



The Review Crew

What's New and Great for Our Youngest Readers?

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

Volume 5 Number 8

April 2009

Fiction

Birds

By: Kevin Henkes

Ills. By: Laura Dronzek

Harper Collins, 2009

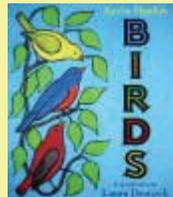
ISBN: 9780061363047

Curriculum: Birds; Comparing

In full and colorful illustrations, birds are compared and then fun antidotes are told about bird experiences. For example, the author encourages the reader to imagine what a tree yells when all the birds suddenly fly away. This book is highly recommended for a bird unit, but also for its encouragement to stretch the imagination and ask thoughtful questions about experiences with birds.

Reviewed by: Leah Jungers

Pioneer Charter



shows soft, cuddly colored pencil and watercolor pictures of places, things, and a small child. While the opposite page is a silhouette of the child interacting with his parents and pet. The text is free verse with a repetitive message as it prepares youngsters for sleep, "It's late. It's night. It's time to sleep. It's time to dream." There are sweet dreams for each of the four seasons, "Close your eyes and dream of resting beneath the budding maple tree....It's time to dream of lazy summer days, sand castles, seagulls....It's time to dream of cool autumn winds, mittens, sweaters....It's time to dream of cold winter, star-filled moonlit nights, frost-covered windows...." In the end, he surrenders to sleep and dreams more cozy dreams.

Reviewed by: Irene Bell

Alumni

It's Time to Sleep, It's Time to Dream

By: David A. Adler

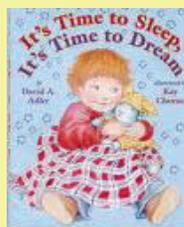
Illus. by: Kay Chorao

Holiday House, 2009

ISBN: 082341924X

Curriculum: Seasons; Bedtime; Parent and child

The illustrations are on two levels. One page



Knuckleheads

By: Joan Holm

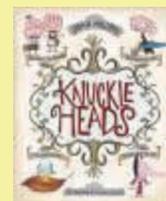
Illus. by: Michael Slack

Chronicle Books, 2008

ISBN: 9780811855235

Fairy tales; Human body; Humorous stories

These are tales of true knuckleheads—literally. There are Hansel and Gretel, Handerella, Thumbelina (of course) and one misfit—Nose White. The characters' noggins in this wacky tale are drawn as



Who are we?

- ☺ We are DPS teacher librarians from elementary, middle and 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.)

hands to hilarious effect. Puns and other wordplay fill the storytelling. This handy collection will tickle funny bones a-plenty.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose
Trevista ECE-8

It's Time to Sleep, My Love

By: Eric Metzaxas

Illus. by: Nancy Tillman

Feiwel and Friends,
2008

ISBN: 0312383711

Curriculum: Lullabies; Bedtime; Animals

"As you dream inside your sleep, the fishes crooning in the deep, and all the songbirds up above will sleep and dream of you, my love, of you, the one I love." These final lyrical verses reflect the soothing, heart-felt tone of this quiet lullaby. This is a book to cherish alone or shared.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose
Trevista ECE-8



Nonfiction

Spanish!

What Happens at a TV Station?/¿Qué pasa en una emisora de televisión?

By: Amy Hutchings

Weekly Reader, 2009

ISBN: 9781433900785

*Curriculum: Television broadcasting;
Television station - Employees; Voca-*



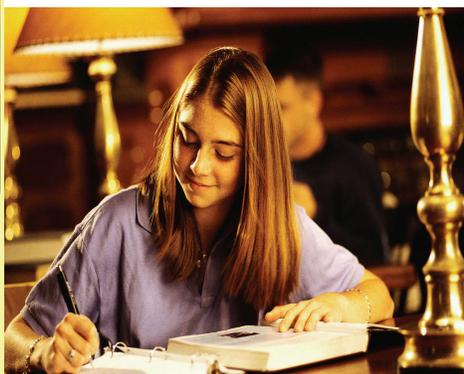
tional guidance

Lucy goes to a TV station to tape a song for a talent show. She is introduced to the director in the control room and other employees that set up the cameras, lights and other equipment for her performance. The stage manager shows her where to stand while a worker holds a microphone on a pole, away from view, to pick up her voice. Afterwards she enjoys watching herself on TV. This is a fun way for youngsters to become acquainted with new environments and learn about the work being done there. The bilingual text uses simple sentences, supported with authentic TV station photographs.

Reviewed by Ethel Hammerly
Spanish reviewer

The Best for Upper Elementary Readers!

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



Nonfiction

Water

By: Gerry Bailey and
Steve Way

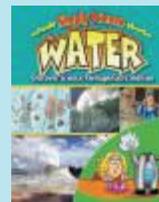
Gareth Stevens, 2009

ISBN: 9781433900372

*Curriculum: Water; Water cycle; Wa-
ter treatment and supply*

The water cycle, the importance of water to all living things, and the power of water are discussed. Additionally, how water gets into our homes, clean, treated, and ready for use through modern technology is a focus. The five reviewed books in this series combine lively, colorful photos and cartoon-like characters with multiple text boxes on every page creating a lively, interesting and informative overview of the titled topics. Accompanied with a quiz, glossary and extensive index, each title is suitable for introductory research.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.



Bumblebees

By: Emily K. Green

Bellwether Media, 2007

ISBN: 1600140092

Curriculum: Bumblebees; Insects

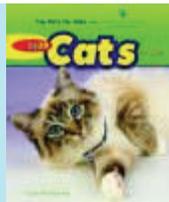
Incredible up-close photographs accompany this very informative emergent reader book about bumblebees. One of a series about insects, it is nicely formatted with large pictures, large text, and all the traditional text features an expository text has, making it a useful teaching tool.

Reviewed by: Leah Jungers
Pioneer Charter



Top 10 Cats for Kids

By: Dana Meachan Rau
Enslow, 2008
ISBN:9780766030718



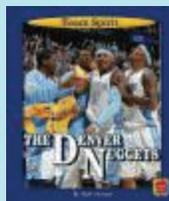
Curriculum: Cat breeds; Cats; Pets

"All cats are different, just like all people are different." Appearance, general behavior, color, and special needs are included for the top ten cat breeds as approved by the American Humane Association. Captioned color photos of all sizes and types of cats illustrate the tips on choosing the perfect pet.

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill ECE-8

The Denver Nuggets

By: Mark Stewart
Norwood House, 2009
ISBN:1599532891



Curriculum: Basketball; Basketball team

The Nuggets have been playing in Denver since 1967. They play quick-thinking, fast-moving, and high-flying basketball. This book presents the history and accomplishments of the Denver Nuggets basketball team. It includes highlights of players, coaches, and awards.

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill ECE-8

The Ohio State Buckeyes

By: Mark Stewart
Norwood House Press,
2009
ISBN:
9781599532776



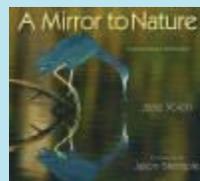
Curriculum: Ohio State Buckeyes (Football team)

The Ohio State Buckeyes have been a college football powerhouse for over a century. With star players, excellent coaches, and a dedicated fan base, a quality program has been active in Columbus throughout this times. The Buckeyes are seven time national champions and have sent many players on to the pros and Hall of Fame. This new extension of the *Team Spirit* series delves into the popular world of college sports. It is packed with information, action-filled photos, profiles of star players and has many more resources, too. Avid sports fans will welcome and enjoy this addition to a collection.

Reviewed by: Karyn Pocernich
Ford Elem.

A Mirror to Nature: Poems About Reflection

Written by: Jane Yolen



Illus. by: Jason Stemple
Wordsong, 2009

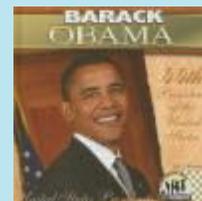
ISBN: 9781590786246
Curriculum: Poetry; Photography; Wildlife

Jason Stemple has captured wildlife and their reflections in water in breathtaking photographs. Jane Yolen has complimented the photographs with her poetry weaving the poetry in, out, and around the animal in the picture. Opposite a photo of a roseate spoonbill standing all alone in the water is a haiku verse that begins, "Her only competition/ Is her reflection." This book includes pictures and poetry about a raccoon, wood stork, alligator, deer, moorhen, snail, roseate spoonbill, cockle, frog, coyote, redbird, and snowy egret. This is a wonderful

book to integrate science and writing. It is highly recommended.
Review by: Dr. Lynne Lopez-Crowley
Johnson Elem.

Barack Obama 44th President of the United States

By: Jill C. Wheeler
Abdo Publishing, 2009
ISBN: 9781604534818



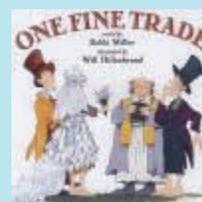
Curriculum: Obama, Barack; Biography; US President; African American Legislators

With the recent flooding of Barack Obama books, readers have a variety of choices to learn more about our new president. This version, titled *Barack Obama 44th President of the United States*, is clear and well written, perfect for 3rd - 5th graders. Included in the biography are political, professional, and personal events in Mr. Obama's life. High quality photos add interest and better understanding of the background of our newest president.

Reviewed by: Megan McQuinn
Howell ECE-8

One Fine Trade

By: Bobbi Miller
Illus. by: Will Hillenbrand



Holiday House
ISBN: 9780823418367

Curriculum: Folklore; Peddlers

In this variation of an old folk song Gregory Piney Woods, a peddler, trades his rail-skinny horse for shiny new silver dollar to buy his daughter, Georgianne's wedding dress. Along the way he meets a wide variety of characters, including a 'giant snake, a-shaking his rattle'. As you read you can hear the melody of the old song in the sing song rhythm of the

words. The detailed illustrations show the wonderful expressions on the characters' faces, adding to the comic tone of the story.

Reviewed by: Megan McQuinn
Howell ECE-8

Nancy Pelosi

By: Geoffrey M. Horn
Gareth Stevens, 2009
ISBN: 1433900211



Curriculum: Nancy Pelosi; Legislators; Women legislators; United States Congress; House of Representatives; Speaker of the House

Nancy Pelosi, from the series People We Should Know, gives readers a close-up look at an important political figure with whom many students may not be familiar. In a straightforward manner, the book lets the reader know of Nancy's strengths and the admiration others have for her. Here students can learn about this dynamic person and political powerhouse who is third in line for the presidency.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elem.

Home Windmills

By: Chereese Cartlidge
ISBN:
9781599531922



Curriculum: Windmills; Inventions; Great ideas

The history of windmills and the exploration of wind as a means of producing energy and reducing fossil fuel use are simply explained in this book. Harnessing the wind and making it work for you is a concept that could capture the imagination of any budding young scientist or inventor.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elem.

Spanish!

Juez (Judge)

By: Jacqueline Laks
Gorman
Weekly Reader, 2009
ISBN: 9781433900990



Curriculum: Judges; Justice; Judicial system

An informative introduction to judges, their main roles in the judicial system, how they get their positions, the various types of courts in which they serve and their function within the different levels in the government structure of our country. Some famous Supreme Court judges receive special attention. In clear Spanish language, the material is well organized and thoroughly dealt with, with photographs of current judges complementing it. A glossary, library and internet resources, plus an index are included in this well presented book. It could serve as part of a unit on the judicial system.

Reviewed by Ethel Hammerly
Spanish reviewer

Middle School Reader Gold Mine

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

Fiction

Warrior Princess

By: Frewin Jones
HaperCollins Publishers,
2009
ISBN: 0060871437



Curriculum: Princesses; War; Magic; Saxons; Wales-History-To 1063

The story is imaginative, neatly constructed, and rich in Welsh lore, characters, and atmosphere. Branwen is a fifteen-year-old princess in the stronghold of Gareth Milain when her world is turned upside down with the murder of her brother Geraint at the hands of the Saxons. For fourteen years the Cantref of Cyffin Tir has been at peace, but over the last twelve months the Saxons have been creeping back into her parents' land. After her brother's funeral, she is sent to a neighboring stronghold, Doeth Palas, for safe keeping. Once there, she begins her training as a warrior; meets with Rhiannon of the Spring from whom she learns, "You are the one who will save this land. You are the Sword of Destiny. The Bright Blade! The Emerald Flame of your people!" and rushes home to find Saxon treachery afoot.

Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Alumni

Here Lies Arthur

By: Phillip Reeve
Scholastic Press, 2008
ISBN: 0545093341



Curriculum: Legends; Knights; King Arthur; Magic

This story sheds a different light on

the tales and the myths of King Arthur and Merlin. Gwyna is a peasant girl who runs when her village is attacked. She is rescued by Myrddin (Merlin) who takes her on as an apprentice. Myrddin is determined to transform a rough, young warlord into King Arthur, a hero. Through trickery, no real magic, Gwyna comes to be the Lady of the Lake. To protect the secrets Gwyna becomes a boy, then a warrior, and then a spy. Through her eyes, the reader sees a different version of Arthur, his life and death.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Rishel M.S.

The Hunger Games

By: Suzanne Collins
Scholastic Press, 2008
ISBN: 0439023483



Curriculum: Future; Survival; Friendships

In a futuristic world, the nation of Panem, in order to maintain control, require each of the twelve districts to send one girl and one boy to the annual Hunger Games. They are required to participate in a fight to the death until only one remains. The games are watched on live television. When Katniss' younger sister's name is drawn, she volunteers to take her place. Katniss and her friend Peeta have to figure out how to survive with their wits and to convince the authorities to let them both live. Listed as one of the Top Ten Books for Young Adults, this story will keep readers on the edge of their seats.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Rishel M.S.

Ways to Live Forever

Written by: Sally Nicholls
Arthur A. Levine Books,
2008



ISBN: 9780545069489
Curriculum: Death; Leukemia

Sam is eleven years old and he is dying of leukemia. Sam has questions like how it feels to kiss a girl, and how do you know you have died? Through a compilation of lists, stories, questions, facts and journal entries written by Sam this book takes readers through the last four months of Sam's life. This book may answer some questions we have asked ourselves. I highly recommend this book.

Reviewed by: Dr. Lynne Lopez-Crowley
Johnson Elem.

Football Hero

By: Tim Green
HarperCollins, 2008



ISBN: 9780061122750
Curriculum: Football; Organized Crime; Conduct of life

Ty lives with his aunt and uncle who have nothing on the Dursley's of Harry Potter fame. Uncle Gus decides that Ty needs to start working after school until midnight or so cleaning the bathrooms of some of the most unsavory places ever, instead of playing football for the middle school team. In one of these places he meets Lucy, a Mafia boss who starts using Ty for insider information because the Jets have just recruited his older brother Tiger. Before Ty knows what is going on the FBI is on the case and now things are really looking grim.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner M.S.

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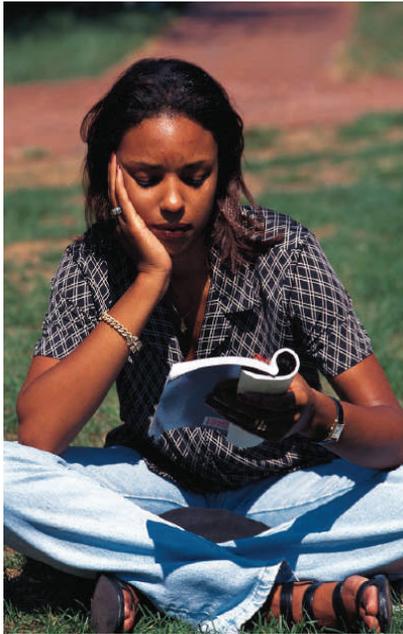
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Karen Shannon
Antonio Nicotera

Young Adults Deserve the Best!



Rapunzel's Revenge

By: Shannon and Dean Hale

Illus. by: Nathan Hale

Bloomsbury, 2008

ISBN: 9781599902883

Curriculum: Graphic novel; Fairytales; Strong women



Rapunzel lives a wonderful life in a beautiful villa. On her twelfth birthday she discovers that she is not who she has always thought she was and that her real mother lives in poverty as a slave. Rapunzel vows to save her mother but her captor places her in a creepy tree with nothing to do except grow her hair. This retelling of the classic fairy-tale is in the graphic novel format set in the old west. Rapunzel is a liberated and forceful young lady. With her hair as an asset and a sidekick named Jack, Rapunzel will achieve her goals.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble

Kepner M.S.

Exposed

By: Susan Vaught

Bloomsbury, 2008

ISBN: 9781599901619

Curriculum: Online predators; Sisters; Sexual abuse; Friendship; Families; Baton-twirling



This cautionary tale begins with Chan, a straight-A, baton-twirling junior looking for a boyfriend-an online boyfriend that won't cheat, won't give her lifelong re-occurring STD, and is low maintenance unlike her last one. She finds Paul despite her parents' strict online rules and begins to do things she never thought she would. Chan soon begins to question whether Paul is who he seems to be.

This HS appropriate story evolves over six weeks and grips the reader. Although preachy at times, the message is clear-be careful online of whom you communicate with and what you tell them.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas

JFK H.S.

Wicked: A Pretty Little Liars Novel

By: Sara Shepard

Harper Collins, 2009

ISBN: 9780061566073

Curriculum: Secrets, High School, friendship, murder, mystery



In this fifth book of the series, murder, jealousy, and popularity conspire together at Rosewood Day private school. Hannah, Spencer, Emily and Aria are coping with the murder of their friend Alison, the prettiest, most popular girl in school, by her boyfriend Ian. But the four girls have secrets and someone's watching. When Ian is let out

of jail, the girls start getting mysterious text messages from a mysterious person called "A." Is "A" Ian? Is Ian innocent, or is he stalking the girls now? Read to find out.

Reviewed by: Sudi Stodola

TJ H.S.



Wondrous Strange

By: Lesley Livingston

Harper Collins, 2009

ISBN: 9780061575372

Curriculum: fantasy, magic, fairies, Shakespeare,

Kelley Winslow is a 17-year-old actress living in New York. When she gets the lead role in *A Midsummer night's Dream*, suddenly she finds her world turned upside down. Kelley rescues a drowning horse who follows her home and refuses to leave her bathtub, the other actors in the play-especially Puck, seem to be taking their roles too seriously, and then this Sonny Flannery she has run into. What secrets lie behind those grey eyes and how do they involve her?

Reviewed By: Sudi Stodola

TJ H.S.

Jody, this one is for you. We are sending you all of our best wishes. And for Danette, who we will miss greatly. Best always.