



The Review Crew

What's New and Great for Our Youngest Readers?

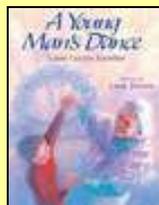
Brought to you by the Denver Public Schools Book Review Committee.

Volume 3 Number 1

October 2006

A Young Man's Dance

By: Laurie Lazzaro Knowlton
Illustrated by: Layne Johnson
Boyd's Mills Press, 2006
ISBN 1590782593

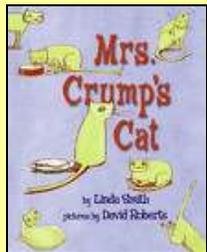


Curriculum: Old age; Grandmothers; Dementia; Nursing homes
"Grandma Ronnie isn't home anymore." Grandma Ronnie loved to bake cookies with her grandson. And she loved to dance with him. Now she is in a nursing home. She doesn't remember his name. She doesn't remember his favorite cookie. However, she still loves to dance—or at least move—to music. Now he dances with her by pushing her wheelchair.

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill K-8

Mrs. Crump's Cat

By: Linda Smith
Illustrated by: David Roberts
HarperCollins, 2006
ISBN 0060283025
Curriculum: Cats; Pets; Friendship



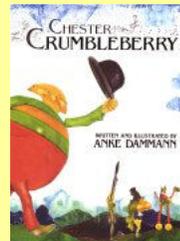
When gruff Mrs. Crump is adopted by a bedraggled yellow cat, little does she dream what changes are in store. Despite constant—and empty—threats to put the cat out, she gradually warms to the adorable interloper. Charming illustrations, a droll sense

of humor, and a genuine, heart-warming conclusion make this a treat.

Reviewed by: Jennifer Fakolt
Mitchell Elem.

Chester Crumbleberry

Written and illustrated by: Anke Dammann
Pie in the Sky, 2004
ISBN 1893815110

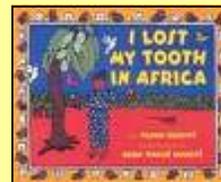


Curriculum: Fantasy
In this richly illustrated picture book Chester Crumbleberry literally picks a flower friend to accompany him on his journey over the hills, past scary creatures then through a dark, lonely forest. After being airlifted over a shark infested lake, they reach their destination just in time to join the fun.

Reviewed by: Steve Bowley
South HS

I Lost My Tooth In Africa

By: Penda Diakite
Illustrated by: Baba Wague Diakite
Scholastic, 2006
ISBN 0439662265



Curriculum: Mali; Teeth; Family life; Commitment

When a child loses a tooth in Africa and puts it under a gourd, the African Tooth Fairy will bring a chicken! Amina's father

(Continued on page 4)

Who are we?

- ☺ We are DPS teacher librarians and literacy experts from elementary schools through high school.
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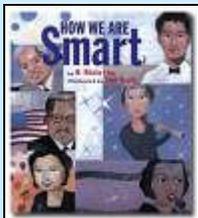
Want to read more reviews? See the instructions on page 6.

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

Nonfiction

How We Are Smart

By: W. Nikola-Lisa
Illustrated by: Sean Qualls
Lee and Low Books, Inc., 2006
ISBN 1584302542



Curriculum: Multiple intelligences; Biography; Poetry; Well-balanced

This beautiful and thought-provoking book serves as a way to clearly communicate to children Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. The book offers a straightforward explanation of the different intelligences, then provides examples in the form of short biographies of twelve men and women who were successful in their

own ways. Each biography includes a quote from that person, a poem about them and an intriguing modernist illustration.

Reviewed by: Laurie Bell
Brown Elem.

The World's most Dangerous Bugs

By: Nick Healy
Capstone Press, 2006.
ISBN 0736854568



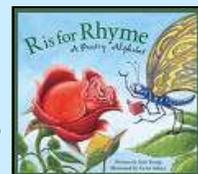
Curriculum: Science; Insects; Insect pests; Insect-carried diseases
Here are disgusting facts about only ten of the world's most dangerous bugs. The photo illustrations in this book are almost enough to make one want to live in a plastic bubble where there is no chance one will run into any of these disgusting creatures.

The book tells where each of these insects lives and the problems they cause for the people they come in contact with.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner Middle School

R is for Rhyme: A Poetry Alphabet

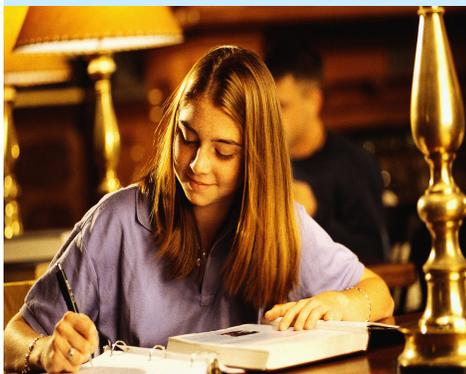
By: Judy Young
Illustrated by: Victor Juhasz



Sleeping Bear Press, 2006
ISBN 1585362409

Curriculum: Poetry; Alphabet
Every poetic term and technique is included in this delightfully illustrated alphabet book. Each original poem is accompanied by a sidebar explanation of the particular style or

(Continued on page 3)



Fiction

The Wright 3

By: Blue Balliett
Scholastic, 2006
ISBN 0439693675
Curriculum: Mysteries; Frank Lloyd Wright; Puzzles

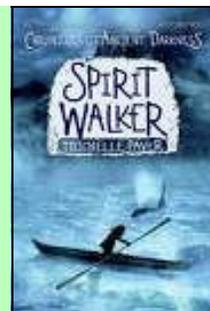


Petra and Calder along with their old friend, Tommy return from *Chasing Vermeer* and find another mystery to solve. The Robie House, which was designed by famous architect Frank Lloyd Wright, is about to be demolished and sold to museums in pieces. Meanwhile, mysterious things are happening around the house. The three friends must work together to figure out the puzzle. Will they solve the mystery in time before the house is destroyed? A fun and fascinating story full of puzzles and clues.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Hill School of Arts and Sciences

Spirit Walker

By: Michelle Paver
Katherine Tegen Books, 2006
ISBN 0060728299
Curriculum: Fantasy; Wolves; Magic; Survival



Torak and Renn return in the second book in the Chronicles series. When the tribe falls ill, Torak believes he is the cause and wants to find the cure. He travels to the island of the Seal Clan to find answers. Renn and Wolf reunite to

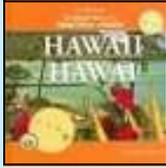
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term presented. Most end with an intriguing question that encourages the reader to explore more through original writings or additional poetry readings.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elem.

Spanish!



Hawaii/Hawaii

By José María Obregón
PowerKids Press, 2005
ISBN 1404230769

Curriculum: Geography; United States
This is an excellent book for early readers to use when they start finding facts about the states. The most important facts are covered in a very concise but understandable way. Each

bilingual book has terrific pictures. A craft activity is a plus to this great book.

Reviewed by: Ana Silva
Sandoval Elem.

**Dias de fiestas y celebraciones/
Holidays and Celebrations**

By: Kathleen Petelinsek and E. Russell Primm.

Child's World, 2006
ISBN 1592964532
Curriculum: Sign language; Holidays



Like other books in the Talking Hands series, this shows how to communicate in sign language. Produced with both English and Spanish text, the books become trilingual! Terrific illustrations and explanations of the sign make this book very understandable for early readers.

Reviewed by: Ana Silva
Sandoval Elem.

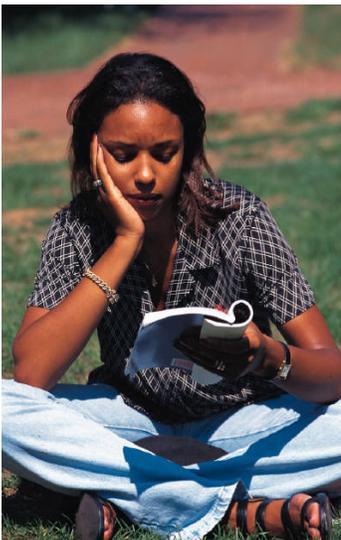
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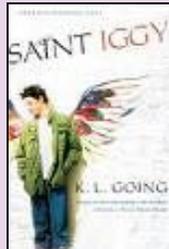
If so, contact Karen Shannon
Karen_Shannon@dpsk12.org

Young Adults Deserve the Best!



Saint Iggy

By: K. L. Going
Harcourt, 2006
ISBN 0152057951
Curriculum: Drug abuse; Family problems



Because his principal tells him, "We can [all] do something that contributes to the world," and because his expulsion hearing is looming, Iggy tries to come up with a plan to show everyone he is worthy of another chance. His drug addicted parents and former tutor, now

friend, Mo are not much help. In spite of her son, Mo's wealthy mother tries to intervene, but this powerful story weaves its way to a tragic end.

Reviewed by: Steve Bowley
South High

Marly's Ghost

By: David Levithan
Illustrated by: Brian Selznick
Dial Books, 2006.
ISBN 0803730632



Curriculum: Magical Realism; Valentine's Day; Ghosts; Grief; Romance

In a delightful retelling of Dickens's Christmas Carol, Marly has succumbed to cancer leaving her boyfriend Ben consumed with grief and bitterness. When Marly pays him a visit the night before Valentine's Day and he finds himself facing the ghosts of Valentine past, present and future Ben learns that life is short and not worth living if love is not a part of it.

Reviewed by: Danette Baltzer
Grant Middle School
(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 1)

tells her this when they are flying to Mali to visit their family, and all Amina can think about is trying to lose her tooth in Africa so she can get her chicken. A fun story that includes words in Bambara, the national language of Mali.

Reviewed by: Laurie Bell
Brown Elem.

*editor's note: a good companion book is Tooth Tales from around the World by Marlene Targ Brill.

I.Q., It's Time

Written & illustrated by: Mary Ann Fraser

Walker & Co., 2005

ISBN 0802789803

Curriculum: School stories; Telling time; Counting by fives

Have you met this enthusiastic class pet who wants nothing more than to be a regular student? This time I.Q. is trying to figure out how to participate in Parents' Night. It is such a busy day, each hour filled with different activities. Will I. Q. finish his surprise in time? This is a wonderful companion book for lessons on telling time and counting by fives. Students would have fun creating their own versions of I.Q.'s project, a clock showing the different activities of the day.

Reviewed by: Penny Cunningham
Valdez Elem.

Slow Days, Fast

Friends

Written & illustrated by: Erik Brooks

Albert Whitman, 2005

ISBN 0807574376

Curriculum: Friendship; Differences; Observation; Injuries



Howard the cheetah is devastated when he injures his leg and can no longer dash around. Now everyone teases him and he can't even catch a turtle! Then Quince the sloth befriends him. Hanging around with Quince, Howard learns to see the world of colors in between blue sky and yellow sun and to soak up the happy sounds of animals at the waterhole. In turn, when his leg is better Howard helps Quince experience the delight of dashing through their world.

Reviewed by: Penny Cunningham
Valdez Elem.

Pinkalicious

By: Victoria Kann & Elizabeth Kann
Illustrated by: Victoria Kann

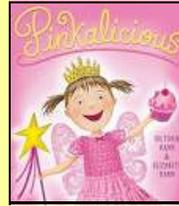
Harper Collins, 2006

ISBN 9780060776398

Curriculum: Families; Humor

Yes, you can have too much of a good thing, just ask Pinkalicious, the heroine of this pinkest of all pink books! It is full of wondrous words, playful platitudes, and illuminating images. Kids will flawlessly foretell the funny finale.

Reviewed by: Gretchen Allgeier
Stedman Elem.



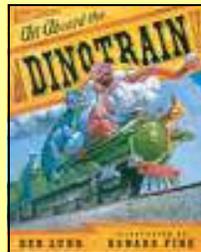
All Aboard the Dinotrain

By: Deb Lund
Illustrated by: Howard Fine
Harcourt, Inc., 2006

ISBN 0152052372

Curriculum: Dinosaurs; Railroads; Stories in rhyme

"Climb aboard for a hilly, spilly, and out-and-out silly roller coaster of a train ride." So begins this rhyming tale of a group of adventurous dinosaurs: brachiosaurus, spinosaurus, triceratops, tyrannosaurus rex, hadrosaurus, and stegosaurus. They load the dinotrain full of dinofreight and set out across the land. But when they come to a hill



too steep for so much weight, they toss out the lumber, oil and grain.

Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Bryant Webster K-8



Spanish!

¡Qué nervios! : el primer día de escuela

By: Julie Danneberg
Illustrated by: Judy Love
Charlesbridge, 2006

ISBN 1580891470

Curriculum: Reading; First day of school

In this fun story Sarah does not want to go to school. She feels tremendously nervous about it, which makes her feel reluctant to meet a new place and people. Throughout the book the illustrator never reveals this character's face. When she finally gets to the school, the Principal introduces Sarah to her... students! A surprise ending that everybody will love.

Reviewed by: Ana Silva
Sandoval Elem.

Nonfiction

Scales

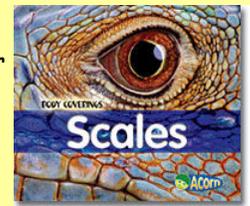
By: Cassie Mayer
Heinemann, 2006

ISBN

1403483744

Curriculum: Body coverings; Fishes; Reptiles

A question-and-answer format is used to introduce young children to scales of different colors, textures, and sizes that protect animals in a



(Continued on page 5)

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variety of ways. This is one in the series about body coverings and their uses to animals. These books have a predictable text structure with moderate support for the reader.

Reviewed by: Marilyn Martin
Park Hill K-8

Pumpkins

Written and illustrated by: Ken Robbins

Roaring Brook Press, 2006
ISBN 1596431849

Curriculum: Pumpkins; Growth cycle; Jack-o-lanterns

Celebrate the glory of the pumpkin with this beautifully-photographed book. Robbins' large, richly-detailed photos follow the life-cycle of the humble pumpkin, as well as touch on its connection to Halloween. Skillfully simple text makes this title a success for read-alouds, and a nice non-fiction complement to seasonal pumpkin tales.

Reviewed by: Jennifer Fakolt
Mitchell Elem.



Spanish!

Lee y aprende: Detective de materiales [Read and Learn: Material Detectives] (Series title)

By: Angela Royston
Heinemann, 2006
ISBN 1403475482

Curriculum: BSCS Science Tracks, grade 1

This series, also available in English, helps young readers investigate the properties of different materials by asking questions such as, "Is a bat rough or smooth?" The book

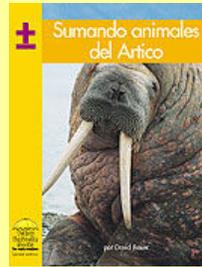
then, explains this topic in a simple way so that children of young age can understand. Fabulous pictures add to the understanding of the topics.

Reviewed by: Ana Silva
Sandoval Elem.

Sumando animales del Artico

By: David Bauer
Yellow Umbrella Books, 2005
ISBN 0736841474

Curriculum: Animals; Arctic; Ecosystems; Habitat



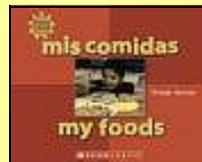
This excellent book gives information to early readers about animals that live in the Arctic. Every couple of pages the reader is asked to add the total number of animals in the beautiful pictures. A repetitive pattern helps struggling readers to get meaning.

Reviewed by: Ana Silva
Sandoval Elem.

Mis Comidas/My Foods

By: George Ancona
Scholastic, 2005
ISBN 0516252925

Curriculum: Food; Multicultural



This bilingual book is about traditional foods. A child whose family immigrated to the USA from Venezuela presents his traditional food. He shows how to make "arepas", "sancocho" and "fried plantains." He also presents foods from two other cultures: tacos from Mexico and pupusas from El Salvador. Graphic pictures and diagrams help the reader understand the food preparation as well as the appearance and name of the ingredients. A map shows the countries mentioned in the book.

Reviewed by: Ana Silva
Sandoval Elem.

(Continued on page 6)

Review Crew Staff

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Valdez Elementary**

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Janet Damon

Oakland Elementary

Jennifer Fakolt

Mitchell K-8

Marilyn Martin

Park Hill K-8

(Continued from page 5)

¿Cómo nos orientamos?

By: Sara de Capua
Childrens Press,
2005

ISBN 0516244426

*Curriculum: Maps
and directions*



This book presents how to get oriented using the cardinal directions. Simply but explicitly the author shows maps and map exercises to practice orientation, compass use, and globes to teach how to get oriented. Great pictures help young readers understand the topic. Other books in the series cover other topics about maps and globes.

Reviewed by: Ana Silva
Sandoval Elem.

(Continued from page 2)

help Torak. Torak is captured by three boys of the Seal Clan and taken to the mage. The mage pretends to help but has a sinister agenda of his own.

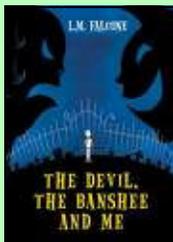
Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Hill School of Arts and Sciences

The Devil, The Banshee and me

By: L.M. Falcone
Kids Can Press,
2006.

ISBN 1553378946

*Curriculum: Super-
natural; Supernatural beings*



In this great mystery story with an eerie bent, Will is living in a bed and breakfast with his parents. One day, Mrs. D., the owner of the B and B, sends Will across the road to Mrs. MacGregor's house in the

cemetery to borrow some eggs. And that is the beginning of how Will, the Devil, and the Banshee all come together in one strange tale.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
Kepner Middle School

Tour America: A Journey Through Poems & Art

By: Diane Siebert

Illustrated by:
Stephen T. Johnson

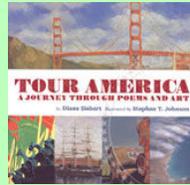
Chronicle Books, 2006

ISBN 0-8118-5056-0

Curriculum: United States; Poetry

Twenty-seven of America's most scenic treasures are exquisitely captured in this "artistic tour de force." The colorful and vibrant illustrations have been drawn or painted using a variety of mediums. All making for the unusual in the Impressionistic artwork. The inventive poems are sometimes rhyming and sometimes free form but all portray something special. Whether it is the well known U.S.S. Constitution (Old Ironsides) in Massachusetts or the little known Lucy the Elephant (all wood) in New Jersey all are brilliantly captured.

Reviewed by: Irene Bell
Bryant Webster K-8



(Continued from page 3)

Where I want to be

By: Adele Griffin

Illustrated by:

G.P Putnam's Sons, 2005

ISBN 0399237836

*Curriculum: Mental ill-
ness; Sisters; Death*

In a well-crafted shifting narrative, the dynamics of family love and contention are explored. Lily and Jane were as different as sisters could be. Lily is popular and beautiful;



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Jane is awkward and struggling with mental illness. The narrative picks up after Jane's death, as each sister describes a past that keeps them from moving on, one from beyond the grave, the other attending high school and social functions. Differences don't define their relationship however; the depth of the two sister's connection surpasses the boundaries between life and death.

Reviewed by: Danette Baltzer
Grant Middle School