

Book Reviews for 2006

I am Pangoo the Penguin by Satomi Ichikawa

Reading Level: Ages 2 5

Pangoo the stuffed penguin loves his boy Danny, but when Danny receives a bunch of new stuffed animals for his birthday and forgets about Pangoo, the little toy decides to go live with the penguins in the zoo.

Reviewer: SH

Wolves by Emily Gravett

Reading Level: Ages 4 8

A rabbit goes to the library and checks out a book about wolves so he can learn all about the animals, but his education comes a little too late. (Dont worry, there is a alternate happy ending for those who need it.)

Reviewer: SH

Looking for a Moose by Phyllis Root; illustrated by Randy Cecil

Reading Level: Ages 3 6

A group of children go in search of a moose, but they dont see any. Do you?

Reviewer: SH

Why Did the Chicken Cross the Road? by Agee and the rest of the Coop

Reading Level: Ages 3 6

Fourteen well-know illustrators, such as Mo Willems, answer the age-old question of Why did the chicken cross the road? in their own quirky ways.

Reviewer: SH

All Aboard the Dinotrain by Deb Lund; illustrated by Howard Fine

Reading Level: Ages 2 4

This goofy rhyming story about a group of dinosaurs taking an ill-fated train ride will enchant the preschool boy in your life.

Reviewer: SH

Hansel and Diesel by David Gordon

Ages 2 6

Two little trucks, Hansel and Diesel, leave home and go to the dark junkyard in search of fuel. They find a marvelous gas station and are invited into the garage by its owner, an evil winch...

Reviewer: SH

Sally Jean, the Bicycle Queen by Cari Best; pictures by Christine Davenier

Reading Level: Ages 3 - 6

Sally Jean loves bikes, especially her two wheeler, Flash, but when she outgrows Flash and needs a new, bigger bike, her parents cant afford to buy her one. How can a girl, who knows all about bikes and bike repair use her skills to acquire a new ride?

Reviewer: SH

Big Brown Bear Goes to Town by David McPhail

Reading Level: Ages 2 5

When Big Brown Bear discovers that his friend Rat has to bail out his car every time it rains, Big Brown Bear decides to help his friend out.

Reviewer: SH

Im Dirty! by Kate and Jim McMullan

Reading Level: Ages 2 5

The creators of I Stink! have done it again! This time a happy backhoe tells the reader all about his mucky day of scooping and shoveling.

Reviewer: SH

Library Lion by Michelle Knudsen; illustrated by Kevin Hawkes

Reading Level: Ages 3 6

A lion wanders into a library and enjoys storytime so much he roars when it is over. The librarian explains to him that he must follow the rules (one of which is no roaring in the library) if he wants to continue to visit and he faithfully does, until an emergency forces him to break some library rules.

Reviewer: SH

Flotsam by David Wiesner

Reading Level: Ages 3 7

A boy finds a very special camera at the beach in this new wordless fantasy by the creator of Tuesday.

Reviewer: SH

Dooby Dooby Moo by Doreen Cronin and Betsy Lewin

Reading Level: Ages 3 6

Farmer Browns animals are at it again! The typing cows and writing duck have decided to enter the talent contest at the fair, but how will they get past their biggest obstacle, Farmer Brown.

Reviewer: SH

Boo and Baa Have Company by Lena and Olof Landstrom

Reading Level: Ages 2 5

Boo and Baa have a difficult time getting a cat out of a tree.

Reviewer: SH

The Dog Who Cried Wolf by Keiko Kasza

Reading Level: Ages 3 6

When Moka the dog learns about wolves he thinks that he should run wild like a wolf instead of being a pampered (and often dressed up) pet, but he soon learns that being a wolf is a lot harder than it looks in a book.

Reviewer: SH

For our patrons discovering the alphabet, here are four new lively and creative alphabet books. Share them all with your child and enjoy the fabulous range of these talented writers and artists.

Found Alphabet by Ramon Shindler and Wojciech Graniczewski; illustrated by Anita Andrzejewska and Andrzej Pilichowski-Ragno

Reading Level: Ages 2 - 5

The authors and illustrators create quirky creatures and visionary vignettes from old junk, with rhyming stanzas for each letter.

The Artful Alphabet by Martina Jirankova-Limbrick

Reading Level: Ages 2 - 5

Fanciful and detailed drawings take a child, a magic hat, and a small dog on a whimsical trip through the alphabet.

Alligator Alphabet by Stella Blackstone and Stephanie Bauer

Reading Level: Ages 2 - 5

This alphabet book has bright, bold finger painting style illustrations with familiar animals and their characteristics demonstrating the letters.

A was an Apple Pie by Etienne Delessert

Reading Level: Ages 2 - 5

An updated version of an old English nursery rhyme with amusing illustrations of all the letters interacting with A, an apple pie.

Reviewer: HF

The Adventures of Polo by Roger Faller

Reading Level: Ages 3 - 6

Reminiscent of Harold and the Purple Crayon, this delightful book follows Polo, a puppy, as he explores his world. With dynamic, vivid illustrations, but no text, Polos travels bring him new friends, exciting challenges and a safe return home. Books like these encourage developing and narrating a story together and provide an interactive, creative way to share a book with your child.

Reviewer: HF

Chewy Louie by Howie Schneider

Reading Level: Ages 3 - 7

Chewy Louie is a great puppy, only he is so hungry that he eats everything in sight! The whole town tries to get Louie to stop chewing on everything, but he wont listen. Will Louie ever learn to be a good puppy?

Reviewer: LB

Yum! Yuck! A Foldout Book of People Sounds by Linda Sue Park and Julia Durango; illustrated by Sue Rama

Reading Level: Ages 3 6

You say Yum! but a Danish child would say Nam-nam! and a German child would say, Leckah!. You can learn more sounds such as Oo-wah! Keh-keh-keh! and Buah in this fun fold out book that also wordlessly tells the story of a food vendors pushcart tragedy.

Reviewer: SH

Do Not Open This Book! By Michaela Muntean; illustrated by Pascal Lemaitre

Reading Level: Ages 3 6

A hard working pig is trying to write a book, but keeps being interrupted by an annoying pestYOU!

Reviewer: SH

I Saw an Ant on the Railroad Track by Joshua Prince; illustrated by Macky Pamintuan

Reading Level: Ages 2 5

Young children will enjoy this thriller about a switchman who sees an ant walking on the railroad track, right in the path on an oncoming train! How can he save the little insect from certain death?

Reviewer: SH

Chicken and Cat by Sara Varon

Reading Level: Ages 2 6

In this wordless book a cat visits his chicken friend in the city, and although he enjoys his trip, he cant help but notice that something very important is missing.

Reviewer: SH

The Last Laugh by Jose Aruego and Ariane Dewey

Reading Level: Ages 3 6

For a little help dealing with bullies, for even the youngest of readers, here is a laugh-out-loud book with a clear and gratifying message. The illustrations are simple, bold and colorful; and all the humor is in the illustrations for everyone to enjoy.

Reviewer: HF

This is the Dream by Diane Z. Shore and Jessica Alexander; illustrated by James Ransome

Reading Level: Ages 5 - 7

Expose your youngest listeners to the entire history of the Civil Rights Movement in this beautifully illustrated and rhythmically written book. In keeping with the mission of the movement itself, major events are presented in a non-violent, but factual manner.

Reviewer: HF

Duck and Goose by Tad Hills

Reading Level: Ages 2 - 4

The duck and goose behave just like siblings in this lively tale about an egg (or ball!). First, they find something to disagree about, like a ball (or egg!). Then they argue about it, fight over it, compromise about it and, ultimately, share it. The illustrations are simple and colorful and the faces of the duck and goose are delightfully expressive.

Reviewer: HF

Tickle the Duck by Ethan Long

Reading Level: Ages 1 - 3

Dont you dare read this book and laugh! No chuckling, guffawing or giggling! And absolutely DO NOT TICKLE this determined duck! Unless you want to share a delightful touch-and-feel book with your little ticklish one.

Reviewer: HF

Mutt Dog! by Stephen Michael King

Reading Level: Ages 2 6

A poor dog who doesn't belong to anyone spends his days hunting for food and places to sleep until one day he wanders into a homeless shelter and meets the lady who runs it.

Reviewer: SH

The 100th Customer by Byung-Gyu Kim and K.T. Hao; illustrated by Giuliano Ferri

Reading Level: Ages 4 8

New restaurateurs Ben Bear and Chris Crocs secret generosity to a poor old woman and a young boy bring more profits than money alone.

Reviewer: SH

Four Hens and a Rooster by Lena and Olof Landstrom

Reading Level: Ages 3 - 6

Four Hens wonder why life at their food trough is so unfair and in the process learn to question the status quo and to stand up to the farmyard bully and demand equality. After consuming power bars and learning relaxation techniques, the hens are ready to tackle the bully and his booster roosters!

Reviewer: HF

Mr. Tuggles Troubles by LeeAnn Blankenship; illustrated by Karen Dugan

Reading Level: Ages 3 7

Mr. Tuggles house is very messy, so it is no surprise when his clothing is misplaced piece by piece, but rather than do a thorough search for the missing pieces, Mr. Tuggle improvises with some unusual items.

Reviewer: SH

In this amusing examination of the importance of keeping track of ones belongings, the hapless Mr. Tuggle deals with the consequences of his forgetfulness and messiness. The droll illustrations of the obstacles he faces (watch his kittens!), the solutions he manufactures, and the reactions of his co-workers (catch the bus driver) delightfully support the comic tone.

Reviewer: HF

The Knight Who Took All Day by James Mayhew

Reading Level: Ages 3 9

A vain knight learns the hard way that actions speak louder than words when he tries to impress a princess by fighting a fierce dragon.

Reviewer: SH

Bad Kitty by Nick Bruel

This funny alphabet book follows the misadventures of a good kitty who goes very, very bad when his people run out of cat food and plan to feed him things that just won't do.

Reviewer: SH

Changeling by Delia Sherman

Reading Level: Grades 4 7

When changeling Neef (a human stolen by the fairies when she was a baby) breaks a geas she never knew had been placed on her she has to go on a quest with her fairy replacement through New York Between to collect three treasures for the Genius of Central Park. If she fails, she will face banishment to the human world, or worse, becoming a victim of the Wild Hunt.

Reviewer: SH

The Beasts of Clawstone Castle by Eva Ibbotson

Reading Level: Grades 4 5

Rollo and Madlyn enlist the help of four and a sixteenth ghosts to help them save their elderly relatives' castle and the rare white wild cattle that roam the property.

Reviewer: SH

Punished by David Lubar

Reading Level, grades 3 - 5

Puns are fun, right? But what if you couldn't stop? That would be a PUN-ishment for you, and everyone you talk to! Discover how a trip to the library brings a PUN-ishing curse down on Logan, and what he has to do to break the spell!

Reviewer: HF

Water Street by Patricia Reilly Giff

Reading Level: Grades 4 - 6

Told from thirteen-year-old Bridget's (Bird's) point of view, this is the story of two very different Irish families struggling to make a living and raise their families in Brooklyn in 1870, after leaving Ireland because of the potato famine. Bird and Thomas, in their last year of school, each learns how to be a good friend to the other. A rich, atmospheric, coming of age story, with believable and likeable characters, that struggle with real obstacles.

Reviewer: HF

Sign of the Raven by Julie Hearn

Reading Level, grade 4 - 8

Oooohhhh! Creepy! A delightful, sinister read combining time-travel into the past and a fantasy world of nasty surgeons, grave-robbers and side-show freaks!

Reviewer: HF

Get Real by Betty Hicks

Reading Level, grade 4 - 7

Did you ever have a girlfriend who was ALWAYS getting you into trouble? The words thirteen year old Destiny (Dez) HATES to hear from her best friend are You have to help me! When Jil decides to find her birth mother, Dez hears those hated words. On top of that, her own parents are driving her crazy! This is an exciting, funny and realistically written story of friendship between two girls as they struggle to understand what makes a good parent.

Reviewer: HF

Ill Sing You One-O by Nan Gregory

Reading Level, grade 4 - 8

This is the story of a young girl, Gemma, who is forced from the foster home and family she loves because some distant members of her biological family have come to claim her. It not only puts an end to the only life she remembers but forces her to confront the question of why her mother abandoned her years before.

Reviewer: HF

That Girl Lucy Moon by Amy Timberlake

Reading Level, grade 4 - 6

How much can go wrong for one girl starting middle school? As if having her mom run away and losing her best friend aren't enough, Lucy gets the whole school mad at her when she organizes a protest about the closing of the finest sledding hill in town. It's a tough year for Lucy Moon. Maybe it's just not worth it to stand up for what's right, if it means standing alone. There's a lot she needs to learn about herself and her own strength.

Reviewer: HF

Listen! by Stephanie Tolan

Reading Level: 4 - 6

For all animal lovers this is a fabulous story about a lonely young girl who rescues a beautiful, frightened, stray dog hiding in the woods. Struggling with her own wounds from a car accident, Charley's compassion and resourcefulness bring healing to both of them.

Reviewer: HF

Fairest by Gail Carson Levine

Reading Level: Grades 5 - 7

Aza, the innkeepers adopted daughter, is so hideous she engenders either pity or rude stares. When she accompanies an eccentric duchess to the kings wedding, Aza finds herself embroiled in a traitorous plot, involving the new queen and a magic mirror.

If you enjoy this fairy tale retelling try Beauty: A Retelling of Beauty and the Beast by Robin McKinley, Just Ella by Margaret Peterson Haddix, The Rumpelstiltskin Problem by Vivian Vande Velde or Goose Chase by Patrice Kindl.

Reviewer: SJS

Artemis Fowl: The Lost Colony by Eoin Colfer

Reading Level: Grades 4 - 7

In this fifth book in the series, Artemis Fowls genius plunges him and Holly into trouble when he successfully predicts a demon sighting, sets out to foil a kidnapping, and discovers that the future of the world once again lies in his hands.

If you have never heard of Artemis Fowl you are in for a treat! You can start at the beginning of the Artemis Fowl series and read your way through.

Reviewer: SJS

Crispin: At the Edge of the World by Avi

Reading Level: Grades 5 - 7

After barely escaping the clutches of John Ayecliffe, Crispin and Bear must once again flee when Bear is branded a traitor by the Brotherhood. In the course of their travels they encounter a witch, take a perilous sea voyage and encounter a murderous band of cutthroats.

Other medieval adventures include The Book of the Lion by Michael Cadnum, Pagans Crusade by Catherine Jinks and Breath by Donna Jo Napoli.

Reviewer: SJS

Julias Kitchen by Brenda E. Ferber

Reading Level: Grades 4 - 6

Eleven-year-old Cara lives a blissful life with her family made even sweeter by her mother Julia, who bakes delicious chocolate chip cookies for her catering business and warm, fragrant Shabbat challah every Friday. Everything changes when Caras mother and little sister are lost in a house fire. Now she and her father are left wondering how to understand what has happened, and even more importantly, how to move on after such a tragedy. One day, Cara finds a way to bring back a piece of her mother and make herself happier, too.

Reviewer: LB

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane by Kate DiCamillo; Illustrated by Bagram Ibatoulline

Reading Level: Grades 3 - 5

Edward, an elegant china rabbit owned by Abilene Tulane, is used to being pampered and loved, though he does not love anyone in return. But when Edward is separated from Abilene, he learns to open his heart to the many people he meets. Soon, Edward finds that love is the most important thing to own, and the one thing he is willing to wait for.

Reviewer: LB

A Little Princess: Based on the Story by Frances Hodgson Burnett adapted by Susanna Davidson; illustrated by Kate Aldous

Reading Level: Grades 2 - 3

Sara Crewe has spent her life being treated like a princess, but when her wealthy father dies suddenly, her world is suddenly transformed. Now she must be a servant to the cruel headmistress Miss Minchin, and live in the cold old attic of the boarding school where she was once a pupil. Sara never gives up hope though, and one morning when she wakes up, she finds something magical has happened which may change her life for the better. If you enjoy this abridgement, you might want to try the original classic too.

Reviewer: LB

Olivia Sharp: The Princess of the Fillmore Street School by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat and Mitchell Sharmat

Reading Level: Grade 1 - 3

Olivia tackles one of her toughest cases when a classmate shares her secret goal of becoming Princess of the School, which does NOT make anyone else in the school very happy. But Olivia handles her client like a queen and everyone has a happy ending.

Reviewer: HF

Pish Posh by Ellen Potter

Reading Level: Grade 4 - 7

You are REALLY gonna wish YOU were Clara Frankofile, one of the heroines of this light-hearted mystery. Shes the rich, really, really rich one, with her own roller coaster in her own apartment! However, you might want to be the other heroine, Annabelle. Shes a very successful thief, who works with her father pulling off risky jobs with all the coolest tools. Either way, this book is a really tempting gem!

Reviewer: HF

Sheep by Valerie Hobbs

Reading Level: Grades 3 - 5

A border collie tells about his life. He is taken from his happy home where he is learning to herd sheep. He goes through a number of owners and names, but never forgets his dream of herding sheep. His owners vary from the wandering goat man to the cruel circus owner who beats him. All ends happily when he finds a home, love, and his true purpose in life.

Reviewer: HG

Lake of Skulls: A Knight's Story by Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell

Reading Level: Grades 3 6

Hey, maybe you dont LOVE to read, but you HAVE TO, now and then, try this! Its short, its fun (even funny), its great! Its Indiana Jones in the middle ages. Enjoy the escapades of our hero as he scrapes through impossible situations with nothing but his horse, his head and his honor. And if you like this guy, weve got more books about him.

Reviewer: HF

Pirate's Passage by William Gilkerson

Reading level, 5-8

Meet mysterious Captain Charles Johnson, who seems to be an intriguing mix of Captain Jack Sparrow and Robin Hood?!? He arrives at Jim's struggling Inn during a frightful storm and gives Jim a 3-D education in piracy, while secretly exploring the old parts of the Inn for reasons of his own. Climb aboard and sail away on this exciting tale of adventure on the high seas. It will give you the low-down on pirate life, including the gruesome details of some of the most victorious, and notorious, of the high seas villains

Reviewer: HF

Pure Dead Trouble by Debi Gliori

Reading Level: Grade 4 - 6

Another adventure with the Strega-Borgia clan! This time demons want the all-powerful Chrononstone, which, you guessed it, has fallen into the claws of Ffup, the Strega-Borgias' pet dragon, who thinks it's a diamond engagement ring! There are frightful eco-terrorists, rabid bats, and marauding multinational corporations! The forces of evil threaten the family on all fronts, but they succeed in routing all of them!

Reviewer: HF

Kitty and Mr. Kipling: Neighbors in Vermont by Lenore Blegvad

Reading Level: Grade 3 - 6

In this fiction-based-on-fact novel, young Kitty welcomes Rudyard Kipling and his wife to her small town in Vermont. Mr. Kipling's foreignness is fascinating to Kitty and the ways of small town Vermonters are intriguing to him. This is a bitter-sweet story of an unusual friendship based on sincere curiosity about people who are different from ourselves. However, not everyone in the community is as welcoming as Kitty, and a sad family situation eventually causes the Kiplings to move away forever.

Reviewer: HF

Rosa, Sola by Carmela A. Martino

Reading Level: Grades 4 - 6

Ten-year old Rosa is an only child (*so/a*) of Italian immigrants and would give anything to have a baby brother like her best friend AnnaMaria. But its best to be careful what you pray for, as Rosa sadly learns. Set in Chicago in 1960, this wonderful book examines family relationships and the many ways in which they try to love and protect each other.

Reviewer: HF

Beka Cooper: Terrier: A Tortell Legend by Tamora Pierce

Reading Level: Grades 5 and up

Beka Cooper is a Puppy (a police cadet) in the most dangerous part of the city where mass murders are occurring and someone calling himself the Shadow Snake is kidnapping and killing children. Fortunately she has the best Dogs (cops) as her trainers, she knows the area well because she grew up there, and she can hear the voices of ghosts who ride around the city on street pigeons.

Reviewer: SH

Devilish by Maureen Johnson

Reading Level: Grades 6 - 8

Girls can be so cruel! Cruel enough to make someone sell her soul to the Devil? Dont miss this scary, and all too realistic, story about one unpopular high school girl who does just that, to avoid her daily rejection and humiliation.

Reviewer: HF

Payback by Andy McNab and Robert Rigby

Reading Level: Grades 6 - 8

This is the exciting sequel to Traitor, by the same authors. Find out how 13 year-old Danny and his special-services grandfather clear the family name of the accusation of traitor. Written by an

ex-agent, these books have that fun ring of authenticity. Not that you'll how to use plastic explosives.

Reviewer: HF

The Princetta by Anne-Laure Bondoux

Reading Level: Grades 5 - 8

This is a thrilling fantasy about a princess, forced into an arranged marriage, and the sickly son of a sea captain she encounters. They both believe that their only future lies at sea. But the sea holds its own threats and challenges, not the least of which is the maniacal hatred of the princess's old teacher, whose plan to usurp the throne is foiled by the princess's continued existence.

Reviewer: HF

Everlost by Neal Shusterman

Reading Level: Grades 5 and older

Allie and Nick both happen to not be wearing their seatbelts when their parents' cars collide head on. Thrown through the windshield and killed, their souls bump into each other on their way to where they are going and end up spiraling out of control and into Everlost, a phantom world superimposed on the world of the living, where other deceased children, beloved items, and memorable locations exist. The pair set out on a quest to find out what happened to their families and along the way they have to avoid beings who are trying to prevent them from ever getting to heaven.

Reviewer: SH

The Fetch by Chris Humphreys

Reading Level, grade 6 - 8

Sixteen-year old Sky is finally learning why he's always felt so different. The discovery of an old sea chest belonging to his dead grandfather and his mother giving him his birth caul, set him on a journey involving ancient Norwegian fortune telling runes, evil, undead draugs and a mysterious fetch, or body double, that leaves its owner to travel through time, bringing Sky ever closer to the secrets in his blood.

Reviewer: HF

Shackletons Stowaway by Victoria McKernan

Reading Level: Grades 5 - 9

This riveting survival story is based on the true-life adventures of Perce Blackborow, who was only 18-years-old when he stowed away on Shackletons ill-fated Antarctic voyage in 1914. The book chronicles life at sea, the struggle to survive in the most inhospitable place on earth, and Shackletons heroic efforts to save his men. For a nonfiction account read Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World by Jennifer Armstrong.

Reviewer: HG

All Hallows Eve: 13 Stories by Vivian Vande Velde

Reading Level: Grades 6 8

Vivian Vande Velde lets her dark side out in this wonderful collection of thirteen creepy tales of ghosts, vampires, werewolves, witches and other things that go bump in the Halloween night.

Reviewer: SH

Parent Swap by Terence Blacker

Reading Level: Grades 6 - 8

Danny Bell hated everything about his life, his school, his parents, his neighborhood so when he found a flier in his backpack for a company called Parent Swap which promised a new home, new parents and a new life, Danny jumped at the chance.

Other entertaining books by this author include: Boy2Girl and The Angel Factory.

Reviewer: SJS

Snatched by Pete Hautman and Mary Logue

Reading Level: Grades 7 - 9

When a classmate disappears school newspaper reporter Roni Delicata and her reluctant side-

kick Brian set out to find the teen before it is too late.

Other abduction stories include: *The Kidnapping of Suzie Q* by Martin Waddell and *Missing Since Monday* by Ann Martin.

Reviewer: SJS

Things Hoped For by Andrew Clements

Reading Level: Grades 6 - 9

Seventeen-year-old Gwen has been living with her grandfather in New York City for two years while pursuing her dream. Her professional future will be decided in the next week when she auditions for Juilliard one day and the Manhattan School of Music the next. If neither of these colleges accepts her, two years of sacrifice and hard work will be for nothing. One telephone message from her grandfather changes Gwens life forever. He tells her that he has gone away for awhile and he asks Gwen to make sure that nobody knows he is gone. Besieged by tenants, a very creepy great-uncle and the pressures of her upcoming audition, Gwen confides in Robert, a young stranger who has an even weirder story than hers.

If you enjoy this book, and would like to read Roberts story, try *Things Not Seen* by Andrew Clements. For another book about making it in the music world try *The Mozart Season* by Virginia Euwer Wolff.

Reviewer: SJS

Blue by Joyce Moyer Hostetter

Reading Level: Grades 5 - 8

This is a story about a real polio hospital created at a summer camp in North Carolina, and one family who is tragically affected, when a polio epidemic erupts one summer. While some children are lost and many are crippled by this horrible disease, many are saved by the their own determination and the dedication of doctors, nurses, and local volunteers.

Reviewer: HF

Black Duck by Janet Taylor Lisle

Reading Level: Grade 6 - 8

Looking for a riveting read? Try historical fiction! Based on a true, unsolved case from prohibition, this is an exciting tale of two teenagers caught up in rum-running, treachery, organized crime and

murder off the coast of Rhode Island in 1929.

Reviewer: HF

Prohibition, rival mobs, a dead body, daring rum runners all played a part of Ruben Harts youth in the year 1929. Little by little the story comes out as he tells his story to David, an aspiring young journalist. David wants to find out who killed the dead man, whos on what side of the law, and what happened to the crew of The Black Duck. This is a great read for fans of both mystery and historical fiction.

Reviewer: HG

The Year the Gypsies Came by Linzi Glass

Reading Level: Grades 6 - 8

Tired of the same old plot line? Try this book for an absorbing, authentic tale about a far away place and fascinating, flawed characters. Set in apartheid Johannesburg, South Africa in the mid-1960s, this is a beautiful and a tragic tale of the consequences when two troubled families collide.

Reviewer: HF

Rash by Pete Hautman

Reading Level: Grades 7 and up

Want to take a scary peek at the future, one in which the government keeps its citizens 100% safe, 100% of the time? In a world where anger, aggression and even sarcasm are unacceptable, even criminal, Bos anger control problems land him in tundra prison working on a pizza assembly line. The guards and prison life are brutal, and the only way to gain a little protection is to make the illegal prison football team.

Reviewer: HF

From the author of *Godless*, we have another funny, thought-provoking offering. The futuristic novel is set in The United Safer States of America where the obsession with safety is society's major concern and even anger is a criminal offense. Sixteen-year-old Bo has problems with anger and his rash behavior lands him in a juvenile prison system reminiscent of Camp Green Lake in *Holes*. There he becomes part of an illegal football team run by a sadistic coach. But for the first time he understands that society was and could be different. Add to the mix an artificial intelligence that's more human than many of the book's characters and you get another fabulous read by Hautman.

Reviewer: HG

La Lnea by Ann Jaramillo

Reading Level: Grades 5 - 8

La Lnea is the border between Mexico and the U.S. Fifteen-year-old Miguel plans to attempt the dangerous crossing to join his parents who had left seven years before. Unknown to Miguel, his sister, Elena is determined to cross also. *La Lnea* is a realistic, adventure-filled journey filled with the perils of corrupt officials, the people killer, coyote guides, private armies, and the hostile desert itself. They are determined to make it or die in the attempt. For book about illegal immigrants living in the U.S. try *The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child* by Francisco Jimnez.

Reviewer: HG

How To Be Popular by Meg Cabot

Reading Level: Grades 7 - 9

Armed with an old how-to manual she finds in her best friend's attic sixteen-year-old Steph sets out to be the most popular girl in her high school. But the advice soon lands her in more trouble than she can handle.

Reviewer: SJS

Dairy Queen: A Novel by Catherine Gilbert Murdock

Reading Level: Grades 7 and older

With her older brothers away at college and her father injured sixteen-year-old D.J. must do all the chores on her parents' dairy farm. Her life is further complicated when the coach from an

opposing high school forces his spoiled, but very cute, quarterback to work with her on the farm. If you enjoy this novel try Squashed by Joan Bauer.

Reviewer: SJS

Traitor by Andy McNab

Reading Level: Grades 6 - 9

When seventeen-year-old Danny Watts is told he will not receive a scholarship in the elite RCBs because his grandfather was a traitor, Danny sets out to find the old man and bring him to justice. What Danny doesn't know is that, from the moment he initiated the search, his life was forfeit. Other thrillers include Stormbreaker by Anthony Horowitz and Thieves Like Us by Stephen Cole.

Reviewer: SJS

The Goodness Gene by Sonia Levitin

Reading Level: Grades 7 and older

Sixteen-year-old Will and his twin brother Berk, the sons of the Compassionate Director of the Dominion of the Americas, are both being groomed to eventually share power with their father. When Will is sent out into the real world to observe a Compassionate Removal he learns things about his father and himself that change his life forever. Other books about dystopian societies include The Giver by Lois Lowry and 1984 by George Orwell.

Reviewer: SJS

Hit the Road by Caroline Cooney

Reading Level: Grades 7 and older

Sixteen-year-old Brits Summer turns into one long string of hilarious disasters when her grandmother pressures her into driving the get away car in a nursing home kidnapping. If you enjoy this light-hearted road trip try Rules of the Road by Joan Bauer.

Reviewer: SJS

Eyes of the Emperor by Graham Salisbury

Reading Level: Grades 7 and older

Sixteen-year-old Japanese-American Eddy Okubo lies about his age and enlists in the local Hawaiian unit of the United States Army. While he is on leave, the Japanese attack Pearl Harbor. Although he is a loyal citizen and soldier, Eddy soon finds the greatest threat to his safety comes from his own country.

Other stories about Japanese citizens during World War II include *Baseball Saved Us* by Ken Mochizuki, *Under the Blood-Red Sun* by Graham Salisbury, and *Weedflower* by Cynthia Kadohata.

Reviewer: SJS

Crunch Time by Mariah Fredericks

Reading Level: Grades 6 - 8

While the plot of this novel concerns four high school seniors preparing for college entrance exams, the conflicts examine issues common to middle schoolers, too. When four strangers band together, each for reasons of their own, they must decide how much to trust each other and how to deal with the harm caused when one of their group betrays them.

Reviewer: HF

No Right Turn by Terry Trueman

Reading Level: Grades 8 and up

The book begins as Jordans father shoots himself, knowing that his thirteen-year-old son is in the house and will be the one to find the body. Fast forward three years to find that Jordan has turned himself into a zombie and social outcast who has never dealt with his pain and rage. Jordan life begins to change when his mother starts to date the owner of a classic 1976 Corvette. The speed and excitement of the car becomes so addictive that Jordan starts to borrow the car. The car even brings him together with the girl of his dreams. Terry Trueman, author of *Stuck in Neutral* writes another powerful, compelling story.

Reviewer: HG

Duckling Ugly by Neal Schusterman

Reading Level: Grades 7 - 10

Meet Cara DeFido, the ugliest girl in Flocks Rest. Outcast and unloved by her family and peers, Cara struggles to find her place in a world where her reflection shatters mirrors and windows, and even clouds up clear water. Until the day she stumbles upon a magical place of eternal loveliness, Cara never dreamed of being beautiful. But her newfound beauty comes at a price, and Cara is forced to confront a living nightmare beyond what she could ever have imagined.

Reviewer: LB

Crushed by Laura and Tom McNeal

Reading Level, Grades 7 8

Audrey Reed, a junior in high school, falls hard for the hot, new student at her school. In this thoughtfully written, realistic, insightful book about personal secrets and the fears of exposure that we all have, Audrey struggles to understand why someone so cool would fall in love with her. But every character in this book has secrets and all of us are Crushed, sometime.

Reviewer: HF

Monkey Town: A Story of the Scopes Trial by Ronald Kidd

Reading Level: Grades 6 - 8

Here's a treat for historical fiction readers! Fifteen-year old Frances Robinson is an eye-witness to the famous Scopes trial where high school teacher John Scopes was tried for the crime of teaching evolution in school in the state of Tennessee in 1925. Yes, this really happened! Over the course of that oppressively hot summer Frances quiet rural life explodes with sabotage, threats, disillusionment and injustice.

Reviewer: HF

M or F? by Lisa Papademetriou and Chris Tebbetts

Reading Level: Grade 7 - 8

This is a funny story of teenage electronic bait and switch. Gay Marcus and straight Frannie, best friends, are both looking for love, but not with each other! Trying to overcome the awkwardness of talking to the object of their affections, they turn to IMing as the obvious solution. Enjoy the confusion and suffer the heartache as they learn that it's always just best to be yourself.

Reviewer: HF

Elsewhere by Gabrielle Zevin

Reading Level: Grades 6 - 10

Our heroine, fifteen-year-old Liz Hall, wakes up into a dream on the S.S. Nile, a luxurious ship in the middle of the ocean. It takes her a day or so to figure out her situation and completely understand it; she has reached the afterlife. Liz died in a hit-and-run bicycle accident, and now finds herself elsewhere, where no one gets older everyone gets younger to Liz's great distaste. She moves in with her Grandma Betty, and this is not Liz's idea of a great way to spend the next (almost) sixteen years. At first all she can bring herself to do is go to the Observation Deck and spend eternims (the money of the dead) on viewing sessions so she can be connected to her old life. Then she meets Owen Welles, and it seems that he is her ticket out of post-mortem depression, until something someone - happens.

Reviewer: EF

Whoa, what happens to you after you die? Kind of creepy to think about! Fifteen year-old (almost sixteen year-old) Liz dies after being hit by a car while on her bike. Discover this author's speculation about what comes next for Liz in this thoughtful and creative book that may create more questions than it answers.

Reviewer: HF

Johnny and the Dead by Terry Pratchett

Reading Level: Grades 5 7

In this second Johnny Maxwell book, Johnny has to save an abandoned cemetery when the current inhabitants realize that only Johnny can see them and hear them. It's not the ghosts who are scary in this book; it's the people who want to destroy the town's traditional feel and historic buildings in the name of progress.

Reviewer: HF

Johnny gets himself into an odd situation when he knocks on the door of a tomb and someone answers it! Now he has to figure out how to stop a development plan that will force the dead to move from the old cemetery they call home.

Reviewer: SH

Out of Time by John Marsden

Reading Level: Grades 6 8

James, haunted by his past, has retreated into himself, refusing to speak and repeating ritualistic behaviors, until the death of a scientist who befriended him leaves him in possession of a time machine. This book, with disjointed chapters, gives the reader the feeling of hopping around in time and space.

Reviewer: SH

Wrecked by E. R. Frank

Reading Level: Grades 7 - 10

An intense look at one girl's struggle with post-traumatic stress syndrome resulting from a car accident in which she was driving and kills another young girl. The accident impacts everyone in her world to varying degrees and exposes her family's inability to help her recover emotionally from the accident. Written by a clinical social worker/psychotherapist who specializes in treating trauma to young people, this book frankly addresses both the physical and emotional issues resulting from trauma.

Reviewer: HF

Peeps: A Novel by Scott Westerfeld

Reading Level: Grades 8 and older

Nineteen-year-old Cal learns a hard life lesson when a one-night encounter with a woman he only knows as Morgan leaves him infected with a parasite that causes most people to turn into psychotic, light-shunning cannibals. Luckily for Cal he is only a carrier, unluckily that means that anyone he has so much as kissed since his encounter with Morgan has also been infected. He now must drop out of college and hunt down all his ex-girlfriends before they can kill or infect others. Every other chapter in this unusual book gives information about real-life (but equally horrifying) parasites that prey on unsuspecting hosts.

Reviewer: SH

Oh, Rats! The Story of Rats and People by Albert Marrin; illustrated by C.B.Mordan

Reading Level: Grades 4 - 7

Wow, who knew? People eat rats! Rats survive nuclear fall-out without injury, and rats are used to find buried land mines! The impressive list goes on and on. They have conquered the world right along with man. Forget the Ick feeling and check this out!

Reviewer: HF

Exploring the Unexplained: The World's Greatest Marvels, Mysteries and Myths

Reading Level: Grades 5 - 8

Who says reading non-fiction is no fun? You may wind up with more questions than answers after reading this (mostly pictures) book about weird and spooky stuff in our world. Remember the Amityville Horror? Or how about zombies and vampires? If Sci-fi is more your thing, read about Roswell, and extraterrestrial intelligence. Also investigated is tantalizing stuff like remote viewing and psychokinesis. This book has got it all!

Reviewer: HF

Forensic Science by Ron Fridell

Reading Level: Grades 5 - 8

Are you a *CSI* or *CSI Miami* fan? Here's a short and sweet (?) book answering all your crime questions. It discusses types of evidence, crime scene reconstruction, and forensic technologies. It's kind of a gruesome topic but the author keeps the yuck factor under control. It includes a glossary of terms and a bibliography for further reading.

Reviewer: HF

Bionics by Judith Jango-Cohen

Reading Level: Grades 5 - 8

Darth Vader is the ultimate in bionics; a creature made up entirely of artificial parts. Crude artificial parts for human have been around for centuries, but they were never very good substitutes. Well, the future is looking much better. There are not only replacement body parts but, improvement body parts! Even bionics for animals! Maybe someday you'll have a bionic part.

Reviewer: HF

Pitch and Throw, Grasp and Know: What is a Synonym? By Brian P. Cleary; illustrated by Brian Gable

Reading Level: Ages 4 8

This rhyming text explains, clarifies and elucidates exactly what a synonym is.

Reviewer: SH

Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin by Gene Barretta

Reading Level: Grades 2 4

This interesting book shows many of the conveniences we are used to today and how little they have changed since Benjamin Franklin invented them in the 18th century.

Reviewer: SH

How Much Can a Bare Bear Bear? What are Homonyms and Homophones? By Brian P. Cleary; illustrated by Brian Gable

Reading Level: Ages 4 8

This fun rhyming romp introduces the concepts of homonyms and homophones in a way that will leave children asking for more.

Reviewer: SH

Team Moon: How 400,000 People Landed Apollo 11 on the Moon by Catherine Thimmesh

Reading Level: Grades 5 - 8

Thirty-seven years ago, after thirty-seven CENTURIES of dreaming, man landed on the moon!

This inspiring book chronicles (with lots of fabulous photos) the unbelievable United States space program and the 400,000 dreamers who made that fantastic voyage possible. This book documents a truly defining accomplishment in human history.

Reviewer: HF

Rescues! by Sandra Markle

Reading Level: Grades 4 - 8

For readers fascinated by disasters, here's Rescue! This book uses actual disasters from around the world to demonstrate different rescue situations, rescue personnel (dogs, too), technology and skills. This is an informative and exciting book to read.

Reviewer: HF

Return of the Bunny Suicides by Andy Riley

Reading Level: Grades 6 and up

For all the fans of The Book of Bunny Suicides, here's the eagerly looked-for sequel! If you're not familiar with these desperate little bunnies, but find the antics of Itchy and Scratchy or Wily Coyote amusing, you'll howl at the sad, pathetic efforts of these guys.

Reviewer: HF

Skateboarding is Not a Crime: 50 Years of Street Culture by James Davis; photographs by Skin Phillips

Reading Level: Grades 4 - 8

Skateboarding is everything, it is a pastime, a sport, a hobby, a craze, an industry, and a toy. A profession, an excuse, a game, a lifestyle, a distraction. It is a reason, not a crime. This is a comprehensive look at the sport, with coverage of its history, equipment, stars, lifestyles, literature and role in countries around the world. It's got excellent photos and a little bit of how-to instruction. It's definitely an art book for the skate crowd.

Reviewer: HF

Just Kidding by Trudy Ludwig; illustrated by Adam Gustavson

Reading Level: Grades 1 - 5

Do every school-age child a favor, and read this book together. This is a non-fiction book that tells the story of D.J. and his troubles with a bully. The story demonstrates some practical and effective ways for a child to deal with a bully, as well as important information for adults to understand about this form of harassment. The author includes suggestions on discussing this issue, tips on teasing dos and don'ts and a wealth of additional resources on the subject.

Reviewer: HF

The Monster Health Book: A Guide to Eating Healthy, Being Active, & Feeling Great for Monsters & Kids! by Edward Miller

Reading Level: Grades 3 - 6

Monsters and kids have a lot in common at least health-wise! They both need to learn that eating healthy, staying active, and getting enough sleep keeps them feeling happy and fit. Follow the monster and his friends through this book to find out how to count calories, pack a healthy lunch, and eat food to boost your mood.

Reviewer: LB

Fooled You! Fakes and Hoaxes Through the Years by Elaine Pascoe, illustrations by Laurie Keller

Reading Level: Grades 4 - 7

For those readers who prefer non-fiction, here's a fun look at how gullible (stupid?) people can be! Including a particularly pertinent look at internet hoaxes, this book describes several hoaxes, their consequences and why each was able to succeed. The illustrations accompanying each tale are witty and add a chuckle to each scheme.

Reviewer: HF

A Bad Case of the Giggles. Bk. 2: Kids Pick the Funniest Poems edited by Bruce Lansky; illustrated by Stephen Carpenter

Reading Level, grade 3-6

Poems can be fun,
Especially the pun-ny, ones.
But make a date,

To read page 98,
And then youll see why
Poetry can make you cry!

Reviewer: HF

I Will Plant You a Lilac Tree: A Memoir of a Schindlers List Survivor by Laura Hillman

Reading Level: Grades 7 and up

In 1942, Laura (formerly Hannelore) was a fifteen-year-old German Jew who volunteered to be transported with her family. The next three years took her through the horrors of eight labor and concentration camps. Its a story that has been told before, but Hannelores beautiful spirit and incredible strength come shining through. Incredibly enough, in the fourth camp she met a Jewish, Polish soldier and they fell in love. Schindlers list was their salvation.

Reviewer: HG

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