Fiction

I Always, Always Get My Way
By: Thad Krasnesky
Illus. by: David Parkins
Flashlight Press, 2009
ISBN: 9780979974649
Curriculum: Family life; Parent and child
Being only three gets Emmy out of a lot of tricky situations. She travels the house wreaking havoc on everyone there - mom, dad, brother, sister, and pets. Yet, eventually, her family tires of her and her excuse of being too little to get in trouble. Older siblings will relate all too well to this little sister story. Told in an entertaining rhyming pattern with comical watercolor illustrations, Emmy's story of mischief will be enjoyed by many.
Reviewed by: Karyn Pocernich
Ford Elem.

Who Wants to Be a Poodle?
I Don't
Written and illus by: Lauren Child
Candlewick Press, 2009
ISBN: 9780763646103
Curriculum: Dogs
Trixie Twinkle Toes Trot-a-Lot Delight lives with Verity Brulee in a sumptuous apartment in a fashionable city. She does not think this is the best life for her. She wants to walk in puddles, poke her head out car windows, and be dangerous and daring! Will she be able to change her circumstances?
Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill Elem.

Star of the Week
By: Darlene Friedman
Illus. by: Roger Roth
Bowen Press, 2009
ISBN: 9780763646103
Curriculum: Kindergarten; Adoption
Cassidy-Li's turn has come to be the Star of the Week. She and Mom are making brownies with sprinkles to take for a special snack. She and Dad are creating a poster all about HER. But how can she include her birth parents? She has never met them and knows nothing at all about them.
Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill Elem.

Binky the Space Cat
Written and Illus. by: Ashley Spires
Kids Can Press, 2009

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.)
Fierce and mighty, Binky defends humans from pesky aliens a.k.a. bugs. "Unlike your average cat...he has a purpose", Binky responds to a SPACE CAT ad and becomes certified to protect humans, venture into outer space (the front yard) and build a rocket ship. Ashley Spires' beginning graphic novel is a hilarious source for encouraging creative writing and Binky's T-chart note taking strategy, comparing aliens and bugs, is a cute way to represent this research technique.

Reviewed by: Cheri Hilton
South HS

My Sister Alicia May
By: Nancy Tupper Ling
Illus. by: Shennen Bersani
Pleasant St. Press, 2009
ISBN: 9780979203596
Curriculum: Down syndrome; Sisters
Rachel's sister, Alicia May has Down syndrome. Rachel talks about the special things her sister does. She describes endearing moments such as Rachel counting the dots on ladybugs and also of frustrating times when she gets tired of looking after her sister. This book provides a special look into the life of living with a sibling with Down syndrome. The illustrations are so realistic that they look like photographs. I highly recommend this book for all libraries. It will give introspection into the world of Down syndrome.

Reviewed by: Dr. Lynne Lopez-Crowley
MSLA

Animals That Live on the Farm: Cows
By: JoAnn Early Macken
Weekly Reader Books, 2010
ISBN: 1433923963
Curriculum: Cows; Farm animals; Farms
Part of a series, Animals That Live on the Farm, this book focuses on cows and is an ideal research tool for young students. The book is broken into three main sections; calves, daily life of a cow living on a farm, and the many uses a cow has on a farm.

Reviewed by: Leah Rounds
Alumni

My Body Belongs To Me
By: Jill Starishevsky
Illus. by: Sara Muller
Safety Star Media, 2008
ISBN: 9780982121603
Curriculum: Child sexual abuse; Child psychology
A little kid is improperly touched by an adult. The author, a lawyer, has written a book for 3- to 10-year-olds that serves as a tool to address the difficult discussion of sexual abuse. The book is written in a sensitive but straightforward manner, and uses rhyme. It includes resources on how to discuss this subject with young children. This is an important book for teachers, psychologists, and parents.

Reviewed by: Dr. Carmen H. Sanjurjo
Alumni

¿Quién es quién?
(Who is Who?)
By: Lotti Scagliotti
Illus. by: Ale González
Nicanitas,
ISBN: 9788496448261
Curriculum: Fingers
A pair of hands is depicted in this Spanish picture book. It is easy to count the fingers, but once they are disguised as puppets it becomes more challenging to identify and name them as a little story is developed around each one of them.

This is a fun way for children to learn the names for each finger as they are introduced in an original way with simple sentences and charming drawings.

Reviewed by: Ethel Hammerly
Spanish reviewer

Key to the colors
Yellow = primary
Blue = upper elementary
Green = middle school
Purple = young adult
The Best for Upper Elementary Readers!

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

**Fiction**

**Sticky Burr: The Prickly Peril**
Written and illus. by: John Lechner
Candlewick Press, 2009
ISBN: 9780763645809
Curriculum: Burrs; Seeds; Adventure; Forests
Told from the point of the bad guy, Scurvy Burr, this short graphic novel tells of the adventure of the bad seeds and their exiled friend trying to take over the Burrwood Village and oust the good guy, Sticky Burr, once and for all. With an easier to follow plot than most graphic novels, the format and silly characters will draw in and keep reluctant readers, and especially boys.
Reviewed by: Leah Rounds
Alumni

**Rule of Three**
By: Megan McDonald
Illus. by: Pamela A. Consolazio
Candlewick Press, 2009
ISBN: 0763641535
Curriculum: Sisters; Acting; Baking; Family life
In Acton, Oregon, oldest sister Alex has always been the one to act in plays while middle sister Stevie has always been content to being the sensible sister, holding the three together. When the Drama Club, at the middle school, announces that the play for the coming season will be a musical (Once Upon a Mattress), Stevie decides she wants to try out for the lead. She has a beautiful singing voice that should make her a shoe-in. Alex, however, has other ideas and a stiff competition ensues. "May the best sister win."
Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Alumni

**Wild Stories**
Written and illus. by Colin Thompson
Kane Miller, 2009
ISBN: 9781933605883
Curriculum: Fables, Zoology
Funny, witty, and absurd stories about creatures in an old house and the surrounding garden. The funniest are the ones about insects and their adventures, especially because they are written from the perspective of the animals themselves. Two or three stories are about growing old and moving on in life. With characters like Ted the Flea who lived on a rat, and Frank1942, an ant who recites poetry, kids and adults will have great fun reading these lively and "wiggly" stories.
Reviewed by: Dr. Carmen Sanjurjo
Alumni

**Nonfiction**

**Django: World’s Greatest Jazz Guitarist**
Written and Illus. by: Bonnie Christensen
Roaring Book Press, 2009
ISBN: 9781596434226
Curriculum: Jazz; Music
Belgium January 23, 1910
Dogs bark
Banjos talk
Dinners boil in black pots

**Cuentos para crecer (Tales to grow up)**
By: Anna Gasol and Teresa Blanch
Illus. by: Jacobo Muñiz
Malsinet, 2008
ISBN: 9788496708501
Curriculum: Traditional tales; Values
Twelve traditional tales from different cultures are used to present values that should help young readers become outstanding citizens. The tales are followed by comments, introspective questions and encouragement to put each value into practice. The values presented are equality, justice, respect, peace, altruism, integrity, solidarity, perseverance, living together harmoniously, patience, and responsibility.
The text, which is easy to follow and attractively supported with soft-colored drawings, will be appealing to youngsters.
Reviewed by: Ethel Hammerly
Spanish reviewer
A laugh, a screech, a baby cries
Django is born
His father’s violin sings
Bell ring in a far off town.

The story is captivating. Django is born among the Roma, an ethnic group known as “gypsies” who migrated to France from India nearly one thousand years ago, and is considered a prodigy from a young age. Despite his lack of any education he moves to Paris and on the eve of fame, gets badly burned in a carriage accident.

Reviewed by: Dana Clark
Greenwood Elem.

**Just the Facts: Writing Your Own Research Paper**
Written and illus. by Nancy Loewan
Picture Window Books, 2010
ISBN: 9781404855199

Curriculum: Research

This is an excellent teaching resource for research skills. The reader is first introduced to a young girl (our guide) as she explains what a research report is: “…a special kind of writing assignment. You don’t tell a story. You don’t make things up. In fact, writing is one of the LAST steps in putting together a research report.” For every ‘tool’ the narrator describes, there is an accompanying page which illustrates what the students’ work should look like. The illustrations are large, modern and eye-caching.

Reviewed by Dana Clark
Greenwood Elem.

**Sneaky, Spinning Baby Spiders**
By: Sandra Markle
Illus. by: Joan Holub Walker, 2008
ISBN: 9780802796974

Curriculum: Arachnids; Spiders

This book will take readers on a remarkable journey into the world of baby spiders. Readers will be fascinated by facts about different types of spiders. They will learn that Diving Bell spiders spin a web underwater to make a nursery chamber and that these spiders will make many trips to the water surface, trap air against their bodies and then dive down to the web and deposit the air into the nursery. This fascinating piece of information and others are supplemented by fabulous photography. A map is included showing where each spider photograph was taken. This book is a must for all libraries.

Reviewed by: Dr. Lynne Lopez-Crowley
MSLA

**The Farwalker’s Quest**
By: Joni Sensel
Bloomsbury U.S.A., 2009
ISBN: 1599902729

Curriculum: Adventure; Quests; Magic; Friendship

The two friends, Ariel and Zeke, are preparing for their name day to find out what training they have the skills for. The two find an ancient artifact called a “telling dart” that appears to be for Ariel. When two strangers come to their village to find the dart, Ariel has bad feelings. She is right and is kidnapped by the strangers. Zeke follows to rescue her and they both travel on to find the meaning of the dart’s message and their true calling. Friendship is tested on their journey, and they must follow their instincts to discover the answers to their quest.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy

**Silver Phoenix**
By: Cindy Pon
Green Willow Books, 2009
ISBN: 9780061730214

Curriculum: China; Family; Survival; Supernatural; Magic

Ai Ling was rejected as a suitable wife for most of the families because her father had been disgraced at the court. This didn’t bother her as she liked her independence. When her father went to the palace to redeem his name, he never returned. Ai Ling decided to go out on her own to find her father. She meets up with Chen Yong who is on a
quest of his own and finds himself drawn to her. Also drawn to her is a number of evil spirits trying to kill her. She finds powers she didn’t know she had and is assisted by the Immortals. She must fulfill her destiny from a previous incarnation. There is adventure, magic, and a young girl finding her place and fulfilling her destiny.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy

Are These My Basoomas I See Before me?:
The Final Confessions of Georgia Nicolson

By: Louise Rennison
HarperTeen, 2009
ISBN: 9780061459351
Curriculum: Friendship; Dating; Families

Georgie is thrilled to be the one and only girlfriend of Masimo, the hot guy from Pizza-a-Gogo land, Italy, for those of you not up on the language. But if she is so thrilled to be his girlfriend why is Dave the Laugh in her thoughts so often? In the immortal words of Georgie, “Why can’t everything be simple???”.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner M.S.

Cat O’ Nine Tails
By: Julia Golding
Roaring Brook Press, 2008
ISBN: 1596434455
Curriculum: England-History-18th Century; Sailor’s life-18th Century

Cat Royal and three friends find themselves betrayed by a family member, become impressed into the British Navy, and endure hardships on board a ship whose Captain is crazy. In addition, the Courageous is forced to land in Georgia where Cat escapes, becomes adopted into the Creek tribe, is hunted by Mr. Maclean (a torturer from the ship), and finally makes her way to friends in Philadelphia. An enjoyable mystery, adventure, and more.

Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Alumni

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Karen Shannon
Antonio Nicotera

Killer Ants
By: Nicholas Nirgiotis
Illus. by: Emma Stevenson
Holiday House, 2009
ISBN: 9780823420346
Curriculum: Ants; Predatory insects

Flesh-eating army ants, African driver ants, fire ants, and the bulldog ants of Australia, are the focus of this informative offering. Large gouache illustrations accompany text about the insects’ varying social structures, life cycles, physiology, weapons and attack modes. Readers will be fascinated by the facts and detailed renderings of these ferocious hunters.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose
Trevista ECE-8

Chris Jericho
By: Sean Price
Capstone Press, 2010
ISBN: 9781429633505
Curriculum: WWE; Professional wrestling

Chris Jericho, also known as Y2J, was
born Chris Irvine in 1970. He was born on Long Island, New York. Chris played hockey, baseball, football and water polo, but he loved wrestling the best. Chris went to college and earned a degree in journalism. After he practiced in the field of journalism for a time, he realized that he wanted to be the one in the spotlight, not the one reporting it.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner M.S.

The Seed Vault
By: Bonnie Jueettner
Norwood House Press, 2010
ISBN: 9781599533438
Curriculum: Plants; Gene banks; Seeds; Global conservation
Historically farmers attempt to preserve seeds from crops to plant the following year. Nature and science have caused the agriculture world to collect millions of seed varieties promoting crop diversity and reducing extinction risks. The Seed Vault examines the 2004 international treaty which preserves an ever growing 100 million seed collection in a "doomsday vault", insureing food crop production in the event of a global disaster. Highly recommended this book conveys our global community efforts to protect planet resources.

Reviewed by: Cheri Hilton
South HS

The Seed Vault
By: Bonnie Juettner
Norwood House Press, 2010
ISBN: 9781599533438
Curriculum: Plants; Gene banks; Seeds; Global conservation
Not only did they capture some of the most powerful images of this tragic era in American history, but photographers also helped change the country's perception and understanding of the Dust Bowl. Following both the people who tried to escape the devastation as well as those who remained behind, their work tells stories of desperation, perseverance, and hope as well. This compilation of incredible photos with powerful text "provides us with a permanent record of a remarkable time that must not be forgotten."

Reviewed by: Karyn Pocernich
Ford Elem.

The Dust Bowl
Through the Lens
By: Martin W. Sandler
Walker & Company, 2009
ISBN: 9780802795472
Curriculum: Dust Bowl era, 1931-1939; Documentary photography
Not only did they capture some of the most powerful images of this tragic era in American history, but photographers also helped change the country's perception and understanding of the Dust Bowl. Following both the people who tried to escape the devastation as well as those who remained behind, their work tells stories of desperation, perseverance, and hope as well. This compilation of incredible photos with powerful text "provides us with a permanent record of a remarkable time that must not be forgotten."

Reviewed by: Karyn Pocernich
Ford Elem.

Stonewcutter
By: John Kuramoto
Illus. by Jon J. Muth
Feiwel and Friends, 2009
ISBN: 9780312554569
Curriculum: Folklore-Japanese
In the stonecutter's quest for power he becomes a merchant, a high official, the sun, a cloud, the wind, and finally a stone. In this form "He was strength itself, more powerful than anything else on earth or in the sky." And yet, "The stonecutter stood before the stone, deciding where to begin." Jon Muth's use of white space in his strikingly simple black figures adds a wonderful touch of mystique to this Japanese folktale. This is a story for readers of all ages.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elem.

Jumping Off Swings
By: Johanna Knowles
Candlewick Press, 2009
ISBN: 9780763639495
Curriculum: Teen Pregnancy; Interpersonal relations; Emotional problems
Using sex to feel loved and labeled a slut by her classmates, Ellie discovers she is pregnant and facing all the hard choices inherent in her situation. This sensitive story unfolds through the first person narratives of four teens. Each perspective gives voice to how the consequences of a teen pregnancy reverberate throughout relationships and the community.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose
Trevista ECE-8

Liar
By: Justine Larbalestier
Bloomsbury, 2009
ISBN: 9781599903057
Curriculum: High school life; Secrets; Werewolves
Micah is admittedly an unreliable narrator, a liar her whole life. Yet here she promises to tell the truth and to share her biggest secret. Details are revealed and additional lies and mysteries are uncovered as the suspicious death of her "after-hours boyfriend" is related. The reader is left guessing even after the final line as to where the truth lies in this chilling and bizarre thriller where anything or nothing could be true.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.
Espressologist
By: Kristina Springer
Farrar Straus Giroux, 2009
ISBN: 9780374322281
Curriculum: Coffeehouses; Matchmaking
Life for 17 year old Jane, a barista, turns crazy when she is promoted to assistant manager and her hobby of matching people’s characteristics to their coffee drinks is revealed. She becomes an espressologist, a matchmaker, who brings many new paying customers to the café but can she find the right match for herself in the beans? An escapist book, readers will believe in espressology and find themselves wondering if their perfect match is just one frappicino away.
Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.

Never Cry Werewolf
By: Heather Davis
Harper Teen, 2009
ISBN:9780061349232
Curriculum: Mystery; Romance; Brat Camp; Dating; Werewolves; Musicians
Since her mother died and her father remarried, Shelby has made a few bad choices, especially when it comes to guys. So when she finds herself at brat camp deep in the Oregon woods, Shelby is wary of falling for dark, brooding Austin Bridges the Third, son of the famous rock star. Now, Shelby must decide whether Austin is just another in a long line of bad boys she should have stayed away from, whether she will help him retrieve his vials, and whether she believes his secret illness is real.
Reviewed by: Sudi Stodola
T.J. H.S.

Killer
By: Sara Shepard
Harper Teen, 2009
ISBN: 9780061566110
Curriculum: Friendship; Secrets; Conduct of life
The mysteries continue with this latest installment of the Pretty Little Liars series. Ali’s death continues to haunt the girls and A is still sending cryptic text messages. While it is the sixth book in the series and the mystery still hasn’t been solved, these rich girls from Rosewood Academy have enough drama in their lives to keep readers interested. With the personal issues and the shallow deceptions that populate these pages, this is juicy reading, even for reluctant readers.
Reviewed by: Sudi Stodola
T.J. H.S.

Blue Plate Special
By: Michelle Kwasney
Harper Teen, 2009
ISBN: 9780811867801
Curriculum: Teen pregnancy; Mothers and daughters; Relationships; Single parents; Rape
Three women, three stories. This is a book about teen pregnancy, addiction, and relationships. Each woman in this book has a deep personal pain she must deal with and each woman finds that she is not as alone as she thinks. One of the strengths of this book is its honesty and truth. The focus is relationships between mothers and daughters and realizing that things are not always the way they seem. Well written with sympathetic characters and a gratifying twist at the end, you may want to hug your mommy when you fin-

Cómo hablar de arte a los niños (How to Talk to Children About Art)
By: Françoise Barbe-Gall
Nerea, 2009
ISBN: 9788496431423
Curriculum: Art appreciation;
This is a Spanish book for adults to show how they can introduce children of three age groups (5-7, 8-10, and 11-13) to paintings. The material is color-coded for each age group, with beginners focusing on descriptions, the next group going into interpretation and more reflection, and the older ones looking for external relationships, motivations and historical importance. The approach is well illustrated and documented with questions and comments that apply the principles exposed to 30 famous paintings. The material is very informative, well organized and thoughtful in its systematic approach to promote art appreciation. Art teachers and parents should take a look at this book.
Reviewed by: Ethel Hammerly
Spanish reviewer

My home is where my books are. (1909) ~ Ellen Thompson ~