

The Review Crew

Early Elementary Fiction

Wade's Wiggly Antlers

By: Louise Bradford
Illus. by: Christine Battuz
Kids Can Press, 2017
ISBN: 9781771386159

Topics: Anxiety; Moose

Wade is playing in the snow with his friends when he notices his antlers seem a little wobbly. His mother reminds him that she told him that these antlers would fall off and he'd grow new ones in the summer. Upset because he uses those antlers for ping-pong paddles, a catcher's mitt, and a host of other things, Wade forgoes playing with his friends until he just has to go sledding, and of course, the antlers fall off. He makes the best of it, though, and when his new antlers spring up, they are even bigger! A child's ambivalence about growing up is reflected here, with colorful patterned illustrations that pop. Useful for discussion about the changes we undergo.

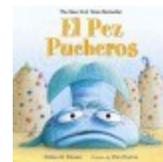
Reviewed by: Peggy Obert
Alumni

El Pez pucheros

By: Deborah Diesen
Illus. by: Dan Hanna
Farrar Straus Giroux, 2016
ISBN: 9780374305048

Topics: Read aloud; Verse translation

The first story in the Pout-Pout Fish series appears here in a Spanish verse translation by Teresa Mlawer. In any language El pez pucheros is determined to



live up to his name, despite insistent advice from neighbors and friends—a clam, a jellyfish, a shrimp, and an octopus. - Pout-Pout rejects advice from each in a recurring refrain ending in the delightful read-aloud words "blub, bluuuub, bluuuuub!" In the end, a glowing purple fish swims up and plants a juicy smack! on our hero's lips. Suddenly Pout-Pout finds himself by turns spellbound, surprised, calm, and convinced: he's not un pez pucheros, but a kiss-kiss fish with mon-tones de besos for everyone he meets. Hanna's zany illustrations add to the fun. Reviewed by: Nick Bleckley
Cheltenham Elem.

Good Night, Baby Animals

By: Karen B. Winnick
Illus. by: Laura Watkins
Henry Holt and Co., 2017
ISBN: 9780805098839

Topics: Animal babies; Tigers; Elephants; Giraffes; Rhinos; Pandas; Gorillas

Six baby animals have their own little story in this beautifully illustrated book. Readers see tiger cubs romp and play. We watch how the mother tiger cares for her cubs. Mother giraffe teaches her little one how to get the best leaves to eat. Each animal is shown in their natural habitat and we see how the mothers train their babies to survive. The animal behaviors are true, but shown in a story form that will draw even toddlers in. Towards the end of the book, the author takes a close up look at these animals and gives some additional facts. It would make a good read aloud, or used to introduce a unit on baby animals.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy



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

Volume 13 Number 9

May 2017

Who are we?

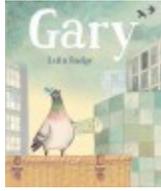
- ☺ We are DPS teacher librarians from elementary, middle and high school.
- ☺ We know DPS students and the DPS curriculum.

What we do!

- ☺ Every month each member writes reviews of at least twelve 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.)

Gary

Written and Illus. by:
Leila Rudge
Candlewick Press, 2016
ISBN:
9780763689544



Topics: Read aloud; Misfits; Homing pigeons

With his unrivaled scrapbook of travel mementos, at first Gary seemed a master homing pigeon. Like the other pigeons, he ate seeds, slept in a loft, and dreamed of adventure. On race days, however, the flightless Gary stayed home, waiting to hear and record others' exploits. One day, unfortunately, mishap found Gary dumped in the city with the other pigeons. As they flew off, he took comfort in his scrapbook--and soon realized he could plot a route home. Arriving just before supper, Gary returned a hero, a hero that other birds came to emulate. Why fly if you can take the A train? Witty mixed-media illustrations add to the fun.

Reviewed by: Nick Bleckley
Cheltenham Elem.

A Bike Like Sergio's

By: Maribeth Boelts
Illus. By: Noah Z.
Jones
Candlewick Press; 2016
ISBN: 9780763666491



Topics: Friendship; Honesty; Integrity

In this story, Ruben feels different than everyone else--especially Sergio, who like all his friends, has a really cool bike. Sergio says, "Just ask your parents for your birthday," but Ruben knows that's not something his parents will be able to afford. Ruben finds a dollar bill, which turns out to be a hundred dollar bill--enough to buy a bicycle, or anything else he wants. Will he make the right decision? A great book to teach honesty and integrity to children of primary

school ages. Also great to show that not all families have the same ability to spend money. Wonderful for any classroom or school library.
Reviewed by: Emily Rubin

Our Very Own Dog

By: Amanda McCardie
Illus. by: Salvatore
Rubbino
Candlewick Press, 2016
ISBN: 9780763689485
Topics: Dogs; Dog care



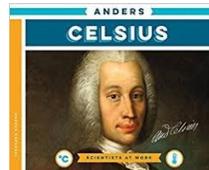
A four year old girl's tale of bringing home Sophie the dog as a family pet nicely frames information about how to successfully adopt an animal from the shelter yourself. Preparing your home for a pet, canine behavior, collars and tags, training, and much more are covered in an easy to read story. The joys and rewards of dog ownership ("She didn't like a bath herself, but liked to visit when we were in the tub."), as well as some of the hazards ("Hey! Those sausages were for us!") are presented. The story ends with the excitement of a pet show where Sophie wins first prize--for the friendliest dog. Rubbino's loose mixed media sketches are nicely integrated with the story, while rewarding careful study on their own.

Reviewed by: Nick Bleckley
Cheltenham Elem.

Early Elementary Nonfiction

Anders Celsius

By: A team of educators, Rebecca Felix, editor
Illus. by: various
photo credits
Abdo Publishing, 2017
ISBN: 9781680781533



Topics: Celsius; Temperature scales;

Astronomers; Mathematicians; Swedish scientists

While noting the importance of his temperature scale to the standardization of scientific measurement, this short biography also emphasizes the Swedish scientist's contributions to astronomy and geology. Two simple sentences on each of twenty-two pages tell the story of Celsius and his accomplished family of scientists and mathematicians. Anders Celsius himself travels widely, studies the Aurora Borealis and the shape of the earth, and founds a major observatory. Bold color and design combines with numerous photographs, sketches, and maps in a book that feels quite sophisticated, but remains easy to read and comprehend. Appropriate captions and a glossary create additional opportunities to learn.

This is one of six volumes in Abdo's Scientists at Work series.

Reviewed by: Nick Bleckley
Cheltenham Elem.

Upper Elementary Fiction

Uruguay

By: Emily Rose Oachs
Bellwether Media, 2017
ISBN: 9780531225684
Topics: South America; Uruguay; Countries



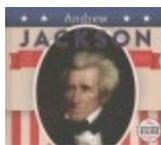
In this Blastoff! Reader Level 5 Bellwether text focusing on the country of Uruguay, the reader learns all about the teardrop shaped small country in South America. These level 5 texts are perfect for fluent readers, with more text and unknown topics, and varied writing styles. Through crisp photographs and easy to read text readers can learn about Uruguay, it's size, location, land and climate, wildlife, the people, daily life, holidays, culture, and fast facts to close it out. A great

middle grade nonfiction text and series to include in any classroom or school library, this text includes a glossary, maps, a language box, diagrams, fun fact boxes, index, headings, photographs, labels, bold words, additional information via books and updated websites, and a table of contents.

Reviewed by: Emily Rubin
Barnum Elem.

Andrew Jackson

By: Megan M.
Gunderson
ABDO, 2017



ISBN: 9781680781014

Topics: Presidents; Andrew Jackson;

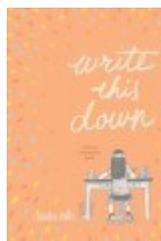
In this Big Buddy Book about Andrew Jackson, the reader learns about the seventh president. Through crisp photographs, illustrations, and informative text the reader is given an introduction on Jackson's childhood, military service, early career, and how he became interested in politics. Readers will learn that Jackson was the first president to come from a poor family, started his career in military before getting into law and politics, and how that military career helped him in his political goals. A great middle grade biography and series to include in any classroom or school library, this text includes a glossary, index, timeline, "Did you know?" boxes, captions, a table of contents, and bold words. At the end of the book are a few pages that do a great job of explaining the line of succession, benefits of being president, branches of government and other interesting information, in addition to the website link that is monitored by ABDO.

Reviewed by: Emily Rubin
Barnum Elem.

Middle School Fiction

Write This Down

By: Claudia Mills
Farrar Straus Giroux,
2016



ISBN: 9780374301644

Topics: Siblings; Authorship

Autumn's brother Hunter, once so nice and now so mean, makes fun of the love poems she wrote, so she wants to prove she can write. She tries *The New Yorker*, the middle school paper, and even submits a page of her novel to an agent, all to no avail. Meanwhile, she and her parents are trying to figure out what's going on with Hunter, who seems determined to destroy himself. Things come to a head after Hunter wrecks the family car and reveals the overheard comment that made him feel like a disappointment to his family. Relationships, the importance of hope, and imagination versus reality are woven together in a book featuring an endearing and introspective heroine.

Reviewed by: Peggy Obert
Alumni

Rebel Genius

By: Michael Dante DiMartino
Roaring Book Press, 2016
ISBN: 9781626723368



Topics: Fantasy; Magic; Artists; Adventure

In the world that Giacomo lives in, all art has been outlawed. There are some artists that still exist, but only in secret. All the artistic people have a "Genius" which is a bird like creature that helps them channel their art. Giacomo is an orphan and lives in the tunnels under the city. He has always liked to draw and keeps his sketch book hidden. He knows that anyone caught with a Genius is imprisoned, and often killed. The night that he discovers his Genius,

Review Crew Staff

Committee Chair:

Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy

Secretary:

Emily Rubin
Barnum Elem

Editor:

Chris Coble
CEC Early College

Reviewers:

Nick Bleckley
Cheltenham Elem.

Denise Cushing
Carson Elem.

Michelle Jensen
George Washington HS

Peggy Obert
Alumni

From ETLs:

Karen Shannon
Antonio Nicotera



the bird saves his life. As a result, a group of young artists were able to find him and take him to a secret place where other artists and their Geniuses work to perfect their craft and study sacred geometry. This type of art is powerful and can be used to make weapons. Giacomo works to control his abilities and learns how to turn his art into weapons, force fields and more. This makes him dangerous to the existing government and his life is at risk. This is an interesting, fast moving story with unique characters. The author is known for his Avatar series, *The Last Airbender* and others.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy

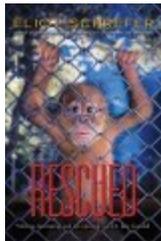
Rescued

By: Eliot Schrefer
Scholastic Press, 2016

ISBN:

9780545655033

Topics: Zoos, Animal Rights



Most folks think about having an exotic pet, but neglect to consider the consequences and repercussions involved in domesticating a wild animal. Author Eliot Schrefer examines this very scenario by introducing us to John's family, who has the distinction of raising Raja, an orangutan, as a family pet. This story grabs your attention very quickly with a disturbing incident that changes both John and Raja's lives. The third book in the Ape Quartet series, *Rescued* continues to examine the themes of animal rights and protection and human impact on the natural world. Readers will not put this book down until the very end.

Reviewed by: Denise Cushing
Carson Elem.



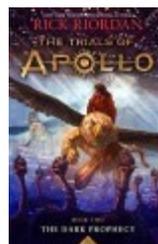
The Dark Prophecy

By: Rick Riordan
Hyperion, 2017
ISBN: 9781484746424

Topics: Apollo; Good vs. evil; Quest

Apollo is still in the mortal form of Lester Papadopoulos a heavy sixteen year-old with bad skin. Three of the most powerful oracles have "gone dark". Apollo, along with Leo Valdez and Calypso, is seeking the second oracle in the prophecy. In order to reach the oracle he and his friends much go through his blood-thirsty old friend, Commodus, one of the evil triumvirate. Fans of Riordan will love this follow up to the first and mourn the fact that the next book won't be out for another entire year. There is action on every page, plenty of humor, and a grand array of new characters to get to know and love.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
CEC Early College



High School Fiction

The Call

By: Peadar O'Gulilin
Scholastic, 2016
ISBN: 9781338045611

Topics: Fairies; Survival

Ireland is suffering the consequences of having banished the Sidhe, or fairy folk, to another realm. The island has been cut off from the rest of the world and its teenagers never know when they will receive the Call, when each is transported to the fairy realm and forced to run for their lives. Nessa and her friends attend an academy where they are trained to try to survive the Call, but the Sidhe are closing in, aided by human traitors. It's Nessa's determination and intelligence that save the



academy, at least temporarily. This fantasy has many grim moments, but the fully-realized characters pull through and together in amazing ways. Definitely for mature readers. Review by: Peggy Obert
Alumni

The Nerdy and The Dirty

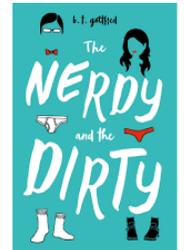
By: B.T. Gottfred
Henry Holt and Company, 2016

ISBN:

9781627798501

Topics: Dating; Love; Self-Acceptance; Sexuality

High school juniors Penelope (aka Pen) and Benedict (aka the Tin Man) don't run in the same circles at Riverbend High. Although they attended junior high together, Pen started high school with a new image, that of a tough Goth girl who hides her intelligence behind two word snarky answers and a jock boyfriend. Benedict is ranked in the top 10 academically. His goal is to find a girl who matches him intellectually and can live up to his expectations of beauty. Pen's goal is to disappear. Pen and Benedict have something in common; neither is comfortable being her/himself. When they end up at the same backwoods, snowy resort over Winter Break with their dysfunctional families, they fall into an intense relationship that reveals they have more in common than they thought. Because of the intense sexual descriptions, this title is more suited for those 16 and over. Review by: Denise Cushing
Carson Elem.



Six of Crows

By: Leigh Bardugo
Henry Holt, 2015
ISBN:

9781627792127

*Topics: Outlaws;
Friendship; Adventure*



A dangerous new drug that enhances magical ability has just come on the market in Ketterdam. It will weaponized Grisha magicians, and then kill them. The young, brutal, thief lord, Kaz, is hired to break the chemist who invented the drug out of prison. The prison is supposed to be impenetrable but the Merchant Council is offering an outrageous amount of money to get him out. Kaz and his hand-picked band of disenfranchised young people take on the task. If anything can go wrong, it does. Fans of The Grisha Trilogy will line up for this one, the first in this new series. Reviewed by: Chris Coble
CEC Early College

What the Dead Want

By: Norah Olson
HarperCollins Publishers, 2016
ISBN: 9780062410115

Topics: Family; Photography; Paranormal



When Gretchen receives an unexpected phone call telling her that she's inheriting a pre-Civil War family mansion from an unknown aunt, she hopes that her trip to upstate New York will lead to answers. Gretchen's mother had been a famous photographer and spiritualist and disappeared five years before without a trace. As she finds herself in unimaginable situations, will she find the answers she's been looking for all these years? Author Norah Olson's use of photography as a medium connecting ghosts, souls waiting to cross over, and the paranormal lends an dark, eerie tone to this well-

written story.
Reviewed by: Denise Cushing
Carson Elem.

100 Days

By: Nicole McInnes
Farrar Straus Giroux, 2016
ISBN: 9780374302849

*Topics: Progeria;
Friendship; Terminal illness*



Tiny Agnes has a rare disease that causes her body to age at an alarming rate: progeria. Her best friend and protector is Moira. Moira is big, where Agnes is small and since people call her names and bully her anyway, she wears Goth clothing and makeup, so they really have something to talk about. Boone was friends with the girls in elementary school. Until something horrible happened and they never spoke to him again. Now the three have been thrown back together. Everyone has their demons. The secret is trying to live with them (or in spite of them). This poignant novel is told in alternating voices between the three teens. Beautifully written and absolutely human. Reviewed by: Chris Coble
CEC Early College



**"The world's favorite season is the spring. All things seem possible in May."
- Edwin Way Teale**



Spring is like a perhaps hand

E E Cummings

Spring is like a perhaps hand
(which comes carefully
out of Nowhere) arranging
a window, into which people look
(while
people stare
arranging and changing placing
carefully there a strange
thing and a known thing here) and

changing everything carefully

spring is like a perhaps
Hand in a window
(carefully to
and fro moving New and
Old things, while
people stare carefully
moving a perhaps
fraction of flower here placing
an inch of air there) and

without breaking anything.

