

The Review Crew



What's New and Great for Our Youngest Readers?

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

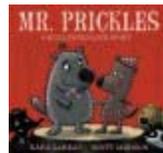
Volume 8 Number 9

May 2012

Fiction

Mr. Prickles: a quill-fated love story

By: Kara LaReau
Illus by: Scott Magoon
Roaring Brook Press, 2012
ISBN: 9781596434837



Curriculum: Friendship; Porcupines; Love; Forest animals

Mr. Prickles is a porcupine with a problem. He has tried to fit in with the other animals of the forest but it has not worked. His quills always got in the way. Finally Mr. Prickles stops trying to play with the other animals and he begins to get angry. His anger turns to grumpiness. "Each night, as the other animals frolicked in the forest, Mr. Prickles watched them from his stump with very prickly regard." One day Mr. Prickles met Miss Pointypants, another porcupine. They became best friends and fall in love and again Mr. Prickles becomes happy.

Reviewed by: Dr. Lynne Lopez-Crowley
MSLA

Isabella's Garden

By: Glenda Millard
Illus. by: Rebecca Cool
Candlewick Press, 2012
ISBN: 9780763660161



Curriculum: Biology; Life cycles; Gardens

Starting with simple seeds, this cumulative verse cycles through the year to flowers blooming under the boughs of an apple tree that shelters a red-breasted fledgling, through Jack Frost's "mantle of sequins and shimmer," back to spring. Children with Picasso-esque faces watch the reader as they plant, frolic in the rain, fly kites, or stand against the autumn wind. A visual and lyrical treasure.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose
Trevista ECE-8

A Nest in Springtime

Written and illus. by: Belle Yang
Candlewick Press, 2012
ISBN: 9780763652791



Curriculum: Spring; Mandarin Chinese; Counting

Geese build their nest and lay their eggs in Springtime; how many eggs will there be? This bilingual board book in English and Mandarin Chinese help young reader learn to count to ten.

Reviewed by: Leah Rounds
Alumni

Vote for ME!

Written and illus. by: Ben Clanton
Kids Can Press, 2012
ISBN: 9781554538225



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 ETLIS, where DPS teachers can order baskets of books for their classrooms. (Call 720-423-8131 to order.)

Curriculum: Voting; Elections

A typical election filled with name calling, mud-slinging, and false promises has an unusual ending as neither candidate wins. Elephant and Donkey do all the things they think they are **supposed** to do in a campaign and find that they would rather just be friends. Terrific illustrations and color usage add greatly to the appeal and fun of this timely book.

Reviewed by: Karyn Pocernich
CMS Community School

And Then It's Spring

By: Julie Fogliano
Illus. by: Erin E. Stead
Roaring Brook Press,
2012
ISBN:
9781596436244



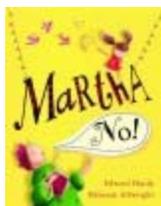
Curriculum: Spring; Gardens

The often painfully slow approach of spring is effectively presented through a young boy and the wait for his garden to grow. After planting seeds in the garden, he patiently watches for the fruits of his labor to burst through the once brown ground. Readers will be able to almost **feel** how slow this process can be, but will be rewarded for their perseverance, as is the boy. In the end comes the arrival of spring, "green all around," and life beginning anew.

Reviewed by: Karyn Pocernich
CMS Community School

Martha, No!

By: Edward Hardy
Illus. by: Deborah Allwright
Egmont USA, 2012
ISBN:
9781606842669



Curriculum: Nannies; Behavior; Sto-

ries in rhyme

Rhyming text recounts a day out for Martha Felicity Molly-Anne May and her new nanny Miss Harrington-Chive. Martha has a knack for getting into trouble, and Miss Chive has a knack for saying "Be careful, dear". Martha manages to scare off another nanny prompting her mother to say "No more nannies!" - clever little Martha's plan from the beginning.

Reviewed by: Dr. Janice Pacheco
Skinner MS

Nonfiction

Step Gently Out

By: Helen Frost
Photographed by: Rick Lieder
Candlewick Press, 2012
ISBN: 9780763656010



Curriculum: Insects; Nature; Poetry; Picture books for children

Exquisite photographs accompany each line of a poem inviting children to look closely at the wonders of nature by examining our tiniest neighbors the insects. Each line is paired expertly with a close up of an insect. The gentle lyrics and softly blurred backgrounds of the photographs heighten the sense of wonder. The title and opening line, "step gently out," reminds children to slow down and observe the world around them. They will be amazed at what there is to see.

Reviewed by: Michelle Jensen
TJ H.S.



Twice as Good: The Story of William Powell and Clearview, the Only Golf Course Designed, Built, and Owned by an African American

By: Richard Michelson
Illus. by: Eric Velasquez
Sleeping Bear Press;
2012
ISBN:
9781585364664



Curriculum: African Americans biography; Discrimination in sports

As the only African American student in his high school, William Powell's principal told him, "If you are going to get ahead in this world, Willie, you can't be as good as white children; you have to be twice as good." Willie took this to heart, becoming a splendid golfer and created the first golf course that welcomed players of any color.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Edison Elem.



The Best for Upper Elementary Readers!

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

Fiction



The Trap

By: Michael Grant
Katherine Tegen
Books, 2011
ISBN:
9780061833687

Curriculum: Fantasy; Friendship; Adventure

In thirty-five days the pale queen's banishment ends. Mack must find the ten remaining members of the Magnificent 12 before this happens. Mack is joined by another member of the Magnificent twelve Jarrah and a former tormentor of Mack's, Stefan. Together they overcome obstacles and numerous attempts on their lives to find the third and fourth member of the Magnificent 12, Xiao and Dietmar.

Reviewed by: Dr. Lynne Lopez-Crowley
MSLA

Emma on Thin Icing

By: Coco Simon
Simon Spotlight, 2011
ISBN:
9781442422797



Curriculum: Friendship; Clubs; Earning money

Emma is trying to be independent and not ask her parents for extra money. She knows that since her mother lost her job at the library things have been extra tough. She and her older brother are in charge of taking care of their little brother. Emma is also walking dogs and baking cupcakes for the Cupcake Club to sell. When Mia asks the girls to be in her mother's wedding and the dress costs too much for

Emma to afford, instead of asking for help she tries to solve all of her problems herself and some of her responsibilities get neglected in the process. This is the third book in the *Cupcake Diaries* series.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner M.S.

Nonfiction

Write On, Mercy! : The Secret Life of Mercy Otis Warren



By: Gretchen
Woelfle

Illus. by: Alexandra Wallner
Calkins Creek, 2012

ISBN: 9781590788226

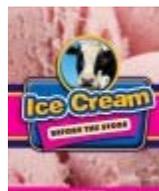
Curriculum: Warren, Mercy Otis, 1728-1814; Historians; Women biography; United States History Revolution, 1775-1783

Though she did so anonymously, Mercy Otis penned political plays and poems supporting the early patriots and wrote a three volume history of the American Revolution. This fascinating history provides readers with an overview of this influential woman's private life and contributions to the cause of American independence.

Reviewed by: Cat DeRose
Trevista ECE-8

Ice Cream: Before the Store

By: Jan Bernard
The Child's World,
2012



ISBN:

9781609736774

Curriculum: Ice cream; Dairy farming; Food processing; Nutrition

One in a series, *Before the Store*, this book follows the process of ice cream making from dairy farm to store. It has good, in-depth, and detailed information with relevant vocabulary and supporting photographs.

Reviewed by: Leah Rounds

Alumni

Seeing Symmetry

Written and illus. by:
Loren Leedy

Holiday House, 2012

ISBN: 9780823423606

Curriculum: Symmetry; Art techniques; Balance

It's in nature and man-made things. It helps create balance in design, beauty and science. It is a standard and essential building block for mathematics. It is symmetry. This clearly written, colorfully illustrated and concisely diagrammed book could serve as an art or unit text, just as easily as a nifty non-fiction reference in elementary and/or intermediate library collections. Cross-referenced notes and glossary provide any and all essential elements needed for word walls, bulletin boards and activity centers in model classrooms.

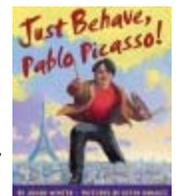
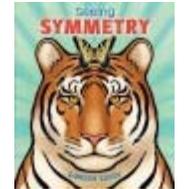
Reviewed by: Cheryl Joseffy
Henry World School

Just Behave, Pablo Picasso!

By: Jonah Winter
Arthur A. Levine Books,
2012

ISBN: 9780545132916

Curriculum: Pablo Picasso; artists; cubism; risk takers



Pablo Picasso was a starving artist for years until his "rose period" which produced beautiful realist paintings. Gaining instant fame the public encouraged him to do more of the same. However, Picasso was too creative to ever dream of being repetitive. After visiting a Parisian art show featuring African masks, Picasso is ecstatic as he bravely risks his career introducing the world to a new form of art called Cubism.

Reviewed by: Cheri Hilton
South H.S.



Middle School Reader Gold Mine

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

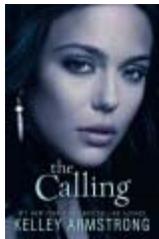
Fiction

The Calling

By: Kelley Armstrong
Harper Collins, 2012
ISBN: 9780061797057

Curriculum: *Fantasy;*
Skin walkers; Relation-
ships; Survival

In the second book of *The Darkness Rising* series finds Maya and her friends fleeing from a forest fire. They are rescued by a helicopter that crashes in the Vancouver Island



Wilderness. The friends find out they are being hunted because of what they are becoming. Trying to survive in the wilderness, and knowing who to trust become an issue. Maya must accept that she has the power to shape shift into a cougar and the others are discovering their special powers. This is full of action and adventure which leaves the reader waiting for the third and final book.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy

The Traitor in the Tunnel

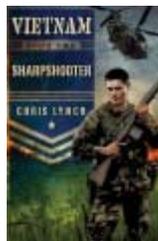
By: Y.S. Lee
Candlewick Press, 2012
ISBN: 9780763653163
Curriculum: *Mystery;*
Detectives; Victorian
England; Theft; Murder

Former orphan and now trusted female detective Mary Quinn, has a new and intriguing case to solve. Set in Victorian England, Mary is sent to work undercover as a domestic in Buckingham Palace. The queen has discovered some petty theft and she wants that person caught. Then things get complicated when the Prince is witness to a murder and scandal can hurt the royal family. Mary is also reunited with James, who is trying to solve his own mystery. This is the third in the series and is an enjoyable mystery story.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy

Sharpshooter

By: Chris Lynch
Scholastic Press, 2012
ISBN: 9780545270267
Curriculum: *Vietnam*
War, 1961-1975; Sol-



diers; Best friends

Ivan and his three friends all enlist for the Vietnam War when one of them gets drafted. Because he has grown up on his father's WWII stories, Ivan is the only one who really wants to be a soldier and looks forward to war. After he becomes a trained sniper, he begins to see things differently and to question his beliefs about himself and his country. Realistic fiction.

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

Freaky Fast Frankie Joe

By: Lutricia Clifton
Holiday House, 2012
ISBN:
9780823423675

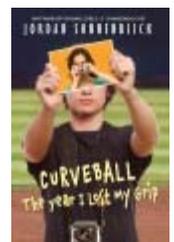
Curriculum: *Stepfami-*
lies; Entrepreneur

Frankie Joe loves living in the Lone Star Trailer Park in Laredo Texas. His best friends are there, an odd collection of senior citizens. But now his flighty mom is going to jail and he is going as far north as you can get and still be in the United States to live with a father he has never met, his wife and four sons; four legitimate sons that is. Frankie Joe is never going to like it here and he is never going to fit in so he starts planning his escape back to Laredo and the Lone Star Trailer Park.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner M.S.

Curveball the Year I Lost My Grip

By: Jordan Sonnenblick
Scholastic, 2012
ISBN: 978054320696
Curriculum: *School;*
Photography; Alzhei-



mer's disease

Pete and his best friend and pitching partner, AJ, have been looking forward to taking the high school baseball team by storm. But the pain in Pete's elbow, the pain he has carefully kept hidden from everyone, suddenly changes his life forever. His pitching arm is gone and now he needs to figure out who he really is and how he is going to get through high school. To complicate matters, his Grampa has been acting strange and telling him not to tell anyone else. What secrets can a person keep and what secrets need to be told and how do you tell the difference?

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner M.S.

Nonfiction

Charles Dickens:
England's Most
Capitvating Story-
teller

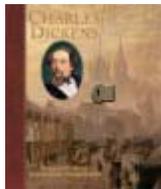
By: Catherine Wells

Candlewick Press,
2011

ISBN: 9780763655679

Curriculum: Charles Dickens; Classic Literature

Charles Dickens gained his literary inspiration focusing on the lives of Londoners in the early-mid 1800s and his own life as he began working at the age of 12. Since he understood the strife of the working class he wrote about ragged schools, industry, workhouses and orphanages. Featuring thirteen works of Dickens, and the aspects of life that were the foundations for each plot, this is an engaging read for those that enjoy his clas-



sics.

Reviewed by: Cheri Hilton
South H.S.



Young Adults Deserve the Best!

Fiction

Pandemonium

By: Lauren Oliver

Harper, 2012

ISBN: 9780061978067

Curriculum: Dystopian literature; Survival; Governmental control; Love

Having escaped before her mandated government cure for *amor deliria nervosa* at the end of *Delirium*, we start this sequel with Lena arriving in the Wilds, near death, presuming her boyfriend, Alex is dead. Slowly, with the help of an Invalid settlement, she recovers physically. Slower is her emotional recovery. Alternating chapters note the Invalid movement's



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From ETLs:

Dave Sanger
Karen Shannon
Antonio Nicotera

efforts against the DFA (Deliria-Free America) and their survival. Riveting twists and turns find Lena dangerously involved in the resistance while learning to trust and love in the most unlikely of circumstances. The cliff-hanger ending promises an exciting 3rd book.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.

Ripper

By: **Stefan Petrucha**

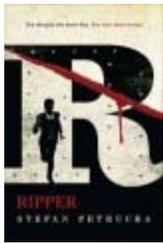
Flux, 2012

ISBN:
9780399255243

Curriculum: Jack the Ripper; New York; Detectives; Orphans; Pinkerton's

It's the late 1800s and Jack the Ripper is now in New York. When his orphanage moves, Carver is taken in by Mr. Hawkings, an enigmatic founder of New Pinkerton's detective agency. Carver uses this opportunity to search for his real father. Carver's and Ripper's stories quickly intertwine. Petrucha weaves in (mostly) accurate historic details and includes awesome characterization of Teddy Roosevelt before he was President. End notes discuss these accuracies as well as the liberties he has taken. The action, blood, plot twists, and short chapters will hold just about any HS or adult reader's attention.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.



Every Other Day

By: Jennifer Lynn Barnes

Egmont, 2012

ISBN: 9781606841693

Curriculum: Supernatural; Demonology; Identity

For the last four years, Kali D'Angelo has spent every other day killing dragons and other mythological beasts. On one of her normal days, she notices a lethal mark on the back of a girl at school, who will be consumed internally by a chupacabra unless Kali can help. Kali and her friends try to discover who is behind the plot to infect teenagers with viruses that will mutate them into supernatural creatures. Fans of science fiction and paranormal genres will enjoy this pairing and the subplots that pop up.

Reviewed by: Peggy Obert
Waller ECE-8



Divergent

By: Veronica Roth

Katherine Tegen Books, 2011

ISBN: 9780062024022

Curriculum: Dystopian societies; Social classes; Identity

Chicago has been divided into five regions where people exhibit a dominant trait, and all sixteen year olds, including Beatrice, must choose which to be. But she discovers she is really Divergent, an anomaly that threatens her carefully segmented society. Now she must determine who her friends are and how she can survive with her secret. Action, suspense, and romance carry the story forward quickly. Students who are fascinated by



alternative societies and their ramifications will definitely appreciate this book.

Reviewed by: Peggy Obert
Waller ECE-8

The Storyteller

By Antonia Michaels
Translated by Miriam Debbage

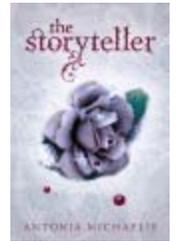
Amulet Books, 2012

ISBN:
9781419700477

Curriculum: Fairy Tales (mature); Emancipated teens; Stereotyping

Anna's curiosity is piqued when she finds a child's doll on the floor of the student lounge, only to discover that it belongs to the school's drug dealer. Determined to unlock Abel's mysterious solitary nature, Anna follows him and finds herself drawn into and consumed by Abel's commitment to protecting and raising his six year-old sister, Micha. The ongoing fairy tale that Abel relates to Micha about a little queen with a diamond heart, pursued by a sinister black ship bears uncanny metaphorical parallels to the reality in which Abel, Micha - and now, Anna reside.

Reviewed by: Cheryl Joseffy
Henry World School



Shadows on the Moon

By: Zoe Marriott
Candlewick, 2012

ISBN: 978-
0763653446

Curriculum: Fantasy; Magic; Asian fiction; Murder; Romance

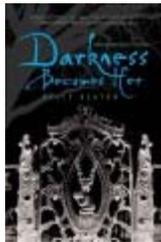


Sixteen-year-old Suzume's life changed completely the day her father and cousin were murdered by the Moon Prince's soldiers. With help from one of her father's servants, she learns to work the art of shadow-weaving. Soon, however, Susume must run for her life again. She reinvents herself three times, but each time Susume takes on a new name, she is still found by Otieno, her dark prince. This magical tale subtly weaves in aspects of Cinderella to create a compelling and gripping magical romance that will keep pages turning to the very end.

Reviewed by: Sudi Stodola
CEC Middle College

Darkness Becomes Her

By: Kelly Keaton
Simon Pulse, 2011
ISBN:
9781442409255



Curriculum: Paranormal romance; Dystopia; Fantasy; Mythology

After the hurricanes, New Orleans has become separate from the U.S. Purchased by nine resident families, New 2, as it is now called, has become a haven for supernatural beings as they attempt to rebuild. Ari's search for her mother has brought her here, where she will soon find that her family's curse has far more powerful origins than she ever dreamed. Now Ari must find the strength to defend her friends who have become the family she always wished for. This teen dystopia sprinkled with Greek myth

and paranormal romance will have readers begging for book two as well.

Reviewed by: Sudi Stodola
CEC Middle College

Anna Dressed in Blood

By: Kelly Keaton
Tor Teen 2011
ISBN: 978-0765328656



Curriculum: Paranormal romance; Horror; Ghosts; Haunted houses

Cas is a ghost-killer. He finds murderous ghosts and, using his father's magical athame, dispatches them into whatever realm they are destined to go. When he encounters the house in which Anna resides, however, Cas realizes that she is unlike any of the ghosts he has previously encountered. Cas finds himself doing many things he never had to do before, like trusting others and taking the time to learn the history of the ghost he has come to kill. Gory, spooky, and surprisingly sweet, this is a must-read for fans of the *Dresden Files*, *Demonata*, and *Escape From Furnace* series.

Reviewed by: Sudi Stodola
CEC Middle College

Nonfiction

Storming the Tulips

By: Ronald Sanders
Stonebrook Publishing, 2011
ISBN: 9780983080008



Curriculum: Holocaust; Jewish children; Personal narratives; Amsterdam; Netherlands

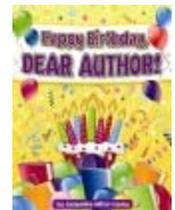
Storming the Tulips is a series of vignettes written by the students and teachers who attended the 1st Montessori School of Amsterdam at the time of the Nazi occupation. Many were classmates of Anne Frank. Some were Jews; others came from families of Nazi sympathizers. All of them struggled to survive the brutal conditions.

Reviewed by: Michelle Jensen
TJ H.S.

Professional

Happy Birthday Dear Author!

By: Jacqueline Witter-Easley
Upstart Books; 2012
ISBN:
9781602130579



Curriculum: Professional; Authors
The likes of Jack Prelutsky, Jan Brett, Mo Willems and Dav Pilkey are presented in this month-by-month celebration of children's book authors. There is an abundance of program ideas, open-ended activities, and fun-filled games for the classroom and/or the library.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Edison Elem.

Have a great summer!