

The Review Crew



Early Elementary Fiction

Starring Me and You

Written and illus. by: Genevieve Cote

Kids Can Press, 2014

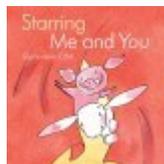
ISBN: 9781894786393

Curriculum: Friendship; Plays

Piggy and Bunny are preparing to give a play, but they have very different approaches to acting. One is shy, one is not; one screams when confronted with stage fright, the other freezes up. Each one even has their own idea of what the play should be. When they get angry, again in their own style, they realize they are also sad in their own ways. They make up, understanding that "the stage is always big enough for me and you." Sweet and simple watercolor and pencil illustrations highlight their personalities. This book would lead to good discussion about how students can adapt to a variety of people.

Reviewed by: Peggy Obert

Alumni



shapes

Cylinder-shaped things are everywhere. Pens, cans, and drums all have three-dimensional cylindrical shapes. This title explains the properties of cylinders, many objects and machines that use cylinders, and places they are found in nature. Highlighted are the BMW Tower in Germany and the machines used to construct the Euro Tunnel. The reviewed titles in the *3-D Shapes* series do a nice job of using text and visuals to explain the shapes to 2nd-3rd grade students. A hands-on activity is included with each book as is a list of additional print resources. A publisher-sponsored website is also provided.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas

JFK H.S.

Upper Elementary Fiction

Bite-Sized Magic

By: Kathryn Littlewood

Katherine Tegen Books, 2014

ISBN: 9780062084262

Curriculum: Magic; Kidnapping; Baking

Rose, fresh from defeating her evil aunt at the Gala des Gâteaux Grands baking competition, is kidnapped by Mostess. The Mostess Corporation wishes to take over the world with their addictive baked good but needs Rose's magical help to ensure their Dinkies, Moony Pies, and Glo-Balls are completely and insanely irresistible. With Rose's parents held hostage, she



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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 fifteen 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 720-423-1841 to order.)

Early Elementary Nonfiction

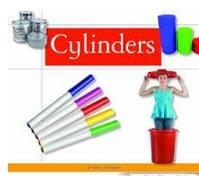
Cylinders

By: Nancy Furstinger

Child's World, 2014

ISBN: 9781623239831

Curriculum: Geometry; 3-D



must cooperate. As usual, though, Rose (and cat, mouse, and brothers) have some tricks up their sleeves. Upper elementary and older readers of the previous two Rosemary Bliss novels will return to enjoy this third wacky, fun, installment.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.

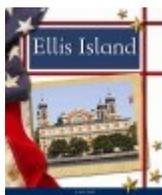
Upper Elementary Nonfiction

Ellis Island

By: Bob Temple

Child's World, 2014

ISBN: 9781623239541



Curriculum: U.S. history; Immigration; Landmarks

Ellis Island was the entry point to the United States for many hopeful immigrants between 1892 and 1954. This title details the history of Ellis Island and immigrant processing. Since declared part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument in 1965, Ellis Island has been restored and opened for tourists. This title provides a concise overview of this historical and significant US landmark. Many photos enhance the text. While 3rd-5th grade readers will find enough information for basic report writing, they are provided with a list of books and a publisher-sponsored website to learn more.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.

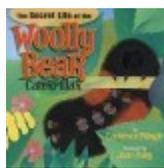
Woolly Bear Caterpillar

By: Laurence Pringle

Illus. by: Joan Paley

Boyd's Mills Press, 2014

ISBN: 9781620910009



Curriculum: Life cycle; Woolly Bear Caterpillars

Bella is a woolly bear caterpillar. She is black on both ends and reddish-orange in the middle. She is woolly, as her name proclaims, but she isn't soft but stiff like the bristles on a brush. Her main goal is to eat as much as she can. As time goes on she will molt three or four times, each time she will get bigger and the reddish-orange band will get bigger and redder. People almost never see woolly bear caterpillars. They are very good at hiding. The only time people might see a woolly bear is in the fall when they are searching for a safe place to spend the winter. This is an informational account of woolly bear caterpillars. It reads like a story but is filled with facts and information. This would be a good read aloud for small children studying life cycles of butterflies and moths or an independent read for slightly older children. The great illustrations will back up the text and draw young readers in.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
CEC Middle College

Middle School Fiction

Into the Still Blue

By: Veronica Rossi

Harper, 2014

ISBN: 9780062072092

Curriculum: Science Fiction; Romance; Betrayal; Survival



This is the third book and the conclusion of the *Under the Never Sky* trilogy. Perry and Aria are continuing the race to the Still Blue. The aether storms continue to get worse and both the Dwellers and the Outsiders are thrown together in order to sur-

vive. Hess and Sable, both evil leaders of the dwellers, kidnap a young boy whose special powers are the key to finding the safe haven. There is a rescue attempt, capture, torture and escape attempts by the Outsiders to save their people. The conclusion is the final and successful attempt to find the Still Blue. They arrive safely, but will have to rebuild their society.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy

The Islands of Chaldea

By: Diana Wynne Jones
Greenwillow Books, 2014

ISBN: 9780062295071

Curriculum: Fantasy; Magic; Survival; Family; Loyalty; Friendships

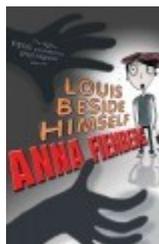


There are four islands in the Chaldea. Logra is separated from the other islands by an invisible barrier. A group from Scarr is sent on a mission to try and reach Logra. The group includes Beck, the wise woman, Aileen her young apprentice, Ivar, the young prince and Ogo, an orphan boy. They must travel through the three lands and try to find the way. They encounter many interesting characters including an intelligent green parrot and an invisible cat. When a spell causes Beck to lose her mind, Aileen must take charge. As she leads this group she begins to come into her own powers, a little at a time. Nothing is as it seems. Friends turn out to be enemies and strangers prove to be allies. This is Diana Wynne Jones last book. She passed away before completing her story. Her sister, Ursula, finished it as a labor of love.

Reviewed by: Karen Burns
Place Bridge Academy

Louis Beside Himself

By: Anna Fienberg
Allen & Unwin, 2013
ISBN:
9781742379944



*Curriculum: Friendship;
Runaways; Courage*

Middle schooler Louis is more comfortable with big words than the professional wrestling moves his dad learned from his father and is trying to teach him. Sometimes Louis feels like he's not even in his own skin, and is an observer, not a participant. Then runaway Cordelia enters the world of Louis and his friends and ends up camping out in a tent in Louis' backyard. Things come to a crisis, but Louis is paralyzed until her helplessness activates his courage and he confronts Cordelia's mother and her boyfriend. Warm humor and believable characters will make this story appealing to middle schoolers, and the thrill of "what happens next?" will keep them glued to the book.

Reviewed by: Peggy Obert
Alumni

A Medal for Leroy

By: Michael Morpurgo
Feiwel and Friends,
2012
ISBN:
9781250039804



Curriculum: African American soldiers; History-20th century; Prejudice & Racism

During World War I, a black soldier fought bravely for the British, but was killed in battle and his body never recovered. Even at the urging of his battle companions and superior officers, the government refused to honor him because of his race. Years

later his grandson Michael tries to rectify the situation. This book is inspired by the true story of Walter Tull, the first black officer in the British army.

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

Jack Strong Takes a Stand

By: Tommy Greenwald
Roaring Brook Press,
2013
ISBN:
9781596438361



*Curriculum: Over
scheduled; Strike; Family; Friends*

Jack Strong's days are packed with activities. His dad tells him it will all look good on his college resume. He has cello lessons, math tutor, Chinese language lessons, baseball, soccer, tennis, swimming, karate, Junior EMTs, plus finding time to do his homework and practice his cello. When all these resume-building activities start to interfere with, well, everything he wants to do, like school dances and class parties, Jack decides it is time to take a stand. Jack decides to go on strike from everything and stay on his couch until his dad lets him stop doing the activities that he doesn't want to do. Jack Strong is a friend of Charlie Joe Jackson and from him he learns about making a stand. This is a great book for middle grade students; funny and sad and maybe even a story that many students will relate to. Humorous pictures are sprinkled within the pages.

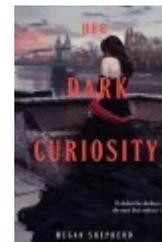
Reviewed by: Chris Coble
CEC Middle College



High School Fiction

Her Dark Curiosity

By: Megan Shepherd
Balzer + Bray, 2014
ISBN: 9780062128058



Curriculum: Serial killings; Monsters; London; Animal experimentation

Juliet Moreau has returned to London from her father's island, but not every creature that was created there remained there. Brutal killings are occurring, and each victim is tied to Juliet. As the body count rises, Juliet uncovers conspiracies and horrors far more involved than she ever imagined. Add in a love triangle and Juliet's search for a cure for her own illness, and you have a most exciting novel. While Shepherd's first book took inspiration from the *Island of Dr. Moreau*, elements of Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde are evident in this effort. The conclusion points to a third novel with a nod to Frankenstein's monster. HS readers will be eagerly awaiting its publication.

Reviewed by: Nancy Lucas
JFK H.S.

Skin and Bones

By: Sherry Shahan
Albert Whitman, 2014
ISBN: 9780807573976



Curriculum: Eating disorders; Friendship

Sixteen-year-old anorexic Jack has landed in an eating disorder clinic in Los Angeles. He and his new friends "Lard," Alice, and Theresa can roam the facility, enjoy smoking time on the roof, and exchange ideas for ridding themselves of unwanted calories or bringing in con-

traband for gorging. Jack is obsessed with Alice, who manipulates him to help her escape and realize her dream of becoming a world class ballerina. When Alice goes into a coma, Jack questions whether he wants to continue his own self-destructive behavior. The characters and the details of anorexia and bulimia are realistic but not overwrought. Teenagers struggling with their body images will find a lot to identify with here.

Reviewed by: Peggy Obert

Alumni

Breakfast Served Anytime

By: Sarah Combs

Candlewick Press, 2014

ISBN: 9780763667917

Curriculum: Teens; Gifted and talented; Friends



Gloria, a city girl from Louisville, Kentucky, is one of 120 gifted and talented seniors chosen from high schools all over the state to attend a special summer institute at (fictitious) Morian College. Gloria, a gifted writer and actress, is attending a class called "Secrets of the Written Word" in which her unusual professor, Dr. X, teaches the group to appreciate great literature. Only four students attend the class and the intimate group become friends who stay in touch even after the summer has ended. Gloria is experiencing growing pains, having lost her mother at a young age when she ran out on the family; her beloved Grandmother, GoGo, has just recently died, leaving Dad to care for Gloria alone. Gloria's newfound friend Mason, also an actor, has also lost a parent (his father committed suicide), and the two students begin a love/hate relationship with one another. Another student, Chloe, who is a free spirit, reveals

her lesbian tendencies. And everyone in the class has a soft spot for sweet encyclopedic Calvin, a farm boy. Gloria is exposed to new places, perspectives, feelings, and ideas. She begins to question many things in this coming-of-age story but comes out in the end a more positive and well-adjusted teen with hope for her future.

Reviewed by: Jutta Gebauer

South H.S.

The Summer I Found You

By: Jolene Perry

Albert, Whitman, and Co., 2014

ISBN: 9780807583692

Curriculum: Type I Diabetes; disabilities; teenagers



Kate is a high school senior whose boyfriend has just broken up with her. To add to her misery, she's just been diagnosed with Type I diabetes. Her lifestyle has changed considerably due to this disease; her parents have begun to watch over her carefully, constantly looking for symptoms of the illness. It seems Kate's dreams of going away to college or even staying out late are over. Then Kate meets Aiden, a 19 year old Army veteran who sustained a terrible injury in Afghanistan; he has lost his right arm along with his dreams of an Army career. The two meet and slowly begin to fall in love. The book is written in chapters that alternate with Aiden and Kate telling the stories from their own perspectives as they learn to cope with their respective disabilities.

Review by: Jutta Gebauer

South H.S.



Willow

By: Tonya Cherie Hegamin

Candlewick Press, 2014

ISBN: 9780763657697

Curriculum: Slavery; Mason-Dixon Line; Coming-of-age

Fifteen-year-old Willow has lived the life of a "favored slave" on Knotwild plantation - close to the Mason-Dixon Line. Life is good for her until her father insists she marry an unsavory slave from the neighboring plantation. Cato is a seventeen-year-old free-born black man who dedicates himself to helping slaves escape across the line. When their lives intersect, Willow must decide the direction her life will take. This is a well-written and touching story sure to appeal to female historical fiction fans.

Reviewed by: Dr. Janice Pacheco

Skinner M.S.



Avalon

By: Mindee Arnett

Balzer + Bray, 2014

ISBN: 9780062235596

Curriculum: Mercenary troops; Space; Space ships; Brothers and sisters; Freedom

Jeth Seagrave is the leader of a crew of teenage mercenaries. Their mission: pull jobs stealing metatech for a powerful crime lord. The crew's latest job requires them to travel to a dangerous, desolate region of space. The job is supposed to provide the crew with a huge payday, but what they find in the Belgrave Quadrant soon places the crew squarely in the crosshairs of both the government and the crime lord. It will take all of their skill to outwit, outsmart, and outmaneuver all parties and hope in the end they make it out of the



conflict in one piece. Reminiscent of the sci-fi television series *Firefly*, *Avalon* is a fast-paced edge-of-your-seat tale filled with action. This sci-fi tale it is a lot of fun and sure to garner many fans.

Reviewed by: Michelle Jensen
TJ H.S.

The Chance You Won't Return

By: Annie Cardi

Candlewick Press,
2014

ISBN:
9780763662929



Curriculum: Drivers education; Mental illness; School; Dating

Alex and her little brother and sister are watching as their mother disappears into her mental illness. She thinks she is Amelia Earhart and she is planning her next flight, the flight we know is her last one. On top of her home problems, she is failing drivers ed. Everyone in school knows her as the girl who drove onto the football field and destroyed their chances of winning the championship. And then she meets the boy who might be a worse driver than she is, Jim Wiley, who drove into his family's house. Jim volunteers to teach her how to drive, and slowly and cautiously she does learn to calm down behind the wheel. A relationship blooms between Alex and Jim but Alex can't let anyone know how desperate things are at home. *The Chance You Won't Return* is a sweet, sad, funny story of learning who you are regardless of the circumstances life throws at you. High school will be the best audience for this book though it would be fine with mature readers at the upper middle school level as well.

Reviewed by: Chris Coble
CEC Middle College

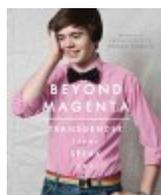
High School Nonfiction

Beyond Magenta

Written and photographed by: Susan Kuklin

Candlewick Press, 2014

ISBN: 9780763656119



Curriculum: Transgender people; Gender identity; Personal narratives

Beyond Magenta presents the stories of six transgender youth. Kuklin interviewed and photographed the teens as they struggled with the emotional impact and physical changes of becoming transgender. This title takes an unflinching, raw, honest look at what it means to be transgender as the stories of the teens and their families allow readers a glimpse into a world of bullying, misunderstanding, and confusion. This powerful title is a must for any teen collection and will hopefully allow readers to empathize with those who view life from a different perspective.

Reviewed by: Michelle Jensen
TJ H.S.



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