



The Review Crew

What's New and Great for Our Youngest Readers?

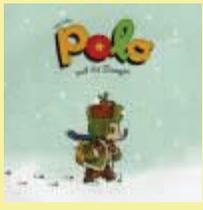
Brought to you by the Denver Public Schools Book Review Committee.

Volume 6 Number 6
February 2010

Fiction

Polo and the Dragon

Written and illus. by: Regis Faller
Roaring Brook Press, 2003
ISBN: 1596434988



Curriculum: Dogs; Dragons; Imagination; Adventure

Polo the dog sets out on a snowy day in this wordless book only to find his tug-boat won't budge. He finds a magic pen and draws a door that opens to an imaginary world where he runs into some trouble with a dragon. This cute story of imagination and adventure, and its wordless format, is sure to bring reluctant readers and provide many creative writing opportunities.

Reviewed by: Leah Rounds
Alumni

All of Me! A book of thanks

Written and illus. by: Molly Bang
Blue Sky Press, 2009
ISBN: 0545044243



Curriculum: Body parts; Thankfulness; Feelings

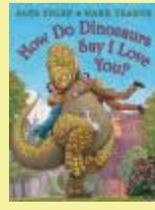
A little girl is thankful for all of her body

parts, from her fine feet to her listening ears in this uniquely illustrated book full of color and texture. Its themes of body parts, thankfulness, feeling belonged, and feelings make it a versatile book that could be used across units, and one student will become familiar with throughout a school year.

Reviewed by: Leah Rounds
Alumni

How Do Dinosaurs Say I Love You?

By: Jane Yolen
Illustrated by: Mark Teague
Blue Sky Press, 2009
ISBN: 9780545143141



Curriculum: Dinosaurs; Behavior; Love

Just like children, dinosaurs can wake up cranky, make messes, and get in trouble. Yet they can also do the things that melt their parents' hearts. Smiles, hugs, and kisses can erase even the worst events of the day. In this newest volume of the series, Yolen and Teague again provide a story that young readers will quite easily relate to and thoroughly enjoy.

Reviewed by: Karyn Pocerlich
Ford Elem.

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.)

Who Goes There

By: Jennifer Ericsson

Illus by: Bert Kitchen

Roaring Brook Press, 2009

ISBN:9781596433717

Curriculum: Owls; Nocturnal animals; Predator/prey

A hungry owl waits in a tree, listening and watching with his big round eyes. He is waiting for a rabbit, mouse, or squirrel; instead he sees and hears a cat, skunk, and beaver. The rhythmic cumulative text and beautifully detailed paintings introduce such concepts as predator/prey, nocturnal, and food chain.

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill Elem.



Me and My Animal Friends

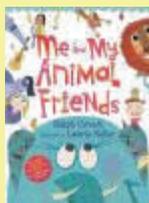
By: Ralph Covert

Illus. by: Laurie Keller
Henry Holt & Company, 2009

ISBN: 0805087369

Curriculum: Children's songs-English-United States; Animals-Songs and music

"If you wanted a pet, if you really, really wanted just the right pet, what would it be? Blue fish, red fish, galloping goats, puffins and camels and piranhas in moats." OR "Dinosaur babies and cows and pigs and a horse as small as a dog is big." Come embark on a journey with two young children as they travel across land and sea and back again searching for the ideal (unusual) pet. Their parents will not allow them to have a pet until they prove that they can be responsible to feed it and care for it. Can they wear their parents down?



Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Alumni

Spanish!

Tito y Tina, la estrella de brillante (Tito and Tina, the Brilliant Star)

By: Hilario

Illus. by: Loti Scagliotti and Ale González

Nicanitas, no year shown

ISBN:9788496448278

Curriculum: Bedtime

At bedtime Tito is by himself and looks through the window at the starry sky and chooses a bright star to be his friend. He names her Tina and this star lights up his room in a special way that brings him company and comfort as sleep sweetly takes over. A charming and soothing little picture book, with very simple sentences, that calms fears of loneliness and darkness many youngsters feel at bedtime. This should be a very appealing book for children.

Reviewed by: Ethel Hammerly
Spanish Reviewer



Nonfiction

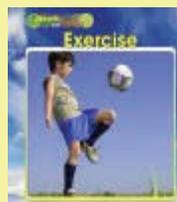
Exercise

By: A. R. Schaefer
Heinemann, 2010

ISBN:
9781432927677

Curriculum: Exercise; Health

Being active is important to feeling good and being happy. Exercising one's



heart, lungs, muscles, bones, and brain are discussed in this title suitable for reading aloud or early independent readers. The four reviewed titles in the *Health and Fitness* series each have colorful photos representative of many ethnic groups. Difficult or unfamiliar words are bolded and defined in the glossary. These titles are a terrific to introduce or reinforce healthy and safe behaviors.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.

Soccer

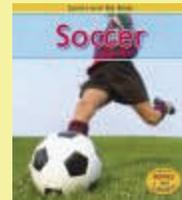
By: Charlotte Guillain
Heinemann, 2009

ISBN:
9781432934569

Curriculum: Soccer; Exercise; Sports

Playing soccer is a great way to join friends and exercise. This title discusses how the body works while playing soccer, how to stay safe while playing, and how soccer benefits the body. The five reviewed titles in the *Sports and My Body* series each have contemporary photos that represent multiple ethnic groups and are appropriate for reading aloud or for young independent readers. This series will be good addition and add variety to the sports sections of elementary school libraries.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.



People Who Help Us

By: Rebecca Rissman
Heinemann, 2010

ISBN: 9781432933432

Curriculum: Communities; Community workers

This oversized book explains to young



readers what it means to be a community. It looks at how different jobs contribute to the community. This would make a good introduction for students studying communities and community workers. It would work fine as a read-aloud, with its large format and many colorful pictures. Its repetition of text also lends itself to read alone for young readers.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elem.

Testing the Ice: A True Story about Jackie Robinson

By: Sharon Robinson

Illus. by: Kadir Nelson
Scholastic, 2009

ISBN: 9780545052511

Sharon Robinson shares a remembrance of her famous dad, Jackie Robinson, who broke the color line in major league baseball. This book tells the story of how the family moved to a house in Connecticut on a lake. That first winter when her dad is testing the ice for skating, it dawns on Sharon that this brave man doesn't know how to swim. Baseball fans and young readers will enjoy the revelation of this personal side of a sports legend.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elementary

Animals

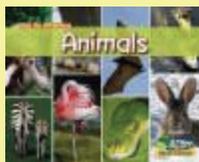
By: Rebecca Rissman

Heinemann Library, 2009

ISBN:
9781432922733

Curriculum: Anatomy

This oversized text



introduces readers to many body parts that animals have. The function of each as well as various pictures depicting the different ways it can look are provided for eight parts common to most animals. The large, captivating photos and predictable text patterns along with its size make this a great choice for a read aloud as readers begin to explore the wonderful world of animals.

Reviewed by: Karyn Pocernich
Ford Elem.

The Best for Upper Elementary Readers!

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

Nonfiction

How Does a Bone Become a Fossil?

By: Melissa Stewart

Raintree, 2010

ISBN: 9781410934451

Curriculum: science; fossils; fossilization

Fossils are formed in many ways whether it's minerals in water turning bones to fossils, insects forever preserved in tree sap or trees transformed into rock. Each of these processes, in addition to how fossils are recovered, cleaned and displayed in museums, are covered in *How Does a Bone Become a Fossil?* Fun facts and new vocabulary supported by a com-



prehensive glossary will help any young scientist to understand what the world was like "long ago, when the world was a different place." This is a great choice for any 3rd-8th grade science classroom.

Reviewed by: Cheri Hilton
South H.S.

Life in the Boreal Forest

Written and illustrated by: Brenda Z. Guiberson

Holt, 2009

ISBN: 9780805077186

Curriculum: Taiga ecology; Taigas

Few of us know about the boreal forest or appreciate how vital it is to the quality of our air and the thousands of species of birds who nest there each summer. Magnificent detailed one-and-a-half page illustrations bring the creatures and seasons of this ecosystem to life. Text describes the interdependent relationships of plants and animals as well as consequences of human actions on the fragile landscape.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose
Trevista ECE-8

The secret world of Walter Anderson

By: Hester Bass

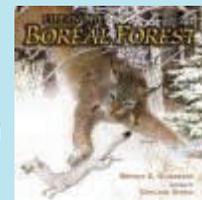
Illustrated by: E.B. Lewis

Candlewick, 2009

ISBN: 9780763635831

Curriculum: Anderson, Walter Inglis, 1903-1965; Artists

Detailed, softly hued watercolors enhance this lovely biography about the skilled, prolific artist Walter Anderson, recalling his eccentric nature and solitary sojourns on Horn Island off the coast of Mississippi where he revealed in

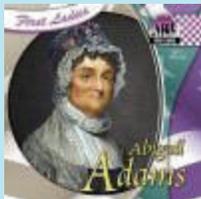


the natural world, his first love. An extended Author's Note details Anderson's childhood with examples of his work and recommended readings for children and adults.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose
Trevista ECE-8

First Ladies: Abigail Adams

By: Jill Wheeler
Abdo Publishing Company, 2010



ISBN: 9781604536294

Curriculum: Abigail Adams; American Revolution; First Ladies

Abigail Adams, the second first lady, was the earliest supporter of women's rights in America. Abigail was a highly educated woman who grew up in Massachusetts where she met and married a young farmer, John Adams. This book, part of the *First Ladies* series, follows each woman's life from childhood to the White House and beyond. Colorful photographs and easy-to-read text guide readers through Mrs. Adams' challenges and triumphs. Sidebars and a timeline give historical context to the stories of Mrs. Adams.

Reviewed by: Megan McQuinn
Howell ECE-8

Secret American Treasures: From Hidden Vaults to Sunken Riches



By: Nel Yomtov
Capstone Press, 2010
ISBN: 9781429633581

Curriculum: Gold; Treasure troves; Secrecy; United States history

Not all treasure is buried deep within the ground. Some treasures are no

more than an idea or symbol. Some of the secret American treasures are Fort Knox, Liberty Bell, Route 66, Lost Dutchman mine, and a lost Army payroll. American history is filled with amazing facts woven into amazing stories.

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill Elem.

The Ultimate 10 Entertainment Television Moments

By: Mark Stewart
Gareth Stevens Publishing, 2010
ISBN: 9780836891669

Curriculum: Arts, Communication, Entertainment History

This is a great pop culture book. Kids can learn about the most popular shows on TV, not only the ones we have today, but also those we had in the past. The book includes interesting TV trivia from *I Love Lucy* to *American Idol*. It also includes highlights and pictures of the time the Beatles appeared on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. It is an informative book that helps kids learn about some of the major TV events of the past and how they touched the lives of many Americans.

Reviewed by: Dr. Carmen Sanjurjo
Alumni

Spanish!

Brave Dogs, Gentle Dogs/Perros guardianes, perros valientes



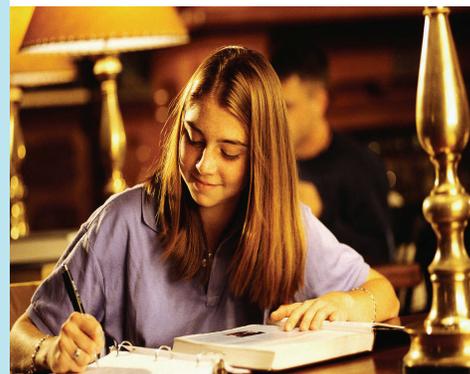
By: Cat Urbigkit
Boyd's Mills Press, 2009
ISBN: 9781590786741

Curriculum: Guardian dogs; Dogs Ranchers in the Rocky Mountain area

use several breeds and crossbreeds of dogs to protect their livestock from predators. From an early age puppies are exposed to sheep's wool which helps them in the process of acceptance, first by lambs and later by sheep. This bonding is essential in developing a protective instinct so that dogs can guard the sheep. This is a charming and informative bilingual book, lovingly narrated with simple language and engaging photographs of puppies eager to become part of the herd. Youngsters will love this book.

Reviewed by: Ethel Hammerly
Spanish Reviewer

These are not books, lumps of lifeless paper, but minds alive on the shelves.
~ Gilbert Highet ~



Middle School Reader Gold Mine

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

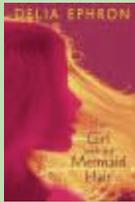
Fiction

The Girl With the Mermaid Hair

By: Delia Ephron

Harper Teen, 2010

ISBN: 9780061542619



Curriculum: High school life; family problems; self esteem

Sukie is an adolescent who, as other teenagers, can go "crazy" with simple events, such as losing her cell phone. As any girl her age, she worries about her looks. When she discovers that her father is having an affair, everything changes and Sukie becomes a different person. The author expresses well the difficulties of being a teen today.

Reviewed by Dr. Carmen Sanjurjo

Alumni

Magic Under Glass

By: Jaclyn Dolamore

Bloomsbury, 2010

ISBN: 1599904306



Curriculum: Magic; Robots; Wizards; Fantasy

A carefully shaped blend of magic and music. Seventeen-year-old Nimira is a trouser girl from exotic Tassim whose family's disgrace brought her from the palace into poverty in Lorinar. A wealthy young sorcerer, Hollis Parry, catches her act at the Music Hall and wants to hire her to accompany his musical automation who plays the piano. Upon her arrival at his estate, she is faced with: rumors of a mad-woman (Annalie Parry) roaming the halls at night; fairies placed in a trance who are now "under glass;" a meeting with Mr. Smollings, the head sorcerer, who has killed to

achieve his position; and much more.

Reviewed by: Irene Bell

Alumni

Dragonfly

By: Julia Golding

Marshall Cavendish, 2009

ISBN: 9780761455820



Curriculum: Adventure; Fantasy; Princesses; Relationships; Alliances

The Princess Taoshira is from the Blue Crescent Islands. She is forced to marry the Prince Ramil from Gerfal to cement an alliance. They are so different in culture, religion and personalities that it is hate at first sight. They are kidnapped before the nuptials can take place. The two must put aside personal differences in order to escape and to defend the two nations they both love from an evil warlord. There is adventure, swordfights and enough twists and turns to keep readers interested to the end.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns

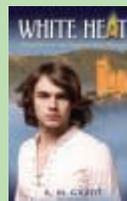
Place Bridge Academy

White Heat

By: K.M. Grant

Walker & Company, 2009

ISBN: 9780802796950



Curriculum: War; Faith; Love; Betrayal

In book two of the *Perfect Fire Trilogy*, we continue to follow the adventures of Raimon and Yolanda. Yolanda believes that Raimon is dead and goes to Paris to go through with an arranged marriage to Sir Hugh. Raimon escaped and took the Blue Flame to the mountains, to try and organize a rebellion against the French King. This fails and he discovers Yolanda is on her way back to the Occitan to try and save her people. The author once again leaves the reader

Review Crew Staff

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Alumni

From ERS:

Dave Sanger

Karen Shannon

Antonio Nicotera

wanting more and waiting for the third book.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns

Place Bridge Academy

The Crimson Cap

By: Ellen Howard

Holiday House, 2009

ISBN: 9780823421527

Curriculum: LaSalle; Explorers; Expeditions; Historical fiction



Pierre Talon is only ten years old when he joins the ill fated explorer LaSalle. After LaSalle and many of his party are murdered, Pierre is adopted by the Hasinai Indian Village. As Pierre comes to love his adopted family he struggles internally with the fact that he must try to find the family he left behind when he joined the expedition. When the Spanish come to the village Pierre has to make a decision to stay with his adopted family or search for his blood family.

Reviewed by: Dr. Lynne Lopez-Crowley

MSLA

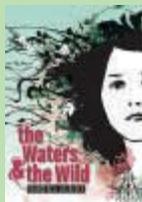
The Waters and the Wild

By: Francisca Block

HarperTeen, 2009

ISBN: 9780061452444

Curriculum: Friends; School; Changelings

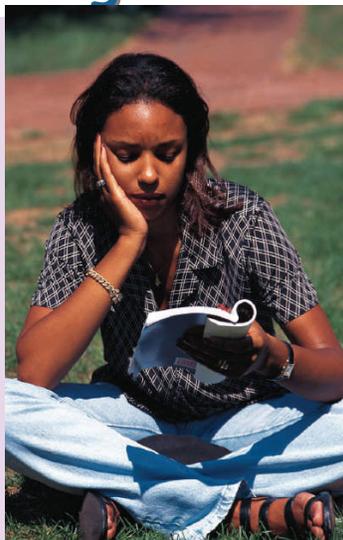


For as long as she can remember, the loneliness has been the biggest part of Bee's life. She never knew how to act around people. She hated animal meat. She couldn't watch television. She loved her mother's garden, even thought about eating dirt. This strangely compelling book is not for everyone. It will require a mature reader to make sense of this changeing story.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble

Kepner M.S.

Young Adults Deserve the Best!



Fiction

The Mark

By: Jen Nadol

Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2010

ISBN: 9781599904313

Curriculum: Death; Philosophy; Psychic Ability; Orphans



If you knew someone was dying today, would you tell them? Cassie discovered the meaning behind the glow that she sees surrounding certain people, their death will occur within 24 hours. This sixth sense plagues her thoughts about what her obligations, tell the victim so that they can spend their remaining hours to the fullest extent, or to allow fate to take course. Whatever the case, how will Cassie deal with seeing *The Mark* for the rest of her life? An excellent story for upper middle and high schools students focusing on the value of life and all it has to offer.

Reviewed by: Cheri Hilton

South H.S.

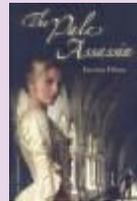
The Pale Assassin

By: Patricia Elliott

Holiday House, 2009

ISBN: 978823422500

Curriculum: French Revolution; Historical fiction



Eugénie is an Aristocrat in Paris. She enjoys parties and new dresses. She is oblivious to the suffering around her in prerevolutionary France. As the Revolution gains momentum Eugénie slowly becomes aware of the danger that surrounds her. She learns that her guardian has promised her hand in marriage to a ruthless man and decides to flee France for England.

Reviewed by: Dr. Lynne Lopez-Crowley

MSLA

This edition of the Review Crew is dedicated to our friend, mentor and fierce advocate, Jody Gehrig. There isn't a life among us that hasn't been altered by having known her.