



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 7
March 2010

Fiction

Creamed Tuna Fish & Peas on Toast

Written and Illus. by: Philip Christian Stead
Roaring Book Press, 2009
ISBN: 9781596434011

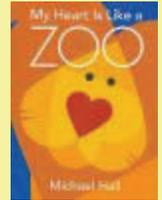


Curriculum: Easy Reader
What happens when Mama Jane serves Wild Man Jack his least favorite dish? Wild Man Jack's children approach him one by one, asking what he'll do if Mama Jane makes it, and he vows to "wheeze," "sneeze" and even "brandish a spoon." Wild Man Jack is a Woody Guthrie type of character who brings to life early 20th century American language. Children will love his outbursts as adults' misbehaving in picture books is rare. One of the most enjoyable aspects is the old newspaper clippings, music scores and letters hiding behind layers of paint and ink drawings.

Reviewed by: Dana Clark
Greenwood Elementary

My Heart Is Like a Zoo

Written and illus. by: Michael Hall
Greenwillow Books, 2010
ISBN: 9780061915109



Curriculum: Zoos; Zoo Animals; Hearts; Sto-

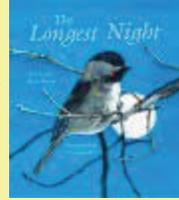
ries in Rhyme

Bright bold colors, done strictly in heart shapes, accompany great descriptive words of the animals in a zoo. This story is done in rhyme and shows a silly seal, rugged moose, a bothered bull, and many more.

Reviewed by: Leah Rounds
Alumni

The Longest Night

Written and Illustrated by Marion Dane Bauer
Holiday House, 2009
ISBN: 9780823420544

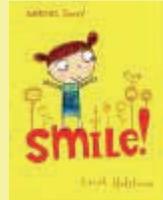


Curriculum: Night; Birds; Animals; Winds
"The snow lies deep. The night is long and long. The stars are ice, the moon is frost, and all the world is still." Crow, moose, and fox try to bring back the sun but the wind whispers they cannot. That power belongs to little chickadee and her song. This beautiful indigo-hued portrait of winter and the promise of spring will be a welcome addition to any elementary collection.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose
Trevista ECE-8

Smile!

Written and illus. by: Leigh Hodgkinson
Harper Collins Children's,



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.)

2009

ISBN: 9780061852695

Curriculum: Easy Reader, Character Development

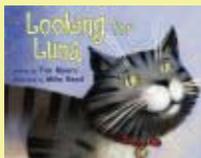
Sunny is a little girl who, "is DEFINITELY NOT sulking" because she is not allowed to have any more cookies before dinner. It really isn't the absence of cookies that is bothering her; it is the loss of her usually permanent smile that is truly troubling. She, very logically, looks for her smile everywhere: under the couch, in the dog's bed and in her bedroom. She even explores the possibility that someone *stole* her smile.

Reviewed by: Dana Clark
Greenwood Elem.

Looking For Luna

By: Tim Myers

Illustrated by: Mike Reed



Marshall Cavendish, 2009

ISBN: 9780761455646

Curriculum: Cats; Stories in rhyme

While searching for her missing cat, a girl and her dad encounter plenty of other cats doing what they like to do - running, catching mice, climbing trees and more. When they finally find their fog-gray cat, Luna, they know well that this search will probably happen again tomorrow. This colorful, pleasant journey is one that readers will also want to take again and again.

Reviewed by: Karyn Pocernich
Ford Elem.

The Best Family in the World

By: Susana Lopez

Illus. by: Ulises Wensell
Kane Miller, 2010

ISBN: 9781935279471



Curriculum: Adoption; Family life

When Carlota finds out she will be adopted, she closes her eyes and wishes for "the best family in the world," and imagines they are very exotic; pirates or tiger trainers. When the Perez family arrives, Carlota finds out they are quite common, but that she does have "the best family in the world." Simple illustrations emphasize the ordinariness of the family, but warm loving expressions emphasize that Carlota is in the best of hands.

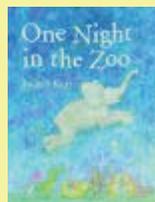
Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elem.

One Night in the Zoo

Written and illus. by:
Judith Kerr

Kane Miller, 2010

ISBN: 1935279372



Curriculum: Zoo animals; Counting; Playful activities

No one but the animals and readers will ever know what goes on at the zoo when the moon is shining brightly. "One magical, moonlit night in the zoo...an elephant jumped in the air and flew! But nobody knew." So begins an extraordinary night when a kangaroo and a crocodile share a bicycle made for two; four bears cook a squid and squidgeberry stew; six rabbits climb onto the back and head of a giraffe for a better view; eight monkeys glue feathers back onto a cockatoo; and ten roosters crow to warn of the approaching zoo keeper. What fun all the animals have and no one can figure out why they look and act tired!

Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Alumni

Eukee The Jumpy Jumpy Elephant



By: Clifford L. Corman, M.D.

Illus. by: Richard A DiMatteo

Speciality Press, 2009

ISBN:9781886941755

Curriculum: Elephants; Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder; School

Eukee was very smart, but he found it hard to sit still. He learned to count, to read, and to write. He got in trouble a lot. He became distracted and followed a butterfly; he blew Mrs. Ostrich's feathers. Eukee continued to try very hard, but still he was easily distracted. If there is a hyperactive child in the class, this is a good read-aloud to remind everyone that these types of activity are not done on purpose to annoy others!

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill Elem.

Nonfiction

The More We Are Together

By: Scholastic
Children's Press,
2010

ISBN: 9780531245477

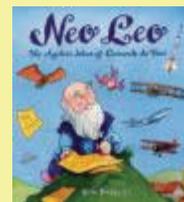
Curriculum: Easy Reader, Sing-a-long songs

This board book is cute and full of excitement. It is designed for toddlers who are just beginning to find out about their world. Fun rhymes and lovely illustrations bring to life the familiar this familiar and classic song. Reviewed by: Dana Clark
Greenwood Elementary



Neo Leo

Written and Illus. by:
Gene Barretta
Henry Holt and Co.,
2009



ISBN: 9780805087031

Curriculum: Science, Inventions

This is a lively introduction to the visionary ideas of Leonardo da Vinci. Leonardo's original sketches are shown on one side of the spread while modern re-creations occupy the other side. The author attempts successfully to break down his massive body of work into small informational chunks which work well for young children.

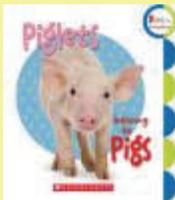
Reviewed by: Dana Clark
Greenwood Elementary

Piglets Belong to Pigs

By: Scholastic, Inc.

Children's Press, 2010

ISBN: 0531244083



Curriculum: Farm Animals; Animals

Farm animals and their babies are highlighted in this adorably photographed book. The book walks through a variety of farm animals and telling what their babies are called; a kid belongs to a goat, a foal belongs to a horse, a piglet belongs to a pig, and they all belong to a farm.

Reviewed by: Leah Rounds
Alumni

Inside-Outside Dinosaurs

Written and illus.

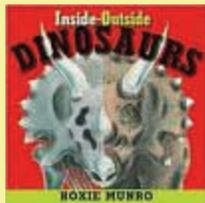
by: Roxie Munro

Marshall Cavendish Children,
2009

ISBN: 9780761456247

Curriculum: Dinosaurs, Science, and Pre-historic life

The illustrations in this book are bold, simple and utterly stunning. They fill up the whole page. There are eight different types of dinosaurs covered in this non-fiction



book, one or two which can be classified as a carnivore, omnivore or flying reptile. The only words on any page are the scientific name of the dinosaur and its nickname. Other than these two pieces of information, there is a full spread of the dinosaur's skeleton, followed by a scene of the dinosaur in its natural setting.

Reviewed by: Dana Clark
Greenwood Elem.

Spanish!

El verano (Summer)

By: Siân Smith

Heinemann, 2009

ISBN: 9781432935276

Curriculum: Seasons; Summer

This series introduces basic vocabulary and information about the four seasons and their sequence, following a pattern of presentation that is repeated in each book. The focus of this easy-chapter book is summer. It presents what can be typically observed about its warm climate, with people wearing light clothing, hats and sun screen, enjoying ice cream and going to the park and the beach, and seeing an abundance of fruits and bees.

Gorgeous photographs complement the simple and repetitive Spanish text in this attractive book. A note for parents and teachers is included with related activities as reinforcement to the material presented.

Reviewed by: Ethel Hammerly
Spanish reviewer



Despacio (Slow)

By: Sarah Shannon

Heinemann, 2009

ISBN:

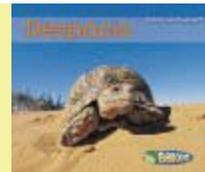
9781432935450

Curriculum: Motion; Force and energy

The focus of this series is to introduce basic vocabulary and concepts related to movement of objects in general. In this easy-chapter book, attention is directed to observing slow-moving turtles, camels, snails and other, establishing a contrast with faster moving vehicles, and noting that some activities such as running or playing in a swing start to slow down before stopping.

Simple Spanish text uses repetitive sentences, supported with colorful ethnically diverse photographs. A summary page reviews the concepts presented. To reinforce learning, a note for parents and teachers is included with related activities. This appealing book develops awareness about youngsters' surroundings in their every day activities.

Reviewed by: Ethel Hammerly
Spanish reviewer



*Reading makes
Immigrants of us all.
It takes us away
from home, but
more important, it
finds homes for us
everywhere.”
Jean Rhys*

The Best for Upper Elementary Readers! Many of these books will work in middle school, too!

Fiction

Wild Times at the Bed and Biscuit

By: Joan Carris

Illus. by: Noah Jones

Candlewick Press, 2009

ISBN: 9780763637057

Curriculum: Pets; Wild animals; Families

Grampa runs a boardinghouse for pets. Well, usually he runs a boardinghouse for pets but suddenly he is taking boarders from the Wildlife Shelter while it gets a make-over. So on this day a goose with an arrow through its neck, two young fox kits that lost their mother and a muskrat with an infected foot come to stay. Ernest, the mini-pig has his hands full trying to make sure the Bed and Biscuit runs smoothly.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble

Kepner M.S.



Peter Peter Picks a Pumpkin House

By: Christine Graham

Illus. by: Susan Boase

Henry Holt, 2009

ISBN: 9780805087062

Curriculum: Nursery rhymes; Fairytales

Did you ever wonder where Peter Peter found a pumpkin big enough to live in? Well, Peter Peter and his wife Wanda raised pumpkins. One year the rain comes and so does Wanda's father. He is upset because the roof leaks and he thinks Wanda will get



sick. So Peter Peter sets off to sell the goat so he can buy the material to fix the roof. On the way he meets a peddler who has a bag of treasure that he is willing to trade for the goat. The treasure turns out to be pumpkin seeds. Does this sound familiar?

Reviewed by: Chris Coble

Kepner M.S.

Nonfiction

First Pooch: The Obama's Pick a Pet

By: Carole Weatherford

Illus. by: Amy Bates

Marshall Cavendish, 2009

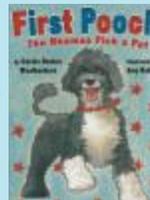
ISBN: 9780761456360

Curriculum: Obama's; Dogs; White House

Candidates for president make a lot of promises during their campaigns. Coolidge promised a chicken in every pot and Kennedy promised a man on the moon and Obama promised his daughters a dog. So when Obama became president the search for the perfect dog began. The dog couldn't make Malia sneeze and it couldn't be a "yappy" dog or a "girly" dog. And the perfect dog turned out to be a Portuguese water dog and his name is Bo.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble

Kepner M.S.

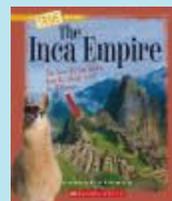


The Inca Empire

By: Sandra Newman

Children's Press, 2010

ISBN: 9780531252284



Curriculum: Incas; Peru; Machu Picchu; Francisco Pizarro; Cusco

The great but brief history of the Inca Empire is discussed in this *A True Book* series title. Highlighted are Machu Picchu, several Inca emperors, and Pizarro's conquest. This title begins with a quiz prompting readers to discover which question is true and which is false. Appropriate illustrations and photos have their own explanative text. For more information additional sources are suggested. An extensive index with bolded page numbers for illustrations completes this book. For introductory research of or interest in the Inca civilization this title will fill the need.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas

JFK H.S.

You Wouldn't Want to Explore with Marco Polo: a really long trip you'd rather not take

By: Jacqueline Morley

Illustrated by: David

Antram

Scholastic Books, 2009

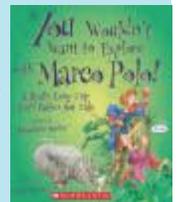
139780531213278

Curriculum: Geography, Travel, History

"It's 1269 and you are a servant for the Polo family." The reader gets the opportunity to meet bandits, south of Kerman; the Pope; visit the Himalayas, Persia and the Great Desert of Lop. The reader stays with Marco throughout each trip, going through culture shock with him; trading and bartering; running scared from tribes and eventually, going to prison as well. Reviewed by:

Dana Clark

Greenwood Elem



Amazing Armor

By: Kimberley Jane Pryor

Marshall Cavendish, 2010

ISBN: 9780761444244

Curriculum: Body covering; Animal defense

From vipers to warthogs and sea urchins, bright colorful photographs depict 27 rather scary looking animals decked out in their amazing protective armor. A page is dedicated to each creature, with an information box giving general facts and a brief discussion of how the animal uses its protective covering as prey and predator.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elem.



How Big is Your Energy Footprint?

By: Paul Mason

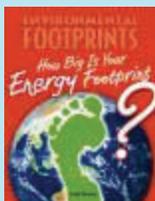
Marshall Cavendish, 2010

ISBN: 9780761444114

Curriculum: Renewable energy sources; Energy development; Power resources

Everything we do and everything we use has an impact on the environment. Heavy footprints harm the environment and use lots of natural resources. Light footprints harm the environment as little as possible and use fewer natural resources. How big is your energy footprint?

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill Elem.



Middle School Reader Gold Mine

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

Fiction

The Midnight Charter

By: David Whitley

Roaring Book Press, 2009

ISBN: 9781596433816

Curriculum: Adventure; Astronomy; Deceit; Friendships

The society that Mark and Lily live in is driven by the buying and selling of everything, including children. Mark had the plague and his father sold him to the local doctor. Mark survives and becomes apprenticed to the Astronomer. He is said to be a prodigy, but finds out too late, that he is part of a plot. Lily goes to the city to start an alms house to help the poor. This is against what the society believes in and she must fight every day to keep going. The two find their fates intertwined by the Midnight Charter, a mysterious organization with great power. Will they figure out the puzzle in time?

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy



Troubadour

By: Mary Hoffman

Bloomsbury, 2009

ISBN: 9781599903675

Curriculum: War; Religious Freedom; Love; Survival

In the land of the Occitania, South of



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From ERS:

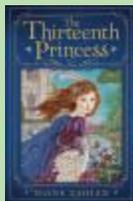
Dave Sanger
Karen Shannon
Antonio Nicotera

France, there is trouble brewing. A series of events takes place that sends the land into war. Elinor, a young noblewoman, disguises herself as a boy and runs away to join a troupe of "joglers." Her father insists she marry a man old enough to be her grandfather. The joglers are bands of troubadours that travel freely throughout the land. They also pass information and news. As they all get caught in the brutality of war, love and survival become the most important thing. We follow Elinor throughout her travels as she finds support and friendship which helps her survive.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy

The Thirteenth Princess

By: Diane Zahler
HarperCollins, 2010
ISBN: 0061824982



Curriculum: Fairy tales; Sisters; Magic

It is an unforgettable story filled with new enchantments: an invisible cottage in the woods belonging to a good witch; a magical castle complete with made-to-order princes; eventual true love for all involved; twelve spellbound princesses in danger of dancing to death; and a young girl determined to save everyone. A wicked enchantress, who is also insanely jealous, casts a spell on the queen so she will bear only daughters. The king only wants sons and when the thirteenth daughter is born, she is banished to the kitchens to become a servant. When Zita is seven, she learns of her royal birth and begins to communicate with her sisters in secret.

Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Alumni

Nonfiction

First Humans

By: Rebecca Stefoff
Marshall Cavendish, 2010
ISBN: 9780761441847



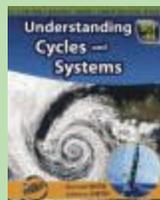
Curriculum: Anthropology; Fossils; Human origins; Louis and Mary Leakey

From the Leakey's discovery of Nutcracker Man to Darwin to the Piltdown man hoax to Peking Man, Stefoff examines these anthropological finds and their importance to human origins. While the information and artifacts are far from definitive regarding how humans evolved, this title provides a comprehensive discussion of the known facts to date. Middle school and older students will find this title useful for research. Additional source suggestions are plentiful. This is an excellent book containing interesting photographs and illustrations and great information.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.

Understanding Cycles and Systems

By: Andrew Solway
Raintree, 2010
ISBN: 9781410933485



Curriculum: Biogeochemical systems-water cycle, carbon cycle, oxygen cycle, nitrogen cycle, rock cycle; Energy balance; Food webs

The intricate network of dynamic systems and cycles that sustain life on our planet is the subject of this exciting offering from Raintree's *Sci-Hi* series. Readers are drawn to explore a wealth of fascinating information and inquiry through a colorful, exciting layout, activities, and websites.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose
Trevista ECE-8

Peaceful Heroes

By: Jonah Winter
Illustrated by: Sean Addy
Arthur A. Levine Books, 2010



ISBN: 9780439623070
Curriculum: Heroes; Peace history

In today's often violent world, "we need a set of heroes who do not hurt people." They can be found all around us - firefighters, political or religious leaders, or just ordinary people. Winter and Addy present fourteen peaceful heroes through a powerful combination of text and distinctive illustrations. Readers will undoubtedly be touched by the stories of these people who impacted so many lives and continue to do so every day.

Reviewed by: Karyn Pocernich
Ford Elem.

Climate Systems: Interactive Forces of Global Warming

By: Julie Kerr Casper, Ph.D.



Facts on File, 2009
ISBN: 9780816072606

Curriculum: Earth Science; Climatology; Global Warming

"We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors-we borrow it from our children".

If all of us would read this book and internalize the data and extraordinary information given in the book, maybe we could stop global warming. The book describes the most critical issues concerning this timely subject. The author focuses on the scientific framework of Earth's complicated climate systems.

The colorful pictures, diagrams, and maps enhance our understanding of the important and urgent topic of global warming.

Reviewed by: Dr. Carmen H. Sanjurjo
Alumni

Elizabethan England

By: Kathy Elgin

Bailey Publishing Associates, 2009

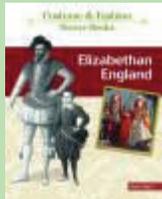
ISBN:
9781604133790

Curriculum: Clothing and Dress; 16th Century British History; Drama

With beautiful illustrations and pictures, the book takes us back to the Elizabethan World. It explores fascinating clothing worn by everyone, from royalty to peasants, during that historical period. This is a great resource for History and Drama teachers. Students will also be fascinated with the beautiful pageantry of clothing examples.

Reviewed by: Dr. Carmen H.

Sanjurjo
Alumni



**Young
Adults
Deserve
the Best!**

Fiction

Lockdown

By: Walter Dean Myers
HarperTeen/Amistad, 2010
ISBN: 9780061214806

Curriculum: Juvenile delinquents; Detention centers; Friendship

Reese lives in Progress, a juvenile detention center, after a drug deal turns sour. Regardless of the center's name, progress is difficult to achieve when you have more to look out for than yourself. Captivating from the start, *Lockdown* demonstrates that criminals aren't always as they appear. Racism, lack of parental and educational support, and little knowledge of options available, young urban men suffer from a broken system. Another Walter Dean Myers book which won't stay on the library shelf for long.

Reviewed by: Cheri Hilton
South HS



Anastasia's Secret

By: Susanne Dunlap
Bloomsbury, 2010
ISBN: 9781599904207

Curriculum: Russian history; Historical fiction; Tsar; Romanov

It is 1918 and the Russian Revolution is gaining momentum. Anastasia Romanova, the Tsar's youngest daughter, befriends a young guard, Sasha, at the palace. He exposes Anastasia to the humble living conditions of Russians who do not have the same privileges as she. As Anastasia's relationship grows with Sasha, the revolution begins to adversely affect the Romanov family. First they are held prisoners in their palace and then they are moved to Siberia and finally transported to their final destination where they are executed. Sasha's and Anastasia's paths keep crossing at the family is moved to different locations.

Reviewed by: Dr. Lynne Lopez-Crowley
MSLA



Split

By: Stefan Petrucha
Walker Books for Young, 2010
ISBN: 9780802793720

Curriculum: Consciousness; Choices

Wade's mother died when he was fifteen. Wade has always wanted to be an excellent student and yet he wants to be a composer and play music. Instead of blending the two, his consciousness incorporates both desires by splitting into two separate lives. Narrating these two lives in alternating chapters, Wade is a musician playing in a dive called The Rat and lives on the edge while his alternate is a good student working all night on a computer code that will help save the world. These worlds start to mingle with each other causing both Wades to seek balance and control in their lives.

Reviewed by: Dr. Lynne Lopez-Crowley
MSLA



Nonfiction

She's All That

By: Megan E Bryant
Scholastic, 2010
ISBN: 9781606310274

Curriculum: Mythology; Goddesses

Mythology has a new face! A fresh level of understanding of the mythological goddesses is to be had through a series of tongue and cheek vignettes, iconic family, friend and foe guides as well as top ten things one should know about each goddess. Fun, modern and easy to read, this is sure to liven up the standard mythology lesson.

Reviewed by: Cheri Hilton
South HS

