7
(The Amulet series, Book 3) The small clan is now looking for a legendary city, said to reside in the clouds. The Elf King's son is still looking for them, as are many of the Elf King's loyal followers.

Klise, Kate & M. Sarah Klise ***OVER MY DEAD BODY***

illus. by M. Sarah Klise 116p. Harcourt 2009 \$15.00 ISBN 978-0-15-205734-3
(43 Old Cemetery Road series, Book 2) Told in their usual style of no narrative, just letters, newspapers articles, illustrations, and notes. Dick Tater, Director of the International Movement for the Safety & Protection Of Our Kids & Youth (IMSPOOKY), raises a ruckus about Seymour Hope (11) living with Ignatius Grumply without proper legal arrangements. Soon Seymour is in the orphanage and Iggy is in the Illinois Home for the Deranged.

LaFevers, R L. ***FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX***

Illus. by Kelly Murphy 134p. Houghton Mifflin 2009 \$16.00 ISBN 978-0-547-23865-4
(Nathaniel Fludd, Beastologist series, Book One) Nate, 10, his parents lost at sea, goes to live with his Aunt Phil (actually a distant cousin). He has a lot to learn as he is told his parents should have started training him at age 8. He and his family are beastologists -- ones who study and protect mythical beasts. They travel to Arabia to witness and protect a phoenix while it flames and is reborn, and encounter trouble.

LaFevers, R L. ***THE BASILISK'S LAIR***

Illus. by Kelly Murphy 150p. Houghton Mifflin 2010 \$15.00 ISBN 978-0-547-23867-8
(Bk 2) Nate (10) has completed his first week of training with his Aunt Phil when they are called to recapture an escaped basilisk. This will be a tricky job because basilisks are so dangerous. Greasle, the gremlin, is still a bit of a bother, but she can be helpful too. Adventure, a mythological beast, and some humor will appeal to readers.

Law, Ingrid ***SCUMBLE***

400p. Dial Books 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-8037-3307-7
Mim's cousin, Ledge, comes into his savvy, and it is to break apart all mechanical things. He is desperate to control it, before the snoopy daughter of the mayor finds out what he can do. Excellent sequel.

Lowry, Lois ***THE BIRTHDAY BALL***

Illus. by Jules Feiffer 186p. Houghton Mifflin 2010 \$16.00 ISBN 978-0-547-23869-2

This original fairy tale is fun and heart-warming. Princess Patricia Priscilla is bored. Her 16th Birthday Ball is a week away, and there she will have to choose one of her suitors to be her husband (and they are all humorously (but also sadly) repellent). But first, she decides to take on the persona of her maid and attend school in the village as a peasant. Her experiences at school for that one week may help to change her future, and that of the kingdom.

Lubar, David ***MY ROTTEN LIFE***

148p. Starscape 2009 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-7653-2508-2; \$5.99 (pbk) ISBN 978- 0-7653-1634-9 (Nathan Abercrombie, Accidental Zombie series, Bk 1) Nathan (5th grade) has had a really bad day. Walking home with his friend Mookie, Nathan wishes he didn't have feelings. That's when Abigail pops up and offers to help. Her Uncle is a neurobiologist, has just invented such a formula (Hurt-B-Gone) and needs a test subject. One drop would do it, but Mookie tripped and the whole bottle splashed over Nathan. It turns him into a half-zombie, which has some advantages, but now he wants to be all human again. Hilarious, & a little gross.

Lubar, David ***DEAD GUY SPY***

168p. Starscape 2009 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-7653-1635-2; \$5.99 (pbk) ISBN 978- 0-7653-2507-5 (Bk 2) Someone is spying on Nathan, do they know his secret? He learns The Bureau of Useful Misadventures (BUM) are hoping to recruit him to their cause of helping people. Or, are they the bad guys? (*Goop Soup* is #3; *The Big Stink* is #4)

MacLachlan, Patricia ***WORD AFTER WORD AFTER WORD***

125p. HarperCollins 2010 \$14.99 ISBN 978-0-06-027971-4
Ms. Mirabel, a writer and poet, visits a fourth grade class over a series of weeks, to inspire and help them write poetry. Lyrical and wonderful. Great to use as you begin a poetry writing unit or event, to inspire and set the mood.

Markey, Kevin ***WALL BALL***

181p. HarperCollins 2010 \$15.99 ISBN 978-0-06-115221-4
Banjo "The Great Whalloper" Bishbash (11) and his team are ready for their spring opener, but the weather has other ideas: it keeps snowing. Still fun and silly with some baseball action. The new center fielder keeps running into the wall in his determination to catch the ball – how can they help him?

McElligott, Matthew & Larry Tuxbury ***BENJAMIN FRANKLINSTEIN LIVES!***

121p. Putnam 2010 \$12.99 ISBN 978-0-399-25229-7
The first in a new series, a flash of lightning wakes up Benjamin Franklin from his suspended animation. Ben thinks it is because he is needed, but maybe it was an accident. He and Victor (6th grade) go on a search through Philadelphia to discover why Ben came alive again. Humorous and a bit of an adventure.

Parker, Jake ***THE STAR CRUSHER***

172p. Graphix (Scholastic) 2010 \$10.99 (pbk) ISBN 978-0-545-11715-9
Secret agent, Missile Mouse, is tough, determined, and full of confidence. The Galactic Security Agency (GSA) sends him on a mission to keep the RIP (the Rogue Imperium of Planets) from destroying a solar system. Lots of action, and smart-aleck comments from Missile Mouse set the tone in this cartoon-like action adventure full-color graphic novel.

Pilkey, Dav ***THE ADVENTURES OF OOK AND GLUK: Kung-Fu Cavemen from the Future***
169p. Blue Sky Press 2010 \$9.99 ISBN 978-0-545-17530-2

George Beard and Harold Hutchins are credited with this second graphic novel (the first being *The Adventures of Super Diaper Baby*). Ook and Gluk live in 500,001 BC and are having a great childhood until Goppennopper Enterprises, using a time machine, comes to their era to nab all the resources (timber, oil, water, etc.) since they are all used up in 2222. Ook & Gluk (and a baby dinosaur, too) are taken to the future where they escape and study Kung-Fu so they can rescue their past. Hilarious, goofy, clever, silly, etc. all you would expect from Dav Pilkey.

Schlitz, Laura Amy ***THE NIGHT FAIRY***

Illus. by Angela Barrett 117p. Candlewick Press 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-7636-3674-6
Flory, a night fairy, is only 3 months old (on her own since she was 7 days old, per usual for fairies) when a bat mistakes her for a moth and crunches her wings. Now she must walk and climb everywhere -- it takes so much time! When she finds a hummingbird caught in a spiderweb, her view changes from selfish to empathetic (not too fast, though) and she finds a way to help.

Scieszka, Jon ***SPACEHEADZ***

Illus. by Shane Prigmore 163p. Simon & Schuster 2010 \$14.99 ISBN 978-1-4169-7951-7
(Book 1) Michael K. (5th grade) begins his first day at a new school trying desperately to disassociate himself from the two other new kids. They turn out to be from another planet; are on earth (along with the class hamster) to save it; and talk like TV commercials or wrestling announcers. They need "3.14 million and 1 earthlings to be Spaceheads." Go to SPHDZ.com to sign up as a Spacehead. Very silly and lots of fun!

Shiga, Jason ***MEANWHILE***

Unp. Amulet Books 2010 \$15.95 ISBN 978-0-8109-8423-3
This book will take some patience, but it's intriguing format and colorful pages will draw in graphic novel readers as well as "Choose Your Own Adventure" fans. Jimmy enters the ice cream store, should he have chocolate or vanilla? The first of many choices involving Jimmy, his friend the professor, his time machine and his Killtron machine. The reader follows a colored tab after making a choice and follows the lines from one panel to the next. Fascinating format. (I have not read all 3,856 story possibilities.)

Vernon, Ursula ***DRAGONBREATH: Attack of the Ninja Frogs***

206p. Dial Press 2010 \$12.99 ISBN 978-0-8037-3365-7
This is the second book about Danny Dragonbreath, an actual dragon, his best friend Wendell, an iguana, and their new friend Suki (well, Wendell's friend anyway). Danny currently is fascinated

by the martial arts and when they discover that ninja frogs are following and trying to capture Suki, it's like a dream come true for Danny. Real ninjas! Told mostly in text with numerous black, white, green, (and an occasional red) illustrations, the story is occasionally told with a page or two of graphic novel format and then back to text. It's great fun. Danny is almost fearless and Wendell is overly cautious so they balance each other nicely.

Vernon, Ursula ***DRAGONBREATH: Curse of the Were-Wiener***

204p. Dial Press 2010 \$12.99 ISBN 978-0-8037-3469-2

(Bk. 3) Danny is wondering about the redness of the lunchroom's hot dog, when it bites his best friend Wendell on the hand. They discover the hot dogs are were-wieners from Transylvania. Thus begins their search for the alpha wurst, and the information for how to "take him out." Again, the story is told in the same format as the previous book. It's also great fun.

Winkler, Henry & Lin Oliver ***A BRAND-NEW ME!***

155p. Grosset & Dunlap 2010 \$4.99 (pbk) ISBN 978-0-448-45210-4

The final book in the series (#17) finds Hank may be left back due to his lack of completing (or starting) his 20 hours of community service. He finds an afterschool opportunity in helping to clean returned instruments for teacher Mr. Rock. He is also sad about his friends, Frankie and Ashley, who will be going to the Anderson Middle School Gifted and Talented Program, while Hank will be stuck going to plain old MS 245. Then, Mr. Rock finds Hank's ability to improvise and create stories may be his ticket to a different middle school.

Nonfiction for Grades 2-5 (or so) 14

31 WAYS TO CHANGE THE WORLD

72p. Candlewick Press 2008, 2010 \$8.99 (pbk) ISBN 978-0-7636-4506-9

A collection of ideas suggested by children on ways to make the world a better place. From basic ideas, such as "recycle your toys" to "Don't charge your phone overnight." My favorite? "Don't start a war."

Brown, Monica ***SIDE BY SIDE / LADO A LADO***

Illus. by Joe Cepeda unp. Rayo (HarperCollins) 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-06-122781-3

A picture book look at the lives of Delores Huerta and Cesar Chavez and the work they did together for the benefit of farm workers.

Campbell, Sarah C. ***GROWING PATTERNS: Fibonacci Numbers in Nature***

32p. Boyds Mills Press 2010 \$17.95 ISBN 978-1-59078-752-6

An easy-to-understand basic look at Fibonacci numbers. Excellent photos easily show the flower petals and spirals in pine cones, etc. Math teachers will certainly want to know about this title.

Franco, Betsy ***MESSING AROUND ON THE MONKEY BARS: And Other School Poems for Two Voices*** Illus. by Jessie Hartland Candlewick Press 2009 \$18.99 ISBN 978-0-7636-3174-1

School and public librarians may not be fond of the poem "In the Library" but this book has fun poetry kids will enjoy reading out loud in twos (or more). A two-page spread at the back of the book suggests other ways students can enjoy the poetry.

George-Warren, Holly ***THE COWGIRL WAY: Hats Off to America's Women of the West***

112p. Houghton Mifflin 2010 \$18.00 ISBN 978-0-618-73738-3

With chapters on "Outlaws and Rebels," "Rodeo Stars," "Celluloid Cowgirls" and more, the author conveys the story of the cowgirl. Actual women who lived a cowgirl life make up each chapter. Readers will meet Calamity Jane, Annie Oakley, Dave Evans and many more. Includes plenty of black-and-white photographs, a bibliography and an index.

Halls, Kelly Milner & Major William Sumner ***SAVING THE BAGHDAD ZOO***

61p. Greenwillow Books 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-06-177202-3

While serving in Iraq, Major Sumner was asked to look at "a small zoo." That look turned into several weeks, and more, of effort to save the animals they found, provide them with food, and construct a better facility for them. The dedication of Major Sumner and others, both Iraqi and Americans, to save the remaining animals is a story of war that children will understand and care about. Sidebars throughout the book provide background information on animals, Iraq, and the people who helped.

Micucci, Charles ***THE LIFE AND TIMES OF CORN***

32p. Houghton Mifflin 2009 \$16.00 ISBN 978-0-618-50751-1

Several smaller illustrations per page with tidbits of information about corn accompany a one-paragraph text on the topic of each two-page spread. Full of information in an appealing design, this book is only flawed by the lack of an index for report writers.

Newquist, H. P. ***HERE THERE BE MONSTERS: The Legendary Kraken and the Giant Squid***

73p. Houghton Mifflin 2010 \$18.00 ISBN 978-0-547-07678-2

Beginning with the legend of the kraken, and how the legend came to be, the author goes on to note that starting in 1870, bodies of strange sea creatures began to show up on beaches. Naturalists speculated that a real sea creature had spawned the kraken legend. The author then covers the discovery of both the giant squid and the colossal squid. A topic sure to fascinate non-fiction readers, and includes lots of color photographs. Includes a brief bibliography and an index.

Pinkney, Andrea Davis ***SIT-IN: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down***

Illus. by Brian Pinkney unpag. Little, Brown 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-316-07016-4

Fifty years ago, four black college students sat down at the Woolworth counter (on Feb. 1, 1960), asking for "A doughnut and coffee with cream on the side." The well-crafted prose and art convey the peaceful protest in Greensboro, North Carolina, and the determination needed to hold fast until the right to be served was granted (July 25-26, 1960). Excellent choice for any library collection. One fold-out page is included. Pair this with *Ruth and the Green Book* (Ramsey).

Sidman, Joyce ***UBIQUITOUS: Celebrating Nature's Survivors***

Illus. by Beckie Prange unp. Houghton Mifflin 2010 \$17.00 ISBN 978-0-618-71719-4
Fans of Sidman's *Song of the Water Boatman* will enjoy this offering of 14 poems. Each 2-page spread has the poem on the left page and information about the organism or animal on the right page. Great diversity in topic and poetic style. Includes a glossary and Author's Note. Good addition to poetry collections.

Simon, Seymour ***TROPICAL RAINFORESTS***

32p. Smithsonian & HarperCollins 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-06-114253-6
Excellent photographs highlight this look at rainforests around the world. A beautiful photo on one page and text on the other balances the book nicely.

Singer, Marilyn ***MIRROR, MIRROR***

Illus. by José Masse unp. Dutton 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-525-47901-7
A book of reverso poetry. The author writes one poem, then on the facing page are the same words backwards with some different spacing and punctuation, creating a second, different poem. Fascinating. Read it to students and challenge them to write a set of mirror poems (reversos) themselves.

Tavares, Matt ***HENRY AARON'S DREAM***

Unp. Candlewick Press 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-7636-3224-3
Told in free verse, the author recounts the boy's dream of playing professional baseball, while noting the segregation that would not allow it. After Jackie Robinson, Henry pursues his chosen career though it isn't an easy road. The book ends as Henry begins his first game with the Braves, an exhibition game against Jackie Robinson's team, the Dodgers. Extraordinarily put together - this picture book biography gives a sense of the hard road Henry, and all black ball players, had to travel, before and after they were allowed to play in the major leagues. It is also a tribute to Henry Aaron, his skill and his strength of character to withstand the angry shouts from the white crowds and play the game. **NOTE:** Uses the "n" word twice, once in reference to people shouting at Jackie Robinson, once in reference to people shouting at Henry Aaron. An Author's Note and Henry Aaron's statistics conclude the book.

Yolen, Jane ***ALL-STAR! Honus Wagner and the Most Famous Baseball Card Ever***

Illus. by Jim Burke unp. Philomel Books 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-399-24661-6
A picture book biography told in free verse of Honus Wagner's accomplishments as a ball player and as a man. And a little bit about that famous baseball card.

Picture Books

Barton, Chris ***SHARK VS. TRAIN***

Illus. by Tom Lichtenheld Little, Brown 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-316-00762-7

Two boys reach into the overflowing toy box. One pulls out a toy shark and the other a toy train. Immediately they have the toys growl at each other. The contests begin. Who will win? It depends on the contest and the circumstances. Starting out logically: ocean or train tracks, then continues with various scenarios that favor first one, then the other. Pair this with *I'm the Best!* by Lucy Cousins.

Becker, Bonnie ***A BEDTIME FOR BEAR***

Illus. by Kady MacDonald Denton unp. Candlewick Press 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-7636-4101-6
Sequel to *A Visitor for Bear*. Mouse comes by for a sleepover. Bear needs everything to be quiet for him to fall asleep. A good follow-up to the first book.

Bottner, Barbara ***MISS BROOKS LOVES BOOKS! (and I don't)***

Illus by Michael Emberley unp. Knopf 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-375-84682-3; \$20.99 (PLB)
ISBN 978-0-375-94682-0

Miss Brooks is the school librarian, and she does love books! All during the school year she dresses up in different outfits to celebrate holidays and books. Then - Book Week (in May!) comes & Miss Brooks wants the children to dress up and promote a book. Our heroine thinks they are all "too flowery. too furry. too clickety" until she and her mom find a book in the stack about an ogre, with warts, who snorts! She is hooked!

Cole, Joanna ***THE MAGIC SCHOOL BUS & THE CLIMATE CHANGE***

Illus. by Bruce Degen 40p. Scholastic 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-590-10826-3

This trip the Magic School Bus visits the Arctic Sea and across the earth to witness the effects of global warming. As usual, student reports on aspects of the topic are included one or two to a page. Global warming is presented as a fact. The book also discusses the greenhouse effect, the need to reduce the amount of CO2 emitted, and alternate sources of energy. It's still an exciting and hectic trip!

Cooper, Elisha ***FARM***

Unp. Orchard Books 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-545-07075-1

Outstanding art gives a realistic look at a family farm. Sometimes the two-page spread contains small illustrations of animals, equipment or people; other times the two-page spread is a wonderful panorama of the farm.

Cousins, Lucy ***I'M THE BEST***

Unp. Candlewick Press 2010 \$14.99 ISBN 978-0-7636-4684-4

Exuberant, Dog is convinced he is the best since he can run faster than Mole, dig better than Goose, swim better than Donkey and is bigger than ladybug. When Mole points out that if his competitions and adversaries change, Dog would always lose, Dog is sad, and apologizes. But soon he is happy again. Good fun and colorful art. Pair this with *Shark Vs. Train*.

Elya, Susan Middleton ***NO MORE, POR FAVOR***

Illus. by David Walker unp. Putnam 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-399-24766-8
One by one, animals in the jungle try to get their children to eat their typical food in this rhyming story. The children refuse, being tired of the same old thing. The parents come up with an idea -- a picnic for all in the clearing, and kids can choose whatever they would like. Sprinkled with Spanish words, this fun whimsical story will be a hit when read aloud. Pronunciations are given at the front of the book.

Heiligman, Deborah ***COOL DOG, SCHOOL DOG***

Illus. by Tim Bowers Unp. Marshall Cavendish Children's Books 2009 \$15.99 ISBN 978-0-7614-5561-5

A follow-up to *Fun Dog, Sun Dog* in this story Tinka runs away to school to find her boy. She gets into plenty of trouble while there, but a wonderful solution is found. Told in repetitive verses, the poetry is catchy and will probably have kids writing similar poems about their own pets.

Karas, G. Brian ***YOUNG ZEUS***

Unp. Scholastic 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-439-72806-5

A picture book approach with a simplified story of how Zeus was raised alone, and then had to defeat his father, Cronus, free his brothers and sisters, and defeat the Titans. Cartoon-like artwork and contemporary language such as: "Keep your eye on Cronus. He's a sneak." will attract young readers interested in mythology.

Khan, Rukhsana ***BIG RED LOLLIPOP***

Illus. by Sophie Blackall unp. Viking 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-670-06287-4

A story of sisters and culture. Rubina is invited to a birthday party, and her mother makes her take her younger sister, Sana, with her. Cultural differences. Rubina doesn't get any more invitations for a long time. One day Sana is invited to a party and the youngest girl wants to go along; and again their mother says they both should go. Rubina intervenes.

The author was born in Pakistan and her family moved to Canada when she was 3. (and she did fuss until her mother made her older sister take her to a birthday party.)

Kooser, Ted ***BAG IN THE WIND***

Illus. by Barry Root unp. Candlewick Press 2010 \$17.00 ISBN 978-0-7636-3001-0

A yellow plastic bag flutters out of the landfill and is nudged around the countryside by wind and water. It is used a few times but always seems to flutter away again. A note at the back of the book talks about recycling plastic bags -- stating (among other facts) that just one young person (the reader) reusing cloth bags could save over 22,000 plastic bags in his or her lifetime!

Lin, Grace ***LING & TING: Not Exactly the Same***

43p. Little, Brown & Co. 2010 \$14.99 ISBN 978-0-316-02452-5

Identical twins, Ling and Ting want the reader to know they are different in many ways, but they will always care about each other. Contains five stories; the first story "The Haircuts" shows us how one twin gets an "oops" cut too high on part of her bangs, then the reader can tell who is who throughout the rest of the book. We learn there are ways they are different.

Long, Loren **OTIS**

Unp. Philomel 2009 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-399-25248-8

Otis, an old tractor, enjoys life working on the farm and kicking up his heels after work. He befriends a lonely calf and the two make the rounds on the farm after a long day. Then the farmer buys a new, big, yellow tractor and Otis is parked behind the barn with no work to do. He is despondent, until an emergency calls him to action. Great, heartfelt story.

Lord, Cynthia **HOT ROD HAMSTER**

Illus. by Derek Anderson unp. Scholastic 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-545-03530-9

A hamster heads to the junkyard to put together a hot rod for the race at noon. The reader is asked on several pages which of the items on the page they would choose, then we find out which one the hamster wants. Then... it's time for the race, is the hamster's car too small?

Luciani, Brigitte **THE MEETING** (Mr. Badger & Mrs. Fox, #1)

Illus. by Eve Tharlet 32p. Graphic Universe 2010 \$25.26 ISBN 978-0-7613-5625-7

(Mr. Badger & Mrs. Fox series, #1) In this full-color graphic novel, Mrs. Fox and her daughter, Ginger, are on the run since their burrow was smashed in. They stop at a likely burrow, which turns out to be occupied by Mr. Badger and his children, Berry, Grub and Thistle. The two families have some trouble adjusting, but by story's end, they are considering each other "family."

McMullan, Kate & Jim **I'M BIG!**

Unp. HarperCollins 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-06-122974-9

A second dinosaur book from the people who brought us *I Stink!* and *I'm Mighty!* this herbivore has lost his pack. He asks others as he searches, and finds a way to escape some toothy carnivores.

Muth, Jon J. **ZEN GHOSTS**

Unp. Scholastic 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-439-63430-4

A Halloween story of the same three children and their panda friend, Stillwater, with a second story, a koan story (explained in the Author's Note) within it.

Peet, Mal & Elspeth Graham **CLOUD TEA MONKEYS**

Illus. by Juan Wijngaard unp. Candlewick Press 2010 \$15.99 ISBN 978-0-7636-4453-6

Retelling an old legend, the authors take us to (probably) India where a young girl worries because her mother is too ill to pick tea leaves, their livelihood, (it is only the two of them). She carries the huge basket to the field, and the overseer laughs at her. Running to her special place, the monkeys she always visits console her. When she wakes, a full basket of tea leaves (picked by monkeys) waits for her. Another surprise awaits her at the field.

Pinkney, Jerry **THREE LITTLE KITTENS**

Unp. Dial Books 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-8037-3533-0

It's great to have a new "3 Little Kittens" for the next group of kids to learn and recite. Great for story time. (Maybe they can act it out, too)

Ramsey, Calvin Alexander ***RUTH AND THE GREEN BOOK***

Illus. by Floyd Cooper Carolrhoda Books 2010 \$16.95 ISBN 978-0-7613-525506

Ruth and her parents are traveling by car from Chicago to Alabama, to visit her grandparents. It is the early 1950s and this African American family soon learns they are not welcome in some establishments. One kind man tells them about the Green Book, which listed places to stay, eat, and buy gas for African American travelers. This picture book conveys the discomfort and concern of Ruth and her family during one part of our country's history; and their relief at arriving safely at the grandparent's home.

Schertle, Alice ***LITTLE BLUE TRUCK LEADS THE WAY***

Unp. Harcourt 2009 \$16.00 ISBN 978-0-15-206389-4

The Little Blue Truck carries some produce into the big city, and is astounded at the tall buildings and amount of traffic. His slower pace frustrates the city vehicles and soon there is a traffic jam.

Scieszka, Jon ***TRUCKERY RHYMES***

Illus. by David Shannon, Loren Long, David Gordman, and others 57p. Simon & Schuster 2009 \$17.99 ISBN 978-1-4169-4135-4

Sorry I didn't know about this book last year. Scieszka has taken well-known (I hope!) nursery rhymes and used a truck theme with each one. Some of them are: "Peter, Peter, Payload Eater," "Wrecker Rosie Sat on a Wall," and "Pop! Blows the Diesel." Sure to be a hit with the story time crowd. Those of you familiar with his "Trucktown" books (also great fun!) will recognize the characters.

Scotton, Rob ***SCAREDY-CAT, SPLAT!***

Unp. HarperCollins 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-06-117760-6

Splat is scared of spiders, among other scary things. How can he have the scariest costume for the party at school?

Sharp, N. L. ***THE FLOWER GIRL / THE RING BEAR***

Illus. by Timothy Jame Hantala unp. Prairieland Press 2010 \$19.95 ISBN 978-0-975-98293-8

A flip book by a Nebraska author. *The Ring Bear* was previously published but has now been combined in this flip book and has new illustrations. This title uses humor to let children know what the flower girl and the ring bearer do in a wedding. Touching and fun.

Solheim, James ***BORN YESTERDAY: The Diary of a Young Journalist***

Illus. by Simon James unp. Philomel Books 2010 \$15.99 ISBN 978-0-399-25155-9

(Nebraska author) A baby writes a diary of her first year of life. Example - Nov. 1: "Guess what! My hands can do more than just write. They can grab things! I made a mental list of things to grab:

cats, ears, elephants, ankles, Vermont.” Clever and fun; maybe kids will want to start a journal themselves.

Urbanovic, Jackie ***SITTING DUCK***

Unp. HarperCollins 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-06-176583-4
Brody (a dog) and Max the duck end up babysitting Brody's niece Annabel -- who is quite active and can get into trouble in an instant! (All the other animals hightail it out the back door when Annabel arrives.) Good fun!

Venable, Colleen AF ***HAMSTER AND CHEESE***

Illus. by Stephanie Yue 48p. Graphic Universe 2010 \$27.93 ISBN 978-0-7613-4598-5; \$6.95 (pbk) ISBN 978-0-7613-5479-6
(Pet Shop Private Eye series, #1) The 'G' has fallen off the end of the guinea pig's label on his cage in the pet shop, and now the hamster thinks he is a "PI" or private eye. If the guinea pig (Sasspants) doesn't find out who keeps taking the pet store owner's sandwich, all the hamsters will be sent away. Humor and a small mystery will attract readers. Told in graphic novel format with full color illustrations.

Willems, Mo ***KNUFFLE BUNNY FREE***

Unp. HarperCollins 2010 \$17.99 ISBN 978-0-06192957-1
The final Knuffle Bunny book. The family flies to Holland to visit Oma & Opa; but Trixie accidentally leaves Knuffle Bunny on the plane. She tries to be happy visiting her grandparents, but it is hard. Over time, and after a wonderful dream, she begins to agree she is getting older and it may be time to let Knuffle Bunny go.

Beginning Readers & Early Chapter Books

Chaconas, Dori ***CORK & FUZZ: The Babysitters***

Illus. by Lisa McCue 32p. Viking 2010 \$13.99 ISBN 978-0-670-01200-8
(Bk 6) Cork and Fuzz (a short muskrat and a tall opossum) are great friends! Cork loves to help others, but Fuzz is more interested in his own plans. When Cork needs help babysitting a little porcupine, Fuzz is busy building a trap, but when the baby is missing, Fuzz is willing to help. A look at responsibility and another great friendship story.

Clarke, Ginjer L. ***BABY MEERKATS***

Illus. by Robbin Cuddy 48p. Grosset & Dunlap 2010 \$3.99 (pbk) ISBN 978-0-448-45106-0
Basic information about the meerkat life cycle, including how live together and hunt for food. A good first look at meerkats for beginning readers.

Seabrooke, Brenda ***WOLF PIE***

Illus. by Liz Callen 48p. Clarion Books 2010 \$16.00 ISBN 978-0-547-04404-3

The wolf tries to blow down the three little pigs house, but no luck. He says he won't let them out and stays outside their door. They are happy and cozy inside, reading stories, singing songs, having hot chocolate. Wilfong (the wolf) joins in -- soon the pigs are sharing pizza and popcorn with him - through the window. Over time he becomes their friend, but he is still a wolf. When a carload of hungry wolves show up, it is up to Wilfong to carry out their plan. Great fun for new readers looking for a little more text.

Silverman, Erica ***COWGIRL KATE AND COCOA: Spring Babies***

Illus. by Betsy Lewin unp. Harcourt 2010 \$ 15.00 ISBN 978-0-15-205396-3

Four stories again, this time about the spring. Cocoa thinks calves are “too much work” but cute (don’t tell the cows). He’s not too sure about the surprise – a new puppy (he wanted peppermints). But again, Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa work out the issues to get their jobs done and accept changes. Lots of fun.

Willems, Mo ***CAN I PLAY TOO?***

57p. Hyperion Books 2010 \$8.99 ISBN 978-1-4231-1991-3

(An Elephant & Piggie Book) Elephant and Piggie are going to play catch when Snake comes along and asks to play, too. They try several ways for Snake to catch the ball before they find the perfect solution. Another beginning reader winner!

Willems, Mo ***CAT THE CAT, WHO IS THAT?***

Unp. HarperCollins 2010 \$10.99 ISBN 978-0-06-172840-2

These four new beginning readers by Mo Willems are sure to be popular. Very basic writing (note titles) with the occasional harder word thrown in; e.g. “It’s Duck the Duck” and in a bubble Duck says, “A pleasure as always.” And somewhere, in each of the four books, readers will find a toy “Pigeon” – just for fun. Very cheery and upbeat.

Willems, Mo ***LET’S SAY HI TO FRIENDS WHO FLY***

Unp. HarperCollins 2010 \$10.99 ISBN 978-0-06-172842-6

Willems, Mo ***WHAT’S YOUR SOUND, HOUND THE HOUND?***

Unp. HarperCollins 2010 \$10.99 ISBN 978-0-06-172844-0

Willems, Mo ***TIME TO SLEEP, SHEEP THE SHEEP!***

Unp. HarperCollins 2010 \$10.99 ISBN 978-0-06-172847-1

Nonfiction Picture Books

Ada, Alma Flor & E. Isabel Campey ;***MU, MOO!: Rimas de Animales / Animal Nursery Rhymes***

Illus. by Viví Escrivá 47p. HarperCollins 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-06-134613-2

The authors of *Pío Peep* brings us this collection of both traditional and original animal rhymes in Spanish and English. The translation from Spanish is not literal, but a poetic recreation of the mood, rhythm and topic. Includes “Una Paloma Blanca.”

Brown, Don ***A WIZARD FROM THE START: The Incredible Boyhood & Amazing Adventures of Thomas Edison*** unpub. Houghton Mifflin 2010 \$17.00 ISBN 978-0-547-19487-5

This picture book biography starts with Edison helping on his family's farm, and leaving school to be home-schooled after his teacher called him "addled." Edison is quoted as saying, "My mother taught me to read good books quickly and correctly, and...this opened up a great world of literature." An introduction to Edison's early life (from age 8 to around 25) lets readers know he was industrious, clever, determined, and heroic (at least once). Concludes with an Author's Note & Bibliography that provides a little more information.

Buckley, Carol ***TARRA & BELLA: The Elephant and Dog Who Became Best Friends***

Unpub. Putnam 2009 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-399-25443-7

Tarra is the first elephant to reside at the Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee. Soon other elephants join her, but they all pair off and leave her without a friend. One morning, there was Bella, a stray dog who soon became Tarra's best friend. This story of the Sanctuary and the two friends is sure to appeal to young readers.

George, Jean Craighead ***THE BUFFALO ARE BACK***

Illus. by Wendell Minor unpub. Dutton 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-525-42215-0

A picture book look at why the buffalo almost became extinct, and efforts to save it, covering the mid-1800s to modern day. The author gives most of the credit to Theodore Roosevelt and naturalist W. T. Hornaday. (Too bad she doesn't mention the Native Americans who worked toward the same goal.)

Hoberman, Mary Ann ***YOU READ TO ME, I'LL READ TO YOU: Very Short Fables to Read Together*** illus. by Michael Emberley 32p. Little, Brown & Co. 2010 \$16.99 ISBN 978-0-316-04117-1

Fifteen poems and 13 fables are included in this collection; kids may not be hearing fables so much anymore, so this is a good choice and great fun! The text is color-coded so all who are reading know when it is their turn. Colorful illustrations in the white spaces add to the appeal. (There are also fairy tales, nursery rhymes, scary stories and short stories in this series.)

Jenkins, Steve ***NEVER SMILE AT A MONKEY***

Unpub. Houghton Mifflin 2009 \$16.00 ISBN 978-0-618-96620-2

Cautions for the reader to observe when encountering certain wild creatures. For example, a cone shell is beautiful but it has poisoned barbs that can be fatal to humans (I didn't know that). Jenkins art this time is only of the animal on a white background. Still is amazing. Additional facts are included at the back of the book.



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