

New Book Reviews for Kids

Below are staff reviews of select new books in the Youth Services Department.
For a list of all the new and forthcoming Youth books, [click here](#).

New Book Reviews

Reading Level:

Babies Preschoolers Kindergarteners 1st Grade 2nd Grade 3rd Grade 4th Grade 5th Grade 6th Grade 7th Grade 8th Grade High Schoolers Adults

Genre:

Adventure Animals--Real Animals--Talking Award Winners Biographies Books for Boys Books for Girls Chick Lit Crime and Punishment Don't Miss These Dystopias Family Fantasy Folktales Friends Historical Fiction The Holocaust Horror Humor In Other Lands LGBT Misfits Mysteries Mythological Non-Fiction Non-Prose Phonetic Read-Alikes Read-Alouds Realistic Fiction Rebus Relationships School Science Fiction Self Image Short Stories Social Issues Spies Sports Supernatural Survival Time Travel Vampires Werewolves

Collection:

J Fiction J Graphic Novels J Non-Fiction J Series JP Fiction JP Non-Fiction JP Series JY Fiction JY Graphic Novels JY Non-Fiction Picture Books Spanish Picturebook

Reviewer:

The Gerbils SJS SHRRPCHGEFDJCHJLJSMBLWKFAB

Ferret Fun

by Karen Rostoker-Gruber

Reading Level: Ages 4-8

What do two ferrets named Fudge and Einstein do when they meet a cat who thinks that they

would be a perfect snack?

Convince him otherwise, that's what!

[Check availability of this book](#)

[More books by Karen Rostoker-Gruber](#)

Illustrator: Paul Ratz de Tagyos Reading Level: [Preschoolers,Kindergarteners,1st Grade](#)

Subjects: [Animals--Talking](#), [Friends](#), [Humor](#), [Read-Alouds](#) Location: [Picture Books](#)

Reviewer:

[EF](#)

Unlocked

by Ryan G. Van Cleave

Reading Level: Grades 7+

When you're the janitor's kid, you don't have many friends. You don't have any friends. Andy is no different, but when he hears a rumor that the school outcast, Blake, has a gun in his locker, he decides to make friends with Blake. When the boys do become friends, Andy must choose between protecting his only friend and protecting a school full of kids who could care less about him?

[Check availability of this book](#)

[More books by Ryan G. Van Cleave](#)

READ-ALIKES

[Just Another Hero by Sharon Draper](#)

[Shooter by Walter Dean Myers](#)

[Jumped by Rita Williams-Garcia](#)

[Echo by Kate Morgenroth](#)

[Give a Boy a Gun by Todd Strasser](#)

[Where the Steps Were by Andrea Cheng](#)

For older readers:

Hate List by Jennifer Brown

Nineteen Minutes by Jodi Picoult

Reading Level: 7th Grade,8th Grade,High Schoolers Subjects: Family, Misfits, Non-Prose, Read-Alikes, Realistic Fiction, School, Social Issues Location: JY Fiction

Reviewer:

EF

You're Finally Here!

by Melanie Watt

Reading Level: Ages 4-8

Rabbit is SO SO SO happy to see you he can barely stand it. But he isn't excited for long - soon he is demanding to know where on earth you were and WHY you weren't with him?? A delicious follow-up to the Scaredy Squirrel series.

Check availability of this book

More books by Melanie Watt

Reading Level: Preschoolers,Kindergarteners,1st Grade Subjects: Animals--Talking, Don't Miss These, Humor, Read-Alouds Location: Picture Books

Reviewer:

EF

Won Ton: A Cat Tale Told in Haiku

by Lee Wardlaw

Reading Level: Ages 4-8

Won Ton is a shelter cat who is pretty skeptical of his new home and family. Like most cats, he pretends not to care about any of the new toys or food his adoptive family gives him... but sneaks just a peek. A cute story told in perfect haiku that everyone will enjoy.

Check availability of this book

More books by Lee Wardlaw

Illustrator: Eugene Yelchin Reading Level: Preschoolers,Kindergarteners,1st Grade Subjects: Animals--Talking, Family, Friends, Humor, Non-Prose, Read-Alouds

Location: [Picture Books](#)

Reviewer:

[EF](#)

Hooray for Amanda and Her Alligator!

by Mo Willems

Reading Level: Ages 4-8

Mo Willems has done it again, (though really, has he ever not?) perfectly epitomizing the many expressions of a good friendship in *Hooray for Amanda and Her Alligator!*

The book takes the form of several stories about the title best friends. Whether you read them aloud, to yourself, or listen, you are sure to love Amanda and her Alligator.

[Check availability of this book](#)

[More books by Mo Willems](#)

Reading Level: [Preschoolers](#), [Kindergarteners](#), [1st Grade](#) Subjects: [Animals--Talking](#), [Don't Miss These](#), [Fantasy](#), [Friends](#), [Humor](#), [Read-Alouds](#) Location: [Picture Books](#)

Reviewer:

[EF](#)

Paw Power

by Kitty Wells

Reading Level: Grade 2-4

Maddy has wanted a cat her whole entire life. But, according to her mother, she can never ever have one because her little brother Jack is allergic to cats. Maddy's luck changes when Jack spots a set of three ceramic cats in an antique market. The mysterious woman at the stall agrees to give them to Maddy only after reading Maddy's palm.

The next day one of the statues turns into a real, very tiny, grey cat named Greykin. Greykin explains that only one of the cats animates at a time and that is only when there is trouble. According to Greykin, the trouble is at Maddie's school. Once he identifies it, he will need Maddy's help to set things right. Can a timid girl like Maddy help Greykin? Or is his quest doomed to failure?

[Check availability of this book](#)

More books by Kitty Wells

Other tales of magical cats include:

The Familiars by Adam Jay Epstein

Catmagic by Holly Webb and

The Story of Serapina by Anne Hitchcock White

Reading Level: 2nd Grade Subjects: Fantasy Location: J Fiction

Reviewer:

SJS

Dark Mirror

by M.J. Putney

Reading Level: Grade 7-9

16-year-old Lady Victoria Mansfield is looking forward to being presented at court and beginning her life as an eligible young lady. She already has her eyes on Edmond Harford, the heir to a large estate. Yes, Victoria has a wonderful future ahead of her...if she can keep her newly emerged ability to fly a secret.

Victoria's world crashes around her when her two-year-old nephew Jamie falls off the edge of a cliff during a large party on her family's estate. Caught half way down the cliff in a loosely rooted tree, Jamie dangles between life and death. Tory doesn't have a choice. She flies down and saves her nephew. Victoria's father immediately banishes her to Lackland Abbey where nobility's defective magical offspring have a chance to be "reformed." Of course, her magical "taint" will make marriage almost impossible. But at least she can hope to return home.

Victoria is determined to suppress her magic until she stumbles upon a secret society of students who insist that only their magic can save England from disaster.

Check availability of this book

More books by M. J. Putney

If you enjoyed this historical fantasy try:

Sorcery and Cecelia, or, The Enchanted Chocolate Pot : Being the Correspondence of Two Young Ladies of Quality Regarding Various Magical Scandals in London and the Country by Patricia C. Wrede and Caroline Stevermer and

A Great and Terrible Beauty by Libba Bray

Reading Level: 7th Grade,8th Grade,High Schoolers Subjects: Books for Girls, Fantasy, Historical Fiction, School, Time Travel Location: JY Fiction

Reviewer:

SJS

TimeRiders

by Alex Scarrow

Reading Level: Grades 5 - 8

Liam O'Connor is trapped below decks on the Titanic, Maddy Carter's plane is just about to explode in mid-air, and Sal Vikram is caught in a fire when a man appears and offers them a way out. Come with him and live outside society for the rest of your life, or stay and die. They each choose to follow him and are transported to New York City on September 10, 2001 where they live in a time bubble of a repeating September 10-11, and become a team of Time Riders. Their mission is to notice subtle shifts to the timeline caused by rogue time travelers and go back in time and stop the other travelers before they can alter the future.

Check availability of this book

More books by Alex Scarrow

Reading Level: 5th Grade,6th Grade,7th Grade,8th Grade Subjects: Adventure, Science Fiction, Time Travel Location: JY Fiction

Reviewer:

SH

Akata Witch

by Nnedi Okorafor-Mbachu

Reading Level: Grade 6-8

Sunny felt out of place when she and her family lived in the United States, she stands out even more in Nigeria. It isn't fair. She's 100% Igbo just like her parents and brothers, but Sunny is an albino so instead of having beautiful dark skin, hair and eyes, Sunny is so light her skin and hair look yellow.

When Sunny sees a strange vision in a candle's flame, she doesn't tell anyone. She's strange enough as it is. When Sunny is befriended by a classmate, she finds herself drawn into the very strangeness she is trying to avoid.

[Check availability of this book](#)

[More books by Nnedi Okorafor-Mbachu](#)

If you enjoyed this tale of young magicians you will probably enjoy:

[So You Want to Be a Wizard by Diane Duane](#)

[The Amulet of Samarkand by Jonathan Stroud and](#)

[The Warrior Heir by Cinda Williams Chima](#)

Reading Level: [6th Grade](#),[7th Grade](#),[8th Grade](#) Subjects: [Fantasy](#), [Friends](#), [In Other Lands](#), [Self Image](#), [Supernatural](#) Location: [JY Fiction](#)

Reviewer:
[SJS](#)

Famous

by Todd Strasser

Reading Level: Grade 7-12

At 16, Jamie Gordon is the youngest of the paparazzi in New York and thus a celebrity in her own right. She is given a dream job that every celebrity photographer would want. Jamie is hired to photograph a week in the life of super star Willow Twine at the star's Hollywood mansion. Willow needs to prove to the studio that she is drug free and Jamie needs to prove that she is truly talented and her celebrity is no fluke.

The book is narrated from several points of view. There is Jamie's first person narration, e-mails to her boyfriend Nasim, the story of Avy, an aspiring actor who is Jamie's best friend, letters from an obsessed Willow fan, and the perspective of a police detective. The plotline goes back and forth in time but each chapter names the narrator and the exact date. It can be a bit confusing, but the extra effort needed to follow the plot is well worth it.

[Check availability of this book](#)

[More books by Todd Strasser](#)

Reading Level: [7th Grade](#),[8th Grade](#),[High Schoolers](#) Subjects: [Realistic Fiction](#) Location: [JY Fiction](#)

Reviewer:
HG

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