



# The Review Crew

## What's New and Great for Our Youngest Readers?

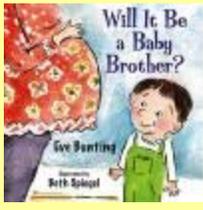
Brought to you by the Denver Public Schools Book Review Committee.

Volume 7 Number 6  
February 2011

### Fiction

#### Will it Be a Baby Brother?

By: Eve Bunting  
Illus. by: Beth Spiegel  
Boyd's Mill, 2010  
ISBN: 9781590784396



*Curriculum: Babies; Brothers and sisters; Family life*  
Edward's family is expecting a baby soon. Edward knows it will be a boy. He won't accept anything else. If it's a girl he will "give her to Aunt Elizabeth." When the baby is born Edward realizes that he got exactly the kind of baby he wanted all along - even if he didn't know it.  
Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier  
Stedman Elem.

#### April and Esme, Tooth Fairies

By: Bob Graham  
Candlewick Press, 2010  
ISBN: 763646837

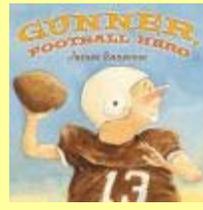


*Curriculum: Tooth Fairy; Fairies; Sisters*  
Two young tooth fairies set out to retrieve their first tooth. With only a minor slip and a cell phone text to Mom, the pair complete their first rite of passage with equanimity.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier  
Stedman Elem.

#### Gunner, Football Hero

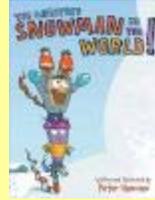
Written and illus. by: James Ransome  
Holiday House, 2010  
ISBN: 9780823420537



*Curriculum: Football; Heroes*  
Gunner loves football. However, he is too short and far too round to be considered prime football material. But Gunner has a secret; he has an awesome arm. Will all his hard work and practice and determination be enough to overcome his physical drawbacks?  
Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin  
Park Hill Elem.

#### The Greatest Snowman in the World

Written and illus. by: Peter Hannan  
Harper, 2010  
ISBN: 9780061284809



*Curriculum: Seasons; Snowmen*  
Charles the Chinchilla wakes up to find the world is white with snow. He devises a plan with his friends to build the biggest snowman in the world, which turns out to be much more difficult than it first seemed. He is not disappointed when the

#### 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.)

project fails; rather, he turns it into another opportunity for fun.

Reviewed by: Dana Clark  
Greenwood Elem.

### Ms. Lina's Ballerinas

By: Grace Maccarone

Illus. by: Christine Davenier

Feiwel and Friends, 2010

ISBN: 9780312382438

*Curriculum: Dance; Ballet*

This is a sweet story that teaches simple mathematical patterns through ballerina formations. "They danced at the beach in four lines of two but now there are nine, what shall we do?" A new ballerina changes everything and they have to get creative to learn how to dance as a group again. They find the answer in, "three lines of three."

Reviewed by: Dana Clark  
Greenwood Elem.



## Nonfiction

### Summer is Super

By: Cari Meister

Illus. by: Jim Lingenfelter

Capstone Press, 2011

ISBN: 9781429647304

*Curriculum: Summer; Seasons; Lifecycles of plants and animals*

In a graphic novel format this book teaches students about the plants, animals, and activities of summer. Each panel contains a fact about summer and bright bold illustrations show children having fun doing summer activities.

Reviewed by: Leah Rounds

Alumni



### How Do You Measure Time?

By: Thomas K. and Heather Adamson

Capstone Press, 2010

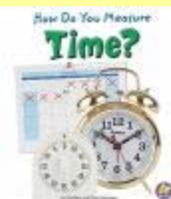
ISBN:

9781429644594

*Curriculum: Measuring time; Days of the week*

Follow Anne as she learns to count time in days, weeks, months hours, minutes and seconds. She has one month to wait before her family goes on a ski trip. Anne uses this time to learn exactly what the passing of each period of time feels like.

Reviewed by: Dana Clark  
Greenwood Elem.



The library is not a shrine for the worship of books. It is not a temple where literary incense must be burned or where one's devotion to the bound book is expressed in ritual. A library, to modify the famous metaphor of Socrates, should be the delivery room for the birth of ideas - a place where history comes to life.

Norman Cousins

## The Best for Upper Elementary

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

## Fiction

### What Happened on Fox Street

By: Tricia Springstubb

Balzer + Bray, 2010

ISBN: 9780061986352

*Curriculum: Neighborhoods; Real estate development; Fathers and daughters; Best friends; Family life; Ohio*

On Fox Street the summer drought isn't the only change. 11-year-old Mo's best friend Mercedes is different. Developers are interested in coming in and Mo's dad sees their offer as a chance for a new life. Her little sister is almost impossible to contain, and Mo is sure that a fox is nearby though she's never seen one. Inside the deceptively cheery cover lie the realistic struggles, joys, fears, and hopes of compelling characters. A great read.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose

Trevista ECE-8



### Bink and Gollie

By: Kate DiCamillo and Alison McGhee

Illus. by: Tony Fucile

Candlewick Press, 2010

ISBN: 9780763632663

*Curriculum: Friendship;*



*Imagination; Compromise; Humor*

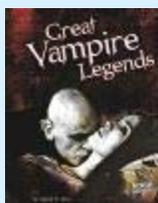
Three short stories follow two friends, Bink and Gollie, best friends despite their many differences. They roller skate to buy socks, take an imaginary trip up the Andes Mountains, and buy an unremarkable goldfish.

Reviewed by: Leah Rounds  
Alumni

# Nonfiction

## Great Vampire Legends

By: Mandy R. Marx  
Capstone, 2011



ISBN: 9781429645768

*Curriculum: Vampire legends; Dracula; Vampire characteristics*

This title explores several of the early European legends from the 1600s and 1700s. Other vampire-like myths from the Hindu religion as well as from China, Africa, and Australia are also included. 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade readers will keep this book circulated. With creepy and interesting legends, photographs, and illustrations, young aficionados of vampire fiction will love this introduction to the topic's real-life history!

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas  
JFK H.S.

## Making Secret Codes

By: Jillian Gregory  
Capstone, 2011  
ISBN:  
9781429645676



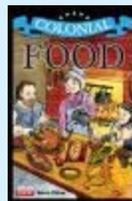
*Curriculum: Secret codes; Military codes; Code keys; Code instruments*

This fun, informative title begins with the history of cryptography from the Caesar shift code to the Navajo code talkers. Readers are then treated to explanations of several types of codes and how to make them. Public key cryptography, which keeps us safe on the internet, is also explained. Readers from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and up will enjoy the possibilities of creating their own secret codes.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas  
JFK H.S.

## Colonial Food

By: Verna Fisher  
Illus. by: Andrew Christensen  
Nomad Press, 2010



ISBN: 9781936313037

*Curriculum: Colonial America; Jamestown; Pilgrims*

What did people eat during colonial times? Where did they get their food? This book tells about the types of food eaten, how the colonists grew food, compares the food from that time period to the foods of today, and explains what the Native Americans ate and where they got their food.

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin  
Park Hill Elem.

## Great Migrations

By: Elizabeth Carney  
National Geographic, 2010  
ISBN: 9781426307003



*Curriculum: Animal migration; Migratory animals*

The 20,000 miles each year that a sperm whale travels and the migra-

tion of 50 million red crabs are well worth knowing about! The amazing migrations of a variety of animals and insects are presented in a powerful manner through photos, maps, and text. The eye-catching photos will draw readers in; the detailed maps provide an informative explanation of their travels; and the distinctive text layout details the dangers and reasons for such travel. The sum total is another winner from National Geographic.

Reviewed by: Karyn Pocernich  
Ford Elem.

## Paper Airplanes: Captain

By: Christopher L. Harbo  
Edge Books, 2011  
ISBN: 9781429647441



*Curriculum: Paper airplanes*

Experienced paper plane makers will be eagerly waiting for this fourth volume in the *Paper Airplanes* series. Having progressed through the ranks to 'captain', readers will learn how to utilize many of the same folding techniques from the previous three books to create even more challenging planes. Initial explanations of techniques and terms, clearly illustrated step-by-step instructions, and the chance to create seven different flyers will make this a popular choice with the hands-on crowd.

Reviewed by: Karyn Pocernich  
Ford Elem.

Librarians are almost always very helpful and often almost absurdly knowledgeable. Their skills are probably very underestimated and largely underemployed.  
Charles Medawar

# Middle School Reader Gold Mine

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

## The Shadow Hunt

By: Katherine Langrish  
HarperCollins, 2010  
ISBN: 9780061116766

*Curriculum: Fantasy;  
Fairies; Magic; Good vs.  
Evil*

Wolf has escaped from the oppressive monastery and their brutal treatment. He runs into Lord Hugo, a hunter, who is trying to catch an elf child. Wolf helps him retrieve the elf and Hugo takes him into his castle. There he meets Hugo's daughter, Nest. The two form an uneasy alliance to help save both the elf child and her father from being drawn into the underworld. Wolf and Nest have to discover who they can trust in order to survive.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns  
Place Bridge Academy



## The Waking: Dreams of the Dead

By: Thomas Randall  
Bloomsbury, 2009  
ISBN: 9781599905853

*Curriculum: Mystery; Japan; Supernatural; Evil Spirits; Friendship*

Kara Foster and her father move to Japan after the death of her mother to begin a new life. She must learn to integrate herself into her new school



with its very different culture. She finds out there was a murder of a student earlier and the older sister is Kara's new friend. When nightmares start, other students begin to die. Are they linked to the earlier murder, or is one of the Japanese evil spirits causing all the trouble?

Reviewed by: Karen Burns  
Place Bridge Academy

## When Molly Was a Harvey Girl

By: Frances M. Wood  
Kane Miller, 2010  
ISBN: 9781935279518

*Curriculum: Self Esteem; Identity; Responsibility; Siblings; History*

13-year-old Molly is corseted by her sister Colleen so she can pass for 18. Destitute, they're seeking employment as Harvey girls, waitresses serving passengers along the Santa Fe rail line in the 1880s. They end up amid the ranchers, miners, railroad workers and townspeople of Raton, New Mexico. This fictional account, based on the author's great grandmother's experiences, offers an engaging storyline and insightful look at the lives and times of these young women.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose  
Trevista ECE-8

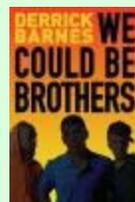


## We Could be Brothers

By: Derrick Barnes  
Scholastic Press, 2010  
ISBN: 9780545135733

*Curriculum: Friends; Families; Identity*

Robeson and Pacino are both in after-school detention. Robeson comes from a very close family and lives in a gated community. Pacino lives in the projects with his single mom who works two jobs.



Robeson is perceived as geeky and Pacino as a tough guy who unbeknownst by his peers gets very good grades. The boys form a bond and both are targeted by a fellow student, Tariq. The tension comes to a head when fellow students are saying Tariq has a gun and is going to kill someone.

Reviewed by: Dr. Lynne Lopez-Crowley  
MSLA

## The Replacement

By: Brenna Yovanoff  
Simon and Shuster, 2011  
ISBN: 9781847388391

*Curriculum: Changelings; Fairies; Kidnapping; Magic*

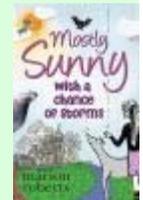
The town of Gentry has a secret that nobody talks about. Mackie is part of that secret. He is a changeling. His allergy to iron is so severe that the smell of blood makes him sick. Every few years babies go missing and are replaced with children like Mackie, with their dark eyes and frail health. Only one other has ever survived. Now, a child has gone missing and Mackie must choose allegiance to his race or to his family. This is an excellent tale that draws on the dark and dangerous side of fairy lore. Mackie is a sympathetic anti-hero that readers will love.

Reviewed by: Sudi Stodola  
TJ H.S.

## Mostly Sunny With a Chance of Storms

By: Marion Roberts  
Allen&Unwin, 2009  
ISBN: 97817417597

*Curriculum: Families; Grief; Friendship*



Many things have changed for Sunny Hathaway. Her father and his new wife have a new baby. Her mother, her mother's boyfriend and his children are all moving into Sunny's grandmother's house since her grandmother has died. On her bus ride to her old school she meets an interesting new boy who loves to knit. Confusing? Very, but quirky and charming.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble  
Kepner M.S.

### The Properties of Water

By: Hannah Roberts  
McKinnon

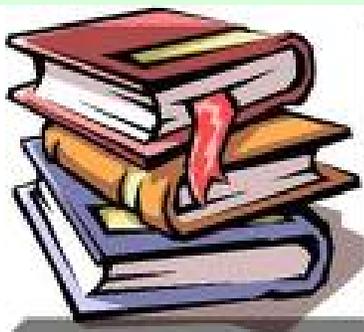
Farrar Straus Giroux,  
2010

ISBN: 9780374361457

*Curriculum: Paralysis; Sisters; Families*

Lace hasn't been in the water since her sister's accident at the lake last summer. It used to be that Lace, Marni and the lake were inseparable, but now the lake only reminds Lace of pain. Her mother has been living in the city at the rehabilitation hospital with Marni since the accident and her father visits frequently, but Lace can't bring herself to visit her sister and see the damage the accident has left.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble  
Kepner M.S.



# Young Adults Deserve the Best!

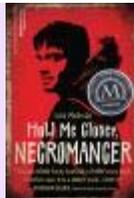
### Hold Me Closer, Necromancer

By: Lish McBride  
Holt, 2010

ISBN: 9780805090987

*Curriculum: Necromancers; Supernatural beings; College drop-outs; Magic*  
Sam, a fast-food-working college drop-out, has no direction in his life. That is, until Douglas takes a menacing interest in him. Douglas is a powerful necromancer threatened by Sam's unknown magical gifts. Supported by friends, family, and werewolves, Sam battles for his life in this comical action thriller. HS students tired of vampires will appreciate this fresh voice in supernatural fiction. The story progresses with steady action and an entertaining supporting cast. A non-explicit sex scene is included.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas  
JFK H.S.



### The Rise of Renegade X

By: Eagmont USA, 2010  
ISBN: 9781606840603

*Curriculum: Superheroes; Identity; Villains; Family*

Damien lives in a world with regular people, superheroes and supervillains. Genetics determine which each person will be. On their sixteenth birthdays superheroes will have an H appear on their thumb and supervillains will have a V



## Review Crew Staff

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Marilyn Martin  
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Alumni

From ERS:

Dave Sanger  
Karen Shannon  
Antonio Nicotera

appear on their thumb. Damien's single mom is a villain. Damien eagerly awaits his sixteenth birthday. When it comes he is confused because an X appears on this thumb. The X means he is neither a superhero nor a supervillain but his actions will determine which he will become. Confused, he returns home and rummages through his mother's things and finds a diary revealing that his father, whom he has never met, is a superhero, therefore the reason for the X. Damien is determined to prove that he is a supervillain but as the story unfolds he finds himself doing good things.

Reviewed by: Dr. Lynne Lopez-Crowley

MSLA

### Matched

By: Ally Condie

Dutton Juvenile, 2010

ISBN: 9780525423645

*Curriculum: Dystopia; Arranged marriage; Rebellion*

It is Cassia's 17<sup>th</sup> birthday and she is on her way to her matching ceremony where she will be introduced to her true match. When her best friend, Xander's face pops up on the Matching screen, she believes they are the perfect pair but when Cassia accesses the data card, another boy's face shows up. Cassia soon finds herself faced with the impossibility of freedom in a society where everything is chosen for her. A great read for fans of *The Giver* and *The Hunger Games*.

Reviewed by: Sudi Stodola

TJ H.S.



# Series Books

## First Graphics



By: Various Authors

PS-2 Nonfiction

In a graphic novel format this series covers research topics for very young students.

## Beginning Pet Care With American Humane



By: Felicia Lowenstein Niven

4—8 Nonfiction

This stellar series outlines issues such as health and exercise problems and challenges, and lifelong responsibility when choosing a pet.

## Samurai Kids



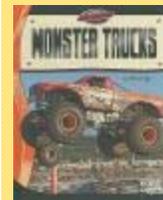
By: Sandy Fussell

6—8 Fiction

Sensei Ki-Yaga, an ancient but legendary warrior, teaches five students with disabilities so they are ready for the Samurai Games.

## Full Throttle

By: Various Authors



6—8 Nonfiction

Describes the first monster trucks, how monster trucks are built, and their performances in shows .

## Interesting Facts About President's Day

Some states, including Illinois, still observe Lincoln's birthday on February 12, in addition to Presidents Day.

Some states only observe Presidents Day.

Some states celebrate neither birthday.

The state of Alabama, has gone its own way. Despite the fact that no one else celebrates Thomas Jefferson's birthday, Alabama has decided that the third President of the United States is worthy of a celebration in their state during the month of February, despite the fact that his birthday is actually in April. If you're visiting Alabama on the third Monday of February, be sure to tip your hat to the memories of both George Washington and Thomas Jefferson.

Up until 1752, Great Britain and America followed the Julian calendar, which is the Roman calendar Julius Caesar initially set into motion. A competing Gregorian calendar was created by Pope Gregory the XIII in 1582. Many countries got on board at that time. Great Britain and America did not adopt the Gregorian calendar until many years later.

There is an 11-day gap between the Julian calendar and the Gregorian calendar. When the Gregorian calendar is adopted, 11 days from the Julian calendar must be dropped.

George Washington was born under the Julian calendar. After America adopted the Gregorian calendar, Washington's birthday moved from February 12 to February 22.

