

The Review Crew



Early Elementary Fiction

Splat the Cat and the Hotshot

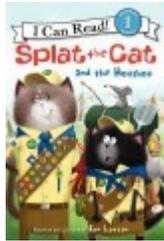
By: Laura Driscoll

Illus. by: Robert Eberz

Harper, 2015

ISBN: 9780062294166

Curriculum: Camping; Cats



Splat the Cat is in awe of new Scout Cat, Scott. Scott can do everything so well! And Splat wished he were just like him. On the Scout's camping trip, Splat packs what he thinks Scott would bring; it may be a lot of stuff, but it's Splat who saves the day in the end by being prepared! Students familiar with Splat the Cat will like this humorous story of Splat's foibles.

Reviewed by: Leah Rounds

Alumni

The Dance Teacher

By: Simon Milne

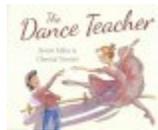
Illus. by: Chantal Stewart

Allen & Unwin, 2013

ISBN: 9781743313312

Curriculum: Dance; Goals; Determination

Isabelle's goal is to become a prima ballerina, so she joins Miss Sylvie's dance studio. She and the rest of her class work hard every day, but, as time goes on, many students find other interests and drop out of the class; however, Isabelle perseveres and her hard work pays off. This book is an inspiration for not just dancers but any young person working hard to reach a goal. Beautiful illus-



trations complement this charming story. Reviewed by: Jutta Gebauer
South H.S.

The Other Day I Met a Bear

Adapted by: John M.

Feierabend

Illus. by: Julia Love Miller

GIA Publications, 2014

ISBN: 9781622770762

*Curriculum: Bears; Fox;
Stories in rhyme*



One day while out for a walk in the forest, a fox comes across a bear. What ensues is a friendly chase with the fox escaping up a tree. This title is based upon an echo song from the mid-twentieth century that has oft been used at summer youth camps. The accompanying sumptuous illustrations enhance the song's playful nature. Created using scratchboard, the illustrations are filled with detail, texture, and personality. This title is a visual delight that will keep children completely engaged and entertained.

Reviewed by: Michelle Jensen

Thomas Jefferson H.S.

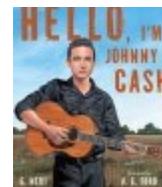
Early Elementary Nonfiction

Hello, I'm Johnny Cash

By: G. Neri

Illus. by: A.G. Ford

Candlewick Press, 2014



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

Volume 11 Number 8

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Who are we?

- ☺ We are DPS teacher librarians from elementary, middle and high school.
- ☺ We know DPS students and the DPS curriculum.

What we do!

- ☺ Every month each member writes reviews of at least fifteen recently published books.
- ☺ This publication consists of the best books we review each month.
- ☺ Our hard work earns thousands of dollars of free books for our school libraries and for the classroom library at ETLs, where DPS teachers can order baskets of books for their classrooms. (Call 720-423-8131 to order.)

ISBN: 9780763662455

Curriculum: *Johnny Cash; Music*

This is the story of Johnny Cash, written in free verse and accompanied by beautiful full page illustrations that every child will love. We learn about his tough childhood growing up in a large family during the Great Depression and how he escapes this life through the gift of his voice which has become familiar to us all. Cash's songs are interwoven into the story to make this a fun read for all ages.

Reviewed by: Jutta Gebauer
South H.S.

Upper Elementary Fiction

My Grandfather's Coat

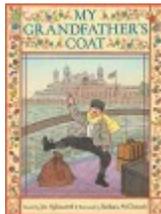
By: Jim Aylesworth

Illus. by: Barbara McClintock

Scholastic Press, 2014

ISBN: 9780439925457

Curriculum: *Immigration; Family; Tailor; Coat*



A boy tells the story about his grandfather and when he came to America. He was a tailor and made himself a handsome coat that he wore on his wedding day. He wore it until it was worn out, then he "snipped and he clipped and he stitched and he sewed." He made a jacket, when it wore out, he made a vest, and finally a tie. While the words tell the story of the coat, the illustrations tell the story of his family. It is a great story to share with many of our students new to this country.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy

Princesses Are Not Just Pretty

By: Kate Lum

Illus. by: Sue Hellard

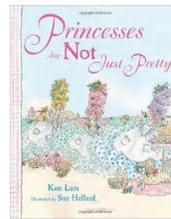
Bloomsbury, 2014

ISBN: 9781599907789

Curriculum: *Princesses; Beauty Contests; Kindness; Responsibility*

The three princesses started arguing about who was the prettiest. They decided that they needed to have a contest. The day before the contest, they did what they could to make themselves the prettiest that they could be. On the day of the contest, Princess Allie dressed for the contest. On her way, she saw the palace bakery was on fire, so she grabbed a hose to put the fire out. Princess Libby was on her way, and passed a little girl whose kitten fell in the pond, and she had to rescue it. The third princess, Mellie, wound up helping to chase piglets. When they reached the contest, they were a sight! Because of their kindness and being helpful to others, they all won.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy



The Secrets of Flamant Castle: The Complete Adventures of Sword Girl & Friends

By: Frances Watts

Illus. by: Gregory Rogers

Allen & Unwin, 2014

ISBN: 9781743319543

Curriculum: *Adventure; Castles; Middle Ages*

Join Tommy (aka Sword Girl) and her friends in this collection of six books. With an ever-present yearning to become a knight, Tommy tackles each dilemma that presents itself with



smarts, friends, and luck! Find out how Tommy becomes Keeper of the Swords, thwarts a murderer, prevents a siege upon the castle, and more! Short chapters and fun illustrations keep the pages turning. This is a perfect selection for adventurous 2nd-4th grade girls.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.

Upper Elementary Nonfiction

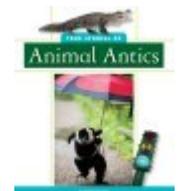
Animal Antics

By: Arnold Ringstad

Child's World, 2014

ISBN: 9781626873568

Curriculum: *Animals; Behavior*



Many animals make great pets, but some up the entertainment factor with their silly antics. This title includes nine different stories of wacky animal behavior such as an umbrella stealing lemur, a money-hungry dog, a mischievous octopus that sprays water at onlookers, and more. Each reviewed book in the *True Animal Stories* series provides short, interesting vignettes that will keep readers engaged. Pictures of the animals being discussed accompany each story.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.

Floods

By: Peter Murray

The Child's World, 2015

ISBN: 9781631437656

Curriculum: *Floods; Water; Storms*
Water is necessary for life and sur-

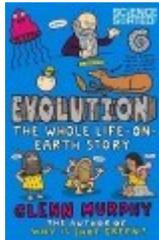


vival, but what if there is too much water? In 1993, it rained for nearly 3 months in Iowa, causing the rivers to rise and major flooding in the area and nine surrounding states. One in a series, *Forces of Nature*, this book focuses on the basic types, characteristics, and locations of large floods around the world and in history.

Reviewed by: Leah Rounds
Alumni

Evolution: The Whole Life-on-Earth Story

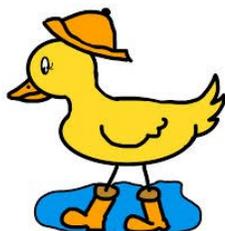
By: Glenn Murphy
Illus. by: Mike Phillips
Macmillan, 2014
ISBN:
9781447254607



Curriculum: Science; Evolution; Darwin

From the author of *Space: The Whole Whizz-Bang Story* and the *Science Sorted* series, comes the hilarious yet informative book about how life on earth began and has evolved through time. How do animals get those cool science-y names? Why are bugs not the size of cars? Why do we have hair? Elementary students will learn all the answers to these questions through Glenn Murphy's uproarious commentary, Mike Phillip's wild illustrations, fun quizzes throughout the book, and a list of additional resources in the back of the book.

Reviewed by: Jonathan Almon
Steck Elem.



Kid President's Guide to Being

Awesome

By: Brad Montague
and Robby Novak
Harper, 2015



ISBN:9780062358684

Curriculum: Inspiration; Friendship; Politics; Biography

Kid President's Guide to Being Awesome is a great companion to the YouTube videos created in 2012 by Brad Montague and Robby Novak. The videos captured the country's attention with a simple message of *awesomeness*, funny dance moves and an overall positive vibe. The book continues on with this trend and Kid President brings happiness and inspiration to all with celebrity interviews, pep talks and 100 ways to change the world. It is amazing to see Brad and Robby's simple idea become an overnight sensation that is still resonating with young people today.

Reviewed by: Sarah Martinez
North H.S.

Middle School Fiction

Revenge of Superstition Mountain

By: Elise Broach
Illus. by: Olga and
Aleksey Ivanov
Christy Ottaviano
Books, 2014



ISBN:
9780805089097

Curriculum: Mystery; Brothers; Hidden treasure

Hold on for the thrilling conclusion of the Superstition Mountain se-

ries. The three Barker brothers, Simon, Henry and Jack along with their friend Delilah are trying hard to understand what is going on in the small town of Superstition. Is the librarian really the reincarnation or ghost of Julia Thomas? Did their Uncle Hank leave them clues to the hidden gold? Is the gold on Superstition Mountain? Can they find it before the three crooks from town do? Find out all this and more in the page turning conclusion of this series.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
CEC Middle College

The Perilous Sea

By: Sherry Thomas
Balzer+Bray, 2014
ISBN: 9780062207326



Curriculum: Fantasy; Mages; Magic; Love

In the sequel to *Burning Skies*, Titus and Iolanthe reunite in their return to Eton College. Iolanthe is the elemental mage that Titus believes fulfills the prophecy for him to save his kingdom from the agents of Atlantis. However, a new revelation shakes Titus' confidence that another mage may be the one. Ioanthe and Titus have been committed to each other and the cause and are also falling in love. Titus must choose to either follow the prophecy or forge his own path to stay with Iolanthe. Readers will be waiting for book three to see how everything turns out.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy



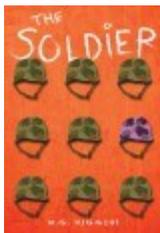
The Soldier

By: M.G. Higgins

Saddleback, 2014

ISBN: 9781622509010

Curriculum: Drawing; Friendship; Women soldiers



To help alleviate her fears, Leyla, a young Iraqi girl, draws pictures of the war ravaging her country. American soldiers patrol the neighborhood, and as her father and brothers plot to overthrow them, Leyla forms a tentative friendship with a female GI. Finally, a Hi/Low book with plot and substance!

Reviewed by: Dr. Janice Pacheco
Skinner M.S.

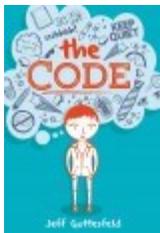
The Code

By: Jeff Gottesfeld

Saddleback, 2014

ISBN: 9781622508945

Curriculum: Middle schools; Middle school students; Bullies



There is an unspoken code in middle school. No one snitches on bullies or cheaters. No one, that is, until Chris decides to take a stand with the help of his friends. Can they break the code without being ostracized themselves? At last, a Hi/Low realistic fiction book with substance!

Reviewed by: Dr. Janice Pacheco
Skinner M.S.

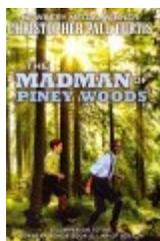
The Madman of Piney Woods

By: Christopher Paul Curtis

Scholastic Press, 2014

ISBN: 9780545156646

Curriculum: Canada;



Blacks; Irish; Veterans; PTSD; Immigrants; Buxton, Ontario

In this companion to *Elijah of Buxton*, Curtis weaves a tale as only he can - with humor and heartbreak as he traces the path of how two boys from very different backgrounds become friends after each has an encounter with the 'Madman'. As they strive to solve a mystery that reaches far into the past, they will need to find the courage to face their fears and learn from life lessons that often come when least expected.

Reviewed by: Michelle Jensen
Thomas Jefferson H.S.

Watch Out Hollywood

By: Maria T. Lennon

Harper, 2014

ISBN: 9780062126931

Curriculum: Lying; Friendship; School



In her first book, Charlie Cooper overcame her reputation as a bully and became a town hero for uncovering a historical secret. With a chance for a Hollywood contract on the line, she tells a white lie to keep her friend Marta from being her competition, but the truth comes out. Her family's disappointed, the school turns against her, and her budding relationship with Bobby Brown seems doomed. Once again, Charlie discovers some truths about herself and this funny and resourceful heroine is able to swallow her pride and redeem herself. Middle school readers will appreciate the believable cast and situations.

Reviewed by: Peggy Obert
Alumni



Masterminds

By: Gordon Korman

Balzer + Bray, 2015

ISBN:

9780062299963

Curriculum: Crime; Genetic engineering; Friendship



Eli lives in Serenity, New Mexico. Serenity is the perfect small town. There is no crime or unemployment or unkindness of any type. When Eli finds out that the Boston Tea Party wasn't really a party where the Americans and the British sat down and drank tea together, he starts to wonder what else isn't real about Serenity. What he and his friends find out is enough to chill the blood of any criminal. This is the beginning of a new series. It is filled with adventure and danger, right up the alley of middle school students who will devour this book and wait eagerly for the next one.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
CEC Middle College

The Iron Trial

By: Holly Black and Cassandra Clare

Scholastic Press, 2014

ISBN:

9780545522250

Curriculum: Magic; Good and evil;



Callum Hunt, Call to his friends, will do anything to fail the Iron Trial. Everyone else will try their hardest to pass. So how is it that Call passes even though he gets the lowest scores on every test? Call's father has warned him all his life about the dangers of the Magisterium. He claims they don't care about the students and that they are the reason that Call's mother is dead. But in the halls of the magisterium Call finds

friends, something he has never had before. And there are choices to be made, choices that are much too difficult for children their age. This is the beginning of a five book series which is a collaboration between Holly Black and Cassandra Clare. This book will attract younger readers to the magic of these two authors.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
CEC Middle College

Middle School Nonfiction

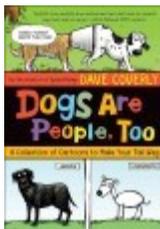
Dogs Are People. Too

Written and illus. by:
Dave Coverly

Henry Holt, 2015

ISBN:
9781627790420

*Curriculum: Dogs;
Cartoons*



This brightly colored collection of cartoons about dogs and their habits, bad and good, is sure to inspire the reader to say, "I know a dog like that!" Chapters include "Stuff Dogs Are Good At" (mainly sniffing and barking), "Working Like a Dog," and others sections showing why they're called man's best friend. The author relates personal vignettes about dogs he has owned as well as stories of true dog heroes and other furry facts. Funny and educational, this book for upper elementary through adults is a delight.

Reviewed by: Peggy
Obert
Alumni



High School Fiction

The Ghosts of Heaven

By: Marcus Sedgwick

Roaring Brook Press,
2015

ISBN: 9781626721258

*Curriculum: Historical
fiction; Science fiction; Mathematics;
Award nominated*



Told through four separate short stories, Marcus Sedgwick expertly weaves the life of a cave girl in prehistoric times, a woman accused of witchcraft in the 17th century, a therapist working at a New York asylum in the 1920's, and a man traveling through space in search of a new Earth. Each story stands on its own and can be read in any order, but symbols and themes, like the image of the spiral or mysteries of the universe, run throughout each story. High schools students will find the tales enthralling, mysterious, suspenseful, and thought provoking.

Reviewed by: Jonathan Almon
Steck Elem.

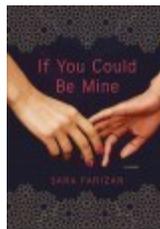
If You Could Be Mine

By: Sara Farizan

Algonquin, 2013

ISBN:9781616202514

Curriculum: Gender Inequality; Friendship; LGBTQ; World Literature



If You Could Be Mine is the story of Nasir and Sahar and their forbidden romance. Set in Iran, the two girls have been best friends since the age of six and now as lovers they are inseparable. However, their friendship and love is

Review Crew Staff

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Michelle Jensen

TJ High School

Sarah Martinez

North High School

Janice Pacheco

Skinner Middle School

Leah Rounds

Alumni

From ETLs:

Karen Shannon

Antonio Nicotera

threatened as Sahar plans to attend university and Nasir's parents have arranged marriage to a well-respected doctor for her. In an attempt to save their love and relationship, Sahar explores her options as she is introduced to the LGBTQ community in a country where homosexuality is a crime.

Reviewed by: Sarah Martinez
North H.S.

High School Nonfiction

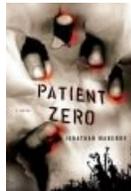
Patient Zero: Solving the Mysteries of Deadly Epidemics

By: Marilee Peters

Annick Press, 2014

ISBN: 9781554516711

Curriculum: Epidemics;
Medical science; Epidemiology



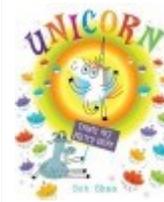
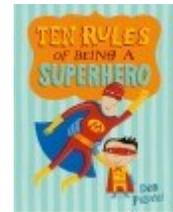
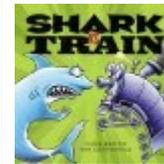
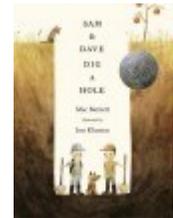
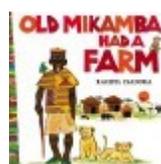
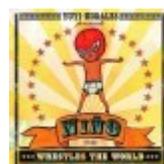
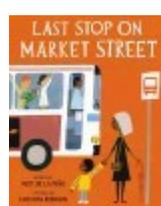
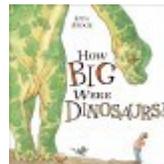
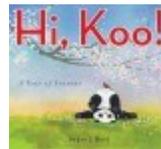
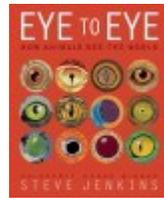
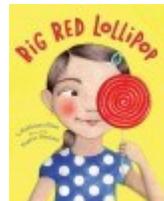
This fascinating, chronological look into seven epidemics begins with the plague of 1665 and ends with AIDS. Cholera, yellow fever, typhoid, the Spanish influenza and Ebola are also covered. With accounts of early victims, possibly the zero patients of each outbreak, readers are drawn into the mystery and history of each epidemic. Readers also learn about the evolution of the science of epidemiology. With 19-27 pages dedicated to each epidemic this engaging title is appropriate for introductory research for MS and HS students. Additional resources and extensive source notes are provided.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas

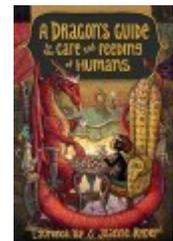
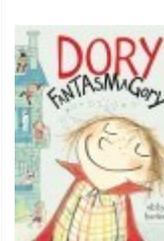
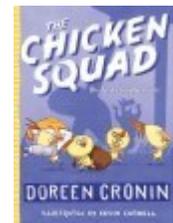
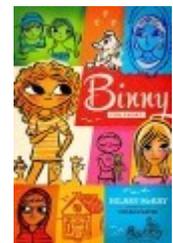
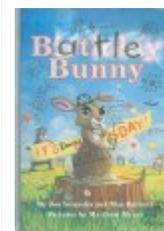
JFK H.S.

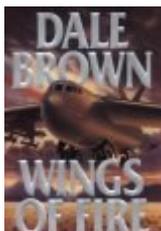
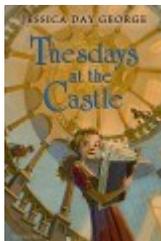
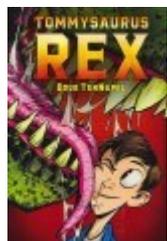
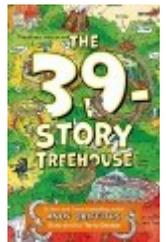
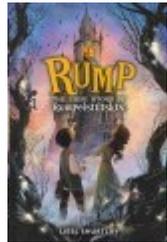
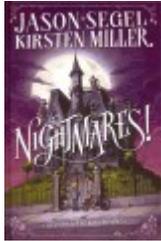
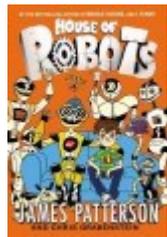


Summer reads for K-2

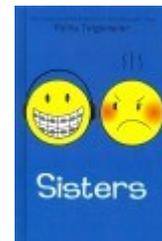
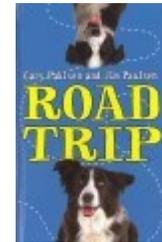
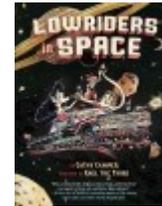
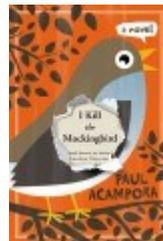
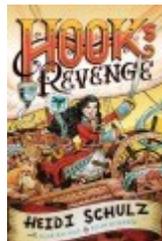
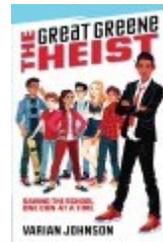
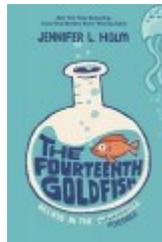
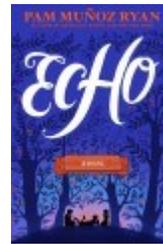
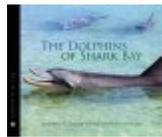
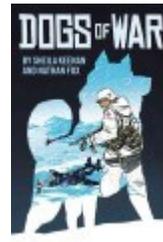
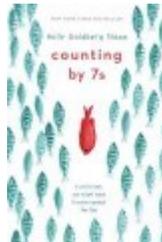
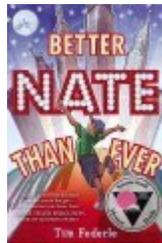


Summer reads for 3 - 5





Summer reads for 6 - 8



Coming Next Month Summer reads for YA