



The Review Crew

What's New and Great for Our Youngest Readers?

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

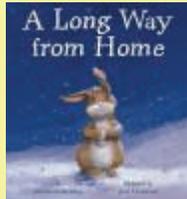
Volume 5 Number 6

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Fiction

A Long Way From Home

By: Elizabeth Baguley
Illus. by: Jane Chapman
Tiger Tales, 2008
ISBN: 1589250745



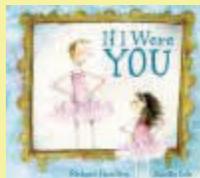
Curriculum: Rabbits; Overcrowding

Warm and winning, so soft and evocative, Noah, Ella, other siblings, and Albatross seem ready to spring off the pages. It is bedtime in the rabbit burrow and Noah is feeling "squished and squashed, crumpled and cramped" by his siblings and Ella who is holding him like a Teddy Bear. He creeps out into the night to be alone and is found by his friend Albatross who tells him about the land of the North Star. They make the journey to the frozen North but Noah is blown off his friend's back only to be swept up by the wind. When he finally lands in the snow, he slips into a hole, rides down an ice slide, lands in an ice palace, and falls asleep in a roomy snow nest. Will he ever get home?

Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Alumni

If I Were You

By: Richard Hamilton
Illustrated by: Babette Cole



Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2008
ISBN: 9781599902890

Curriculum: Fathers and daughters; Bed-time; Imagination

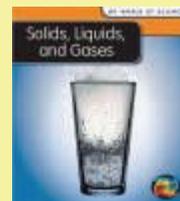
At bedtime, both Daisy and her dad have fun imagining what it'd be like to be each other. If their roles were reversed, Daisy would dress her dad in a tutu and eat sundaes while he ate oatmeal. Dad would watch TV and play while Daisy cleaned the house. They both have fun thinking about how different things would be. Yet, in the end, they realize that they enjoy being themselves and being together. Cole's watercolors comically depict Daisy and her dad in various situations. This would be an entertaining read aloud or a perfect story to read before bed.

Reviewed by: Karyn Pocerlich
Ford Elem.

Nonfiction

Solids, Liquids, and Gases

By: Angela Royston
Heinemann, 2008
ISBN: 9781432914387



Curriculum: Matter-properties; Change of state

The science topics discussed in this book

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.)

are the hardness and softness of solids, the changing shape of matter, and how solids can change into liquids. This will work well with the primary curriculum. There are twenty-one books included in the series *My World of Science*.

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill ECE-8

Guess Who Jumps

By: Dana Meachen Rau
Marshall Cavendish, 2009
ISBN: 9780761429081

Curriculum: Frogs

Though fairly obvious by the up-close photographs, each page of this book reveals a clue in which the reader must guess the animal, in this case, frogs. This book is a good tool to introduce the characteristics of a frog, and its simple sentences make it possible for emergent readers to read independently.

Reviewed by: Leah Jungers
Pioneer Charter

Animals in Winter

By: Martha E. H. Rustad
Capstone Press
ISBN:
1429622008



Curriculum: Animal behavior; Winter

A bright red cardinal sits on a bare tree branch; a young reindeer, digs under the snow to find grass and berries; a white snowshoe hare hops through a drift. These and other crisp photographic images are the mainstay of this introductory offering from Capstone's *All About Winter* series. *Hibernation, Migration* and *Signs of Winter* subheadings introduce each two page spread. This is an

attractive offering, perfect for the elementary collection needing an update on books about this season.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose
Trevista ECE-8

Spanish!

Ahorrar agua (Saving Water)

By: Charlotte Guilain
Heinemann, 2008



ISBN: 9781432918705

Curriculum: Water conservation

Young readers are made aware of the importance of protecting the environment by reducing water usage in daily activities. This colorful, easy chapter book in Spanish uses repetition in simple sentences and takes a practical approach with ideas children will be able to apply while brushing their teeth, washing dishes, watering plants, and washing their car among others to help out in this area. Nicely illustrated, this book promotes caring for the environment. An illustrated glossary, index, and notes for parents and teachers are included as well.

Reviewed by: Ethel Hammerly
Spanish reviewer

**Wear the old coat
and buy the new
book.**
~ Austin Phelps ~

Fiction

The Robot and the Bluebird

Written and illustrated by: David Lucas



Farrar Straus Giroux, 2007
ISBN: 0374363307

Curriculum: Robots; Birds

In a robot world one robot is unable to get a heart so he is taken away to rot in the robot junkyard. One day a bluebird is breaking her journey south and the robot offers her shelter in the place that should have held his heart. The robot offers to carry his new friend the rest of the way, where soon he has found a new home with all of nature.

Reviewed by: Leah Jungers
Pioneer Charter

My one hundred adventures

By: Polly Horvath
Schwartz & Wade Books,
2008
ISBN: 0375845826



Curriculum: Adventure; Family; Beaches; Individuality

Summer sameness used to be a comfort for Jane but the twelve-year-old is ready for life and adventure. Taking her pastor's advice, the youth begins praying for things to happen and gets more than she bargained for after her overly zealous pastor sends her off on a wacky Bible delivery in a hot air balloon setting off a chain of events that more than answers her pleas for excitement. Wily, wacky and witty, author Horvath has another "must read" in her resume.

Reviewed by: Danette Baltzer
Grant M.S.

The Best for Upper Elementary Readers!

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

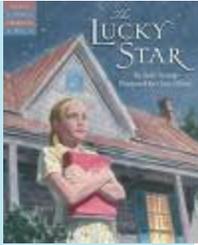
The Lucky Star

By: Judy Young

Illus. by: Chris Ellison

Sleeping Bear Press,
2008

ISBN: 1585363480



Curriculum: Depression-1929; Education; Family life; Perseverance; Gratitude

For Ruth, things are awful during the depression, she wears hand-me-down shoes; her father works far from home; and school is closed due to lack of money. Ruth realizes she can be a lucky star for her little sister Janie and her friends, and teaches them how to read, write and count. Ellison's illustrations reflect the closeness and love within the family. With the economic times of today, kids will relate to the lack of money, the hand-me-downs, and the worry of being homeless.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elem.

Nonfiction

Howard Thurman's

Great Hope

Written by: Kai Jackson
Issa

Illustrated by: Arthur L.
Dawson

Lee & Low, 2008

ISBN: 9781600602498

Curriculum: African American; Baptists; Clergy

Howard Thurman was born in segregated Daytona, Florida, in 1899. Since



his mother worked away from home all week and his father was dead, Grandma Nancy, who was born into slavery, was the strong support in his life. He overcame adversity to complete his eighth grade education, then went to an out-of-town high school. This man ultimately became a renowned African American theologian and civil rights leader.

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill ECE-8

Face to Face With Wolves

By: Jim and Judy
Brandenburg

National Geographic

ISBN: 9780426302428

Curriculum: Wolves; Endangered species

From the life-sized cover photo to the paw print endpapers, this volume from the *Face to Face* series is filled with images and facts about pack life and the hopeful signs of recovery wolves are making after centuries of persecution. Readers will find suggestions for further reading, websites and activities they can participate in to learn more about and protect these amazing animals.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose
Trevista ECE-8



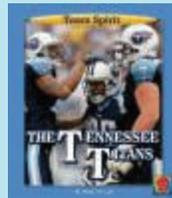
Tennessee Titans

By: Mark Stewart
Norwood House, 2009
ISBN:

9781599532035

Curriculum: Football

Written on an elementary level this book will teach the history and other facts about the Tennessee Titans.



Did you know that the Titans played in Texas for 37 years as the Houston Oilers? The name Titans was used in the early 1960s by the New York Jets. Readers will learn about football uniforms, players and fun facts about this team. This book can entice reluctant readers who are sports fans to read it from cover to cover.

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

Spanish!

Tarjetas de crédito y cheques (Credit Cards and Checks)

By: Margaret Hall

Heinemann, 2008

ISBN: 9781432917753

Curriculum: Credits cards; Debit cards; Checks; Cash substitutes

As one of the series *Earn, Save, Spend* this book in Spanish presents a systematic description of banking services available to cover purchases or expenses other than with cash. From opening a checking account, the use and processing of checks, to debit cards and credit cards with their limits and interest charges, the explanations are clear and easy to follow. The wise use of credit and debt management is introduced as well. This informative and appealing book includes a glossary, index, plus library and internet resources.

(Illustrations having any text are all in English.)

Reviewed by: Ethel Hammerly
Spanish reviewer



Middle School Reader Gold Mine

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

Fiction

The Faerie Door

By: B. E. Maxwell

Harcourt Inc., 2008

ISBN: 9780152063450



Curriculum: Fairies; Magic; Friendship; Good vs. Evil

Victoria lives in England in the 1890's. Elliot lives in America in 1966. Through faerie magic, their paths cross in a most unusual way. They discover magic rings that allow them to move between worlds and into Faerieland. Each is given a perilous quest from the Faerie Queen in order to defeat the evil in Elliot's world. Both children must face evil, dragons and the dreaded Shadow Knight. They also find kindness, friendship and the bravery they need to succeed.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Rishel M.S.

Cemetery Street

By: Brenda Seabrooke

Holiday House, 2008

ISBN: 9780823421152



Curriculum: Family; Divorce; Friendship; Cemeteries; Devil Worship

Courtney's newly divorced, flaky mother moves her family to Florida. Courtney and her little brother are dismayed to find themselves living in a small house on Cemetery Street, right next to the Limbo Key ceme-

tery. There are scary noises and unusual lights. Courtney's new friend, Josh, helps investigate the occurrences for their school newspaper. Is there really supernatural devil worship occurring next door, or is there a real explanation?

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Rishel M.S.

The Lost Island of Tamarind

By: Nadia Aguiar

Feiwel and Friends, 2008

ISBN: 0312380291



Curriculum: Adventure and adventurers; Magic; Brothers and sisters; Pirates; Islands

From the opening page until the last page, a high pitch of excitement is sustained which unfolds at a very fast pace. Thirteen-year-old Maya lives on a sailboat (the Pamela Jane) with her marine biologist parents, nine-year-old Simon, and eight-month-old Penny. Maya must grow up fast when a violent storm hits and her parents are washed overboard. She is left in charge of Simon and Penny and a boat with a mind of its own. The Pamela Jane steers them to the island of Tamarind: a haunting, fantastical island cut off from the outside world and not appearing on any maps. Here "fish can fly, pirates patrol the waters, jaguars lurk in the jungles, the islanders are at war, and an evil, child-stealing enchantress rules the jungle where the children are mining Ophalla (Element X)."

Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Alumni

Tom Trueheart and the land of Dark Stories

By: Ian Beck

Greenwillow Books, 2007

ISBN: 9780061152139



Curriculum: Adventures; Good verses evil; Fairy tales

Five of Tom's six older brothers are getting married to the princess brides today. But before the wedding can get started the brothers and the brides are kidnapped and Tom is enchanted to the size of a man's thumb. The brothers and the brides are taken to the land of dark stories, where there are never any happy endings. It will take all of Tom's wits, and the help of his best friend Jollity, the crow, to rescue the brothers and their brides from this ghastly place.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner M.S.

Moribito - Guardian of the Spirit

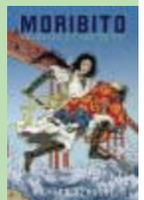
By: Nahoko Uehashi

Illustrated by: Yuko Shimizu

Translated by: Cathy Hirano

Arthur A. Levine Books, 2008

ISBN: 9780545005425



Curriculum: Fantasy; Princes

Suspense and battles between good and evil abound in this book about Balsa, a sword-wielding bodyguard, and Chagum, the prince she is hired to protect. Chagum carries within him an egg that must survive in order for the country to avoid a century-long drought. Although at first reluctant to take the assignment, Balsa comes to deeply care about Chagum and risks everything to ensure his safety. The strong characters, as

well as fast paced action without excessive violence, and the Japanese folklore woven in, make this installment in the Uehashi's recently translated series a good choice for fans of fantasy.

Reviewed by: Karyn Pocernich
Ford Elem.

Little Audrey

By: Ruth White
Farrar Straus Giroux, 2008
ISBN: 9780374345808
Curriculum: Coal miners; Poverty: Historical fiction



Speaking through the voice of her older sister, Audrey, Ruth White tells about growing up in a Virginia coal mining camp in 1948. Her father drinks and there is always the worry of him spending his paycheck on drink rather than food. Audrey is so thin that other kids call her skeleton. Her mother fights depression and at times emotionally drifts away. The book brings to life the poverty and poor living conditions endured by this family. This book received a starred review by School Library Journal, Booklist and Book Links. Reviewed by: Dr. Lynne Lopez-Crowley
Johnson Elem.

Nonfiction

Brazil

By: Zilah Deckker
National Geographic,
2008
ISBN:
9781426302985



Curriculum: Countries of the world;

Brazil; geography; culture; South America;

This is a book that lives up to National Geographic standards. The articles capture the richness of the culture, its holidays, and traditional foods. The inimitable National geographic style is apparent throughout the book; rather than the title "Web links," the section for internet resources is titled "Add a little extra to your country report!"

The writing style is engaging, containing facts and trivia well-illustrated by the photographs, charts and maps. Well worth reading even without a report due!

Reviewed by: Sudi Stodola
TJH.S.

In a very real sense,
people who have read
good literature
have lived more than
people who cannot or
will not read.

It is not true that we
have only one life to
lead; if we can read,
we can live as many
more lives and as
many kinds of lives as
we wish.

~ S. I. Hayakawa ~

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Young Adults Deserve the Best!

Fiction

Everything Beautiful

By: Simone Howell

Bloomsbury U.S.A. Children's Books, 2008

ISBN: 9781599900421

Curriculum: Coming of age; Camp; Handicapped people; Religious beliefs; Friendship

Riley, 16, agnostic and bent on being bad is brought to a Christian camp for a week long stint and an attitude adjustment. During this brief experience Riley bonds with Dylan, an alumnus of this camp. A recent accident has left an angry, bitter Dylan wheelchair bound. Their connection grows quickly transforming them as they test their beliefs and trust in each other. Although these transformations are unrealistically quick, teen girls will enjoy this coming-of-age novel. Some sexual situations make it appropriate for HS students.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas

JFK HS



Piggy

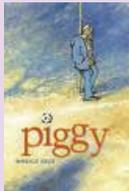
By: Mireille Geus

Front Street, 2008

ISBN: 1590786369

Curriculum: Autism; Emotional problems; Friendship; Bullies

Readily translated from the author's original Dutch, Geus introduces readers to the corkscrewed mind of Lizzy, an autistic twelve-year-old who is struggling to fit in. Having finally found a friend, Lizzy is easily persuaded and readily used by the emotionally unbalanced Peggy (a.k.a Piggy) as she plots revenge on the school bullies who torture the girls with any occasion. Deftly giving thought voice without losing story, the narrative will keep readers enrapt while being offered the opportunity to think about friends and choices.



Reviewed by: Danette Baltzer

Grant M.S.

Out of His League

By: Pat Flynn

Walker & Co, 2006

ISBN: 9780802797766

Curriculum: Coming of age; Interpersonal relationships; School; Small town life

Ozzie is a rugby player from Australia. An opportunity through an international exchange program lands Ozzie in Hope, Texas, where the game is football. Texas is not like anything Ozzie has ever experienced before. Football rules, the boys who play football are kings, the girls all want football players, and a losing team is the worst thing that could happen to a town. Ozzie shares a few rugby moves with the team and before you know it they aren't losing anymore. But Ozzie doesn't feel like a hero. There is some underage drinking and hints of sexual behavior but this book would work for mature middle school students.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble

Kepner M.S.



The Bone Magician

By: F.E.Higgins

Feiwei & Friends, 2008

ISBN: 0312368453

Curriculum: Magic; Mystery; Orphans; Death; Gothic fiction

In this paraquel to *the Black Book of Secrets*, Young Pin Carpue is an orphan who has found a job as a body-watcher for the local undertaker which leads to an accidental meeting with the Bone magician and his assistant, a pair of performers who raise the dead to speak with the living. There's also a serial killer on the loose, and Pin's unfortunate encounter with the Silver Apple Killer leads to an exciting adventure as he tries to unravel the twisted threads to three mysteries at once.

Reviewed by: Sudi Stodola

TJH.S.



Nonfiction

Hip-Hop and Urban Dance

By: Tamsin Fitzgerald

Heinemann, 2009

ISBN: 9781432913786

Curriculum: Hip-hop and urban dance; B-boying; Choreography; Crews

DJ-ing, MC-ing, graffiti, and b-boying are the common elements to hip-hop. This title discusses the evolution of hip-hop from its origins in Harlem in the 1920s to present day. Each element above is explained. Readers are treated to information on new developments in the hip-hop such as krumping. Clothing, competitions, and training are covered. Each book in the series is packed with information, contemporary photos, and a list of resources. Sidebar biographies are scattered throughout the text. The detailed overview of each dance style makes these suitable for introductory research for upper MS and HS students.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas

JFK HS



Great Careers with a High School Diploma: Construction and Trades

By: Kenneth C. Mondschein

Ferguson Publishing, 2008

ISBN: 9780816070435

Curriculum: Vocational guidance; Occupations; High school graduates - employment

Practical information is given for in-demand careers in the construction trade. Details are listed for 12 jobs, including what you'll do; who you'll work for and where; the money you will make; training you'll need; how to find a job; moving up in the field; and web sites to check out. The layout is simple and straight forward. For students not interested in attending college, this series offers a serious look at some great careers.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier

Stedman Elem.

