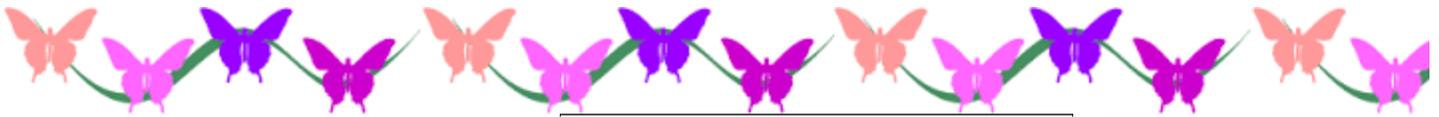


The Review Crew



Early Elementary Fiction

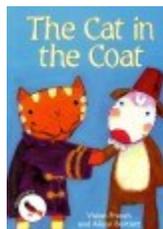
The Cat in the Coat

By: Vivian French

Illus. By: Alison Bartlett
ReadZoneBooks Ltd., 2014

ISBN: 9781783221400

Curriculum: Cat; Goat; Fable; Rhyme



Cat and Goat meet and each admires the others clothing; Goat admires Cat's beautiful coat, and Cat likes Goat's hat. The shrewd cat then makes plans to acquire the hat as his own. This is a cute tale with lots of simple rhyming lines that children will enjoy. The illustrations are colorful and attractive to engage the younger reader. Discussions after reading the book might include how children feel about the mischievousness of the cat. Is this how friends act toward one another? Children will enjoy reading this story over and over again and might reconstruct the ending to create a happier ending for both characters.

Reviewed by: Jutta Gebauer
South H.S.

Zen Socks

Written and illus by: Jon J Muth

Scholastic Press, 2015
ISBN: 9780545166690

Curriculum: Friendship; Giant Panda; Brothers and sisters; Life lessons



Leo and Molly have just moved in to their new home. As they look out the window, they see the neighbor across the street. He is a giant panda named Stillwater. As they

watch. Stillwater rides his bike past their house with their cat riding in the basket. They go out and introduce themselves and soon become friends. Molly tells him how she would like to be a ballet dancer like her aunt. She tells Stillwater that she will practice all day and then will be as good as her aunt. So Stillwater tells her the story of "The Taste of Bonzo's Sword." The moral of the story illustrates the importance of patience. They learn many things from Stillwater's stories including the story of the many starfish on the beach, and how they can make a difference. This is a wonderful story with beautiful illustrations. It is a great read aloud and can spark many discussions.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy

Let's Play

Written & Illus. by: Gabriel Alborozo

Allen & Unwin, 2014
ISBN: 9781743316283

Curriculum: Orchestra; Music; Musical instruments



A wonderful read-aloud for any music teacher (specifically elementary), Alborozo's colorful illustrations and sketch drawings bring music alive to a generation of future musicians. A conductor takes a group of young children and teaches them about the orchestra. He starts with the percussion section, and then moves through the brass, strings, and the woodwinds sections, introducing the instruments in each section along the way. With each instrument a specific color or drawing pattern is taken, bringing the sounds to life. At the end, the chil-

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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.

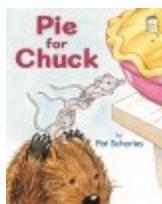
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- ☺ Every month each member writes reviews of at least twelve recently published books.
- ☺ This publication consists of the best books we review each month.
- ☺ Our hard work earns thousands of dollars of free books for our school libraries and for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

dren in the story join with musicians to create their final masterpiece in sound and art. A must have addition for every elementary school library. Reviewed by: Emily Rubin Barnum Elem.

Pie for Chuck

Written and illus. by:
Pat Schories
Holiday House, 2015
ISBN:
9780823433956



Curriculum: Fictional animals; Teamwork; Predicting
Dreaming of pie, Big Chuck awakens to the tempting smell of the real thing, cooling in a kitchen window. When neither our woodchuck hero nor his chums can reach the treat, teamwork pays off--after a fashion. At story's end the pie lies within ready reach, but Chuck and friends desert their dessert, frightened by a small child. *Pie for Chuck* features appealingly large print and impossibly cute artwork. Plenty of repetition and picture support make this an easy choice for emergent readers, read alouds, and little ones who retell using pictures.

Reviewed by: Nick Bleckley
Cheltenham Elem.

Pinkalicious and the Pink Parakeet

Written and Illus. by:
Victoria Karr
HarperCollins, 2015
ISBN: 9780062245960

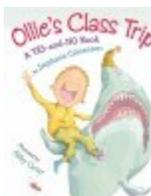


Curriculum: Beginning Readers; Heroines
It's Bird Week at school and Pinkalicious has taken to avian information like a duck to water. "Fact!" she tells her brother, "Orioles can eat seventeen worms in a minute." "Big whoop," he replies, "So can I." (Note a master's touch: at a stroke we get the brother we love to hate and the always delicious yuck

factor.) On the class field trip Pinkalicious pursues the rare pink parakeet. When it hitchhikes out of its enclosure in Ms. Penney's coat, only Pinkalicious can bring it home again. Reviewed by: Nick Bleckley Cheltenham Elem.

Ollie's Class Trip: A Yes and No Book

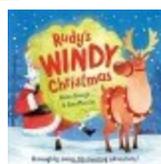
By: Stephanie Calmeson
Illus. by: Abby Carter
Holiday House, 2015
ISBN:
9780823434329



Curriculum: Call and response; Field trips
When Mike the aquarium guide speaks to the class, what will Ollie do--tell jokes to a shark, ride on a seahorse, or play tag with a turtle? No, no, and no! "Will Ollie have fun looking, listening, and learning?" Yes! Here's a call and response book that teaches field trip safety and behavior. *Ollie's Class Trip* features zany water color illustrations and silly suggestions that will make five-year-olds howl. Calmeson and Carter collaborated previously on *Ollie's School Day*. Reviewed by: Nick Bleckley Cheltenham Elem.

Rudy's Windy Christmas

By: Helen Baugh
Illus. by: Ben Mantle
Albert Whitman &
Company, 2014
ISBN: 978087571736



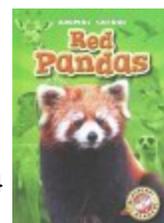
Curriculum: Christmas; Reindeer; Flatulence
It's Christmas Eve and Mrs. Claus serves a festive feast featuring brussel sprouts to prepare Santa for his busy night delivering toys. Santa fools her by feeding his sprouts to Rudy the red-nosed reindeer. The consequences are quite fragrant, as Rudy emits "sprouty whiffs", "windy pops", and "booty burps" throughout

the journey. The other reindeer are so amused that they wear themselves out laughing. How will the team ever make it back to the North Pole? Children will enjoy all the colorful synonyms for passing gas. Reviewed by: Denise Cushing Carson Elem

Early Elementary Nonfiction

Red Pandas

By: Megan Borgert-Spaniol
Bellwether Media,
2016
ISBN: 9780531216774



Curriculum: Animals; Mammals; Red pandas
In this nonfiction text, students will learn about Red Pandas. These mammals live in bamboo forests. Students are taught about what a Red Panda is, its special features, what they eat, their babies, and their habitat. With many bright and detailed photographs students are taught all about Red Pandas, including some interesting facts about how they are nocturnal, that they use their tails keep them warm, and that their tails help them balance. The book has very accessible text that most students should find success with. Text Features include table of contents, photographs, index, glossary, and bold words. There is also a Learn More section, with ways to do so at the library and on the web. One of many in this series that would be a great addition to any school or classroom library. Reviewed by: Emily Rubin Barnum Elem.



Desert Animals

By: David West
Bright Connections
Media, 2015
ISBN:
9781622670352



Curriculum: Animals; Desert animals
Ten desert animals are presented in this title, including a fennec fox, gila monster, coyote, camel, and hyena. Each full page spread prominently displays a photograph of the animal with a paragraph providing a description and a few basic facts. Each page also has a color coded table with information about the animal's diet, habitat, size, animal group, and an additional fact. This attractive title is a perfect choice for young students in need of beginning research materials.
Reviewed by: Michelle Jensen
Thomas Jefferson H.S.

Upper Elementary Fiction

My Pet Human

Written and illus. by:
Yasmine Surrovec
Roaring Brook Press,
2015
ISBN:
9781626720732



Curriculum: Cats; Friends
Oliver is an independent cat with the freedom to do as he pleases. He looks to his feline and canine friends with disdain because they are all owned by humans. But then he thinks that having a close relationship with a human might come in handy. He would have regular meals, a warm place to sleep and get massages every now and then. When a little girl moves into the abandoned house across the street, he sees his chance. He plans to train his human

to serve him. When he helps the girl make friends with a neighborhood boy he is relieved that she won't be around too much to bother him. But then something unexpected happens. Oliver starts to miss the little girl's attention. Then things go from bad to worse; animal control catches him and he thinks he is done for. Find out how Oliver escapes and the important lessons he learns. This chapter book is an easy read full of humor and quirky illustrations and comes highly recommended.
Reviewed by: Jutta Gebauer
South H.S.

The Tale of Rescue

By: Michael J. Rosen
Illus. by: Stan
Fellows
Candlewick Press,
2015



ISBN: 9780763671679
Curriculum: Cattle dogs; Family; Blizzard; Rescue
This story is a retelling of an actual event. It involved a family with their ten-year-old son. It also involved a very brave cattle dog named Angus. The family took a trip to the Appalachian foothills of Ohio. They set out on a walk one afternoon and found themselves lost in the middle of a blizzard. They are stranded in the whiteout, freezing and lost. The father sent out a whistle, since he knew their voices wouldn't carry. On a nearby cattle ranch, the dog heard the whistle and began to hunt them. Amazingly, he found them and herded the family toward the ranch house. The family survived. The 10-year-old boy went back to the area as an adult to find the house and rancher that saved them. He found the now old rancher and his dog still there. The water-

color illustrations really add to the telling of the story. This is for anyone who enjoys dog stories and it has a happy ending.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy

The Marvels

Written and illus. by:
Brian Selznick
Scholastic, 2015
ISBN: 9780545448680



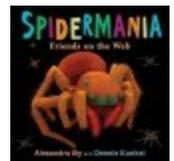
Curriculum: Actors; Family; London; Theater
The story begins in 1766 on a ship in the ocean. For four hundred pages the story of a multi-generational dynasty of actors unfolds in pencil sketches. The end of the dynasty appears to come when the theatre burns down. Skip to the year 1990 where a new story begins in text. Here we meet Joseph Jervis who has run away from his boarding school looking for an uncle he has never met. Throughout the book both the illustrated and textual stories touch in mystical seeming ways, leaving the reader searching for answers. Readers will be moved by this brilliant book.
Reviewed by: Chris Coble
CEC Early College

Upper Elementary Nonfiction

Spi-

dermania: Friends on the Web

By: Alexandra Siy
Illus. by: Dennis Kunkel
Holiday House, 2015
ISBN: 9780823428717



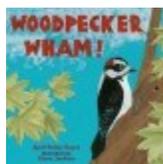
Curriculum: Spiders; Arachnids
All the amazing attributes of this member of the arachnid family are on display in this vivid book that delves into the bodies and lives of such animals as the spitting spider, black widow, and

daddy longlegs. From using super-silk to build webs and fly through the air, to the watery dens of the diving bell and fishing spider, amazing facts are revealed in clear, well-written text. Remarkable color-enhanced photographs from an electron microscope make the spiders larger than life and emphasize their unique features. Although the text is aimed at middle elementary readers, all spider lovers will be fascinated by the illustrations and information on such topics as naming spiders, eye patterns, and using a flow chart to identify a spider.

Reviewed by: Peggy Obert
Alumni

Woodpecker Wham!

By: April Pulley Sayre
Illus. by: Steve Jenkins
Henry Holt and Company, 2015



ISBN: 9780805088427

*Curriculum: Nature; Birds in Nature; Woodpeckers
Chop Chip Chop
Bonk Bonk Bonk
Wik-A, Wik-A*

Sayre's *Woodpecker Wham!* is an informative picture book full of short, fun filled prose that tells the story of how woodpeckers live, nest, forage for food, and more. Alliteration within the passages keeps the text lively and provides a bit of interaction for the reader. Amazing collage illustrations portray a variety of woodpecker species in different settings and seasons. There is a 3-D effect to many of the pages as wood chips fly off the page and marbled, speckled, woodpeckers fan their textured feathers. A section at the end provides a more in-depth look into woodpeckers with information on how to find and help woodpeckers.

Reviewed by: Sarah Martinez
North H.S.

Middle School Fiction

Faceless

By: Alyssa Sheinmel
Scholastic, 2015

ISBN: 9780545676014

Curriculum: Plastic Surgery; Transplants; Relationships



High school runner Maisie is practicing when lightning strikes a tree and brings down electrical wires that burn off part of her face. Encouraged by the idea that a face transplant will restore her life, she opts for the surgery but is bitter when she realizes she will never be the same. Going through the steps of grieving while she deals with her parents, her friends, and her boyfriend Chiraq, she finally attends a support group where wounded veteran Adam helps her recognize the new, emerging Maisie. Although most teenagers will never have to face this level of trauma, any kind of loss will let them appreciate the pain and transformation in this remarkably well-researched story.

Reviewed by: Peggy Obert
Alumni

From the Notebooks of a Middle School Princess

Princess

Written and Illus. by:
Meg Cabot
Feiwel and Friends, 2015
ISBN: 9781250066022



Curriculum: Friendship; Middle school; Princesses

A new middle grade novel from Meg Cabot will certainly become a favorite of elementary school students as they meet the new Princess Olivia of Genovia, especially those who fell in love with Princess Mia of Genovia as little girls. Olivia Grace Clarisse Mignonette

Harrison is an "average" sixth grader, except that she lives with her Aunt Catherine, Step-Uncle Rick, and step-cousins Justin and Sara, because after her mother died it was decided her father had an "unstable" profession that wouldn't be good for raising a young girl. While she knows him through letters and gifts, she has never met him and this is one of her biggest dreams. Written in journal entries with line sketches done by Meg Cabot, readers will connect with the social awkwardness that Olivia feels and the issues of middle school (and elementary school). A fun novel that would be perfect for late elementary school girls.

Reviewed by: Emily Rubin
Barnum Elem.

Echo

By: Pam Muñoz Ryan
Scholastic Press, 2015

ISBN:

9780439874021

Curriculum:

Harmonica; Music; Fate; Discrimination



Echo presents five separate stories that harmoniously weave together by tale's end. Otto, lost in the forest, is found by three mysterious sisters. The sisters trapped in the forest by a witch can be freed by Otto's use of a harmonica. Decades later the harmonica comes into the possession of a young German boy. Friedrich, shy and self-conscious, must overcome his fears to save his father from a death camp. As an orphan, Michael wishes for a safe home for both he and his brother. As he plays, the harmonica seems to provide a promise for the future. Finally, Maria discovers a talent for music and the ability to stand up against injustice as she plays the sweet notes of her new harmonica. Echo is a multilayered, well-crafted, and uplifting must read.

Reviewed by: Michelle Jensen
Thomas Jefferson H.S.

Charlie Joe Jackson's Guide to Planet Girl

By: Tommy Greenwald
Illus. by: J.P. Coovert
Roaring Brook Press,
2015
ISBN:
9781596438415



Curriculum: Middle school; Dating; Humor

Charlie Joe Jackson, famous for never reading a book or visiting the library, has a problem. All of his friends have girlfriends. He has become the fifth wheel! And to make matters worse, the school's end of the year dance is coming up. Finally Charlie Joe sneaks into the library to ask the librarian for a book that might help him figure out how to get a girlfriend. Like all the other Charlie Joe Jackson books, this one is filled with humor as well as a basic honesty about what school and relationships are really about. Humorous sketches add a different dimension to the text. Reviewed by: Chris Coble
CEC Early College



Space Dumplins

By: Craig Thompson
Graphix, 2015
ISBN:
9780545565431



Curriculum: Family Dynamics; Friendship; Adversity
Violet Marlocke lives in a future world, Earth is long gone. Humans and aliens live together on space stations and space trailer parks. The fuel crisis has been solved, as space whale "dumplins" are used to create energy. The only problem with the space whales is that they are known to eat everything in their paths. When Violet's school is

devoured, she is forced to go to work with her mother, a fashion designer, on asteroid Shell-Tar. Violet doesn't quite fit in on Shell-Tar and soon teams up with other misfits on a dangerous quest to save her father after he disappears during a secret mission. Students will enjoy Thompson's colorful, exciting graphic novel.
Reviewed by: Denise Cushing
Carson Elem.

Middle School Nonfiction

Drowned City : Hurricane Katrina & New Orleans

Written and Illus. by:
Dan Brown
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015
ISBN: 9780544157774



Curriculum: Weather; Natural Disaster; American Government; Tragedy
A devastating storm, broken levees, floating dead bodies, and thousands looking for food, shelter, and medical care are just some of the images depicted in Dan Brown's graphic novel that marks the ten-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. Ill-prepared, the city of New Orleans and its people struggle to survive amidst the inaction of city, state, and federal agencies. The muted illustrations capture vividly the devastation people endured as a total city came under water and under attack. Accompanying text recounts rescues, statistics, and actual quotes from everyday citizens to leaders like the president of the United States. This brief but detailed account of the events leading up to the hurricane, its landfall and aftermath will leave readers wanting to investigate further.
Reviewed by: Sarah Martinez
North H.S.

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High School Fiction

Red Girl, Blue Boy

By: Lauren Baratz-Logsted
Bloomsbury, 2015
ISBN: 9781619635005
Curriculum: Friendship; Teen relationships; Politics; Presidential politics

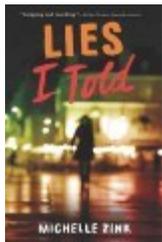


One of the *If Only* novels, *Red Girl, Blue Boy*, introduces us to Katie and Drew, two high schoolers in the midst of their parents' presidential bids. Great timing with the current events, readers will enjoy getting to read from both Katie and Drew's points of views as they go through life as the children of presidential candidates from the conventions to election night. Katie and Drew live in neighboring towns and have lived opposite lives. Katie growing up with her widowed father who has been in the political world her whole life and going to a private school sharing her last name. Drew growing up with parents and twin younger brothers, whose father got rich a few years ago and now his mom is living her dream to be president. Short chapters keep the reader wanting more, truly a sweet romance novel great for middle and early high schoolers.

Reviewed by: Emily Rubin
Barnum Elem.

Lies I Told

By: Michelle Zink
Harper Teen, 2015
ISBN:
9780062327123



Curriculum: Scams; Adopted Children; Family Dynamics; Teen Love
Grace finds herself in a new school, again and must try to fit and make

friends. Grace is not your typical sixteen-year-old; she is trying to make friends and fit in because it's her job. Her adoptive parents are running a grift in the affluent neighborhood of Playa Hermosa, California. Her adoptive brother, Parker and she are integral to the con. They must infiltrate the rich cliques and beach parties in order to get close to Logan Fairchild. It is rumored that his father has stashed 20 million dollars in gold bricks somewhere on his property.

When Grace genuinely develops feelings for Logan, will she carry through on the swindle? Spoiler, this book is the first in a series.

Reviewed by: Denise Cushing
Carson Elem.

Unbecoming

By: Jenny Downham
Scholastic Inc., 2016
ISBN: 9780545907170
Curriculum: Family Dynamics, GLBT, Dementia, Elderly



Katie's world is turned upside down one quiet Sunday when her mother receives a phone call from a local hospital. It seems that her Grandmother Mary, who is suffering from dementia, needs a place to live. Katie is shocked because she thought her grandmother had died long before she was born. Carolyn, Katie's mother, has been hiding secrets from her, but why? She feels as if nothing in her life is quite as it seems. As this tale of secrets unravels, the reader learns about three women in one family who are challenging social norms during three different time periods.

Reviewed by: Denise Cushing
Carson Elem.



Blue-Butterfly Day by Robert Frost

It is blue-butterfly day here in spring,
And with these sky-flakes down in flurry on flurry
There is more unmixed color on the wing
Than flowers will show for days unless they hurry.

But these are flowers that fly and all but sing:
And now from having ridden out desire
They lie closed over in the wind and cling
Where wheels have freshly sliced the April mire.



And to my thinking as a lover of life, butterflies, soap-bubbles, and whatever is of their kind among men, know most of happiness. To see these light, foolish, delicate, mobile little souls flitting about—that moveth Zarathustra to tears and to song.

Friedrich Nietzsche