

CCBC

Choices

2011

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with

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School of Education
University of Wisconsin–Madison

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Friends member and professional librarian Tana Elias has created the index for *CCBC Choices* as a volunteer since the 1995 edition. We thank her for her ongoing generosity in sharing her time and expertise with us and, more important, with users of *Choices*.

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Finally, we spend many hours at home reading books. We thank the adults and children with whom we live for their understanding, and also their willingness to listen when we can't wait to talk about something we've read.

Carling Febry, Kathleen T. Horning, Merri V. Lindgren, and Megan Schliesman

Introduction

CCBC Choices is created by librarians at the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC), a library of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison (see Appendix II for more about the CCBC).

The CCBC receives review copies of more than 3,000 new books for children and young adults annually, including most of the trade books published in English by corporate publishers in the United States. Our goal in creating *CCBC Choices* is to highlight some of the outstanding titles published for children and young adults among the 3,000 or more we receive.

In choosing titles, we look first and foremost at books that excite us because they are well-written, interesting, and engaging. We also consider the needs and reading interests of children and teenagers, drawing on our own experience and what we learn from librarians and teachers working directly with children and teens. We sometimes seek out content reviews or do additional research to determine whether a book that stands out to us for its literary qualities is also one that is accurate and authentic in its presentation of factual information or depiction of experience.

Ultimately, selecting books for *CCBC Choices* is a highly subjective process. We often agree on titles to include. But sometimes we disagree. *Choices* is a reflection of the consensus we have reached.

Once we finish *CCBC Choices* each year we always find a handful of additional titles we wish we'd included. We often learn about one or more of these books when we see them on other annual best-of-the-year lists offering perspectives on excellence in publishing. Despite these inevitable oversights, we believe the list we have compiled is a rich one.

This edition of *CCBC Choices* features 240 books that give a sense of the depth, breadth, creativity, and insight to be found in publishing for children and teens today. We are thrilled to share them with you.

Visit the CCBC's web site at www.education.wisc.edu/books/choices.asp to find out how to obtain additional copies of *CCBC Choices 2011*.

Organization of *CCBC Choices 2011*

The organization of the books in *CCBC Choices* into thematic and format categories has been developed over the years to help teachers, school and public librarians, and others who work with children quickly find books that meet their needs. We often make refinements from year to year in the organization, in part due to our ever-growing understanding of what our colleagues who work directly with children want and need, and in part to reflect the books we have chosen in a particular year.

Books have been placed into one of the following thematic categories when appropriate:

- The Natural World
- Seasons and Celebrations
- Historical People, Places, and Events
- Contemporary People, Places, and Events
- Understanding Oneself and Others
- The Arts

The remaining books have been placed into one of the following genre or format categories:

- Folklore, Mythology, and Traditional Literature
- Biography and Autobiography
- Poetry
- Concept Books
- Picture Books for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers
- Picture Books for School-Age Children
- Books for Beginning Readers
- Books for Newly Independent Readers
- Fiction for Children
- Fiction for Young Adults

Picture books about people who actually lived have been placed in the Historical People, Places, and Events section or the Biography and Autobiography section. Novels set in the past have been placed in one of the Fiction categories. Graphic novels are assessed individually based on content and placed in the category that best suits each individual title.

The subject index can be used to find books across all of the categories about specific topics and in specific genres and formats (“Graphic Novels,” “Historical Fiction,” “Fantasy,” etc.).

Age Recommendations

We provide suggested age ranges for each title. These are meant to be general guidelines based on appeal and age-appropriateness of the content. We know that some children and teens are ready for and will enjoy books recommended

for older readers. Our suggested age recommendations cannot substitute for professional judgment and personal knowledge of individual readers, classrooms, and communities.

There is considerable overlap of ages in the two picture book categories as well as in the fiction categories. Given the wide range of individual variation among readers, we encourage you to look through both age categories for each genre. For consistency of organization, we have divided the books as follows:

- Picture Books for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers: younger age recommendation is three or younger (e.g., Ages 1–4, Ages 3–6)
- Picture Books for School-Age Children: younger age recommendation is four or older (e.g., Ages 4–7, Ages 6–10)
- Fiction for Children: younger age recommendation is 10 or younger (e.g., Ages 9–12, Ages 10–14)
- Fiction for Young Adults: younger age recommendation is 11 or older (e.g., Ages 11–15, Age 13 and older)

Publication Information

All of the books in *CCBC Choices* have a 2010 publication date (a few may have 2009 copyright dates, but were not actually released until 2010). The citation for each book includes the current price and thirteen-digit international standard book number (ISBN) for any edition we were able to find in print in late 2010. Most of the books are available in hardcover trade editions. Some are also or only available in library editions with reinforced bindings. A few are only, or also, available in paperback. This information will be helpful when looking for the books in *CCBC Choices* at your public library, school library media center, or bookseller.

The Charlotte Zolotow Award

The Charlotte Zolotow Award is given annually to the author of the best picture book text published in the United States in the preceding year. Established in 1997, the award is named to honor the work of Charlotte Zolotow, a distinguished children's literature editor for thirty-eight years with Harper Junior Books and an author of more than seventy picture stories, including such classic works as *Mr. Rabbit and the Lovely Present* (Harper, 1962) and *William's Doll* (Harper, 1972). Ms. Zolotow attended the University of Wisconsin in Madison on a writing scholarship from 1933 to 1936. She studied with Professor Helen C. White.

The award is administered by the CCBC. Each year, a committee of children's literature experts selects the winner from the books published in the preceding year. The committee works with a shortlist of titles they develop along with input from the CCBC professional staff. All titles are subject to the approval of the CCBC professional staff.

Any picture book for young children (birth through age seven) originally written in English and published in the United States in the preceding year is eligible for consideration for the Charlotte Zolotow Award. The book may be fiction, nonfiction, or folklore, as long as it is presented in picture book form and aimed at the birth through seven age range. Easy readers and poetry collections are not eligible. Books written by Charlotte Zolotow are also not eligible for the award.

In addition to choosing the award-winning title, the committee may select up to five Honor Books and up to ten titles to be included on a Highly Commended list that will call attention to outstanding writing in picture books.

The selection committee is comprised of five members who are appointed to a two-year term by the CCBC professional staff. These appointments are based on knowledge of children's books, demonstrated ability to evaluate children's books and discuss them critically, and/or direct experience working professionally with children from birth through age seven.

Members of the fourteenth annual Charlotte Zolotow Award Committee were Carling Feby, chair (librarian, Cooperative Children's Book Center, Madison, Wisconsin); Suzy Grindrod (teacher, Emerson Elementary School, Madison, Wisconsin); Kathleen T. Horning (director, Cooperative Children's Book Center, Madison, Wisconsin); Tracy Moore (librarian, Madison Public Library, Madison, Wisconsin); and Maryann Owen (librarian, Racine Public Library, Racine, Wisconsin).



2011 Charlotte Zolotow Award

- Winner:** ***Big Red Lollipop.***
 Written by Rukhsana Khan.
 Illustrated by Sophie Blackall.
 Viking, 2010
- Honor Books:** ***April and Esme: Tooth Fairies.***
 Written and illustrated by Bob Graham.
 U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2010
- City Dog, Country Frog.***
 Written by Mo Willems. Illustrated by Jon J Muth.
 Hyperion, 2010
- Hip-Pocket Papa.***
 Written by Sandra Markle. Illustrated by Alan Marks.
 Charlesbridge, 2010
- A Sick Day for Amos McGee.***
 Written by Philip C. Stead. Illustrated by Erin E. Stead.
 A Neal Porter Book / Roaring Brook Press, 2010
- Highly Commended Titles:**
- A Beach Tail.*** Written by Karen Lynn Williams.
 Illustrated by Floyd Cooper. Boyds Mills Press, 2010
- Chavela and the Magic Bubble.*** Written by Monica Brown.
 Illustrated by Magaly Morales. Clarion, 2010
- I Am a Backhoe.*** Written and illustrated by Anna Grossnickle Hines.
 Tricycle Press, 2010
- Little Black Crow.*** Written and illustrated by Chris Raschka.
 A Richard Jackson Book / Atheneum, 2010.
- My Garden.*** Written and illustrated by Kevin Henkes.
 Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2010
- Willoughby and the Moon.*** Written and illustrated by Greg Foley.
 Balzer + Bray / HarperCollins, 2010

Comments on Publishing in 2010

Although there has been quite a buzz about e-books making a significant impact on the marketplace, we haven't seen much of an impact to date on books for children, particularly when it comes to books for younger children. There doesn't yet seem to be any technology on the visible horizon that has improved on the technical ingenuity of the 32-page picture book.

That said, it's surprising that we don't see more innovation and creativity in the picture books being published a decade into the twenty-first century. Jeannie Baker's *Window* comes closest, with its two parallel, wordless stories taking place at the same time in two different hemispheres. And Laura Vaccaro Seeger once again delivers an engaging visual challenge in her cause-and-effect story *What If?*

Other picture book artists seem to be making a case for the continued existence of traditional books, even as they use post-modern methods to present their arguments. No one does this more blatantly than Lane Smith in his interplay between a bibliophile monkey and a computer-loving jackass in *It's a Book*. The characters in *Art & Max* by David Wiesner deconstruct and then recreate the very illustrations that have brought them to life, and Mo Willems's latest entry in his "Elephant & Piggie" easy-reader series has the two reaching a new plane of consciousness in *We Are in a Book!* (Though perhaps an e-sequel is inevitable: *We Are in an App!*)

Willems also provided an evocative, understated narrative for a more traditional picture book, *City Dog, Country Frog*, illustrated by Jon J Muth. With its exquisite watercolor illustrations, it was one of the few standouts in an otherwise disappointing year for picture books.

While all of the authors and artists listed above are extremely well-known in the picture book field, it's encouraging to see that there is still room for newcomers. The Caldecott Medal this year went to Erin E. Stead for her first book, *A Sick Day for Amos McGee*, written by Philip C. Stead. The gentle story and muted illustrations hearken back to the mid-twentieth century, sometimes called the Golden Age of picture books.

Fascinating Facts

Last year we noted that 2009 was a stellar year for nonfiction, and we hoped that it marked the beginning of a trend toward an increase in the number of stand-alone works of non-fiction that meet high standards for research, documentation, and presentation of information for children and teens. Unfortunately, we did not see the same number of outstanding works of nonfiction for children and teens in 2010, but we did see the same level of quality in many of the year's offerings.

Houghton Mifflin's stellar series "Scientists in the Field" continues to live up to the very high standard they set early on with new entries in 2010, including *The Hive Detectives* by Loree Griffin Burns and Ellen Harasimowicz; *Project Seahorse* by Pamela S. Turner and Scott Tuason; and *Kakapo Rescue* by Sy Montgomery and Nic Bishop, which was selected as this year's Sibert Award winner.

For younger children, Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan's *Ballet for Martha*, illustrated by Brian Floca, and Laban Carrick Hill and Bryan Collier's *Dave the*

Potter both illuminate the lives of two creative artists, showing the sweat and genius behind their work. A famous painting is given voice in Ruthie Knapp's funny and informative *Who Stole Mona Lisa?* And Barbara Kerley gives a daughter's-eye-view of Mark Twain in *The Extraordinary Mark Twain (According to Susy)*, which not only provides insight into Twain as a writer but also as a parent.

For teens, we especially admired four books on four very different subjects. Ann Angel's biography *Janis Joplin* won YALSA's 2011 Award for Excellence in Nonfiction and is likely to win Joplin a new generation of fans, as well. Tanya Lee Stone offers an insightful social history on the fashion doll some people love and others love to hate in *The Good, the Bad, and the Barbie*. One of the most distinguished writers of nonfiction for young readers, Russell Freedman, gave us a compelling history of World War I in *The War to End All Wars*. Finally, some of the best science writing we've ever seen for teens distinguishes *Every Bone Tells a Story*, a collaboration between writer Jill Rubalcaba and archaeologist Peter Robertshaw. Like Freedman, they have the rare ability to bring history—or, in this case, prehistory—to life by using the drama inherent in what they are recounting.

Satisfying Fiction

In fiction, what stood out above all else in 2010 was the welcome increase in novels for children and teens written by African American authors. These included novels by established writers such as Sharon Draper (*Out of My Mind*), Walter Dean Myers (*Lockdown*), and Rita Williams-Garcia (*One Crazy Summer*); those who are relatively new to the publishing scene, such as Tonya Bolden (*Finding Family*), Sundee T. Frazier (*The Other Half of My Heart*), and G. Neri (*Yummy*); and writers embarking on their first books for children, such as Jewell Parker Rhodes (*The Ninth Ward*), an established writer for adults, Renée Watson (*What Momma Left Me*), and Victoria Bond and T.R. Simon (*Zora and Me*). The quality of the writing, and the variety of genres, settings, and characters among these and other books for children by African American authors in 2010 is notable. We hope this is an indicator of the future of publishing and not just a blip in the history of African American fiction for children and teens.

In recent years, we have noted a marked increase in the number of novels published for young adults, particularly in the fantasy genre. Originally this could be attributed to the “*Harry Potter* effect,” with every publisher understandably wanting to capitalize on the unprecedented success of Rowling's series. Just as it was waning, along came *Twilight* to boost the demand and supply once again. We still see a lot of *Twilight*-tinged star-crossed romances and paranormal fantasies, with the objects of affection morphing from vampires to werewolves to demons to angels to mermaids (albeit—thankfully—not all in one volume).

It was with tremendous relief and appreciation that we read an exceptional romance about star-crossed lovers grounded firmly in reality in 2010. Laura McNeal's outstanding young adult novel *Dark Water* will satisfy both the reader who wants a thrilling romance and the reader who wants a smart, believable teen protagonist, one whose decision-making is as clouded by adolescence as it is by love.

Dark Water is one example of many fine works of contemporary realism in 2010. A mainstay of young adult literature from the mid-1960s to the late 1990s,

it again seems to be making a comeback. Standouts in realistic fiction for 2010 deal with diverse topics. Walter Dean Myers's *Lockdown* is set in a juvenile prison, as fourteen-year-old Reese is challenged to stay out of trouble and get back on the right path. *Hush* by Eishes Chayil looks at the painful silence surrounding sexual abuse in New York's Chassidic community. A. S. King's *Please Ignore Vera Deitz* is another book about silence around a number of issues in smart, struggling, hard-working teenage Vera's life.

Teen fiction with GLBTQ themes seemed to have peaked in 2009, when there were close to 100 books published with gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, or questioning characters. We saw far fewer books in this category in 2010, but the quality continues to be consistently high. Notable among them was *Will Grayson, Will Grayson*, a laugh-out-loud novel, co-authored by John Green and David Levithan, featuring a gay protagonist and a straight protagonist, both named Will Grayson.

Several novels of 2010 deftly straddle the terrain between realism and something else. None would necessarily be called fantasy; in fact, all are firmly grounded in the lives of their contemporary teen protagonists. But all offer an intriguing detour into improbable territory that is wholly believable in the context of their stories. Louis Sachar's *The Cardturner* does all this and more, making the card game of bridge—yes, bridge—fascinating as seventeen-year-old Alton assists his wealthy, blind uncle by turning his cards during bridge games. Neal Shusterman examines dynamics of pain, power, and human nature in *Bruiser*, about several teens whose lives become enmeshed. And Jennifer Donnelly blurs lines between present and past in *Revolution* as teenager Andi is haunted by the death of her younger brother and the suffering of the French *dauphin* centuries ago.

We continue to see a great number of novels set in a dystopic future, including the third and final volume in Patrick Ness's excellent "Chaos Walking" series, *Monsters of Men*. Suzanne Collins's wildly popular "Hunger Games" series also came to a close with her third volume, *Mockingjay*. But the true stand-out in the realm of dystopia this year was *Ship Breaker* by Paolo Bacigalupi, an original and atmospheric novel set in a time when the U.S. coastline is underwater and the teen protagonist ekes out an existence stripping abandoned ships for scrap metal until the day he finds something far more precious aboard a wrecked ship.

Two of the year's best children's books were middle-grade novels written by authors who have made a name for themselves writing young adult fiction. Sharon Draper's *Out of My Mind* deals with a fifth-grade girl with cerebral palsy who is facing changes in her life as she begins fifth grade. Unable to talk, she has difficulty getting her thoughts and feelings across to her classmates. Only those closest to her—and readers of this book—know just how smart and funny she is. Another eleven-year-old, Delphine, is put in charge of her two younger sisters when the three of them are sent across the country from New York to California to spend a month with the mother they've never known in Rita Williams-Garcia's *One Crazy Summer*.

With their depth, humor, and memorable characters, both *Out of My Mind* and *One Crazy Summer* stand out as original, solid middle-grade novels published in 2010. Happily, they were not alone as middle-grade fiction made a notable comeback with a significant number of standout offerings. Among them were

Keeper by Kathi Appelt, *The Ninth Ward* by Jewell Parker Rhodes, *The Star in the Forest* by Laura Resau, *Zora and Me* by Victoria Bond and T. R. Simon, *Cosmic* by Frank Cottrell Boyce, *Turtle in Paradise* by Jennifer L. Holm, and a number of others. Middle-grade fiction is alive and well and living on the “New Books” shelves of your local library or bookstore.

Counting on Multicultural Literature

Finally, each year in *CCBC Choices* we include statistics on the number of books by and about people of color that we received at the CCBC the previous year. We continue to do this because it’s important to pay attention to the way books and book publishing reflect—or fail to reflect—the diversity of our nation and the realities of the lives of children and teenagers today.

Of course we are also interested in a qualitative analysis of multicultural literature and have already commented on a handful of the many multicultural titles that stood out to us this year—many of which we recommend in the pages that follow. But the numbers matter, too. Quality literature arises in part from depth in the numbers—the more multicultural books published, the greater the chances there will be outstanding offerings among them. And certainly diversity of experience within any racial or cultural group depends on a wide number and variety of books being published and available to children and teens.

We received approximately 3,400 books at the CCBC in 2010. Of those,

- 156 books had significant African or African American content
- 102 books were by Black authors and/or illustrators
- 22 books featured American Indian themes, topics, or characters
- 9 were created by American Indian authors and/or illustrators
- 63 had significant Asian/Pacific or Asian/Pacific American content
- 60 books were created by authors and/or illustrators of Asian/Pacific heritage
- 63 books had significant Latino content
- 53 books were created by Latino authors and/or illustrators

It should be noted that these numbers include both stand-alone trade books and books that are published as part of a formulaic nonfiction series, and that many individual authors and illustrators of color wrote or illustrated more than one book.

We participate in and hear about conversations concerning multicultural literature all the time. Where are the books for beginning and newly independent readers? (Make sure to check out Grace Lin’s *Ling & Ting* and the wonderful *Anna Hibiscus* books by Atinuke!) Where are picture books featuring contemporary African American children (Hooray for *A Beach Tail* by Karen Lynn Williams!) Why are we asking the same questions today that were being asked thirty years ago in terms of stagnating numbers?

Looking for answers can sometimes be frustrating. But what is clear from the questions is how important multicultural literature is—not just to children and teenagers, but to adults who are striving to make sure that children and teens have have access to books that offer them affirmation, visibility, and insight into the world in which they live.

The *Choices*

The Natural World

Arnosky, Jim. *Slow Down for Manatees*. Putnam, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-399-24170-3, \$16.99)

A pregnant manatee badly injured by a boat in shallow water is taken to an aquarium where she is treated and begins to heal. “But her world, once boundless, had shrunk to the size of a tank.” Jim Arnosky’s straightforward yet moving account of the manatee’s gradual recovery, the birth of her calf, and their eventual release back into the wild highlights the plight of this gentle creature whose greatest danger is humans who don’t take care when boating in waters where manatees live and swim. An author’s note following this fictional story based on actual events provides additional information about manatees. Full-page paintings and small spot illustrations of the manatee’s natural habitat accompany the narrative. (Ages 5–8)

Burns, Loree Griffin. *The Hive Detectives: Chronicle of a Honey Bee Catastrophe*. Photographs by Ellen Harasimowicz. (Scientists in the Field) Houghton Mifflin / Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 66 pages (trade 978-0-547-15231-8, \$18.00)

Author Loree Griffin Burns begins this intriguing “Scientists in the Field” volume by taking readers into the world of a beekeeper tending her hives. She then profiles a bee wrangler, who transports bees across the country to pollinate crops, before delving into the devastating effects of Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). Scientists aren’t yet sure what has been causing bee colonies to die off in alarming numbers in recent years, but the potential impact extends from the bees themselves to our food supply. Burns looks at the work of four different scientists studying CCD from various research angles. Each one turned a fascination with bees into a career, and their enthusiastic appreciation for bees shines in this narrative documenting a scientific mystery for which answers are still being sought. Ample, clearly labeled color photographs, along with wonderful design elements, are an integral part of the book’s appeal. (Ages 10–15)

Cole, Joanna. *The Magic School Bus and the Climate Challenge*. Illustrated by Bruce Degen. Scholastic Press, 2010. 37 pages (trade 978-0-590-10826-3, \$16.99)

Ms. Frizzle and her class are at it again, this time studying climate change. In order to prepare for a play they will be performing on global warming, the students climb aboard the Magic School Bus and embark on a classic Frizzle field trip, defying the boundaries of space and time in the name of learning. The Friz and her students venture to the Arctic to witness glacial melting, move south to understand the causes of climate change, and finally visit places where people are using alternative forms of energy. The students then research initiatives to counter global warming, briefly examining the pros and cons of each. By providing basic and relevant information on the topic, author Joanna Cole successfully describes global warming in a child-friendly, accessible way. Paired with Bruce Degen’s familiar artwork—

including dialogue bubbles, paneling, and handwritten student reports—this addition to the “Magic School Bus” series is a terrific overview of climate change and its implications for the future. (Ages 7–10)

Ehlert, Lois. *Lots of Spots. Beach Lane Books, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-1-4424-0289-8, \$17.99)*

Spots, stripes, color, and texture all stand out in another visually dynamic look at the natural world from Lois Ehlert. Short, playful rhymes accompany Ehlert’s striking collage portraits of striped and spotted animals and insects set against bright white page backgrounds. Every page spread is artfully designed, and every illustration is artistically inspiring in a book that concludes with a short note discussing the role of spots and stripes in nature, whether it’s to camouflage or to call attention. (Ages 3–7)

French, Vivian. *Yucky Worms. Illustrated by Jessica Ahlberg. Candlewick Press, 2010. 28 pages (trade 978-0-7636-4446-8, \$16.99)*

When a child and his grandma dig up a worm while gardening, the boy’s first instinct is to throw it away. “‘Throw it away?’ Grandma looked horrified. ‘Would you throw away one of your friends?’ ” When he replies that it’s hard to befriend a creature when you “can’t even tell which end is which,” Grandma seizes the moment to deliver a lesson on the value of earthworms. In a conversational style, she explains worms’ physiology, diets, function as soil aerators and fertilizers, and the dangers they face from predators. She dispels a myth (bisected worms don’t turn into two worms) and demonstrates how to bring worms to the surface with a simulated rainfall. By the time they move on to the next gardening chore, Grandma has cultivated a newfound respect for worms in her grandson. The pencil and gouache art both illustrates and amplifies the text, with cross-sections offering a worm’s-eye view, while informational tidbits and dialogue bubbles embellish the main storyline. (Ages 4–8)

Jenkins, Steve. *Bones: Skeletons and How They Work. Scholastic Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-545-04651-0, \$16.99)*

A comparative, cross-species look at elements of skeletal structures features a different bony body part on each page spread, from hands (including fins and claws) to feet (including hooves, and claws again) to skulls, and much of what’s in between. The creatures compared vary from bone to bone: a human has twelve pairs of ribs, a two-toed sloth twenty-four, a small python two hundred, while turtles of all sizes have ribs that grow on the outside, fusing together to form a shell. Spine comparisons included a dog, a dolphin, a giraffe, a velociraptor, and a human (humans being the constant throughout the book). Conscientious notations of scale for bones provide additional means of comparison on some pages (the scale varies from bone to bone on others). Bright bones contrast against deeply colored backgrounds, making the details of Jenkins’s skeletal collages stand out. Catchy headings (“Some Assembly Required” for the final skeletal spread showing every bone in the human body laid out) invite smiles along with fascination, while some final facts about bones conclude this multi-jointed volume. (Ages 6–11)

Jenkins, Steve and Robin Page. *How to Clean a Hippopotamus: A Look at Unusual Animal Partnerships*. Houghton Mifflin / Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-547-24515-7, \$16.00)

Steve Jenkins's trademark symbiosis of engaging text and detailed, dynamic collage images is perfectly suited to the exploration of the (usually) mutually beneficial relationships between a host of different creatures. Jenkins adapts a graphic novel design format, using panels on each page or page spread to tell the story of each creature's role in the symbiotic relationship. The tiny boxer crab, for example, uses sea anemones to defend itself from large fish, waving the anemones' deadly tentacles like a boxer waving gloves. In return, the anemones receive stray bits of food when the boxer crab eats. A book that invites dabbling as well as reading straight through includes additional information about symbiosis and each of the volume's subjects in the closing pages. (Ages 9-13)

Judge, Lita. *Born to Be Giants: How Baby Dinosaurs Grew to Rule the World*. Flash Point / Roaring Brook Press, 2010. 48 pages (trade 978-1-59643-443-1, \$17.99)

Dinosaurs may have been gigantic creatures, but "every giant was once a baby." This captivating narrative details various dinosaurs' beginnings as babies, sometimes no larger than a golf ball or a loaf of French bread. Author/illustrator Lita Judge, who has a background in paleobotany, uses comparisons—such as the way dinosaurs lived in herds like modern-day caribou—to help readers understand dinosaur behavior. Using words such as "perhaps," "maybe," "might," and "probably," Judge carefully clarifies when she is theorizing and when she is basing something on fact. Colorful illustrations with ample white space accompany a text in which readers are encouraged to explore and speculate, much like scientists, about how dinosaurs might have behaved long ago. (Ages 5-9)

Markle, Sandra. *Hip-Pocket Papa*. Illustrated by Alan Marks. Charlesbridge, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-1-57091-708-0, \$15.95)

Although pairs of male and female hip-pocket frogs initially watch over their eggs together, once the brood hatches into tadpoles, it's the father who protects the offspring by carrying them in the pockets hidden on his hips. The majority of this picture book story focuses on the thirty days the tadpoles travel aboard their thumbnail-sized father as he avoids the many dangers present in his Australian temperate rainforest habitat. Eventually the tadpoles metamorphose and their father watches while "the twelve tiny froglets hop off and crawl away. The tadpoles that grew up inside his pockets are ready to be on their own." A lyrical text and gorgeous watercolor illustrations capture the drama of the tiny amphibians' transition from egg to frog, and are augmented by a glossary, author's note, and list of additional information sources. *Honor Book, 2011 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 4-8)

Montgomery, Sy. *Kakapo Rescue: Saving the World's Strangest Parrot*. Photographs by Nic Bishop. (Scientists in the Field) Houghton Mifflin / Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 73 pages (trade 978-0-618-49417-0, \$18.00)

Kakapo parrots are big (up to nine pounds), flightless, whiskered, full of personality, and almost—but not quite—extinct. Efforts to save this rare species are the subject of this fascinating—and occasionally heartbreaking—account that showcases both success and failures of Kakapo conservation. Codifsh Island off the coast of New Zealand is a Kakapo sanctuary and breeding ground—the remote island is devoted to protecting and preserving the birds, and most of the 91 (by book's end) surviving Kakapos in the world are found there. Sy Montgomery's primary narrative enthusiastically documents the work of scientists, rangers, and the volunteers that are a huge part of the Kakapo rescue effort, while sidebars provide additional information about the birds, including how they came so close to extinction and early efforts to save them. Bishop's alluring photos not only capture the absolute charm of the Kakapos but also the delight and commitment of those working to save them in another fine volume in the "Scientists in the Field" series. (Ages 10–14)

Sayre, April Pulley. *Turtle, Turtle, Watch Out!* Illustrated by Annie Patterson. Charlesbridge, 2010. 32 pages (lib 978-1-58089-148-6, \$17.95)

"Late one night, on a beach in Florida, a baby turtle's story begins. It could be a short story—or no story at all—if not for helping hands." An engaging, informative picture book chronicles a sea turtle's first twenty years of life, underscoring some of the threats to this endangered creature, as well as some of the ways people help protect it. April Pulley Sayre's finely paced narrative, full of both quiet moments and drama, is perfect for reading aloud. The repeated refrain of "Turtle, turtle, watch out!" will have young listeners joining in on a story showcasing the important part humans play in the sea turtle's survival, as well as a few of the turtle's own survival skills. Detailed realistic illustrations give a sense of the turtle's watery world. End matter includes "Helping Hands for Sea Turtles," highlighting global efforts to save sea turtles, and "Sea Turtle Species," providing information on the seven types of sea turtle, all of which are endangered. (Ages 4–9)

Schwartz, David M. and Yael Schy. *What in the Wild? Mysteries of Nature Concealed . . . and Revealed*. Photographs by Dwight Kuhn. Tricycle Press, 2010. 24 pages (trade 978-1-58246-310-0, \$16.99; lib. 978-1-58246-359-9, \$19.99)

Following the same format used in *Where in the Wild?* (2008) and *Where Else in the Wild?* (2009), both published by Tricycle Press, authors David M. Schwartz and Yael Schy again collaborate with photographer Dwight Kuhn to inspire curiosity about the natural world. Each page spread is comprised of a poem that offers clues to the origin and identity of the animal sign from nature shown in the photograph on the facing page. A clever fold-out reveals a second full-page photo of the creature that made or left the sign along with informational text. "Skittery, scattery, / Gathery, chattery— / Stashing

my treasures / Where no one can see” begins the poem “Leafy Lait.” The accompanying photo shows a mass of gathered leaves in the bare branches of a tree. Open the fold-out page and a gray squirrel is pictured in front of its nest and information about how gray squirrels make their nests is provided. Ten mysterious photographs and accompanying poems, along with the additional photos and information about each, comprise this intriguing volume. (Ages 6–10)

Turner, Pamela S. *Project Seahorse. Photographs by Scott Tuason. (Scientists in the Field)* Houghton Mifflin / Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 56 pages (trade 978–0–547–20713–1, \$18.00)

Another expedition with the “Scientists in the Field” series introduces readers to efforts to protect and preserve the seahorse population off the coast of the Philippine island village of Handumon. Scientists Amanda Vincent and Heather Koldevey’s Project Seahorse has led to the creation of a marine protected area. The two women work closely with conservationists and local villagers in order to protect the coral reef environment seahorses need while also supporting the local economy of families who depend on the sea to support them. Pamela S. Turner’s engagement with her subjects—from the scientists to Philippine fishing families—shines in a narrative that is threaded with plenty of science, including informational sidebar spreads, and enhanced with many color photographs, including some captivating undersea images. (Ages 9–13)

Voake, Steve. *Insect Detective. Illustrated by Charlotte Voake. U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2010. 28 pages (trade 978–0–7636–4447–5, \$16.99)*

A colored ground beetle is a “precious jewel.” The leaf-miner caterpillar protects itself from predators between layers of leaves, “a bit like hiding in a sandwich!” Author Steven Voake invites appreciation for insects in a book that encourages readers to “Listen,” “Look,” and “Count” in order to notice the small yet marvelous creatures all around. Short bursts of added information accompany the main narrative, which moves seamlessly from page to page, insect to insect. Illustrator Charlotte Voake portrays each creature softly with pen and watercolor, enhancing the idea that insects are wondrous rather than scary. The final pages suggest ways to “Be an Insect Detective,” providing ideas for simple outdoor projects and activities. The volume engages and inspires further investigation by drawing on children’s natural curiosity about the world around them. “All you have to do is open the door and step outside.” (Ages 4–9)

Seasons and Celebrations

Castillo, Lauren. *Christmas Is Here.* Words from the King James Bible. Simon & Schuster, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-1-4424-0822-7, \$12.99)

Words from the King James *Bible* announcing the birth of Jesus are paired with illustrations by Lauren Castillo that visually frame the Biblical story with a contemporary one of a young child visiting a Living Nativity in a twenty-first-century town. The child peers into the manger where Baby Jesus lies, and with a turn of the page time and locale shift: The contemporary town is gone, snow is no longer falling, a gray day has become a dark winter night, and shepherds are tending their sheep in the fields. On subsequent pages the shepherds are visited by an angel and then follow the light of a star to a stable, where a baby lies in a manger. With another turn of the page, the story is back in modern times as the child's family and other members of their community gather at the Living Nativity and sing. Castillo's expressive lines and softly colored palette brim with warmth and feeling. (Ages 2-5)

Day, Nancy Raines. *On a Windy Night.* Illustrated by George Bates. Abrams, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-8109-3900-4, \$16.95)

A skeleton-costumed boy journeying home through the dark on Halloween night becomes increasingly anxious as the wind rises, leaves rustle, and a voice whispers, "CRACKLETY-CLACK. BONES IN A SACK. THEY COULD BE YOURS—IF YOU LOOK BACK." Nancy Raines Day's rhyming text will have readers and listeners on the edge of their seats as the boy's walk home is punctuated by dramatic encounters and the ever-more-insistent bony refrain. George Bates's digitally enhanced pen-and-ink illustrations help balance the tension in this marvelous mood piece. His beautiful, night-shaded artwork is full of playfully haunting images—bat-shaped branches, an owl-shaped cloud, and leaves that have whirled into a not-too-frightening ghost. A final encounter with a hairy beast that turns out to be the boy's sweet-faced cat grounds the drama of a breathless journey in the landscape of its protagonist's imagination. (Ages 5-8)

Galbraith, Kathryn O. *Arbor Day Square.* Illustrated by Cyd Moore. Peachtree, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-1-56145-517-1, \$16.95)

Katie and her Papa live in a growing nineteenth-century prairie town. They join the other townspeople in planning a town square, and all agree it needs trees. Everyone contributes coins, and soon fifteen saplings, "spindly and green," arrive by train. "In a quiet corner of the Square, Papa and Katie dig a hole together. Here they plant a flowering dogwood, in memory of Mama." Kathryn Galbraith's unusually poignant and understated story spans generations of history in its final pages as grown Katie returns to the square with her husband and children for the annual celebration of what has become Arbor Day, and towering trees shade the square for a twenty-first century celebration. Cyd Moore's warm, pleasing illustrations complement

Galbraith's engagingly detailed narrative. An author's note tells about the beginning of Arbor Day as a holiday in Nebraska in 1872. (Ages 5–8)

Kimmelman, Leslie. *The Little Red Hen and the Passover Matzah.* Illustrated by Paul Meisel. Holiday House, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-8234-1952-4, \$16.95)

A riotous retelling of this much-loved tale has the hardworking hen getting no help from Sheep, Horse, and Dog planting wheat, let alone harvesting it, schlepping it to and from the Passover mill, and making the ground flour into matzah for the Seder. But the animals are more than willing to show up at her door when it's time to eat. The chutzpah! "Now I should invite them to my Seder?" she wonders. Then she remembers the words in the Passover Haggadah: "*Let all who are hungry come and eat . . .*" The Little Red Hen was a good egg—a mensch. A mensch forgives." And a mensch also rests while Sheep, Dog, and Horse wash and dry all the dishes at meal's end. Eric Kimmel's terrific storytelling combines tradition, information, and humor, while Paul Meisel's blithe illustrations are full of delightful details. A note about Passover, a Yiddish glossary, and instructions for making matzah are included. (Ages 4–8)

Lin, Grace. *Thanking the Moon: Celebrating the Mid-Autumn Moon Festival.* Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. 26 pages (trade 978-0-375-86101-7, \$16.99; lib. 978-0-37509610104, \$19.99)

While the "mid-autumn moon glows in the sky" a contemporary family shares a nighttime picnic of pomelo fruit, tea, and mooncakes during the Chinese Moon Festival. Three young sisters and their parents gather on a hillside with others from their community in a tradition of thanksgiving for "a good year and to come together with family." Rich, saturated hues in the vivid gouache illustrations add to the warmth of the night in this quiet celebratory volume. A concluding author's note provides additional information about the holiday to supplement the brief text. (Ages 2–5)

Pfeffer, Wendy. *The Longest Day: Celebrating the Summer Solstice.* Illustrated by Linda Bleck. Dutton, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978-0-525-42237-2, \$17.99)

A picture book look at the summer solstice in the Northern Hemisphere features brief descriptions of how peoples as varied as the Ancient Greeks, the Chumash Indians of California, the builders of Stonehenge, and others marked the longest day of the year in the past, as well as ways in which the solstice is observed in some places today. A simple explanation of the cycle of the seasons and typical, child-centered summer activities are also part of this easy nonfiction narrative illustrated with colorful, clean-lined illustrations showing summer and solstice activities. (Ages 4–8)

Portnoy, Mindy Avra. *A Tale of Two Seders.* Illustrated by Valeria Cis. Kar-Ben, 2010. 32 pages (lib 978-0-8225-9907-4, \$17.95)

"The year after my mom and dad stopped being married to each other, I went to two seders in two places—one at Dad's apartment, and one at

Mom's house." A girl's straightforward account of how she navigates moving between two households focuses on how she has observed Passover in the three years since her parents' divorce. Child-friendly details in the narrative introduce information about the seder as well as a wide circle of extended family and friends who are part of her Passover meals. With the passage of time come additional changes to her family, most notably her dad's upcoming remarriage but also her parents' decision to have the entire family—including her dad's future wife—attend a seder together at their Temple. Lively illustrations accompany this welcome story that concludes with recipes for *charoset* from four different cultural traditions and a glossary of terms. (Ages 4–8)

Sacre, Antonio. *La Noche Buena: A Christmas Story*. Illustrated by Angela Dominguez. Abrams, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–8109–8967–2, \$16.95)

Missing snow and the familiar Christmas traditions of her mother's family, Nina is apprehensive about spending the holiday with her dad's relatives in Miami's Little Havana. Her *abuela*, Mimi, reassures her by letting her know she is needed to help with the preparations for *La Noche Buena*, or Christmas Eve. Over the course of three days, Nina peels garlic and onions and makes countless trips to her uncle's house with marinade for the roasting pig. By the time *La Noche Buena* arrives, Nina feels like she belongs. She's also more than ready to feast on the delicious meat, fruit, seafood, beans, and rice, and attend *Misa del Gallo* (Rooster's Mass). Illustrator Angela Dominguez's colorful acrylic artwork and author Antonio Sacre's cheerful narrative are a perfect pairing in story about a child who finds comfort and joy in the embrace and traditions of her Cuban American family. (Ages 5–9)

Folklore, Mythology, and Traditional Literature

Ada, Alma Flor, and F. Isabel Campoy, selectors. *iMuu, Moo! Rimas de animales = Animal Nursery Rhymes*. English versions by Rosalma Zubizarreta. Illustrated by Viví Escrivá. Rayo / HarperCollins, 2010. 44 pages (trade 978–0–06–134613–2, \$16.99)

As they did in *iPio Peep! Traditional Spanish Nursery Rhymes* (HarperCollins, 2003), Alma Flor Ada and F. Isabel Campoy draw on their own childhood favorites and other beloved poems from across Latin America in this bilingual (Spanish/English) collection of rhymes about animals. Added to this volume are several original rhymes written by Ada or Campoy. In their introduction, Ada and Campoy move beyond information to inspiration, writing, "During the extraordinary process of acquiring our first language, we learn to play with sounds, delighting in rhymes and alliterations. Thus, the folklore we encounter as children leaves a profound impact on our psyches . . . we extend an invitation to parents and teachers to remember their own childhoods, that we may create strong bonds of communication between yesterday and

tomorrow.” Soft color illustrations by Viví Escrivá feature animals from the rhymes and people of the Américas. (Ages 1–6)

Browne, Anthony. *Me and You*. U.S. edition: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2010. 24 pages (trade 978-0-374-34908-0, \$16.99)

Anthony Browne creatively demonstrates the many ways stories can be told and interpreted, and the many experiences that can coexist in a single place, through this new take on the “Goldilocks and the Three Bears” tale. On each two-page spread, Baby Bear tells one side of the story in prose narrative illustrated in full color, while wordless, paneled illustrations showing a blonde-haired girl unfolds in a subdued palette as a visual narrative on the other. Baby Bear’s world is one of economic wealth but little affection—his parents are too self-involved to give him much attention. Goldilocks lives in a bleak urban landscape. The two narratives come together as Goldilocks chases a balloon through a the sketchy cityscape, gets lost, and comes upon a large, inviting house full of comforts—warm food, soft chair, cozy bed—belonging to none other than the three bears. The juxtaposition of the contrasting art styles and contrasting experiences supports the idea that multiple perspectives—visual and otherwise—can inform both storytelling and life. (Ages 4–8)

Gilani-Williams, Fawzia, reteller. *Nabeel’s New Pants: An Eid Tale*. Illustrated by Proiti Roy. U.S. edition: Marshall Cavendish, 2010. 24 pages (trade 978-0-7614-5629-2, \$15.99)

Just before the start of Eid, the holiday marking the end of Ramadan, Nabeel the shoemaker buys gifts for his wife, mother, and daughter. He also buys a new pair of pants for himself, but they are four fingers too long. Nabeel’s wife is too busy with preparations for the celebration to shorten them, as are his mother and daughter. So Nabeel shortens them himself. Then his wife reconsiders—Nabeel is so thoughtful, it’s the least she can do. His mother comes to the same conclusion, and so does his daughter. On Eid, Nabeel puts on his pants to go to mosque with his family and gets a very big—or rather short!—surprise. Fawzia Gilani-Williams’s warm, funny retelling seamlessly incorporates Arabic words and information about the Muslim faith and Eid into the narrative, while Proiti Roy’s appealing, clean-lined India ink and gouache illustrations incorporate engaging details. (Ages 4–8)

Karas, G. Brian. *Young Zeus*. Scholastic Press, 2010. 48 pages (trade 978-0-439-72806-5, \$17.99)

Karas’s whimsical account of the story of Zeus’s early life provides young children with an engaging introduction to Greek mythology. The light humorous tone of both the text and the illustrations neutralizes some of the more sinister mythological themes (unwanted children, cannibalistic father) without watering down the original story. Karas chooses to retell the version in which Zeus is raised by the goat Amalthea (though, sadly, he left out the details about how the goat kept baby Zeus hidden from Cronos). He then moves on to tell how Zeus outsmarted Cronos to free his siblings and unleash his uncles from the Underworld, and the resulting battle between

them and the Titans. Much of the story is relayed through witty, modern dialogue that somehow manages to stay true to the essential characters, and even include a few in-jokes for those who already know their mythology. (Ages 4–8)

Landman, Tanya. *Mary's Penny*. Illustrated by Richard Holland. Candlewick Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–7636–4768–1, \$15.99)

Tanya Landman offers a feminist slant on a traditional tale when a farmer trying to determine which of his two sons should inherit his land challenges them to each purchase something for a penny with which they can fill the house. Both of them fail. Then Mary, their overlooked, unconsidered sister, comes up with a perfect, and perfectly simple, solution: She purchases a candle and tinderbox and fills the house with light, and a tiny penknife to carve a hollow reed so that she can fill the house with music, too. “. . . you have filled the house with light and knowledge and music and joy, you have also filled the house with wisdom. You shall run the farm from this day forward.” While a note on tale sources or variants would be welcome, Landman’s lively telling is distinguished by rich language and a judicious use of repetition, while Richard Holland’s distinctive illustrations feature expressive figures and terrific touches of humor that complement the story. (Ages 5–9)

Historical People, Places, and Events

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. *They Called Themselves the K.K.K.: The Birth of an American Terrorist Group*. Houghton Mifflin / Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 172 pages (trade 978–0–618–44033–7, \$19.00)

Susan Campbell Bartoletti traces the history of the Ku Klux Klan, from its inception in 1866 as an outgrowth of a conversation among six disgruntled Confederate veterans, through the Reconstruction Era, and up to the present day. Using a combination of scholarly histories, white supremacist writings, and primary sources such as attendance at a Klan Congress, Bartoletti offers an insightful examination of a controversial organization. Initially a social club known for its drunken and sophomoric antics, the Ku Klux Klan quickly evolved into a powerful and political force exerting immense control over southern populations, both Black and white. While Bartoletti focuses primarily on the KKK during the time of Reconstruction and the peak of its power and influence during the nineteenth century, she also speaks to the lasting impact of terror used as a weapon and the ongoing efforts of the Klan in contemporary times. Detailed source notes, quote attributions, a Civil Rights Time Line, and archival photographs and illustrations support the compelling text. (Age 13 and older)

Bausum, Ann. *Unraveling Freedom: The Battle for Democracy on the Home Front During World War I.* National Geographic, 2010. 88 pages (trade 978-1-4263-0702-7, \$19.95, lib. 978-1-4263-0703-4, \$23.95)

This fascinating account of the political and social climate in the United States during World War I looks at how intense nationalism and patriotism resulted in growing intolerance and infringement on citizens' civil rights. Through propaganda and policy, the government suppressed individuals and groups who sought to protest U.S. involvement in the war (such as suffragists who picketed the White House) and growing infringements on civil rights in the name of national security (socialist Eugene Debs ended up in prison for speaking out against the Espionage and Sedition Acts of 1917). Public intolerance focused largely on German immigrants, German Americans, and the German language. The fear and paranoia resulted in a sweeping change to the cultural landscape across a country in which communities and neighborhoods largely defined by German immigrant roots felt the need to Americanize their identities. Author Ann Bausum's insightful look at the often deeply disturbing course of events on the home front during World War I concludes with relevant comparisons to events during other wars in U.S. history, including the current conflicts in Iran and Afghanistan, and leaves plenty of room for astute readers to draw many additional parallels and comparisons. (Age 13 and older)

Belton, Robyn. *Herbert: The True Story of a Brave Sea Dog.* U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-7636-4741-4, \$15.99)

Herbert, a border terrier, was one of the passengers aboard a small boat traveling from Nelson, New Zealand, to a coastal town where the Snadden family had a cottage. Tim, the young son in the family, traveled by car with his mother. When the little boat hit severe stormy weather half-way through the journey, Herbert was washed overboard, but the men onboard, including Tim's father, were too busy handling the boat to notice until it was too late to turn back. Everyone assumed the worst except for Tim, who was certain his beloved dog was still out there. To appease him, his father hired a fishing boat the next morning and Tim and his dad retraced the journey. Optimistic Tim refused to give up and—miraculously—they found Herbert. He had been swimming for thirty hours. Remarkable as this story sounds, it did, in fact, happen and the endpapers of this picture book are a collage of news clippings, photos, letters, and an award for courage citing “dogged swimming against adversity,” all documenting the historic event from 1984. Robyn Belton's watercolor and pencil illustrations capture the drama inherent in the story of an intrepid dog and his faithful owner. (Ages 5–8)

Bildner, Phil. *The Hallelujah Flight.* Illustrated by John Holyfield. Putnam, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-399-24789-7, \$16.99)

James Banning set out to be the first African American to make a transcontinental flight across the country with few resources but a single great idea: invite everyone who was willing to help him and copilot Thomas Allen along the way to sign the wings of the plane so that they could be part of the journey. Banning and Allen were relying on people to donate everything

from fuel to food to a place to sleep as they traveled from place to place in the midst of the Depression in 1932. They weren't always welcomed where they landed, and they sometimes faced overt racism, but they completed their historic flight thanks to the kindness of strangers whose names they carried with them. Phil Bildner's fictionalized account of Banning and Allen's optimism and accomplishment is distinguished by lively, language-rich storytelling and is set against John Holyfield's buoyant, upbeat illustrations. (Ages 6–9)

Engle, Margarita. *Summer Birds: The Butterflies of Maria Merian*. Illustrated by Julie Paschkis. Henry Holt, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-8050-8937-0, \$16.99)

"Summer birds" was a medieval term used for butterflies. This inspiring narrative is written in the voice of Maria Merian, who was thirteen and living in mid-seventeenth-century Germany when she determined that, counter to common belief, butterflies did not appear magically from the mud but changed from one form to another before emerging from cocoons. Margarita Engle's brief text manages to not only convey a wealth of factual information about butterflies but also a sense of the superstitions Maria challenged with her careful observations (insects were believed to be evil), as well as her soaring spirit and determination. Julie Paschkis's lovely illustrations are full of small moments of nature's wonders that Maria found so fascinating. A historical note provides additional information about the life of Maria Merian, who grew up to become famous as a scientist, artist, and explorer. (Ages 5–8)

Freedman, Russell. *The War to End All Wars: World War I*. Clarion Books / Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 176 pages (trade 978-0-547-02686-2, \$22.00)

From the political tensions that preceded World War I to the assassination that sparked it to the Treaty of Versailles that defined the terms of peace in its aftermath (and set the stage for World War II), Russell Freeman provides a comprehensive look at the "War to End All Wars." Brief accounts of the experiences of individual soldiers from various nations on both sides of the conflict bring important personal perspectives to a narrative that gives a sense of the fear, misery, and drudgery that were part of being a soldier in the trenches and on the battlefield of this war that extracted a horrifying human toll. Freedman also looks at the war's impact on the people and the landscape of towns, villages and other contested areas that formed the war's front lines. The weapons of warfare, as well as the politics and propaganda of war, are also part of this astute account illustrated with black-and-white photographs. Source notes, a bibliography, and an index round out the volume. (Age 12 and older)

Glaser, Linda. *Emma's Poem: The Voice of the Statue of Liberty.* Illustrated by Claire A. Nivola. Houghton Mifflin / Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-547-17184-5, \$17.00)

“Give me your tired, your poor, / your huddled masses yearning to breathe free . . .” (from “The New Colossus”). A friendship gift from France to the United States, the Statue of Liberty had nothing to do with immigration until Emma Lazarus, commissioned to write a poem as part of a publication to raise money to erect the statue in New York Harbor, imagined the immigrants who would see it upon their arrival in America and gave the statue a voice of fierce compassion. Emma was a wealthy Jewish American writer whose view of the world, and her role in it, had changed after she visited Ward’s Island in New York Harbor. Linda Glaser’s prose poem captures Emma Lazarus’s brief life as a woman defying expectations of class and gender to work for and with the poor, and the dedication that led her to write the extraordinary poem that forever turned the Statue of Liberty into a symbol of America’s promise. Claire A. Nivola’s lovely watercolor and gouache illustrations pair delicacy of detail with a bold assertion that the statue’s promise embraces the diversity of all who have and continue to come to the nation’s shores. (Ages 8–11)

Holmes, Mary Tavener and John Harris. *A Giraffe Goes to Paris.* Illustrated by Jon Cannell. Marshall Cavendish, 2010. 30 pages (trade 978-0-7614-5595-0, \$17.99)

In 1827, the Egyptian Pashir gave the King of France a remarkable gift: a giraffe named Belle. This fictionalized account of Belle’s journey from Egypt to France is told in the voice of Atir, Belle’s loving Sudanese caretaker. Appealing details—based on fact—about the journey chronicle the challenging logistics of transporting and taking care of the huge creature (a hole was cut in the ship’s deck to accommodate Belle’s neck and head as she stood in the hold), and the extraordinary reception Belle received in France. Atir walked with Belle 500 miles from Marseille to Paris, with Belle attired in a waterproof cape and boots. “I am serious . . . She was not used to walking such distances.” Along the way the giraffe was admired and feted as a wonder to behold. Her arrival in Paris was celebrated with souvenirs, songs, and more. Historical artifacts and documents and whimsical illustrations add even greater appeal to an already captivating story. Brief source notes are provided. (Ages 7–11)

Hopkinson, Deborah. *The Humblebee Hunter: Inspired by the Life and Experiments of Charles Darwin and His Children.* Illustrated by Jen Corace. Disney / Hyperion, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-1-4231-1356-0, \$16.99)

Etty would much rather be outside where “raspberries glistened in the sun and birds brushed the air with song” than baking in the kitchen. When her father calls from the garden she eagerly joins him, and Etty and her siblings are soon engaged in one of his experiments, each child assigned to count how many times a bee visits a flower in a minute. “Ready . . . start!” Deborah Hopkinson’s fictionalized story is told from the point of view of

Charles Darwin's second daughter, Henrietta. Etty's engagement with the experiment is drawn out over a series of pages marking the minute's passing as she counts each blossom that her flour-dusted bee visits. Her focus is so intense that she feels like a bee herself. The sudden cry of "Stop!" marks the end of the minute and of Hopkinson's story, and one can imagine the voices of Darwin's children exploding with observations. An author's note provides additional information about Darwin and his children, whom he often involved in his scientific inquiry. Jen Corace's stylized illustrations capture Etty's intense focus and a sense of the curiosity and warmth in the Darwin household. (Ages 5–9)

Kerley, Barbara. *The Extraordinary Mark Twain (According to Susy)*. Illustrated by Edwin Fotheringham. Scholastic Press, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978-0-545-12508-6, \$17.99)

"According to Susy, people were . . . well, just plain wrong about her papa." Susy's papa is Mark Twain, and the world thinks of him first and foremost as a very funny man. But thirteen-year-old Susy knows there is much more to her papa and begins writing her own account his life. Barbara Kerley's engaging look at Susy Twain's biography of her father is interspersed with Susy's observations, and excerpts of what she actually wrote (including fold-out journal entries on some pages). When Twain's wife discovered Susy's work in progress she showed it to her husband, who made an effort help his young biographer out. Details of their warm and lively relationship, and Susy's appreciative yet amusingly honest look at her father ("The animals on the farm *could not care less* that Papa was a world-famous author . . .") make for a spirited picture book biography. There's abundant humor in Edwin Fotheringham's illustrations, while Kerley's author's note and additional end matter provide more welcome details, including how much Twain treasured his daughter's accounting of his life. (Ages 7–10)

Klise, Kate. *Stand Straight, Ella Kate: The True Story of a Real Giant*. Illustrated by M. Sarah Klise. Dial, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-8037-3404-3, \$16.99)

In 1872, Ella Kate began life as a typically-sized infant, but by age thirteen she was almost six feet tall. Although her parents told her to "stand straight" with pride, Ella Kate was embarrassed and sometimes humiliated by the constant attention and teasing. But at age eighteen and eight feet tall, she accepted an offer from a Chicago museum to stand on exhibit for a month. This led to jobs across the country with the circus, in exhibitions, and at a world's fair. Ella Kate earned an ample income and built a house customized to her unique dimensions in a community that offered friendship and support, but she also continued to work as a circus show star for the opportunity it offered to travel broadly. She found that "as big as I was, the world was so much bigger." Sensitive and respectful, this accessible story reveals the mockery and teasing Ella Kate endured, but maintains a positive focus on the satisfying life she created for herself. Acrylic paint illustrations offer just the right note of cheerfulness and intriguing detail. (Ages 6–10)

McCully, Emily Arnold. *The Secret Cave: Discovering Lascaux*. Farrar Straus Giroux, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–374–36694–0, \$16.99)

French schoolboy Jacques Marsal had seen remnants of prehistoric drawings on cave walls in France on a school field trip. But people had scratched their initials in the walls, too. “Years ago people didn’t understand what this was and added their own marks,” his teacher explained. “They desecrated this place.” Jacques remembered that desecration a few years later in 1940 when he and some friends stumbled upon a tunnel that they were sure led to a count’s buried gold. Instead, they found a different kind of treasure—undiscovered cave paintings. The works covered the walls of the hidden cave, perfectly preserved. Emily Arnold McCully’s fictionalized account of the discovery of Lascaux is based on anecdotal stories. Her author’s note provides additional information about Lascaux and cave paintings, as well as the role played by Jacques and his friends in the cave’s discovery and preservation. McCully’s illustrations, especially of the cave art, illicit a spine-tingling response not unlike that visitors to the cave must surely feel when looking at the extraordinary ancient art. (Ages 6–10)

McCully, Emily Arnold. *Wonder Horse*. Henry Holt, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–8050–8793–2, \$16.99)

In the late nineteenth century, a horse named Jim Key made headlines for his ability to do math, identify colors, read, and spell. Just as astonishing—or unbelievable—to some was that Jim Key had been trained by a Black man. Bill “Doc” Key had a gift for working with animals and his approach had always emphasized kindness over cruelty. Emily Arnold McCully focuses on Doc’s love for animals and the close bond he had with Jim, who’d been born with twisted legs and a playful nature, in this captivating picture book history. Doc and Jim performed at fairs and carnivals and their achievements were met with amazement and appreciation, followed by skepticism. To counter the skeptics and the prejudice they faced, Doc invited a group of Harvard professors to test Jim, and newspapers carried the result of their conclusions: “Jim Key Educated by Kindness.” McCully’s author’s note provides additional background information on Doc and Jim (including a photo of the two) and addresses questions that still remain about how animal intelligence is defined and determined. (Ages 5–8)

Napoli, Donna Jo. *Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya*. Illustrated by Kadir Nelson. A Paula Wiseman Book / Simon & Schuster, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–1–4169–3505–6, \$16.99)

A heartfelt tribute to Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai, who founded Kenya’s Green Belt Movement to combat deforestation, condenses years of activism into a lyrical narrative focusing on Wangari’s impact on both the lives of women and the Kenyan environment. Author Donna Jo Napoli imagines a series of scenes in which women from across Kenya come to Wangari to share their troubles—too little food, too little firewood, dirty water. “Plant a tree,” Wangari tells each one. She suggests a different tree for each trouble—the *mukawa* thorns will keep predators from chickens; the *mukuyu* will filter water to clean streams. And she always concludes

each encounter with “*thaya nyumba*—Peace my people.” Kadir Nelson’s lush illustrations, done with oil paint and printed fabrics, show a greening country and the grace and beauty of those who are bringing it back to life. An afterword and author’s note provide brief, factual information about Maathai as well as sources for this account of her work. (Ages 6–10)

Nolan, Janet. *The Firehouse Light*. Illustrated by Marie Lafrance. Tricycle Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-1-58246-298-1, \$15.99)

In 1901 a businessman in Livermore, California, presented the volunteer firefighters in town with a four-watt bulb made of carbon filament and hand-blown glass to light the storage shack where fire equipment was kept. The shack eventually became a firehouse, and later a bigger firehouse was built. In each place the original bulb has burned on. This clever and engaging look at changes in a community over a hundred years uses this intriguing historical tidbit as its launching point, chronicling the arrival of cars, and later television, the increasing—and increasingly diverse—population of the community, changes in how firefighters and others respond to an emergency, and much more. Through it all, the light is the touchstone. The changes are documented in ten-year intervals in a narrative full of captivating details and illustrations reminiscent of folk art. An afterword provides additional information about the centennial light, including a photograph of it still burning today, in this picture book that would be a delight even if it weren’t based on fact—something that only adds to the pleasure. (Ages 5–9)

Pinkney, Andrea Davis. *Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up By Sitting Down*. Illustrated by Brian Pinkney. Little, Brown, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978-0-316-07016-4, \$16.99)

A recipe for justice is the extended metaphor of this distinctive picture book about the civil rights sit-ins that began with four Black college students at a Woolworth’s lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1960. “They sat straight and proud. And waited. And wanted. A doughnut and coffee, with cream on the side.” Andrea Davis Pinkney’s text has moments of playfulness and moments of power as it describes how that first sit-in expanded from four students to many, and from Greensboro to other cities across the South as part of the larger fight for civil rights. Brian Pinkney’s imaginative illustrations include images of a lunch counter that grows longer and longer as more and more people join the protests. A Civil Rights Movement timeline highlighting key individuals, organizations, and events, as well as an author’s note and suggestions for additional reading and research, are all part of the informative end matter. (Ages 7–10)

Rubalcaba, Jill and Peter Robertshaw. *Every Bone Tells a Story: Hominin Discoveries, Deductions, and Debates*. Charlesbridge, 2010. 185 pages (lib. 978-1-58089-164-6, \$18.95)

Discovery, deduction, and debate about four hominins—people who lived before recorded history—are detailed in this lively, accessible narrative focusing on Turkana Boy, Lapedo Child, Kennewick Man, and Iceman. The four discoveries present a host of compelling stories from the moment

each fossilized skeleton, bones, or mummy were first sighted, through the thorough study of the remains, and especially when experts propose reasoned but conflicting explanations of those results. Extensive back matter offers further reading, a timeline, glossary, list of individuals involved in discovery and research of the four hominins, and a bibliography. The engaging text draws readers in, and is enhanced with well-captioned photographs and a consistent design that allows easy comparison of the four cases. (Ages 12 and older)

Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *The Dreamer*. Illustrated by Peter Sís. Scholastic Press, 2010. 372 pages (trade 978-0-439-26970-4, \$17.99)

A novel based on the childhood and young adulthood of Chilean poet Pablo Neruda (born Nefalí Reyes) is grounded in events and activities of the often tense family life of the poet's early years, and his increasing awareness of class, race, and politics in Chile as he grew. Nefalí and his siblings were raised by a gentle mother and a domineering father who diminished his children's dreams and sense of worth. An observant, sensitive child, Nefalí, like his older brother, both feared this man and longed for his approval. Pam Muñoz Ryan's artful narrative, imbued with magical realism, is alive with Nefalí's sensitivity and his love of sounds, words, and language. These become a source of discovery, solace, and transformation as he matures, giving him the means to explore and express his observations, dreams, and ideals that become increasingly political in nature. Ryan's writing is beautiful, full of imagery suited to a story about a boy becoming a poet, while illustrations by Peter Sís feature a delicacy and strength suited to Nefalí's character. (Age 10 and older)

Shelton, Paula Young. *Child of the Civil Rights Movement*. Illustrated by Raul Colón. Schwartz & Wade, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978-0-375-84314-3, \$17.99)

Paula Young Shelton, daughter of Andrew Young, looks at the civil rights movement from a child's point of view. Shelton's engaging account is divided into titled sections that begin with "Going Home," detailing her family's move from New York back to the south and young Paula's introduction to Jim Crow. "My First Protest" describes what happened at a restaurant where her family was refused seating because they were Black: "I was so hungry that I started crying . . . Mama and Daddy didn't try to stop me; they simply sat me down and let me cry. And did I ever!" Additional sections introduce figures of the civil rights movement who were part of Paula's childhood: Martin Luther King, Jr., and his family joining hers for a swim, a house full of activists arguing next steps as Paula listened to the symphony of voices from beneath the kitchen table. (Brief information about each individual is provided in the back matter.) Textured illustrations in muted tones by Raul Colón convey a sense of the past, including a host of recognizable faces, in this welcome, child-centered reminiscence that is both personal and informative. (Ages 5-10)

Smith, Icy. *Half Spoon of Rice: A Survival Story of the Cambodian Genocide.* Illustrated by Sopaul Nhem. East West Discovery Press, 2010. 43 pages (trade 978-0-9821675-8-8, \$19.95)

“Survival Story” is essential to the measured approach author Icy Smith took in writing about the Cambodian genocide for children. Nat is a young boy in the midst of preparing for the Cambodian New Year celebration when sudden gunfire in the streets marks the start of terrible times. Along with thousands of others, Nat and his parents are forced out of the city by Khmer Rouge soldiers. Separated from his parents at a labor camp after days of walking, Nat spends the next four years fighting to survive as he works in the rice field. Troops from the Vietnamese Liberation Army eventually liberate the camp, and Nat and his friend Malis make their way over the border into Thailand, where he finds his parents. Malis is unable to learn the fate of her own family. Nat’s voice is matter-of-fact yet full of feeling in a narrative that is honest about the horror and pain but never overwhelms with explicit details. Sopaul Nhem’s paintings masterfully reflect chaos and emotion in a story that concludes with Nat’s family about to emigrate to the United States. An extensive author’s note provides more information about the Cambodian genocide in the 1970s, including photographs of child laborers. (Ages 7–10)

Stone, Tanya Lee. *The Good, the Bad, and the Barbie: A Doll’s History and Her Impact on Us.* Viking, 2010. 130 pages (trade 978-0-670-01187-2, \$19.99)

Love her or hate her, it seems that most contemporary girls and women have strong feelings about Barbie. Tanya Lee Stone gives voice to opinions at both ends of that spectrum, from those who deplore Barbie as a “destructive force on the self-image of women all over the globe” to others who see her as “a symbol of empowerment.” In this even-handed account, Stone covers Barbie’s birth in 1959 through her various incarnations and evolutions over the following fifty years. The first few chapters serve as a brief biography of Ruth Handler, the woman who co-founded Mattel and conceptualized the idea of a teenage fashion model doll that could serve as an alternative to the more ephemeral paper dolls of the time. Barbie’s physical changes over the years—body proportions, facial expressions, racial and cultural characteristics, as well as her vast and much-debated wardrobe, from couture to trendy to career, all receive lively discussion. Barbie’s friends and relatives, Barbie mutilation, store-bought versus homemade clothing and other aspects of Barbie’s world in the lives of children are all brought to life with numerous personal anecdotes. Detailed source notes, a bibliography, and an index conclude this fascinating examination of “an American icon.” (Age 10 and older)

Stotts, Stuart. *We Shall Overcome: A Song That Changed the World.* Foreword by Pete Seeger. Illustrated by Terrance Cummings. Clarion / Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 72 pages (trade 978-0-547-18210-0, \$18.00)

Stuart Stotts traces the history of the song “We Shall Overcome” in an account that also offers insight into folk music as a living, ever-changing art

form. Glimpses of the song that eventually became “We Shall Overcome” can be found in church hymns from the European tradition and African-influenced slave spirituals. A song called “We Will Overcome” emerged from these antecedents on the picket lines of the labor movement in the first half of the twentieth century, and in the early 1960s, this staple of union activism began to be adapted by singers and organizers in the civil rights movement. Its transformative journey continues today as verses are added to fit new causes. As it has passed from singer to singer, many individuals and groups have shaped the song both musically and lyrically, with Pete Seeger, who provides a foreword for this volume, being one of the most influential. In addition to source notes and a bibliography that includes recordings and DVDs (a CD is included with the book), Stotts relates two personal stories in an author’s note that speaks to the power of this song as part of the struggle for peace and social justice. (Age 11 and older)

Tavares, Matt. *Henry Aaron’s Dream*. Candlewick Press, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978-0-7636-3224-3, \$16.99)

Ever since Henry “Hank” Aaron was a boy, he wanted to play baseball. But growing up during the 1940s in segregated Mobile, Alabama, Henry couldn’t play on a real diamond until one designated “Colored Only” finally opened. Even though he held his bat the wrong way, Henry played every chance he had, inspired by Jackie Robinson, the first Black man to play in the major leagues. Despite racism, Henry persisted, his determination—and eventually a change in the way he held the bat—landing him in the minor leagues. Hank finally achieves his dream of playing in the big leagues when the Milwaukee Braves put him in a starting position at right field, batting leadoff, and his career took off. Matt Tavares offers a captivating account of Henry Aaron’s baseball career through straightforward text and large, multiple-perspective illustrations. Tavares gives insight into the injustices Black athletes endured and the progress they fought for during the 1950s and 1960s, and includes an author’s note that further describes Hank Aaron’s involvement in the civil rights movement. (Ages 6–10)

Tunnell, Michael O. *Candy Bomber: The Story of the Berlin Airlift’s “Chocolate Pilot.”* Charlesbridge, 2010. 106 pages (lib 978-1-58089-336-7, \$18.95)

In 1948, U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Gail Halvorsen was one of the many pilots who ferried food supplies into blockaded West Berlin during the Berlin Airlift. A group of inquisitive German children gathered near the landing strip inspired Lt. Halvorsen to offer to drop gum and candy out of his plane on his next flight. The drop went off as planned, in small packages suspended on handkerchief parachutes. After a few more drops, the group waiting for the bounty from the sky grew, and mail (some in thanks, and others requesting specific delivery locations) began to arrive at the airport, tipping off Halvorsen’s superiors to his unsanctioned activities. Realizing the possibilities for positive publicity, the Air Force gave Halvorsen official orders to continue, and the project grew so large that additional staff was assigned to manage the correspondence from recipients, requests for candy,

and contributions from individuals, organizations, and candy manufacturers in the United States, all eager to be a part of Operation Little Vittles. Years later, Halvorsen still receives letters from German adults recalling the candy drops of their youth, and reunions and reenactments have taken place. The account of the Candy Bomber is generously illustrated with photographs and reproductions of letters sent by candy-seeking children. (Ages 9–14)

Wiviott, Meg. *Benno and the Night of Broken Glass*. Illustrated by Josée Bisaillon. Kar-Ben, 2010. 32 page (trade 978–0–8225–9929–6, \$17.95)

Benno the cat lives at Number 5 Rosenstrasse, where many people in the building care for him. Hans Hausmeister gives him fresh milk. Sophie Adler gives him chicken scraps after her family's Sabbath meal on Fridays. Inge Schmidt sneaks him schnitzel after church on Sundays. But Benno no longer sees Sophie and Inge walk to school together after "men in brown shirts" light a bonfire on the street one night. Soon, once-friendly faces yell "Scat!" and people walk with lowered eyes as Benno tries to avoid the heavy boots of the brown-shirted men on the street. "Then came a night like no other . . . At Moshe's butcher shop, they overturned the refrigerators . . . Benno saw the beautiful Neue Synagogue set ablaze . . . Herr Gerber's grocery remained untouched." Meg Wiviott's remarkable narrative conveys the hugeness and inexplicable tragedy of events in 1938 Berlin from a neutral observer's perspective. Josée Bisaillon's wonderful mixed-media illustrations (collage, drawing, and digital montage) gradually shift from warm colors to somber tones to images that give a dramatic sense of chaos and fear. An informational afterword provides more information on Kristallnacht, including photographs and a bibliography. (Ages 7–11)

Biography and Autobiography

Adler, David A. *Frederick Douglass: A Noble Life*. Holiday House, 2010. 138 pages (978–0–8234–2056–8, \$18.95)

Frederick Douglass was born into slavery and died an advocate, activist, and civil servant, an educated man known for his rhetorical gifts, determination, and integrity. This account of Douglass's life takes teen readers on a journey into the world of slavery and then beyond after Douglass made his escape and set about defying limits and expectations. But Douglass's mission was never to impress, it was to live his life on his own terms, and that meant fighting against injustice and for his beliefs. He worked to end slavery—and protect runaway slaves—before the Civil War, supported women's suffrage throughout his adult life, and spoke out against lynching in the decades after the end of the Civil War. He became respected among Blacks and whites alike—a welcome guest at Abraham Lincoln's White House, and later a presidential appointee to posts in and beyond Washington. He demanded respect but offered forgiveness, too—when he thought it was deserved.

David A. Adler's thoroughly researched, well-documented, and illuminating biography includes ample source notes. (Age 13 and older)

Angel, Ann. *Janis Joplin: Rise Up Singing*. Introduction by Sam Andrew. Amulet Books, 2010. 120 pages (trade 978-0-8109-8349-6, \$19.95)

Janis Joplin's transformation from member of the high school Slide Rule Club to rock star is documented with insight into her personal choices and public persona. From the opening chapter revealing a young Janis attempting and failing to fit the traditional expectations of her hometown of Port Arthur, Texas, readers are given a sense of the woman whose interests (African American singers, the blues), and style (brash, outspoken, unrepentant) set her outside mainstream society, but who always sought attention and approval. Despite occasional enrollment at college and university, Janis couldn't ignore the pull of her talent and inevitably drifted back to the music scene and the self-destructive behavior to which it was so closely linked. Janis's risk-taking lifestyle is put within the context of the 1960s, acknowledging the open attitude toward sex and drug use prevalent among her peers and fans in the music world. Janis's family was also important to her, and she maintained a regular correspondence with her parents and sister despite making choices they didn't condone. Information about Janis's bands and her evolving public image is covered both in the narrative and visually through numerous photographs, album and magazine covers, and promotional posters. Detailed source notes, a timeline, and a bibliography are included in Wisconsin author Ann Angel's inspired biography. (Age 14 and older)

Diakit , Baba Wag . *A Gift from Childhood: Memories of an African Boyhood*. Groundwood Books / House of Anansi Press, 2010. 134 pages (trade 978-0-88899-931-3, \$19.95)

Author/artist Baba Wag  Diakit 's vivid account of his childhood in a small village in Mali, West Africa, is defined by stories and storytelling, and full of affection and humor. Diakit  describes life with his grandparents and extended family members and his childhood escapades, weaving in family stories and tales he grew up hearing. These, along with the rhythm and responsibilities of life within the community, ground him in family and tradition and values. Diakit  had a particularly close relationship with his grandmother, and with his mother, who lived in the city but came to visit him and participate in important events, and the strength of those relationships and the gifts of his early childhood are evident throughout a narrative that also describes how he became an artist and storyteller and eventually moved to the United States. He and his family return often to the people and places of his childhood—the roots that continue to nourish him. The occasional illustrations in this memoir are hand-painted tiles in Diakit 's distinctive style. Most of them are beautifully composed scenes of village life, glazed in rich colors and full of warmth and occasional whimsy. (Ages 11–15)

Fleischman, Sid. *Sir Charlie: Chaplin, the Funniest Man in the World.* Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2010. 268 pages (trade 978-0-06-189640-8, \$19.99)

“Watching the first ten minutes or so of *Modern Times* could be perilous. You could die laughing. The scenes are that funny.” The late Sid Fleischman’s enthusiasm for the comic genius of Charlie Chaplin fuels his lively and informative biography of the entertainer. Fleischman vividly depicts Chaplin’s rough beginnings in the slums of London, his entrée into vaudeville, and his rise to Hollywood fame. Chaplin turned his gifts as a keen observer, talented mimic, and brilliant physical comedian into gold on stage and screen. Behind the scenes, he was a perfectionist whose personal life was as complicated as the intricate timing in a scene from one of his silent movie masterpieces. Even readers unfamiliar with Chaplin movies may recognize his “Little Tramp” character—one of many shown in black-and-white photographs of Chaplin in and out of costume. And Fleischman makes it easy for those smitten by Chaplin to find out more: He provides an annotated bibliography for further reading and an annotated filmography of his favorite Chaplin flicks. (Age 12 and older)

Gherman, Beverly. *Sparky: The Life and Art of Charles Schulz.* Chronicle Books, 2010. 125 pages (trade 978-0-8118-6790-0, \$16.99)

In 1922, the man who created the beloved comic strip “Peanuts” was born. Charles Schulz, nicknamed Sparky by an uncle within a week of his birth, was interested in drawing from an early age. Whether sketching Popeye on classmates’ notebooks in school, submitting a strip for a contest, or enrolling in art school, Sparky worked toward his dream of becoming a cartoonist. Even while serving in the army during World War II, he decorated fellow servicemen’s letters home with doodles. Author Beverly Gherman reveals Sparky’s inspiration for the humorous strips that could simplify universal concepts in three or four panels. From the barber shop where his father worked, to the neighborhood kids who became the characters Linus and Lucy, Sparky always connected his life experiences to his strips. As his personal life changed through marriage, divorce, and children, his career continued to flourish, eventually winning him the prestigious Reuben Award (twice) for cartoonist of the year. Bright, colorful pages with contrasting text, opposite photographs and samples of strips that include early “Peanuts” sketches and characters, comprise the eye-catching design for this compelling biography. (Ages 10–14)

Molnar, Haya Leah. *Under a Red Sky: Memoir of a Childhood in Communist Romania.* Frances Foster Books / Farrar Straus Giroux, 2010. 302 pages (trade 978-0-374-31840-6, \$17.99)

A singular memoir begins when Eva (now Haya) is seven years old. Her family lives in Bucharest, Romania, in the 1950s. Eva is the only child in a household of sometimes bickering adults living under the enormous weight of Communism. Fear and doubt are the norm, making the grown-ups’ love for Eva all the more tender as each develops a distinctive relationship with this child who surely symbolizes brightness and hope. Eva discovers

her family is Jewish—something that’s never been talked about—when the government gives Jews permission to apply for passports to emigrate to Israel. She becomes fascinated by her religion and is determined to learn more. At the same time, the government promptly fires the Jews who’ve applied to emigrate from their jobs, which puts her family under enormous economic hardship. Haya Leah Molnar’s compelling account of this period in her childhood ends when she and her parents finally arrive in Israel. Her vivid memories, imbued with an adult sensibility, spill onto the page in striking, beautiful prose full of with warmth and liveliness. (Age 14 and older)

Nelson, S. D. *Black Elk’s Vision: A Lakota Story*. Abrams, 2010. 47 pages (trade 978-0-8109-8399-1, \$19.95)

An account of the life of Black Elk, the Lakota-Oglala medicine man, is based largely (but not wholly) on *Black Elk Speaks* and strikingly illustrated by artist S. D. Nelson. Born in 1863, Black Elk’s Great Vision came to him when he was nine years old. As he grew into adulthood he became known in his community as someone who could heal others through his connection to the Spirit World. Black Elk fought in the Battle of Little Big Horn, saw the slaughter of the buffalo that were so important to Lakota survival, and witnessed the Wounded Knee massacre. He worked in Buffalo Bill’s Wild West show, a stereotypical production in which Indians pretended to die at the hands of cowboys, in part to try to learn about the Wha-shi-choo (“Wasichu” in Lakota, meaning white man). Throughout his life, he held fast to his vision, which affirmed the circle of life, of support and respect. S. D. Nelson’s stunning artwork offers an expressive, cohesive visual accompaniment to the narrative, which is also enhanced by archival black-and-white photographs. A timeline, source notes, and other material round out the volume. (Ages 9–13)

Novesky, Amy. *Me, Frida*. Illustrated by David Diaz. Abrams, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-8109-8969-6, \$16.95)

Amy Novesky recounts how Frida Kahlo came to paint the famous portrait titled *Frida and Diego Rivera*. Newly married, Frida and Diego moved to San Francisco, where Rivera had been invited to paint a mural. Frida feels timid and lonely; the trip marks her first time out of Mexico and she speaks only Spanish. But she begins exploring the city on her own, and when she sings Mexican folk songs at a party she becomes the center of attention. Gaining confidence, something opens up inside her and she is inspired to paint the wedding portrait of Diego and herself that was then featured at her first art show, the Sixth Annual Exhibition of the San Francisco Society of Women Artists. David Diaz’s brilliant artwork colorfully portrays Frida and Diego’s life in San Francisco, while Novesky’s illuminating text gives readers both factual and emotional grounding in Frida’s breakthrough painting. (Ages 7–12)

Orgill, Roxane. *Skit-Scat Raggedy Cat: Ella Fitzgerald.* Illustrated by Sean Qualls. Candlewick Press, 2010. 48 pages (trade 978-0-7363-1733-2, \$17.99)

“Ella was going to be famous. She told everyone so. Never mind her broken-down shoes. Ella was raggedy and poor, but she was tough.” Ella Fitzgerald needed to be tough as a teen. Her mother died when she was fourteen, and the music in Ella seemed to die for awhile, too. Ella eventually opted for life on the streets over an orphanage, singing and dancing on corners, soaking up everything about music that she could. Roxane Orgill’s be-bopping picture book biography describes Ella’s early years and her against-the-odds rise to fame as she worked to shape passion and raw talent into her distinctive musical style. Ella took advantage of every chance that came her way, turning small breaks into big opportunities to shine. “She’d had a dancing beat in her feet ever since she was a bitty girl in Yonkers, and all she ever needed was a chance to send that beat traveling up through her body, into her throat, and out her mouth into a song.” Colors glide with cool rhythms in Sean Qualls’s energetic paintings. (Ages 6–10)

Telgemeier, Raina. *Smile.* Scholastic, 2010. 213 pages (trade 978-0-545-13205-3, \$21.99)

When sixth-grader Raina falls and severely damages her two front teeth, a series of painful and sometimes experimental dental procedures follows over the course of the next several years. Through middle school and into high school, Raina endures braces, headgear, retainers, and root canals, before finally obtaining false front teeth, all with the aim to obtain a perfect smile. But teeth aren’t all Raina is concerned with—as a growing teenager, she’s trying to find her niche with friends who don’t always accept her, crushing on boys at school, surviving an earthquake in her city, San Francisco, and feeding her passion for art. Raina Telgemeier’s colorful and clean design makes this a highly appealing and accessible graphic novel memoir. The events and relationships presented, based on the author’s own experiences during the late 1980s and early 1990s, make an honest and compelling story. Through optimism, humor, and a supportive family, Raina grows into a confident young adult who loves herself enough to smile and really mean it. (Ages 10–14)

Contemporary People, Places, and Events

Cooper, Elisha. *Farm.* Orchard Books / Scholastic, 2010. 48 pages (trade 978-0-545-07075-1, \$17.99)

An engaging blend of words and expressive watercolor images chronicle a year in the life of a contemporary farming family. Elisha Cooper captures myriad activities and elements on the farm across the seasons: Soil is tilled.

Crops are sewn and eventually harvested. Cats are ubiquitous. At the center of it all are the farmers (husband and wife) and their two children (girl and boy), who often help out and occasionally get up to mischief. The pleasure is in the narrative details on every page spread, and illustrations that range from intimate to expansive. In June, “The cattle mosey around and poop.” In July, “The boy picks tomatoes, carrots, beans. He throws tomatoes at birds until the farmer tells him to stop.” Each turn of the page reveals something to savor in this quietly compelling volume. (Ages 4–9)

Geisert, Arthur. *Country Road ABC: An Illustrated Journey Through America's Farmland.* Houghton Mifflin, 2010. 62 pages (trade 978-0-547-19469-1, \$17.00).

Arthur Geisert's alphabet book features elements of a contemporary country road, including farms, people, and other dimensions of a rural environment. “B is for barn cats,” “L is for loading,” “V is for volunteer fire department,” and “X” marks a very specific spot: County Road Y 31 (longitude and latitude provided). Detailed illustrations, made from copperplate etchings and acrylic and watercolor, create a peaceful tone that aptly matches the journey down the road through the village, but there's a lot to look at in these bucolic scenes. A Farm Glossary offers a detailed explanation of each of the alphabet words while Geisert's incorporation of changing seasons makes this a journey through a year as well along country roads. (Ages 3–8)

Oelschlagel, Vanita. *Bonyo Bonyo: The True Story of a Brave Boy from Kenya.* Illustrated by Kristin Blackwood and Mike Blanc. VanitaBooks, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978-0-9819714-3-8, \$15.95)

When he was a child, Bonyo Bonyo's baby sister died. That sad event was the start of a hopeful dream: someday he would build a hospital in his village in western Kenya. This first-person picture book narrative tells how young Bonyo was able to fulfill that dream through education obtained with steadfast support from his family despite the sacrifices required, and countless other acts of generosity and kindness. “In my village there was a word that meant togetherness. That word was *'harambee.'* I will never forget how everyone helped me.” Bonyo attended medical school in Akron, Ohio (where he practices medicine today), and was able to return to Kenya fifteen years after leaving and turn his dream into a reality. He established a medical mission and a clinic in his home village named in honor of his mother. Illustrations rendered with heavy black lines and colorful hues provide the backdrop for this inspiring profile. A photograph of the real Bonyo and more information about his work in Kenya is included. (Ages 7–10)

Wilkes, Sybella. *Out of Iraq: Refugees' Stories in Words, Paintings and Music.* Evans, 2010. 70 pages (trade 0-978-023753-930-6, \$17.99)

Working for the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), Sybella Wilkes has had a unique opportunity to interact with individuals whose lives have been disrupted and displaced by the war in Iraq. In this photo-essay she shares the voices and stories of Iraqi children, teens, and adults who are refugees within Iraq, or who have traveled beyond the country's borders in search of

safety. Wilkes provides essential background information on recent history in Iraq in introductory essays to each section of profiles, so that readers gain a basic understanding of life under the rule of Saddam Hussein, changes—for better and worse—brought on by the U.S.-led invasion, and the impact of the resulting civil war. These provide context for the personal stories that unfold and speak to fear, fragility, strength, resilience, and compassion on many fronts. Many color photographs, as well as reproductions of artwork created by some of the refugees, add a wonderful visual dimension to this volume. (Age 11 and older)

Winter, Jeanette. *Biblioburro: A True Story from Colombia*. Beach Lane Books, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-1-4169-9778-8, \$16.99)

Luis loves books. He loves them so much, he figures out a way to share his passion with people living in rural areas of Colombia. Loading books into crates he's built for the backs of two burros, Alfa and Beto, Luis creates a "Biblioburro"—the Burro Library. Every week Luis and his Biblioburro travel "across the countryside to faraway villages in the lonely hills." The trips are long and sometimes dangerous, but once he arrives at his destination, Luis insists on reading aloud to the children who gather before they choose books to borrow. An author's note tells of the real Luis Soriana, who has delivered books by burro to remote Colombian villages since 2000. Acrylic paint with pen-and-ink illustrations depict Luis's weekly expeditions with lush colors and inviting detail. (Ages 3-7)

Understanding Oneself and Others

Addasi, Maha. *Time to Pray*. Illustrated by Ned Gannon. Boyds Mills Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-1-59078-611-6, \$17.95)

"Come to pray, come to pray," calls the *muezzin* in the middle of the night, waking young Yasmin during her stay with her grandmother in the Middle East. It's a call that resonates with Yasmin, and her grandmother, Teta, helps her begin her spiritual practice. She takes Yasmin to the fabric store and purchases cloth for prayer clothes, helps her select a special prayer rug, and finally demonstrates how to wash before praying. Then Yasmin makes her first trip to the mosque to pray with Teta. The phrase "time to pray" takes on several meanings, not only reflecting Yasmin's start of her intentional spiritual practice but also the call of the *muezzin*. Author Maha Addasi bilingual (English/Arabic) text informs readers about the *Fard* prayers (required prayers for Muslims) through a loving grandmother-granddaughter story while maintaining a realistic, childlike perspective. Ned Gannon's colorful oil artwork is full of geometric designs and warm, gentle tones. (Ages 6-10)

Baker, Jeannie. *Mirror*. U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978-0-7636-4848-0, \$18.99)

Two interconnected stories comprise this innovative picture book about two boys in different parts of the world. One lives in Australia and one lives in Morocco. An introduction in both English and Arabic precedes each wordless visual narrative. The story set in Australia unfolds in pages that turn from right to left, and the story set in Morocco unfolds in pages that turn from left to right in this ingeniously designed work in which the two stories are meant to be read side-by side (they are separately bound on the far right and left edges of the two covers). In each story, the boys are seen starting the day at home with their families and then accompanying their fathers on errands. For the boy in Morocco, this involves a trip by donkey to a market to sell the rug his mother has woven. For the boy in Australia, it's running around the city by car picking up various home improvement items, including a beautiful new carpet—the same one the Moroccan mother wove. Jeannie Baker's intricate collage illustrations capture the crowded cityscape in Australia, the openness of the Moroccan landscape, and the abundance of choices found in both "Hardware Planet" and a Moroccan bazaar with equal skill and delight. They also convey the love and warmth in each of the boy's families in this singular picture book that includes a brief essay by Baker explaining her inspiration for the story and offering insight into how she created the art. (Ages 6–10)

McGowan, Michael. *Sunday Is for God*. Illustrated by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher. Schwartz & Wade Books, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-375-84188-0, \$17.99)

"Weekdays are for school. Saturday's for having fun. But Sunday is the Lord's Day. Sunday is for God." So begins the text of a child-centered picture book about the special Sunday rituals of one Christian, African American family. From sunrise to sunset, the story's narrative stays true to a young child's experience as he participates in the family's activities: dressing up for church, having to sit still, and listening to prayers, hymns, and preaching he doesn't entirely understand. Through it all he takes his cues from his mother, father, and grandfather, following their lead. He ultimately feels like his grandpa, "not laughing and smiling happy, just quiet happy." Distinctive acrylic paintings use pieces of paper from hymnals and prayer books as a collage medium. (Ages 4–7)

Peete, Holly Robinson and Ryan Elizabeth Peete, with Denene Millner. *My Brother Charlie*. Illustrated by Shane W. Evans. Scholastic Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-545-09466-5, \$16.99)

Callie's twin brother, Charlie, has autism. Even though they've been together since before they were born, there are times when it's just hard being his sister. But Callie loves her brother, and she knows Charlie loves her, too. "I have learned from Charlie that love doesn't always come from what you say. It can also come from what you do." Coauthor Ryan Elizabeth Peete, daughter of Holly Robinson Peete, has a twin brother with autism. In an

honest, childlike voice, fictional Callie talks about the challenges of having an autistic sibling, and also the very real joy she gets from knowing and loving her brother. “Charlie has autism. But autism doesn’t have Charlie.” Shane W. Evans’s illustrations feature doe-eyed African American characters. (Ages 5–8)

Schneider, Katherine. *Your Treasure Hunt: Disabilities and Finding Your Gold*. Beaver’s Pond Press, 2010. 28 pages (trade 978–1–59298–320–9, \$18.95)

A text that speaks directly to kids with disabilities in a matter-of-fact, realistic way and encourages them to problem solve and advocate for themselves gains its greatest strength from author Katherine Schneider’s personal account of how she’s navigated challenges presented by being almost totally blind since birth. Schneider shares moments of frustration and triumph from her childhood and adulthood, and uses these as launching points to ask questions and share suggestions. Most important, she creates opportunities to talk about feelings, acknowledge challenges, and affirm strengths. Color photographs, including some showing diverse children, illustrate this purposeful volume. (Ages 4–8)

The Arts

Ancona, George. *¡Olé! Flamenco*. Lee & Low Books, 2010. 48 pages (trade 978–1–60060–361–7, \$19.95)

Janira Cordova is the youngest member of “Flamenco’s Next Generation,” a flamenco dance company in Sante Fe, New Mexico. George Ancona examines the living history of this fascinating art form that combines singing, dancing, and instrumental music. Flamenco originated among the *Gitano* or Roma peoples of Spain, where it is still passed down from one generation to the next. But it has also traveled around the globe like the people themselves. The distinct emotional and expressive nature of flamenco music and movement is captivatingly conveyed through Ancona’s text and dramatic color photographs, which seamlessly place flamenco within the context of both family and culture. In families like Janira’s, flamenco is a vital, vibrant part of their heritage and ongoing way of life. A glossary and pronunciation guide are included. (Ages 7–10)

Bryan, Ashley. *All Things Bright and Beautiful*. Based on the hymn by Cecil F. Alexander. Atheneum, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–1–4169–8939–4, \$16.99)

Ashley Bryan’s stylized construction paper artwork demonstrates “all things bright and beautiful,” serving as the backdrop to the lyrics of Cecil F. Alexander’s famous hymn. Large, sparse text floats across pages that teem with

animals, plants, landscapes, and people of various cultures. Bryan's colorful and inviting interpretation of Alexander's hymn shows an enthusiasm for diversity as well as an ability to unify. This affirming, ebullient picture book also includes a brief note on Alexander, and "All Things Bright and Beautiful" hymn notation. (Ages 2–8)

Greenberg, Jan and Sandra Jordan. *Ballet for Martha: Making Appalachian Spring*. Illustrated by Brian Floca. A Neal Porter Book / Roaring Brook Press, 2010. 48 pages (trade 978–1–59643–338–0, \$17.99)

The collaboration of choreographer Martha Graham, composer Aaron Copland, and artist Isamu Noguchi to create the ballet "Appalachian Spring" melded distinctive individual creativity in a product that pushed the boundaries of the arts. Led by Martha Graham, the trio worked together in bringing to life "a story to be told in movement and music" about "a new home, a new family, a new life. A dance about America." Never willing to settle for anything less than the perfection she imagined, Martha Graham rearranged Copland's music to fit the dance, and spurred Noguchi to craft a set "sparse and angular, like Martha's way of dancing." The story of the evolution of "Appalachian Spring" is followed by a description of the performance itself, as seen by audiences in its 1944 premiere. Clean watercolor illustrations and the judicious use of white space create an uncluttered visual accompaniment to the text, well-matched in style and substance. (Ages 7–11)

Haas, Robert B. *I Dreamed of Flying Like a Bird: My Adventures Photographing Wild Animals from a Helicopter*. National Geographic, 2010. 64 pages (trade 978–1–4263–0693–8, \$17.95)

Robert B. Haas is known for his breathtaking aerial photographs of the natural world. His birds-eye perspective has enabled him to capture some remarkable scenes, like the time a flock of flamingos on the ground below him morphed into a flamingo-shaped mass of pink birds. In this captivating photo-documentary, Haas begins by describing his work taking pictures from helicopters and small planes, where safety is dependent first and foremost on having an excellent pilot, but two safety harnesses are also a must. He goes on to chronicle how he achieved the spectacular photographs shown, touching on the drama of nature, his artistic approach, and some of the specific challenges he faced. His conversational narrative is full of enthusiasm for his work and appreciation for the natural world, both of which shine from his photographs. (Age 9 and older)

Hill, Laban Carrick. *Dave the Potter: Artist, Poet, Slave*. Illustrated by Bryan Collier. Little, Brown, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978–0–316–10731–0, \$16.99)

Author Laban Carrick Hill's artful, free-flowing narrative describes how Dave, an African American potter who lived in slavery, might have created his famous and beautiful pots in this picture book that illuminates an artist known only by his first name. Dave's work is identifiable by his signature. He also often wrote short poems on the sides of his pottery. Dave's words provide a window into what his life was like, and Hill includes supplemental

information that discusses and analyzes Dave's various writings and the few facts that are known about his life. Bryan Collier uses earthy tones in his watercolor and collage illustrations to depict the textures of the clay and Dave's intense concentration as he throws a pot on the wheel in a volume that provides a captivating look at an incredible nineteenth century artisan. (Ages 6–10)

Knapp, Ruthie. *Who Stole Mona Lisa?* Illustrated by Jill McElmurry. Bloomsbury, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–1–59990–058–2, \$17.99, lib. 978–1–59990–549–5, \$18.89)

In August 1911, an Italian housepainter named Vincenzo Perugia stole the *Mona Lisa*. Author Ruthie Knapp spins the bare facts of that cataclysmic event in the art world into an imaginative, lively story told in the voice of the *Mona Lisa* herself as she documents her creation and worldwide appeal, as well as her unsettling disappearance. At first, she notes, "I was famous because Leonardo was famous." Later, she observes, "I was famous for being famous." After being stolen, "They looked for me in closets and corners. They looked in dustbins and vents . . . The museum posted a reward for my return . . . people came to see No Mona. Millions of people." Eventually, *Mona Lisa* was recovered and returned to the museum. "Now you know why I am smiling. I am happy to see you. I am happy to be back where I belong." An author's note provides some additional facts about the theft of the *Mona Lisa* in this playful, vivacious picture book that whimsically deliver a wealth of information about the famous painting. The same can said for Jill McElmurry's delightful illustrations, full of ample humor as they reflect the narrative action. (Ages 7–12)

Lichtenheld, Tom. *Bridget's Beret*. Henry Holt, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978–0–8050–8775–8, \$16.99)

Bridget is an artist. While other kids want ice cream, Bridget is happy to sit on her picnic table and draw. But when her most prized possession—a beret similar to what famous artists have worn—sails away in the wind, she believes she has lost her artistic inspiration. Frantic, Bridget files a Missing Beret Report with the police, posts "Missing Beret" signs around the neighborhood, and even tries on a handful of other types of hats with the hope that they will cure her artist's block . . . with no luck. Dismayed but persistent, Bridget's fortune changes when her little sister Jessie asks her to make a sign for a lemonade stand, and Bridget realizes she can draw with or without her beret. Tom Lichtenheld's humorous language, coupled with bold, colorful illustrations and clever asides, make this a hilarious book about following a passion. An author's note on "How to Start Your Art" looks at various art styles by famous "beret-wearing" artists. (Ages 4–8)

Macaulay, David. *Built to Last*. Houghton Mifflin / Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 272 pages (trade 978–0–547–34240–5, \$24.99)

This volume brings together newly revised text and illustrations for three of David Macaulay's earlier works: *Castle*, *Cathedral*, and *Mosque*. All three are about fictional (rather than historically specific) buildings, but informative

text and illustrations focus on the facts of how such buildings were constructed and, just as important, the human dimension of their creation. Each type of building served as a focal point for communities in medieval societies in Europe and the Muslim empire. The end result is a cohesive volume that takes readers through the middle ages, moving from west to east across the map of Europe as it offers insight into each society and fascinating, detailed information on how each structure was built. Revisions to the artwork add color and decrease the sometimes overwhelming visual detail of *Castle* and *Cathedral*, in addition to correcting mistakes in perspective or scale. Macaulay's marvelous introduction discussing how he approached this revision project is a wonderful testament to the ongoing creative process and his own artistic integrity in a work that inspires appreciation for human achievement. (Age 10 and older)

Poetry

Atkins, Jeannine. *Borrowed Names: Poems About Laura Ingalls Wilder, Madam C. J. Walker, Marie Curie, and Their Daughters.* Henry Holt, 2010. 209 pages (trade 978-0-8050-8934-9, \$16.99)

Laura Ingalls Wilder, Madam C. J. Walker, and Marie Curie were all born in 1867. All three women went on to become famous for their contributions to literature, business, and science, respectively. And all three women had daughters. Jeannine Atkins tells the story of three remarkable women, and three singular mother/daughter relationships, in poems full of insight and compassion for all six of her subjects. The three mothers were each fascinating in their own right, and the three daughters carved their own unique places in society as well, whether consciously following in their own mother's footsteps or defiantly walking a road of their own—one that sometimes led them home again. Atkins admits to letting her imagination build on fact, but she clearly acknowledges the gap between the known and the speculative in her introduction. This thought-provoking collection is full of emotions both fierce and tender. After Marie Curie has died of leukemia her daughter asks, "Can the past press closer than the present? Who is a daughter without her mother?" (Age 12 and older)

Nye, Naomi Shihab, selector. *Time You Let Me In: 25 Poets Under 25.* Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2010. 236 pages (trade 978-0-06-189637-8, \$16.99)

"Do you think / if you left your house / emily dickinson / your poems would have titles?" ("do you think ...," by Chase Berggrun). "There has never been a shortage of hope and change for young artists and writers," notes poet Naomi Shihab Nye in her introduction to this anthology. "It's their currency—to experiment, penetrate layers and realms and eras and elements, participate in many directions, discover what is coming next." The work of twenty-six* poets under the age of twenty-five comprises this collection

that offers a handful of carefully crafted poems on wide-ranging subjects from each writer. Some writers are world travelers whose works reflect those perspectives and experiences; others have traversed cultural landscapes within their own families and communities. Some write about the intimate; others the internal. All bring a poet's eye and voice to personal experiences from traumatic to bittersweet to joyous. This volume may serve as inspiration to young writers, but the poems should be read and enjoyed for what they offer us all. (*Nye notes her aptitude for language exceeds her aptitude for math.) (Age 14 and older)

Raczka, Bob. *Guyku: A Year of Haiku for Boys*. Illustrated by Peter H. Reynolds. Houghton Mifflin, 2010. 48 pages (trade 978-0-547-24003-9, \$14.99)

"If this puddle could / talk, I think it would tell me / to splash my sister." *Guyku* is meant to be haiku for boys, but boys and girls alike will appreciate the moments of humor and moments of quiet observation in this seasonal collection of haiku. Some of the poems are action-oriented (kite-flying, mosquito-battling, snowball-throwing) while others make astute, accessible observations about seasonal sights, activities, and thoughts perfect for a child audience ("How many million / flakes will it take to make a / snow day tomorrow?") The hand-written text and the subdued palette used in the understated illustrations perfectly extend the narrative's relaxed, quietly playful tone. (Ages 7-10)

Sidman, Joyce. *Dark Emperor & Other Poems of the Night*. Illustrated by Rick Allen. Houghton Mifflin / Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 29 pages (trade 978-0-547-15228-8, \$16.99)

Joyce Sidman's poetry explores various beings of the night with fresh, descriptive imagery and perspectives. A moth writes about its love for the primrose that nourishes and camouflages it. A baby porcupine—or porcupette—confidently confirms its ability to protect itself by raising its quills and doing a pirouette. As dawn begins, the moon asks where everyone from the night has gone, realizing that it will be another day before the sights and sounds of darkness return. Each of Sidman's captivating poems is accompanied by a paragraph providing factual information about the subject. Rick Allen's detailed, colored linoleum print illustrations lend additional beauty to this gratifying nocturnal experience. (Ages 9-13)

Sidman, Joyce. *Ubiquitous: Celebrating Nature's Survivors*. Illustrated by Beckie Prange. Houghton Mifflin / Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-618-71719-4, \$17.00)

To begin with, there are the amazing endpapers, in which artist Beckie Prange has condensed 4.6 billion years of earth's history into a visual timeline using 46 meters of string laid out in tight arcs and whorls, with different colors representing different geologic eras. Each of the subjects that follow in this extraordinary collection that is both poetry and natural history are placed on the timeline at the point they first appeared on the earth. And what do bacteria, mollusks, lichens, beetles, grasses, ants, sharks, squirrels,

dandelions, humans and the other living things profiled in this volume all have in common? They are survivors, displaying resilience and the ability to thrive. In finely crafted poems that reflect a variety of forms, Joyce Sidman invites readers to contemplate these natural wonders with appreciation, curiosity, and good humor. Brief biological information about each subject is provided in an accompanying factual narrative, and Prange's hand-colored linocut illustrations are both beautiful and informative. (Ages 9–13)

Singer, Marilyn. *Mirror Mirror: A Book of Reversible Verse*. Illustrated by Josée Masse. Dutton, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-525-47901-7, \$16.99)

Fourteen cleverly crafted pairs of poems look at a selection of familiar fairy tales from two points of view, with each pair comprised of the same lines in opposite order—a reversal that changes meaning and perspective entirely. The mirrored poems illuminate well-known tales such as Little Red Riding Hood (offering both Red Riding Hood's and the Wolf's perspective), Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, Rapunzel, Jack in the Beanstalk, and others. Not every pair works equally well as poetry in two directions but the best are masterpieces, and the collection as a whole is not only entertaining but offers intriguing possibilities for classroom use. Ingenious illustrations reflect the dual perspectives of each pair of poems in a single, brilliantly composed, richly hued painting. (Ages 7–10)

Yolen, Jane and Andrew Fusek Peters, selectors. *Switching on the Moon: A Very First Book of Bedtime Poems*. Illustrated by G. Brian Karas. Candlewick Press, 2010. 95 pages (trade 978-0-7636-4249-5, \$21.99)

As they did in *Here's a Little Poem* (U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2007), Jane Yolen and Andrew Fusek Peters have collaborated on an anthology of poems for young children that delight and, in this volume, inspire quiet contemplation perfect for bedtime. The selectors/contributors (both have written several of the poems included) have clearly made an effort to include a range of poems and poets not typically found in other anthologies (along with a few favorites), making this a welcome and distinctive contribution to poetry books for young children. The poems are divided into sections titled "Going to Bed," "Sweet Dreams," and "In the Night." G. Brian Karas's soft, soothing illustrations spanning the page-spreads feature comforting hues and eye-pleasing scenes. (Ages 1–5)

Concept Books

Baker, Keith. *LMNO Peas*. Beach Lane Books, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978-1-4169-9141-0, \$16.99)

Not all peas are alike in this cleverly written ABC book: they are plumbers, voters, gigglers, and even zoologists. Pea protagonists are distinctive from page to page, and letter to letter, through changing backdrops, attire, and props. Each white page contains giant, textured letters that contrast with the tiny peas—appealing to those who enjoy searching for and studying details.

Author/illustrator Keith Baker incorporates pop culture, dialogue bubbles, and color along with rhyme and humor to captivate and engage. Fictional pea descriptions easily translate to human ones, and a final invitation asking “Who are you?” encourages discussion around identity at a basic level. (Ages 3–6)

Campbell, Sarah C. *Growing Patterns: Fibonacci Numbers in Nature*. Photographs by Sarah C. Campbell and Richard P. Campbell. Boyd's Mills Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–1–59078–752–6, \$17.95)

Stripped down description and clear color photographs on thoughtfully designed pages work together to explain the Fibonacci sequence to a young audience. Beginning with a peace lily (1 petal), moving to a crown of thorns (2 petals), followed by a spiderwort (3 petals), then a flowering quince (5 petals), and finally a cosmos (8 petals), the sequence so often found in nature is demonstrated visually and described in the simple text. Other examples of the Fibonacci numbers in nature shown include the bracts on a pinecone, the disk flowers at the center of a sunflower, the sections on the outside of a pineapple, and the spiral of a nautilus shell. The final two pages offer additional information about Fibonacci numbers and a glossary. (Ages 6–9)

Frasier, Debra. *A Fabulous Fair Alphabet*. Beach Lane Books, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–1–4169–9817–4, \$16.99)

Readers who have been to a state or county fair will appreciate how Debra Frasier evokes the dazzling, dizzying feel of midway in this alphabet book. Those who've never been to a fair will get a vicarious sense of the fun on a stroll through these pages. There's so much to look at on every page. Each letter of the alphabet is represented by a word or words naming common sights at a fair (Arena, Barn, Eat Everything, Ice Cream, Roller Coaster). The accompanying image incorporates the letter of the alphabet multiple times in a motif that shouts out in carnival-bright colors. (Ages 3–6)

Picture Books for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers

Alter, Anna. *Disappearing Desmond*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. 36 pages (trade 978–0–375–86684–5, \$17.99; lib. 978–0–375–96684–2, \$20.99)

Desmond is the kind of kid who prefers to stay out of the spotlight. In fact, he's pretty much perfected the art of fading into the background, often literally, as amusingly shown in the illustrations of this unusual story. When the new girl at school, Gloria, unfailingly picks him out of his anonymity, Desmond is stunned. And he finds that he actually likes it when she includes him in their imaginary play. The clean lines and a flat perspective of the illustrations will make it easier for children to find Desmond wherever he

is hiding in this pleasing story of different personality types interacting in a school setting in a positive way. (Ages 3–6)

Avraham, Kate Aver. *What Will You Be, Sara Mee?* Illustrated by Anne Sibley O'Brien. Charlesbridge, 2010. 32 pages (lib 978–1–58089–210–0, \$16.95)

On the morning of Korean American Sara Mee's *tol*, or first birthday, her older brother Chong eagerly awaits the *toljabee*, a game in which Sara Mee will be offered an array of objects; the one she chooses will predict her future. Chong chose a pen at his *toljabee*, meaning he will be a writer. As party guests arrive, family members prophesy that Sara Mee might be a captain, a chef, or even a musician. Illustrator Anne Sibley O'Brien colorfully displays the warmth of a loving family with realistic watercolor illustrations, and author Kate Aver Avraham incorporates Korean words into a childlike narrative that consistently exudes the excitement and anticipation of this cultural tradition. After Sara Mee makes her long-awaited selection, Chong helps his sister create a memento from the special day. Avraham's personal experience celebrating her Korean American daughter's *tol* brings tenderness and depth to this satisfying and informative narrative. (Ages 3–7)

Barton, Chris. *Shark Vs. Train.* Illustrated by Tom Lichtenheld. Little, Brown, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–316–00762–7, \$16.99)

Celebrating the competitive spirit of imagination at its silliest extreme, two children contemplate a face-off between favorite toys—a shark and a train—in a wide range of scenarios. In some, one toy or the other boasts an obvious advantage: shark aces the high-dive jump, while train's flame-belching smokestack gives him an edge in the burping contest. Other times they share equally in success or failure—their lack of thumbs prevents either from video game prowess. Competition in a range of venues—trick-or-treating, performing in a piano recital, sword fighting on a tightrope—continues, until a call to lunchtime sends both children running off, and their favorite toys are tossed aside without ceremony until the next play time. The ridiculous contests and their visual depiction invite young readers to contemplate additional head-to-head battles between these two heroes, or other champions of their own choosing. (Ages 3–6)

Birdsall, Jeanne. *Flora's Very Windy Day.* Illustrated by Matt Phelan. Clarion, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–618–98676–7, \$16.00)

Furious that her little brother, Crispin, has spilled her paints—again!—and irritated that her mother makes her take him outside with her to play, Flora doesn't really care when a strong wind lifts Crispin off the ground and begins to carry him away. But when she sees how frightened he looks, she goes into heroic big sister mode and grabs his hand, causing the two of them to be blown up into the sky together. Every creature they meet on their lofty journey asks Flora if it can have her little brother. This ends up affirming for Flora just how much she wants to continue having her little brother around. The sweet tone of Matt Phelan's sweeping watercolor illustrations are perfectly paired with the understated, just-this-edge-of-mean text so that

the two together give the book just the right balance-and an extra level of humor for the adult reader. (Ages 3–6)

Braun, Sebastien. *Back to Bed, Ed!* Peachtree, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–1–56145–518–8, \$15.95)

After playing with Dad, getting a drink, brushing his teeth, having a bath, and reading a story with Mom, Ed the mouse is all ready to go to sleep in his own bed. But when the light is switched off, Ed always finds a reason to jump out of his own bed and into his parents': it's too dark, there are monsters in his room. Ed's increasingly sleep-deprived mom and dad eventually think of a plan to keep Ed in his own bed, and the next time Ed heads toward their room he finds a "Closed" sign on their door. With his father's encouragement, Ed is emboldened to return to his room and comforts himself by gathering his teddy, frog, duck, and squirrel stuffed animals, telling them, "There's no need to be scared . . . I'm here now." Although the solution may come more easily for Ed than for most youngsters, Sebastien Braun's combination of humor and appealing art all contribute to an engaging read-aloud. (Ages 2–6)

Cadow, Kenneth M. *Alfie Runs Away.* Illustrated by Lauren Castillo. Frances Foster Books / Farrar Straus Giroux, 2010. 36 pages (trade 978–0–374–30202–3, \$16.99)

His mom's insistence that he get rid of his favorite pair of old shoes is the last straw for Alfie, and he threatens to run away. His mother sends him off with a bottle of water, some food, a flashlight, and a bag to carry it all in, while Alfie selects his teddy bear and his favorite picture books. He gets as far as his own backyard before he decides to stop to take a snack break, and, upon reflection, he comes up with the perfect solution: his shoes may be too small for him, but they fit his teddy bear perfectly. By the time his mom comes to find him, he's ready to go back home. Ken Cadow offers an appealing take on a common childhood occurrence. Black charcoal lines predominate in Lauren Castillo's warm illustrations, in which most pictures are designed to highlight the little red sneakers that serve as the catalyst for Alfie's misadventure. (Ages 3–5)

Cousins, Lucy. *I'm the Best.* U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–7636–4684–4, \$14.99)

Dog has a terrific group of friends, but he wants everyone to know he's the best. He can run faster than Mole, dig better than Goose, swim better than Donkey, and he's bigger than Ladybug. His friends are feeling pretty sad until they realize that Dog isn't the only one with bragging rights, and they turn the tables by proclaiming accomplishments of their own. Now Dog is the one feeling sad, not only because he's not the best but because "I'm just a silly show-off." He apologizes to his friends, and that's when they prove just how wonderful they are in Lucy Cousins's funny picture book. The author/illustrator's colorful, childlike illustrations are as appealing as ever, and her narrative is spot on when it comes to portraying the need to be the best that will be familiar to many young children. Dog's ego bounces back higher

than ever on the final page of this entertaining story that also offers a great opportunity for discussion. (Ages 3–6)

Fleming, Denise. *Sleepy, Oh So Sleepy*. Henry Holt, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-8050-8126-8, \$16.99)

The yawning, brown-skinned child on the book jacket sets the tone for yet another bedtime book with a variation on the “Look-how-sleepy-you are!” theme. What makes this one stand out is that the text doesn’t try for subliminal: it’s up-front with its ulterior motive. The lulling narrative points to various baby animals who are “sleepy, oh so sleepy,” only breaking the pattern every few pages to ask “Where’s my sleepy baby?” (With luck, he will not be sprinting across the room.) Somehow, Fleming is able to make her signature illustration style work in this context, even with her bold outlines and bright colors. Each double-page spread features a close-up of a particular baby animal, curled up with its eyes closed. If seeing the droopy eyelids on the baby ostrich doesn’t make a child sleepy, nothing will. (Ages 1–3)

Foley, Greg. *Willoughby & the Moon*. Balzer + Bray / HarperCollins, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-06-154753-9, \$18.99)

Before falling asleep each night, Willoughby Smith stares out his bedroom window at the moon. But he’s alarmed one night to discover the moon is no longer shining in the sky. Following a tiny light, Willoughby discovers the moon inside his closet, along with a gigantic snail that has lost his ball and needs Willoughby’s help finding it. The two become instant companions, traveling across the moon’s terrain on a buggy and sailing through the galaxy on a space pod before finally consulting the snail’s map of the moon and discovering the ball in a cave. Greg Foley’s imaginative bedtime story speaks to common childhood fears in a comforting context. His dreamlike fantasy is told through vivid descriptions and striking illustrations in shiny silver, black, and white. *Highly Commended, 2011 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 3–7)

Gal, Susan. *Please Take Me for a Walk*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-375-85863-5, \$15.99)

A dog begs to be taken for a walk, naming all the things it wants to do outside (except the obvious one). It would like to chase squirrels, watch people in the neighborhood play, and meet other dogs to introduce to its best friend (its owner). A patterned text using repetition and rhyme conveys the excitement and anticipation that a dog exudes when asking to leave the house. Charcoal-on-paper and digital collage illustrations accompany the narrative, alternating busy scenes from the community with a familiar image of the dog requesting again and again: “Please take me for a walk.” (Ages 3–7)

Gay, Marie-Louise. *Roslyn Rutabaga and the Biggest Hole on Earth!* Greenwood Books / House of Anansi Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-88899-994-8, \$16.95)

Rosalyn is determined to dig a hole in her back yard that will go all the way to the South Pole so she can meet a penguin. She sets out digging in the morning and finds a worm and a mole (she herself is a rabbit), and a stash of dog bones. Midday her father brings her lunch, and when the two sit down in the hole to eat together, it becomes clear that the hole is only a couple of feet deep. But her father encourages her to continue by assuring her that there will be plenty of carrot sandwiches on hand for any penguins she comes across—assuming they like carrots. Rosalyn's pursuit of her dream is depicted with spirited mixed-media illustrations that show her father as an active participant in her imaginary play. (Ages 3–5)

Graham, Bob. *April and Esme: Tooth Fairies*. U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2010. 36 pages (trade 978-0-7636-4683-7, \$16.99)

Sisters April and Esme beg their parents to let them take on their first official tooth fairy pick-up and delivery job. After a family discussion over dandelion soup dinner, Mom and Dad help prepare the girls for their excursion. With a reminder from their parents to “text if you need to,” April and Esme set off into the night. Their destination is the home of Daniel Dangerfield. In spite of a close call when Daniel wakes up, the girls pull off a successful mission, even finding enough time to visit the room of Daniel's Grandma to give her a goodnight kiss (they don't take her dentures). Their safe arrival home is celebrated with lots of hugs from Mom and Dad, and Daniel's tooth gets hung from the rafters. Bob Graham offers a humorous alternative to the traditional tooth fairy story in this delightful outing featuring a hip and loving young tooth-fairy family. Lots of visual humor is incorporated into Graham's wonderful storytelling. *Honor Book, 2011 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 3–8)

Hacohen, Dean. *Tuck Me In!* Illustrated by Sherry Scharschmidt. Candlewick Press, 2010. 26 pages (trade 978-0-7636-4728-5, \$9.99)

“It's time for bed. Who needs to be tucked in?” The answer is a rousing “I do!” from one creature after another in this pleasing picture book that gives young readers and listeners the opportunity to tuck in Baby Pig, Zebra, Elephant, Alligator, Moose, Hedgehog, and Peacock in turn. The brilliance is in the clever design of a book in which every other page is a “blanket”—half the size of the full pages, and just big enough to “cover” the expectant baby animal waiting to be tucked. Each blanket is a different, brightly colored design that matches or complements the baby's pillow. The amusingly wide-eyed expressions on the animals' faces are sure to bring a smile, while the repeated refrain (“Who else needs to be tucked in?”) offers a soothing sense of predictability perfect for any day's end. Contrasting end papers show the animal babies wide-awake inside the front covers and slumbering inside the back. (Ages 1–4)

Henkes, Kevin. *My Garden*. Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-06-171517-4, \$17.99)

In a whimsical flight of fancy, a little girl helping her mother in the garden imagines what her own ideal garden would be like. It would have flowers that could change colors and patterns, and that would grow back as soon as you picked them. The rabbits in her garden wouldn't eat the plants "because the rabbits would be chocolate and I would eat *them*." A jelly bean bush, tomatoes "as big as beach balls," invisible carrots ("because I don't like carrots") and morning glories "shining like stars" would be in her garden, but so would buttons and umbrellas, rusty keys, and other unusual things. Joyful illustrations combine circular images on the story's opening and concluding pages that show the little girl working in her real garden, with full-page images in between that explode with her colorful imaginings, one of which inspires her to plant a seashell in her family garden at story's end. "Who knows what might happen?" *Highly Commended, 2011 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 3-6)

Hines, Anna Grossnickle. *I Am a Backhoe*. Tricycle Press, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978-1-58246-306-3, \$12.99)

"Bend, hook, lift. Swoooooohhhh. Swing. Drop. I am . . . a crane truck." A young boy playfully imagines himself as a variety of trucks as he copies their motions with his toys. Every new turn of the page introduces another truck, including a backhoe, bulldozer, crane truck, dump truck, and roller, while colorful digital illustrations display the parallels between the boy and the actual truck. Through the use of repetition and descriptive language, Anna Grossnickle Hines invitingly appeals to a child's natural liveliness and urge to imitate. A final flatbed truck is created with the help of the boy's daddy, and later, after backing into the "garage," or couch, they settle in to read a book together—about the timeless topic of trucks. *Highly Commended, 2011 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 2-5)

Hughes, Shirley. *Don't Want to Go!* U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-7636-5091-9, \$16.99)

When her mom is sick, little Lily has to spend the day with Marilyn, an adult friend of her parents who is a stranger to Lily. Marilyn has two children of her own, a baby and a school-aged son, so she knows exactly how to care for a shy toddler who feels strange in unfamiliar circumstances. She doesn't overwhelm Lily with attention, and bit by bit she finds small ways to make Lily feel as though she belongs. Not surprisingly, Lily doesn't want to leave when her dad comes to pick her up at the end of the day. In her winsome pen and ink and watercolor illustrations, Shirley Hughes once again shows her mastery at depicting the ordinary life experiences of preschoolers, showing their feelings by getting every facial expression and body posture exactly right. (Ages 3-5)

Joosse, Barbara. *Sleepover at Gramma's House*. Illustrated by Jan Jutte. Philomel, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978-0-399-25261-7, \$17.99)

A night at Gramma's house involves all sorts of fun for her young granddaughter: favorite foods, painting, stories, imaginary play, and, most of all, a beloved adult's undivided attention. Barbara Joosse's bouncy text captures the exuberance of a young child (in this case, an elephant) who is giddy with the excitement about the overnight adventure. The accompanying ink, watercolor, and acrylic illustrations complement the vivacious tone, making the characters appear almost weightless in their boundless joy at being together. (Ages 3-5)

Lobel, Anita. *Nini Lost and Found*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-375-85880-2, \$17.99)

At first, a door left open in her home spells opportunity for a large, contented tabby cat, and indeed the world outside is full of wonders: teasing grasses, soft moss, and odiferous flowers. But as Nini wanders further from home and day turns to night, the outside world turns threatening, with strange noises and unfamiliar animals. Nini cowers in the hollow at the base of a tree, afraid to move, until her owners come looking for her with a flashlight. Anita Lobel's luminous gouache and watercolor illustrations show wondrous details of the outside world, both beautiful and frightening. They also show that Nini hadn't wandered very far from home, and the text ends with the suggestion that Nini might venture out again one day. (Ages 3-6)

Na, Il Sung. *The Thingamabob*. U.S. edition: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. 24 pages (trade 978-0-375-86106-2, \$15.99)

When Elephant comes upon a big red umbrella, he has no idea what it is. He tries in vain to use it—to fly, to float, to hide behind—but it's only when it begins to rain that he figures out the true purpose of the "thingamabob." Il Sung Na's whimsical illustrations were made using Adobe Photoshop to layer various painted textures. She cleverly uses understatement and shifting perspectives to show the beginnings and endings of each of Elephant's experiments with the umbrella. Even the youngest listeners will be likely to know what the thingamabob is, and will enjoy Elephant's perception of it as something exotic and unusual. (Ages 2-5)

Nyeu, Tao. *Bunny Days*. Dial, 2010. 48 pages (trade 978-0-8037-3330-5, \$16.99)

A whimsical picture book features three short stories detailing a series of mishaps involving a group of winsome bunnies, two busy goats, and a gentle bear who repeatedly saves the day. In "Muddy Bunnies," Mr. Goat is hard at work on his tractor, oblivious to the mud spewing all over the white bunnies playing on a nearby hill. "Dusty Bunnies" features Mrs. Goat vacuuming the grass when she unwittingly sucks the alarmed bunnies from their warren below into the machine. And in "Bunny Tails," Mr. Goat, cutting flowers in his garden, gets momentarily distracted and snips off the bunnies' tails. Author/illustrator Tao Nyeu's illustrations feature masterful design elements, from eye-catching, uncluttered composition to spare use of color, with each

story rendered in a different palette of two or three hues. The bunnies' rounded bodies and expressive faces, and the fanciful scenes in which they appear, are full of charm, but there is just enough of an edge to Nyeu's concept that it never strays to excessive sweetness. Instead, it's pure delight. (Ages 3–7)

Oelschlager, Vanita. *A Tale of Two Daddies*. Illustrated by Kristin Blackwood and Mike Blanc. VanitaBooks, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978-0-9819714-5-2, \$15.95)

A little boy curious about how things work in the family of a little girl who lives with her two dads is full of questions as the two of them play. "Who's your dad when your hair needs braids? Who's your dad when you're afraid? . . . Which dad helps when your day begins? Who is there to tuck you in?" Alternating page spreads feature the boy's questions and the girl's response to each ("*Poppa's* the one when I need braids. *Daddy* is there when I'm afraid . . . *Poppa's* awake when my day begins. *Both* of my daddies tuck me in."). This warm, welcome book is a standout for its fresh, clever approach to relating familiar details in a child's life—in this case, a child who happens to have same-sex parents. (Ages 3–8)

Patricelli, Leslie. *Potty*. Candlewick Press, 2010. 24 pages (trade 978-0-7636-4476-5, \$6.99)

Patricelli, Leslie. *Tubby*. Candlewick Press, 2010. 24 pages (trade 978-0-7636-4567-0, \$6.99)

Patricelli continues her series about a captivating bald baby with two more board-book volumes. *Tubby* deals with the nightly ritual of a bath that begins with naked time and a chasing game and ends with a clean, dry baby in a fresh diaper. *Potty* focuses on a toddler milestone: the first time using a potty. After watching what the cat does and the dog does, Baby realizes that humans have traditions of their own. Few book creators today are producing original board books as witty and engaging as Patricelli, and her latest offerings more than live up to her previous ones. (Ages 1–2)

Pfister, Marcus. *Happy Birthday, Bertie!* U.S. edition: North South, 2010. 24 pages (trade 978-0-7358-2280-1, \$16.95)

Bertie the hippo can hardly wait for his birthday party. He can also hardly wait to open his present from Daddy, but first he and Daddy have to finish getting the cake and decorations ready. When Bertie's guests arrive and pile up their presents for Bertie, Daddy can't remember where he hid his gift. Bertie and his friends play hide and seek while Daddy searches, and Bertie can't resist sneaking a tiny piece of cake and a peek at some of the presents before finding his friend Benny hiding on top of a cupboard. Startled when Bertie shouts "I can see you!" Benny tumbles down, along with balloons, streamers, and . . . Daddy's present! Marcus Pfister's cheerful picture book displays a young child's unbridled enthusiasm for birthdays. It also shows a single-parent father competently handling all aspects of birthday party preparation and execution—lost gift aside. (Ages 2–5)

Rueda, Claudia. *No*. Translated from the Spanish by Elisa Amado. U.S. edition: Groundwood Books / House of Anansi Press, 2010. 36 pages (trade 978-0-88899-991-7, \$18.95)

As winter approaches a mother bear tells her cub it's time to sleep, but the small bear balks. "I don't want to go to sleep." For every caution the mother bear offers—winter is cold . . . it's long . . . the snow will be deep—the determined young bear is ready with a comeback. To her final warning, "Here comes a storm," the little bear says, "That will be fun." And it is, until the snow grows so thick and white (on a series of wordless page spreads) that the cub loses sight of its mother. "Mamma!!" Claudia Rueda's elegantly spare and wonderfully warm and comforting picture book is told through a brief back-and-forth dialogue between the two bears, set against uncluttered illustrations that use rounded shapes, curving lines, and just a handful of colors to convey character, mood, and feeling, including welcome reassurance when mother and cub are reunited. (Ages 2-4)

Schubert, Leda. *Feeding the Sheep*. Illustrated by Andrea U'Ren. Farrar Straus Giroux, 2010. 24 pages (trade 978-0-374-32296-0, \$16.99)

"What are you doing?" the little girl asked. 'Feeding the sheep,' her mother said. Snowy day, corn and hay." "What are you doing?" is the repeated refrain of this engaging story spanning the cycle of the seasons. Each page spread introduces another scene in which the little girl asks the question and her mother replies, followed by a playful rhyme about the work being done. The end result is a story of how the sheep's wool, which the mother shears in early spring, becomes a cozy blue sweater that she has knit for the little girl by autumn's end. This terrific read-aloud has delightful language and a satisfying, full-circle conclusion, while the lively illustrations integrate each step of the wool-working into scenes that also depict the changing seasons, the love between the spirited girl and busy mom, and the warmth within their home. (Ages 3-6)

Seeger, Laura Vaccaro. *What If? A Neal Porter Book / Roaring Brook Press*, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-1-59643-398-4, \$15.99)

The social dynamic of inclusion and exclusion is the serious theme of a playful picture book told in a series of visual vignettes strung together with a handful of essential words. A boy kicks a beach ball into the water. "What if . . . ?" two seals begin playing with the ball and toss it back up onto beach. "And what if . . . ?" a third seal is on the beach. "Then what if . . . ?" one of the seals in the water heads to the sand and starts tossing the ball with the third seal. "But then . . ." there is one sad-faced seal left—and left out—in the water. "OR . . ." marks a transition for the scenario to begin all over again, but this time the seal up on the sand is left out when the second seal takes the ball back into the water. "OR . . ." the action plays out again, but this time it concludes with all three seals playing together. Laura Vaccaro Seeger's bright, bold illustrations are rich with the colors of sea and sand and brim with both feeling and possibility in this inviting and illuminating story. (Ages 3-7)

Stead, Philip C. *A Sick Day for Amos McGee*. Illustrated by Erin E. Stead. A Neal Porter Book / Roaring Brook Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-1-59643-402-8, \$16.99)

Zookeeper Amos McGee always follows the same routine. Every day, after breakfast and tea, he takes the number five bus to the zoo and visits the animals. But one day when Amos is sick and doesn't show up as usual, the worried animals decide to take the number five to Amos's house to check in on their friend. Erin E. Stead's woodblock printing and pencil illustrations use color sparingly and purposefully—contributing to the soft, calm tone of this story. Playful characterizations (the tortoise wins races, the rhinoceros always has a runny nose, the owl is afraid of the dark) add to the gentle humor in Philip C. Stead's comforting story of friendship with a creative and rewarding conclusion. *Honor Book, 2011 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 3–8)

Tafolla, Carmen. *Fiesta Babies*. Illustrated by Amy Córdova. Tricycle Press, 2010. 20 pages (trade 978-1-58246-319-3, \$12.99)

A vibrant picture book celebrates very young children and elements of Latino culture and family life. Each double-page spread features a rhyming couplet describing “fiesta” babies in action (“Fiesta babies sing along / to Grandpa’s favorite mariachi song!”). A detailed illustration decorates the page of text, while the full-page illustration opposite depicts a colorful scene featuring one or more young children engaged in the activity described. Both the short, bouncy narrative and the art that accompanies it are full of energy and appreciation for Latino culture, and all children. The artist focuses on Latinos in scenes depicting family life and shows children from diverse backgrounds in other scenes. (Ages birth–3)

Underwood, Deborah. *The Quiet Book*. Illustrated by Renata Liwska. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-547-21567-9, \$12.95)

Every turn of the page reveals a new kind of quiet in this contemplative picture book. From “First look at your new hairstyle quiet” to “Coloring in the lines quiet,” Deborah Underwood’s simple text triggers thoughtful reflection and opportunities for discussion and sharing. Situations that are sometimes humorous and sometimes poignant offer universal understanding and appeal. Renata Liwska’s illustrations range from simple animal characters on white backgrounds to full-page scenes. Her soft and muted hues are a perfect match for the mood of this charmingly understated book. (Ages 3–7)

Waddell, Martin. *Captain Small Pig*. Illustrated by Susan Varley. U.S. edition: Peachtree, 2010. 24 pages (trade 978-1-56145-519-5, \$15.95)

When Turkey and Old Goat take Small Pig out for a ride in a rowboat, Small Pig insists on milking the experience for all its worth. He wants to row (he rows the boat in circles) and fish for whales (he catches an old boot, which is almost as good), and finally he gets tired of rowing and takes a nap. Throughout the day Old Goat encourages Small Pig and applauds his efforts, while Turkey worries that things will go wrong—and they do: Turkey

ends up overboard. This gently humorous tale, illustrated with spritely pen-and-ink paintings, echoes the realities of children who live with two adults, each with opposite views of life. (Ages 3–5)

Willems, Mo. *City Dog, Country Frog*. Illustrated by Jon J Muth. Hyperion, 2010. 56 pages (trade 978-1-4231-0300-4, \$17.99)

From the time they meet, City Dog and Country Frog are good friends. During the spring and summer, they play Country Frog (jumping and splashing) and City Dog (fetching and barking) games. In fall, Country Dog is tired so they play “remembering games”—games to recall their happy memories from spring and summer. But when winter arrives, a lonely City Dog waits for Country Frog, but Country Frog never comes. When spring arrives again, Country Chipmunk appears, a surprising twist that brings Mo Willems’s tender tale about friendship, nature, and cycles full circle. Willems skillfully uses simple language and repetition, along with elements of humor, to tell a soothing story that can be interpreted in many ways, making it rich for discussion possibilities with young children. Jon J Muth’s vibrant watercolor artwork, with expressive, anthropomorphized characters, captures the contrast of changing seasons and the emotions associated with discovery and loss. *Honor Book, 2011 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 3–7)

Willems, Mo. *Knuffle Bunny Free: An Unexpected Diversion*. Balzer + Bray, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978-0-06-192957-1, \$17.99)

In the third volume about Trixie and her favorite stuffed toy, the now-famous Knuffle Bunny accompanies the family on a transnational plane ride to visit grandparents living in Holland. Trixie only realizes that something’s missing once she’s sitting in Oma’s garden: She left Knuffle Bunny on the airplane. The adults in Trixie’s world do the usual things adults do to try to console a child who’s lost a favorite thing: Her dad calls the airline (the plane has already left for China) and her Oma buys her a new stuffed rabbit (not even close). Eventually, it’s Trixie herself who is able to reach acceptance by imagining Knuffle Bunny as a world traveler visiting far-off places she can only dream of. Although the resolution (finding Knuffle Bunny in the seat pocket on the returning plane) stretches credulity, it’s a satisfying ending, with Trixie, realizing she can do without her toy, offering it to the crying child sitting behind them. Mo Willems uses the same illustrative technique—color cartoon drawings superimposed onto black-and-white photographic backgrounds—found in other books about Trixie and her cherished bunny. (Ages 3–6)

Williams, Karen Lynn. *A Beach Tail*. Illustrated by Floyd Cooper. Boyd’s Mills Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-1-59078-712-0, \$17.95)

“*Swish-woosh.*” The sound of waves washing the shore repeats throughout an engaging picture book in which a young African American boy is the architect of his own adventure. After Gregory draws “a Sandy lion” at the beach, his dad cautions, “Don’t go in the water, and don’t leave Sandy.” And Gregory doesn’t, but as the tail he draws on Sandy gets longer and longer, it takes him farther and farther away from his dad: over an old sand castle,

around a horseshoe and a ghost crab, all the way to a jetty. “But Gregory did not go in the water, and he did not leave Sandy.” It’s only when he finally looks up that Gregory realizes how far he’s gone. He turns a moment of worry—which one of those distant figures sitting on towels is his dad?—into masterful problem solving when he follows Sandy’s tail over and around all the objects, back to his dad’s welcome smile. Floyd Cooper’s sun-washed, sandy illustrations are the perfect accompaniment to this terrific picture book narrative. *Highly Commended, 2011 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 3–7)

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Pecan Pie Baby*. Illustrated by Sophie Blackall. Putnam, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–399–23987–8, \$16.99)

It’s the end of summer and Gia and her mother are waiting on a baby that’s due to come around the time of the first snow. Gia is less than happy with all the attention “that ding-dang baby” is getting from family members and friends, even before it’s born. And already the baby is a copycat who loves Gia’s favorite food—pecan pie. That must explain why her mama is craving it so. Woodson’s honesty as she writes about a big sibling’s lack of enthusiasm is refreshing, as is the acknowledgement from Gia’s mother that she, too, will miss when it was just the two of them, after the baby is born. Sophie Blackall’s warm ink-and-watercolor illustrations show a multiracial extended family with an African American mom and daughter at its center. (Ages 3–6)

Picture Books for School-Age Children

Birtha, Becky. *Lucky Beans*. Illustrated by Nicole Tadgell. Albert Whitman, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–8075–4782–3, \$16.99)

Marshall Loman is tired of having beans for dinner night after night. But Marshall’s father, like so many others during the Depression, is unemployed and beans are inexpensive. Although he’s starting to hate them, Marshall discovers having a lot of beans in the house can come in handy when it comes to winning a contest. “How many beans are in the jar? Win this brand new sewing machine!” If anyone knows beans, it’s Marshall and his family. Using estimation, Marshall and his family determine how many beans can fit in a quart jar and how many quart jars would fill a jar the size of the one in the contest, coming up with a number that wins them the sewing machine (in spite of one community member’s protest that they can’t enter because they are Black) and, to Marshall’s dismay, a year’s supply of beans. This heartwarming tale, based on the author’s grandmother, captures a caring African American family working together and having fun, despite economic hardship. (Ages 6–9)

Brown, Monica. *Chavela and the Magic Bubble*. Illustrated by Magaly Morales. Clarion, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-547-24197-5, \$16.00)

Chavela, a young Mexican American girl, loves chewing *chicle* (gum) and is exceptionally good at blowing bubbles with it. One morning, on her weekly Saturday trip with her grandmother to the corner store, Chavela spots a new type of gum called “Magic Chicle.” She chews it and discovers she can float with the giant bubble she blows. The gum carries her all the way to Mexico, where she meets *chicleros* (gum collectors), who are extracting chicle from *sapodilla* trees, and a girl who mysteriously reminds her of her grandmother. Chavela sings, dances, and learns about how *chicle* is extracted from the trees and turned into chewing gum before journeying back to her home. Illustrator Magaly Morales’s colorful, bold and bright acrylic artwork, with its curves, swoops, and sense of motion, depicts Chavela’s journey and discoveries with delight in this whimsical story about a loving grandmother-granddaughter relationship that captures the essence of magical realism and offers a gratifying resolution. *Highly Commended, 2011 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 5–9)

Button, Lana. *Willow’s Whispers*. Illustrated by Tania Howells. Kids Can Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-1-55453-280-3, \$16.95)

Willow has a voice “as soft and shy as a secret.” Classmates ask her to play but turn away when they don’t hear her response (“I’d love to”). She gets orange juice when she asked for apple, and misses being line leader when the teacher doesn’t hear her say, “I haven’t had a turn.” Willow’s dad assures her that one day her “big strong voice . . . will wiggle its way out.” Determined to make her words louder, Willow creates a magic microphone with cardboard, glitter, and glue. The prop gives her the confidence to speak up, until she finally realizes she doesn’t need it anymore. While Willow’s transformation over the course of a single day is a little quick, she’s a protagonist many kids will relate to, and her solution to her problem shows a genuine creative spark. The illustrations have an appealing, childlike quality with their black outlines and bursts of color. (Ages 4–7)

Croza, Laurel. *I Know Here*. Illustrated by Matt James. Greenwood Books / House of Anansi Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-88899-923-8, \$18.95)

When she learns that her family will be moving from rural Saskatchewan to Toronto in the summer, a young girl simply states her anxiety: “This is where I live. I don’t know Toronto. I know here.” “Here” is the road she lives on, the forest behind her trailer home, and the sound of the wolves that howl at night. “Here” is the truck that delivers groceries, her teacher and the nine kids in her school, and “the squishy spot by the beaver dam where my little sister, Kathie, catches frogs and puts them in a bucket.” The details of place are quietly comforting even as they convey a sense of pending loss in Laurel Croza’s graceful narrative. The story concludes with the young narrator’s burst of childlike inspiration: she can preserve her memories by drawing a picture, taking them with her when she goes. Matt James’s soothing

illustrations offer a sense of intimacy imbued with a little whimsy—a perfect accompaniment to this lyrical, heartfelt story. (Ages 5–8)

Heide, Florence Parry, and Roxanne Heide Pierce. *Always Listen to Your Mother*. Illustrated by Kyle M. Stone. Disney / Hyperion, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–1–4231–1395–9, \$15.99)

Ernest always helps out at home and always does what his mother tells him to do. “Ernest never: spilled, whined, dawdled, talked back, got his own way . . . or had a good time.” When a new family moves in up the hill, Ernest pays them a visit (after getting his mother’s permission, of course) and meets Vlapid. “You look like the kind of boy who always listens to his mother,” Vlapid’s mother tells him. Vlapid’s mother has a to-do list of her own—Kitchen, Dining Room, Living Room. It turns out that Vlapid, too, always listens to his mother, and the two boys set to work, wreaking havoc in each room. Vlapid’s mother is thrilled with the results. Florence Parry Heide and Roxanne Heide Pierce’s deliciously subversive picture book story is paired with funny, pitch-perfect illustrations by Kyle M. Stone contrasting Ernest’s straight-laced, uptight existence at home with Vlapid’s Addams-esque family life. (Ages 5–9)

Herman, Charlotte. *First Rain*. Illustrated by Kathryn Mitter. Albert Whitman, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–8075–2453–4, \$16.99)

When Abby and her parents move to Israel, she’s excited but also sad: her grandma isn’t moving with them. Grandma gives Abby a letter to read on the plane, and Abby has left one behind for Grandma to read at home. This marks the start of their new, long-distance relationship. In letters and e-mails, Abby tells Grandma about things she is doing in Israel, teaches her words in Hebrew, and sends her a jar of mud from the Dead Sea. (“Dead Sea mud is supposed to be good for your skin.”) And as she waits for the rainy season to arrive, Abby reminisces with Grandma on the phone about their shared love of splashing in puddles. When the rains finally do arrive, they bring a special surprise for Abby in a picture book story that underscores a warm and fun-loving bond that extends across the miles. (Ages 4–7)

Hills, Tad. *How Rocket Learned to Read*. Schwartz & Wade, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–375–85899–4, \$17.99; lib. 978–0–375–95899–1, \$20.99)

One beautiful autumn day, Rocket the dog is disturbed by a little yellow bird who is eager to teach him how to read. He doesn’t particularly want to know how to read, but the bird is persistent. She manages to grab his interest with a story she reads aloud about an unlucky dog who had lost his favorite bone. By the time she flies away at the end of the school day, Rocket is hooked and is eager to begin learning his letters. When his teacher flies south for the winter, Rocket practices everything he’s learned by writing letters in the snow and spelling out the names of the things he is observing. When spring brings the bird back, the reading begins anew, but this time with an eager student. Rocket’s shape and coloring make him look like a descendant of Harry the Dirty Dog, and he is just as fetching. His efforts to learn to read mirror those

of human children, who are often motivated by the pull of a great story and a talented teacher. (Ages 4–7)

Hyde, Heidi Smith. *Feivel's Flying Horses*. Illustrated by Johanna van der Sterre. Kar-Ben, 2010. 32 pages (lib 978–0–7613–3957–1, \$17.95)

Like many nineteenth-century immigrants to the United States, Feivel arrives alone, with just a few dollars to his name, desperate for a job so he can save to bring his wife and four children to America. A skilled wood carver who made ornate reading desks for Torah scrolls back home, he finds work as a furniture maker, and on a rare day off he and a friend take a trip to Coney Island. Feivel is struck by the craftsmanship of the beautiful horses on the carousel, and after seeing a Help Wanted sign, he gets a job carving the horses for a new Coney Island carousel. Feivel takes his inspiration for the horses from members of his own family, giving each one the name and attributes of a specific individual. Stylized illustrations are filled with details of immigrant life on the Lower East Side in New York City, as well as what turn-of-the-century Coney Island might have looked like. Although the story is based on a fictional character, the author includes a historical note that discusses the role Eastern European Jewish immigrants played in carving carousel horses, translating Old World skills to the New World. (Ages 5–9)

Isol. *Petit, the Monster*. Translated from the Spanish by Elisa Amado. U.S. edition: Groundwood Books / House of Anansi Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–88899–947–4, \$16.95)

A picture book originally published in Argentina explores the contradictory behaviors and feelings that almost all children struggle to make sense of. Petit is a young boy who can be very nice, but not all the time. He's good when he plays with his dog, but not when he pulls girls' hair. He's bad when he tells a lie, but he's good at telling stories. He takes care of his toys—a good thing—but he doesn't want to share them—is that so bad? He doesn't like Gregory at all, but the other day he felt sorry for him. It's all so confusing! When he realizes that his mother, too, has more than one side to her nature (“Mother is good because she understands and bad when she sends me to bed without dessert”), Petit wonders, “Could it be that it runs in the family?” Author/illustrator Isol deftly uses humor to explore essential questions of childhood in a picture book featuring lighthearted line drawings with a striking, two-tone color scheme. (Ages 4–8)

Javaherbin, Mina. *Goal!* Illustrated by A. G. Ford. Candlewick Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–7636–4571–7, \$16.99)

The Iranian author of a story set in South Africa writes in an author's note: “Football is magic to me. Where there is a ball, there is hope, laughter and strength.” And her story's young narrator has a wonderful ball—“a federation-size football that he won for being the best reader in his class.” No longer do he and his friends have to play with cheap plastic balls most kids own. They have everything they need for a great game of soccer, but when they play in the streets of their town they have to draw straws to see who will be the roof guard, on the lookout for bullies who would steal the

wonderful ball. A. G. Ford's realistic oil paintings give a strong sense of a hardscrabble, sun-baked town even as they illustrate the universal details of a game played by children around the world. And even though the streets are never safe for these children, there is always a game to be played. As the narrator says, "When we play, we forget to worry. When we run, we are not afraid." (Ages 5–8)

Khan, Rukhsana. *Big Red Lollipop*. Illustrated by Sophie Blackall. Viking, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–670–06287–4, \$16.99)

Rubina's excitement when she's invited to a birthday party quickly becomes mortification when her mother insists she take her younger sister along. Her immigrant family is Muslim and doesn't celebrate birthdays. No one understands that it will be strange if Sana comes. Having Sana at the party is a disaster, just as Rubina knew it would be. To make things worse, Rubina gets into trouble for being angry when Sana eats the big red lollipop from her favor bag. The dissonance—between siblings, between cultural traditions, and between a child's seemingly righteous anger and an adult's response to it—is palpable in this picture book, but so too is the relief that eventually comes. Despite not receiving another birthday party invitation herself, Rubina speaks up on Sana's behalf when Sana receives a party invitation and their mother expects her to take their youngest sister, Maryam. "So Sana gets to go by herself." Rukhsana Khan's emotionally vivid story, featuring lively illustrations by Sophie Blackall, invites thought and discussion. *Winner, 2011 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 6–9)

Krause, Ute. *Oscar and the Very Hungry Dragon*. Translated from the German by Ute Krause. U.S. edition: North-South Books, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–7358–2306–8, \$16.95)

It's a familiar scenario: hungry dragon seeks princess for dinner. But with no princesses available, the villagers draw names from a hat and choose Oscar as alternative dragon fodder. Oscar's thin frame is a disappointment to the ravenous beast, but he's open to the idea of fattening the child up. From his cage, Oscar submits shopping lists and orders a professional stove. His first meal includes "grilled eggplant for starters, then pasta and homemade ice cream." The aroma is delicious, but the dragon refuses Oscar's offer to share. Days pass, and Oscar produces gourmet meals, but the dragon continues to turn up his nose at human food. Nearsighted, the dragon can't see Oscar putting on weight, and falls for the cooking-spoon-handle-as-finger ploy. At last his hunger is too much to bear, and the dragon samples Oscar's cuisine, to his great delight. When new eyeglasses alert him to the fact that he's been duped, the thought of the loss of Oscar's culinary prowess saves the day. This clever twist on a classic theme offers a quick-witted and creative hero, while humorous illustrations amp up the story's impact. (Ages 4–8)

Krensky, Stephen. *Noah's Bark*. Illustrated by Rogé. Carolrhoda, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–8225–7645–7, \$16.95)

The story of Noah's Ark has inspired creative imaginations for generations, but this one offers a whole new angle. In Stephen Krensky's pre-Flood world,

animals made whatever sound came out of their mouths: beavers crowed, snakes quacked, and pigs howled. The cacophony they caused when they were all together below decks on the ark was more than Noah could bear. To establish order, he assigned single sounds to specific animals and gave them specific roles to play so they could warn him of problems like leaks, big waves, and a passenger overboard. This hilarious picture book won't be a substitute for the original story, but it provides a playful extension, and younger listeners may delight in assigning the wrong sounds to the various animals on the ark, as they are spelled out in large letters throughout the bold, stylized illustrations. (Ages 4–7)

Nelson, Marilyn. *Snook Alone*. Illustrated by Timothy Basil Ering. Candlewick Press, 2010. 48 pages (trade 978–0–7636–2667–9, \$16.99)

Abba Jacob lives a simple monk's life in his hermitage on an island. His only companion is his little rat terrier, Snook, and the two of them have settled into a routine of contented daily existence. When the Society for the Preservation of St. Brendan's Atoll asks Abba Jacob to catalog the plant and animal life on every island in their area, Snook accompanies him. Content to explore each island while Abba Jacob works, Snook is left behind during a storm when Abba Jacob and his guides must leave in a hurry. Alone on the uninhabited island, Snook must survive on his own. He develops his own routine and does fine, but there is always something missing from his life. Marilyn Nelson's graceful narrative combines with Timothy Basil Ering's striking acrylic and ink illustrations to provide just the right amount of detail to convey a sense of longing for something once had but then lost—and eventually, joyfully found again. (Ages 7–10)

Newhouse, Maxwell. *The Weber Street Wonder Work Crew*. Tundra, 2010. 24 pages (978–0–88776–913–9, \$17.95)

Every child has gift to share and a job to do on Weber Street, whether it's a green thumb, a way with dogs, or enough elbow grease to make the windows shine. And every child contributes to make their street a better place to live. Ava, for example, who uses a wheelchair, is a computer whiz and helps an elderly neighbor with her online social networking. And when it's time for the community garage sale and block party, everyone pitches in to get the necessary work done and to share in the fun. Everything on Weber Street is a bit too good to be true perhaps, without a single crabby neighbor or child who would prefer to play their X-Box or Wii, but the book demonstrates the ideals of civic engagement and community involvement. Newhouse's folk-art style illustrations feature a diverse cast of characters living on Weber Street. (Ages 4–7)

Ramsey, Calvin Alexander with Gwen Strauss. *Ruth and the Green Book*. Illustrated by Floyd Cooper. Carolrhoda, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–7613–5255–6, \$16.95)

Young Ruth is excited to be traveling with her parents from Chicago to Alabama in their 1952 “sea mist green” Buick to visit her grandma. Then a gas station attendant won't let her mother use the restroom, and the

anticipation of staying in a real hotel turns to disappointment and anger: no Blacks allowed. It's an attendant at another gas station who tells them about *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, a guide to businesses and homes that welcome Black travelers. "I couldn't stop reading it—all those places in all those states where we could go and not worry about being turned away." They stay one night at the home of a Black woman who welcomes them with a warm smile and a free room, and a second night at an inn where every visitor has a copy of the *Green Book*. "It felt like I was part of one big family!" Illustrations heighten the sense of history and emotion in a fascinating picture book that stays true to a child's perspective while illuminating the essential support African Americans provided one another in the face of mid-twentieth-century racism. A historical note provides additional information on the development and uses of *The Negro Motorist Green Book*. (Ages 6–9)

Raschka, Chris. *Little Black Crow. A Richard Jackson Book* / Atheneum, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-689-84601-4, \$16.99)

A young boy sitting on a fencepost wonders about a little black crow he sees. His questions are wide-ranging as he speculates on everything from the weather and the crow's family to more serious considerations. "Are you ever afraid of mistakes you've made?" Rhyming and repetition create a musical cadence to the boy's musings, inviting participation in narrative that works its way to the heart of what matters: the little boy's sense of self and his place in the world. Watercolor and ink illustrations complement this contemplative book. *Highly Commended, 2011 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 4–7)

Ritz, Karen. *Windows with Birds*. Boyds Mills Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-1-59078-656-7, \$16.95)

An unusual perspective on moving from one home to another looks at the change through the eyes of a cat who is unsettled and unhappy at no longer living in the house that had "windows with birds." Instead, the cat is now in a place where the windows are high up, looking down on city buildings. He hides deep in a laundry basket and up inside a box spring while a little boy looks for him. When the boy finally falls asleep after tossing and turning, the cat comes out, curling up next to him on the bed. And in the morning, there are birds outside the windows after all, along with new places to hide in and explore, and the boy—always the boy—who took care of him before and takes care of him still. Karen Ritz's story acknowledges the anxiety and fear that can be part of change, along with the new discoveries that bring excitement and the continuity that provides comfort. (Ages 4–7)

Rodriguez, Béatrice. *The Chicken Thief*. U.S. edition: Enchanted Lion Books, 2010. 24 pages. (trade 978-1-59270-092-9, \$14.95)

In the midst of a friendly picnic, a group of friends—a bear, a rooster, a rabbit, and assorted hens and chicks—are startled when a fox suddenly rises from nearby bushes, snatches up one of the chickens, and races off with her in his arms. This wordless picture book tracks his flight through the forest, up a mountain, and across a raging sea in a rowboat. All the while, the

rooster, the rabbit, and the bear are in frantic pursuit. When the trio finally bursts through the door of the fox's den, they discover the chicken and the fox having a cozy cup of tea in front of the fireplace. Stockholm Syndrome or star-crossed lovers searching for a happy home? Arguments could be made for either interpretation; however, visual clues suggest that while the hen is startled at the fox's initial appearance, she appears composed shortly after and is clearly trying to explain everything to her friends near story's end. The book's short, wide format encourages readers to track the animals' movement across the pages, while the warmly colored illustrations add charm to the drama. (Ages 4–8)

Rumford, James. *Rain School*. Houghton Mifflin / Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–547–24307–8, \$16.99)

When Thomas starts school in his village in Chad, the first lesson the children learn is how to make the mud bricks to build the school room. Bit by bit they build the school, and then the traditional learning can begin. James Rumford based his story on a town he visited while serving in the Peace Corps in Chad, where the mud-brick school was washed away during the summer's rainy season. His brightly colored pastel illustrations show the difference between the dry and rainy seasons by using gold and orange hues in the winter and grays and blues for the rainy season. The art also captures the eagerness of the school's young students, who are learning to read. (Age 4–7)

Russo, Marisabina. *A Very Big Bunny*. Schwartz & Wade, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978–0–375–84463–8, \$17.99)

Being different is rarely easy, and Amelia is painfully aware that she is the biggest bunny in her class. When they line up in size order, Amelia is always last. Her feet are too big for hopscotch. The seesaw? Out of the question. Amelia learns to keep to herself in an effort to avoid unwanted attention. When little Susannah shows up in class, she faces a similar—yet different—set of obstacles. Her feet are too small for hopscotch. The seesaw? Out of the question. But unlike Amelia, Susannah doesn't keep to herself. In fact, she tries to engage Amelia in conversation again and again, despite Amelia's rebuffs. And when Amelia contemplates developing a bad cold to avoid picture day, it's irrepensible Susannah who shows up with the supplies necessary to ensure that both bunnies, large and small, will be looking their very best for their close-ups. Perfect pacing pairs with appealing gouache illustrations in this welcome and gentle attempt to help children understand what it's like to stand out from one's peers. (Ages 4–8)

Smith, Lane. *It's a Book*. Roaring Brook Press, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–1–59643–606–0, \$12.99)

Smith's cartoon illustrations show Jackass and Monkey sitting in armchairs across from each other, Jackass with his laptop and Monkey with his book. In a text told in dialogue, Jackass, who has never seen a book before, peppers Monkey with question after question about what it does ("Can it text? Tweet? Wi-Fi?") and how it works ("Does it need a password? Need a screen

name?”). Exasperated, Monkey finally resorts to reading a passage of *Treasure Island* aloud. Jackass gets drawn into the story and asks to read it, promising to re-charge it when he’s finished. Monkey’s parting words (“It’s a book, Jackass.”) have raised some adult eyebrows, but it is the character’s name, and the author has made it pretty clear from the beginning that he doesn’t think much of the story’s antagonist. (Ages 5–8)

Watson, Renée. *A Place Where Hurricanes Happen*. Illustrated by Shadra Strickland. Random House, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978–0–375–85609–9, \$17.99)

“We’re from New Orleans, a place where hurricanes happen. But that’s only the bad side.” Renée Watson’s offers insight into the experiences of children during Hurricane Katrina in this narrative told in the voices of four fictional African American friends: Adrienne, Michael, Tommy, and Keesha. Life in their New Orleans neighborhood is about much more than hurricanes. It’s about playing hide-and-go-seek, drawing under the tree, and cooking and eating jambalaya. When Katrina hits, the four are separated and each relates what happened, from boarding up the windows and fleeing to relatives’ houses to seeking shelter at the Superdome to being rescued from rising waters at home. After fear and frustration and long months of separation they are finally reunited and participate in a healing ritual in their neighborhood that honors those who’ve come back, and those who have not. Watson’s sensitive writing, and Shadra Strickland’s soft illustrations, skillfully and tenderly present the children’s experiences in this picture book that assumes some prior knowledge of the catastrophe. (Ages 6–10)

Wiesner, David. *Art & Max*. Clarion, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978–0–618–75663–6, \$17.99)

In the desert of the American Southwest, a horned lizard named Art is just about to finish painting his masterpiece when he is interrupted by a small lizard named Max who wants to paint, too. All Max needs is a blank canvas, some paint, and an idea to get started. Art provides them all, but when he suggests to Max, “Paint me,” Max takes it literally and covers Art in colorful paint. His humorous, over-the-top attempts to get the paint off of Art playfully show different kinds of media, culminating in a simple line drawing of Art that gets deconstructed when Max begins pulling at a loose thread. As he did with his Caldecott-winning *The Three Pigs* (Clarion, 2001), Wiesner takes book illustration to a new intellectual plane, encouraging young readers to think about the pictures they are seeing by honing their awareness of the creative process. (Ages 5–8)

Books for Beginning Readers

Chaconas, Dori. *Cork & Fuzz: The Babysitters.* Illustrated by Lisa McCue. (A Viking Easy-to-Read) Viking, 2010. 32 pages (trade 978-0-670-01200-8, \$13.99)

“Cork was a short muskrat . . . Fuzz was a tall possum . . . Two best friends. One was helpful. The other one was Fuzz.” Cork could use Fuzz’s help as he tries to babysit a little porcupine who chews on everything in sight. But Fuzz is too busy making a bear trap to help Cork out. And when he does try to help, he only makes things worse. Now Cork is in charge of a crying baby porcupine. But Fuzz unwittingly provides assistance after all when he catches himself in his own bear trap. It’s the perfect distraction for the baby, who proves to be pretty helpful himself. Dori Chaconas and Lisa McCue have again teamed up on another winning, winsome story featuring this entertaining duo. (Ages 4–7)

Lin, Grace. *Ling & Ting: Not Exactly the Same!* Little, Brown, 2010. 43 pages (trade 978-0-316-02452-5, \$14.99)

Ling and Ting are identical Chinese American twin sisters who distinguish themselves from each other over the course of six easy, breezy, interconnected stories in this beginning chapter book. In the opening chapter, the seemingly identical girls don’t look exactly alike for long; restless Ting sneezes during a haircut, resulting in a slip of the scissors and jagged bangs that set her apart from her sister. The girls prove to have different approaches to everything they do, from making Chinese dumplings to eating—or not—with chopsticks. Ling likes magic. Ting is a storyteller. But both are full of delight—in each other, and for young readers. Grace Lin’s appealing illustrations add to the charm of this volume that offers up a pleasing surprise or two in the way the stories tie together, offering more complexity than one might expect from a beginning reader. (Ages 4–7)

Ries, Lori. *Aggie the Brave.* Illustrated by Frank W. Dormer. Charlesbridge, 2010. 48 pages (lib. 978-1-57091-635-9, \$12.95)

Aggie is a small brown-and-white dog about to be spayed, and the surgery is a scary prospect for Aggie’s young owner. “Will Aggie get hurt? What if she gets hungry? Can I wait for her here?” Instead it’s a long day of waiting at home and a night in an Aggie-less bed before his family can pick Aggie up the next day. It takes a few more days before Aggie—in her “lamp-head” collar that the little boy transforms into a lion’s mane—starts acting like herself again. And two weeks pass before Aggie can run and play like she used to in this terrific book for beginning readers that is fine-tuned to a child’s feelings of anxiety and love. Lori Ries’s perfectly pitched text is paired with Frank W. Dormer’s pen-and-ink and watercolor illustrations that sparkle with moments of unexpected humor. (Ages 4–7)

Seabrooke, Brenda. *WolfPie*. Illustrated by Liz Callen. Clarion / Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 46 pages (trade 978-0-547-04403-3, \$16.00)

After trying unsuccessfully to blow down the Pygg brothers' house of brick, Wilfong the wolf decides to wait them out; after all, they can't stay inside forever. He's soon less interested in eating the Pyggs than in joining all their fun, eagerly calling through the window as the brothers play games and tell jokes. Then winter comes and Wilfong freezes solid. With the arrival of spring it's not just Wilfong but his relationship with the Pyggs that warms. The brothers aren't ready to completely embrace Wilfong—he is a wolf after all—but they are willing to consider that he's changed his ways. Wilfong proves he is trustworthy time and time again, and after he saves the brothers from a horde of hungry wolves, the Pyggs realize Wilfong is a friend indeed. Brenda Seabrooke's charming chapter book features illustrations by Liz Callen that are perfectly suited to the lively and funny tenor of the story. (Ages 6–9)

Silverman, Erica. *Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa: Spring Babies*. Illustrated by Betsy Lewin. Harcourt / Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 40 pages (trade 978-0-15-205396-3, \$15.00)

Spring means babies on Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa's farm. First there's the birth of Sweety-Pie's calf in the middle of the night. Then there's the gift of a puppy from their friend Jenny (although Cocoa was hoping for peppermint). Finally, there's five owlets up in the hayloft. Erica Silverman continues to delight in the latest volume featuring the memorable interactions between wise young Kate and her self-centered horse, who never fails to reveal a kind heart. Silverman develops much of the droll humor through the dialogue between Kate and Cocoa, while playful language and terrific pacing add to the lively storytelling. Betsy Lewin's watercolor illustrations bring additional warmth and charm to this winning volume. (Ages 4–8)

Willems, Mo. *Can I Play Too? (An Elephant and Piggie Book)* Hyperion, 2010. 57 pages (trade 978-142311991-3, \$8.99)

Willems, Mo. *We Are in a Book! (An Elephant and Piggie Book)* Hyperion, 2010. 57 pages (trade 978-142313308-7, \$8.99)

Mo Willems continues to delight with Elephant and Piggie, whose humorous exchanges—all conveyed through speech bubbles—are a gift to beginning readers. In *Can I Play Too?* the two are starting a game of catch when a snake asks to join the game. The request challenges Elephant and Piggie to tactfully point out the obvious—the snake has no arms to catch the ball. The snake is eager to try, but after several unsuccessful attempts (it's literally bombarded with balls), Piggie comes up with a much better way to include their new friend in the game. In *We Are in a Book!* Elephant and Piggie make a stunning discovery: “The reader is reading these word bubbles. We are in a book!” Piggie is quick to realize the powerful position this puts them in. She makes the reader say “Banana,” which sends Elephant into gales of laughter. And when the book is coming perilously close to its end, the answer is obvious. “Will you please read us again?” Willems's deceptively simple

dialogue and illustrations not only are brimming with wit but also grounded in conventions that support both reading and visual literacy. (Ages 3–7)

Books for Newly Independent Readers

Atinuke. *Anna Hibiscus*. Illustrated by Lauren Tobia. U.S. edition: Kane Miller, 2010. 109 pages (pbk 978–1–935279–73–0, \$5.99)

Atinuke. *Hooray for Anna Hibiscus!* Illustrated by Lauren Tobia. U.S. edition: Kane Miller, 2010. 108 pages (pbk 978–1–935279–74–7, \$5.99)

A pair of chapter books feature a young girl and her family who live in a large city in Africa. Anna Hibiscus's dad is Black African; her mom is white Canadian. Anna lives with her parents, twin baby brothers, and grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins in their family compound where cars, cell phones, and the Internet are a way of life, but so are traditional dress, food, and values. In these stories, humor is often drawn from situations in which embracing modern ideas has unexpected outcomes. When Anna Hibiscus's parents decide to take only their immediate family on a vacation to a nearby island—their house is so crowded!—they miss everyone else so much that one by one Anna Hibiscus's dad brings the rest of their relatives to join them. When Anna's uncles purchase a generator so the family has light when the electricity goes out—a predictably unpredictable occurrence—all of the children miss the thrill that used to come with each power outage: of playing hide and seek in the dark, of listening to their grandmother's stories. The way the generator meets its demise is funny, but the decision not to replace it is one that emphasizes the importance of slowing down and taking time to be together in a mindful way. Author Atinuke, who is originally from Nigeria, incorporates the cadence of oral storytelling into the narrative of these warm, energetic volumes that offer an affirming look at African identity. (The author makes clear Anna Hibiscus lives in one of many countries in Africa, but the decision not to specify one in particular seems intentional and appropriate.) She engagingly portrays a contemporary urban African child who is not only surrounded by the love and bustling chaos of her family but is also learning about the larger world right outside her door in which not everyone is as fortunate as she. Enlightening but most of all entertaining, these books are a treat for newly independent readers, as well as children lucky enough to hear them read aloud. (Ages 5–9)

Cheng, Andrea. *Only One Year*. Illustrated by Nicole Wong. Lee & Low, 2010. 97 pages (trade 978–1–60060–252–8, \$16.95)

Nine-year-old Sharon will miss her two-year-old brother, Di Di, when he leaves to live in China for one year with Nai Nai, their grandmother. Sharon doesn't understand why Di Di can't simply go to daycare or a neighbor's

house while her parents are working, but Mama explains the importance of Di Di learning Chinese and being raised by family. Like many Chinese American children, Sharon and her younger sister, Mary, also spent a year in China when they were two. As the seasons pass, Sharon stays busy with school, playing with friends, and building a miniature house, and she and Mary keep an album of photos sent by Nai Nai. When Di Di returns, Sharon and Mary must adjust to his presence all over again, while three-year-old Di Di deals with missing Nai Nai and life in China. Author Andrea Cheng's simple text and clean layout, coupled with Nicole Wong's ink illustrations, make an engaging and culturally informative read for newly independent readers. An author's note describes the decision many immigrant families face as they weigh leaving their children with strangers against placing them in the care of loving family members who will ground them in their culture and language—even if that family is half a world away. (Ages 6–9)

Greene, Stephanie. *Princess Posey and the First Grade Parade.* Illustrated by **Stephanie Roth Sisson.** Putnam, 2010. 83 pages (trade 978-0-399-25167-2, \$12.99)

Posey is scared about her impending entry into first grade, especially the thought of getting dropped off at the curb and braving school on her own. The next-door neighbors intensify her fear with stories of monsters and snakes, and even though Posey knows they are teasing her, she becomes increasingly anxious. To make things worse, her mom has informed her that she can't wear her battered tutu to school, an outfit she's worn daily all summer and that secretly makes her feel empowered (it's shown glittery pink on the cover). But a chance encounter with her new teacher before school starts turns things around. By the time the first day arrives, Posey is looking forward to the milestone event. This reassuring story features short chapters, even shorter lines of text with ample white space between them, and black-and-white illustrations on many pages. The fine writing transcends a few weak moments in the plot in a welcome book for readers who are ready to tackle slightly longer chapter stories. (Ages 5–8)

Fiction for Children

Alexander, R. C. *Unfamiliar Magic.* Random House, 2010. 355 pages (trade 978-0-375-85854-3, \$17.99)

The daughter of a witch, twelve-year-old Desi is frustrated by her own lack of magical training. Her mother seems determined that Desi remain ignorant of all but the most basic magic. Then her mother disappears in an effort to keep a dark magician—Desi's own father—from tracking Desi down. Before she left, Desi's mother transformed her familiar, the family's cat, into a teenage girl to act as Desi's guardian and protector. Devil, now renamed Cat, is completely puzzled by her human body and human behavior, and completely puzzling to the teenage boy living next door who'd like to get to

know her. Meanwhile, Desi is determined to use magic to find out where her mother is, not realizing that every time she tries a spell, she is drawing danger closer and closer. But the threat turns out not to be as clear-cut as Desi's mother thought in R. C. Alexander's debut novel, an enjoyable fantasy grounded in the real world and featuring a cast of memorable characters whose relationships and interactions are sometimes complex, sometimes hilarious (especially those involving teenage Cat, who still thinks like a cat), and always satisfying. (Ages 10–13)

Appelt, Kathi. *Keeper*. Illustrated by August Hall. Atheneum, 2010. 416 pages (trade 978-1-4169-5060-8, \$16.99)

Kathi Appelt weaves elements of legend, lore, and fantasy into a novel in which ten-year-old Keeper's attempt to journey in a small red boat to the rocky reef 100 yards offshore from her Texas Gulf Coast home ends up taking her farther than she'd planned. She hopes to find her mother, who she believes is a mermaid, in order to make sense of a day that was supposed to be so right but on which everything went wrong. Her friend Dogie was going to propose to Signe, the young woman with whom Keeper lives. Now Signe, Dogie, and even their elderly neighbor Mr. Beauchamp are upset because of things Keeper did and did not do. With her dog and pet seagull, Keeper is caught in a nighttime storm and swept past the reef into rough open sea. The farther she goes from shore, the harder it is for Keeper to maintain the fantasy about her mother's identity. Truth—in the form of memory—finally takes hold, but with it comes the affirmation Keeper needs, and also rescue from a surprising source. Much like she did in *The Underneath* (Atheneum, 2008), Appelt gives every being in her story voice and conscience—human and nonhuman alike are observers, tellers, and agents in her tale, and she moves in and around each character's story without ever losing her way. The result is a beautifully crafted novel that creates a full circle filled with love. (Ages 8–11)

Balliett, Blue. *The Danger Box*. Scholastic Press, 2010. 304 pages (trade 978-0-439-85209-8, \$16.99)

Legally blind and a compulsive list-maker, Zoomy is being raised by grandparents who make him feel like a treasure. He is smart and curious, and he can tell that whoever wrote the journal entries in the old notebook he found in a box in his grandparent's garage was smart and curious, too. When Zoomy's long-lost alcoholic father shows up asking questions about the box he left in the garage years before, Zoomy knows to keep quiet: His father feels dangerous. In the meantime, Zoomy meets Lorrol, a kindred spirit and the first friend he's ever made, and shares his theory about the identity of the notebook's original owner: Charles Darwin. There's a lot going on in this latest outing from Blue Balliett that has multiple narrative elements, including a newspaper Zoomy and Lorrol start about Darwin titled *The Gas Gazette*. Although the "bad guys" are drawn with broad strokes in this mystery and everything turns out unbelievably fine, Zoomy and those closest to him, especially his grandparents, are wonderfully realized in a novel that offers a number of satisfyingly suspenseful moments as it imagines the fate

of the very real missing Darwin journal chronicling his historic voyage on *H.M.S. Beagle*. (Ages 8–11)

Banerjee, Anjali. *Seaglass Summer*. Wendy Lamb Books, 2010. 163 pages (trade 978-0-385-73567-4, \$15.99)

While her parents go to India to visit family, eleven-year-old Poppy Ray is staying with her Uncle Sanjay, a veterinarian on an island off the Washington State coast. Poppy wants to be a veterinarian too, so she can't wait to help her uncle at work, even if her responsibilities are limited to animal grooming, cage cleaning, and other basic tasks. Over the course of the summer, Poppy gets to know her Uncle Sanjay better and slowly develops a friendship with Hawk, son of the gruff woman who manages Uncle Sanjay's office. Poppy also discovers that her uncle's work involves more than just caring for animals—it's about being part of a community and developing relationships with people, too. She also learns that being a vet is emotionally demanding. It can mean helping a severely injured animal that may or may not recover, or euthanizing someone's beloved but aging and ailing pet—a plot element handled with realism and compassion. This appealing novel is written with a light touch but has plenty of substance, including a strong cast of intriguing secondary characters. (Ages 7–10)

Bauer, A. C. E. *Come Fall*. Random House, 2010. 231 pages (trade 978-0-375-85825-3, \$15.99)

A blend of realism and fantasy moves back and forth between a story about three outsiders who become friends in junior high school, and a secondary plot involving the Faery Queen Titania, King Oberon, and Puck. Salman Page is a new kid at school, and Lu Zimmer is assigned to be his designated buddy. Salman and Lu's friendship is tentative at first. But when Lu sees how Salman's dark skin and foster child status, not to mention the crow that follows him around outside, make him a target of other kids, she takes his side without question. Lu is not sure what Salman will make of Bloss Pease, but Salman likes Bloss (who appears to be somewhere on the Autism spectrum) because he's always genuine. The subplot in this otherwise solid work of realistic fiction relates to Salman. Queen Titania promised Salman's mother that she would watch over the boy until he reached adulthood: Salman's crow was sent by her. But the heart of A. C. E. Bauer's compelling novel is the friendship among the three distinct and likeable young, contemporary teens. Bauer provides a rich portrait of her protagonists' lives as she reveals how their deepening friendship challenges them all to be braver and stronger in many ways. (Ages 10–13)

Bell, Cathleen Davitt. *Little Blog on the Prairie*. Bloomsbury, 2010. 276 pages (trade 978-1-59990-286-9, \$16.99)

Teenage Gen is spending the summer with her family at Camp Frontier. Participants agree to live off the grid and on the land like pioneers. But Gen has snuck a cell phone in and is texting her friends back home about the absurdity of the experience. ("Help. I'm dressed up like an American

Girl doll minus the fashion sense.”) Camp was supposed to be a bonding experience for Gen’s family, but the struggle of even simple tasks and the competition among camp families is causing more stress than togetherness. Even Gen’s crush on Caleb, a boy from another family, is complicated: the teenage daughter of the camp’s owners seems to like him too. Then Gen discovers the owners’ secret shack. The history purists have a computer with Internet access and a fridge stocked with soda. Now Gen can recharge her phone and text even more scathing perspectives on Camp Frontier. But one of Gen’s friends has been posting her texts on a blog, and readership is about to skyrocket. Cathleen Davitt Bell starts with a hilarious premise and develops it into a story that offers astute observations about human behavior at the best and worst of times. A subplot involving a reality TV show is over the top but ultimately doesn’t detract from the genuine humor, as well as the insightful story about family at the novel’s core. (Ages 10–14)

Bolden, Tonya. *Finding Family*. Bloomsbury, 2010. 181 pages (trade 978–1–59990–318–7, \$15.99)

Tonya Bolden incorporates vintage photographs of African Americans into a fictional story about twelve-year-old Delana, who lives with her grandfather and great aunt in Charleston, West Virginia, 1905. Delana’s Great Aunt Tilley often shows old family photos and tells Delana stories about the people in them. When Great Aunt Tilley dies, Delana’s second cousin Ambertine (“trash and trouble,” Aunt Tilley always said) secretly shows up and begins telling Delana more about her family—stories Aunt Tilley never told. Suddenly, all of Aunt Tilley’s family stories, including—and especially—the one about Delana’s own parents are cast into doubt. After Delana discovers her father did not abandon her after her mother’s death as she’d always been told, she’s full of anger at her grandfather, who forced her father into making an unfair, painful choice. Tonya Bolden successfully balances Delana’s feelings of grief, loss, and anger with eventual compassion and forgiveness in this compelling story of self-discovery and coming of age that builds to a satisfying conclusion, including a long-awaited photograph of Delana herself. (Ages 9–12)

Bond, Victoria and T. R. Simon. *Zora and Me*. Candlewick Press, 2010. 170 pages (trade 978–0–7636–4300–3, \$16.99)

Carrie and her best friend Zora are both nine and living in Eatonville, Florida, an all-Black community, just after the turn of the twentieth century. Zora is convinced a quiet older man in their town has the power to transform into a killer gator. Her already active imagination is further fueled by a book of gator myths and lore, and she convinces Carrie and their friend Teddy to help her investigate. Then a homeless Black man is found murdered. Is it the work of the killer gator, or something even more sinister? It’s Zora’s habit of listening in on adult conversations and asking questions that eventually helps her piece together what happened, which has nothing to do with magic or myth and everything to do with racism beyond the borders of their town. This swiftly paced story is spun from elements of the childhood of Zora Neale Hurston, who would grow up to become a masterful storyteller—

something foreshadowed here. Clarification on fact versus fiction in the story would have been a welcome addition to the end matter about Hurston, which includes a brief biographical sketch as well as a timeline of her life and selected bibliography. But that doesn't detract from this captivating mystery featuring terrifically appealing characters and a strong sense of place and time. (Ages 9–12)

Bow, Erin. *Plain Kate*. Arthur A. Levine Books / Scholastic, 2010. 314 pages (trade 978–0–545–16664–5, \$17.99)

Kate's decision to sell her shadow after her father dies is a dangerous one, leaving her no choice but to flee her village. Even if no one notices her fading shadow, it will be hard to hide the fact that her cat, Taggle, can suddenly talk—the gift she received in the bargain to ease her loneliness. Kate's taken in by a band of Roamers who have no idea of the deal she's made. They admire her skill as a carver and have sympathy for the challenges she's faced. But a Roamer girl whose mother was a witch healer eventually discovers Kate's secret. Instead of raising the alarm, Drina offers to help Kate get her shadow back, using the incantations her mother taught her before being burned to death for witchcraft. But Drina isn't skilled enough to fulfill her good intentions. Everything goes wrong, and Kate is cast out from the people she's come to love, even as the magic that's been unleashed threatens them all. Erin Bow's highly original debut fantasy features a cast of intriguingly complex characters, including the highly entertaining—and ultimately heroic—talking cat. There are moments of pure heartbreak in this story that reveals the worst, but also the best, of human nature. (Ages 10–13)

Boyce, Frank Cottrell. *Cosmic*. U.S. edition: Walden Pond Press / HarperCollins, 2010. 313 pages (trade 978–0–06–183683–1, \$16.99)

Twelve-year-old Liam is often mistaken for an adult because of his size and physical maturity. His parents worry about Liam's difficulty relating to peers, but Liam knows there are advantages too, like being invited to take the latest model Porsche out for a spin by an unsuspecting salesperson. (Liam's dad, in the nick of time: "You. Out. Now.") Liam's success posing as an adult reaches new heights when he enters a contest for dads and kids to try out a new, secret thrill ride called "Rocket." He enters as a dad, and when he ends up one of four winners, he convinces his classmate Florida to play the role of his daughter. After a little deception to explain their absence, the two embark on an all-expenses-paid trip to China. That's where "Rocket" takes off—literally: It turns out this thrill ride is the real thing. Liam and fashion-obsessed Florida are a striking contrast to the other contest-winners: three overachieving kids and their high-pressure dads. In a story that unfolds largely in retrospect, Liam relates events that brought him to his current situation: inside a rocket spinning out of control in space, the only "adult" on board. Frank Cottrell Boyce's latest novel is a deft blend of laugh-out-loud humor and immeasurable warmth as it offers up observations about both childhood and parenting, and features characters who reveal welcome—and sometimes surprising—depth. (Ages 9–13)

Connor, Leslie. *Crunch*. Katherine Tegen Books / HarperCollins, 2010. 330 pages (trade 978-0-06-169229-1, \$16.99)

Fourteen-year-old Dewey's parents are stranded on vacation up near the Canadian border, leaving Dewey and his four siblings on their own for much longer than originally planned. All the kids know the routine for taking care of themselves and one another, but things are complicated because of why their parents can't get home: there's an energy crunch and no one can get gas. People from all over town are showing up with their bikes in hopes of getting them fixed at their dad's repair shop. Dewey is good at fixing bikes, and his brother Vince is great at it. But as the demand for repairs escalates, so too do tempers on all sides, with the crisis bringing out the best in some friends and neighbors and the worst in others. Meanwhile, bikers and pedestrians take over the interstate, bike parts are running out, grocery store shelves are emptying, and there's no end to the trouble in sight. For Dewey, who is trying to manage the business, admitting he can't do it all is akin to admitting defeat, and learning to say "I can't" without feeling like a failure is his ultimate challenge. Despite an unnecessary subplot involving a bike thief, Leslie Connor's novel is an intriguing blend of old-fashioned sensibility and twenty-first-century dilemma. Wonderful sibling personalities and interactions ground this story that offers a fascinating "what if" for readers to contemplate. (Ages 10-13)

Coulumbis, Audrey. *Jake*. Random House, 2010. 162 pages (trade 978-0-375-85630-3, \$15.99)

With one slip on an icy patch, Jake's mom breaks her leg, and that sudden, severe injury has an initially frightening impact on the ten-year-old's life. Jake's father died years earlier, and Jake and his mother live alone. Her accident necessitates a hospital stay, and she'll require assistance after she's able to return home. A grandfather he barely knows arrives to lend a hand, and their next-door neighbor, Mrs. Buttermark, proves a true friend as she helps Jake navigate his way through the first few difficult days. With her support, Jake and his reserved grandfather begin to develop a relationship in this novel set during the Christmas season. When an aunt and his mother's best friend also rally around, Jake realizes he has the support of a wonderful family comprised of relatives and friends. Despite an unfortunately confusing passage of time in the opening scene and the start of chapter one, this novel is a realistic exploration of how scary it can be for a child when something happens to that one adult who cares for him or her, and a warm, affirming look at an expansive idea of family. (Ages 7-11)

Coy, John. *Eyes on the Goal*. Feiwel and Friends, 2010. 164 pages (trade 978-0-312-37330-6, \$16.99)

Jackson, Gig, Isaac, and Diego share a strong interest in sports. In the spring, they were all members of the same baseball team. Now about to enter sixth grade, the friends head off to a week at summer soccer camp. Of the four, only Diego has a background in soccer, and he's placed in a group with other skilled players their age. Despite his lack of experience, Gig's natural athleticism puts him in the same section, but both Jackson and Isaac are embarrassed to be slotted with players a year younger. Jackson is frustrated

that he seems to have little talent for the sport—it's so hard not to use his hands. He's also interested in Diego's cousin—another soccer star—and must cope with his first crush as well as an unsettling nighttime encounter with a possible ghost. As the week passes, Jackson is challenged to improve his game and remain good friends with his buddies, despite flaring tempers and bruised egos. The four boys introduced in *Top of the Order* (Feiwel and Friends, 2009) emerge from soccer camp with their friendship intact, ready for middle school and, presumably, a fall sport, as the “4 for 4” series continues. (Ages 9–12)

Crum, Shutta. *Thomas and the Dragon Queen*. Illustrated by Lee Wildish. Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. 267 pages (trade 978–0–375–85703–4, \$15.99)

Small for his age but very capable, upbeat Thomas serves as a page and then squire to a knight named Gerald. Despite being teased for his size, he perseveres in training and soon proves himself behind the scenes in battle. When Princess Eleanor is kidnapped by the dragon queen while the knights are off protecting the kingdom's borders, Thomas is knighted and sent on a quest to save her. It proves to be lonely, dangerous, and ultimately full of surprises: he reaches Eleanor on Barren Isle where the dragon queen has her lair, only to discover the princess doesn't need rescuing—she's already working on a diplomatic solution. In the meantime, she's minding the dragon queen's brood: baby dragons whose personalities are irresistible. And Thomas, an experienced big brother, proves to be an able assistant to Eleanor in both dragon-sitting and diplomacy. There are somber moments in this story—the brief battles show that war is grim and death is hard—but Shutta Crum's overall tone is light without ever being frothy in this imaginative and thoroughly enjoyable original fantasy featuring a smart, thoughtful protagonist. (Ages 7–10)

Draper, Sharon M. *Out of My Mind*. Atheneum, 2010. 295 pages (trade 978–1–4169–7170–2, \$16.99)

Melody is a fifth-grade girl with severe cerebral palsy. She has never been able to speak—words come out as guttural sounds. Although Melody's parents can't always understand her, they do recognize her intelligence. To almost everyone else, including the kids and most teachers at her school, she is essentially invisible. The smart, funny girl she is can finally emerge from silence when Melody acquires an electronic voice, allowing her to program words and “speak” for herself. Determined to prove what she can do, Melody tries out for her school quiz bowl team and aces the exam. Her inclusion on the team is met with skepticism by some, but others welcome her, including a girl who becomes her first school friend. Still, things are far from perfect; she faces prejudice, hurdles, and heartbreak that even words can't overcome, along with a heart-rending moment in which she needs her “voice” at a time when she doesn't have access to it. But Melody's world opens up. More important, the world opens up to her in Sharon M. Draper's profoundly affecting novel. Told in Melody's first-person voice, the story relates details of family and school life from Melody's memorable, eye-opening perspective. (Ages 10–13)

Fixmer, Elizabeth. *Saint Training*. Zonderkidz, 2010. 240 pages (trade 978-0-310-72018-8, \$14.99)

Mary Clare O'Brian is the oldest daughter in a large Catholic family living in fictional Littleburg, Wisconsin, in 1967. She bears much of the responsibility for caring for her younger siblings, and with her parents tense because money is tight, Mary Clare bargains with God: if He'll help provide, she'll strive to become a saint. This inspires her ongoing correspondence with the Mother Superior of a Minnesota convent—Mary Clare intends to become a nun and eventually take over the Mother Superior's post, figuring this is good positioning for future sainthood. Issues of the era—Mary Clare's mother is reading *The Feminine Mystique*, her oldest brother is registering for the draft as a Conscientious Objector, and Father Groppi's involvement in civil rights in Milwaukee is a point of debate among Catholics—are seamlessly woven into a story by first-time Wisconsin author Elizabeth Fixmer that is first and foremost about a smart, spirited, take-charge girl coming of age during tumultuous times. This account of Mary Clare's gradually maturing perspective on her family, her religion, and the wider world is often hilarious but also deeply moving. (Ages 10–13)

Frazier, Sundee T. *The Other Half of My Heart*. Delacorte Press, 2010. 296 pages (trade 978-0-385-73440-0, \$16.99)

Eleven-year-old twins Minni and Keira are far from identical. Outgoing Keira has dark brown skin, hair, and eyes like their African American mom. Shy Minni has light skin, red hair, and blue eyes like their Irish American dad. The sisters are visiting their African American grandmother to participate in the Miss Black Pearl preteen program—an event Minni dreads, while Keira can't wait to perform. The girls find plenty of ways to make fun of their strict, old-fashioned grandmother, but some things are too painful for laughter. Grandmother Johnson passionately shares memories of the civil rights movement, but also clearly favors Minni and makes critical comments about Keira's dark skin and kinky hair. This, along with Keira's defense of Minni after another contender nastily questions Minni's blackness, makes Minni think more about what it's like for Keira in their community back home, where theirs is the only African American family. It also makes Minni feel guilty for not speaking out when her sister has faced overt racism, and uncertain about her own racial identity. Sundee T. Frazier takes a fearless look at the complex issues of race, identity, and prejudice beyond and within the Black community in this lively, deeply felt novel in which nothing, including love, is black-and-white. (Ages 10–13)

Haddon, Mark. *Boom!* U.S. edition: David Fickling Books, 2010. 194 pages (trade 978-0-385-75187-2, \$15.99)

This fast-reading science-fiction spoof begins with friends Jimbo and Charlie overhearing two teachers at their school talking what seems to be gibberish. Naturally they conclude the teachers are space aliens, and it just so happens they're right. The discovery puts Charlie and Jimbo in danger, and it isn't long before Charlie is kidnapped. A sibling relationship of mutual disdain is transformed when Jimbo is saved from the same fate by his teenage sister

Becky, who unwittingly disrupts the aliens' kidnapping attempt, and then helps Jimbo try to save Charlie. To Jimbo's surprise and relief, Becky turns out to be strong, steadfast, and quick with a stick in a crisis as they deal with the alien threat to the world. There's plenty of humor ("The giant monkey spider walked up to me and held out a hairy leg . . . 'My name is Ktop-p-pááčôñi,'" said the spider. 'It will cause a car crash in your mouth. But you can call me Britney.'") and action in this fun-filled, tongue-in-cheek novel originally published in Britain in 1994 as *Gridzbi Spudvetch!* Mark Haddon revised the original story for this edition. (Ages 8–11)

Hawkins, Aaron R. *The Year Money Grew on Trees*. Houghton Mifflin / Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. 293 pages (trade 978-0-547-27977-0, \$16.00)

Jackson's neighbor offers to deed him the neglected apple orchard between their homes if Jackson makes it productive and pays her \$8,000 from his profits. At fourteen, Jackson is naïve enough to think he might be able to do it and convinces his two younger sisters and three cousins to work for a share of the money they'll make. But from the moment he strikes the deal Jackson is full of doubt that borders on dread. He knows nothing about growing apples. As he learns—from a book, from a taciturn Sunday School teacher who turns out to be a quiet champion of his efforts, and through trial and error—he must manage complex logistics and an entertainingly unpredictable work crew, devote every spare minute and more of his time to hard physical labor, and acknowledge the very real possibility that the neighbor has no intent of honoring her obligation, IF he succeeds. But Jackson's growing sense of pride, and the connections he makes to the land and to the people who help him, turn out to be the best part of the bargain in this satisfying story set in the 1980s. There's an old-fashioned sensibility to the novel, and if the ultimate outcome seems a bit too good to be true, getting there is a pleasure. (Ages 9–12)

Holm, Jennifer L. *Turtle in Paradise*. Random House, 2010. 191 pages (trade 978-0-375-83688-6, \$16.99)

During the Depression, eleven-year-old Turtle is sent to live with her Aunt Minnie in Key West after her mother's employer makes it clear that she doesn't like children (her mother is a live-in domestic). Turtle spends her time with her boy cousins—Beans, Buddy, and Kermit—and their friends who run a babysitting service called the Diaper Gang, carting around neighborhood babies and selling their homemade diaper-rash ointment. Strong and quick-witted, Turtle is able to keep up with the gang, even if they consider her an outsider. Their daily adventures are varied, and these independent kids are capable and competent, though one senses that the adults, as busy as they are, are watching out for them in one way or another. As Turtle starts to embrace her extended family and new surroundings, she makes interesting discoveries about her relatives and her identity. And when the Diaper Gang goes on a treasure hunt, the story reaches an adventurous climax. Reality comes crashing down quickly with the return of Turtle's mother and her boyfriend, Archie, but a surprising twist grounds this humorous and exciting

story in the warmth of family. Jennifer L. Holm richly depicts personalities and setting in a novel that, she explains in an author's note with photos, is inspired by her own family's history. (Ages 8–11)

Houtman, Jacqueline. *The Reinvention of Edison Thomas*. Front Street, 2010. 189 pages (trade 978–1–59078–708–3, \$17.95)

When Eddy (Edison) Thomas learns that the crossing guard near his school is being eliminated, he worries—obsessively—about the potential dangers for younger children. Although his recent third-place finish in the school science fair left him deeply disappointed, Eddy decides to apply his interest in and aptitude for science and inventing to the problem of the unsafe intersection. Meanwhile, he's trying to navigate the social maze of middle school. Eddy's periodic sessions with a counselor focus on reading facial expressions and social cues, and he wishes they were as easy to understand as schematics. Eddy's one friend at school is Mitch, a boy he's known since preschool. But it's Justin, another science fair kid, who points out that Mitch repeatedly sets Eddy up to be the butt of jokes and mockery, something Eddy himself has a hard time discerning. Wisconsin author Jacqueline Houtman's debut novel features a protagonist with Asperger's syndrome or a similar condition, although Eddy is never labeled. Scenes showing how Eddy thinks, how he talks, and how he interacts—at school and at home, with peers and with parents—reveal a kid with a great heart and sometimes challenging personality. Houtman does a terrific job balancing Eddy's interests and aptitudes with the things that are hard for him. Even the stuff he's good at requires realistic trial and error, but it also helps open the door to new, genuine friendship. (Ages 9–13)

Ignatow, Amy. *The Popularity Papers: Research for the Social Improvement and General Betterment of Lydia Goldblatt & Julie Graham-Chang*. Abrams, 2010. 204 pages (trade 978–0–8109–8421–9, \$15.95)

Best friends Lydia and Julie record their witty observations about what makes certain fifth graders popular in a notebook they pass back and forth. Their plan is to figure out the key to popularity by the time they enter middle school. Their year is peppered with activities to get people to notice them—all based on what the most popular girls do. While taking up knitting doesn't prove to be effective, joining a stick-fighting club and the lacrosse team opens opportunities for new friendships. A real strength of this laugh-out-loud book is the unexpectedly deep and distinctive characterizations of Lydia and Julie, and the wonderful secondary characters, including Julie's gay dads (one of who is Asian American) and Lydia's rebellious older sister, Melody, a goth girl. An eventual fallout between the two best friends offers an opportunity to discover how much they've grown, which includes being able to sincerely say "sorry." Amy Ignatow's light, funny novel, written in two distinctive narrative styles (and fonts) and featuring numerous illustrations (also in two distinctive styles) is a perceptive and poignant commentary on friendship. (Ages 8–11)

Lasky, Kathryn. *Chasing Orion*. Candlewick Press, 2010. 360 pages (trade 978-0-7636-3982-2, \$17.99)

During the summer of 1952, eleven-year-old Georgie, who goes by Georgie, moves into a new house and meets Phyllis, the teenage girl next door. Phyllis is not only friendly but beautiful. She is also encased in an iron lung, a victim of polio. Phyllis's parents talk about her future as if everything is bright and anything is possible, and Phyllis always agrees when they're around. But when she's alone with Phyllis, Georgie begins to sense that beneath her seemingly upbeat exterior Phyllis is desperate and unhappy. Phyllis's growing interest in Georgie's older brother, Emmett—something Georgie had initially encouraged—begins to worry Georgie as she wonders if Phyllis is motivated by something darker than desire for romance. Does she want Emmett to help her die? Kathryn Lasky's increasingly tense and beautifully written novel is a wonderful portrait of its time, when the fears surrounding polio limited children's freedom, especially in summer, and the disease itself forever altered lives. As a narrator Georgie is wise beyond her years, yet Lasky's story not only works but is a skilled treatment of a psychologically complex topic for its audience. (Ages 10–14)

Levy, Debbie. *The Year of Goodbyes*. Disney / Hyperion, 2010. 136 pages (trade 978-1-4231-2901-1, \$16.99)

Debbie Levy's narrative in verse is built around her mother's *poesialbum*—a traditional friendship album that was popular among girls in Germany at the time of Hitler's rise. Actual entries from her mother's friends and classmates form the epigraph for each chapter as twelve-year-old Jutta (Levy's mother) describes how life for Jews becomes more and more restricted and dangerous. Her father is desperately trying to obtain permission, and then visas, for their family to emigrate to America. Eventually they are able to escape the dangers in their homeland. Blending fact and fiction, Levy is able to convey the monumental events taking place in Germany through the eyes of a girl whose life revolves around family and friendships, all of which become more and more cherished as time goes by and dangers increase. In addition to photographs, a timeline and bibliography, Levy's afterword offers brief accounts of what happened to her mother's friends and classmates whose names and words are part of Jutta's *poesialbum*, adding additional depth to this fascinating story. (Ages 10–13)

Matti, Truus. *Departure Time*. Translated from the Dutch by Nancy Forest-Flier. U.S. edition: Namelos, 2010. 214 pages (trade 978-1-60898-087-1, \$18.95)

A girl is stranded at a run-down hotel that has an unusual proprietor: a solicitous fox that's alternately assisted and hampered by a rat with big plans and inconsistent follow-through. She can't quite remember the details of her life and her hosts aren't offering answers. As the girl explores the hotel—seeking the source of the song that someone is playing endlessly on a piano—she gets flashes of insight to who she is and why she's there, but she can't comprehend their meaning. An unusual and intriguing fantasy alternates chapters about the girl's experiences at the hotel with chapters grounded in

the real world. In these, a girl on the eve of her eleventh birthday is struggling with grief over her father's death the year before. She's also burdened by guilt. A traveling musician, her father hadn't made it home for her tenth birthday as he'd promised he would, and the last letter she sent him was full of anger and condemnation, as well as the crumpled remnants of a story they'd been writing together about a girl, a fox, and a rat. Truus Matti deftly moves back and forth between two narratives intricately connected on an emotional plane, as well as through mirrored characters, as she examines the healing power of forgiveness in a story featuring characters, both human and animal, that are entertaining and full of appeal. (Ages 9–13)

Newbery, Linda. *Lucy and the Green Man*. Illustrated by Pam Smy. David Fickling Books, 2010. 217 pages (trade 978-0-385-75204-6, \$16.99)

For young Lucy, working in the garden is one of the ways she loves spending time with her Grandpa Will. It is Grandpa Will who teaches her about Lob, a green man who resides in his garden, and Lucy even catches a glimpse of Lob—this ancient being of the earth. But after Grandpa Will dies, the garden at her grandparents' home goes untended, and eventually the house is sold. At her home in the city, Lucy feels bereft, grieving the loss of her grandpa and also of Lob. As time passes she begins to wonder if Lob was just made up. Meanwhile, Lob is literally adrift in the countryside, wandering in search of a new place to be, feeling drawn toward the city for reasons he can't explain. It is a garden—and the hope and faith that a garden represents—that eventually reunites Lucy and Lob in this tender, satisfying story about both grieving and believing in the magic of the earth. (Ages 7–10)

Resau, Laura. *Star in the Forest*. Delacorte Press, 2010. 149 pages (trade 978-0-385-73792-0, \$14.99)

Sixth grader Zitlally's family is in the United States illegally. When Papá is picked up for speeding and deported back to Mexico, Zitlally becomes convinced that her father's fate is tied to that of a dog she finds chained and starving in the woods near her trailer park. She thinks the dog, whom she calls Star—the meaning of her own name in the Nahuatl language—is Papá's spirit animal. That means Papá's safe return and Star's well-being are dependent upon one another. Zitlally does her best to care for the dog, finding a surprising source of help in her neighbor Crystal. Zitlally has never gotten to know Crystal well—Zitlally's friends at school didn't think Crystal was worth getting to know—but she discovers that Crystal is not only a good ally in caring for Star but a good friend as well. Crystal tells grand lies about her own father, but Zitlally recognizes the pain beneath them and the desire to make up a brighter story than the truth. Wonderful descriptive language and fully realized, sensitively portrayed characters are among the literary qualities that distinguish this short, accessible novel that seamlessly incorporates spiritual elements into an illuminating look at the fears and struggles of undocumented families. (Ages 8–11)

Rhodes, Jewell Parker. *Ninth Ward*. Little, Brown, 2010. 217 pages (trade 978-0-316-04307-6, \$15.99)

In the week before Hurricane Katrina hits New Orleans, twelve-year-old Laneshia is attending school, running errands in her neighborhood, and starting to make a new friend in TaShon, a boy who lives nearby. Laneshia lives in the Ninth Ward with Mama Ya-Ya, the woman who's raised her since birth, while the ghost of Laneshia's mother is the silent third resident of their home. In this vivid work of realistic fiction the ability to sense things beyond the physical world is simply part of the fabric of Mama Ya-Ya's and Laneshia's lives. It's as real as the rhythm of life in their neighborhood, a place where people do what they can for one another. But that rhythm is disrupted as the hurricane approaches and warnings come to evacuate. Laneshia and Mama Ya-Ya have no way out of the city, or even to the stadium where many others are taking shelter. They remain at home, eventually joined by TaShon. The ferocious winds and torrential rains are frightening, but the rising waters in the storm's aftermath are a slow and quiet terror. When the attic in which the three take shelter begins filling with water, Laneshia discovers survival is more than a matter of strength and courage, but of faith as well. In the end, that means holding on, reaching out, and letting go in author Jewell Parker Rhodes's memorable, exquisitely realized story that offers an affecting look at the tragedy of Hurricane Katrina through one child's experience. (Ages 9-13)

Schlitz, Laura Amy. *The Night Fairy*. Illustrated by Angela Barrett. Candlewick Press, 2010. 117 pages (trade 978-0-7636-3674-6, \$16.99)

Born a little before midnight, Flory is a night fairy whose magic is strongest under the moon. When a terrifying encounter with a little brown bat leaves her wings in tatters, Flory decides to become a day fairy, when she's sure the world must be a safer place. Although she's a solitary creature like all fairies, Flory strikes up an acquaintance with a perpetually hungry squirrel, finding food and shelter with his help. Desperate to fly again, Flory offers to free a hummingbird caught in a spider's web in exchange for its services as her personal winged steed. Insulted, the bird refuses even as she also asks Flory for help: her eggs are unprotected from the chill night air and the chicks won't survive until morning. Selfish Flory must decide whether to help the hummingbird's chicks or ignore their predicament, which makes her "feel queer, as if her heart were swollen and sore." Rude and impatient, Flory defies the conventional fairy glitter and fluff. But in an environment full of both threats and wonders, even prickly Flory finds room for compassion. Gorgeous book design and full-page watercolor illustrations show Flory amid the small dramas of her lush backyard world. (Ages 7-10)

Schröder, Monika. *Saraswati's Way*. Frances Foster Books / Farrar Straus Giroux, 2010. 233 pages (trade 978-0-374-36411-3, \$16.99)

Twelve-year-old Akash hopes to earn a scholarship to continue his schooling but his grandmother sends him to work in a quarry to help pay the family's debt after his father dies. Akash runs away and ends up living among the street children at the train station in Mumbai. He initially refuses to do

anything illegal to make money. But Akash, a gifted math student, can't ignore the numbers when another boy shows how much he can earn as a drug courier. Akash ultimately avoids becoming enmeshed in that dangerous world by his good judgment and honesty, which earn him the admiration and friendship of one of the train station vendors, who helps support him in his quest to return to school. Praying to Saraswati—the goddess of knowledge and wisdom—helps Akash hold on to his dream in this compelling novel featuring an appealing protagonist who succeeds against tremendous odds. Author Monika Schröder lives in India and her narrative is rich with details of place as she depicts the harsh lives of street children and the life-changing effects of compassion and kindness. The novel's upbeat cover image is somewhat misleading but it does reflect Akash's resiliency and the hopeful future suggested for him by story's end. (Ages 10–14)

Sheth, Kashmira. *Boys without Names*. Balzer & Bray / HarperCollins, 2010. 320 pages (trade 978-0-06-185760-7, \$15.99)

Eleven-year-old Gopal lives with his family in rural India. After a bumper onion crop drives down the prices and leaves the family with little money and mounting debts, they flee to Mumbai in search of a better life. Instead, Gopal is kidnapped and sold into child slavery. He's locked in a stifling attic room with several other boys where they are forced to glue tiny beads into intricate patterns on wooden picture frames that will ultimately be exported and sold abroad. A cruel master nicknamed Scar keeps the boys overworked and underfed, and discourages them from forming any bonds or even telling one another their names. Even so, Gopal slowly manages to gain the boys' confidence by telling them tales at night before they fall asleep, and gradually each boy begins to reveal his own story. Throughout the ordeal, Gopal looks for an opportunity to escape, but as his bond to the other boys become stronger, the idea of leaving them behind becomes impossible. With perfectly paced, distinctive writing, Kashmira Sheth provides a fascinating look into contemporary child slavery, endemic throughout the world. By setting the story in a specific place, she succeeds in personalizing it and enriching it with cultural detail. (Ages 9–13)

Silberberg, Alan. *Milo: Sticky Notes and Brain Freeze*. Aladdin, 2010. 275 pages (trade 978-1-4169-9430-5, \$15.99)

Moving, new schools, and an interminable “fog” have been a part of Milo's life since his mother's death from a brain tumor. His father has gotten rid of all his mother's clothes and other reminders of her, leaving Milo with nothing tangible to remember her by. His father's reluctance to talk about his mom further complicates Milo's sadness. But starting seventh grade at his newest school proves to be a turning point. Although Milo isn't exactly the popular type, he finds his niche with Hillary, the quirky neighbor girl, and another kid from school whose family gives Milo the feelings of normalcy he used to have when his mom was around. With the help of his adult neighbor, Sylvia, and his two new best friends, Milo starts to open up, talking about his mother and finding a way to bring back memories of her life. The humor, honesty, and friendships in this entertaining story are surprisingly profound,

and the diary format with cartoon illustrations makes it an engaging and accessible book. (Ages 10–13)

Springer, Nancy. *The Case of the Gypsy Good-bye.* (An Enola Holmes Mystery) **Philomel, 2010. 166 pages (trade 978–0–399–25236–5, \$14.99)**

In Nancy Springer's final "Enola Holmes Mystery," the youngest detective of the Holmes family multitasks as she searches for Lady Blacheffleur, a missing Duquessa, while unraveling a puzzling coded message that may finally answer questions about her own mother's disappearance. Quick-thinking Enola is one step ahead of her brothers Sherlock and Mycroft, but the siblings' paths converge via their respective deductive work. Provocative themes of class, economics, and women's issues again provide a strong framework for this well-plotted mystery. Enola's mother gives voice to a maternal perspective rarely heard in novels for young readers while maintaining credibility as the woman who raised three exceptionally intelligent, strong-willed, and independent children. A solid stand-alone novel, Enola's last case also provides a satisfying conclusion to the storylines about the Holmes family that have run throughout this outstanding six-book series. (Ages 9–12)

Walsh, Pat. *The Crowfield Curse. Chicken House / Scholastic, 2010. 336 pages (trade 978–0–545–22922–7, \$16.99)*

In 1347 England, fourteen-year-old Will is an orphan living in a monastery. While on an errand he finds an injured animal in the woods, only to discover the small, catlike creature isn't an animal at all: it's a hobgoblin. Will's care for the hob—who takes on the name Brother Walter—not only inspires a wonderful friendship between them but also opens Will's eyes to the magical world that coexists with the everyday one. Among the many secrets around him is one the monks themselves have been harboring: an angel is buried in a field nearby. When a leper and his pale, powerful companion turn up asking questions about the field, Will gets drawn deeper into a drama that involves warring factions of the fay. The ailing man has been cursed so that he can never die, and only the resurrection of the angel can end his painful life. Pat Walsh's debut novel is a fresh, solid fantasy featuring an original plot and complex characters. While she leaves no loose ends in wrapping up this story, its conclusion hints at the promise of future outings for Will and others. (Ages 9–13)

Watson, Renée. *What Momma Left Me.* **Bloomsbury, 2010. 240 pages (trade 978–1–59990–446–7, \$16.99)**

Just after their mother's death, thirteen-year-old Serenity and her twelve-year-old brother, Danny, have gone to live with their maternal grandparents. In this narrative told bit by bit in a young African American's memorable first-person voice, Serenity reveals that her mother was killed by her father, who had a history of abuse. As Serenity starts at a new school, makes a good friend, and finds herself drawn to a boy with a reputation for trouble, she finds herself struggling with what happened, especially as she sees her brother heading down a dangerous path of his own. But Serenity's grandparents and other extended family members provide her with a strong sense of security and support. In dealing with changes and decisions of her own, Serenity

determines that their love and her own religious faith are essential to helping her see the future as something filled with possibility. Renée Watson's impressive first novel tackles some of the hard, hard things that can happen in a child's life while firmly asserting the power and promise of hope and love. (Ages 10–14)

Westerfeld, Scott. *Behemoth*. Illustrated by Keith Thompson. (Leviathan Book Two) Simon Pulse, 2010. 485 pages (trade 978–1–4169–7175–7, \$18.99)

The adventures of Deryn (a girl masquerading as a boy in the British Air Service) and Alek (undercover heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne) continue in this alternative history of World War I which began with *Leviathan* (Simon Pulse, 2009). Intrigue and double-dealing drive the plot as the teens are swept up in a British ploy to keep the Ottomans from joining forces with the Germans. When Deryn runs into trouble on a top-secret mission from her commander she ends up in Istanbul, a hotspot of conflicting loyalties. Deryn hopes to be reunited with Alek, who escaped from the airship *Leviathan*. She even contemplates telling him the truth about her identity—he doesn't know she's a girl—as her feelings for him start to run deeper than friendship. But Alek's alliance with resistance fighters in Istanbul raises unexpected complications, not the least of which is his friendship with a fierce and beautiful young woman named Lilit. As in *Leviathan*, steampunk elements and fascinating possibilities of Darwinism add to the setting of this novel, with ingenious genetically engineered creatures and mechanical wonders part of the richly imagined world. (Ages 10–14)

Williams-Garcia, Rita. *One Crazy Summer*. Amistad / HarperCollins, 2010. 218 pages (trade 978–0–06–076088–5, \$15.99)

When her dad sends eleven-year-old Delphine and her two younger sisters, Vonetta and Fern, to Oakland, California, during the summer of 1968 so they can get to know their mother, Delphine has low expectations. That's a good thing, since Cecile, who abandoned them years before, seems to resent their very existence. Known in the Black community as Nzila, Cecile is a poet. She keeps a printing press in her kitchen and needs time and space uninterrupted by boisterous children so she can write and print her work. She sends the girls off each morning to a free breakfast and programming at the Black Panthers' community center. Delphine is initially resistant to the political indoctrination they receive, especially from Crazy Kelvin, the vocal Black Separatist with the gigantic afro, who immediately criticizes Fern for carrying around her white baby doll, Miss Patty Cake. But gradually Delphine begins to see that the women who run the camp are kind and caring, and the things she's learning about political process and revolution come in handy when she decides to start standing up to Cecile. Rita Williams-Garcia's fresh, funny novel resonates with depth and meaning that comes through the brilliant characterizations, sparkling dialogue, and a stunningly realistic recreation of a time and place in a story that concludes with a surprising, yet wholly satisfying resolution. She's created a small masterpiece of a middle-grade novel that will have broad child appeal. (Ages 8–12)

Wood, Maryrose. *The Incurrible Children of Ashton Place: Book 1: The Mysterious Howling.* Balzer + Bray / HarperCollins, 2010. 272 pages (trade 978-0-06-179105-5, \$15.99)

A graduate of the Swanburne Academy for Poor Bright Females, plucky, tenderhearted Penelope Lumley has just accepted her first teaching position as a tutor at Ashton Place. Penelope's already planning lessons in Latin when she meets her three charges, who turn out to be wild—literally. Raised (presumably) by wolves, the three siblings yip, yap, woof, growl, and howl. But despite their lack of social graces, the children are exceptionally bright. By the full moon at Christmas they're ready to make their social debut (despite the occasional yip and woof) at Lady Ashton's ball. Author Maryrose Wood manages to simultaneously poke fun at and revere elements of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century genre novels for children in this slyly funny yet warmhearted orphan story edged with mystery. Clues to veiled truths about the children, Lord Ashton, and even Penelope herself unfold as Wood spins her clever and compelling tale. Reading aloud proves to be the most enjoyable and influential thing Penelope does as an educator and as a loving caretaker, whether sharing a poem by Longfellow or the fulsomely sweet *Silky Mischief* (Penelope's favorite of the "Giddy-Yap, Rainbow" series) in a novel that also illuminates the power of story. (Ages 9–12)

Yang, Gene Luen. *Prime Baby.* Colors by Derek Kirk Kim. First Second, 2010. 56 pages (pbk. 978-1-59643-612-1, \$6.99)

Eight-year-old Thaddeus is jealous of his new baby sister, Maddie, and wants nothing to do with her until he realizes she's a gateway for an alien invasion. His first clue: her single syllable babble ("ga") is always vocalized in strings of prime numbers. When the aliens finally emerge—from small pods that Maddie throws up—they turn out to be "missionaries of smiles and happy feelings." This is a deep disappointment to Thaddeus. Meanwhile, the government locks Maddie away. Thaddeus is more than willing to exploit his parents' resulting distress for personal gain. But then he recognizes the look on his sister's face in her isolation room as one all too familiar to him: loneliness. First published in the *New York Times Magazine*, Gene Luen Yang's smart, funny graphic novel is hilarious from its first page ("my mother's womb is a Trojan horse") to its last. Smiles and happy feelings indeed. (Age 9 and older)

Fiction for Young Adults

Abdel-Fattah, Randa. *Where the Streets Had a Name.* U.S. edition: Scholastic Press, 2010. 320 pages (trade 978-0-545-17292-9, \$17.99)

Thirteen-year-old Hayaat and her Palestinian family have lived in Bethlehem, only six miles from the Old City of Jerusalem, since their family home and olive groves were taken for Israeli settlements years before. Her mother's frustration, her father's sadness, boisterous disagreements with her siblings, and an undercurrent of love and humor define Hayaat's life. So, too, do uncertainties, from sudden curfews to the unpredictability of violence. When her grandmother falls ill, Hayaat is determined to bring her a jar of soil from the yard of the Old City home where the elderly woman lived years ago. Traveling with her Palestinian Christian friend Sammy, the six miles there and then back last all the hours of a single day and deep into the night. Journeying by foot, bus, and taxi, around and through checkpoints, sneaking over the city wall, the two meet other Palestinian travelers as well as Jews who are sympathetic and helpful. But the trip also brings back Hayaat's terrible memories of a blast that left her face scarred and killed a childhood friend several years before. In the days and weeks that follow, Hayaat can't shake a growing feeling of despair. Author Randa Abdel-Fattah has woven a rich tapestry of a narrative, incorporating eye-opening details of the challenges faced by families like Hayaat's into a story that illuminates the importance of laughter, love, and above all, hope. (Age 12 and older)

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Forge.* (Seeds of America) Atheneum, 2010. 294 pages (trade 978-1-4169-6144-4, \$16.99)

Continuing the story of Corzon and Isabelle begun in *Chains* (Simon & Schuster, 2008), Laurie Halse Anderson takes her protagonists into the heart of the Revolutionary War. Enlisting in the patriots' army to avoid re-enslavement after escaping from a British prison, Corzon ends up in an army regiment that winters with Washington's troops at Valley Forge. Details of life there unfold in vivid scenes that also chronicle Corzon's growing friendship with fellow soldiers, most (but not all) of whom treat him as an equal. When Corzon's former master shows up at Valley Forge, Corzon is re-enslaved and discovers that runaway Isabelle has also been captured. Anderson deftly uses flashbacks to recount necessary details from *Chains* as she sets this compelling tale of the fierce desire for freedom against the backdrop of our nation's fight to be free of tyranny. A helpful question-and-answer section at the novel's end clarifies fact from fiction in a narrative grounded with terrific characters, and propelled by a swift-paced plot. (Age 11 and older)

Avasthi, Swati. *Split.* Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. 282 pages (trade 978-0-375-86340-0, \$16.99)

A powerful novel about the effects of domestic violence opens as teenage Jace arrives at the apartment of his older brother, whom he hasn't seen in five years. Christian fled their abusive home when Jace was eleven. He'd spent

years trying to prevent their father from beating and berating their mother, until it was no longer safe for him to stay. Jace took over the role of their mother's protector, and now their dad has thrown him out. Christian is far from thrilled to see Jace—he has dealt with the past by distancing himself from it both literally and emotionally, and Jace is a reminder he can't ignore. As the story unfolds, scenes from the past—awful things they both witnessed and endured—play out, as do the effects on their lives. For Jace, one of these is the anger he can sometimes barely control. He hit his girlfriend before he fled home, and he's terrified of turning into their father. Swati Avasthi's first novel is a hard but ultimately hopeful story as the brothers struggle to confront the pain of their past. Realizing that they cannot rescue their mother is one of the hardest of many difficult truths they must accept. While a few of the secondary plot details seemed glossed over, the story gets right the dynamics and the consequences of abuse. (Age 14 and older)

Bacigalupi, Paolo. *Ship Breaker*. Little, Brown, 2010. 326 pages (trade 978-0-316-05621-2, \$17.99)

Climate change and violent storms have put much of the Gulf coastal area under water, petroleum-based fuel is scarce, and oil tankers are obsolete. As part of a light scavenge crew, Nailor teams with other teens to strip deserted tankers of all valuable scrap material. His future is uncertain, as Nailor is approaching the age when he'll grow too large to maneuver in tight spaces, but not large enough to qualify for the muscle work of the heavy crew. Earning barely enough to buy food, Nailor and the other scavengers live life on the edge. His drug-using, abusive father is yet another worry in Nailor's desperate existence. So when he discovers a luxurious clipper ship beached after a hurricane and filled with dead crew members, Nailor believes he's hit the scavenge mother lode. The potential to change his life for the better seems within reach, but then he discovers the wealthy yacht owner on board. Teeange Nina is badly injured but still alive, and Nailor must decide if he's able to kill her to claim her riches. The choice he makes propels him into adventure and intrigue in this atmospheric dystopian novel of survival that examines questions of loyalty and ethics in a chillingly changed world. (Age 13 and older)

Berk, Josh. *The Dark Days of Hamburger Halpin*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. 250 pages (trade 978-0-375-85699-0, \$16.99)

A recent transfer from a school for deaf students, Will Halpin's snarkily observant voice takes measure of his new surroundings at Carbon High School. When classmate Devon Smiley makes friendly overtures, Will isn't interested in allying himself with another social outsider. But Devon's a persistent guy, and Will is drawn into a friendship despite himself. The two are part of a school field trip to the Happy Memory Coal Mine when a popular football player plummets to his death, prompting Will and Devon to launch their own investigation into the suspicious event. The contemporary intrigue is paralleled by a local legend about a deaf coal miner who shares Will's name and is reported to haunt the Happy Memory Coal Mine. Will and Devon are joined in their sleuthing by Ebony, Will's friend

from the school for the deaf, and the trio uncovers secrets among the staff and students of Carbon High. At the same time, Will applies his analysis of the current events to answer questions about his doppelgänger ghost. Will's smart and witty adolescent narration and the predictable mystery are balanced by weightier elements exploring the politics of deaf culture from Will and Ebony's differing viewpoints. (Age 13 and older)

Bondoux, Anne-Laure. *A Time of Miracles*. Translated from the French by Y. Maudet. U.S. edition: Delacorte Press, 2010. 180 pages (trade 978-0-385-73922-1, \$17.99; lib. 978-0-385-90777-4, \$20.99)

The emergence of nationalism in former Soviet states following the fall of communism has left Blaise Fortune and Gloria, the woman who has raised him since infancy, in constant search of a safe haven in the Caucasus. Their ultimate goal is France, where Blaise was born. Gloria has told the story of finding Blaise in the wreckage of a sabotaged train over and over again: she took the baby from a badly injured French woman who told her the child's name. Blaise believes every breath of it, including the possibility of a mother still alive in France. Gloria has done everything possible to give Blaise a childhood, preserving his sense of hope, possibility, and wonder, and as he and Gloria are buffeted by political turmoil and violence, he never loses faith in her. Then she finally figures out a way to get him to France, and from the moment he arrives, the story that has defined him becomes more and more impossible to believe. As Blaise moves through adolescence into young adulthood, the truth about his past becomes clear and with it comes a sense of betrayal. A beautiful, heartbreaking novel from French author Anne-Laure Bondoux raises many questions as it explores complex political and emotional landscapes, but ultimately never doubts the power of love. (Age 13 and older)

Chayil, Eishes. *Hush*. Walker & Company, 2010. 359 pages (trade 978-0-8027-2088-7, \$16.99)

A haunting novel set in New York's contemporary Chassidic Jewish community moves back and forth between present and recent past. At nine Gittel sees her best friend Devory raped by the girl's teenage brother. Gittel doesn't understand what she witnesses, only that it frightens her. By the time she is almost eighteen, Gittel has blocked out everything that happened, including the trauma of Devory's death by suicide months later. When she turns eighteen, Gittel marries. In learning about sex for the first time she finally realizes what happened to Devory years before. Devastated by grief, guilt, and anger, Gittel is determined to break the shattering silence about Devory. But the insular Chassidic community is ruled by powerful rabbis who don't want scrutiny from police or others in the outside world. There are wonderful people within and beyond the Chassidic community who support Gittel, including her parents, who knew the truth from the beginning and stumbled through their own grief and fear—speaking out would have meant being ostracized. Gittel's response to the abuse she witnessed as a child forms the taut center of this searing story, but the narrative is richly woven with appreciative details about Chassidic life, including several funny, endearing

riffs on Chassidic culture from teenage Gittel's perspective. At the same time, it's a novel that powerfully condemns the actions of any community that enables silence, suffering, and abuse to continue. Chayil, who wrote under a pseudonym, concludes the novel with an affecting afterword discussing the experiences that informed her writing of *Hush*. (Age 14 and older)

Cohn, Rachel and David Levithan. *Dash & Lily's Book of Dares*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. 260 pages (trade 978-0-375-86659-3, \$16.99)

Dash and Lily meet through a notebook left in a bookstore by Lily (with the help of her older brother) and found by Dash. This smart, funny novel is set in New York City during the holiday season, a time Dash hates, while it's Lily's favorite part of the year. The contrast serves initially to define each of their characters: Dash is sophisticated and sarcastic, Lily is innocent and upbeat. In chapters that alternate between Dash's (penned by David Levithan) and Lily's (written by Rachel Cohn) perspectives, the two teen's lives draw closer and closer together through their conversation on the notebook's pages. They send one another to tantalizing, often seasonally festive locales around the city to retrieve the notebook for each round of the exchange. They also demand honesty of one another, and in responding to that demand each is challenged to reveal more than what they would typically share with people they know. Dash and Lily are articulate and witty—perhaps too much so to quite ring true—but it's impossible not to become drawn into their lives in this delightful story that probes the sometimes surprising depths of each of their characters as a friendship on paper develops—with a few dramatic and sometimes hilarious ups and downs—into romance. (Age 13 and older)

Collins, Suzanne. *Mockingjay*. (The Third Book of the Hunger Games) Scholastic Press, 2010. 398 pages (trade 978-0-439-02351-1, \$17.99)

Suzanne Collins concludes the much-touted "Hunger Games" trilogy in this volume that has Katniss Everdeen now the heroic symbol and face of the rebels, who are on the rise in their quest to overthrow the Capitol. But if Katniss felt like a pawn of the oppressive government as player and victor of the Games, she now feels like a puppet of the District 13 leadership that is leading the rebellion. Even being reunited with her mother, sister, and best friend Gale is bittersweet with her co-victor Peeta a prisoner of the government. It takes awhile for the action to rise in *Mockingjay*, and there are some missed opportunities when it comes to probing the emotional depths of Katniss's character and relationships with others—things done so well in the first two books. But as the series draws to a close the tension mounts along with the action, as do critical questions for readers to ponder about power, manipulation, morality, and the price of peace and justice. (Age 11 and older)

Crowley, Cath. *A Little Wanting Song*. U.S. edition: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. 272 pages (trade 978-0-375-86096-6, \$16.99, lib. 978-0-375-96096-3, \$19.99)

Charlie and her dad are spending summer break—as they always do—with her grandfather in the small Australian town where Charlie's parents grew

up. Songwriting is Charlie's secret outlet for pain and frustration around the death of her mother seven years before. Rose lives next door to Charlie's grandfather and has not only ignored Charlie during her visits over the years but mocked her behind her back. But now Rose has won a scholarship to attend the last two years of high school in the city where Charlie lives. Her parents think she's too young to go on her own, and Rose has decided to befriend Charlie in the hopes their friendship will convince her mom and dad to let her go. A social outsider, Charlie is initially suspicious of Rose's overtures but soon is drawn into the circle that includes Rose, Rose's boyfriend, Luke, and Dave—a boy who has always offered her kindness. Alternating chapters from Charlie and Rose's perspective offer insight into each girl's life. Charlie's ever-expanding emotional distance from her still-grieving dad, and Rose's ever-more-desperate feeling that she'll be trapped in the small town forever, are powerful forces in a beautifully written young adult novel that chronicles a burgeoning but tenuous friendship. Every character in Cath Crowley's quiet masterpiece is multi-dimensional, achingly real, and worthy of a novel of their own. (Age 13 and older)

De Goldi, Kate. *The 10 p.m. Question*. U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2010. 245 pages (trade 978-0-7636-4939-5, \$15.99)

Twelve-year-old Frankie's friendship with free-spirited Sydney challenges him in numerous ways. Sydney has moved so often that she's learned to roll with change—like it or not—while Frankie is a worrier for whom routine is comforting and change scary. Honesty is scary too, at least when it comes to telling the truth about his mother. She runs a successful baking business from their home but she hasn't left the house in nine years. Frankie is the one who makes sure his mom has what she needs every day, and as much as he loves her it's a burden that adds to his worries and leads to growing resentment toward other family members for the responsibility he carries. Frankie's also terrified he'll end up just like his mom some day. It's a fear he can hardly bear thinking about, but telling anyone is out of the question—no one in his family talks about his mom's past breakdowns—events Frankie can barely remember—let alone how they've been affected by them. Realistically flawed characters and an unusual situation unfold with immense subtlety and grace in Kate De Goldi's poignant and often funny novel featuring many moments that illuminate things beneath the story's surface that weren't visible before. (Ages 11–14)

Donnelly, Jennifer. *Revolution*. Delacorte Press, 2010. 471 pages (trade 978-0-385-73763-0, \$18.99)

The death of her younger brother Truman tore Andi's family apart. Two years later, anger and guilt have left Andi indifferent to graduating from her private high school. Andi's dad intervenes uninvited, whisking her off to Paris for winter break to focus on her senior thesis while he does work of his own. Andi is tracing the musical DNA of many classic and contemporary rock songs to the compositions of (fictional) eighteenth-century French composer Andre Mahlerbeau. Andi's geneticist dad is conducting DNA testing on a preserved heart believed to be that of the young prince Louis-

Charles, the dauphin at the time of the French Revolution. Andi's discovery of an old diary belonging to Alexandrine, a young peasant woman who became a companion to the prince and tried to free him from captivity, blurs the lines between contemporary and historical fiction in this ambitious novel. The fervor and terror of Revolutionary France are palpable in the diary sections. And on the vibrantly realized streets of Paris, Andi meets Virgil, a young musician whose parents emigrated from Tunisia and whose lyrics speak to the race, class, and religious issues that divide France today. As she reads about the past, Andi can't help but equate the innocent dauphin and his tragic death with memories of her brother, and the desperation and depression she's battled threatens to overwhelm her even as her developing relationship with Virgil allows her to sense the possibility of happiness. Jennifer Donnelly's rich, complex story explores sorrow and healing across two time periods in a novel that credibly merges present and past. (Age 14 and older)

Fisher, Catherine. *Incarceron*. U.S. edition: Dial, 2010. 442 pages (trade 978-0-8037-3396-1, \$17.99)

Part futuristic dystopia, part-cyberpunk, and part court intrigue, this rich, atmospheric novel follows two main narrative lines with completely distinct settings. In one, a teenage boy named Finn is trapped in a vast techno-prison called Incarceron, where prisoners inhabit bleak landscapes, form alliances, and fight for their own survival. They can never escape, but Finn is determined to try, driven by fleeting memories of an earlier time when he was free. Meanwhile, seventeen-year-old Claudia, daughter of the prison Warden, lives a privileged life Outside, in a technologically advanced society that models itself after Elizabethan society in order to maintain the comforts of the ruling class. She is about to marry the spoiled, immature Prince Caspar, although his older stepbrother Giles, who died years before, was originally her betrothed. Knowing she is no more than a pawn in the power struggle between her father and the queen, and desperate to escape her fate, Claudia discovers a crystal key that gives her a window into Finn's life in Incarceron—because he possesses its mate. Two equally gripping parallel plots go back and forth and eventually intertwine as Claudia and Finn turn to each other as they try to escape their respective prisons. Well-developed secondary characters and tantalizing subplots add depth to the underlying intrigue that will continue in Book 2. (Age 12 and older)

Flores-Galbis, Enrique. *90 Miles to Havana*. Roaring Brook Press, 2010. 292 pages (trade 978-1-59643-168-3, \$17.99)

After Julian and his older brothers are sent to the United States by their parents as part of the Pedro Pan airlift early in the Cuban Revolution, they end up in a Miami refugee camp where a teen named Caballo bullies the other kids with threats of violence. Julian's brothers end up transferred to an orphanage in Denver, leaving Julian to deal with Caballo and other challenges on his own. Even as he misses his family, part of Julian welcomes the new sense of independence after being treated like a helpless child for years. Running away from the camp to avoid his own trip to an orphanage,

Julian is sheltered by Tomás, a young man planning to help fourteen people escape Havana by boat. When Tomás's well-organized mission starts to unravel, Julian steps in and ends up playing a critical role in the tense rescue. Enrico Flores-Galbis relates vivid details of life in Cuba, in the camp, and on the streets of Miami in Julian's believable voice. The author also shows how things for Julian's family are untenable under the revolutionary government, even while acknowledging a different perspective through a conversation Julian has with Bebo, his family's long-time servant, before leaving Cuba. The older man who's never had a formal education welcomes the previously unattainable opportunities that the change in their country offers people like him. (Age 11 and older)

Frank, Hillary. *The View from the Top*. Dutton, 2010. 232 pages (trade 978-0-525-42241-9, \$16.99)

Six teens from a small town in Maine are the subjects of six interconnected stories set the summer after high school graduation. Annabelle is a serious, talented musician who has been dating Matt for several years. Although Annabelle is leaving for college in the fall, everyone (especially Matt) seems to assume they'll be together forever. Annabelle herself is clearly having second thoughts about their relationship, although she's also mired in their habitual togetherness. She's not so mired, however, that she doesn't wonder what it would be like to date Jonah, Matt's best friend. Meanwhile, Tobin, a fellow musician, secretly longs for Annabelle, as does Lexi, Matt's sister. And although Jonah is somewhat interested in Annabelle, he gets side-tracked by an unexpected affair with Matt's mother. Hillary Frank's deep insights into character elevate what might otherwise be a soap opera to a solid look at turning points and moments of self-discovery in the lives of each of these teens (as well as a summer visitor to town who spends an enlightening day with Annabelle at the beach). Frank writes with honesty about messy and complicated moments and feelings, and offers a clear, uplifting view at the novel's end. (Age 14 and older)

***Free? Stories about Human Rights*. Amnesty International. U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2010. 202 pages (trade 978-0-7636-4703-2, \$17.99)**

Fifteen short stories from a variety of authors illuminate individual articles of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. All of the stories show how the articles relate to events that are part of the lives of children and teens in places around the world. There is sly humor in some, everyday drama or slowly unfolding horror in others. Each story is strongly grounded in the perspective and experience of an older child or teenager in this inspired collection that invites readers to question how freely they live their own lives, and how freely others are able to live theirs. The stories are set in the United Kingdom, several African nations, Russia, the Middle East, the United States, and elsewhere. They cover topics ranging from bullying to colonialism, refugees to Hurricane Katrina, child slavery to choosing one's own friends, and more. Brief biographies of the contributors, and the complete Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are included. (Age 11 and older)

Freitas, Donna. *This Gorgeous Game.* Frances Foster Books / Farrar Straus Giroux, 2010. 208 pages (trade 978-0-374-31472-9, \$16.99)

After winning a prestigious writing contest sponsored by Father Mark, a well-known priest and successful author, seventeen-year-old Olivia is honored by the recognition and flattered by the man's interest in her work. But as time passes, Father Mark's attention and expectations begin to feel more like a burden than appropriate mentorship. Olivia grows uncomfortable with increasingly unwanted attention as his early support turns to relentless interest: daily phone calls, emails, letters, appointments, invitations, and unannounced visits, as well as demands around reading and writing assignments. Unable to share her concerns with friends and family, who are thrilled that famous Father Mark is so personally involved in her writing career, Olivia struggles to acknowledge that the man for whom she had so much respect has become an obsessive and frightening stalker. The quiet support of Sister June, a perceptive high school teacher, and her friends and family when she finally reveals what's been happening, empowers Olivia to confront the abusive behaviors of Father Mark, and a burgeoning romance with a fellow summer school student hints of a hopeful future for her. This compelling portrait of a naive teenager masterfully manipulated by a powerful adult captures Olivia's self-doubt assessing Father Mark's actions. (Age 14 and older)

Gonzalez, Christina Diaz. *The Red Umbrella.* Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. 284 pages (trade 978-0-375-86190-1, \$16.99)

Fourteen-year-old Lucia's parents aren't happy with recent changes in Cuba under Fidel Castro, but they stay silent, hopeful that things will calm down. As more and more people around them join the revolutionary cause—some out of genuine fervor, others out of fear—Lucia's family gains attention for their obvious lack of revolutionary enthusiasm. When Lucia's parents decide to send her and her little brother to the United States as part of the Pedro Pan airlift in 1961, Lucia and Frankie are told it will be only for a few weeks, just until things get better in Cuba. But things don't get better, and Lucia and Frankie end up living with an older couple in Grande Isle, Nebraska. The Baxters don't know much about Cuba or about contemporary teenage life. But they prove to be caring, loving foster parents, helping Lucia and Frankie adapt to life in America even as the children hunger for news of and from their parents. This swiftly moving debut novel, told in Lucia's authentically teen-like voice, is based on the experiences of the author's parents. The terrific storytelling is rooted in details of family life and friendship that cover expansive emotional territory. (Age 12 and older)

Green, John, and David Levithan. *Will Grayson, Will Grayson.* Dutton, 2010. 320 pages (trade 978-0-525-42158-0, \$17.99)

Two teenage boys, both named Will Grayson, have little in common but their name. One is straight, one is gay. The straight Will Grayson has always lived in the shadow of his larger-than-life gay best friend, Tiny Cooper, but he is just beginning to come into his own and develop a relationship with Jane, a girl he met in his high school's GSA. The gay Will Grayson is

depressed and lonely, and the only real happiness in his life come from an online friendship with a mysterious boy named Isaac. When the two Will Graysons meet through a chance encounter, things start to change for both of them, as the fabulously flamboyant Tiny Cooper (“the world’s largest person who is really, really gay, and the world’s gayest person who is really, really large”) takes center stage in both their lives. Told in the alternating voices of both Will Graysons, each one emerges as a distinctive, fully rounded character, and their intertwining stories are told with a perfect mix of humor and adolescent angst in this entertaining, affirming novel. (Age 14 and older)

Hartnett, Sonya. *Butterfly*. U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2010. 232 pages (trade 978-0-7636-4760-5, \$16.99)

Plum is at the worst possible moment of adolescence, despising things about herself, her friends, her family, and her life. Her so-called friends tolerate her at their fringe, and Plum puts up with some of their abuse and humiliation in the hope of being accepted, only to sabotage any chance she might have with her own desperation. Her achingly real need for acceptance finds affirmation in Maureen, the married woman living next door. Maureen understands Plum’s desire to be a new person, more grown up and sophisticated, and offers Plum seemingly sincere advice and much-needed friendship. Meanwhile, Plum is unaware that Maureen is having an affair with her older brother, Justin, let alone that Justin wants to break it off. Sonya Hartnett brings her immense talent to this coming of age novel that juxtaposes several storylines as it offers up a painful look at self-loathing, and also offers breakthrough moments of clarity and hope. Plum’s yearning to belong—in her family, among her friends—is profound. Maureen’s desperation is unsettling. And both of Plum’s brothers love her but aren’t sure how to help her, let alone themselves. Hartnett shows her wonderfully drawn characters from more than one perspective, leaving readers to contemplate the motives and complexities of individuals and relationships in this masterful novel that ends with a suspenseful and disturbing final scene but also the sense that Plum, at least, will be alright. (Age 14 and older)

Hutchinson, Shaun David. *The Deathday Letter*. Simon Pulse, 2010. 240 pages (pbk 978-1-4169-9608-8, \$9.99)

Oliver Talbott is a sex-obsessed teenage boy (in other words, he notes, typical) who has just received his Deathday Letter. Everyone gets one eventually—the form letter that says you have twenty-four hours to live—but like most teens Oliver hadn’t given a thought to his own mortality. With his best friend, Shane, and Ronnie, a former best friend/girlfriend whom Oliver still loves (she broke it off because he obsessed to much about sex), Oliver spends his final day in pursuit of experiences he’s never had in Sean David Hutchinson’s offbeat, funny novel. The list includes thrill-seeking (bridge-jumping, anyone?), drinking, drugs, and maybe, if he’s lucky, sex. But its connections with people that turn out to matter most in a story that never loses its humorous touch even as it begins probing greater depths. Oliver’s parents, his Nana (“seventy-eight years of awesome in this tiny, wrinkly body”), and even his obnoxious younger sisters are all wonderful secondary

characters who come through when it matters most: helping Oliver show Ronnie how much she means to him, a fact that turns out to have nothing to do with physical desire. Hutchinson turns an inevitable conclusion into a provocative question that will have readers talking in this distinctive debut. (Age 14 and older)

Kadohata, Cynthia. *A Million Shades of Gray*. Atheneum, 2010. 216 pages (trade 978-1-4169-1883-7, \$16.99)

Y'Tin dreams of growing up to become the most celebrated elephant trainer Vietnam has ever seen. One of his clan's elephant caretakers, he would spend all his time with Lady if he could. Then the North Vietnamese invade his village, seeking revenge against Rhade like Y'Tin's father who collaborated with the Americans during the war. Separated from his family in the chaos and terror that follow, Y'Tin and Lady eventually join two other boys and their elephants, hoping to find other survivors from their village. Y'Tin and his parents often disagreed, but his thoughtful father always eventually arrived at an answer to the questions that faced them. Now, Y'Tin consciously longs for his childhood as he faces momentous decisions that will determine both his and Lady's fate on his own. Although the narrative gets a bit bogged down initially explaining setting and context, Cynthia Kadohata's novel set in Vietnam in 1973 features wonderfully realized characters and a vivid sense of place, while relationships—between Y'Tin and his family, Y'Tin and the other boys, and especially Y'Tin and Lady—are a compelling force in the story. An author's note provides additional information on time, place, and politics of this story about a “Dega” (or Montagnard) boy. (Age 11 and older)

King, A. S. *Please Ignore Vera Dietz*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. 326 pages (trade 978-0-375-86586-2, \$16.99)

A tough, funny, sometimes painful look at complacency, compassion, and friendship begins with the funeral of Vera Deitz's best friend, Charlie. Vera is the only one who knows that Charlie was innocent of the crime most believe he committed on the night he died. Telling the truth should be simple, but that would mean addressing her increasingly complicated relationship with Charlie. It would also mean addressing her parents' refusal to acknowledge the abuse in Charlie's home—they never reported his mother's cries of pain to the police—and the recent departure of Vera's mom, something about which she and her dad never talk. Vera's voice is remarkable, both scathing and full of compassion for the people around her. Occasional interjections from others—Vera's dad, a likable, buttoned-up accountant who's trying too hard to improve himself and Vera; Charlie himself from the afterlife; and even the “pagoda,” an architectural symbol of their town—add humor, pathos, and hard-hitting honesty to a book that alternates between past and present as Vera recounts her friendship with Charlie and seeks courage to face many truths. This book full of memorable characters seamlessly incorporates real-life issues, from the struggle to balance work and school to the complications of being underage and falling in love with an older guy. (Age 14 and older)

Lottridge, Celia Barker. *Home Is Beyond the Mountains*. Greenwood Books / House of Anansi Press, 2010. 224 pages (trade 978-0-88899-932-0, \$16.95)

This novel is based on actual events in northern Iran and Iraq in 1918 through the early 1920s. Nine-year-old Samira is an Assyrian girl who flees with her parents and two siblings from Turkish forces invading their Iranian village. Only Samira and her older brother, Benyamin, are alive by the time they reach the refugee camp near Baghdad. Despite their grief and exhaustion, the two establish a family-like relationship with other orphans, allowing them to form a strong community. After several years, a bold new orphanage director, Susan Shedd, decides to help the group of three hundred orphans return to Iran. They make the three-hundred-mile journey through the mountains on foot in the hopes of finding surviving members of their families. Celia Barker Lottridge is the niece of the real Susan Shedd. Her affecting novel is based on her aunt's work, and also her mother's memories of growing up in Persia. Lottridge's historical account shows the children's intense resilience and also their remarkable sense of responsibility for one another. (Age 12 and older)

Marchetta, Melina. *Finnikin of the Rock*. U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2010. 399 pages (trade 978-0-7636-4361-4, \$18.99)

As children, Finnikin, his friend Prince Balthazar, and Balthazar's cousin Lucian vowed to protect their homeland. But a vicious attack followed shortly after. The king and his entire family, including Balthazar, were assassinated, and a sorceress's spell sealed the kingdom's borders. In the ten years since, Finnikin has lived in exile, attempting to aid his fellow refugees while learning diplomacy as he travels from land to land. Now nineteen, Finn and his guardian meet Evanjalín, another refugee and young religious novice. Evanjalín's visions, in which she walks the dreams of those within the closed borders of their land, say Balthazar survived and can lead them back across the impenetrable barrier to reclaim their home. As Finn and an ever-growing band of followers accompany her on a confusingly circuitous journey back to their homeland, he moves back and forth between emotional extremes: his distrust of Evanjalín is paired with his fierce desire to believe that Balthazar, his friend and true heir to the throne, survived. Once the complex history is set in place, Finn's story unfolds on a richly realized stage, combining intrigue, action, appealing characters, vivid personalities, and a satisfying love story. (Age 13 and older)

Mariz, Rae. *The Unidentified*. Balzer + Bray / HarperCollins, 2010. 296 pages (trade 978-0-06-180208-9, \$16.99)

Katey attends school in the Game, a converted mall designed by corporations, which have become the major funders of education. The companies constantly monitor students on camera and online in hopes of finding teens they can "brand" to help promote and sell their products. Everything in the Game is about being connected, being cool, and staying on top of the latest trend. Unlike most of her peers, Katey isn't eager to be branded and does the bare minimum to remain a player; as a result, she's intrigued by a group

called the Unidentified who seem to be inviting the students to break out of the controlled and controlling system based on popularity and consumerism. But her very interest in the Unidentified—she's the first to pay attention to what they are doing, and curious about who they are—attracts sponsor attention. Katey and her mom are struggling financially, and she accepts the sponsorship only because it comes with economic benefits. Suddenly the Unidentified are being exploited by sponsors as the next big fad, even as Katey discovers they may not be as radical as they originally appeared. This timely novel combines a mystery (who is behind the Unidentified?) with exploration of provocative issues of privacy and consumerism in a story set in a believably not-too-distant future. (Age 13 and older)

McNeal, Laura. *Dark Water.* Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. 287 pages (trade 978-0-375-84973-2, \$16.99)

Everything in Pearl's life feels unsettled: money is scarce, her mom is depressed, her best friend is consumed with a new boyfriend, and her cousin, Robby, is sure his dad—Pearl's beloved uncle—is having an affair. Then there's her dad, who left her mom and expects Pearl to treat him like nothing between them has changed. Pearl first notices Amiel miming the work of picking fruit on the corner where day laborers stand in hopes of getting chosen for a job. Amiel doesn't speak because of a crushed larynx, but Pearl is drawn to his graceful movements and the soft whisper of a voice he eventually reveals. In the country illegally from Mexico, Amiel has cobbled together a shack in the woods to avoid being discovered by law enforcement, but Pearl can hardly see the reality of his spare, lonely existence because the time she spends with him feels so charged with possibility. Laura McNeal's magnetic story is woven with lyricism and honesty, not to mention moments of deprecating humor. Told in flashback, it's always clear the novel will culminate with a devastating fire, but McNeal skillfully builds the tension so that when tragedy strikes, it does so with shocking power and surprise. Through Pearl's voice McNeal creates an affecting portrait of a teen who is still unformed—a true adolescent. Even at the novel's end, as she lives with the heart-wrenching consequences of her actions during the fire, Pearl's thinking is grounded as much in romance as reality. This striking novel touches on many rich themes: racism and classism, poverty and prejudice, friendship and family, and the powerful draw of falling in love. (Age 14 and older)

Moriarty, Jaclyn. *The Ghosts of Asbury High.* Arthur A. Levine Books, 2010. 480 pages (trade 978-0-545-06972-4, \$18.99)

This ambitious novel returns to the same school that was the setting for Jacqueline Moriarty's *The Year of Secret Assignments* (U.S. edition: 2004) and *The Murder of Bindy Mackenzie* (U.S. edition: 2006), both published by Scholastic. At first only Em is intrigued by Riley and Amelia, two new scholarship students who arrive her senior year, but soon everyone wants to be around the multitalented, mysterious pair. It turns out there is more to their backgrounds than anyone—including the scholarship committee—knows. Events of the school year unfold through multiple voices and formats—from

essays for a gothic fiction exam (with students writing in the gothic style), to blog entries for English, to minutes of the faculty scholarship committee meetings—in narratives that ranges from hilarious (Em shows unwitting mastery of malapropisms and unbridled enthusiasm for exclamation points) to spare and haunting (Amelia’s “Shadowgirl” blog). Moriarty does an excellent job of giving each of the many characters strong and distinctive voices. She also deftly blends humor with serious revelations about the lives of teens teetering on the brink of adulthood. All of the characters have so much more beneath the surface than is apparent at first, and these discoveries are not only a pleasure, but much of the point in this riff on Gothic fiction that isn’t afraid to be playful while still holding fast to deep emotional core. (Age 14 and older)

Myers, Walter Dean. *Lockdown. Amistad* / HarperCollins, 2010. 247 pages (trade 978-0-06-121480-6, \$16.99)

Almost fifteen, Reese is trying for early release from Progress, a juvenile detention center. But his hopes are jeopardized when some of the tougher inmates target a kid named Toon and Reese feels he must physically defend the younger boy, especially when the guard on duty turns a blind eye to the pending violence. Reese’s actions reinforce the perceptions of those within the justice system who already believe he’s a criminal and lost cause. The warden at Progress wants him to understand that the choices he has made and continue to make matter. But racism, prejudice, poverty, and violence have been constants in Reese’s life—what kinds of choices does he really have? Talking with Mr. Hooft, who lives at the nursing home where Reese has a work release job, Reese begins to reflect more deliberately on that question, inspired in part by Mr. Hooft’s past experiences as a prisoner of war, not to mention the elderly man’s initially racist attitude toward Reese because he’s Black. Reese is also inspired by his younger sister, whose dreams he is determined to nurture. Myers’s affecting story affirms something fierce and essential: the desire to be loved and respected, to do the right thing, to be given a chance. (Age 12 and older)

Neri, G. *Yummy: The Last Days of a Southside Shorty*. Illustrated by Randy DuBurke. Lee & Low, 2010. 94 pages (trade 978-1-58430-267-4, \$16.95)

This painful, powerful graphic novel is based on actual events in Chicago in 1994 when an eleven-year-old boy nicknamed Yummy accidentally killed a fourteen-year-old girl in his neighborhood in a gang shooting (someone else was the target). The narrative unfolds from the perspective of a fictional classmate of Roger “Yummy” Sandifer who is reflecting on the tragic, incomprehensible events. He recounts Yummy’s difficult childhood, various perspectives on his character, and the lure of gangs that snared Yummy (and that threaten his own family). He tells about the innocent girl who died, and reveals what happened to Yummy following the shooting: On the run from police, Yummy was at first protected by members of his gang, but they murdered him a few days later. “I don’t know what’s worse, the way Yummy lived or the way he died.” The facts are harsh but the young narrator’s

negotiates a bearable accounting while trying to find something to believe in. (Age 12 and older)

Ness, Patrick. *Monsters of Men. (Chaos Walking: Book Three) U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2010. 608 pages (trade 978-0-7636-4751-3, \$18.99)*

Todd and Viola are once again separated as the war between the Mayor's Army, the Answer, and the Spackle erupts in New Prentisstown in this final entry in the "Chaos Walking" trilogy that began with *The Knife of Never Letting Go* (2008) and continued with *The Ask and the Answer* (2009), both published in the United States by Candlewick Press. Under the impression that it will keep Viola safe, Todd intentionally becomes the Mayor's right-hand man, although the Mayor is influencing Todd in more ways than Todd will admit. Viola, encamped with the Answer and increasingly ill, is growing wary of Todd's ability to silence his Noise and to control the thoughts of others—tactics the Mayor used so successfully in his chilling rise to power. The Spackle are given voice in this volume through the character of #1017, illuminating the collective conscious of this indigenous group. Innately peaceful, they are challenged by #1017's obsession to seek revenge on "The Knife," his name for Todd. Author Patrick Ness continues to explore critical questions about war versus terrorism and what sacrifices can or should be made to achieve a greater good in this fast-paced, suspenseful conclusion to the series. (Age 12 and older)

Perkins, Lynne Rae. *As Easy as Falling Off the Face of the Earth. Greenwillow/HarperCollins, 2010. 352 pages (trade 978-0-06-187090-3, \$16.99)*

Teenage Ry is stranded in Montana after a mishap with a train (short story: it left without him). Ry stumbles into the nearest town and has the good fortune to meet Del, a man with a kind heart and wanderlust. He's willing to drive Ry home to Wisconsin (a memorable, funny road trip), and then continues to help Ry after they arrive to discover Ry's grandfather—in charge of things while Ry's parents are sailing incommunicado in the Caribbean—is missing. Ry and Del set off to find Ry's parents, traveling by car, small plane (*really* small, Ry nervously obsesses) and boat, relying on friends of Del's and their own resourcefulness each step of the way. Ry is challenged to trust himself and trust others, acknowledge his fears but not let them limit him, and roll with whatever the next moment brings in Lynne Rae Perkins's uplifting, singular story. In the process he discovers how strangers become friends, and how home and family are concepts that expand with his heart in a singular novel brimming with warmth and humor. Ry's travels comprises the primary storyline, but subplots follow other journeys involving Ry's grandfather, his parents, and his family's lost dogs (the canines' adventures are told in segments presented in graphic novel form). (Age 12 and older)

Perkins, Mitali. *Bamboo People. Charlesbridge, 2010. 272 pages (trade 978-1-58089-328-2, \$16.95)*

Chiko wants to be a teacher but lives in fear of conscription by the Myanmar government if he leaves his home. But with little money for food since

his father, a doctor, was arrested for treating political resisters, Chiko risks applying for a government teaching job. That's when he's rounded up with a group of young men at the application center and forced into the army. Chiko survives the physical demands of military training with the help of Tai, a savvy boy from the streets. In turn he teaches Tai to read, something that infuriates their Captain. Part one of this riveting narrative ends with an explosion during a dangerous mission. Part two picks up the story from the perspective of Tu Reh, a Karenni teen who finds injured Chiko and takes him back to his people against his own better judgment. Tu Reh's tribe has suffered severely at the hands of the government army, and many of his fellow tribe members are furious he has brought an enemy soldier to their refugee camp. It's a battle against prejudice and hatred, including his own, for Tu Reh to see Chiko as an individual and not a soldier. When he does, he discovers that this young Burmese man is no less a victim of the Myanmar government than his own people have been. Mitali Perkins sheds light on the current political oppression in Burma (Myanmar) in this eye-opening story. (Age 13 and older)

Sachar, Louis. *The Cardturner*. Delacorte Press, 2010. 336 pages (trade 978-0-385-73662-6, \$17.99)

Teenage Alton's great Uncle Lester is a serious bridge player. He's also taciturn, brilliant, and blind, memorizing and playing each hand with the assistance of a cardturner. With hopeful thoughts of inheritance, Alton's mom eagerly accepts aging (and wealthy) Uncle Lester's offer to hire Alton for this role. Alton is resentful, but the complex, challenging card game soon has him intrigued. When Toni, Uncle Lester's former cardturner, offers to teach Alton more about bridge, he eagerly accepts, although he's too insecure to tell Toni he likes her. Years ago, Uncle Lester was in love with Toni's grandmother, a smart, savvy bridge player who was already married and ended her life in an asylum, a victim of power, politics, and cruelty. But there's a bit of cosmic triumph in the works if Alton and Toni are willing to play along. There's plenty of bridge action in Louis Sachar's unusual and entertaining novel, but it's the human story that holds it fast, including two tales of love. Sachar cleverly gives information about bridge strategies in sections of text preceded by a graphic of a whale—narrator Alton's way of indicating that what comes next may be as boring as those sections about whales in *Moby Dick*: Feel free to skip ahead. But some teens may find the mathematics and complexities of the game as fascinating as the hearts and minds of Sachar's characters. (Age 13 and older)

Shusterman, Neal. *Bruiser*. HarperTeen / HarperCollins, 2010. 328 pages (trade 978-0-06-113408-1, \$16.99)

Determined to stop his twin sister, Brontë, from dating the kid known as "Bruiser" at their high school, Tennyson finds himself drawn into Brewster's life instead. Brewster and his younger brother, Cody, live with their uncle, who doesn't like Brewster making friends. After seeing Brewster's bruised and ravaged back, Tennyson is sure Brewster is the victim of abuse. As it turns out, Brewster's uncle has never hit him, but the truth is more unsettling.

Tennyson figures it out slowly: Brewster comes to his lacrosse game and Tennyson plays without pain. Brontë twists her ankle but Brewster is the one limping. Brewster comes to their house and the suppressed rage between Tennyson and Brontë's parents, whose relationship has been on the brink of implosion, dissipates, along with the twins' own sadness and uncertainty about their family. Despite Brewster's obvious suffering, Tennyson finds the feeling of well-being addictive, and it's not long before he's unwilling to live without it. Neal Shusterman's tense and masterful novel is told in sections alternating between Tennyson, Brontë, Brewster, and Cody's voices. Through the sharply funny and observant narratives of Tennyson and Brontë, Brewster's spare torment, and Cody's innocent wisdom, Shusterman explores human nature in a fascinating and ultimately transcendent story. (Age 14 and older)

Stork, Francisco X. *The Last Summer of the Death Warriors*. Arthur A. Levine Books / Scholastic, Inc., 2010. 344 pages (trade 978-0-545-15133-7, \$17.99)

The deaths of his father and sister within three months have made seventeen-year-old Pancho the newest resident at St. Anthony's, a home for orphaned and abandoned boys. D.Q., a resident who is terminally ill with cancer, quickly pegs Pancho as his new best friend. Pancho resists the role, but D.Q. wants someone in his corner and senses there's something Pancho wants, too. D.Q. is going to Albuquerque to try a new treatment regime his mother insists upon. She abandoned D.Q. years before in a time of crisis, and now she is fighting for his life even if it means alienating him further. And it turns out a way to get to Albuquerque is exactly what Pancho has been hoping for. The man he believes is responsible for the death of his developmentally disabled sister lives there, and Pancho plans on killing him. Francisco X. Stork's astoundingly beautiful novel explores complex emotions of characters who are fully realized as they weave their way into one another's hearts and minds. With its suspenseful and satisfying conclusion, this story affirms the power of caring and love to reveal meaning and value in life. (Age 14 and older)

Turner, Megan Whalen. *A Conspiracy of Kings*. Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2010. 336 pages (trade 978-0-0618-7093-4, \$16.99)

Young Sophos is the new king of Sounia but faces treachery and little support at home. He's shown up disguised as a beggar in Attolia, hoping to negotiate a deal with the King of Attolia, his old friend Gen, for support. But Sophos is shocked to find that friendship means little when Gen is acting as King. A satisfying conclusion to the story cycle begun with *The Thief* (1996) and continuing with *The Queen of Attolia* (2000) and *The King of Attolia* (2006), all published by Greenwillow, puts the main characters from those books into secondary roles. The psychology of Megan Whalen Turner's characters and the political intrigue of her plotting is as complex and satisfying as always in this richly told tale. Sophos is particularly notable for his vulnerability, uncertainty, and remarkable growth as he recounts his long and often treacherous path to the throne of Sounia—a position

he claimed somewhat reluctantly—and then comes into his own as king.
(Age 13 and older)

Wallenfels, Stephen. *POD.Namelos*, 2009. 212 pages (pbk 978-1-60898-010-9, \$9.95)

Sixteen-year-old Josh is just waking up when the pods appear outside his home in Washington State. Twelve-year-old Megs is in a hotel parking ramp in Los Angeles, hiding out in the car she and her mom have been living in. But the pods—ominous alien spherical vessels that appear to ionize anything moving in their range—aren't the only threat in this story that also examines the psychological response of people under duress. Josh, who would like to deny the severity of the situation even though his mother is missing, is trapped at home with his father, who's rationing supplies and preparing for the worst. Megs, whose mother isn't with her, is facing an even more immediate threat than the pods—she's being hunted through the parking ramp by looters who want something she has. Author Stephen Wallenfels offers a gripping sci-fi and survival story grounded in the very real human responses of its characters. (Age 12 and older)

White, Tracy. *How I Made It to Eighteen: A Mostly True Story*. Roaring Brook Press, 2010. 151 pages (trade 978-1-59643-454-7, \$16.99)

The day Stacy Black throws her fish through the window is the day she checks herself into a mental hospital, knowing she needs help. Previously living with her boyfriend and struggling with depression, seventeen-year-old Stacy just wants to be happy. But when she starts group and one-on-one therapy, she isn't very revealing. Although she is supportive of others, she turns every question she's asked outward rather than inward, talking more about her boyfriend than she does about herself. Months pass before she begins to honestly face her secret, self-destructive behavior. Author Tracy White's fictional account of her recovery from depression, drug and alcohol abuse, and bulimia effectively puts the reader inside a struggling teen's head in an accessible graphic novel format. Spare, clean art is used to tell Stacy's story through thought bubbles and dialogue boxes, and four of Stacy's friends add depth and understanding by periodically responding to questions: "How did you meet Stacy?" "Did you know she was depressed?" Their varied personalities reveal background information on Stacy's life, demonstrating how friends can both reinforce and challenge harmful behaviors. After twenty-four weeks at Golden Meadows Hospital, and after detaching herself emotionally from her boyfriend, Stacy's life turns the corner as she begins to understand that honesty is essential to moving forward and being happy. (Age 14 and older)

Yovanoff, Brenna. *The Replacement*. Razorbill, 2010. 343 pages (trade 978-1-59514-337-2, \$17.99)

Mackie is allergic to iron and slowly losing his battle against the toxic environment in the small, depressed steel town where he's grown up. Now a teenager, it's amazing Mackie's lived as long as he has. Even more amazing is that everyone ignores the obvious: Mackie's a changeling. To ensure prosperity, his town struck a bargain with the faerie world decades before and every seven years a human baby is exchanged for a faerie one. Usually, the changeling dies in infancy. But Mackie didn't die. He's an outsider at school but loved by his family, especially his sister, and has a few good friends. He draws on that love and support when he decides to challenge the power of the faerie world and complacency of his town—which has long ago faded from prosperity. Mackie doesn't think he can save himself, but the seven-year cycle has begun again. Another baby has been taken, and Mackie is determined to save her. An inventive fantasy grounded in reality offers intriguing forays into the world of dark faerie. Mackie's quest to overthrow the status quo features a satisfying romance, several chilling scenes, and above all an appealing and sympathetic protagonist surrounded by a host of wonderful secondary characters. (Age 13 and older)

Appendices

Appendix I

Checklist of Books in *CCBC Choices 2011*

This quick-reference listing of all of the books recommended in this edition of *CCBC Choices* is alphabetical by main title, followed by the author (just the first author is listed if there are more than one). The *Choices* category in which each book is located is also provided. Full citation information for the books, including publisher and ISBN, is listed with the full entry in the *Choices* categories. Browse the categories (see page locations, below) or use the author/title index to locate the exact page on which the full entry is located.

The Natural World (Natural World): pages 16–20
 Seasons and Celebrations (Seasons): pages 21–23
 Folklore, Mythology, and Traditional Literature (Folklore): pages 23–25
 Historical People, Places, and Events (History): pages 25–35
 Biography and Autobiography (Biography): pages 35–39
 Contemporary People, Places, and Events (Contemporary): pages 39–41
 Understanding Oneself and Others (Understanding): pages 41–43
 The Arts (Arts): pages 43–46
 Poetry (Poetry): pages 46–48
 Concept Books (Concept): pages 48–49
 Picture Books for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers (PB Preschoolers):
 pages 49–60
 Picture Books for School-Age Children (PB School-Age): pages 60–68
 Books for Beginning Readers (Beginning): pages 69–71
 Books for Newly Independent Readers (Independent): pages 71–72
 Fiction for Children (Fiction Children): pages 72–88
 Fiction for Young Adults (Fiction YA): pages 89–106

- 90 Miles to Havana*. Flores-Galbis, Enrique. (Fiction YA)
- 10 p.m. Question*. De Goldi, Kate. (Fiction YA)
- Aggie the Brave*. Ries, Lori. (Beginning)
- Alfie Runs Away*. Cadow, Kenneth M. (PB Preschoolers)
- All Things Bright and Beautiful*. Bryan, Ashley. (Arts)
- Always Listen to Your Mother*. Heide, Florence Parry. (PB School-Age)
- Anna Hibiscus*. Atinuke. (Independent)
- April and Esme*. Graham, Bob. (PB Preschoolers)
- Arbor Day Square*. Galbraith, Kathryn O. (Seasons)
- Art & Max*. Wiesner, David. (PB School-Age)
- As Easy as Falling Off the Face of the Earth*. Perkins, Lynne Rae. (Fiction YA)
- Back to Bed, Ed!* Braun, Sebastien. (PB Preschoolers)

- Ballet for Martha*. Greenberg, Jan. (Arts)
- Bamboo People*. Perkins, Mitali. (Fiction YA)
- Beach Tail*. Williams, Karen Lynn. (PB Preschoolers)
- Behemoth*. Westerfeld, Scott. (Fiction Children)
- Benno and the Night of Broken Glass*. Wiviott, Meg. (History)
- Biblioburro*. Winter, Jeanette. (Contemporary)
- Big Red Lollipop*. Khan, Rukhsana. (PB School-Age)
- Black Elk's Vision*. Nelson, S. D. (Biography)
- Bones*. Jenkins, Steve. (Natural World)
- Bonyo Bonyo*. Oelschlager, Vanita. (Contemporary)
- Boom!* Haddon, Mark. (Fiction Children)
- Born to Be Giants*. Judge, Lita. (Natural World)
- Borrowed Names*. Atkins, Jeannine. (Poetry)
- Boys without Names*. Sheth, Kashmira. (Fiction Children)
- Bridget's Beret*. Lichtenheld, Tom. (Arts)
- Bruiser*. Shusterman, Neal. (Fiction YA)
- Built to Last*. Macaulay, David. (Arts)
- Bunny Days*. Nyeu, Tao. (PB Preschoolers)
- Butterfly*. Hartnett, Sonya. (Fiction YA)
- Can I Play Too?* Willems, Mo. (Beginning)
- Candy Bomber*. Tunnell, Michael O. (History)
- Captain Small Pig*. Waddell, Martin. (PB Preschoolers)
- Cardturner*. Sachar, Louis. (Fiction YA)
- Case of the Gypsy Good-bye*. Springer, Nancy. (Fiction Children)
- Chasing Orion*. Lasky, Kathryn. (Fiction Children)
- Chavela and the Magic Bubble*. Brown, Monica. (PB School-Age)
- Chicken Thief*. Rodriguez, Béatrice. (PB School-Age)
- Child of the Civil Rights Movement*. Shelton, Paula Young. (History)
- Christmas Is Here*. Castillo, Lauren. (Seasons)
- City Dog, Country Frog*. Willems, Mo. (PB Preschoolers)
- Come Fall*. Bauer, A.C.E. (Fiction Children)
- Conspiracy of Kings*. Turner, Megan Whalen. (Fiction YA)
- Cork & Fuzz*. Chaconas, Dori. (Beginning)
- Cosmic*. Boyce, Frank Cottrell. (Fiction Children)
- Country Road ABC*. Geisert, Arthur. (Contemporary)
- Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa*. Silverman, Erica. (Beginning)
- Crowfield Curse*. Walsh, Pat. (Fiction Children)
- Crunch*. Connor, Leslie. (Fiction Children)
- Danger Box*. Balliett, Blue. (Fiction Children)
- Dark Days of Hamburger Halpin*. Berk, Josh. (Fiction YA)
- Dark Emperor & Other Poems of the Night*. Sidman, Joyce. (Poetry)

- Dark Water*. McNeal, Laura. (Fiction YA)
- Dash & Lily's Book of Dares*. Cohn, Rachel. (Fiction YA)
- Dave the Potter*. Hill, Laban Carrick. (Arts)
- Deathday Letter*. Hutchinson, Shaun David. (Fiction YA)
- Departure Time*. Matti, Truus. (Fiction Children)
- Disappearing Desmond*. Alter, Anna. (PB Preschoolers)
- Don't Want to Go!* Hughes, Shirley. (PB Preschoolers)
- Dreamer*. Ryan, Pam Muñoz. (History)
- Emma's Poem*. Glaser, Linda. (History)
- Every Bone Tells a Story*. Rubalcaba, Jill. (History)
- Extraordinary Mark Twain*. Kerley, Barbara. (History)
- Eyes on the Goal*. Coy, John. (Fiction Children)
- Fabulous Fair Alphabet*. Frasier, Debra. (Concept)
- Farm*. Cooper, Elisha. (Contemporary)
- Feeding the Sheep*. Schubert, Leda. (PB Preschoolers)
- Feivel's Flying Horses*. Hyde, Heidi Smith. (PB School-Age)
- Fiesta Babies*. Tafolla, Carmen. (PB Preschoolers)
- Finding Family*. Bolden, Tonya. (Fiction Children)
- Finnikin of the Rock*. Marchetta, Melina. (Fiction YA)
- Firehouse Light*. Nolan, Janet. (History)
- First Rain*. Herman, Charlotte. (PB School-Age)
- Flora's Very Windy Day*. Birdsall, Jeanne. (PB Preschoolers)
- Forge*. Anderson, Laurie Halse. (Fiction YA)
- Frederick Douglass*. Adler, David A. (Biography)
- Free?* Amnesty International. (Fiction YA)
- Ghosts of Ashbury High*. Moriarty, Jaclyn. (Fiction YA)
- Gift from Childhood*. Diakit , Baba Wagu . (Biography)
- Giraffe Goes to Paris*. Holmes, Mary Tavener. (History)
- Goal!* Javaherbin, Mina. (PB School-Age)
- Good, the Bad, and the Barbie*. Stone, Tanya Lee. (History)
- Growing Patterns*. Campbell, Sarah C. (Concept)
- Guyku*. Raczka, Bob. (Poetry)
- Half Spoon of Rice*. Smith, Icy. (History)
- Hallelujah Flight*. Bildner, Phil. (History)
- Happy Birthday, Bertie!* Pfister, Marcus. (PB Preschoolers)
- Henry Aaron's Dream*. Tavares, Matt. (History)
- Herbert*. Belton, Robyn. (History)
- Hip-Pocket Papa*. Markle, Sandra. (Natural World)
- Hive Detectives*. Burns, Loree Griffin. (Natural World)
- Home Is Beyond the Mountains*. Lottridge, Celia Barker. (Fiction YA)
- Hooray for Anna Hibiscus!* Atinuke. (Independent)
- How I Made It to Eighteen*. White, Tracy. (Fiction YA)

- How Rocket Learned to Read*. Hills, Tad. (PB School-Age)
- How to Clean a Hippopotamus*. Jenkins, Steve. (Natural World)
- Humblebee Hunter*. Hopkinson, Deborah. (History)
- Hush*. Chayil, Eishes. (Fiction YA)
- I Am a Backhoe*. Hines, Anna Grossnickle. (PB Preschoolers)
- I Dreamed of Flying Like a Bird*. Haas, Robert B. (Arts)
- I Know Here*. Croza, Laurel. (PB School-Age)
- I'm the Best*. Cousins, Lucy. (PB Preschoolers)
- Incarceron*. Fisher, Catherine. (Fiction YA)
- Incorrigible Children of Ashton Place*. Wood, Maryrose. (Fiction Children)
- Insect Detective*. Voake, Steve. (Natural World)
- It's a Book*. Smith, Lane. (PB School-Age)
- Jake*. Couloumbis, Audrey. (Fiction Children)
- Janis Joplin*. Angel, Ann. (Biography)
- Kakapo Rescue*. Montgomery, Sy. (Natural World)
- Keeper*. Appelt, Kathi. (Fiction Children)
- Knuffle Bunny Free*. Willems, Mo. (PB Preschoolers)
- La Noche Buena*. Sacre, Antonio. (Seasons)
- Last Summer of the Death Warriors*. Stork, Francisco X. (Fiction YA)
- Ling & Ting*. Lin, Grace. (Beginning)
- Little Black Crow*. Raschka, Chris. (PB School-Age)
- Little Blog on the Prairie*. Bell, Cathleen Davitt. (Fiction Children)
- Little Red Hen and the Passover Matzah*. Kimmelman, Leslie. (Seasons)
- Little Wanting Song*. Crowley, Cath. (Fiction YA)
- LMNO Peas*. Baker, Keith. (Concept)
- Lockdown*. Myers, Walter Dean. (Fiction YA)
- Longest Day*. Pfeffer, Wendy. (Seasons)
- Lots of Spots*. Ehlert, Lois. (Natural World)
- Lucky Beans*. Birtha, Becky. (PB School-Age)
- Lucy and the Green Man*. Newbery, Linda. (Fiction Children)
- Magic School Bus and the Climate Challenge*. Cole, Joanna. (Natural World)
- Mama Miti*. Napoli, Donna Jo. (History)
- Mary's Penny*. Landman, Tanya. (Folklore)
- Me and You*. Browne, Anthony. (Folklore)
- Me, Frida*. Novesky, Amy. (Biography)
- Million Shades of Gray*. Kadohata, Cynthia. (Fiction YA)
- Milo*. Silberberg, Alan. (Fiction Children)
- Mirror*. Baker, Jeannie. (Understanding)
- Mirror Mirror*. Singer, Marilyn. (Poetry)
- Mockingjay*. Collins, Suzanne. (Fiction YA)
- Monsters of Men*. Ness, Patrick. (Fiction YA)

- iMuu, Moo!* Ada, Alma Flor. (Folklore)
- My Brother Charlie*. Peete, Holly Robinson. (Understanding)
- My Garden*. Henkes, Kevin. (PB Preschoolers)
- Nabeel's New Pants*. Gilani-Williams, Fawzia. (Folklore)
- Night Fairy*. Schlitz, Laura Amy. (Fiction Children)
- Nini Lost and Found*. Lobel, Anita. (PB Preschoolers)
- Ninth Ward*. Rhodes, Jewell Parker. (Fiction Children)
- No*. Rueda, Claudia. (PB Preschoolers)
- Noah's Bark*. Krensky, Stephen. (PB School-Age)
- iOlé!* Ancona, George. (Arts)
- On a Windy Night*. Day, Nancy Raines. (Seasons)
- One Crazy Summer*. Williams-Garcia, Rita. (Fiction Children)
- Only One Year*. Cheng, Andrea. (Independent)
- Oscar and the Very Hungry Dragon*. Krause, Ute. (PB School-Age)
- Other Half of My Heart*. Frazier, Sundee T. (Fiction Children)
- Out of Iraq*. Wilkes, Sybella. (Contemporary)
- Out of My Mind*. Draper, Sharon M. (Fiction Children)
- Pecan Pie Baby*. Woodson, Jacqueline. (PB Preschoolers)
- Petit, the Monster*. Isol. (PB School-Age)
- Place Where Hurricanes Happen*. Watson, Renée. (PB School-Age)
- Plain Kate*. Bow, Erin. (Fiction Children)
- Please Ignore Vera Dietz*. King, A. S. (Fiction YA)
- Please Take Me for a Walk*. Gal, Susan. (PB Preschoolers)
- POD*. Wallenfels, Stephen. (Fiction YA)
- Popularity Papers*. Ignatow, Amy. (Fiction Children)
- Potty*. Patricelli, Leslie. (PB Preschoolers)
- Prime Baby*. Yang, Gene Luen. (Fiction Children)
- Princess Posey and the First Grade Parade*. Greene, Stephanie. (Independent)
- Project Seahorse*. Turner, Pamela S. (Natural World)
- Quiet Book*. Underwood, Deborah. (PB Preschoolers)
- Rain School*. Rumford, James. (PB School-Age)
- Red Umbrella*. Gonzalez, Christina Diaz. (Fiction YA)
- Reinvention of Edison Thomas*. Houtman, Jacqueline. (Fiction Children)
- Replacement*. Yovanoff, Brenna. (Fiction YA)
- Revolution*. Donnelly, Jennifer. (Fiction YA)
- Roslyn Rutabaga and the Biggest Hole on Earth!* Gay, Marie-Louise. (PB Preschoolers)
- Ruth and the Green Book*. Ramsey, Calvin Alexander. (PB School-Age)
- Saint Training*. Fixmer, Elizabeth. (Fiction Children)
- Saraswati's Way*. Schröder, Monika. (Fiction Children)
- Secret Cave: Discovering Lascaux*. McCully, Emily Arnold. (History)

- Seaglass Summer*. Banerjee, Anjali. (Fiction Children)
- Shark Vs. Train*. Barton, Chris. (PB Preschoolers)
- Ship Breaker*. Bacigalupi, Paolo. (Fiction YA)
- Sick Day for Amos McGee*. Stead, Philip C. (PB Preschoolers)
- Sir Charlie*. Fleischman, Sid. (Biography)
- Sit-In*. Pinkney, Andrea Davis. (History)
- Skit-Scat Raggedy Cat: Ella Fitzgerald*. Orgill, Roxane. (Biography)
- Sleepover at Grandma's House*. Joosse, Barbara. (PB Preschoolers)
- Sleepy, Oh So Sleepy*. Fleming, Denise. (PB Preschoolers)
- Slow Down for Manatees*. Arnosky, Jim. (Natural World)
- Smile*. Telgemeier, Raina. (Biography)
- Snook Alone*. Nelson, Marilyn. (PB School-Age)
- Sparky*. Gherman, Beverly. (Biography)
- Split*. Avasthi, Swati. (Fiction YA)
- Stand Straight, Ella Kate*. Klise, Kate. (History)
- Star in the Forest*. Resau, Laura. (Fiction Children)
- Summer Birds*. Engle, Margarita. (History)
- Sunday Is for God*. McGowan, Michael. (Understanding)
- Switching on the Moon*. Yolen, Jane. (Poetry)
- Tale of Two Daddies*. Oelschlagel, Vanita. (PB Preschoolers)
- Tale of Two Seders*. Portnoy, Mindy Avra. (Seasons)
- Thanking the Moon*. Lin, Grace. (Seasons)
- They Called Themselves the K.K.K.* Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. (History)
- The Thingamabob*. Na, Il Sung. (PB Preschoolers)
- This Gorgeous Game*. Freitas, Donna. (Fiction YA)
- Thomas and the Dragon Queen*. Crum, Shutta. (Fiction Children)
- Time of Miracles*. Bondoux, Anne-Laure. (Fiction YA)
- Time to Pray*. Addasi, Maha. (Understanding)
- Time You Let Me In*. Nye, Naomi Shihab. (Poetry)
- Tubby*. Patricelli, Leslie. (PB Preschoolers)
- Tuck Me In!* Hacohen, Dean. (PB Preschoolers)
- Turtle in Paradise*. Holm, Jennifer L. (Fiction Children)
- Turtle, Turtle, Watch Out!* Sayre, April Pulley. (Natural World)
- Ubiquitous*. Sidman, Joyce. (Poetry)
- Under a Red Sky*. Molnar, Haya Leah. (Biography)
- Unfamiliar Magic*. Alexander, R. C. (Fiction Children)
- Unidentified*. Mariz, Rae. (Fiction YA)
- Unraveling Freedom*. Bausum, Ann. (History)
- Very Big Bunny*. Russo, Marisabina. (PB School-Age)
- View from the Top*. Frank, Hillary. (Fiction YA)
- War to End All Wars*. Freedman, Russell. (History)

- We Are in a Book!* Willems, Mo. (Beginning)
- We Shall Overcome.* Stotts, Stuart. (History)
- Weber Street Wonder Work Crew.* Newhouse, Maxwell. (PB School-Age)
- What If?* Seeger, Laura Vaccaro. (PB Preschoolers)
- What in the Wild?* Schwartz, David M. (Natural World)
- What Momma Left Me.* Watson, Renée. (Fiction Children)
- What Will You Be, Sara Mee?* Avraham, Kate Aver. (PB Preschoolers)
- Where the Streets Had a Name.* Abdel-Fattah, Randa. (Fiction YA)
- Who Stole Mona Lisa?* Knapp, Ruthie. (Arts)
- Will Grayson, Will Grayson.* Green, John. (Fiction YA)
- Willoughby & the Moon.* Foley, Greg. (PB Preschoolers)
- Willow's Whispers.* Button, Lana. (PB School-Age)
- Windows with Birds.* Ritz, Karen. (PB School-Age)
- Wolf Pie.* Seabrooke, Brenda. (Beginning)
- Wonder Horse.* McCully, Emily Arnold. (History)
- Year Money Grew on Trees.* Hawkins, Aaron R. (Fiction Children)
- Year of Goodbyes.* Levy, Debbie. (Fiction Children)
- Young Zeus.* Karas, G. Brian. (Folklore)
- Your Treasure Hunt.* Schneider, Katherine. (Understanding)
- Yucky Worms.* French, Vivian. (Natural World)
- Yummy.* Neri, G. (Fiction YA)
- Zora and Me.* Bond, Victoria. (Fiction Children)

Appendix II

About the CCBC

The Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) is a unique examination, study and research library of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. A vital gathering place for books, ideas and expertise, the CCBC is committed to identifying excellent literature for children and adolescents and bringing this literature to the attention of those adults who have an academic, professional or career interest in connecting young readers with books.

The CCBC is funded to serve students and faculty on the UW–Madison campus, and school and public librarians and teachers across Wisconsin. In addition to the UW–Madison School of Education, the CCBC receives support from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction through its Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning.

The CCBC houses a noncirculating collection of new, retrospective, and historical books published for children and young adults. The library serves as a book examination center for Wisconsin librarians and teachers, and supports teaching, learning, and research by providing informational and educational services related to children's and young adult literature. This work is carried out in many ways, from ongoing evaluation of new books (resulting in the annual *CCBC Choices* publication) to the library's award-winning Intellectual Freedom Information Services, and from reference services to outreach programs across Wisconsin.

You can find out much more about the CCBC, and access many original, thematic bibliographies and a searchable database of CCBC-recommended books, on the library's website at www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/

Appendix III

About the Compilers

Carling Febry began working as a librarian at the Cooperative Children's Book Center of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison in January, 2010. She is also a library media specialist for the Madison Metropolitan School District at Lincoln Elementary School. Carling chaired the 2011 Charlotte Zolotow Award Committee and served as a member of the 2010 Charlotte Zolotow Award Committee. She is currently a member of the 2012 Pura Belpré Committee. While in Library School, Carling worked at the CCBC as a reference assistant and was an ALA/ALSC student intern for the 2008 ALA Annual Conference. Carling has a B.A. degree in Spanish and Latin American, Caribbean, and Iberian Studies, and a Master's Degree in Library and Information Studies, both from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Kathleen T. Horning is the director of the Cooperative Children's Book Center of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. For nine years she was also a children's librarian at Madison Public Library. She is the author of *From Cover to Cover: Evaluating and Reviewing Children's Books* (revised edition: HarperCollins, 2010). With Ginny Moore Kruse, she coauthored *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults, 1980–1990*, and with Ginny Moore Kruse and Megan Schliesman, *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults, 1991–1996*. Kathleen is a past-president of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) of the American Library Association (ALA), and a past president of the United States Board on Books for Young People (USBYY). She has chaired the Americas Award Committee, under the auspices of the Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs (CLASP), University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee; ALA/ALSC's 1997 Mildred Batchelder Award Committee; and ALA/ALSC's 1995 John Newbery Committee; and three Charlotte Zolotow Award Committees (administered by the CCBC), including the 2010 committee. She also chaired USBYY's Hans Christian Andersen Award Committee, which selected U.S. nominees for the international award in 1992. She has served as a member of many book award and evaluation committees, including the ALA Rainbow List, the NCTE Lee Bennett Hopkins Awards, the ALA/EMIERT Coretta Scott King Award, ALA Notable Children's Books, and the 1990 Newbery Committee. She received the Scholastic Library Publishing Award from the American Library Association in 2009 for her outstanding leadership in the field of librarianship and children's and young adult literature. Kathleen frequently lectures to librarians on issues in evaluating literature for children and young adults, and she delivered the 2010 May Hill Arbuthnot Honor Lecture for ALA/ALSC. She has a B.A. in Linguistics and a Master's Degree in Library and Information Studies, both from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Merri V. Lindgren is a librarian at the Cooperative Children's Book Center of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Merri was the editor of *The Multicolored Mirror: Cultural Substance in Literature for Children and Young Adults* (Highsmith, 1991), and a former columnist for the *Wisconsin State Journal*, writing about children's books. She is currently serving on the ALA/ALSC Quicklists Consulting Committee. Merri was a member of the ALA/ALSC 2010 Caldecott Award Committee. She also served on ALA's first Odyssey Award Committee (2008), a joint award of ALSC and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA). She served on the 2001 Charlotte Zolotow Award committee and chaired the 2002, 2006, and 2007 Charlotte Zolotow Award committees. Merri has worked as a youth services librarian at the Helen M. Plum Memorial Library in Lombard, Illinois, and as an instructor of Adolescent and Young Adult Literature at Edgewood College. She is a former trustee of the Baraboo (Wisconsin) Public Library. Merri graduated from UW–Madison with a B.A. Degree in Psychology and has a Master's Degree in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Megan Schliesman is a librarian at the Cooperative Children's Book Center of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. With Kathleen Horning and Ginny Moore Kruse, Megan coauthored *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults, 1991–1996* and is currently a columnist for *Library Sparks* magazine. Megan was chair of the ALA/ALSC 2011 Laura Ingalls Wilder Committee, and a member of the ALA/ALSC 2005 Newbery Award Committee. She has also served on the 1998, 1999 and 2002 Charlotte Zolotow Award committees, and chaired the 2003, 2008 and 2009 Zolotow Award committees. She was a member of the committee that created the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's *Planning Curriculum in English Language Arts* (DPI, 2001) and created the bibliography for DPI's *Teaching Character Education Using Children's Literature* (DPI, 2001). Megan manages the CCBC Intellectual Freedom Information Services and "What IF . . . Questions and Answers on Intellectual Freedom" forum and has written articles on intellectual freedom for several library and education journals. She is current chair of the Wisconsin Educational Media and Technology Association (WEMTA) Intellectual Freedom Special Interest Group, and a past member of the Wisconsin Library Association Intellectual Freedom Roundtable board. She is also a former member of the South Central Library System Board of Trustees in Wisconsin. She has a B.A. degree in English from UW–Whitewater and a Master's Degree in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Tana Elias, who created the index for *CCBC Choices 2011*, is a librarian and the Web Resources Coordinator at Madison Public Library, and a freelance indexer. Tana previously created the index for *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults, Volume Two: 1991–1996*, and for the annual editions of *CCBC Choices* since 1995. While a student reference assistant at the CCBC, Tana compiled *Children's Books by Wisconsin Authors and Illustrators* and *Children's Books about Wisconsin: An Identification Record of Titles Published in 1992* (CCBC, 1993). Tana was a member of the 2000 Charlotte Zolotow Award Committee and chaired the 2001 Charlotte Zolotow Award Committee. She was the editor of the Friends of the CCBC newsletter from 1996–2000, and has reviewed books for *School Library Journal*. Tana has a B.A. in History from Hamline University and a Master's Degree in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Appendix IV

The Friends of the CCBC

Interested in receiving *CCBC Choices* each year when it's published? Join the Friends of the CCBC!

The Friends sponsor programs to develop public appreciation for children's and young adult literature and support special projects at the CCBC, including the annual *CCBC Choices* publication. The Friends also cosponsor the annual Charlotte Zolotow lecture that brings a distinguished author of children's books to the UW–Madison campus each fall, and provide funding for other public lectures on the UW–Madison campus.

Members of the Friends receive a copy of *Choices* each March when it is published. Other annual membership benefits include a seasonal newsletter and announcements of CCBC news and events through the Friends listserv. Friends members also receive invitations to events open only to the membership. Membership is open to all.

Members of the 2010–2011 Friends of the CCBC, Inc., Board of Directors are President Kim Dahl, Vice-President Madge Klais, Recording Secretary Georgia Beaverson, Membership Secretary Linda Schmitt, Treasurer Amanda Struckmeyer, and Directors-at-Large Stacey Burkhart and Chelsea Couillard. In addition to the board volunteers, the Friends book sale coordinator is Angie Sparks. The Friends Newsletter is edited by Janet Piehl, with design and layout by Michael Kress-Russick.

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This subject index provides access to the titles in *CCBC Choices* as well as to information about the CCBC and publishing in 2010 mentioned in the introduction and end matter. While the index is not comprehensive, themes and subjects were chosen with story time, classroom use, and reader's advisory in mind. In keeping with the CCBC's interest in providing access to multicultural literature, the index also includes the ethnic backgrounds of the persons, fictional and real, portrayed in this year's *CCBC Choices* selections. Subject entries are as specific as possible, and include cross-references to point the reader to other subjects of interest. For example, "Africans and African Americans" includes a cross-reference to "Kenyans" and other culturally specific sub-groups.

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