



The Review Crew

What's New and Great for Our Youngest Readers?

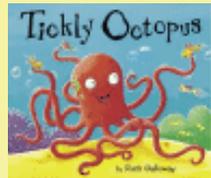
Brought to you by the Denver Public Schools Book Review Committee.

Volume 4 Number 3
November 2007

Fiction

Tickly Octopus

Written and Illustrated by: Ruth Galloway
Tiger Tales, 2007
ISBN: 1589250648



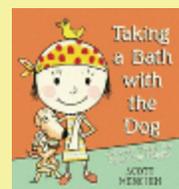
Curriculum: Octopus; Fish

Striking and stimulating illustrations portray a world of swirling seaweed, colorful corals, squirming starfish, clickity-clackity crabs, and "little fish that jumped and jigged and wiggled and giggled." Such is the world of the tickly octopus who uses his eight "twisty, twirly tentacles" to tickle everything in sight. A great story to be read aloud for the vocabulary just rolls of the tongue.

Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Bryant Webster ECE-

Taking a Bath with the Dog and Other Things That Make Me Happy

Written and illus. by: Scott Menchin
Candlewick, 2007
ISBN: 9780763629199



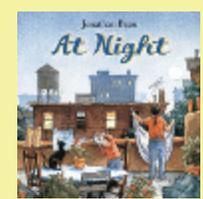
Curriculum: Happiness; Self-realization

"I miss your smile today, Sweet Pea. What would make you happy?" This small girl does not know what would make her happy so sets out on a quest to find out what makes others happy. She asks many people and animals, and even the sun, "What makes you happy?" Everyone has a different answer! A wonderful read-aloud to get children to think about just what makes them really happy.

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill ECE-8

At Night

By: Jonathan Bean
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007
ISBN: 0374304467



Curriculum: Night; Sleep; City life

One night, after her brother and sister and parents all go to bed, a little girl lies "in her dark room, AWAKE." When a breeze blows through her open window, our little insomniac follows it to the rooftop of her apartment building. Under the watchful eyes of her mother and her cat she builds a cozy bed on some lawn chairs and her problem is solved.

Reviewed by: Steve Bowley
South H.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.)

Want to read more reviews? See the instructions on page 5.

Nonfiction

Schools

By: Lisa Easterling

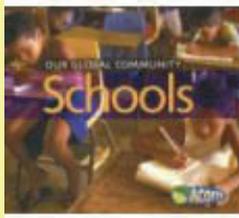
Heinemann Library, 2007

ISBN: 978-1-4034-9400-9

Curriculum: Schools

One in the *Our Global Community* series, *Schools* uses basic text and striking photos to help young readers learn about the differences and similarities in all types of schools. This is a book with a simple premise yet valuable information for readers as they try to learn more about the world around them.

Reviewed by: Karyn Pocernich
Ford Elem.



Reviewed by: Ethel Hammerly
Spanish reviewer

Milk and Cheese/ Leche y Queso

By: Thea Benduhn

Weekly Reader, 2008

ISBN:
9780836884579

Curriculum: Milk and Cheese; Food Pyramid; Food

As part of Find out About Food series, this bilingual book introduces beginning readers to healthful living. This is achieved by eating every day from each of the six food groups in the food pyramid and by exercising. The emphasis is on learning about milk and other milk products that contribute to strong bones and teeth. Text is supported by colorful photographs.

Reviewed by: Ethel Hammerly
Spanish reviewer



The Best for Upper Elementary Readers!

Fiction

Prunes and Rupe

By: Lydia Griffin

Illus by: Judith Hunt

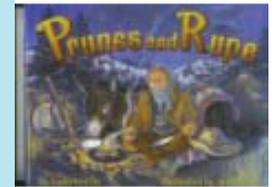
Filter Press, 2007

IBBN:
0865410860

Curriculum: Colorado history; Friendship; Donkeys; Mining

Rupe and Prunes, his burro, are best friends. They have spent forty years together mining the high country of the Colorado Rockies. Now Rupe's doctor says he has to go to the lowlands for the winters because the altitude and the cold are too much for his aging body. So he asks the people of Fairplay to take care of Prunes. Every day Prunes goes from house to house begging for flapjacks. This poignant and beautifully illustrated book is based on a true story. The story is a piece of Colorado history and now it is a wonderful picture book as well.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner M. S.



Spanish!

Animales de las montañas (Animals of the Mountains)

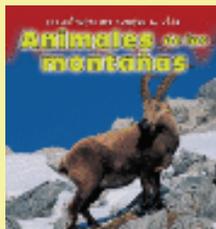
By: Elisabeth de Lambilly-Bresson

Weekly Reader, 2008

ISBN: 9780836884586

Curriculum: Mountain Animals; Animals; Animal Behavior

Seven mountain animals (black bear, European antelope, marmot, eagle, ermine, wild goat, and wolf) tell the beginning reader in first person narrative about their lives and activities. The book is a good introduction to the topic and is very well illustrated with colorful photographs that will appeal to children.



Books, I found,
had the power
to make time
stand still, re-
treat or fly
into the fu-
ture.

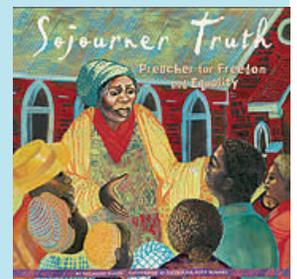
~ Jim Bishop ~

Nonfiction

Sojourner Truth: Preacher for Freedom and Equality

By: Suzanne Slade

Illustrated by:



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

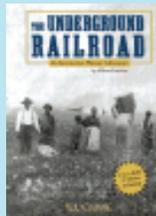
Natascha Alex Blanks
Picture Window, 2008
ISBN:1404837264

Curriculum: African American women; Reformers; Abolitionists

Sojourner Truth was named Isabella when she was born a slave on a New York farm. She was sold at the age of 9, then again a year later. Isabella grew up to rename herself Sojourner Truth and help many people win freedom and equal rights. The bright colors and patterns of the exotic illustrations evoke an emotional response that matches the power of the text.

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill ECE-8

The Underground Railroad: An Interactive History Adventure



By: Allison Lassieur
Capstone Press, 2008
ISBN: 1429601647

Curriculum: underground Railroad; Fugitive slaves; Antislavery movement; Abolitionists; Slavery

"You chose the path you take through history." In this book based on real people and real events the reader must choose among becoming a slave, a slave catcher, or helping in the Underground Railroad. Every few pages the reader chooses again between two scenarios until he/she reaches the conclusion of their chosen story. Tough choices these are. Along with the three different story paths, there are 37 choices and 16 different endings. Photographs and richly detailed drawings accompany this fascinating trip through history.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elem.

Birmingham, 1963

By: Carole Boston Weatherford
Wordsong, 2008



ISBN: 1590784405

Curriculum: Bombings; Sixteenth Street Baptist Church (Birmingham, AL); African Americans; Hate crimes

Through sparse free verse a fictitious eye witness tells of the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, which injured many and took the lives of four young black girls. The poetic images are vivid and accompanied by equally evocative archival photographs; "The day I turned ten/Someone tucked a bundle of dynamite/Under the church steps, then lit the fuse of hate." At the end of the book each young girl's short life is memorialized with a poignant summary. An Author's Note sums up the events that lead to the bombing and the final closing of the case, thirty-nine years later.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elem.

Morris and Buddy: The Story of the First Seeing Eye Dog

By: Becky Hall
Illustrated by: Doris Ettlinger



Albert Whitman & Company, 2007

ISBN: 978-0-8075-5284-1

Curriculum: Guide Dogs

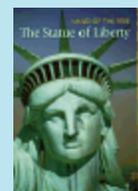
Blinded as a boy, Morris Frank longed for the independence of the seeing

world. He overcame this obstacle with the help of Buddy, the first seeing-eye dog. Over the years, he helped thousands of others to use guide dogs to do the same. This story of courage and determination will inspire and intrigue readers.

Reviewed by: Karyn Pocernich
Ford Elem.

Spanish!

La Estatua de la Libertad (Statue of Liberty)



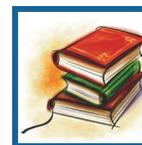
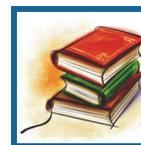
By: Anne Hempstead
Heinemann, 2006

ISBN: 9781403476043

Curriculum: Statue of Liberty (New York, NY); Structures, buildings; Symbols

As part of The Country of Freedom series, this book traces in four chapters the fascinating history and symbolic meaning of the Statue of Liberty. In addition, it portrays well the role it has come to play not only in the national popular culture of the United States but beyond, as a symbol of hope for freedom and democracy to oppressed people throughout the world.

Reviewed by: Ethel Hammerly
Spanish reviewer



Middle School Reader Gold Mine

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

Fiction

**More Horowitz Horror:
More Stories You'll
Wish You'd Never Read**

By: Anthony Horowitz
Philomel Books, 2006
ISBN: 0399245190



Curriculum: Horror tales, English

The 9 tales are spellbinding, and readers will relish not only the action and adventure but also the terror that begins on page 1 and never stops. Ever wonder what it would be like to be in an elevator with 35 flesh eating humans or spend a vacation in Barbados being roasted alive from the outside to the inside? How about living in "Twist Cottage" where the women stay only a short time or pick up a hitchhiker near a mental institution? "Whatever you do, don't take this book to bed with you because things are never what they appear."

Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Bryant Webster ECE-8



Young Adults Deserve the Best!

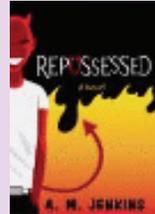
Repossessed

By: A. M. Jenkins
HarperTeen, 2007
ISBN: 0060835680

Curriculum: High school life; Possession; Relationships

Fallen Angel, Kiriell, tired of torturing lost souls not worthy of Heaven, decides to go AWOL in the body of soon-to-be-deceased Shaun. Shaun, a slacker teen with little parental supervision, is perfect for fun. Kiriell tries to pack as many human experiences into his time as possible since he knows his absence will soon be noticed and punished. This quirky, witty novel gives one a giggle while also causing one to consider how each of us affects others, for better and for worse. Some sexual content makes this most appropriate for mature high school students.

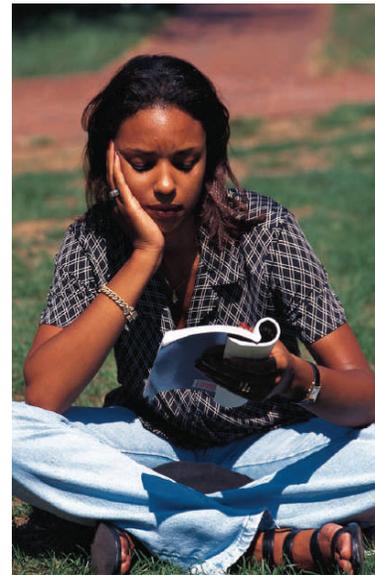
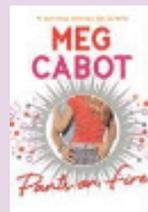
Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.



Pants on Fire

By: Meg Cabot
HarperTeen, 2007
ISBN: 0060880155

Curriculum: Coming of age; Honesty; Relationships; Dating



Katie seems to have the perfect life. Katie, however, lies. She lies about liking quahogs (clams) to participate in the Quahog Princess contest, she lies about being happy with her boyfriend and kisses other boys, and her biggest lie, which happened four years ago, involved abandoning a friend, Tommy, who told the truth and was run out of town. But now Tom's back and really hot! Is he back for revenge? This realistic contemporary look at Katie's life will be a hit with Meg Cabot fans. Written without strong language and mature scenes, middle schools can also recommend this title.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.

Does My Head Look Big in This?

By: Randa Abdel-Fattah
Orchard Books, 2007
ISBN: 0439919479

Curriculum: High school stories; Australian Muslims

Amal, an Australian-Muslim-Palestinian high school student, decides to go full-time wearing the *hijab*. In the Muslim



(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

school she used to attend a head scarf was part of the uniform, but she has never worn one in her public high school. The usual trials and tribulations of teenage life are complicated by Amal's decision. Her relationships with family, friends from both schools, and the community at large, will provide much insight into a culture about which many readers know little. Those who wear the *hijab* to school will appreciate this wonderful addition to the few titles available about students like themselves.

Reviewed by: Steve Bowley
South H.S.



The Girlfriend Project

By: Robin Friedman
Walker and Co. 2007
ISBN: 0802796249

Curriculum: Friendship; Dating;
School; Identity

Reed is seventeen and he has never had a girlfriend. Of course that was before he lost the braces and glasses and grew into his body; and a pretty okay body at that. Now he is on a mission to find a girlfriend. Ronnie and Lonnie, the twins next door and his best friends are all ready to help him out. All the hottest girls in school are looking at him. Reed tries to learn how to talk to girls, but suddenly he realizes there is only one girl he really wants



When I got [my] library card, that was when my life began.

~ Rita Mae Brown ~

This newsletter contains only a few of the reviews we write each month. To read them all:

- ◆ Go to LION, our online library catalog, at <http://lion.dpsk12.org>
- ◆ Click on "DPS Book Reviews" on the right side under "Other Resources" for an alphabetical list of reviewed books by title and click on a title that interests you **or** search for a book by title, author, or subject.
- ◆ When you get to the book records, look for the button called "Other Resources" and click on it.
- ◆ You will see a list of available features for that book. If there is a "DPS Book Reviews" link, it will open the review written by a member of this committee. This review is often more detailed than the short review published in this newsletter.

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