

The Review Crew



What's New and Great for Our Youngest Readers?

Fiction

The Bear in the Book

By: Kate Banks

Illus. by: Georg Hallensleben

Farrar Straus Giroux, 2012

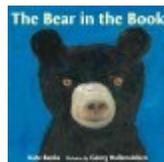
ISBN: 9780374305918

Curriculum: Bears; Bedtime; Reading

At bedtime, a young boy chooses a favorite book about a bear who is also getting ready for his winter sleep. Cuddling with his mother, the boy shares his observations about the story as she gently reinforces concepts such as seasons and colors. In the end, as the bear finally comes out in spring, the little boy falls sweetly asleep. The book is richly and colorfully illustrated with full-page paintings that enhance the simple but evocative text. This is a perfect book to demonstrate read-aloud techniques.

Reviewed by: Peggy Obert

Waller K-8



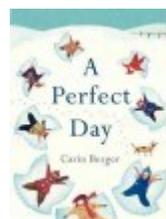
A Perfect Day

Written and illus. by: Carin Berger

Greenwillow Books, 2012

ISBN: 9780062015808

Curriculum: Snow; Snow activities



This beautiful picture book documents a day of snow from the first morning light to the evening shadows. Meet all the children as they skate and sled, build snowmen and forts and the ever popular snow angels. The pictures in this book are exquisite. Carin Berger uses a variety of media to create her collages. This is a beautiful read-aloud, a brilliant book for beginning readers and an artistic study for all ages.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner M.S.

Spanish!

¡Qué fastidio ser Princesa!

By: Carmen Gil

Illus. by: Daniel Montero Galan

Cuento de Luz, 2012

ISBN: 9788415241140

Curriculum: Fairy Tales; Empowering girls

Nona joins the ranks of reluctant princesses, in this charming tale of self-discovery and independence. When Nona, shown in elegantly rendered drawings, sets out to find her true calling, she excels as both a pirate and a knight, but ultimately finds her true destiny as an entertainer.

Reviewed by: Elise Edwards
Early Education



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

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Who are we?

- ☺ We are DPS teacher librarians from elementary, middle and high school.
- ☺ We know DPS students and the DPS curriculum.

What we do!

- ☺ Every month each member writes reviews of at least fifteen recently published books.
- ☺ This publication consists of the best books we review each month.
- ☺ Our hard work earns thousands of dollars of free books for our school libraries and for the classroom library at ETLs, where DPS teachers can order baskets of books for their classrooms. (Call 720-423-8131 to order.)

Nonfiction

National Geographic Little Kids: First Big Book of Space

By: Catherine D.
Hughes

Illus. by: David A. Aguilar
National Geographic, 2012
ISBN: 9781426310140

*Curriculum: Space; Earth; Planets;
Stars; Space exploration*

Our home, the Earth, orbits around the sun, and beyond that lay our moon, eight planets, five dwarf planets, asteroid belts, and comets. The vast universe expands further away from our Milky Way, with billions of stars, galaxies, and black holes. Man has been exploring space with rockets and space shuttles, telescopes, and satellites, in hopes of learning more about our universe. Crisp and amazing photographs of space draws the reader in, all while providing a very good introduction to all things space for young readers.

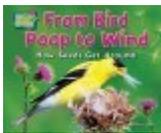
Reviewed by: Leah Rounds
Alumni

From Bird Poop to Wind : How Seeds Get Around

By: Ellen Lawrence
Bearport, 2013
ISBN:9781617725852

Curriculum: Seeds dispersal; Seeds ecology; Germination

Seeds get creative when it comes to getting around. They can be spread in bird poop, by animals, by hitching a ride, being carried by the wind or floating in water. Some seeds even blast away from the parent plant at 60 miles an hour! This colorful volume uses full-page labeled photos, inserts,



questions and simple, clear text to teach young readers about the why and wherefore of seed mobility.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose
Alumni

Count!

By: Agnese Baruzzi
Tango Books, 2012
ISBN:
9781857078565

Curriculum: Counting; Animals

Like the typical counting book, each page has a number from 1 to 10 and a single word in bold blocky print identifying the animal being counted. What separates this title from other counting books is Baruzzi's amazing die cut art. Pages colored in darker hues are overlaid with a black die cut page that depicts the scene. Comical squirrels, wide-eyed Owls, and elegant butterflies fill the pages. The eye-catching art will keep children engaged as they peruse each page and practice their counting skills.

Reviewed by Michelle Jensen
TJ H.S.



The Best for Upper Elementary Readers!

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

Fiction

Chickadee

By: Louise Erdrich
Harper, 2012
ISBN:
9780060577902

*Curriculum: Ojibwa Indians; Metis;
Indians of North America; Kidnap-
ping; Voyages and travels; Family life;
Great Plains history 19th century*

When Makoons, an Ojibwe youth, humiliates a mean-spirited member of the tribe who has insulted his grandmother, his twin brother, Chickadee, is kidnapped by the man's sons and becomes their slave. He makes a daring escape and struggles through the wilderness in search of his family. Set in 1866, this fourth installment of the *Birchbark House* series gives readers a glimpse into the changing world of indigenous woodland people as their way of life changed with the settlement of French trappers, traders and Catholic missionaries. An insightful series that will appeal to fans of adventure and historical fiction.

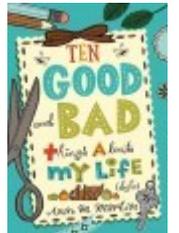
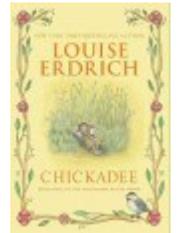
Reviewed by: Cat DeRose
Alumni

Ten Good and Bad Things About My Life (So Far)

By: Ann M. Martin
Feiwal and Friends,
2012
ISBN:
9780312642990

*Curriculum: Family life;
Camps; Friendship*

Given a "what I did last summer" assignment by her fifth grade teacher, Pearl recounts the vacation she thought would be a total bust after



her father lost his job and her family's scheduled trip to the Wild West was cancelled. But between summer camp with her best friend JBIII (and worst enemy Jill), a staycation around New York City, and a creative money-making opportunity, Pearl feels she had the best summer ever. Students who like funny realistic fiction will enjoy Pearl and her honesty.

Reviewed by: Peggy Obert
Waller K-8

A Fairy tale: A Magical Story for Older Children

Written and illus. by:
Tony Ross

Andersen Press, 2012

ISBN:
9781849393553

Curriculum: Friendship; Fairies

Bess is frustrated by her books, she doesn't believe in fairies. One day her ball bounces over the wall and she meets Mrs. Leaf, an older woman who tells her that there could be fairies. Mrs. Leaf tells her that fairies are only pretty when they are happy. Mrs. Leaf and Bess are constant friends for many years. When Bess is old she sometimes remembers that fairies are young and beautiful when they are happy. The pictures are gentle and wonderful, as is the text. This is a completely satisfying story.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner M.S.



Nonfiction

Quiz Whiz: 1,000 Super Fun Mind-Bending Totally Awesome Trivia Questions

By: National Geographic

National Geographic, 2012
ISBN: 9781426310188

Curriculum: Trivia

Do you know who the sandwich was named after? Find out here! Boasting 1000 trivia questions, this *National Geographic Kids* title is packed with interesting information to entertain readers of all ages. Questions fall under 8 categories including *Animal Intelligence* and *It's Not Rocket Science*. Answers for each category are located at the end of that chapter. This fun title will amuse people from 8-100! The included pictures and illustrations add to the interest. Perfect for browsing, down time, or a long road trip, adults and children can test their knowledge together.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.

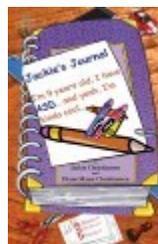
Jackie's Journal

By: Jackie Christiansen and Diane Meyer Christiansen

Blackhawk Publishing,
2012

ISBN:9780982637852

Curriculum: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Personal journals, Friendship, Bullying



Jackie is a young writer, who happens to have ASD. He shares his thoughts and observations through funny anecdotes, lists, jokes, and advice. This personal narrative will be appealing to any elementary student who has struggled with fitting in or for those who would like more information about living with ASD.

Reviewed by: Elise Edwards
Early Education

National Geographic Kids: Ultimate U.S. Road Trip Atlas

Written and illus. by:
Crispin Boyer

National Geographic,
2012

ISBN: 9781426309335

Curriculum: Fifty states; United States

This atlas is an incredibly visually fun book, with a well laid out format, clear road maps with key, and good general information on each state. Though intended for backseat fun with games and activities, it could easily be used in a unit of the fifty states or to learn about maps

Reviewed by: Leah Rounds
Alumni

Speed : Get Quick!

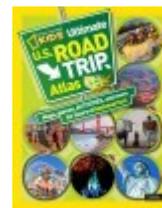
By: Ellen Labrecqe

Heinemann Library, 2013

ISBN: 9781432973841

Curriculum: Exercise; Speed

Speed is part of fitness and to maximize speed certain muscles must be developed. After discussing warming up, fuel, hydration and form, specific exercise are illustrated. Readers are issued mini challenges to put these exercises in practice. Captioned color photos and inserts provide visual interest and in-



formation. Suggested resources emphasize healthy eating and answer general questions about kid's health issues. Additional volumes cover coordination, stamina, strength and flexibility. A great, practical series for encouraging fitness.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose

Alumni

Dogs on Duty: Soldiers' Best Friends on the Battlefield and Beyond

By: Dorothy Hinshaw Patent



Walker and Co., 2012

ISBN: 9780802728456

Curriculum: Dogs, war use

The invaluable contributions of Military Working Dogs (MWDs) are highlighted here, including stories of Stubby and Chips from World War II and Vietnam War hero Nemo. The special abilities and senses of the dogs are explained, and their exhaustive training is documented in the dramatic photographs like those showing the MWDs parachuting from airplanes and using special night vision equipment. A fascinating read for young people and adults.

Reviewed by: Peggy Obert

Waller K-8

**The books that
the world calls
immoral are books
that show the
world its own
shame.
Oscar Wilde**



**Middle School Reader
Gold Mine**

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

Fiction

A Tale Dark and Grimm

By: Adam Gidwitz

Puffin, 2011

ISBN: 9780329900670

Curriculum: Magic; Fairy Tales; Hansel & Gretel



While Hansel & Gretel had a rough time of it in their niche of fairy tale drama, they face even more trouble as Gidwitz weaves them into a variety of other Grimm tales in this inventive tale. Using the unfortunate siblings as his main focus, Gidwitz narrates other Grimm fairy tales including *Faithful Johannes*, *The Seven Ravens*, *The Robber Bridegroom*, and *The Devil and his Three Golden Hairs*. Cleverly disguised as a single novel sprinkled with narrative interjections reminiscent of Lemony Snicket, this is a surprisingly accurate retelling of the original tales. A clever and skillful method of teaching students some of the original Grimm's tales.

Reviewed by: Sudi Stodola
CEC Middle College

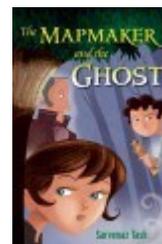
The Mapmaker and the Ghost

By: Sarvenaz Tash

Walker & Company,
2012

ISBN:

9780802723406



Curriculum: Maps;

Meriwether Lewis; Bullies; Family

Goldenrod Moran loves maps and puzzles. She decided to spend the summer mapping the woods like the explorer Meriwether Lewis. Things turn unusual when she meets a strange woman who wants her to search for a rare blue rose. She meets the ghost of Lewis, who helps with her quest. Goldenrod also stumbles across a gang of bullies with nothing but trouble on their minds. She must help her brother, help the old woman, find the blue rose and stay out of trouble herself. A fun, light hearted story with adventure and a cast of characters.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns

Place Bridge Academy

The Secret Prophecy

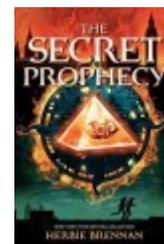
By: Herbie Brennan

Harper Collins; 2012

ISBN:

9780062071804

Curriculum: Mystery; Conspiracy; Nostradamus; Friendship; Trust



Edward Michael Govertson, known as Em awakes one morning to find out his father has died. His life and his mother's are turned upside down. There are men with guns at the funeral, and his house is broken into and searched. Em is being followed by a suspicious group of men. He discovers his father had found an unknown manuscript by Nostradamus, which prophesied future

events. Apparently, no one wants these manuscripts to be made public. Em is caught into the mystery and must decide who he can trust in order to survive.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy

Broxo

By: Zack Giallongo
First Second, 2012
ISBN:
9781596435513



Curriculum: Princesses; Zombies; Friendship; Adventure; Graphic novel

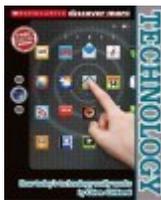
On a quest to find the secluded Peryton Clan, Princess Zora finds instead a lone boy, Broxo, who proclaims to be the a king. Initial suspicion gives away to trust and a reliance on each other as they face countless dangers. After Zora realizes that the terrifying, wandering zombies are the lost inhabitants of Peryton, Broxo decides to perform the ritual that will release his ancestors from their curse. A compelling storyline, evenly-paced action, and artwork that conveys the desolate mood while contributing to the development of the characters make this a title that will be popular.

Reviewed by: Michelle Jensen
Thomas Jefferson H.S.

Nonfiction

Technology: How today's technology really works

By: Clive Gifford
Scholastic Press,
2012



ISBN: 9780545383738

Curriculum: Electronics; Robots; Games; Computers

Chapter topics include microchips and smart tech; fun, games and thrills; force, speed and power; and technology for life. Each page includes stunning photography, illustrations, artwork and amazing statistics about how we use technology. Informative and visually appealing, this is a sure bet for budding engineers and curious middle school students.

Reviewed by: Dr. Janice Pacheco
Skinner M.S.



Young Adults Deserve the Best!

Fiction

The Night She Disappeared

By: April Henry
Henry Holt, 2012
ISBN: 9780805092622
*Curriculum: Kidnapping;
Abduction; Pizza parlors*



Review Crew Staff

Committee Chair:

Nancy Lucas
JFK High School

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CEC Early College

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Chris Coble
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Leah Rounds

Alumni

From ETLs:

Dave Sanger

Karen Shannon

Antonio Nicotera

While delivering pizzas one night, Kayla goes missing. Gabie thinks it was meant to be her that was abducted as the caller asked if the girl with the Mini Cooper was delivering that night. Gabie becomes obsessed with finding Kayla, who she's sure is still alive, before it's too late. Told from various viewpoints, including those of Kayla and the abductor, this YA thriller for HS students is tough to put down. Mixed in with the narrative are police interviews, 911 transcripts and newspaper articles which add to the realistic nature of the story.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.

The Raven Boys

By: Maggie Stiefvater

Scholastic Press,
2012

ISBN:
9780805087161

Curriculum: Fantasy; Clairvoyance; Magic

Against her better judgment, Blue joins Gansey and his group of troubled friends in their search for an energy line under which Glendower, an ancient Welsh king, is said to be buried. Whoever releases the king from his grave will be granted a rich reward. The exciting conclusion will leave readers begging for the next installment in this projected four-book series.

Reviewed by: Dr. Janice Pacheco
Skinner M.S.



Transcendence

By: C.J. Omololu
Walker, 2012

ISBN:
9780802723703



Curriculum: Reincarnation; Secret societies; Romance

Cole Ryan is a teen cello prodigy. On a trip to England, she has a vision of the past and faints, to be rescued by the handsome and mysterious Griffon. When she runs into Griffon again stateside, he assures her that he is not a stalker, but rather an important person from one of her previous lifetimes. From Griffon, Cole learns about the secret group of people who remember their reincarnations, and soon they realize that her life is in danger. If Cole cannot unravel the mysteries of her visions, she will die.

Reviewed by: Sudi Stodola
CEC Middle College

Don't Turn Around

By: Michelle Gagnon

Harper 2012
ISBN: 9781250004871

Curriculum: Dystopia; Hackers; Government Conspiracy; Surgical experimentation

Bored one evening, Peter hacks into his father's computer. Five minutes later, his front door is kicked in and a group of men in black suits pin him to the floor while they confiscate his laptop and cut the network connection. Seeking help, he discovers teen hacker and runaway Noa, who has every reason to distrust the group Peter has stumbled upon, as she has just escaped from a surgery room in one of their secret warehouses. Together, the hackers uncover a chilling governmental conspiracy that is responsible for the dozens of sick and missing teens over the last five years.

Reviewed by: Sudi Stodola
CEC Middle College



Dead Girl Moon

By: Charlie Price

Farrar Straus Giroux,
2012

ISBN:
9780374317522

Curriculum: Murder; Runaways; Mystery

Three teens, each with a challenging background, become friends in a small Montana town. Each teen longs for a new beginning but find themselves dragged into a web of small-town corruption after they discover a body in the river. Their discovery leads to a series of actions and events that could bring even bigger trouble their way.

Reviewed by: Dr. Lynne Lopez-Crowley
MSLA



Skinny

By: Donna Cooner

Point, 2012
ISBN: 9780545427630

Curriculum: Obesity; Gastric bypass surgery; Self-acceptance

Ever is fifteen-years-old and weighs 302 pounds. Her mother died when she was younger and her father has since remarried. Ever's two stepsisters are gorgeous, she is taunted at school and worst of all is haunted internally by a voice called Skinny that voices self-loathing from Ever. Ever decides to have gastric-bypass surgery. As she loses weight as a result of the surgery, she becomes a makeover project of popular Whitney. As her popularity increases she notices the distance in her old friendship with Rat, who has been her friend since they were small. To reclaim her friendship with Rat, Ever finds she must do some self-reflection.

Reviewed by: Dr. Lynne Lopez-Crowley
MSLA

