

Book Reviews for 2007

Diary of a Fly by Doreen Cronin; pictures by Harry Bliss

Reading Level: Ages 3 10

A fly tells all in her diary, written AFTER she grows a head.

Reviewer: SH

My Cat, the Silliest Cat in the World by Gilles Bachelet

Reading Level: Ages 3 6

There is something VERY wrong with Mr. Bachelets cat.

Reviewer: SH

The Three Little Fish and the Big Bad Shark by Ken Geist; illustrated by Julia Gorton

Reading Level: Ages 3 - 6

The classic story of the Three Little Pigs retold under the sea! Fantastic, vibrantly colorful pictures and clever dialogue adaption make for a great story.

Reviewer: EF

Dadblamed Union Army Cow by Susan Fletcher; illustrated by Kimberly Bulcken Root

Reading Level: Ages 4 9

This amusing picturebook is based on the true story of a cow who traveled with a Union Army regiment throughout the American Civil War.

Reviewer: SH

Ruthie and the (Not So) Teeny Tiny Lie by Laura Rankin

Reading Level: Ages 2 5

Ruthie loves everything teeny tiny and one day she is thrilled to find a teeny tiny camera on the playground, but when Martin tells her it is his, she lies and insists it is hers. Will her conscience let her get away with a not so teeny tiny lie?

Reviewer: SH

Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identity by Mo Willems

Reading Level: Ages 3 5

Trixie brings her one-of-a-kind, unique Knuffle Bunny to school only to discover that another girl has her own unique, one-of-a-kind Nuffle Bunny in this sequel to Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale.

Reviewer: SH

Max's Magic Seeds by Graldine Elschner; illustrated by Jean-Pierre Corderoch

Reading Level: Ages 4 7

Max is not looking forward to school starting and the boring long walk that takes him there, until his uncle gives him a huge bag of flower seeds and instructions to secretly scatter them along his path.

Reviewer: SH

The Backward Day by Ruth Krauss; pictures by Marc Simont

Reading level: Ages 3 - 7

Ever feel like doing everything differently? The little boy in *The Backward Day* does! He wakes up and decides it is backwards day. Starting with getting dressed and throughout his morning, the little boy does everything backward with the cooperation of his family. The little boy has fun with this idea with his family. This is a cute story from the 1950s, published for the first time with wonderful illustrations by Marc Simont.

Reviewer: RR

Keeper of Soles by Teresa Bateman; illustrated by Yayo

Reading Level: Ages 4 8

When Death comes for a cobbler's soul the poor craftsman does the only thing he can to avoid his faith, he talks the Grim Reaper into waiting a month for a pair of custom made sandals.

Reviewer: SH

Whos Hiding by Satoru Onishi

Reading Level: Ages 1 3

This clever book is perfect to share with a young toddler. The cartoon animals stay in the same position on each page, but sometimes they blend into the background, or sleep, or are angry and the child is asked to identify which animal is doing something special.

Reviewer: SH

On Meadowview Street by Henry Cole

Reading Level: Ages 3 8

When Carolines family moves to Meadowview Street she discovers that it has been a long time since anyone has viewed a meadow there, but what starts off as one protected flower in Carolines yard soon changes things for the better.

Reviewer: SH

The End by David LaRochelle and Richard Egielski

Reading Level: Ages 4 7

The clever cause and effect fairytale starts at the end and ends with once upon a time.

Reviewer: SH

The Top Job by Elizabeth Cody Kimmel; illustrated by Robert Neubecker

Reading Level: Ages 4 8

Have you ever wondered how the light bulb on the top of the Empire State Building gets changed? This fictionalized account of the facts will make you wonder about a lot of other odd, top jobs.

Reviewer: SH

Slugs in Love by Susan Pearson; illustrated by Kevin OMalley

Reading Level: Ages 3 7

Marylou loves how Herbie's slime trail glistens in the dark, how he can flatten himself to fit through cracks and frankly everything about him, so one morning she leaves him a love note. Herbie is very interested in meeting his admirer, but unfortunately he doesn't know who Marylou is and the garden is so big how will two lovelorn slugs ever get together?

Reviewer: SH

Olvina Swims by Grace Lin

Reading Level: Ages 4 - 9

Have you ever been afraid to swim? Olvina the chicken is vacationing with her penguin friend, Hailey, and tells her she is afraid to swim. In Hawaii there are a lot of places for swimming so Hailey wants to help her. Hailey starts Olvina off in the bathtub and then takes her to the pool. With arm floaties and kind encouragement, Olvina realizes she can swim and that it is a lot of fun. This is a cute story that shows with help from a friend, you can do anything.

Reviewer: RR

Our Tree Named Steve by Alan Zweibel; illustrated by David Catrow

Reading Level: Ages 3 8

When parents take their children to see the land in the woods where their new house is going to be built the children are enchanted by one particular tree. Instantly dubbed Steve the tree is spared from the chainsaws and lives a long and noble life with its new family.

Reviewer: SH

Wolf Island by Celia Godkin

Reading Level: Ages 5 - 10

If you have ever wondered what happens when an animal leaves its natural surroundings, then this is the book for you. When the wolves accidentally leave Wolf Island, it becomes easy for the deer to move in. This change in the food chain endangers the other species on the island until the wolves make their way back to the island. This beautifully illustrated book gently explains how quickly the food chain can be compromised and how important it is for nature to keep its delicate balance.

Reviewer: RR

Tunjur! Tunjur! Tunjur! A Palestinian Folktale retold by Margaret Read MacDonald; illustrated by Alik Arzoumanian

Reading Level: Ages 3 9

An old woman prays for a child and is blessed with a little pot for a daughter. When Pot goes to town and is mistaken for an ordinary pot she discovers she can steal things she wants by making her lid stick shut, but she makes one too many trips to town and learns a hard lesson about stealing.

Reviewer: SH

Wake Up, Henry Rooster! by Margriet Ruurs; illustrated by Sean Cassidy

Reading Level: Ages 4 6

Henry Rooster has a problem, he just is not a morning person...er...bird, so how in the world is he supposed to get up before sunrise to crow and wake the world?

Reviewer: SH

Detective Small in the Amazing Banana Caper by Wong Herbert Yee

Reading Level: Ages 5 7

After grocers discover one morning that every banana in town is missing, Detective Small gets right on the case!

Reviewer: EF

Counting Crocodiles by Judy Sierra; illustrated by Will Hillenbrand

Reading Level: Ages 2 5

Monkey lives on an island with a lemon tree and would really like to visit a neighboring island with a banana plant, but the sea is full of crocodiles. Luckily she is a very clever monkey.

Reviewer: SH

Bashful Bob and Doleful Dorinda by Margaret Atwood; illustrated by Duan Petri?i?.

Reading Level: Ages 6 - 7

Bob, raised by dogs, and Dorinda, brought up by distant relatives who dont treat her all that nicely, meet one day and work together to save the town from a bewildered buffalo.

Reviewer: EF

Ella Sets the Stage by Carmela & Steven DAMico

Reading Level: Ages 3 6

When Ellas teacher announces that the class will have a talent show, Ella is excited until she realizes she doesnt know what her talent is! Will she find one in time for the performance?

Reviewer: EF

Casey Back at Bat by Dan Gutman; paintings by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher

Reading Level: Ages 5 8

Caseys return to bat scores him a strong fly ball, hit across the world and through time! But will

he be able to bring himself home?

Reviewer: EF

Pirate Bob by Kathryn Lasky; illustrated by David Clark

Reading Level: 3 - 7

Pirate Bob likes being a pirate but are other pirate friends and booty enough for him to be happy?

Reviewer: EF

What Do Parents Do? (When Youre Not Home) by Jeanie Franz Ransom, illustrated by Cyd Moore

Reading Level: Ages 3 7

While youre spending the night at Grandmas, Mom and Dad get to have all the fun doing the things they say you cant do! Who will clean up their mess at the end of the day?

Reviewer: EF

When a boy and his sister go to visit his grandmother, the boy responds to the question of what his parents are up to. The answer is no good. The parents are doing all the wrong things, such as jumping on the bed and sitting too close to the TV. The cheerful illustrations simultaneously show the fun that the children are having at the grandparents and the fun the parents are having at home. The books strength lies in the narrators ability to repeat parent phrases (such as Even though thats not the way we treat pillows in our house) with explanations of lifes little mysteries (why are there always missing socks). A fun read for children and parents alike.

Reviewer: LY

The Great Fuzz Frenzy by Janet Stevens and Susan Stevens Crummel

Reading Level: Ages 4 6

What do you think would happen if a tennis ball fell into a prairie dog hole? If you answer with chaos, youre right!

Reviewer: EF

The Dumpster Diver by Janet Wong; illustrated by David Roberts

Reading Level: Ages 3 7

The Dumpster Diver and his neighbors (the Diving Team) prove that one mans trash is anothers

treasure by salvaging wonderful things from dumpsters that can be reformed into fun objects.

Reviewer: EF

The Story of Cherry the Pig by Utako Yamada

Reading Level: Ages 4 - 7

Cherry the pig loves to bake desserts. Then one day, she overhears a family of mice who stole some bites from her apple cake talking about how incredible it tasted, and she is inspired to enter the cake into the bake-off at the Harvest Festival!

Reviewer: EF

If Not for the Calico Cat by Mary Blount Christian; illustrated by Sebasti Serra

Reading Level: Ages 3 6

Back in the days of sailing ships it was believed that a calico cat on board ship would keep the crew safe from danger, but, as the crew of *The Jade Lotus* discovers, your luck really depends on the cat.

Reviewer: SH

My Dadima Wears a Sari by Kashmira Sheth; illustrated by Yoshiko Jaeggi

Reading Level: Ages 3 8

A young girl wonders why her grandmother always wears a sari, so her grandmother explains all the wonderful things you can do with the versatile article of clothing. At the end are instructions for wrapping a sari. If you like this book you will also like *Sukis Kimono* by Chieri Uegaki.

Reviewer: SH

When Rupa asks her Dadima if she would rather wear a skirt and tee-shirt instead of a sari, she learns about all the wonderful things a sari can be and do! Whether used for collecting shells, playing hide-and-seek, an umbrella in a rainstorm, or camouflage in the jungle, Dadimas sari is a lot more than just something to wear!

Reviewer: LB

The Gulps by Rosemary Wells and Marc Brown

Reading Level: Ages 4 - 7

The Gulp family likes to gobble all kinds of food unless it's healthy food, that is! When they go to the county fair, the dance floor collapses under them, the wheels on the hay wagon snap off, and they all get stuck going down the waterslide! What can they do to get healthy again?

Reviewer: SH

365 Penguins by Jean-Luc Fromental and Jolle Jolivet

Reading Level: Ages 2 - 5

What happens when a family gets one penguin a day for a whole year? How do you store penguins? In cartons like eggs? Cubes? Pyramids? And who is sending all these penguins? Fantastic art and math play make this book fun to read.

Reviewer: EF

The Red Chalk by Iris van der Heide; illustrated by Marije Tolman

Reading Level: Ages 3 - 5

Sara thinks the sidewalk is too bumpy to draw on with her chalk, so she trades it away for some marbles. Then she trades those away, and continues trading, unsatisfied. What will Sara end up with?

Reviewer: EF

Once Upon a Banana by Jennifer Armstrong; illustrated by David Small

Reading Level: Ages 2 - 6

A mischievous performing monkey runs away from his owner, steals a banana and ignores a no littering sign, which causes chain reaction chaos in the city as more signs are inadvertently disobeyed.

Reviewer: SH

Wolf! Wolf! by John Rocco

Reading Level: Ages 3 - 7

This book lets you know the wolfs side of the Boy Who Cried Wolf story.

Reviewer: SH

Building with Dad by Carol Nevius; illustrated by Bill Thomson

Reading Level: Ages 2 7

This book, which is laid out sideways, will thrill any construction-loving child with its simple story of a school being built and its grand scale illustrations of the heavy equipment being used on the job.

Reviewer: SH

Fergus and the Night-Demon: An Irish Ghost Story by Jim Murphy; illustrated by John Manders

Reading Level: Ages 6 10

Fergus is the laziest man in Ireland and for that very reason the Night-Demon has decided to come and get him, but Fergus uses his wits and a sense of blarney to avoid his horrible fate, and learns a lesson too. **WARNING:** This book is not for those prone to nightmares!

Reviewer: SH

Where is the Cake? by T. T. Khing

Reading Level: Ages 2 7

This clever wordless book has many plots literally running side by side. The reader can follow the rats who have stolen a cake, or the very upset young bunny, the pig familys interrupted picnic and many more characters who all end up together at the end.

Reviewer: SH

Selvakumar Knew Better by Virginia Kroll; illustrated by Xiaojun Li

Reading Level: Ages 5 9

This book is based on the true story of a dog who saved a boy during the terrible 2004 tsunami

that devastated India and other Indian Ocean countries.

Reviewer: SH

Cowlick! by Christin Ditchfield; illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw

Reading Level: Ages 3 6

If you or someone you love suffers from bad hair days caused by cowlicks, you will get a kick out of this books explanation of how they come to be.

Reviewer: SH

Pumpkin Hill by Elizabeth Spurr; illustrated by Whitney Martin

An unpicked pumpkin on a hill goes to seed and so do generations of its descendents until one day the pumpkins wreck havoc in town when a storm shakes them all free of their vines and down the hill they roll.

Reviewer: SH

Wind-Wild Dog by Barbara Joosse; illustrated by Kate Kiesler

Reading Level: Ages 4 7

Ziva is a husky puppy with one brown eye and one blue eye, which makes most of the sled dog racers not want her because of the superstition that a brown eye makes a dog half wild. When she is finally adopted by a racer she has to decide if she is going to be a wild dog, or a tame one.

Reviewer: SH

This Way, Ruby! by Jonathan Emmett; illustrated by Rebecca Harry

Reading Level: Ages 2 5

Ruby the duckling goes exploring with her brothers and sisters, but, while they want to rush from place to place, she wants to go slowly and enjoy the sights and sounds. It is a good thing she does too, because when the ducklings become lost only Ruby can figure out how to get home.

Reviewer: SH

Letters from a Desperate Dog by Eileen Christelow

Reading Level: Ages 3 5

Emma the dog has a problem; her human is always barking, Bad! Bad! Bad! at the smallest thing. Luckily she finds an online advice column Dear Queenie and can ask for some helpful hints. If you like this book, another book about a dog with a problem owner you will enjoy is Dear Mrs. Larue: Letters From Obedience School by Mark Teague.

Reviewer: SH

The Best Chef in Second Grade by Katharine Kenah; illustrated by Abby Carter

Reading Level: Grades 1 - 3

Everyone wants to be the best at something and second grade Ollie is no different. The only problem is he enjoys doing is cooking which doesn't help him in school. Until he learns that a famous TV chef is coming to his classroom. Ollie is very excited until he is given the assignment to find his family's favorite dish. With his fussy sister how is he supposed to do that? Every day he comes to school and finds he is the only one without a family favorite and this was his chance to be the best in his class. Will he ever find his family's favorite food before the chef arrives? Check out The Best Chef in Second Grade to find out how Ollie completes his hardest assignment yet.

Reviewer: RR

Someone Named Eva by Joan M. Wolf

Reading Level: Grades 5 - 8

In 1942 the Nazis destroyed the town of Lidice, Czechoslovakia. Lidice was emptied of all 500 of its citizens. A few children who looked like the German Aryan ideal were taken from their families and sent to special centers to be reeducated and reborn as German boys and girls. They were given new names and forbidden to speak any language except German. Once they completed their schooling they were adopted by German families. In this fictionalized account, 11-year-old Milada struggles to remember her family, her country and her very identity as she fights against becoming someone named Eva. The authors note at the end should not be missed.

Reviewer: HG

Into the Woods by Lyn Gardner; pictures by Mini Grey

Reading Level: ages 9 and up

Sisters Aurora, Storm and baby Any are orphaned after their mothers death and their fathers abandonment. Having been given a mysterious flute on her mothers death bed, Storm feels a new sense of responsibility to her sisters. Upon the arrival of the evil Dr. DeWilde and his pack of wolves, Aurora, Storm and Any are forced to run from their home at Eden End. Their adventure takes them to an inviting house of sweets, a long lost great grandmother and to meet a pied piper that lures children away from home. They never know when Dr. DeWilde will appear or when his wolves will be lurking in the bushes. Aurora, beautiful, trusting, and fearful, and Storm, the adventurous and wild one, have to find baby Any as well as their way to safety.

Reviewer: RR

Skulduggery Pleasant by Derek Landy

Reading Level: Grades 5 and up

Stephanie is spending the night alone in the mansion she recently inherited from her Uncle Gordon when she is attacked by a strange man demanding that she give him the key. Luckily for her an even stranger man, Skulduggery Pleasant, comes to her rescue and brings her into the realm of magic that most humans have no idea exists alongside their own mundane world.

Reviewer: SH

Annie and Snowball and the Dress-up Birthday by Cynthia Rylant; illustrated by Sucie Stevenson

Reading Level: Ages 4 - 8

Come meet Henrys cousin, Annie, and her pet rabbit, Snowball. When Annies birthday is approaching, she decides to invite Henry and Mudge and his parents to her family birthday party. Annie calls Henry to let him know that everyone is going to dress up. She cant wait to dress in her best dress and dress up Snowball as well. Read this tale to find out about the funny misunderstanding between Annie and her family.

Reviewer: RR

Summerhouse Time by Eileen Spinelli

Reading Level: Grades 4 - 6

For 11-year-old Sophie, every August is spent with her extended family at the beach house. She remembers it as the best time of the year. But problems come up this year with her favorite cousin, her Dad, her aunts job, and even her cat. And she waits eagerly for a letter from her crush (boyfriend?) back home. Written in free verse from Sophies point of view, youll come to love summerhouse time, too.

Reviewer: HG

Daisy Jane, Best-Ever Flower Girl by Megan McDonald; illustrated by Claudine Gevry

Reading Level: Ages 4 - 8

Daisy Janes favorite game to play is Bride, so imagine Daisy Janes surprise when her favorite babysitter, Allie, delivers the news that she is getting married and would like Daisy to be the flower girl! But, Daisy Jane turns into more than just a flower girl and saves Allies wedding from disaster. Check out this story to find out how Daisy Jane comes to the rescue.

Reviewer: RR

Hitlers Canary by Sandi Toksvig

Reading Level: Grades 5 - 7

Set during the Nazi occupation of Denmark, 10-year-old Bamse is part of a famous Danish theatrical family. While his uncle is a Nazi sympathizer, Bamse and his parents are anti-Nazi, but his father is afraid, his mother isnt involved, and his sister is secretly dating a German soldier. Only his older brother, Orlando, is involved in the resistance and says that he wont be Hitlers canary, singing any tune he is told to sing. Bamse and his best friend, a Jew, find themselves increasingly involved in the resistance and ultimately Bamse and his family help with the movement to rescue Denmarks Jews. The story is based on the lives of the authors family. Her grandmother was a famous actress who used her considerable acting skills to trick the Gestapo and to save the Jews hidden in her apartment.

Reviewer: HG

Titans Curse by Rick Riordan

Reading Level: Grades 6 8

Percy Jackson is back for his third quest. By now readers of this lively series will know what to expect, and they will be largely satisfied with this entry in the series. Kronos evil has continued to spread and so Percy, Thalia, as well as a newly discovered half-blood, and a Huntress of

Artemis, must work quickly to stop a monster, who is so powerful that he could destroy Olympus. The action continues and Riordan once again writes an ending that will leave the readers surprised and curious about what will happen in the next book.

Reviewer: LY

Johnny and the Bomb by Terry Pratchett

Reading Level: Grades 5 8

After Johnny and his friends discover the towns bag lady injured in an alley Johnny ends up in temporary possession of her shopping cart full of garbage bags, and one mean cat. He accidentally discovers is that the shopping cart is a time machine and winds up taking his friends back to the day that their town is bombed by the Nazis during World War II.

Reviewer: SH

The Shrunk Head by Denys Cazet

Reading Level: Grades K - 2

In the third of Grandpa Spanielsons Chicken Pox Stories grandpa tells Barney another whopper to keep his mind off his itchy chicken pox. This time it is a tale about when the savage Pooches captured him and Dr. Storkmeyer and shrunk the doctors head!

Reviewer: SH

Being Teddy Roosevelt by Claudia Mills

Reading Level: Grades 1 - 4

Fourth grader Riley ORourke is given an assignment to research President Teddy Roosevelt, but wished he could research a jazz musician instead because he loves music and wants to learn how to play the saxophone. Rileys mother cannot afford to pay for a sax. What will Riley do? He is not a good student and doesnt want to learn about a president. Can he find anything interesting about Teddy Roosevelt? Does he ever get a saxophone? Read on to find out how learning about President Roosevelt can help Riley solve his saxophone problem.

Reviewer: RR

A Pickpockets Tale by Karen Schwabach

Reading Level: Grades 4 - 8

For Molly, the only way to survive the mean streets of 18th century London is to be a pickpocket, but when she is caught for her crimes, she is sent to New York to be a servant to a Jewish family. Molly immediately begins scheming to find a way home but could it be she is beginning to like life in the New World?

Reviewer: LB

Hurt Go Happy by Ginny Rorby

Reading Level: Grades 6 - 9

13-year-old Joey has been deaf since she was six, but her mother won't let her learn sign language. Instead, Joey has to get by reading lips and trying to understand the fast-moving world around her. Her whole life changes when she meets an old man named Charlie and his chimpanzee, Sukari, who knows how to communicate through sign language. When Joey's mother finds out about Charlie and Sukari, will she keep Joey imprisoned in silence or finally allow her to learn to sign?

Reviewer: LB

Unwind by Neal Shusterman

Reading Level: Grades 7 and up

In a future world, where abortion is banned, parents are given the option of unwinding their child, donating the entire child's body for use in medical transplants, between the ages of thirteen and eighteen. Troubled teenager Connor stumbles upon tickets for a family vacation to the Bahamas, but, while there are tickets for his parents and younger brother, there is no ticket for him. Searching further he discovers an Unwind order in his name with his unwinding arranged for the day before the family trip. His only hope is to run away from home and stay hidden from the authorities until he turns nineteen.

Reviewer: SH

Taken by Edward Bloor

Reading Level: Grades 6-9

In 2035, in a society sharply divided between rich and poor, kidnapping rich children is a major growth industry. Thirteen-year-old Charity has even written a paper on the subject, so she knows when she is taken that she has 24 hours for the ransom to be paid and for her release or the plan may have gone horribly wrong. Her story is told in flashbacks as she tries to remain calm during her ordeal. Bloor has crafted a tense thriller with surprising twists that also examines issues such as wealth distribution and health care.

Reviewer: HG

Diamonds in the Shadow by Caroline B. Cooney

Reading Level: Grades 6-9

Jared Finchs family is providing the temporary home for an African refugee family of four. Although Jared and Mattu are the same age, sixteen, Jared doesnt want a new friend, especially one who shares his bedroom. Jareds sixth grade sister, however, is thrilled to have a new found sister, even one who barely moves and doesnt talk. But it starts to seem to Jared that there is something strange or wrong about this family. Their past and the present unite for a fast pace exciting climax. The book does not gloss over the horrors of civil war in Africa and readers will learn about blood diamonds.

Reviewer: HG

Genesis Alpha by Rune Michaels

Reading Level: Grades 6 - 9

The title refers to the computer game that twelve-year-old Josh played with his college-aged brother, Max, until Max is arrested for the brutal murder of a girl. Josh cant believe that his wonderful brother could be capable of such an act, especially since the bond between them is so special. When Max was dying of cancer at the age of seven, Josh was the test tube baby created to save his brother. If his brother is a monster, what does that make him? Then the dead girls self-destructive sister appears at Joshs house with issues of her own. This is a thriller with that grapples with questions of guilt, innocence, and consequences.

Reviewer: HG

The Snows by Sharelle Byars Moranville

Reading Level: Grades 7 - 9

This novel follows the Snow family through several generations. Each story takes place when the main character is sixteen. In 1931, during the Depression, Jim takes care of his little sister, Cathy, when his father decides to sell everything and move his family West. In 1945, Cathy falls in love with the soldier brother of her sister-in-law. She becomes pregnant and he is killed before they can marry. In 1969, Jill witnesses the shooting at Kent State. And in 2006, Jill learns about the family she barely knows.

Reviewer: HG

They Came From Below by Blake Nelson

Reading Level: Grades 7 and up

Emily and Reese are best friends who see each other only over summer vacation, where they both pass the time lazing on the beach or going to parties, hoping to pick up a summer fling. After a strange organism washes up on the local beach, the girls meet Steve and Dave, two foreign-exchange students, their whole summer turns upside down. Steve and Dave are strange, giving Emily and Reese the idea that they don't really know how to be human. It turns out that Steve and Dave are really alien organisms called up from the depths of the ocean and manifested in human form. Their goal? To try and stop the threat of increasing global pollution, which threatens to destroy their ocean home. Blake Nelson's novel is an amusing look at a very real and frightening problem.

Reviewer: EF

Defect by Will Weaver

Reading Level: Grades 6 - 9

David is a freak of nature. His features are grotesque and his back and shoulders are hunched over. His ears, bat-like in appearance, have super sensitive hearing. But the secret that David hides from everyone is his hidden folded wings of flesh that allow him to glide from heights. After a life of misery, he is finally in a caring foster home, he has some friends at the new alternative high school, and he may possibly even have a girlfriend. Then he is offered surgery to make him not only normal, but handsome. David must decide what is important to him and who he is. Is his appearance a curse or a blessing?

Reviewer: HG

Huge by Sasha Paley

Reading Level: Grades 7 - 11

Wellness Canyon is a weight-loss spa the place that April has saved up all her money to attend for one summer, and the place that Wils fitness-oriented parents have sent her to in order to make her less embarrassingly obese. The summer starts off rocky for the two girls, being so totally different in the same living space, with different goals, but as the pounds drop off, the girls begin to realize things about each other, and about themselves.

Reviewer: EF

Baby by Joseph Monninger

Reading Level: Grades 6-9

15-year-old Baby is heading to the latest in a long list of foster homes. All she really wants is to get back with her boyfriend, Bobby. But this home is different. This couple has dogsled dogs and they teach Baby to drive a team. For once, shes happy with her life. Then Bobby shows up to take Baby away and her life takes another direction. The descriptions of dog sledding are wonderful; this is a great read for dog lovers.

Reviewer: HG

Does My Head Look Big In This? By Randa Abdel-Fattah

Reading Level: Grades 7 and up

Sixteen year-old Amal has just made the biggest decision of her life to become a full-timer, which means to wear the hijab, the head scarf worn by female Muslims. Amal goes to a preparatory school in Australia, and at first worries that her hijab will cause other kids to make fun of her. Throughout the course of the book, Amal realizes the merits of her decision as she encounters a first reciprocated crush, a best friend with a well-intentioned but controlling mother, and prejudice against her hijab. Abdel-Fattah has written a wonderful book that explores Islam as a religion without being preachy. Readers will relate to Amals high school experience as well as learn a few things!

Reviewer: HG

Someone Like Summer by M.E. Kerr

Reading Level: Grades 7 9

This is a modern day Romeo and Juliet story. Annabel is a tall blonde from a middle class family. Esteban, a Colombian immigrant, is small, dark and handsome. He is one of the illegal laborers who work for Annabels contractor father. The couple fall in love and must face prejudice from all sides. Theres Annabels father, who calls his workers muchachos, pays them less than American workers, but in some ways does care about their well being. But he doesnt want one dating his daughter. Estebans sister doesnt want her brother dating a flour face. The novel deals with current topics such the situation of the illegal immigrants and the war in Iraq.

Reviewer: HG

Summer Ball by Mike Lupica

Reading Level: Grades 6 - 8

This sequel to Travel Team sees Danny ready to take on new challenges. As he prepares to enter his freshman year of high school, Danny goes to the prestigious Right Way basketball camp. While at the camp Danny has to come to grips with the fact that he will soon be playing against people much taller than him and whether or not he will be able to compete with those players. His coach at camp, doesnt think so, only confirming Dannys fears.

This book features all of Lupicas trademarks including authentic dialog & riveting sports sequences. Fans of Travel Team will enjoy reading about the new adventures of their favorite characters and like the new characters who are introduced.

Reviewer: LY

TWOC: Taken Without Owner's Consent by Graham Joyce

Reading Level: Grades 6 and up

Matt and his brother, Jake, were twoccers, people who take cars without owners consent. Matts admiration for his brother devastates him when a twoccing becomes fatal. TWOC takes you through the journey of Matt dealing with Jakes death and the disfiguring of his girlfriend Jools. A book for a light read on a difficult subject.

Reviewer: RR

Lush by Natasha Friend

Reading Level: Grades 7 and up

Sams father is an alcoholic, and she has always protected him by not telling anyone about his

problem and how it hurts her family. But when she begins writing anonymous letters and leaving them in a library book, the person who writes back becomes a secret confidante. Will Sam be able to face the harsh reality of forgiving her father or will his addiction tear them apart?

Reviewer: LB

Evil Genius by Catherine Jinks

Reading Level: Grades 6 8

Artemis Fowl lovers can sink their teeth into this book as they wait on the next book in that series. Cadel Piggot has been adopted by two clueless parents who don't know how to handle their super genius child. After getting caught hacking, Cadel is sent to see Dr. Thaddius Roth. Through Dr. Roth, Cadel meets his father, a jailed famed criminal, and is slowly corrupted and trained in how to commit crimes without being caught. Cadel's life changes dramatically when he enters the Axis Academy, a college for evil, at age 14 and as his relationship deepens with someone he has met online through one of his schemes.

This novel's strength lies in the slightly absurd world that Jinks has created and in her various amoral characters. The resolution of the book manages to be both slightly predictable and full of unexpected twists. This book's inventive world and funny and unique characters will leave readers hoping that there will be sequel.

Reviewer: LY

Peak by Roland Smith

Reading Level: Grades 6 9

Fourteen-year-old Peak (yes, that's his name) is from a mountain climbing family. When he is caught scaling a skyscraper in New York, his choices come down to juvenile hall or leaving the country to live with the father he barely knows. To his surprise, his father plans to make him the youngest person to reach the top of Mount Everest. Readers will get a great sense of the dangers and thrills of climbing the world's highest mountain. For the true life story of a young climber try *Within Reach: My Everest Story* by Mark Pfitzer.

Reviewer: HG

Un Lun Dun by China Miéville

Reading Level: Grades 5 - 9

Zanna and Deeba, twelve-year-old best friends, think that their lives are pretty normal. But when the girls follow a broken umbrella down into the world of Unlondon, a world on the brink of war against the Smog, they learn that their lives are a little more significant than they thought. Zanna is a girl long-prophesized as the Shwazzy the girl who will save Unlondon (and London) from the Smog, but when an attack leaves Zanna with no memory of having traveled to Unlondon, Deeba remains the abcitys only hope against the Smog. With her pet milk carton Curdle, a pincushion-headed man, a group of utterlings, a book, and a bus conductor, Deeba sets off to prove to Unlondons Propheseers that there is an evil plot afoot. If you liked *The Phantom Tollbooth* by Norton Juster, or *Coraline* by Neil Gaiman, this book is perfect for you!

Reviewer: EF

The Throwaway Piece by Jo Ann Yolanda Hernandez

Reading Level: Grades 8 and up

Jewel has spent her whole life caring for her dysfunctional mother and has felt it was up to her to provide for her mothers happiness. On Jewels 16th birthday, her mother gives her up to foster care so she can focus on finding a new husband. In Jewels devastation, she continues to be devoted to her mother, but closes out anyone else. Jewels English teacher sees something special and unique in Jewel and asks her to tutor another student. Through this experience and many others, Jewel still cannot see the positive way she affects others lives. This book gives the insight to Jewels life and feelings as well as the personal lives of her friends, teacher, social worker and mother. This beautifully written book deals with many serious topics such as racism, rape and suicide.

Reviewer: RR

Echo by Kate Morgenroth

Reading Level: Grades 8 and up

Siblings argue, this is a worldwide given, but sometimes arguments can go too far, and accidents can happen. Just such an accident happens to Justins younger brother Mark, and Justin has to live with the effects of having been a part of the fatal quarrel. Kids at school no longer see Justin as the star athlete he once was. His popularity and girlfriend have left him in the dust, and his former best friend has turned into a bully, relentlessly hounding Justin about Marks death. No one seems to understand the pain Justin is in, and hes not about to tell them, either, especially not after he starts hearing a voice in his head

Reviewer: EF

The Night My Sister Went Missing by Carol Plum-Ucci

Reading Level: Grades 8 and up

When Kurt and Casey Carmody's parents go to Los Angeles, the kids promise that they won't do anything stupid. And dune parties aren't stupid until someone brings a tiny, fake-looking, but very real gun. Everyone passes the gun around, touching it, marveling at how real it looks. And then a shot rings out. Casey falls into the water. No one hears a splash. No one sees who shot the gun. Casey does not surface. Kurt is able to eavesdrop on police interviews with attendees of the dune party (the benefits of living in a very small town), and learns that the situation is far more complicated than an accidental gunshot and a missing, possibly dead sister.

Reviewer: EF

Dead Connection by Charlie Price

Reading Level: Grades 8 and up

Murray has a unique gift: being able to communicate with ghosts! In fact, he has many friends whom he visits with each day at the local cemetery. But when a teenage girl goes missing, Murray and Pearl, the daughter of the cemetery caretaker, think a strange new presence at the graveyard could hold the key to her whereabouts.

Reviewer: LB

The Opposite of Music by Janet Ruth Young

Reading Level: Grades 8 and up

Billy and his family are dealing with their father, Bill's, depression. While the family seeks out the help of a psychiatrist, they do not feel Bill's progress is fast enough and decide to research methods to help him on their own. Their unconventional methods show how a family's deep love and concern can help, but only so much.

Reviewer: RR

The Looking Glass Wars by Frank Beddor

Reading Level: Grades 4-7

Young Alyss, the seven-year-old princess of Wonderland, falls through the Pool of Tears into London. After her close friend the Reverend Dodgson publishes the book *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Alyss realizes that she must become Alice the proper London girl, and her belief in Wonderland ceases to exist. But when her bodyguard finds her location and sends an old childhood friend to bring Alyss back to Wonderland, the now grown-up Alice must reclaim her queendom and defeat her aunt Redd using a sorely out-of-practice imagination. Fans of *Peter and the Starcatchers* will enjoy this book.

Reviewer: EF

Jacobs Ladder by Brian Keaney

Reading Level: Grades 6 10

After waking up in a strange, barren field without any memories, Jacob finds himself the newest member of a strange town called Locus. As he and the other young men and women spend their days moving rocks and eating tasteless, colorless food, Jacob is determined to escape and go back to the life he can remember so little about. But in order to do this, he must travel through a vast wasteland to find the Palace of Remembrance, a magical place that may not even exist. Will he take the risk to get back all that he lost?

Reviewer: LB

Now You See Her by Jacquelyn Mitchard

Reading Level: Grades 7 10

When talented teen actress Hope Shay falls in love with Logan, a senior at her acting academy, she doesn't bargain on being part of an elaborate scheme involving her own kidnapping and ransom! But as Hope is drawn deeper into her relationship with Logan, her grip on reality starts slipping now everyone is accusing her of planning her own abduction. How will Hope ever uncover the truth about her own life, and the events that led up to the one shocking event that changed everything?

Reviewer: LB

Buried by Robin Merrow MacCready

Reading Level: Grades 8 and up

When Claudine, a high school senior, wakes up and finds that her alcoholic mother has

disappeared again she is determined to take care of herself on her own. But juggling all her responsibilities and worries is too much for Claudine, and as her world starts to crumble and her mother still hasn't returned, she doesn't know where to turn.

Reviewer: LB

Kid B by Linden Dalecki

Reading Level: Grades 7 and up

17-year-old Kid B and his crew live for b-boying in their east Texas town. But when they go up against the group Magno Clique in a hip-hop dance competition, what were once friendly challenges between the teens become violent, and Kid B must make some important choices about his own life and who he truly wants to be.

Reviewer: LB

May I Pet Your Dog? The How-to Guide for Kids Meeting Dogs (and Dogs Meeting Kids) by Stephanie Calmenson; illustrated by Jan Ormerod

Reading Level: Ages 3-10

Harry the dachshund and his dog friends teach children the proper way to greet (or sometimes decide not to greet) dogs they meet in public.

Reviewer: SH

The Girl's Like Spaghetti: Why You Can't Manage Without Apostrophes! By Lynne Truss; illustrated by Bonnie Timmons

Reading Level: Grades 1-8

This humorously illustrated book shows the reader the importance of apostrophes and how silly sentences can become when apostrophe errors are introduced. For instance, there is a big difference between "The dogs like my dad" and "The dog's like my dad."

Reviewer: SH

The Giant of Seville: A "Tall" Tale Based on a True Story by Dan Anderson

Reading level: Ages 3 and up

Seville, Ohio is a small, uneventful town until Captain Martin van Buren Bates comes to town. This is no ordinary visitor though because Captain Bates is a giant. He comes to town to search for a new home for him and his wife after traveling the world with the circus. Although the town seems quite friendly, Captain Bates feels he and his wife may be too large for this small town until he finds their hearts may even be bigger than their town.

Reviewer: RR

The Mutiny on the *Bounty* by Patrick OBrien

Reading Level: Grades 3 - 5

Many children probably have not heard of the Mutiny on the *Bounty*. This picture book by Patrick OBrien is a wonderful introduction to the infamous event. The highlight of the book are the beautiful illustrations which accompany the text. The text and illustrations work hard to introduce the relevant background knowledge about sailing so that the reader can fully understand the tale told. OBrien deserves commendation for his even handed telling of the story. Overall this a book recommended for readers of nonfiction or children who would like to learn more about the ill fated voyage of the *Bounty*.

Reviewer: LY

The Tale of Pale Male: A True Story by Jeanette Winter

Reading Level: Grades 1 - 5

Meet Pale Male, the red-tailed hawk of New York City! Pale Male builds a nest on a tall apartment building on Fifth Avenue, but the people who live in those apartments aren't too happy. Will Pale Male and his family be allowed to stay?

Reviewer: LB

One-Eye! Two-Eyes! Three-Eyes! A Very Grimm Fairy Tale told by Aaron Shepard; pictures by Gary Clement

Reading Level: Grades 2 - 4

Poor Two-Eyes is a disgrace to her family because of her deformity, so her sisters, One-Eye and Three-Eyes treat her terribly. Luckily with the help of a mysterious woman and a magical goat,

Two-Eyes gets a better life.

Reviewer: SH

Owen and Mzee: The True Story of a Remarkable Friendship and Owen and Mzee: The Language of Friendship by Isabella Hatkoff, Craig Hatkoff and Dr. Paula Kahumbu; with photographs by Peter Greste

Reading Level: Grades 2 4

After the December 2004 Tsunami a young hippopotamus was left orphaned and trapped on a coral reef off the coast of Africa. Rescued and brought to an animal sanctuary he was put in an enclosure with a tortoise who took on the role of hippo mother. These two photo essays tell the story of Owen the hippo and Mzee the tortoise and their continuing friendship.

Reviewer: SH

The Frog Princess: A Tlingit Legend from Alaska retold by Eric A. Kimmel; illustrated by Rosanne Litzinger

Reading Level: Ages 4 10

A young girl finds fault with all of the suitors who come to her village, until, after saying she would rather marry a frog from the lake than a certain man with big eyes, a stranger with slightly bulging eyes and extra long fingers comes to take her as his bride.

Reviewer: SH

Jurassic Poop: What Dinosaurs (and Others) Left Behind by Jacob Berkowitz; illustrated by Steve Mack

Reading Level: Grades 3 6

What is the best way to find out what dinosaurs, prehistoric animals and people ate? Examine their fossilized poop; or, more politely their coprolites. This book tells you all about how coprolites are formed and the amazing things that scientists can find out by examining them. (By the way, if fashion is more your style you can always buy some poop to wear. If you have any polished agates in your jewelry box what you might have are pretty little gems of poo.)

Reviewer: SH

A Place for Butterflies by Melissa Stewart; illustrated by Higgins Bond

Reading Level: Ages 3 9

You can choose to read just the simple text which explains the importance of butterflies or choose to read the insets as well and learn about different varieties of butterflies, their life cycle, and how to protect them in this beautifully illustrated book. The end papers show the ranges of the butterflies featured in the book.

Reviewer: SH

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