

The Review Crew

Early Elementary Fiction

Chik Chak Shabbat

By: Mara Rockliff

Illus. by: Kyrsten Brooker

Candlewick, 2014

ISBN: 9780763655280



Curriculum: Cultural diversity; Traditions; Celebrations; Cooking; Judaism

The neighbors surrounding Goldie Simcha's apartment adore the smell of her famous cholent, a traditional Jewish stew, wafting through the building during Shabbat, the Jewish day of rest. One fateful Saturday afternoon, the neighbors noticed the smell of cholent was missing throughout the building. Goldie Simcha had fallen ill. How would the neighbors celebrate Shabbat without her cholent? This poignant tale includes vibrant illustrations and a look into diverse celebrations.

Reviewed by: Jonathan Almon
Steck Elem.

Louise Loves Art

Written and illus. by: Kelly Light

Balzar+Bray, 2014

ISBN: 9780062248176



Curriculum: Siblings; Art; Listening; Compassion

This is the delightful story of budding artist Louise and her love of Art. Louise, her little

brother Art and their playful cat spend the day using their imagination to create "masterpieces" for an upcoming "art show". Louise leads the way in her search for the ultimate piece de resistance drawing the cat with Art following close behind. Things do not turn out as expected but the siblings prevail and art/ Art conquers all. Excellent illustrations with a bright, bold palette. A great story time read with one sentence per page text. This book provides plenty of topics for discussion.

Reviewed by: Sarah Martinez
North H.S.

Julia's House for Lost Creatures

Written and Illus. by: Ben Hatke

First Second, 2014

ISBN: 9781596438668

Curriculum: Friends

Julia moves to town and settles by the sea. She is happy in her new environment; except that it is way too quiet. So she encourages people to visit by putting up a sign advertising for "lost creatures." Soon she's hosting goblins, mermaids, fairies, and even a dragon. Now she has a new problem. She has plenty of house guests, but no one is doing any chores to help out. The house is a mess! Find out how Julia brings back harmony to her cozy little house.

Reviewed by: Jutta Gebauer
South H.S.



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

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Who are we?

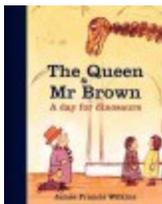
- ☺ We are DPS teacher librarians from elementary, middle and high school.
- ☺ We know DPS students and the DPS curriculum.

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.)

The Queen & Mr. Brown: A Day for Dinosaurs

Written and Illus. by:
James Francis Wilkins
Natural History
Museum, London, 2014
ISBN: 9780565093259



Curriculum: Dinosaurs; Queen of England

In this comical story, England's Queen takes a day off from her royal duties to visit the Natural History Museum with her pet dog Mr. Brown. It is a miserable rainy day as the two enjoy the exhibits and have a snack. But the excitement really begins as the Queen falls asleep and begins to dream! Children will love following the queen and her little dog along on their adventures.

Reviewed by: Jutta Gebauer
South H.S.

**Early Elementary
Nonfiction**

Birds

By: Penelope Arlon
Scholastic Inc., 2014
ISBN:
9780545667739



Curriculum: Birds

"There are over 10,000 colorful kinds of bird!" This visually stunning book of detailed bird photographs and simple facts offers a good general overview of birds. It's an ideal browse for any young bird lover.

Reviewed by: Leah Rounds
Alumni



Before After

Written and illus. by:
Anne-Margot Ramstein
and Matthias Aregui
Candlewick Press, 2014
ISBN:
9780763676216



Curriculum: Time; Sequencing

Ingredients become a cake, a sheep on a mountainside becomes a skein of wool, and a rocking horse changes to a rocking chair in this concept book that shows the effects of time on a variety of things. There are the usual caterpillar to butterfly and egg to chicken, but the fun is in the unusual, like watching that skein of wool become a hat for a boy in the snow, then the woodpile in the snow being used in a fireplace on the snowy day. Muted colors are used for the illustrations that are simple in design but can be philosophically complex. There are lots of possible discussion topics in this wordless book for all ages.

Reviewed by: Peggy Obert
Alumni



Mira donde vivo! Look Where I Live!

By: Lone Morton
Illus. by: Louise
Comfort
B Small Publishing,
2009



ISBN: 9781905710928

Curriculum: Search-and-find; Homes; Homes around the world

Agnus lives in Scotland, Ross lives in Australia, and Emilie lives in Switzerland. Search and find traditional items in children's homes from around the world! This bilingual books offers

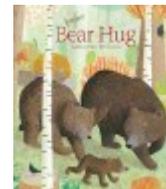
a look into international homes and lifestyles, and is a fun browse for all ages.

Reviewed by: Leah Rounds
Alumni

**Upper Elementary
Fiction**

Bear Hug

Written and Illus. by:
Katharine McEwen
Templar Books, 2014
ISBN:
9780763666309



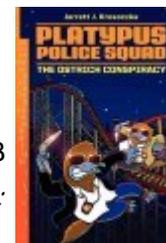
Curriculum: Bears; Hibernation; Life Cycle

As winter approaches, a young bear prepares to spend his first winter without his family. He remembers how his father taught him to prepare his den. He catches fat, silvery fish and gathers food. One day he sees another young bear and the two of them eat berries and get ready for hibernation. Together they stay snug through the winter. When spring comes, they leave their cave with a new little cub. Now bear will teach his cub what to do when he ventures out on his own. A beautifully illustrated story that is good for young readers and read alouds.

Reviewed by Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy

The Ostrich Conspiracy

By: Jarrett Krosoczka
Walden Pond Press,
2014
ISBN: 9780062071668



Curriculum: Detectives; Mystery; Crime

Rookie detective Rick Zengo and his veteran partner Corey O'Malley are on the scene at the new amusement park. The Dome's grand opening and the announcement that movie star Chase Mercy will be filming his next movie there, have the citizens all abuzz. On opening night an explosion shuts down many of the rides and has the town folk wondering if The Dome is going to be a safe place to go. Zengo believes it is his nemesis, Frank Pandini Jr., but the evidence soon starts to point in another direction.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
CEC Middle College

Upper Elementary Nonfiction

Vincent van Gogh

By: Linda Cernak
Illus. by: J.T. Morrow
Child's World, 2015
ISBN:
9781626873551



Curriculum: Vincent van Gogh; Impressionists

Focusing predominantly on his importance as an artist, this biography briefly traces van Gogh's youth and early adulthood. He eventually decided to become an artist and moved to Paris where he was inspired by many Impressionist artists. His self-mutilation, death, and posthumous fame are also explored. Each reviewed title in this series, *The World's Greatest Artists*, offers readers biographical information and discusses the artist's methodology and famous works as well as why his/her contributions to the art world are significant. Appropriate for introductory research for upper ele-

mentary and MS students.
Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.

With Love

By: Jane Goodall
Illus. by: Alan Marks
Michael Neugebauer
Publishing, 2014
ISBN:
9789888240906



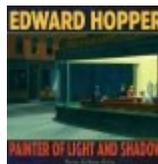
Curriculum: Chimpanzees; Behavior; Relationships

One of the foremost experts in the study of chimpanzees, Jane Goodall, has written a little book with ten powerful stories. She tells us these stories to show us that these creatures are more like humans than any other creatures. She names the chimps that she studies and tells of their adventures and relationships. One example is where the older brother rescues his younger sibling from a snake. Another example is a chimp who mourns the loss of his mother. The ten stories are short and poignant. There are no actual photographs of these events, but the illustrations are beautifully done.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy

Edward Hopper: Painter of Light and Shadow

Written and illus. by:
Susan Rubin
Abrams Books, 2007
ISBN:
9780810993471



Curriculum: Art; American artists
American artist Edward Hopper started wanting to be an artist at a very young age. On his pencil box

he wrote "WOULD BE ARTIST". He never quit wanting to be an artist. After high school he moved to New York City and later to Paris; always studying and practicing. Eventually he moved back to the United States. His pictures were of sad and lonely places, somehow reflective of he himself. Few people were attracted to his art at the time but in later days, he became one of the most famous and recognizable of American artists.

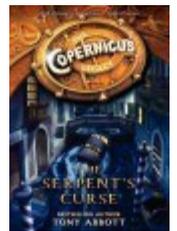
Reviewed by: Chris Coble
CEC Middle College

Middle School Fiction

The Copernicus Legacy:

The Serpent's Curse

By: Tony Abbott
Harper Collins, 2014
ISBN: 9780062194503



Curriculum: Adventure; Russia; Series

In the second installment of the Copernicus Legacy, brothers, Wade and Darrell, and company find themselves in another globe-trotting adventure for Copernicus' relics. Galina, Krause, the leader of the evil Teutonic Knights, is in relentless pursuit of the relics as well and has even kidnapped Wade and Darrell's mother, Sara Kaplan. Can the Kaplans rescue their mother and the relics before it's too late? Readers who love the DaVinci Code will love the suspense, riddles, and history provided by Tony Abbott in this series.

Reviewed by: Jonathan Almon
Steck Elem.



The Boy Who Swam with Piranhas

By: David Almond
Illus. by: Oliver Jeffers
Candlewick Press, 2013
ISBN: 9780763661694



Curriculum: Runaways; Circus; Piranhas; Adventure

Young Stanley Potts lives happily with Uncle Ernie and Aunt Annie until their home becomes a fish cannery. Reaching his limit, Stanley joins a traveling carnival and is chosen to be the successor to Pancho Pirelli who swims in a tank with piranhas. A precarious, hilarious and totally endearing tale.

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

The Luck Uglies

By: Paul Durham
Illus. by: Petur Antonsson
Harper, 2014
ISBN: 9780062271501



Curriculum: Monsters; Secret societies; Fantasy

Rye O'Chanter, with friends Quinn and Folly, discover secrets about their medieval Village Drowning's history as they work desperately to save it from the monster Bog Noblin. With evil all around, and closing in, only the banned secret society called the "Luck Uglies" has the power and knowledge to help.

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



The Vault of Dreamers

By: Caragh O'Brien
Roaring Brook Press, 2014
ISBN: 9781596439382



Curriculum: Dreams; Schools

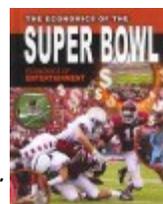
The Forge is an elite arts school that is also a reality show. Rosie Sinclair isn't sure she can survive the cuts based on viewers' ratings, but drama, including a romance with kitchen helper Linus, keeps her in so she is free to pursue her film making project by hiding cameras around the campus. After discovering that the school is harvesting the dreams of the students to sell as therapy for brain-injured patients, she is caught and placed in the vault of dreamers. Does she escape? Watch for a sequel. This dystopian story with a little Hunger Games flavor flows well and readers will be sympathetic to Rosie's dilemma and will want to root her on.

Reviewed by: Peggy Obert Alumni

Middle School Nonfiction

The Economics of the Super Bowl

By: Lizann Flatt
Crabtree, 2014
ISBN: 9780778779728



Curriculum: Super Bowl; Economics; NFL

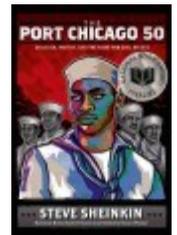
The NFL is not just a sports team organization, and the Super Bowl is not just another football game. From pre-season to championship, an NFL season is a multi-billion-dollar business. This title explores the ins and outs of tick-

ets sales, advertising, merchandising contracts, half-time shows, and team staffing. Definitely a consumer-driven business, reaching the Super Bowl certainly adds value to an individual team's profits as well as those for the NFL. This title familiarizes upper MS and HS students to supply and demand, capitalism, and sponsorship, as well as microeconomics and macroeconomics. A solid choice.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas JFK H.S.

The Port Chicago 50

By: Steve Sheinkin
Viking, 2014
ISBN: 9781596437968



Curriculum: African Americans; Armed Forces; World War II; Civil Rights

The desegregation of the Navy and the fight for safe working conditions during World War II comes to life in this chronicle of the Port Chicago 50. A little-known story, this book recounts the story of African American sailors who were not allowed out to sea but instead assigned the dangerous job of loading ammunition and live bombs on ships headed out to war. After an explosion destroys their ship and kills 320 men the sailors refuse to go back to work until changes are made to improve their working conditions. Their actions are viewed as defiance by their superiors and the sailors are accused of mutiny. As a result the men endure a harrowing trial, jail and struggles throughout their lives. The book was written based on oral interviews from the actual Port Chicago 50 and includes photographs and Navy records that thoroughly illustrate the incident.

Reviewed by: Sarah Martinez North H.S.

High School Fiction

Made for You

By: Melissa Marr

Harper, 2014

ISBN:

9780062011190

Curriculum: Murder; Serial killers; Visions; Mystery

Seventeen-year-old Eva wakes up in the hospital after being hit by a car. Shortly after the accident, Eva's friends begin turning up dead and she begins to wonder if the hit and run was really an accident. When Eva realizes that she now has the ability to see the death's of those that touch her, she knows it is up to her to discover the killer's identity before anyone else for whom she cares dies. This thriller is a suspenseful, spine-tingling glimpse into the mind of a psychopath.

Reviewed by Michelle Jensen

Thomas Jefferson H.S.



High School Nonfiction

Poisoned Apples

By: Christine

Heppermann

Greenwillow Books, 2014

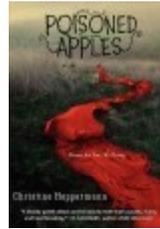
ISBN: 9780062289575

Curriculum: Girls; Social issues; Poetry

In this collection of fifty poems, author Heppermann uses a caustic, satirical voice in her examination of the lives of teenage girls. Fairy tale imagery and characters collide with the modern pressures and expectations placed upon young women. *Poisoned Apples* challenges the dictates of society as it explores how girls view themselves and their roles. At times funny, this collection has a hard edge and is often heart-breaking in its honesty.

Reviewed by: Michelle Jensen

Thomas Jefferson H.S.



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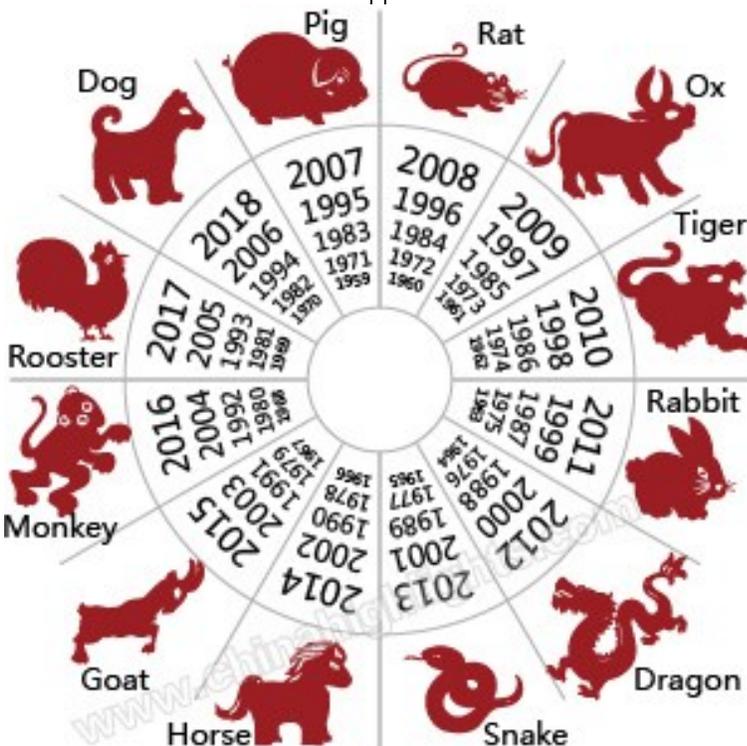
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