

2009 BOOKS FOR GRADES 4-6

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Barbara Campbell - Reference - Curriculum Resources Laboratory - University of Iowa

barbara-campbell@uiowa.edu

AT OUR BEST

Spinelli, Eileen and Jerry. **TODAY I WILL: A YEAR OF QUOTES, NOTES, AND PROMISES TO MYSELF**. Knopf.
A quote, thought and suggested resolution for each day of the year. Selections include illustrations by a variety of illustrators and quotes from favorite and classic YA and children's literature. Great gift!

United Nations. **UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS**. Ill. Eric Puybaret. Gautier-Languereau.
Illustrated version of the complete text of the declaration published in honor of its 60th anniversary. Picture book format includes an elegant, full page illustration for each chosen section.

BIOGRAPHY

Adler, David and Michael S. Adler. **PICTURE BOOK OF HARRY HOUDINI**. Ill. Matt Collins. Holiday House.
Simply written text and dynamic illustrations tell about the life of Houdini. Includes source notes, a timeline of important events, a bibliography, recommended websites for more information, and a note from the author.

Barton, Chris. **THE DAY-GLO BROTHERS: THE TRUE STORY OF BOB & JOE SWITZER'S BRIGHT IDEAS & BRAND NEW COLORS**. Ill. Tony Persiani. Charlesbridge. **SIBERT HONOR**
Chronicles the lives and events which led to Bob and Joe Switzer's experiments with paints and colors, and their invention of day-glo, fluorescent paint, first developed in the 1930's.

Bass, Hester. **THE SECRET WORLD OF WALTER ANDERSON**. Ill. E. B. Lewis. Candlewick. **PRINTZ AWARD**
The life and work of Walter Anderson, a reclusive but brilliant artist, watercolorist and muralist who painted natural scenes on Horn Island off the gulf coast of Mississippi.

Christensen, Bonnie. **DJANGO**. Roaring Brook Press. **SCHNEIDER FAMILY BOOK AWARD**
Django Reinhart taught himself to play the guitar as a boy, and was considered a prodigy, but when an accident with fire damaged his hand, it seemed he might never play his instrument again.

Fleming, Candice. **THE GREAT AND ONLY BARNUM**. Schwarz & Wade.
Meet the greatest showman on earth through photographs, posters, quotes, and great stories about the people and events that took place within the circus world, and during the career and life of P.T. Barnum.

Hendrix, John. **JOHN BROWN: HIS FIGHT FOR FREEDOM**. Abrams.
Abolitionist John Brown went from conducting slaves on the underground railroad to waging a personal, passionate, violent war against slavery and injustice during the 1840's and 50's. An afterword explains the authors views on Brown's fight against oppression and injustice, and his controversial choice to use violent means.

Krull, Kathleen. **THE BOY WHO INVENTED TV: THE STORY OF PHILO FARNSWORTH**. Knopf. **PRINTZ RECOMMENDS**.
After reading about the work of others to develop television, Philo, and amateur inventor came up with the idea of turning images into parallel lines of light, and was able to create a TV. An afterword explains how RCA was able to disregard his patents and claim rights to the invention.

Krull, Kathleen. **ALBERT EINSTEIN**. Viking.
A delightful, readable biography of Einstein which in parts, makes one laugh out loud. Lots of quotes attributed to Einstein, his sister and others in his life. Upon seeing his new baby sister for the first time, and thinking that she would be something like a new toy, young Einstein was heard to say, "Yes, but where are the wheels?"

Nelson, Vaunda Micheaux. **BAD NEWS FOR OUTLAWS: THE REMARKABLE LIFE OF BASS REEVES, DEPUTY U.S. MARSHALL**. Carolrhoda. **CORETTA SCOTT KING AUTHOR AWARD**
Born a slave in 1838, Bass Reeves went on to be one of the most famous, respected lawmen in the west. Told in tall-tale fashion, this book details his exploits. Back matter includes a glossary of western terms, timeline, bibliographies and author's note about her inspiration.

Wargin, Kathy- Jo. **ALFRED NOBEL: THE MAN BEHIND THE PEACE PRIZE.** Ill. Zachary Pullen. Sleeping Bear. Simple language and engaging pictures to tell how Alfred Nobel, inventor of dynamite, was determined to be remembered for something other than violence, and bequeathed his entire estate to the development of the Nobel Peace prizes.

CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL

Arnosky, Jim. **CROCODILE SAFARI.** Scholastic.

Provides details about the nearly-extinct American crocodile, how crocodiles differ from alligators and Arnosky's experience hunting and photographing them in the Florida Everglades. Accompanying DVD shows Arnosky on the hunt and painting, and includes a song he wrote about his trip. Pair with Arnosky's novel, *The Pirates of Crocodile Swamp* (2009).

Davies, Nicola. **JUST THE RIGHT SIZE: WHY BIG ANIMALS ARE BIG & LITTLE ANIMALS ARE LITTLE.** Ill. Neal Layton. Candlewick.

Fascinating facts and the science behind size limits imposed by nature and physiology and how small creatures can often do more per size unit than large ones. Illustrations allow understanding of difficult concepts.

Turner, Pamela S. **THE FROG SCIENTIST.** Houghton Mifflin. PRINTZ HONOR

Follows the career of an African American man through his years at Harvard to his career as a scientist studying the effects of pesticides and contaminated water on frogs. Includes thumbnails and scientific names of each type of frog, and a bibliography/webliography for more information about frogs and conservation efforts. Part of the "Scientists in the Field Series."

Wedekind, Annie. **WILD BLUE : THE STORY OF A MUSTANG APPALOOSA.** Feiwel and Friends.

Told from the point of view of a wild mustang filly who is captured in an illegal round up and shipped by trailer from her Idaho range near a Nez Perce reservation to an auction further south. She manages to escape, and sets off to find her way home. This is the first in a new Breyer Horse Collection Series featuring stories about different breeds. Back matter includes a map, and information about wild horses and the Native American relationship to the Appaloosa.

FANTASY/SCIENCE FICTION

Bruchac, Joseph. **NIGHT WINGS.** HarperCollins.

This scary but not *too* scary, tale blends fantasy and Abenaki folklore with modern reality. Thirteen year old Paul is staying with his Abenaki Grandfather while both of his parents are deployed in Iraq. Grandfather is approached by a team of T.V. producers from *Forbidden Mysteries* who want help locating a secret, traditional, treasure supposedly hidden on the mountain nearby. Grandfather and Paul are forced at gunpoint to comply, and they must use ancient magic to protect the treasure.

Daneshvari, Gitty. **SCHOOL OF FEAR.** Little Brown.

Four kids with phobias end up at a summer camp which is supposed to help them conquer their fears. When the strange headmistress dies leaving everything to her dog, the kids must fight their fears and band together with the creepy caretaker and the dog to escape from someone who would like to take over the school and claim the estate. Each chapter begins with the caption "Everyone is Afraid of Something" and a definition of a phobia.

DiCamillo, Kate. **THE MAGICIAN'S ELEPHANT.** Candlewick.

A young orphan named Peter believes that his long-lost little sister Adele might still be alive, and he spends his last coin to seek the help of a local fortune teller. He is told that she lives, and strangely enough, an elephant will lead him to her. That very night, a magician accidentally conjures an elephant during a show at the opera house.

Flieschman, Sid. **THE DREAM STEALER.** Ill. Peter Sis. Greenwillow.

The Dream Stealer, Zumpango, is a magical creature who is supposed to swoop down at night to take away nightmares and bad dreams from children while they sleep. When he steals the end of Susana's good dream, she makes him take her back to his castle to try to recover her dream. A good read aloud with line-drawn illustrations and Spanish words and phrases interspersed.

Gaiman, Neil. **ODD AND THE FROST GIANTS**. Ill. Brett Helquist. Harper.

Odd seems to be able to smile in spite of much bad luck in his young life. His father was lost at sea in a Viking raid, his leg is crippled, and his mother has married a man who likes his drink a bit too much. When Odd sets off to get away from his disrupted family, he meets an eagle, a bear, and a fox who turn out to be the Norse Gods Odin, Thor and Loki under a spell by the Frost Giant, and Odd must help them save the world from perpetual winter. A great story to read aloud.

Golds, Cassandra. **THE MUSEUM OF MARY CHILD**. Kane Miller.

Heloise lives with her extremely strict godmother who runs a doll museum but will not allow Heloise to have a doll of her own. Heloise escapes and eventually finds out the truth about her past with the help of a flock of birds, an orphans choir, and a prisoner. There is a Dickensian, almost gothic feel to the way the plot slowly reveals past incidents and hints at horrors and secrets which have led to present circumstances.

Harris, Lewis. **A TASTE FOR RED**. Clarion.

Stephanie is in 6th grade and her family has just recently moved to California. She believes she might be a vampire. With the help of her neighbor, she finds out that she is actually an “olfative” - a very sensitive person who can recognize vampires, and must work to help protect others.

Lin, Grace. **WHERE THE MOUNTAIN MEETS THE MOON**. Little Brown. **NEWBERY HONOR**

Japanese folktales are seamlessly woven into a tale in which a young girl sets off to find a better fortune for her parents. Each character she meets helps her to realize what good fortune really is and meanwhile, her parents, missing her, realize how much they have already.

Snyder, Laurel. **ANY WHICH WALL**. Random House.

Four Iowa children discover a wall in the middle of a cornfield which allows them to teleport to other places, past, present and future by just leaning against it and wishing, but the magic is quirky and they must discover its limits and rules as they go along.

Umansky, Kaye. **CLOVER TWIG AND THE MAGICAL COTTAGE**. Roaring Brook.

Clover’s family could use some extra money, so she applies for a job with Mrs. Eccles, a neighbor whose sign says she needs “A gril to cleen.” Mrs. Eccles turns out to be a witch, the cottage is magical, and Clover winds up having to protect the cottage from theft by Mezmeranda, Mrs. Eccles’ evil sister.

Stewart, Trenton Lee. **THE MYSTERIOUS BENEDICT SOCIETY & THE PRISONER’S DILEMMA**. Little Brown.

The four main characters are children, each with different talents, who were selected for a special mission based on a competition offered for bright and gifted children. Reynie is an 11 year old orphan, and has strong intuition and people skills; Kate is athletic, resourceful and always ready with ingenious solutions; Sticky has a photographic memory; Constance Contraire is the queen of obstinacy. In this installment, they band together to find out about the parentage and past of Constance and also to save the Whisperer machine from the clutches of the evil Drogheda Curtain, the identical twin nemesis of their beloved Mr. Benedict. Punny, funny and fun. (Third in Series)

Teague, Mark. **THE DOOM MACHINE**. Blue Sky.

Set in 1956 in a small town, backyard inventor Uncle Bud has created a machine for travelling through space and time. When Evil Skreepian aliens want to take over the world, they kidnap Uncle Bud and some other town residents in an attempt to find and steal his machine. Super-smart Isadora and Jack, a boy who is always in trouble, join forces to rescue them from the clutches of the Skreepian queen.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Bryant, Jennifer. **KALEIDOSCOPE EYES**. Alfred A. Knopf.

Set in the late 1960’s, 13 year old Lyza, and her friends Malcom and Caroline hope to find Captain Kidd’s treasure based on a map left to her by her late grandfather. A novel-in-verse which allows insight into the effects of the Vietnam War on families, and explores social and racial tensions of the sixties.

Green, Tim. **FOOTBALL CHAMP**. HarperCollins.

12 year old football prodigy Troy White can read the defense and predict football plays. He’s been working with the coach of the Atlanta Falcons all season, and helping his friend, linebacker Seth Halloway to achieve an amazing, comeback season. With playoffs looming, Troy grants an interview to a disreputable sports writer who threatens to publicly accuse them all of cheating. Everything for the football lover, likeable characters and a savant kid with REALLY understanding parents. (Sequel to *Football Genius*.)

Marino, Nan. **NEIL ARMSTRONG IS MY UNCL : & OTHER LIES MUSCLE MAN McGINTY TOLD ME.** Roaring Brook. Set in 1969 in New York, 10 year old Muscle Man McGinty is a foster child who lies all the time. He has recently moved into the house near Tammy where her best friend used to live. The story is told from the point of view of Tammy, a bully, who takes out her resentment on Muscle Man, but eventually learns that sometimes words mean more than they seem to say.

Seagraves, Donny Bailey. **GONE FROM THESE WOODS.** Delacorte.

When Uncle Clay invites his eleven-year-old nephew to go rabbit hunting near his rural Georgia home, Daniel balks, but decides he can't say no without risking his relationship with his favorite uncle and angering his father. Daniel accidentally shoots Uncle Clay causing his death. The book does not take a stand on gun control or hunting, but rather, presents a scenario which opens the door for discussion and thought about such issues. Back matter includes information and statistics about gun control, gun safety, suicide and a letter from the author about inspiration for this book.

Draper, Sharon, M. **SASSY: THE BIRTHDAY STORM.** Scholastic.

Nine year old Sassy and her family experience a hurricane while visiting her grandparents in Florida. Sassy worries about dressing just right, dealing with embarrassing moments and helping to save endangered sea turtles. This African American family is just that - a family - in this easy-to-read book without racial overtones or messages. (Second in the *Sassy* series)

Yee, Lisa. **BOBBY VS GIRLS. (ACCIDENTALLY)** Arthur A. Levine.

A gentle story about friends just starting 4th grade and changing boy/girl relationships. Both Holly and Bobby end up running for the same student council position, nearly ruining their friendship and setting off a boys-against-girls battle at school. Black and white illustrations support the reader's understanding of character's feelings and motivations.

Lupica, Mike. **MILLION DOLLAR THROW.** Philomel.

Eighth grade star quarterback Nate Brodie gets a chance to try to win a million dollars at a half-time contest during a New England Patriots game. With both his parents working multiple jobs, his family could really use the money, but pressure to succeed and personal stress, as Nate learns that his best friend Abby is going blind, overwhelm him, causing his usual passing expertise to tank.

Mass, Wendy. **11 BIRTHDAYS.** Scholastic.

Amanda and Leo were born on the same day and have been best friends since they were babies, celebrating every birthday together. When Amanda chooses not to invite Leo to her 11th birthday party, something strange happens and she keeps reliving the day of her 11th birthday over and over. She finally realizes that she and Leo must work together to solve this mysterious problem.

Gratz, Alan. **THE BROOKLYN NINE: A NOVEL IN NINE INNINGS.** Dial Books.

Beginning before the Civil War and ending in the present, traces the history of baseball through nine generations of a family. The generations are connected by events, heirlooms and baseball lore. Both male and female characters are based on real people and events, which the author, s note at the end explains.

Stead, Rebecca. **WHEN YOU REACH ME.** Wendy Lamb. **NEWBERY AWARD**

Set in 1979 in a Manhattan apartment building, 12 year old Miranda is helping mom practice to go on \$20,000 pyramid television game show. Her favorite book is Madeline L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time*, and before long, time seems to be altered in her own life. Strange events in her neighborhood and a host of interesting characters and events are tied into a mystery which has time and space converging in an unusual way.

Whelan, Gloria. **THE LOCKED GARDEN.** HarperCollins.

After their mother dies, Verna and Callie move with their father to Michigan where he accepts a position as psychiatrist for a mental institution. They live on the asylum grounds, with Aunt Maude who looks after them and their housekeeper, a recovering patient from the asylum. Set in the late 1890's, this book is about a family's need to change and adapt, jealousy and compassion, and a historical glimpse into ideas about the treatment of mental patients at the turn of the century.

GRAPHIC NOVELS

Butzer, C. M. **GETTYSBURG: THE GRAPHIC NOVEL**. Bowen Press/HarperCollins.

Uses primary sources, letters, and quotes in the balloons and word-boxes to tell about the battle, its aftermath and efforts to have a monument built to honor the dead. Contains the Gettysburg address, illustrated. Interspersed wordless sections move the action along and the index provides source notes.

Collicutt, Paul. **ROBOT CITY ADVENTURES: CITY IN PERIL**. Paul Collicutt.

First in a series for younger kids featuring Curtis, a robot with a lighthouse for a head, who works with humans and other robots to protect the harbor and inhabitants of Robot City.

Phelan, Matt. **THE STORM IN THE BARN**. Candlewick.

Jack is 11 years old during 1937 when the Dust Bowl years affect his hometown in Kansas. Inspired by the “Jack Tales,” he decides to find a way to bring back the rain by freeing a storm trapped in a nearby barn, pitting himself against a mysterious apparition which has been haunting the area causing illness and despair.

Sava, Scott Christian. **HYPERACTIVE**. Worthwhile.

Twelve year old Joey has always been hyper, but on the first day of school, he suddenly discovers that he can move at super-human speeds. Mr. Itchez of Burnz and Itchez Pharmaceuticals wants to steal a sample of Joey’s DNA so he can market it.

Sturm, James , Andrew Arnold & Alexis Frederick-Frost. **ADVENTURES IN CARTOONING: HOW TO TURN YOUR DOODLES INTO COMICS**. First Second, 2009.

More than just a how-to-draw book, this is actually the goofy story of a knight, his sweets-loving horse, and a magic elf who set out to capture the bubble-gum-chewing dragon. Woven in are simple lessons and information about cartooning techniques. Bonus features at the end include drawing tips and vocabulary related to comics and cartooning.

INFORMATION AND IDEAS

Bryson, Bill. **A REALLY SHORT HISTORY OF NEARLY EVERYTHING**. Delacorte, 2009, c2008.

Filled with fun tidbits to encourage further inquiry, or just to browse, readers learn about the way things work, what happened to the dinosaurs, why the sea is salty and more. Bryson is an Iowa native who wrote *A Short History of Nearly Everything* (Doubleday, 2003) for adults. *An Illustrated Short History of Nearly Everything* (Doubleday, 2005) followed, and now this version is an adaptation for an even younger audience.

Cerullo, Mary M. **SHIPWRECKS: EXPLORING SUNKEN CITIES BENEATH THE SEA**. Dutton.

Great photos and information about two shipwrecks - a slave ship off coast of Florida and another, much later wreck off the coast of Massachusetts. Shows how sea and coral have reclaimed much of what is left, but also shows artifacts and tells how archeologists learn about history.

Chaikin, Andrew. **MISSION CONTROL, THIS IS APOLLO: THE STORY OF THE FIRST VOYAGES TO THE**

MOON. Penguin Group. Featuring original paintings by Alan Bean , astronaut and artist, and rich with photographs, provides details about each of the Apollo missions, innovations, and the astronauts who flew them. Includes a bibliography/webliography for more information.

Hollyer, Beatrice. **OUR WORLD OF WATER: CHILDREN AND WATER AROUND THE WORLD**. Holt.

Published in association with Oxfam, provides information about water consumption and scarcity by looking at water usage during a typical day in the life of children from various countries. Engaging photos, quotes and accessible text inspire questions about conservation. Back pages provide a glossary, information about countries visited and facts about water.

Roeder, Annette. **13 BUILDINGS CHILDREN SHOULD KNOW**. Prestel.

Photographs, construction techniques, interesting facts, a timeline, inquiry questions, comparisons, activities and games - everything you wanted to know about 13 interesting buildings including the Great Pyramid, Leaning Tower of Pisa, St. Peter’s Basilica, China’s “Bird’s Nest” stadium and more.

Sandler, Martin W. **THE DUSTBOWL THROUGH THE LENS: HOW PHOTOGRAPHY REVEALED AND HELPED REMEDY A NATIONAL DISASTER.** Walker and Co.

Dramatic photo essay which investigates causes and events leading up to the dust bowl years, and chronicles the lives of those living through it. Sandler investigates the impact that photographers and the media had on the government and people outside of the region, and through their attention and actions, helped bring an end to harmful farming practices and suffering. Use with *Out of the Dust* by Hess.

Thimmesch, Catherine. **LUCY LONG AGO: UNCOVERING THE MYSTERY OF WHERE WE CAME FROM.**

Houghton Mifflin. Recounts the discovery of the fossilized, skeletal remains of Lucy, believed to be the earliest human ancestor, and explains archeological techniques and anthropological theories of human evolution. Poetic text, glorious photographs and accessible explanations take readers on a journey into the mystery of human origins.

Walker, Sally M. **WRITTEN IN BONE: BURIED LIVES OF JAMESTOWN AND COLONIAL MARYLAND.**

Carolhoda . **PRINTZ RECOMMENDS.** Scientists and forensic anthropologists uncover the remains of residents of Jamestown to learn more about their lives, habits, occupations and causes of death. Photographs of bones, skulls, artifacts and primary source documents support the engaging text which explains how scientists unravel clues to the mysteries of the past.

Weitzman, David. **PHARAOH'S BOAT.** Houghton Mifflin.

In Egypt in 2581 B.C.E., a boat was commissioned by the Pharaoh Cheops for his afterlife journey, and it was discovered by archaeologists in a pit on the Great Pyramid site. This book shows the step-by-step construction/restoration process, with illustrations reminiscent of ancient Egyptian art and hieroglyphics. The finished boat is depicted on fold-out pages.

Wood, A.J. and Clint Twist. **CHARLES DARWIN AND THE BEAGLE ADVENTURE: COUNTRIES VISITED DURING THE VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD OF HMS BEAGLE UNDER THE COMMAND OF CAPTAIN FITZROY, ROYAL NAVY, INCLUDING EXTRACTS FROM THE WORKS OF CHARLES DARWIN.** Candlewick/Templar. Traces the voyage of Darwin and the Beagle, using zoological plates from his work, a colorful map, a genealogical table, and facsimile documents. Many extras include personal letters, photos, and things to take out of envelopes and browse. Those who liked *Piratology* and *Wizardology* will love this one.

LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE GIRLS: Fiction

Swearingen, Greg. **THE OUTLANDISH ADVENTURES OF LIBERTY AIMES.** Ill. Greg Swearingen. Wendy Lamb.

Ten year old Liberty's strict, liar, inventor and scoundrel of a father, Mal, keeps Liberty and her extremely overweight and timid mother isolated and imprisoned in their home. One day, Liberty finds Mal's secret cache of magical formulas and escapes, setting off to find her destiny and meeting some unusual characters along the way.

Fitzmaurice, Kathryn. **THE YEAR THE SWALLOWS CAME EARLY.** HarperCollins.

Groovey (Eleanor) is 11 years old and her Dad is in jail, turned in by her mother for gambling away her inheritance and spoiling her hopes for attending cooking school. Well drawn supporting characters have different gifts/failings, each helps Groovey to see beyond the surface to accept people for who they are.

Wilson, Jacqueline. **COOKIE.** Roaring Brook.

Eleven year old, average-looking Beauty Cookson hates her name, is teased at school, and bullied at home by her controlling, psychologically-abusive father. Frightening events urge Cookie (Beauty's nickname) and her mother to find the strength to leave, and new friends help them start anew discovering their talents and gaining self-esteem. Illustrations at the beginning of each chapter hint at events to come.

Zucker, Naomi. **CALLIE'S RULES.** Egmont.

Figuring out rules about what is cool and what is social suicide is hard, and as Callie begins 6th grade she has to try to figure them all out. When the town council starts making rules about wholesome American values, and how residents and children may or may not celebrate Halloween, Callie must think of a way to save her family tradition and she begins to learn what it means to stand up for what you believe.

Kelly, Jacqueline. **EVOLUTION OF CALPURNIA TATE**. Holt. **NEWBERY HONOR**.

Living on a Texas farm in 1898, 12 year old Calpurnia Tate is the only girl in a family of 7 children, and she resists all of her mother's efforts to "make her a lady." Her interest in nature and science allows her to bond with her eccentric grandfather, an amateur naturalist, and they discover a new species of plant. Evolution becomes a metaphor for Callie as she comes of age to discover her identity. Also evolving is the role of women and societal expectations at the turn of the century.

Ketchum, Liza. **NEWSGIRL**. Viking.

In 1851, 12 year old Amelia, her single mother and mother's female friend move to California to begin a sewing business. When Amelia decides to cut her hair and join a gang of orphaned, newspaper boys, she encounters prejudice and class differences, faces societal restrictions on women, and after a harrowing experience during a balloon launching, comes to understand her own identity and appreciate those who love her.

Lawrence, Iain. **THE GIANT-SLAYER**. Delacorte.

This framed tale is set in 1955 just before the Salk vaccine for polio became available. When 11 year old Laurie's young neighbor is stricken, she begins visiting his hospital ward where several kids in iron lungs are living. She entertains them by making up a story about a fierce giant and other magical, mythical creatures, and a small boy who heroically defeats the giant. Excellent seamless weaving of the narratives.

Ferrari, Michael. **BORN TO FLY**. Delacorte.

Eleven-year-old Bird McGill wants to be a fighter pilot someday just like her father who is a World War II Air Force pilot. When a Japanese boy moves to town to stay with his uncle while his parents are in an internment camp, the people of this Rhode Island town believe they might be spies, but Kenji is Bird's friend, and she is willing to risk her life to prove them wrong.

LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE GIRLS: Nonfiction

Hoose, Phillip. **CLAUDETTE COLVIN: TWICE TOWARD JUSTICE**. Melanie Kroupa. **NEWBERY HONOR / PRINTZ HONOR / SIBERT HONOR**. Claudette Colvin was a 15-year-old African American girl who refused to give up her seat on a bus almost a year before Rosa Parks did. Hoose uses a mix of primary sources and research to tell Claudette's story, the reasons she was not chosen to be the figurehead for the Civil Rights Movement and how her involvement changed her life.

Macy, Sue. **BYLINES: A PHOTOBIOGRAPHY OF NELLIE BLY**. National Geographic.

A fascinating look at the woman reporter and her many adventures. She was determined not to be dependent on any man for her financial well being. Photographs, maps, and quotes bring the story to life and back matter includes a detailed bibliography/webliography, author's note and timeline.

Stone, Tanya Lee. **ALMOST ASTRONAUTS: 13 WOMEN WHO DARED TO DREAM**. Candlewick. **SIBERT MEDAL / PRINTZ HONOR**. Tells about "The Mercury 13," a group of women who trained as astronauts in the early 1960's doing everything that their male counterparts were able to do, but were never given the chance to go into space because of gender differences and policy at the time. This photo essay describes the individual experiences of the women, their training, and the struggle for women's rights that was brewing during the 1950's and 60's.

Rappaport, Doreen. **ELEANOR, QUIET NO MORE: THE LIFE OF ELEANOR ROOSEVELT**. Disney/Hyperion.

PRINTZ RECOMMENDS. A humanizing biography of Eleanor Roosevelt with focus on her courage to speak out politically, and champion social causes even when controversial. Quotes on nearly every page guide the narration from Eleanor's childhood through her education abroad and later life in politics.

MANY PEOPLE/MANY CULTURES

Baskin, Nora Raleigh. **ANYTHING BUT TYPICAL**. Simon & Shuster. **SCHNEIDER FAMILY BOOK AWARD**

Jason, a 12 year old autistic boy, is very successful interacting on a social networking site called "Storyboard" where budding writers can blog and discuss their creative work. After striking up a friendship with Rebecca online, Jason dreads finally meeting her in person at a local Storyboard conference, for she will see him as he really is with all his social limitations and odd behaviors.

Clements, Andrew. **EXTRA CREDIT**. Atheneum.

Worlds collide when Abby, a 6th grade girl from Illinois, is required to become a pen pal with Sadeed, a boy in Afghanistan. He is elected by his teacher to respond because he is the best English language student, but elders in his village require that he help his younger sister Amira compose the letters instead since it would be improper for a boy and girl his age to communicate. The third-person narration alternates points of view and both correspondents grow in awareness and appreciation of each other's cultures.

Deedy, Carmen Agra with Wilson Kimeli Naiyomah. **14 COWS FOR AMERICA**. Ill.T homas Gonzalez. Peachtree.

When Kimeli returns from America to his Maasai village, and tells them about Sept. 11, the people reach out to America with a symbolic gift reflecting their generosity and compassion.

Edwardson, Debby Dahl. **BLESSING'S BEAD**. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Blessing (Nutaq), an Inupiaq girl, goes to live with her maternal grandmother who still practices old ways to escape her abusive step-father and mother who is a recovering alcoholic. She learns family history and heritage, gaining a sense of identity and personal power. Part 1 is set at about turn of century (1900's) when flu epidemic nearly wipes out entire villages (her great-grand mother's time) and the second part set in the late 1980's just before the opening of the Iron Curtain and the 'Ice Curtain' which allows native Alaskans who have migrated to Russia in the past to return for a whaling festival.

López, Diana. **CONFETTI GIRL**. Little, Brown.

Meet 6th grader Lina Flores who lives in Corpus Christi, Texas, loves socks, science, volleyball and a boy named Luis. Her English-teacher Dad has become lost in his books since her mom's sudden death, and Lina is barred from playing volleyball at school because of poor grades. Lina's best friend's mother is newly divorced and has become obsessed with making and selling cascarones, a Mexican novelty made by filling eggshells with confetti. The cascarones become a metaphor for all of the characters as they rebuild their lives, refill emptiness and find new meaning. Includes many Spanish words, phrases and proverbs.

Lourie, Peter. **WHALING SEASON: A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF AN ARCTIC WHALE SCIENTIST**. Houghton

Mifflin. Follows a modern scientist studying whale ecology for a year as he works with followers of the traditional practices of the Inupiat - whaling for use by individuals rather than commercial whaling. Photographs show how whales are captured and how all parts of the whale are harvested without waste. Includes glossary and bibliography. Use with *Blessing's Bead* by Dahl.

Michael, Jan. **CITY BOY**. Clarion.

Set in contemporary Malawi, both of Sam's parents have died of AIDS, and he must move to countryside with his maternal aunt who is taking over guardianship. Life is much harder in the rural area where his aunt lives with no electricity in a one-room mud hut. The lack of privacy and communal style of living are very foreign to this only child who has always had everything he needed and lived in a modern city apartment. Sam must find ways to deal with change as he grieves for his mother and survives in a place where "the Disease" has altered life for so many.

Myracle, Lauren. **LOVE YA BUNCHES**. Amulet.

Myracle gets the voices just right as four fifth grade girls work out the intricacies of loyalty, friendship, popularity and acceptance. Chapters alternate among the characters; Katie Rose, a perky, outspoken Asian girl who sees life through the lens of her camera; Yasaman a quiet but very computer-savvy Muslim girl; Violet, an African American girl who has just moved into the area with her Dad; and beautiful, popular Camilla, the daughter of lesbian couple. Video scripts, text-messages and emoticons abound. :-)

MYSTERY AND ADVENTURE

Arnosky, Jim. **THE PIRATES OF CROCODILE SWAMP**. Putnam's.

Adventure ensues when two young boys, aged 9 and 11 run away from their abusive father and hide out in a swamp in the Florida keys. With help from locals and information about animals and survival learned from books and TV nature shows, they elude capture until circumstances change allowing them to go home with their mother.

Avi. **MURDER AT MIDNIGHT**. Scholastic.

In this prequel to *Midnight Magic* (Scholastic, 1999) set in 1490 Italy, Magnus the magician meets Fabrizio, a street orphan who is enraptured by magic and illusions. They become embroiled in a political plot and falsely accused of trying to overthrow and assassinate the king. Was it magic that helped to create so many pamphlets speaking against the king, or could it be this new invention - the printing press?

Cody, Matthew. **POWERLESS**. Alfred A. Knopf.

When Daniel moves to Noble's Green, PA, he meets a group of kids who have super-powers which they use to help others, but as they reach their 13th birthdays, they lose all power and even memory of what they could once do. Daniel becomes the real hero when he uses his investigative powers to find the connections between a 1940's comic book hero, a meteor strike, a famous orphanage fire and the answer to saving the kids powers.

French, S. Terrell. **OPERATION REDWOOD**. Amulet Books.

12-year-old Julian must stay with the family of his rich, paternal uncle while his single mother is working as a photographer in China, and he learns that they plan to send him away to math camp over the summer. Julian sneaks off and stay at Huckleberry Ranch with his best friend Danny for the summer, where they learn about old growth forests, giant redwoods and the plans that his uncle's corporation have to clear cut and develop the area. Kids save the day, learn to fight for the earth and stand up for what they believe, finding support in surprising places in this fast-paced adventure.

Helgerson, Joseph. **CROWS & CARDS: A NOVEL**. Houghton Mifflin/Harcourt.

In 1849, when Zeb turns 12, his Pa encourages him to find a trade or vocation, and decides to send him to live with his great-uncle to learn how to be a tanner. On the riverboat journey south, Jeb gets shanghaied by a gambler/con-man who trains Jeb to help him cheat at cards. This Mississippi River tale and the characters have a Twain-ish feel, and an extensive glossary (*Dictionarium Americannicum*) defines the many archaic words and idioms used in the narration.

O'Conner, Barbara. **THE SMALL ADVENTURE OF POPEYE AND ELVIS**. Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

Set in a back-woods section of rural South Carolina, Popeye sure wishes he had something to do other than listen to Grandma Velma recite the names of British Royalty to save her memory, or watch Uncle Dooley laze around the house all day. When a silver motor home gets stuck in the mud at the top of the road, Popeye meets the quirky, Jewell family and becomes friends with Elvis - the perfect sort of friend who seems to attract adventure. The boys set off to solve the mystery of who is sending YooHoo drink cartons like little boats, down the stream with strange messages inside. Easy to read with great characters, a non-judgmental voice and interesting vocabulary words sprinkled in for fun.

Peterson, P.J. **WILD RIVER**. Delacorte.

In this survival story, 12 year old Ryan is more of a couch potato/video game aficionado than he is outdoorsman, but when things go horribly wrong on a kayak trip with his older brother, Ryan is able to use some of his videogame strategies to figure out how to save their lives. Fast paced, easy to read - suitable for readers who might not be ready for Gary Paulsen.

Roberts, Ken. **THUMB AND THE BAD GUYS**. Groundwood.

Set in the tiny town of New Aukland, the local kids would love for some bad guys to come, just to add a bit of excitement to their lives. A mystery does arise after 11 year old Leon (known as Thumb) and his friend Susan begin sneaking around and following a middle-aged resident to his secret shack in the hills. In the end, what they really learn is a lesson about the history of their town and about jumping to conclusions. *3rd book in this easy-to-read series about Thumb and his friends.*

Suma, Nova Ren. **DANI NOIR**. Aladdin.

13 year old Dani loves old *noir* movies and finds her escape from dealing with boredom and her parent's divorce by going to the local movie theater. She identifies with the characters whose lives are changed by the inevitable *femmes fatale* and believes everyone has an angle. When she notices that the teenage projectionist is cheating on his girlfriend, she attempts to solve the mystery of who "the other girl" might be, but also begins to realize much about herself, about truth and lies, and about friendship.

Thompson, Kate. **HIGHWAY ROBBERY**. Greenwillow.

The first person narrator of this story is a young street urchin who tells the story of how he was asked by a mysterious stranger to hold his horse for him while he conducted some business. The boy takes his job very seriously, wanting to earn the gold coin promised to him upon the stranger's return. Could this be the famous highway robber Dick Turpin and is this his famous mare Black Bess? Is this young lad telling the truth? Great for teaching the concept of unreliable/reliable narrators.

NEW BEGINNINGS

Amato, Mary. **INVISIBLE LINES**. Egmont USA.

With help from an eccentric teacher, 7th grade Trevor becomes aware of the invisible lines which separate social classes, connect like-minded individuals, and define rules for behavior and life. Negotiating them can be difficult for someone who now lives in a poor section of town and attends school with richer kids. His time must be split between helping his single mom with his younger siblings, playing soccer, his personal artwork and establishing friendships.

Bredsdorff, Bodil. **EIDI**. Farrar Straus Giroux. **BATCHELDER HONOR**

Time and place are indistinct in this tale about Eidi, first introduced in *The Crow Girl* (Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2004) Eidi feels out of place after the birth of her half-brother, so she decides to take a job spinning wool for a nearby shepherd. While taking his wool to town, she meets Tink, a young boy abused by his step-father, and helps him escape while learning more about the mystery of his past and of her own father. (Translated from the Danish - Second in *Children of Crow Cove* series)

Carmichael, Clay. **WILD THINGS**. Front Street.

After Zoe's neglectful, single mother dies, she must go to live with her eccentric uncle, a renowned metal sculptor. The point of view in story alternates between Zoe, and a wild cat that has lived near this house for a long time. The cat helps fill in history and back-story. A message of compassion, hope and the importance of belonging rings true without being sentimental.

DeFelice, Cynthia. **SIGNAL**. Farrar Straus & Giroux.

When 12 year old Owen moves to the Finger Lakes region of New York with his father after the death of his mother, he makes friends with a neglected, abused girl who believes she must return to her real home - another planet. She convinces Owen that she's an alien and that they must build a signal for a returning space ship and her true parents. Well drawn characters face issues of loneliness, dealing with death, reality, loyalty and friendship.

Hoberman, Mary Ann. **STRAWBERRY HILL**. Ill. Wendy Anderson Halprin. Little Brown.

During the Depression, 10 year old Allie Sherman's family must move to Connecticut for her Dad's new job. First person narration tells about Allie's 4th grade year as she begins setting down new roots, attending a new school, making friends and dealing with anti-Semitism for the first time. This is poet, Hoberman's first work of fiction.

Polacco, Patricia. **JANUARY'S SPARROW**. Philomel.

Tells the story of a slave family that escapes from a Kentucky plantation and follows the Underground Railroad until they reach shelter in Michigan. Told from the point of view of 8 year old Sadie Crosswhite, this story is based on true events which took place in Marshall, MI when the whole town faced slave-catchers in support and protection of the Crosswhite family. Although this is designed like a picture book, it is 95 pages long.

Weissman, Elissa Brent. **THE TROUBLE WITH MARK HOPPER**. Dutton.

Two 6th grade boys with exactly the same name and similar physical characteristics could not be more different! One is a gifted, but nearly friendless overachiever and the other, a friendly but average boy who excels in art. When their school records get mixed-up, both boys end up registered to compete in an academic contest which means everything to "smart" Mark, who plans to cheat by submitting "artistic" Mark's work for the talent portion of the contest.

Woodson, Jacqueline. **PEACE, LOCOMOTION**. Putnam's.

This novel is written entirely as letters from 12 year old Locomotion (Lonnie C. Motion) to his younger sister Lili, about past memories, present circumstances, and how to think and feel about their foster parents and the future. He is afraid that Lili will get *too* comfortable in her new home, and forget who their real parents were and the special relationship they shared as brother and sister. (Sequel to *Locomotion*)

POETRY

Heard, Georgia (Ed.) **FALLING DOWN THE PAGE**. Roaring Brook.

A collection of 45 list poems in a variety of styles, written by children's and YA poets, which chronicle daily events throughout a school year. Great for reading aloud and to inspire creative writing. Long, narrow shape of the book and vertical binding add to the impact.

Hopkins, Lee Bennett, Sel. **INCREDIBLE INVENTIONS**. Greenwillow.

Fun and surprising facts are revealed in this collection of poems about everyday inventions such as crayons, Band-aids, drinking straws, Velcro, jigsaw puzzles and blue jeans. A variety of poets and poetic styles are represented including haiku, concrete and simple rhymed verse, and there are short paragraphs with further information about each invention at the back. Use in elementary school units about inventors and inventions.

Janeczko, Paul B. **A FOOT IN THE MOUTH**. Ill. Chris Raschka. Candlewick.

Nice assortment of poems in this collection includes some for two voices, bilingual, traditional favorites, all accompanied by Raschka's colorful, energetic illustrations.

Smith, Hope Anita. **MOTHER: POEMS**. Holt.

This novel in verse reveals the feelings, thoughts and struggles of a young girl dealing with the death of her mother. Each poem can stand on its own, however, and is illustrated with a faceless, torn-paper collage making the meaning universal. Elegant, simple and unsentimental.

Hughes, Langston. Photos. Charles R. Smith, Jr. **MY PEOPLE**. Ginee seo. **CORETTA SCOTT KING ILLUSTRATOR AWARD**

An inspired picture book interpretation of Hughes poem, using beautiful sepia-toned photographs of African Americans of all ages, each placed against a black background.

Hughes, Langston. **THE NEGRO SPEAKS OF RIVERS**. Ill. E.B. Lewis. Disney/Jump at the Sun. **CORETTA SCOTT KING ILLUSTRATOR HONOR**. Dedicated to the heroes of the civil rights movement, E.B. Lewis illustrates and interprets Hughes poem with elegant water color paintings - a double-page spread for each line of the poem. Use for teaching metaphor and visual interpretation. Truly suitable for all ages.

Nelson, Marilyn. **SWEETHEARTS OF RHYTHM**. Dial.

A collection of poems, told from the point of view of instruments in a pawn shop, chronicles the careers of the women who played them in the all-girl, multi-racial swing band known as the "Sweethearts of Rhythm" popular in the 1940's. The instruments sometimes recall earlier events or owners before the "Sweethearts" and before they all ended up in this particular pawnshop together.

Myers, Walter Dean. **LOOKING LIKE ME**. Ill. Christopher Myers. Egmont.

Father and son collaborate on a rap-like poem illustrated with jazzy, colorful collages, celebrating self-esteem and identity as a brother, friend, artist, city child, and more. Reminiscent of Whitman's "*Song of Myself*"

TOUCHED BY WAR

Bogacki, Tomek. **THE CHAMPION OF THE CHILDREN: THE STORY OF JANUSZ KORCZAK**. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. A picture-book biography of the Polish doctor who gave up his medical practice to help underprivileged children and created an orphanage based on humane and decent practices. When Nazis invade, Janusz moves his orphanage to the ghetto and eventually accompanies the children on the train to Treblinka.

Burg, Ann E. **ALL THE BROKEN PIECES**. Scholastic,.

Set in 1975, Matt Phin, is a 12 year old Vietnamese boy who came to America as part of the baby lift and was adopted. He feels resentment from a neighborhood boy whose own brother died in the war. A novel in verse, Matt's first person narrative reveals his survivor guilt, memories of the horrors, and the loss of his country and family.

Holmes, Sara Lewis. **OPERATION YES**. Levine.

The kids of military families, moved often, resentful, and scared for their parents, are all coping as best they can in the public school just outside of a military base in North Carolina. When Miss Loupe becomes their new 6th grade teacher, she tries to help them rise above it all through improv and the arts, but when her own brother is reported missing in action, she loses her enthusiasm.

Keller, Julia. **BACK HOME**. Egmont.

Rachel is 13 when her Dad is sent to Iraq with his National Guard unit. When he returns home an amputee with traumatic brain injury, she and her family must come to terms with the fact that this is not the same person they knew. They must make difficult decisions about his care, facing life with an invalid in the home, anger and more.

- Metselaar, Menno. **ANNE FRANK: HER LIFE IN WORDS AND PICTURES FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE ANNE FRANK HOUSE.** Roaring Brook. Stunning photo biography about Anne, her family and the museum which is now in the annex where they hid. The many photographs of individuals and of the actual diary pages bring home the fact that these were real people with normal lives before Hitler.
- Murphy, Jim. **A SAVAGE THUNDER: ANTIETAM & THE BLOODY ROAD TO FREEDOM.** Margaret K. McElderry. Photo essay about the battle and events leading up to it. Photographic images from the Library of Congress are used well, and engaging text allows events to slowly unfold. Reveals some unbelievable facts and statistics about the battle and extreme losses due to war.
- Murphy, Jim. **TRUCE: THE DAY THE SOLDIERS STOPPED FIGHTING.** Scholastic. **PRINTZ RECOMMENDS** Describes a Christmas night during WWII when all fighting stopped, and both German and American soldiers met on the battlefield, shook hands and sang. Pair with *Yankee Soldier at Seder* by Weber.
- Parry, Roseanne. **HEART OF A SHEPHERD.** Random House. Ignatius, the youngest of five brothers, is left at home with his aging grandparents to help manage their Oregon ranch while his father is deployed in Iraq. Mother has left the family to pursue her own career in arts, and his brothers are either away at military training camps or school. Grandfather is a Quaker with nonviolent beliefs that contradict the military bearing of the rest of the family, and Ignatius struggles to identify his own beliefs even as he handles difficult situations dealing with ranch life and responsibility to be the man of the family.
- Patterson, Katherine. **THE DAY OF THE PELICAN.** Clarion. A Muslim family displaced by the war in Kosovo in 1998 ends up coming to America after much hardship, only to find themselves facing discrimination here after the twin towers are hit in 2001.
- Philbrick, Rodman. **THE MOSTLY TRUE ADVENTURES OF HOMER P. FIGG.** Blue Sky. **NEWBERY HONOR** Twelve- year- old Homer runs away in search of his older brother who was illegally sold off to fight in place of a rich boy for the Union Army. Homer is the unreliable narrator of this tall-tale type approach to a Civil War story, who survives harrowing events with his ability to tell lies and a lot of luck Nice read aloud companion to “Highway Robbery” by Kate Thompson.
- Robinson, Anthony and Annemarie Young **MOHAMMED'S JOURNEY: A REFUGEE DIARY.** Ill. June Young. Francis Lincoln. Mohammed was age 6 when his father was taken into custody by Sadaam Hussein, and he and his mother were forced to flee Iraq. His picture-book memoir chronicles the events in the life of his Kurdish family, the horrors they faced, and brings home the realities of war.
- Ruelle, Karen Gray. **THE GRAND MOSQUE OF PARIS: A STORY OF HOW MUSLIMS RESCUED JEWS DURING THE HOLOCAUST.** Ill. Deborah Durland DeSaix. Holiday House. **PRINTZ RECOMMENDS** During the Nazi Occupation of France from 1940-44, many Jews found help through the Islamic community and were hidden in the Grand Mosque in Paris. This picture book explains different strategies used to hide and transport refugees and names brave individuals who were central to Muslim cooperation with the French resistance. End matter includes an author’s note, glossary and a wealth of resources for more information.
- Thor, Annika. **A FARAWAY ISLAND.** Delacorte. **BATCHELDER AWARD** In 1939, two Jewish girls are evacuated to Sweden for safety to avoid Nazi persecution, and they must learn to adapt to new life styles, language and guardians while they wait and hope for their parents to be able to leave Germany to join them. First of a planned series of 4 books.
- Weber, Elke. **THE YANKEE AT THE SEDER.** Ill. Adam Gustavson. Tricycle. Based on a true event and told from the point of view of 10 year old Jacob, a Confederate family invites a Jewish Union soldier to share a Passover meal with them. Author’s note tells about the actual event and includes photographs of some of the individuals.
- Whitney, Kim Ablon. **THE OTHER HALF OF LIFE.** Knopf. Describes the voyage of a group of Jews escaping Nazi’s persecution aboard a passenger liner headed for Cuba and safety, but when they arrive, they are turned back . Based on a true account.