



The Review Crew

What's New and Great for Our Youngest Readers?

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

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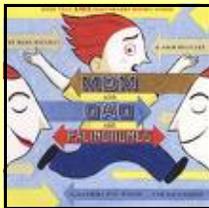
Who are we?

- ☺ We are DPS teacher librarians and literacy experts 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 720-423-8131 to order.)

Fiction

Mom and Dad Are Palindromes

By: Mark Shulman
Illus. by: Adam McCauley
Chronicle Books, 2006
ISBN: 0811843289



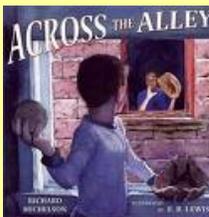
Curriculum: Palindromes; Humorous stories

Following a classroom lesson on palindromes, BOB is singled out as the only student in his class whose name fits the definition, causing his face to turn REDDER and REDDER. He begins to notice palindromes everywhere he looks, OTTO his PUP, MOM, DAD and a sign reading STEP ON NO PETS! To avoid further embarrassment, BOB decides to use his full name, ROBERT TREBOR. This story will be enjoyed by readers of all ages, WON'T IT NOW?

Reviewed by: Steve Bowley
South HS

Across the Alley

By: Richard Michelson
Illus. by: E. B. Lewis
G. P. Putnam's, 2006
ISBN: 0399239707

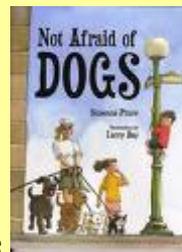


Curriculum: Friendship; Baseball; Music
Racial differences keep Jewish Abe and African-American Willie apart during the day, but at night the boys are friends, passing their hobbies across the alley through bedroom windows. Abe is better at baseball, and Willie easily picks up the violin Abe's grandfather wants him to play. When the boys' secret comes to light; Willie gives a recital at the temple, and Abe throws the strikes on the sandlot mound. This is a wonderful blend of text and warm watercolor illustrations, and a good companion to Jacqueline Woodson's *The Other Side*, which is also illustrated by Lewis.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elem.

Not Afraid of Dogs

By: Susanna Pitzer
Illus. by: Larry Day
Walker, 2006
ISBN: 0802780679



Curriculum: Dogs; Fear
Daniel boasts that he is the bravest boy in the city: he isn't afraid of spiders, snakes, or even thunderstorms - but dogs are a different story. One stormy evening, Daniel

(Continued on page 4)

Want to read more reviews? See the instructions on page 5.

The Best for Upper Elementary Readers! Many of these books will work in middle school, too!

Nonfiction

Jurassic Poop: What Dinosaurs (and others) Left Behind

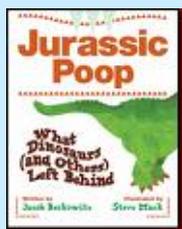
By: Jacob Berkowitz
 Illus. by: Steve Mack

Kids Can Press, 2006
 ISBN: 1553378601

Curriculum:

Coprolites; Fossils

Scientists have learned a great deal by studying the fossilized, frozen or dried "poop" of dinosaurs and other prehistoric animals (including people). For example, by studying the largest coprolite ever found, a "turd larger than two loaves of bread," paleontologists can tell that



tyrannosaurids gulped their food. Mack's drawing of t-rex's cousin, straining to pass this remarkable pile, is hysterical. Berkowitz's informative text presents facts in an equally appealing and funny way - one section of Chapter 2 is called, "Survival of the Feces."

Reviewed by: Steve Bowley
 South HS

Did a Dinosaur Drink This Water?

By: Robert E. Wells
 Albert Whitman, 2006

Curriculum: Water cycle; Water

Did you realize that the water you drink is very old? It continues over and over through the water cycle - rivers to ocean, evaporation, rain,



back into the rivers. Could this water have once been in the same waterhole where a dinosaur took a drink? A fascinating new look at water.

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
 Park Hill

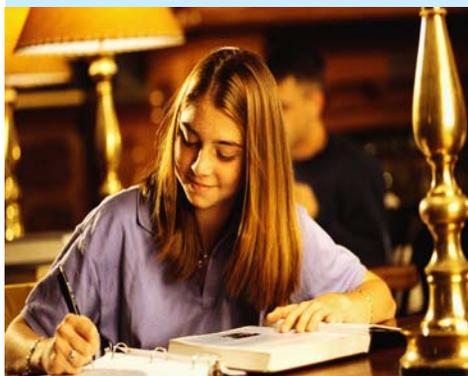
Drumbeat in Our Feet

Written and
 Illus. by:
 Patricia Keeler
 Lee & Low
 Books, 2006

Curriculum: Dance; Africa

Explore the origins of African dance throughout the continent. The rhythm sings through the verse; the color and movement

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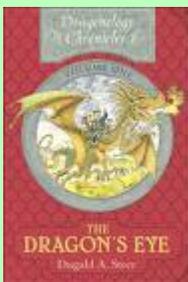


Fiction

The Dragon's Eye

By: Dugald A. Steer
 Illustrated by:
 Douglas Carrel
 Candlewick, 2006

ISBN: 0763628107
Curriculum: Fantasy



Middle School Reader Gold Mine

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

Fiction; Dragons; Family

Daniel Cook and his sister Beatrice are sent to spend the summer with the mysterious Dr. Drake who is an expert on Dragonology. Mysterious things keep happening and the children join Dr. Drake to solve the mystery of the Dragon's Eye. Readers who enjoy the other Dragonology books will enjoy the lore and history of dragons, along with an exciting adventure.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
 Hill Campus

The Cobra King of Kathmandu

By: P. B. Kerr
 Orchard Books, 2007

ISBN: 0439670233

*Curriculum: Fantasy
 Fiction; Djinn; Magic;
 Family*

The third book in the Children of the Lamp trilogy, find John and Philippa traveling from London to Nepal to help their friend, Buck to find out who is murdering people using a snakebite of the cobra. They find a secret Cult and find out that there is a plot to capture them and other djinn to fuel the power of the evil Guru Masamjhasara. This is a fun

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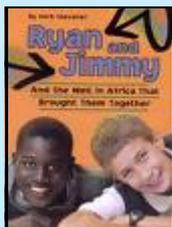


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twine between the history and the verse as shown through an interpretation in a New York setting as well as the African dancers in the sepia background.

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill

Ryan and Jimmy and the Well in Africa That Brought Them Together



By: Herb Shoveller
Kids Can Press, 2006
ISBN: 1553379645

Curriculum: Wells; Africa; Commitment; Empathy

This true story of a little boy from Canada who decided to make a difference in the world is truly inspiring. Ryan Hreljac saved up his

money to help build wells in African villages. Through this project he met Jimmy, a boy living in a village in Uganda. Their life-long friendship and commitment to making the world a better place serves as a great example for students everywhere.

Reviewed by: Laurie Bell
Brown Elem.

Celebrate Hanukkah with Light, Latkes, and Dreidels



By: Deborah Heiligman
National Geographic, 2006
ISBN: 0792259246

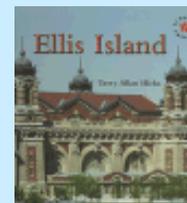
Curriculum: Jewish holidays; World religions; Acceptance

Far surpassing other books about the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah, this one features beautiful photographs of Jewish people from all around the

world (including Africa and Asia) celebrating the festival of lights. Visually appealing as well as highly informative, this resource includes recipes, games, and a map showing where all the photographs were taken. A must have for every school library!

Reviewed by: Laurie Bell
Brown Elem.

Ellis Island



By: Terry Allan Hicks
Marshall Cavendish Benchmark, 2007
ISBN: 0761421343

Curriculum: Ellis Island; United States history; Immigration

In three concise, easily understand chapters this title gives balanced and unbiased historic and contemporary information about Ellis Island,

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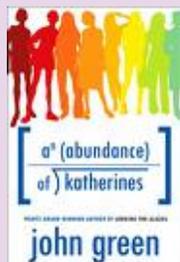
Young Adults Deserve the Best!

Fiction

An Abundance of Katherines

By: John Green
Dutton, 2006
ISBN: 0523476881

Curriculum: Friendship; Travel; Self-perception; Math



Colin doesn't really have a "type" when it comes to girlfriends. But all of his girlfriends, and there have been nineteen of them, have all been named Katherine. Colin and his best friend, Hassan, have decided a road trip might be the answer to having been dumped by the

nineteenth Katherine. They find themselves in rural Tennessee, Gutshot Tennessee to be exact, where they are a little out of their element. But it turns out to be a good place for Colin to work on his new theorem: The Theorem of Underlying Katherine Predictability. A math problem that will predict how long a relationship will last.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner M.S.

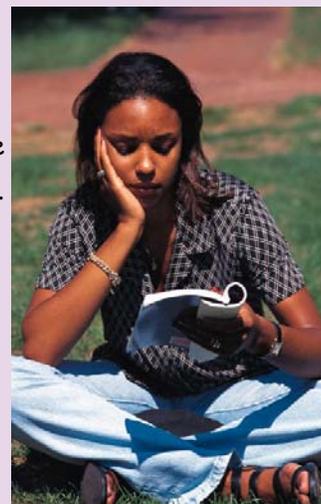


devilish

By: Maureen Johnson
Razorbill, 2006
ISBN: 1595140603

Curriculum: High school; Friendship; Catholic school; Demonology

Jane and Allison are best friends, always have been. They attend a Catholic high



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comes face to face with his greatest fear: a small canine, even more frightened than Daniel. What will he do? A sensitively humorous story about confronting and overcoming one's fears.

Reviewed by: Jennifer Fakolt
Mitchell Elem.

Bear Dreams

Written & illus. by:
Elisha Cooper
Greenwillow, 2006
ISBN: 0060874285



*Curriculum: Bears;
Hibernation*

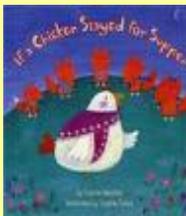
Bear decides to challenge the fairness of his "hibernation habit" by leaving his cold cave to play with his non-hibernating animal friends. Possessed with boundless energy, he races, wrestles, flies and climbs trees, refusing to rest, until, sleepy and exhausted, he is carried back to his comforting cave by his concerned parents. Simple, yet expressive and exquisite pastel illustrations are the background for this endearing story. It would be a great complement to the kindergarten unit on hibernation.

Reviewed by: Andrea Antico
Asbury Elem.

If a Chicken

Stayed for Supper

By: Carrie Weston
Illus. by: Sophie Fatus
Holiday House,
2006



ISBN: 0823420671

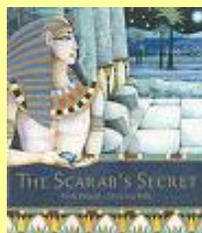
Curriculum: Foxes; Behavior; Chickens; Night; Lost children
Children will be counting and re-counting on their fingers, calling out

the answers and chanting with the little foxes as they listen to this creative, charming tale. Colorful, whimsical illustrations will delight and enchant listeners of all ages. Mother Fox leaves her five children in the den, warning them not to go outside until she returns. Were they all guilty of disobedience? Young students will wonder and discuss. The happy, surprise ending lends a different meaning to "chicken soup for supper".

Reviewed by: Andrea Antico
Asbury Elem.

The Scarab's Secret

By: Nick Would
Illus. by: Christina Balit
Walker & Co., 2006
ISBN: 0802795617
Curriculum: Ancient Egypt

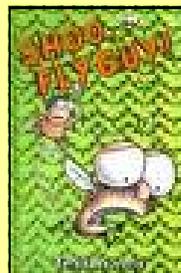


In this first person narrative Khepri, a scarab beetle from Ancient Egypt, tells how, through an accident or through fate, he finds himself in the tomb being constructed for the pharaoh. Discovering a booby trap in one of the passages, Khepri manages to reveal the plot against the pharaoh and is honored by being painted into one of the murals. The story is beautifully and simply told. The luminous illustrations capture the flavor of ancient Egyptian art without being an exact imitation.

Reviewed by: Penny Cunningham
Valdez Elem.

Shoo, Fly Guy

Written and illus. by:
Tedd Arnold
Cartwheel Books,
2006
ISBN: 0439639050
Curriculum: Humorous stories



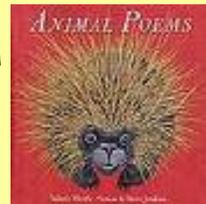
Meet Tedd Arnold's newest character, the gross and engaging Fly Guy. Fly Guy loves food that is "...brown, oozy, lumpy, and smelly." One day he flies off alone to find something to eat. Each food he finds has one of the desired qualities, but not the others. "Close enough!" But each time the food's owner shoos him off. At last he finds just the right food-- and it's called shoo fly pie! Listeners will enthusiastically chime in on the repetitive lines and even young readers who have never heard of shoo fly pie will think the ending is hilarious.

Reviewed by: Penny Cunningham
Valdez Elem.

Nonfiction

Animal Poems

By: Valerie Worth
Illus. by: Steve Jenkins
Farrar Strauss
Giroux, 2007
ISBN: 0374380570



Curriculum: Poetry; Nature; Animals.

Valerie Worth's highly acclaimed poems are the cornerstone for the paper college creations of Steve Jenkins. Textured paper gives the camel the color and texture of the desert he "sails." Serrated edges give a squirrel curled snugly in his nest a furry outline. Verse and visual consort delicately to entice young readers into the delights of poetry.

Reviewed by: Danette Baltzer
Grant M.S.

(Continued from page 3)

which is accompanied by archival photographs and illustrations. Sometimes the text is very sparse, taking up no more than a third of the page. Page numbers for illustrations are indicated by bold type in the well designed index. A "Find Out More" section includes books and Web sites that give little additional information. This book would be useful for basic research and for those interested in the arrival of European immigrants at the turn of the century.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elem.

(Continued from page 3)

school where they don't fit in very well. Every year the seniors are paired up with a new freshman or a student new to school in order to teach them the ropes, so to speak, in a "big-little" ceremony. To make a long story short, no one chooses Allison, she throws up, Lanalee (a new to school student) chooses her, now she is in more trouble than she can imagine or even begin to deal with. The publisher recommends it for high school, but it is appropriate for mature middle grade readers as well.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner M.S.

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This newsletter contains only a few of the reviews we write each month. To read longer reviews of these books and hundreds of others:

- ◆ Go to LION, our online library catalog, at <http://lion.dpsk12.org>
- ◆ Search for a book by title, author, or subject.
- ◆ When you get to the book records, look for the button called "Other Resources" and click on it.
- ◆ You will see a list of available features for that book. If there is a "DPS Book Reviews" link, it will open the review written by a member of this committee. This review is often more detailed than the short review published in this newsletter. There are also reviews for many books besides the ones in the newsletter. The link "Syndetics" will open a list of features that may include reviews from other sources, a summary, and a cover image.

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carpet ride that will keep many readers hooked until the very end.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Hill Campus

Wind Rider

By: Susan Williams
Laura Geringer Books,
2006

ISBN: 0060872365
Curriculum: Horses; Sex role; Prehistoric peoples



Fern chafes under the traditional female tasks of her tribe, and admires the wind runners, the wild horses that graze near her family's *ahne*. When she does the impossible and rescues and trains a filly, her life changes. But will the tribe accept her in this new role? Animal and adventure lovers alike will enjoy this fast-paced novel.

Reviewed by: Jennifer Fakolt
Mitchell Elem.