



The Review Crew

What's New and Great for Our Youngest Readers?

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

Volume 2 Number 5

March 2006

Who are we?

- ☺ More than a dozen teacher librarians and literacy experts from elementary schools through 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 303-405-8131 to order.)

You are My Miracle

By: Maryann Cusimano Love

Illustrated by: Satomi Ichikawa

Philomel Books, 2005

ISBN: 0399240373



Curriculum: Christmas; Stories in rhyme
Gentle rhymes and warm, colorful illustrations abound on each page. They begin several days before the special night and continue until the magical eve of Christmas is reached. Each verse and accompanying illustration are full of love, joy, togetherness, and a wonderful collection of stuffed animals. Papa bear and baby bear spend some fun time together making cookies, wrapping presents, and many other things. A wonderful addition to the holiday genre.

Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Bryant Webster K-8

Fancy Nancy

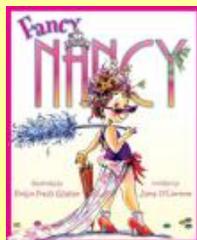
By: Jane O'Connor

Illustrated by: Robin Preiss Glasser

HarperCollins, 2006

ISBN: 0060542101

Curriculum: Individuality; Family life



Nancy believes lace trimmed socks help while playing soccer, frilly toothpicks make sandwiches taste better, everything is better when fancy, including the way one speaks. Even though the rest of her family isn't "fancy", they love Nancy for the individual she is.

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill

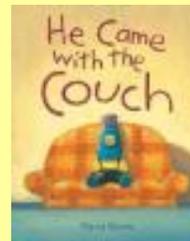
He Came With the Couch

By: David Slonim

Chronicle Books, 2005

ISBN: 0811844307

Curriculum: Friendship; Acceptance



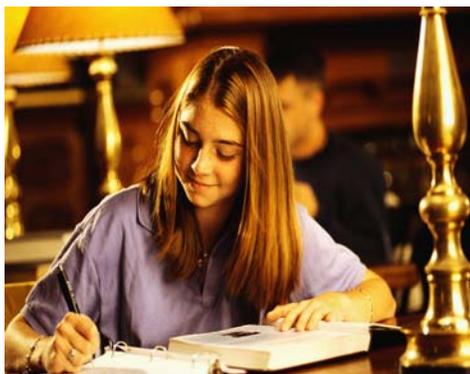
When Sophie's family brings home a new couch from a rummage sale, they get an added bonus in the form of a strange blue little boy. The quirky details found in the pictures help demonstrate the theme of the story: to accept wholeheartedly those unasked for gifts that life has to offer.

Reviewed by: Laurie Bell
Brown International Elem.

Continued on p. 3

Want to read more reviews? See the instructions on page 4.

Upper Elementary Readers, we'll find something good for you next month. Some months we just don't get that many books to review.



Middle School Readers Strike it Rich!

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

has been there to help her pick out the right fish every time.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner Middle School

What Mr. Mattero did

By: Priscilla Cummings
Dutton Children's Books,
2005

ISBN: 0524476210

Curriculum: Lies; Sex crimes; Teachers; Families

Melody Mattero is in eighth grade when three seventh grade students accuse her father of touching them inappropriately. The consequences of a lie, like ripples in a pond, spread outward in ever widening rings. More and more people are affected and they will never be able to go back to the way they were before the lie was told.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner Middle School

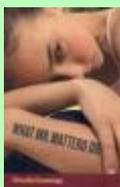
Hook, Line and Sinker

By: G. P. Guarente
RazorBill, 2005

ISBN: 1595140115

Curriculum: Interpersonal relationships; Fish; Plays

Fiona has been disappointed by guys, well, pretty much every time she meets one. But she has figured out a way to move on. She buys a fish and adds it to her TCG (tank of clueless guys). And Jonas, the fish shop boy,



Ithaka

By: Adele Geras
Harcourt, 2005

ISBN: 0152036033

Curriculum: Greek Mythology, Fiction

An outstanding novel that brings alive the world of Ancient Greece and its Mythology. It is big in scope, historical perspective, and a sprawling cast of characters. The major characters--the women in particular--come through as real humans or goddesses facing real and recognizable problems. Klymine, a young handmaiden to Penelope, tells the tale of Penelope's faith and devotion to her husband Odysseus even though ten years have passed since the end of the Trojan War. A powerful story of what women can accomplish when men go off to war.

Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Bryant Webster K-8

The Turning

By: Gloria Whelan
Harper Collins, 2006

ISBN: 0060755946

Curriculum: Historical Fiction; Soviet Union; Ballet

Tatiana is a young ballerina in the Kirov Ballet company in the early



1990's. She hopes to be chosen for the group's performance in Paris. She dreams of freedom and escaping the KGB. However, these choices are not as easy as she thinks. She is witness to the political coupe against the communist regime that changes her decisions and her life.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Hill MS

The Sword that Cut the Burning Grass

By: Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler

Philomel Books, 2005

ISBN: 0399242724

Curriculum: Mystery Fiction; Japan; Shogun; Samurai

In the fourth book of this series, Seikei is now fourteen years old and a samurai apprentice. He is sent by his adopted father, Judge Ooka on a mission. He must find the fourteen year old emperor and convince him to resume his royal duties. This is Seikei's first mission on his own and things are not as simple as they seem. Seikei stumbles on a plot to kidnap the emperor and overthrow the Shogun.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Hill MS

Bamboozlers

By: de Guzman, Michael
Farrar Straus Giroux, 2005

ISBN: 0374305129

Continued on p. 3



Andy Shane and the Very Bossy Dolores Starbuckle

By: Jennifer Richard Jacobson

Illustrated by: Abby Carter

Candlewick Press, 2005

ISBN: 076361940X

Curriculum: School stories; Bossiness

Andy's Granny Webb is an expert on insects and life lessons as well. When Granny visits Andy's classroom, he learns how to handle the ever bossy tattletale, Dolores Starbuckle, and neither Andy nor Dolores ever realizes that a lesson is being taught.

Reviewed by: Steve Bowley
Beach Court

The Dog Who Cried Wolf

By: Keiko Kasza

Illustrated by: Keiko Kasza

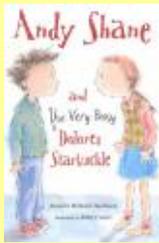
G.P. Putnum's Sons, 2005

ISBN: 0399242473

Curriculum: Dogs; Wolves

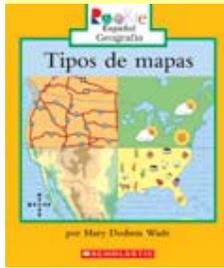
After reading her dog, Moka, a book about wolves, Michelle tells him, "You're kind of like a wolf." Moka realizes, however, that he is "nothing but a house pet," and takes off for the mountains to live free, only to return the next day hungry, tired and afraid of wolves.

Reviewed by: Steve Bowley
Beach Court



Nonfiction

Spanish!



Tipos de Mapas [Types of Maps]

By: Mary Dodson Wade

Children's Press, 2005.

ISBN: 0516252437

Curriculum: Geography; Maps

This book shows young readers different type of maps. The colorful pictures and the simple text help children to read these maps by themselves while they discover how useful maps are for finding information about places. This book belongs to the series Rookie Spanish Geography

Reviewed by: Ana M. Silva
Valdez Elementary School.

Holidays and Celebrations/Días de fiestas y celebraciones (Talking Hands)

By: Kathleen Petelinsek and E. Russell Primm

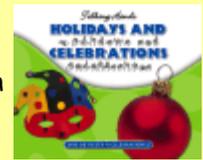
Illustrated by: Nichole Day Diggins

The Child's World, 2006

ISBN: 1592964532

Curriculum: Sign language

Spanish!



This series of books introduce some basics of the American Sign Language to readers of both

English and Spanish. The books contain pictures and simple drawings to explain each of the signs. Other titles in the series are: *Family and Friends, Questions and Answers, At School, At Work* and *Opposites*.

Reviewed by: Ana M. Silva
Valdez Elementary School

Middle School, continued from p. 2

Curriculum: Grandfathers; Swindlers



Nothing exciting happens for Albert except he gets suspended too often. Then his grandfather appears, a grandfather he never even knew he had. He wants Albert to assist him with the biggest swindle of his career. Will they be able to "con a con man"?

Marilyn Martin
Park Hill

Nonfiction

Elizabeth I: the Outcast Who Became England's Queen

By: Simon Adams

National Geographic, 2005

ISBN: 0792236491

Continued on p. 4



Young Adults Deserve the Best!
We hope to have something for them next month.

The closest we will ever come to an orderly universe is a good library.

Ashleigh Brilliant

All quotes are from:

<http://www.richmond.k12.va.us/readamillion/readingquotes.htm>

Members of the Educational Resource Services and the Review Crew know that the children of Hurricane Katrina need some order in their universe. Because school libraries are competing with many other needs for funding to restore their collections we have chosen to set aside some of the books that would usually go to our school libraries or the Classroom Library at ERS to a school in need.

Details:-----



Middle Readers, continued from p. 3

Curriculum: Royalty; Elizabethan England

Elizabeth offers a readable overview of the little princess who survived imprisonment, religious turmoil, threats from Spain, and other challenges. It includes fabulous photos and a timeline running along all bottom edges, enabling readers to clearly follow her life and reign. A great next step for elementary school princess lovers.



Reviewed by: Beth Kenny
Career Education Center

Want more?

To read longer reviews of these books and hundreds of others:

- ◆ Go to LION, our online library catalog, at <http://lion.dpsk12.org>
- ◆ Click on "ERS Home" on the menu at the left side of the screen.
- ◆ Under "Browse Catalogs & Databases" click on "DPS Review Database."
- ◆ Under "Link to Review Database," click on "Review Database."
- ◆ Ignore the member log-in boxes. Click on "Advanced Search"
- ◆ You can search for words in the title, author, curriculum connections, and more. (To see your choices, click on the blue down arrow at the end of the box that says "Title." Use as few as one search criterion or as many as four, one in each box.
- ◆ Once you have a list of titles, click on a title to see a full review.

Reviews from other sources such as School Library Journal and Horn Book are now available through LION, our online library catalog. Check it out!

- ◆ Go to LION (see above)
- ◆ Search for a book by title, subject, or however you want.
- ◆ When you get to the book records, if there is a dark blue button called "More About This Book", click on it.

To learn more about the other great new features of your library catalog, ask your librarian!