



The Review Crew

What's New and Great for Our Youngest Readers?

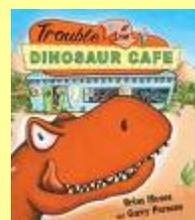
Brought to you by the Denver Public Schools Book Review Committee.

Volume 3 Number 4
February 2007

Fiction

Trouble at the Dinosaur Cafe

By: Brian Moses
Illus. by: Garry Parsons
Wanker & Company, 2006
ISBN: 0802795994



Curriculum: Dinosaurs; Stories in rhyme
A subject that children are always ready to devour is told in delightful rhyming verse which rolls off the tongue. Some dinosaurs are busy slurping swamp juice, eating tree roots and vegetable pie when in stomps a growing Tyrannosaurus Rex "with a wicked gleam in his eye." He immediately becomes the bully and orders everyone around with a cry for tasty dinosaur stew.

Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Bryant Webster K-8 School

Coco All Year Round

Written and illus. by:
Sloane Tanen
Bloomsbury, 2006
ISBN: 1582347093



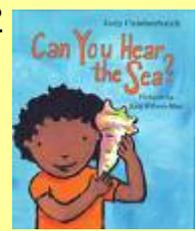
Curriculum: Months of the year

Follow Coco, a fuzzy chick of the type found in Easter baskets, through twelve monthly dioramas - starting with ice skating in January through holiday celebrations in December. The 3-D illustrations are a hoot and the rhyming text is a riot, as well, "I walk down the street with my whole Girl Scout troop. - It would have been fun, had I not slipped in poop."

Reviewed by: Steve Bowley
South HS

Can You Hear the Sea?

By: Judy Cumberbatch
Illus. by: Ken Wilson-Max
Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2006



ISBN: 9781582347035
Curriculum: Sound, Shells, Grandparents. West Africa

Sarah's grandfather gives her a shell and says "you'll hear the sea." Sarah listens but only hears sounds of her village. She and grandfather sit quietly together and at last, Sarah hears the water, waves, surf, and sea. The beautiful, easy rhythm and brightly colored illustrations give expression to village

Who are we?

- ☺ We are DPS teacher librarians and literacy experts from elementary schools through high school.
- ☺ We know DPS students and the DPS curriculum.
- ☺ Every month each member writes reviews of at least fifteen recently published books.
- ☺ Our hard work earns thousands of dollars of free books for our school libraries and for the classroom library at ERS, where DPS teachers can order baskets of books for their classrooms. (Call 720-423-8131 to order.)

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The Best for Upper Elementary Readers!

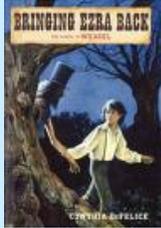
Many of these books will work in middle school, too!

Fiction

Bringing Ezra Back

By: Cynthia DeFelice
Farrar Straus Giroux,
2006

ISBN: 0374399395
*Curriculum: Historical
Fiction; Westward
Expansion*



Here, at last, is the sequel to *Weasel*. In *Weasel*, young Nathan Fowler came face to face with human evil and learned not to trust anyone he didn't know. Now the Fowlers have learned that their friend Ezra, who saved their lives when *Weasel* still roamed the wilderness, may have become a side-show attraction. Nathan's father,

unable to go find Ezra himself and knowing how important it is for Nathan to discover the complexities of human nature, sends Nathan off in the company of a peddler who himself embodies many shades of gray. Like *Weasel*, this is an easy and fast but thought-provoking read.

Reviewed by: Penny Cunningham
Valdez Elem.

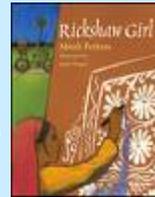
Rickshaw Girl

Written by: Mitali Perkins

Illus. by: Jamie Hogan
Charlesbridge, 2007

ISBN: 1580893082
Curriculum: Painting; Sex role; Family life; Bangladesh

When Naima damages her father's rickshaw - her Bangladeshi family's only source of income - she knows



she can use her painting skills to earn money for repairs. But will her father allow Naima to break tradition and work in the village? Rich, contemporary cultural details make this short chapter book a rewarding read.

Reviewed by: Jennifer Fakolt
Mitchell Elem.

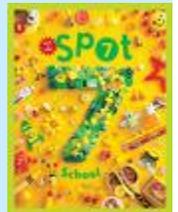
Nonfiction

Spot 7 School

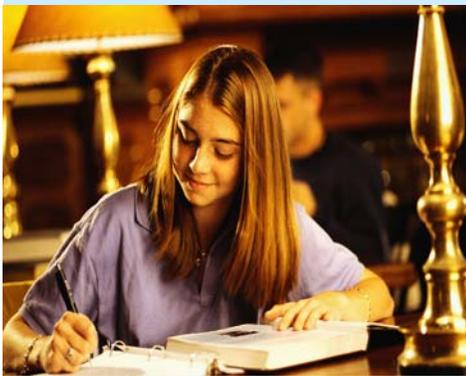
Written and Illus. by:
KIDSLABEL

Chronicle Books, 2006
ISBN: 0811853241

Curriculum: Picture puzzles; Schools



(Continued on page 3)



Fiction

Tanglewreck

By: Jeanette Winterson
Bloomsbury Children's
Books, 2006

ISBN: 1582349193

Curriculum: Science fiction; Time
The tale is spellbinding, and readers will relish not only the action,



Middle School Reader Gold Mine

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

the well-crafted settings but all the details which make for scenes of great power. Time tornados rush through the streets of London and those in the path vanish without a trace. A woolly mammoth is seen roaming the banks of the Thames River, a race of 'Throwbacks' live beneath the streets of London and many other unusual sightings happen as one woman tries to and almost succeeds in controlling Time.

Reviewed by: Irene W. Bell
Bryant Webster K-8

My Lady Pocahontas

By: Kathleen V. Kudlinski
Marshall Cavendish, 2006

ISBN: 0761452931
*Curriculum: Historical
Fiction; Native Americans;
Pocahontas*

It is a moving tale of love, bravery, betrayal, and the necessity of facing up to the past and one's inner demons in order to achieve the vision of the future: she would be the instrument to bring together two very different cultures. It tells an important early chapter of American history from the Pamunkey viewpoint as the



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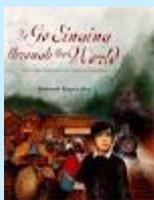
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Like puzzles? Spot seven differences between pairs of nearly identical photos of items found around the school. Photos are large, crisp, colorful, and filled to the brim with objects big and small. Enjoy challenges in the art room, science lab, gym, and more. *I Spy* fans will eat this up.

Reviewed by: Jennifer Fakolt
Mitchell Elem.

To Go Singing Through the World: The Childhood of Pablo Neruda

By: Deborah Kogan Ray
Illus. by: Deborah Kogan Ray
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006
ISBN: 0374376271



Curriculum: Poets; Creativity ; Chile
Using Neruda's own words mixed with the author's narration, this story follows the watchful young Pablo as he grows up in the small Pioneer town of Temuco. Through the encouragement of his step-mother and a kind school principal he is able to come out of his shell and risk sharing his poetry with the world. This beautifully illustrated book will be especially useful for teaching units on poetry.

Reviewed by: Laurie Bell
Brown Elem.

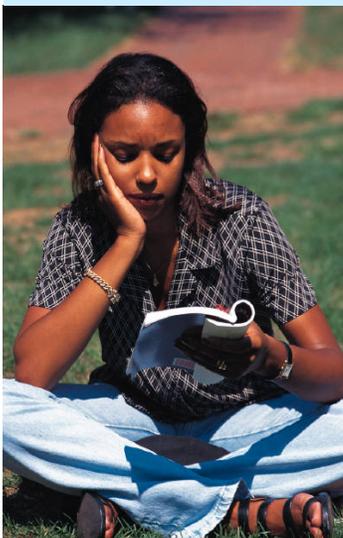
Godspeed, John Glenn

Written & Illustrated by: Richard Hilliard
Boyd's Mills Press, 2006
ISBN: 1590783840



Curriculum: Astronauts; John Glenn; Biography;
Children will feel they are actually onboard Friendship 7 with John Glenn in 1962 as he courageously and daringly orbits the earth. Biographical, historical and career-oriented information and diagrams often appear in fact boxes alongside the bold, beautiful illustrations and the lively text. The suspenseful and dangerous final part of the journey will have kids on the edge of their seats. Many will be inspired to read more about Glenn and other astronauts. A picture-book biography that's equally at home as a read-aloud or read-alone.

Reviewed by: Andrea Antico
Asbury Elem.



Young Adults Deserve the Best!

Fiction

Trash

By: Sharon Darrow
Candlewick Press, 2006
ISBN: 0763626244
Curriculum: Novel in verse; Brothers and sisters; Graffiti; Foster care; Creativity; Independence

Sissy and Boy were abandoned from birth. Their mother didn't even bother to give them names. From a series of bad foster homes they finally come to living on the streets of St. Louis painting their street names on blank walls. A tragic accident leaves Sissy questioning everything and seeking for a way to be reborn.

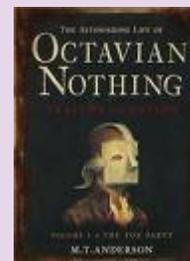


Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner MS

The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing: The Pox Party

By: M.T. Anderson
Candlewick Press, 2006
ISBN: 0763624020

Curriculum: Historical Fiction; Revolutionary War; Slavery; Survival



This Printz Honor Book tells the story of revolution and slavery from a different point of view. Through a diary format from Octavian's point of view, we are told of his life as he is raised by a group of philosophers, giving him the best education available. Later he learns he is a slave and a subject of their experiments to see if the African has intelligence. After his mother dies from smallpox, he escapes and joins the patriots in their fight for freedom.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Hill School of Arts and Sciences

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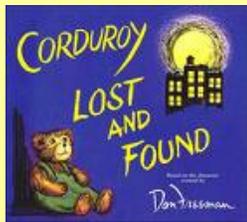
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life and the bond between children and grandparents.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elem.

Corduroy Lost and Found

By: B.G. Hennessy
Illus. by: Jody Wheeler



Viking, 2006

ISBN: 067006100X

Curriculum: Teddy bears; Friendship; Appreciation

In this new adventure, Corduroy is worried about what to get Lisa for her birthday. When he chases the moon, thinking it is a yellow balloon that Lisa might like, he ends up lost. Luckily, he is found by a friendly Spanish-speaking man who runs a newsstand. The inclusion of Spanish words and phrases will make this charming story especially popular at DPS school libraries.

Reviewed by: Laurie Bell
Brown Elem.

Nonfiction

Cookies

By: Amy Krouse Rosenthal
Illus. by Jane Dyer
HarperCollins, 2006
ISBN: 006058081X



Curriculum: Values; Character Traits

The best way to teach young children abstract concepts is to make them concrete using something very familiar. What could be more familiar to children than cookies? Clearly

and simply, the author illustrates twenty-two different human qualities and character traits using the everyday experiences we have with cookies. "Trustworthy means, if you ask me to hold your cookie until you come back, when you come back, I will still be holding your cookie." Some of the words are paired with their opposites, further clarifying the concepts: greedy and generous, pessimistic and optimistic

Reviewed by: Penny Cunningham
Valdez Elem.

(Continued from page 2)

drama of two clashing cultures unfold.

Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Bryant Webster K-8 School

American Born Chinese

Written and Illus. by: Gene Luen Yang
First Second, 2006
ISBN: 1596431520



Curriculum: Chinese Americans; Chinese legends; Coming of age stories

This 2007 winner of the Michael L. Printz Award for excellence in YA literature tells three alternating stories in comic book format. All three deal with self discovery and some form of racial stereotyping or prejudice, and in the end, all are tied together through a surprising twist of plot.

Reviewed by: Steve Bowley
South HS

In the Belly of the Bloodhound

By: Louis A. Meyer
Harcourt, 2006
ISBN: 0152055576



Curriculum: Pirates; Slave Ships; Adventure

The adventures of Jackie Faber continue. After escaping the battle, she discovers she has been labeled a pirate and there is a price on her head. She returns to Boston and hides out at the Lawson School for Young Girls and tries to act like a proper lady. But when the girls travel to a nearby island for a field trip, they are captured by a slave ship. Jackie must rely on all her seafaring knowledge to help them escape.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Hill School of Arts and Sciences

Nonfiction

Chinese New Year

By: Elaine A. Kule
Enslow, 2006
ISBN: 0766025772



Curriculum: Celebrations; Chinese New Year

In the year 2254 B.C. the Emperor Yao ordered his astrologers to learn more about the cycle of changing seasons. From this evolved the twelve month calendar as well as the twelve year cycle represented by different animals. Each year must have a beginning and an end. This colorful, well-written book discusses the traditions that surround this holiday.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner MS

Liftoff: A photo-biography of John Glenn

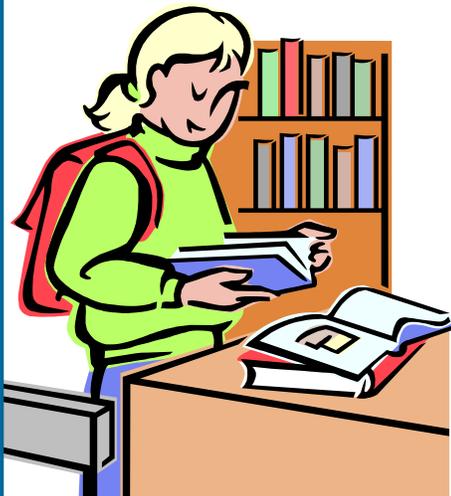
By: Don Mitchell
National Geographic
ISBN: 9780792258995



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Your Teacher Librarian Knows...

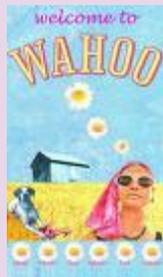
- ◆ what is new and great in children's literature
- ◆ how reading aloud to older students can increase their vocabulary and comprehension
- ◆ which books kids will sit still for
- ◆ how to teach 21st Century skills to your students
- ◆ how to make your students successful at research projects
- ◆ how to find Internet sites that will work for your students
- ◆ and much more!



(Continued from page 3)

Welcome to Wahoo

By: Dennis and Elise Pritcher Carr
Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2006
ISBN:
9781582346960



Curriculum: Conduct of life; Friendship; Gossip; High schools

A down-turn in her father's business and retaliation by international assassins, forces wild, rich girl Victoria Julianne Van Wyck to assume a new identity and move from an upscale boarding school in Switzerland to Wahoo, Nebraska. Finding true friendship is just one of her many new adventures. But things change when the scar-faced villain arrives in Wahoo.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elem.

(Continued from page 4)

Curriculum: John Glenn; United States space program; Astronauts.

The flight of the *Friendship 7* was an historic moment that furthered the American space program's race to the moon. This succinct and engaging biography of the famous astronaut's life who flew that mission will enlighten young readers about one of the great American legends as well as inspire them to reach for the stars.

Reviewed by: Danette Baltzer
Grant M.S.

Review Crew Staff

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