



# The Review Crew

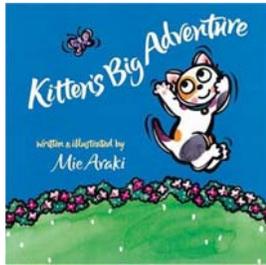
## What's New and Great for Our Youngest Readers?



### Fiction

#### Kitten's Big Adventure

By: Mie Araki  
I Illustrated by:  
Mie Araki  
Gulliver Books,  
2005  
I SBN:  
0152167382



*Curriculum: Cats; Courage*

Bold, bright, colorful illustrations abound through the pages enhancing the story of a little kitten who is brave, adventurous, and daring. One day, the kitten spies a butterfly and the adventure begins. Out through the cat door into the garden goes the kitten chasing after the pretty, purple butterfly. Hidden in the pictures is a baby mouse who experiences the same escapades.

Reviewed by: Irene Bell  
Bryant Webster K-8

#### Bunny Mail

Author/Illus.: Rosemary Wells  
Viking, 2004  
I SBN: 0670036307

*Curriculum: Letters, Grandmothers, Picnics*

Max really wants a bright red motorcycle. He decides to send a letter to Santa requesting one. Unfortunately the mailman cannot read the address. His letter ends up with Ruby's letter to Grandma. Can Grandma decipher his letter and make his wish come true? Of course!

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin  
Park Hill

#### Where Did That Baby Come From?

Author/Illus: Debi Gliori  
Harcourt, 2004  
I SBN :0152053735



*Curriculum: Babies, Brothers and sisters, Stories in rhyme*

"Where did that baby come from? And can we take it back? It wails and it squeaks. Its diaper leaks." Older siblings are sure to enjoy this tale about the trials of acquiring a new brother or sister. The delightful illustrations mirror the bewilderment as adjustments are made for this new arrival.

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin  
Park Hill

Brought to you by  
the Denver Public  
Schools Book  
Review Committee.

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#### Who are we?

- ☺ More than a dozen library media specialists from elementary schools through high school.
- ☺ We know DPS students and the DPS curriculum.
- ☺ Every month each member writes reviews of at least fifteen recently published books.
- ☺ Our hard work earns thousands of dollars of free books for our school libraries and for the classroom library at ERS, where DPS teachers can order baskets of books for their classrooms. (Call 303-405-8131 to order.)

# The Best for Upper Elementary Readers!

Many of these books will work in middle school, too!



## Fiction

### Detective LaRue: Letters from the Investigation:

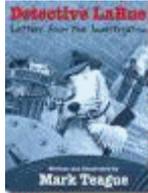
Author/Illus.: Mark Teague

Scholastic Press, 2004.

ISBN: 0439458684

*Curriculum: Mystery, Suspense*

*Detective LaRue* is a wonderful example of voice, understatement, exaggeration and embellishment. For example, while Ike writes Mrs. LaRue of his horrible mistreatment by law enforcement, the illustration show that he is actually enjoying



dog biscuits and doughnuts as he types his letter. The adventures of this crafty, wordsmith of a dog will spark laughter from both children and adults alike.

Reviewed by: Robin Jones  
Columbine Elementary School



## Nonfiction

### Horse Sense

By: Beth Gruber

Compass Point Books, 2005

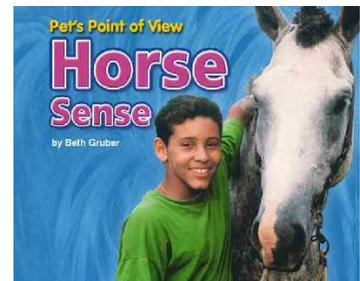
ISBN: 0756507022

*Curriculum: Horses: breeds, characteristics*

In this series, the animals speak for

themselves. "Horses like me have been around for a long, long time—at least 50 million years before the first humans!" Topics include evolution, animal relatives (zebra, tapir), body nomenclature (withers, flank), breeds, communication, needs, play, equipment and horses around the world.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose  
Smedley Elementary



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# Middle School Reader Gold Mine

You guessed it! Many of these books will work in high school, too!



## Fiction

### The Teacher's Funeral

By: Richard Peck

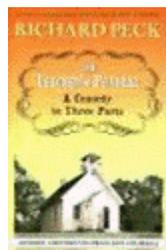
Dial Books, 2004

ISBN: 0803727354

*Curriculum: Teachers, Country Life, Humorous Fiction*

When old Miss Myrt passed on in August, Russell figures there will be no more schoolin' for him. There's no way they could find a new teacher for their one room school house this close to the start of school. To his horror, the school board hires his older sister, Tansy. This is a fun, lighthearted read with a lot of down to earth humor as Russell and his friends find out what education is really about.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns  
Hill Middle School



### The Purple Emperor

By: Herbie Brennan

Bloomsbury Children's Book, 2004

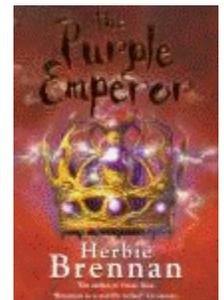
ISBN: 1582348804

*Curriculum: Magic, Fairies, Fantasy Fiction*

In the sequel to *The Faerie Wars*, Henry finds himself back in the world of the Faeries. He has to help his friend, Pyrgus recapture his rightful place on the throne. His dead father has been resurrected by evil and they must find new allies to help fight the evil that is taking over the kingdom. Readers will enjoy the action and the unique characters.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns  
Hill Middle School

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**Jack's Kite**

By: Yvonne Jagtenberg

Illustrated by: Yvonne Jagtenberg

Roaring Brook Press, 2003

ISBN: 0761323856

*Curriculum: Fathers and sons, fiction; Kites, fiction*

Jack spends a long day at the family campsite waiting to fly his kite and wishing his father was there to help. After trying, with much advice from fellow campers, the kite flies away when a boy lets go of it accidentally. Can you guess who finds it and returns it to camp?

Reviewed by: Steve Bowley  
Beach Court

**Mister Seahorse:**

Author/Illus: Eric Carle

Philomel Books, 2004.

ISBN: 0399242694

*Curriculum: Fish, Fathers*

Eric Carle has won the Laura Ingalls Wilder Award for creating meaningful and beautifully illustrated picture books for children. *Mister Seahorse* is an excellent demonstration of this achievement. Children will learn valuable and sometimes overlooked facts about fathers in nature as well as the names and characteristics of several different fish. Along with the interesting text, Carle has once again created beautiful and colorful illustrations that stimulate the readers senses.

Reviewed by: Robin Jones  
Columbine Elementary School

**The Bully Blockers Club**

By: Teresa Bateman

Illustrated by: Jackie Urbanovic

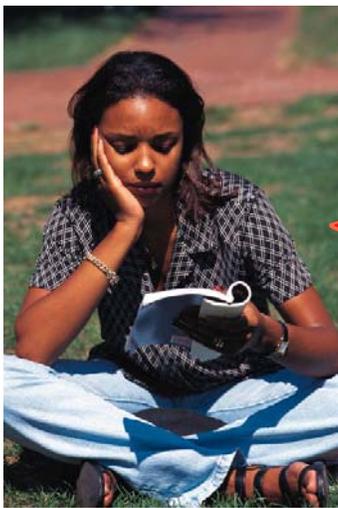
Albert Whitman, 2004

ISBN: 0807509183

*Curriculum: Problem solving; Bully Proofing*

This book contains all the ingredients for effectively dealing with bullies in a well-told story that's not at all didactic. When Lotty is bullied her first day at school her brother and sister give her ideas she can do herself. When those don't work, they talk to their parents and her teacher. When the bully continues to harass her without getting caught

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**First Crossing: Stories about Teen Immigrants**

By: Donald R. Gallo (ed.)

Candlewick Press, 2004

ISBN: 0763622494

*Curriculum: Immigration, fiction*

Another fine young adult short story collection edited by Don Gallo and written by ten well-known authors. The teen immigrant theme makes for some interesting reading. The title story by Pam Munoz Ryan tells of Marco's illegal crossing from Mexico, lying on a coffee table straddling a motor, hidden under the hood of a car!

Reviewed by: Steve Bowley  
Beach Court

**Candy**

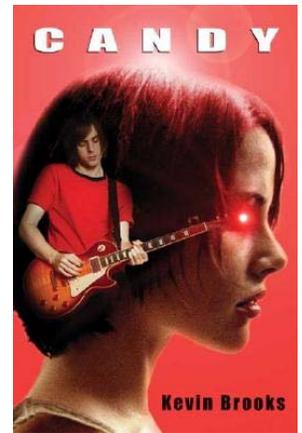
By: Kevin Brooks

Scholastic, 2005

ISBN: 0439682370

*Curriculum: first loves, drug abuse,*

Joe Beck comes from the "right" side of town. His parents are wealthy and he attends a good school. When he gets lost in London, he is befriended by a girl who fascinates him. After a week, he cannot get her out of his mind. Soon, he is involved in her world, a world filled with violence, drugs and gangs. Can Joe escape and rescue Candy from this dangerous world?



Reviewed by: Carol Chapman  
Morey Middle School

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**Women for President :The story of Victoria Woodhull**

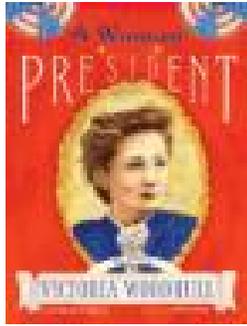
By: Kathleen Krull

Illustrated by: Jane Dyer

Walker & Company,2004

ISBN: 0082789080

*Curriculum: Women history*



Readers of Kathleen Krull's new picture book will be surprised to learn that a woman ran for president in 1872. This little-known-fact is just one of many interesting bits of information that inhabit Krull's well-researched biography. A Woman for President: The Story of Victoria Woodhull chronicles the varied and fascinating life of one of America's most powerful women of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. A self-made millionaire, she founded companies and championed women's rights. Oddly, she was not able to vote for herself, in fact, she spent Election Day in jail. Women did not get the right to vote until 1927.

Reviewed by: Pat White

Ashley Elementary

**Journey to Freedom- The Blues:Birth of an American Sound**

By: Pamela Dell

The Child's World,2005

ISBN: 159296230

*Curriculum: Blues, Music*

Part of the "Journey to Freedom" series. This is an excellent series to introduce the intermediate reader to the history, culture and experiences of the African American. With excellent photos and illustrations, this series is a resource for research and an interesting read. The Blues introduces the intermediate reader to the blues, the history of the music, and the era of its origins. It includes a series of short biographies of notables such as: Gertrude Rainey, Bessie Smith, Billie Holiday, B.B. King, and Etta James. A timeline helps guides readers.

Reviewed by: Pat White

Ashley Elementary

**Roald Dahl**

By: Adam Woog

PubKidhaven Press, 2005

ISBN: 0737726148

*Curriculum: Author study; Biography*

Roald Dahl's life was as interesting and eccentric as any of his books. Readers of this biography will gain insight into why he created the kinds of plots and characters that we all love (and love to hate) in *The BFG* and *Matilda*. Besides being useful for author studies, this book will gain a following when the upcoming remake of the movie *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* is released.

Reviewed by: Penny Cunningham

Valdez Elementary

**The AIDS Epidemic: Disaster and Survival**

By: Jennifer Reed

Enslow, 2005.

ISBN :0766023826

*Curriculum: Health, Epidemics*

This is a look at the AIDS epidemic especially in Africa, Asia and the United States. It is a fairly bleak look at the disease. The statistics for orphans and how fast the disease is spreading are startling. There is also a look at what is being done to treat and eradicate this disease worldwide.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble

Kepner Middle School

*When I got my  
library card, that  
was when my life  
began.*

by the adults, Lotty herself comes up with the winning idea.

Reviewed by: Penny Cunningham  
Valdez Elementary

**The Umbrella**

Author/Illus: Jan Brett  
G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2004.  
ISBN: 039924155



*Curriculum: Rainforest, habitat*

Jan Brett is a master at building suspense. Many of her stories feature a boarder on each page, providing clues to the events of the story. In addition to her beautiful, thoughtful illustrations, Brett provides an exciting story that teaches the ecology, the animals and the Spanish language of the rainforest. This story would be a fantastic addition to any library.

Reviewed by: Robin Jones  
Columbine Elementary School



**Nonfiction**

**Five Little Dinosaurs:**

By: Will Grace  
Illustrated by: Ed Vere  
Scholastic Inc., 2004.  
ISBN: 0439583934

*Curriculum: Counting, Dinosaurs*

This counting book combines every child's favorite counting chant, "Five Little Monkeys" with every child's favorite extinct animal, the dinosaur. The bright colors and the comical illustrations will attract even the most reluctant reader, not to mention they will love to chant this song over and over and over again.

Reviewed by: Robin Jones  
Columbine Elementary School

**The Cry of the Icemark**

By: Stuart Hill  
The Chicken House, 2005  
ISBN: 0439686261

*Curriculum: Fantasy*

The text is filled with rich images, magical detail, a strong heroine, sophisticated allusions to Roman battle lore and formations, and surprising touches of humor. Mix this with such unusual creatures as talking snow leopards, ferocious wolf-folk, vampires, giant snowy owls, the Holly King and the Oak King, and a young warlock; you have a tale that must be read. The beautiful princess becomes involved in a terrible war with the Polyoptian Empire, its ruthless general Scipio Bellorum, and his conquering army of millions. In order for the Icemark and the Northern lands to remain free, she must build an extraordinary coalition with the unusual creatures.

Reviewed by: Irene Bell  
Bryant Webster K-8

**The Thought of High Windows**

By: Lynne Kositsky  
Kids Can Press, 2004  
ISBN: 1553376218

*Curriculum: Holocaust, Friendship*

To escape the hardships of life Esther has been known to jump out of windows, but when the Nazis take over France, it's a matter of life or death for the Jewish teen on the run in France. *Windows* is compelling. Readers will relate to Esther's personal struggles and will learn about the Holocaust.

Reviewed by: Danette Baltzer Roland  
Grant Middle School



**Nonfiction**

**Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis**

By: Donna Brown Agins  
Enslow Publisher, 2004  
ISBN: 0766021866

*Curriculum: United States, First Ladies*

Continued on p. 6

One of the most intriguing women in American history, this biography on Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis is interesting and informative. Her background is explored and private moments in the white house are revealed and the reader gets glimpses of her life with the infamous Onassis millionaire.

Reviewed by: Danette Baltzer Roland  
Grant Middle School

**In your face: The culture beauty and you**

By: Shari Graydon  
Annick Press, 2004  
ISBN: 1550378570

*Self-Image, The culture of beauty*

This is a book I would love to give to all of the young ladies I know. It is well written and funny as well as being informative and current. Here is an honest look at the industries that promote beauty and beauty products and the stereotypes that make their business successful.

Chris Coble  
Kepner

**The Truth About Forever**

By: Sarah Dessen  
Viking, 2004  
ISBN: 0-670-03639-0

*Curriculum: Friendships, grieving*

Macy's life takes a change when she starts working for a small, fun-loving, chaotic, catering company, Wish. Her friendship with Wes revolves around the game of Truth. She acknowledges her grief over her dad's death, living with her workaholic mom, and looks forward to renovating the neglected family beach house.

Reviewed by: Sara Larson  
Rachel B. Noel Middle School

*Books, I found, had the power to make time stand still, retreat, or fly into the future.*

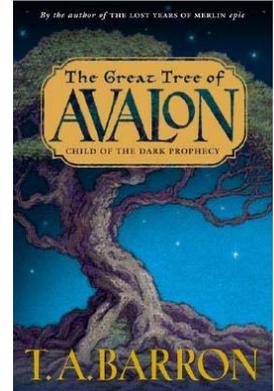
**Great Tree of Avalon: Child of the Dark Prophecy**

By: T. A. Barron  
Philomel Books, 2004  
ISBN: 0399237631

*Curriculum: fantasy, Merlin, Avalon*

Fans of the Barron series The Lost Years of Merlin

will not be disappointed by this new series. Readers new to Barron's fantasy world will soon become fans of this and other series by Barron. The Child of the Dark Prophecy introduces readers to the world of Avalon, planted by Merlin as a seed. Three young adults, Tamwyn, Scree, and Elli could each be the destroyer or savior of Avalon. Suspense builds as the three meet an evil wizard and his plot to conquer the world



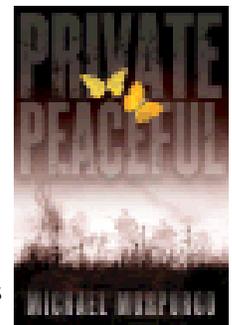
Reviewed by: Carol Chapman  
Morey Middle School

**Private Peaceful**

By: Michael Morpurgo  
Scholastic Press, 2003  
ISBN: 0439636485

*Curriculum: World War I, shell shock, war conditions*

Michael Morpurgo has written a captivating glimpse of the horrors of World War I in the novel Private Peaceful. The story is told in a series of flashbacks, starting with Tommy and his older brother Charlie as schoolboys. Eventually, both get caught up in the patriotic fever as Great Britain joins the war effort in France. Tommy lies about his age to enlist and follow Charlie. After surviving basic training, both brothers are sent to the front, "No Man's Land" and forced to make a critical decision that will cost one of the brother's his life.



Reviewed by: Carol Chapman  
Morey Middle School