

CCBC

Choices

2003

**CCBC Choices 2003**

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with

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and  
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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Each year, the Friends of the CCBC, Inc., underwrites the production and printing costs of *CCBC Choices*. The extraordinary support from this all-volunteer organization means that *Choices* is available at no cost to teachers, school and public librarians, and interested others across Wisconsin. We are appreciative of their commitment to the work of the CCBC in this and many other ways. (For more information about the Friends of the CCBC, see Appendix VI.)

We thank Friends member Tana Elias, who created the index for *CCBC Choices 2003*. This is the eighth year Tana has created the *Choices* index as a volunteer—an extraordinary commitment in and of itself.

It was also eight years ago that Friends member Lois Ehlert created the cover design for *CCBC Choices*, giving the publication a fresh look that we continue to enjoy.

A number of individuals with specialized interests and expertise evaluated one or more books at our request, or volunteered their comments. We thank Anne Altshuler, Peggy Choy, Oralia Garza de Cortés, Saeid Golestani, Barry Hartup, Graciela Italiano, Margaret Jensen, John Kruse, JoAnn Ninham, and Darlene St. Clair for contributing to our work in this way.

We have gained many insights from participants in CCBC book discussions throughout 2002. Likewise, we are appreciative of all who attended the annual CCBC award discussions of books published during 2002. The CCBC held Randolph Caldecott, John Newbery, Coretta Scott King, and Michael L. Printz award discussions in December, 2002, and January, 2003. We extend special thanks to Joanne Lenburg, who coordinated Madison Metropolitan School District staff participation in the Coretta Scott King and Michael L. Printz discussions.

Members of the *CCBC-Net* community, an electronic book discussion forum sponsored by the CCBC, shared some of their favorite books of the year, and the outcomes of regional or local award book discussions, during December, 2002, and January, 2003. Their comments provided us with additional perspectives and insights. We are thankful to all who participate in this lively virtual community.

Finally, Ginny Moore Kruse retired as director of the CCBC in August, 2002. She read many books throughout the first eight months of the year and her annotations for a number of these titles are in this edition of *CCBC Choices*. Since August, she has continued to provide us with her insights and observations about numerous books.

*CCBC Choices* was first created under Ginny's leadership at the CCBC. The very first edition of *CCBC Choices* was a stapled, four-page bibliography created by Ginny and graduate student Susan C. Griffith in early 1981 to draw attention to outstanding titles published the previous year. Over the years, *Choices* has changed in appearance and format significantly, often as the result of Ginny's ideas for ways it could be expanded and improved, as well as input from the professional staff that Ginny mentored (the three of us included), and library and education colleagues across the state. Ginny's high standards for the books chosen, and the publication itself, is something we are committed to continuing.

Kathleen T. Horning, Merri V. Lindgren, and Megan Schliesman

## INTRODUCTION

*CCBC Choices* is created within the environment of the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC), a library of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (see Appendix II for more about the CCBC). As a book examination center and research library, the CCBC receives review copies of almost all of the trade books and many alternative press books published in English in the United States for children and young adults during the year. The library received literally thousands of newly published books throughout 2002. One or more of the professional staff examined each of them. Hundreds were subsequently read. We discussed many formally or informally with other librarians and educators in Wisconsin and elsewhere in the nation. Many were also discussed on *CCBC-Net*, the national electronic book discussion group moderated by the CCBC.

Our goal in creating *CCBC Choices* is to highlight outstanding titles published for children and young adults each year. We hope that *CCBC Choices* will help teachers, school and public librarians, daycare providers, and others who work with children and young adults locate high-quality books that meet specific curricular and developmental needs, as well as the need of every child and young adult to have access to a wide array of literature that can inform, entertain, and inspire. We recommend each and every book in *CCBC Choices*. But each and every book is not necessarily for every child, every classroom, or every family. We are confident, however, that everyone using *CCBC Choices* will find a significant number of books that will delight, inform, or stimulate the innate curiosity of children and teenagers.

In choosing books for *CCBC Choices*, we strive to call attention to a wide array of books. The process is a subjective one in many respects. As we look for books that are accurate, that are interesting, that are well-written and engagingly presented, we don't always agree on an individual title's merits (or lack thereof). It is one thing to determine accuracy in the case of an informational book, another when discussing the authenticity of events or emotions in a work of fiction. We talk about these differences. Some of these titles ultimately end up in *CCBC Choices*; others do not.

There are books we simply miss, even with the thousands that we examine and hundreds that we read in evenings and on weekends throughout the year. We regret these oversights as they come to light and look for other ways we can draw attention to those titles as we work with teachers and school and public librarians throughout the year.

Book discussion is an important part of our evaluation process at the CCBC. In addition to the informal discussions we have with one another and colleagues, we hold monthly discussions open to any adult in order to look critically at some of the new books we have received at the CCBC. Using CCBC Book Discussion Guidelines (see Appendix III), we strive to articulate our first critical responses to the books in question.

We also host annual award discussions, using the criteria for eligibility and excellence established by national book award committees. The award discussions provide an opportunity to look critically at some of the year's outstanding children's books. In late 2002 and early 2003, we held discussions of books eligible for the Caldecott Medal, the Coretta Scott King Award, the Newbery Award, and the Michael L. Printz Award. The results of those discussions can be found in Appendix IV.

### **Organization of *CCBC Choices 2003***

The organization of the books in *CCBC Choices* into thematic and genre categories has been developed over the years to help teachers, school and public librarians, and others who work with children quickly find books that meet their needs. We often make refinements from year to year in the organization, in part due to our ever-growing understanding of what our colleagues who work with directly with children want and need, and in part to reflect the books we have chosen in a particular year.

The 200 books recommended in *CCBC Choices 2003* are divided into 17 thematic and genre categories. Each title has been placed in the category to which it seems most suited. Because many of the books could easily have been placed in more than one section, a “see also” listing at the end of each category draws attention to other relevant titles in this edition of *Choices*. There is a combined author/title/subject index at the end of *Choices*.

We provide suggested age ranges for each title we recommend. These are meant to be general guidelines. Individual children and teenagers may find books suggested for younger or older age ranges appealing, and adults may determine them appropriate. Nothing can substitute for professional judgment, and personal knowledge of individual readers, classrooms, and communities. There is considerable overlap of ages in the two picture book categories (Picture Books for Younger Readers and Picture Books for Older Readers), as well as in the two fiction categories (Fiction for Children and Fiction for Young Adults). We have tried to address these using the “see also” references.

The citation for each book in *CCBC Choices 2003* includes the prices and international standard book number (ISBN) for any edition we were able to find in print in late 2002. Most of the books are available in hardcover trade editions. Some are also or only available in library editions with reinforced bindings. A few are only, or also, available in paperback. Whether or not hardcover-only titles eventually make it into paperback is influenced by a number of factors, including sales of the hardcover edition.

Several books in *CCBC Choices 2003* have a 2001 copyright date. To our knowledge, these books were not actually published in 2002, and therefore are included in this edition of *Choices*.

Consumers of books for children and young adults have the luxury -- and the difficulty -- of choosing from thousands and thousands of available titles. There are literally hundreds of thousands of books for children and young adults currently in print. In recent years, we've estimated approximately 5,000 new titles join those ranks annually. Their quality varies widely. For those who are committed to finding high-quality books for the children and young adults for whom they are professionally or personally responsible, the Cooperative Children's Book Center offers an environment for discovery and learning, and, ultimately, for making up one's own mind about the new books published each year.

In creating *CCBC Choices*, we have tried to identify outstanding titles of the publishing year in the hope that it will provide librarians, teachers, parents, and others with assistance in navigating the wide and exciting array of choices available to them.



## THE CHARLOTTE ZOLOTOW AWARD

The Charlotte Zolotow Award is given annually to the author of the best picture book text published in the United States in the preceding year. Established in 1997, the award is named to honor the work of Charlotte Zolotow, a distinguished children's literature editor for 38 years with Harper Junior Books and an author of more than 65 picture stories, including such classic works as *Mr. Rabbit and the Lovely Present* (Harper, 1962) and *William's Doll* (Harper, 1972). Ms. Zolotow attended the University of Wisconsin in Madison on a writing scholarship from 1933 to 1936, where she studied with Professor Helen C. White.

The award is administered by the Cooperative Children's Book Center, a children's literature library of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Each year, a committee of children's literature experts selects the winner from the books published in the preceding year. The winning author receives a cash prize and a bronze medal designed by UW-Madison Art professor Philip Hamilton and based on an original drawing by Harriett Barton of HarperCollins. The award is formally presented in the fall, prior to the annual Charlotte Zolotow Lecture on the UW-Madison campus.

Any picture book for young children (birth through age seven) that is first published in the United States and is written by a U.S. citizen or resident is eligible for consideration for the Charlotte Zolotow Award. The book may fall into any genre of writing (fiction, nonfiction, poetry, or folklore) as long as it is presented in a picture book form and aimed at an audience of young children. The committee works with a shortlist of titles selected by the CCBC professional staff. Committee members may suggest additional titles they think should be included on the shortlist; however, all titles are subject to the approval of the CCBC professional staff. Books written by Charlotte Zolotow are not eligible for the award.

In addition to choosing the award-winning title, the committee may select up to three Honor Books and up to ten titles to be included on a Highly Commended list that will call attention to outstanding writing in picture books.

The selection committee is comprised of five members, who are appointed to a two-year term by the CCBC professional staff. These appointments are based on knowledge of children's books, demonstrated ability to evaluate children's books and discuss them critically, and/or direct experience working professionally with children from birth through age seven.

Members of the sixth annual Charlotte Zolotow Award Committee were Megan Schliesman, chair (librarian, Cooperative Children's Book Center, UW-Madison); Carole DeJardin (Children's Services Supervisor, Appleton Public Library, Appleton, Wisconsin); Eric James (Grade 1-2 Teacher, Country View Elementary School, Verona, Wisconsin); Michelle Reis Olsen (librarian, Randall Elementary School, Madison, Wisconsin); Marlys Sloup (literacy consultant; retired teacher, Madison, Wisconsin); and Kathleen T. Horning, ex officio (librarian, Cooperative Children's Book Center, UW-Madison).

[logo]

## ***2003 Charlotte Zolotow Award***

**Winner:** *Farfallina & Marcel* by **Holly Keller**.  
(Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins, 2002)

**Honor Book:** *The First Thing My Mama Told Me* by **Susan Marie Swanson**.  
Illustrated by Christine Davenier. (Harcourt, 2002)

### **Highly Commended:**

Andrews-Goebel, Nancy. *The Pot That Juan Built*. Illustrated by David Diaz.  
(Lee and Low, 2002)

Banks, Kate. *Close Your Eyes*. Illustrated by Georg Hallensleben.  
(Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2002)

Henkes, Kevin. *Owen's Marshmallow Chick*. (Greenwillow Books /  
HarperCollins, 2002)

Herrera, Juan Felipe. *Grandma and Me at the Flea*. Illustrated by Anita de Lucio-  
Brock. (Children's Book Press, 2002)

McMullan, Kate & Jim. *I Stink!* (Joanna Cotler Books / HarperCollins, 2002)

Okimoto, Jean Davies and Elaine M. Aoki. *The White Swan Express: A Story  
about Adoption*. Illustrated by Meilo So. (Clarion, 2002)

Schertle, Alice. *All You Need for a Snowman*. Illustrated by Barbara Lavallee.  
(Silver Whistle / Harcourt, 2002)

Shannon, David. *Duck on a Bike*. (Blue Sky Press / Scholastic, 2002)

Wilson, Karma. *Bear Snores On*. Illustrated by Jane Chapman.  
(Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2002)

Wong, Janet S. *Apple Pie Fourth of July*. Illustrated by Margaret Chodos-Irvine.  
(Harcourt, 2002)

## **OBSERVATIONS ABOUT PUBLISHING IN 2002**

The most recent edition of *Children's Books in Print* (R.R. Bowker, 2003) states that there are XXXX books from XXX U.S. publishers currently available for purchase in the United States. This includes new trade books, reprints, paperback editions of titles published earlier, large-print books, book-club editions, novelty books, series books from informational publishers, and more. There are well over three times as many books available now than a decade ago.

Only a small percentage of that vast number actually represents brand new titles for children and teens. We estimate about 5,000 such books were published in 2002.

The CCBC received approximately 3,100 new books for children and young adults in 2002. The majority of these were published by approximately 45 or so trade publishers (some of which are separate divisions of the same publishing house) and five to ten small, independent publishers. Some were titles from publishers specializing in informational books for the young, often developed specifically with curricular needs in mind.

Of the 200 books in *CCBC Choices 2003*, XXX represent the first published works for the young of XX authors and XXX illustrators; 17 were originally or simultaneously published outside the United States (1 of these was a translation); 12 were published by 6 small, independently owned and operated publishers; and 50 feature multicultural themes or topics (the CCBC definition of "multicultural" refers to people of color). To our knowledge, XXX of the books we recommend in *CCBC Choices 2003* have not appeared on any of the other nationally distributed lists of the year's best books as of late January, 2003.

Most of the books in *CCBC Choices 2003* are published for an audience ranging in age from infancy to 14 years -- the upper age in the definition of "children" used by the book awards committees of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) of the American Library Association (ALA). A few of the books in this edition of *CCBC Choices* are recommended for older ages as well.

As we comment on some of what we observed about the publishing year in 2002 on the following pages, please note that not every book we discuss has been selected as a *CCBC Choice*. Books that are not recommended in this edition of *CCBC Choices* are designated by the inclusion of publisher information after their titles.

### **Multicultural Literature: Books for Every Child**

There are varied definitions of "multicultural literature" used in the field of literature for children and young adults. No single one is correct. At the CCBC, we use the term to mean books by and about people of color: Africans and African Americans, American Indians, Asians/Pacifics and Asian/Pacific Americans, and Latinos.

We know there is enormous diversity within any cultural group, and we know no single book can speak to the experience of an entire group. That is why it is so important to have a wide range of multicultural literature available in classrooms and libraries. All children need books that reflect their own lives, and also the world in which they live.

There is a wide range of outstanding multicultural titles in print and available (though books will go out of print if they are not purchased). And even though the overall number of multicultural titles published each year is a small percentage of the overall total, there is always a

significant number of exemplary books among them. And there are a number of resources available to teachers, librarians, and parents searching specifically for outstanding multicultural titles to share with children, from the Coretta Scott King, Américas, Pura Belpré, and other award lists; to specialized bibliographies published in professional journals or as professional resource books, such as the National Council of Teachers of English *Kaleidoscope* series (NCTE, various years); to the occasional, welcome focus on multicultural literature in publications aimed at parents and the general public, such as *Black Books Galore's Guide to Great African American Children's Books* and its companion volumes (John Wiley, various years). But we are also pleased to see that multicultural literature is more and more becoming an integral part of the discussion of children's and young adult literature in resources such as children's literature textbooks for students studying to become teachers.

### ***CCBC Statistics on Multicultural Literature***

In 1985, the CCBC began to document the number of books for children and young adults by and about African Americans annually. In 1994, we expanded the effort to include books by and about all people of color. We have seen the numbers ebb and flow over the years, but have yet to see multicultural literature make up more than 10 percent of the total number of new books published. This percentage drops to less than 5 percent when it includes only titles written and/or illustrated by people of color. Furthermore, these statistics represent only quantity, not quality or authenticity, which we pay close attention to as we evaluate books at the CCBC, often seeking the outside opinions of colleagues and experts in the field.

Of the 3,100 some titles we received at the CCBC in 2002, we document the following with regard to books by and about people of color:

- 166 books had significant African or African American content. 68 books were by Black book creators, either authors and/or illustrators (most, but not all, were among the 166 titles with African or African American content).
- 64 books featured American Indian themes, topics, or characters. Of these, only six were created by individuals identified as American Indian authors and/or artists.
- 91 books were about or significantly featured Asians/Pacifics or Asian/Pacific Americans. 46 were specifically by book creators of Asian/Pacific heritage (most, but not all, were among the 91 books with Asian/Pacific content).
- 94 were on Latino themes and topics. 48 were created by Latino authors and/or artists (most, but not all, were among the 94 books with Latino content).

The number of books by and about Africans and African Americans and by and about American Indians was down considerably from last year. The number of books by and about Latinos showed a significant increase, while the number of books by and about Asians/Pacifics and Asian/Pacific Americans remained about the same. (A complete archive of the statistics we have compiled over the years is available on the CCBC website at:

[www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/pcstats.htm](http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/pcstats.htm)). What also continues to remain unchanged is the fact that the books created by people of color represent the work of just a relatively small number of authors and artists. This is especially true among books by and about American Indians. The

need for publishers to find and develop new authors and artists of color to join the ranks of those already established in creating books for children and young adults remains an essential one.

To locate all of the books in this edition of *CCBC Choices* about people of color, we refer you to the index, which provides subject headings for each specific racial/cultural group as identified within the books we've selected, and a list of all books fitting that subject.

### ***Books by and about Africans and African Americans***

In 2002 we were greatly saddened by the death of Virginia Hamilton, whose contributions to 20th century children's literature are immeasurable. Hamilton's *Time Pieces* (Blue Sky Press / Scholastic) was published posthumously. She will be greatly missed, but we take comfort in the knowledge that her books will live well into the 21st century.

Hamilton's legacy lives on in another way as well. One of the highlights of 2002 was the first book by Jamie Lee Adoff, Virginia Hamilton's son, who made his children's and young adult publishing debut with *The Song Shoots Out of My Mouth*, an exuberant collection of musically inspired poems.

There were a number of other rich books of poetry by African American book creators in 2002, from Walter Dean Myers's provocative *Patrol*, about a young Black man in the Vietnam War, to Joyce Carol Thomas's *Crowning Glory*, about the beauty of African American hair. Thomas's celebratory collection features the lovely, light-infused artwork of Brenda Joysmith.

We were pleased to see Gregory Christie's return to children's book illustration with *Stars in the Darkness* (Chronicle), a picture book written by Barbara Joosse about a family and a neighborhood struggling with gang violence.

African American author Sherri L. Smith made an intriguing debut in 2002 with *Lucy the Giant* (Delacorte), a novel about a teenage girl of native Alaskan descent. Smith's skilled, sensitive storytelling makes her a writer to watch in the future. Jamaica Placide's debut novel, *Fresh Girl*, tells of a young Haitian American girl's difficult acclimation to life in the United States, which is complicated by the trauma she endured while fleeing Haiti. *The Red Rose Box* by Brenda Woods is a stirring coming-of-age novel set in the Jim Crow South, and also Los Angeles, where a young girl gets her first taste of life without segregation, her first taste of freedom. One of the first two entries in Orchard's First Person Fiction series, books about the immigrant experience by immigrant authors, is *Behind the Mountains* by Edwidge Danticat, who proves she can write well for children as well as adults in this story of a young Haitian girl's life before and after her arrival in the United States.

### ***Books by and about American Indians***

Native writer Linda Boyden (Lumbee Nation Cherokee) was the winner of Lee & Low's New Voices award for her picture book *The Blue Roses*, about the bond between a young girl and her grandfather that continues even after his death. A selection of Oneida artist Lisa Fifield's powerful paintings of animals and people living in harmony are reproduced in *Bears Make Rock Soup*, with short vignettes by Lise Erdrich, a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibway, accompanying them.

These new American Indian voices were particularly welcome as we were disappointed overall in the range of books about American Indians published in 2002. The majority was formulaic nonfiction. During the 1990s and into the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a number of outstanding photodocumentaries about contemporary Native children were published. This year, we saw hardly any.

One of the informational books that did stand out was Laurence Pringle's *Dog of Discovery: A Newfoundland's Adventures with Lewis and Clark* (Boyd's Mills Press), in which the author provides a relatively easy introduction to Lewis & Clark's journey that is especially notable for how carefully he referenced each Native group by its very specific tribal name.

Picture books and novels with significant American Indian cultural content, such as Muscogee Creek writer Cynthia Leitich Smith's *Indian Shoes*, a marvelous chapter book for young readers featuring a contemporary Native child, were again few and far between.

### ***Books by and about Asians/Pacifics and Asian/Pacific Americans***

One of our favorite books of 2002 on Asian/Pacific themes was *The White Swan Express: A Story about Adoption* by Jean Davies Okimoto and Elaine Aoki. This engaging picture book about four North American families who travel to China, and the four baby girls they adopt, is admirable for a number of reasons, not the least of which is its child-centered storytelling. First-time author Shirin Yin Bridges's based her delightful picture book *Ruby's Wish*, about a young girl in China who wants an education, on the experiences of her own grandmother. And Janet S. Wong continues to create word-dazzling, wonderfully paced picture books. In *Apple Pie 4<sup>th</sup> of July*, she deftly captures the feelings of a first-generation Chinese American child worried that her parents don't know how to celebrate that most American of holidays. Instead, the girl discovers that American traditions can expand to embrace diversity.

As in previous years, there wasn't an abundance of novels on Asians/Pacifics and Asian/Pacific Americans in 2002, but also as in previous years, several fine novels stand out. Linda Sue Park's latest work of historical fiction was somewhat of a departure for a writer whose novels have been characterized by centuries-old settings. *When My Name Was Keoko* is a powerful story of oppression and resistance told from the alternating points of view of a Korean brother and sister living under Japanese rule during World II. Australian author Garry Disher's *The Divine Wind* is also set during World War II, in an Australian coastal town where the narrator's love for a young Japanese woman is complicated by the racism and paranoia that mount once the war begins.

Tanuja Desai Hidier makes a breathtaking debut with her novel *Born Confused*, a fast-paced, complex, and delightful look at a teenager's search for identity that explores both universal issues and those specific to protagonist Dimple Lala as she navigates conflicted feelings about her South Asian heritage. Graham Salisbury continues to write about teenagers in Hawaii in his notable short story collection *Island Boyz*, while we were pleased to see picture book author Ken Mochizuki made his novel-writing debut with *Beacon Hill Boys* (Scholastic Press).

### ***Books by and about Latinos***

One of the interesting aspects of Latino literature for the young is the number of established Latino writers for adults who are creating books for children and young adults. This is not always an easy or successful transition. Some individuals, such as Pat Mora and Juan Felipe Herrera, have established careers and reputations in both fields. Others, like Julia Alvarez and Isabel Allende, are recent arrivals on the children's and young adult literature scene, although well known for their adult works.

Alvarez published her second novel for youth in 2002. *Before We Were Free* (Alfred A. Knopf) is set in the Dominican Republic in 1960 and 1961, during the Trujillo dictatorship. Told from the point of view of a 12-year-old girl whose father and uncle are involved in the plot to assassinate Trujillo, the novel captures the tension of life lived in fear and uncertainty. Isabelle Allende's first novel for young readers, *City of the Beasts*, is a substantial fantasy with a strong environmental message. We are pleased to see it is also available in the author's native Spanish as (*La Ciudad de las Bestias*), something rare for novel-length books, especially from mainstream publishers.

Herrera's marvelous *Grandma and Me at the Flea/ Los Meros Meros Remateros* is a lively bilingual picture book about a Mexican American boy who attends the Sunday flea market with his grandmother and discovers the community of support that exists among the vendors. Pat Mora has written a fascinating book about a young woman in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Mexico who defied tradition by becoming educated in *A Library for Juana: The World of Sor Juana Inés*.

While we welcome the contributions of these "crossover" authors from the adult literary community, we also commend the work of those who chose to write expressly for children. Alma Flor Ada, who also writes *about* literature for the young, adds to her growing list of books for children with *I Love Saturdays y domingos*, about a bicultural child's relationship with her two sets of grandparents, one Latino, one Anglo. Pam Muñoz Ryan's latest work is a stirring picture book biography of the African American singer Marian Anderson, *When Marian Sang*.

Two Mexican artists are the subjects of two other dazzling picture book biographies. *Frida*, about the life of Frida Kahlo, features Jonah Winter's wonderfully restrained text and Spanish artist Ana Juan's stunning illustrations. *The Pot That Juan Built*, by Nancy Andrews-Goebel, is a multilevel narrative describing the life and work of potter Juan Quezada, and features David Diaz's bold, dramatic art.

The continued creation of a diverse body of excellent multicultural literature for youth benefits from both the ongoing commitment of small publishers such as Lee & Low, Children's Book Press, Cinco Puntos, Just Us Books, and others who are devoted exclusively to publishing multicultural literature for children (and often to developing new authors and artists of color), and the ongoing commitment of large trade book publishers who seek out diverse voices, sometimes developing imprints devoted to multicultural titles and/or themes, such as the Amistad imprint at HarperCollins, and Orchard's First Person Fiction, both of which debuted in 2002. We commend them all, even as we'd like to see more books that reflect the diversity of the world in which we live.

### **Putting the World in Perspective: Beyond September 11, 2001**

Like the world in general, the children's and young adult literature community sought ways to respond to the incomprehensible events of September 11, 2001. A number of books published

for children and young adults in 2002 reflect the struggle we all share to put this tragedy into some sort of perspective.

Among those we especially admire are Georgia Heard's *This Place I Know*, a collection of poems compiled from among those she took into New York City classrooms in the weeks following the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks. Annie Thoms, a teacher at Stuyvesant High School in Manhattan, led a group of students from that school in the creation of a performance piece drawn from their interviews with classmates, faculty, and staff about their experiences on September 11 and in the days and weeks that followed. The riveting result was *With Their Eyes*.

In *Fireboat*, Maira Kalman weaves the World Trade Center bombing into a captivating picture book about the John J. Harvey, a New York City fireboat that had been retired but went back into action with its volunteer crew on September 11. By examining that day in the context of the Harvey's entire history, she reminds readers that as traumatic as September 11 was, the events were extraordinary—one awful day, but with many good days that came before, and many good days that will follow.

Mitch Frank, a reporter for *Time* magazine, takes a straightforward question-and-answer approach for older children and teens in *Understanding September 11th: Answering Questions about the Attacks on America* (Viking).

Perhaps now, more than ever, we realize the importance of building bridges and making connections, of understanding the things we have in common with people around the globe. One of the aftereffects of the events of September 11 has been the increased interest among teachers, librarians, and others in finding books about the Middle East to share with children and teenagers. The number of books to draw upon has never been great, as anyone who worked to create a resource bibliography in the fall of 2001 knows. But a number of the titles that do exist are exemplary, including several published in 2002.

Naomi Shihab Nye has worked to bring international voices, including those from the Middle East, to young readers in the United States for years. In 2002, she published two volumes of poetry. *The Flag of Childhood* is a paperback anthology of poems from Middle Eastern writers selected from *The Space Between Our Footsteps* (Simon & Schuster), Nye's comprehensive anthology of poems and paintings from the Middle East that was published in 1998. *19 Varieties of Gazelle* is a collection of Nye's original poems about the Middle East. Both books have moving introductions in which Nye specifically references the events of September 11 in different yet powerful ways that invite readers to open their minds.

Deborah Ellis first wrote about the plight of Afghan people living under the Taliban in *The Breadwinner* (Groundwood, 2001). She continues the harrowing story in *Parvana's Journey*, in which a 12-year-old girl searches for what's left of her family in the war-ravaged country. Cathryn Clinton's admirable *A Stone in My Hand* is set in Gaza during the 1980s, when a young Palestinian girl tries to absorb the impact of her father's death, and the ever-increasing anger and violence around her as tensions mount between members of her community and the Israelis.

There were few informational books relating to the Middle East beyond the usual formulaic volumes on nations and religions. One of the few exceptions was *Muslim Child: Understanding Islam Through Stories and Poems* by Rukhsana Khan (Albert Whitman), which seeks to help non-Muslim readers understand of the Muslim faith, and is rooted in a child's perspective.



## ***Translated Literature***

An important aspect of building bridges—of helping children and young adults in this country understand the larger world in which they live—is the commitment of U.S. publishers to acquire books originally published in other nations. This includes books that were originally published in English, as well as those published in other languages and which require translation into English.

The effort that goes into publishing a translated book is tremendous. Often the editor does not speak the original language of the text, and so relies on summaries by one or more readers fluent in the language in order to determine whether or not to pursue the rights to a foreign title. The editor must find a qualified individual to translate the text, someone who understands the nuances of both the original language and English, and who can consider both the literal meaning and literary integrity of the original as they work. It's a complex job, but one to which a number of editors are committed, with the support of their publishing houses.

Of the more than 3,100 books we received at the CCBC in 2002, we documented 71 translated titles that originated in 13 nations. Understandably, picture books comprised the majority. One of the most memorable was *King & King* by Linda de Haan, a fractured fairy tale from the Netherlands in which a young prince falls in love not with a princess, but with the brother of one of the many eligible young women his mother insists he meet. All ends happily ever after, of course!

We documented only ten works of fiction or nonfiction of substantial length, a number indicative of the amount of work involved in publishing such a book. In acknowledgement of that work, and of the importance of bringing these international voices to young readers here, ALSC/ALA's Mildred L. Batchelder Award acknowledges the publisher of the year's outstanding translated title (picture books are ineligible unless the text is of substantial length). (The Batchelder Award is not always conferred; a committee may decide that no title merits the award in a given year.)

Among the longer translated books published in 2002 was Cornelia Funke's *The Thief Lord* (U.S. edition: Scholastic), an ornate, fast-paced tale of orphans on the run, wily young thieves, and nefarious adults that was originally published in Germany and translated into English by Oliver Latsch. *The Thief Lord* was the recipient of a fair amount of popular media attention in the summer of 2002. Japanese author Kazumi Yumoto's *The Friends* (U.S. edition: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1996) was honored by the Batchelder Award in 1997. In 2002, her fourth title was published in the United States. *The Letters* (U.S. edition: Farrar, Straus, Giroux) was translated by Cathy Hirano.

Few books originally published in Latin America make it to the United States, so we were especially pleased to see Brazilian author Ana Maria Machado's novel *Me in the Middle*, translated by David Unger and published by Groundwood in Canada, distributed here in the United States.

## ***Books from Other English-Speaking Nations***

Far more common than translated titles among international literature for youth in the United States are books from other English-speaking nations that are acquired for U.S. publication, or

that are simultaneously distributed here. Most of the former come from Great Britain and Australia, most of the latter come from Canada.

We were especially appreciative of the global themes reflected in Australian author Judith Clarke's stunning *A Wolf on the Fold*, short stories that are bound by their connection to four generations of one Australian family. They dramatically personalize the effects of war and violence at the same time they reveal the way smaller, everyday challenges in our lives help shape who we become.

We were struck by the exquisite language in Sonya Hartnett's *Thursday's Child*. This Australian author's lyrical, otherworldly novel is set against the bleak backdrop of the Depression.

British author/artist Tim Vyner's *World Team* takes readers on a trip around the world as he imagines children in various countries across the globe all playing soccer at the same time. Photographer Melanie Eclare documents a diverse group of children in Britain creating a garden in *Harvest of Color*.

Aidan Chambers's *Postcards from No Man's Land* grapples with weighty issues ranging from euthanasia to a teenager's burgeoning sexuality. In this winner of Britain's Carnegie Medal, mature content is woven into a swift and compelling read.

In addition to Deborah Ellis's *Parvana's Journey*, books from Canada that we especially appreciated include Brian Doyle's *Mary Ann Alice*, which continues his warm and humorous look at life in the tiny town of Low, Quebec, early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and *Berta*, an easy chapter book about a dachshund intent on mothering something, be it baby chicks or a lamb twice as big as she is. Scientist Kathy Conlan's fascinating account of her work studying the effects of pollution in Antarctica in *Under the Ice* reminds us that the one world we share is dependent upon us all taking care of it.

Whether the books come from over the boarder or across the globe, international voices and perspectives are a critical and enriching component of literature for youth in the United States today.

## **What's So Funny? Humor in Literature for Children and Teens**

While we are grateful to see a thoughtful, written response for children to the recent events of terror and war, on a lighter note we also welcome the books of humor that appeared in 2002. Books for young children have a strong history of including those that provoke a laugh, and the past year was no exception.

Following an earlier success story with another winner can be a difficult task, but three 2002 picture books did just that. Doreen Cronin's *Giggle, Giggle, Quack* features the same farm and set of highly unusual animals that debuted in *Click, Clack, Moo* (Simon & Schuster, 2000). Farmer Brown's on vacation, and the animals that were last seen transacting delicate labor negotiations are now cleverly duping the substitute caretaker into providing them with luxuries of all kinds while their owner is away. Another barnyard hero returns in *Minerva Louise and the Red Truck* by Janet Morgan Stoeke. This is the plucky hen Minerva Louise's fifth book in which she entertains with her always enthusiastic but wonderfully naïve farm-centered interpretations of the world around her. And Saxton Freymann, who first endowed fruits and vegetables with

emotions in *How Are You Peeling? Foods With Moods* (Arthur A. Levine / Scholastic, 2000), has expanded his technique with the whimsical canine creations of *Dog Food*. Dogs sculpted from the likes of broccoli, peppers, and cauliflower are paired with dog-related phrases (e.g., “doggy bag,” “sick puppy”) to create visual puns that will be relished by young and old.

Animals often seem to set the scene for funny stories, and ducks seem particularly suited to the role of instigator. David Shannon’s *Duck on Bike* works wonders with its use of textual repetition and visual characterization of yet another barnyard full of gifted creatures. Duck discovers the joy of bicycle riding, and her example sets the gears turning in the minds of her farm comrades. When the opportunity unexpectedly presents itself, all of the animals leap at the opportunity to try their hand (or hoof, paw, or wing) at cycling, delightfully depicted by Shannon’s comical illustrations.

The close ties between animals and humans provide half the fun of *Bubba and Beau, Best Friends*. Kathi Appelt’s comparisons between a hound family and their human owners poke gentle fun at people and their pets, whose similarities provide the momentum behind her expertly paced tale.

Arthur Geisert’s dry wit is aimed at those who appreciate careful details and understated humor. *The Giant Ball of String*, a picture book for older children, is a drama starring pigs that inhabit the fictional Wisconsin town of Rumpus Ridge, who go to great lengths to regain their massive ball of string when residents of a neighboring town claim it. The visual humor evident in Geisert’s detailed drawings, such as a town center draped with drying string, complement the deadpan tone of the text as the pigs’ elaborate ploy is enacted.

Our colleague Margaret Jensen brought Candlewick’s “Brand New Readers” series to our attention in 2002. These understated, irresistible books for children just learning to read feature simple, engaging stories that end with a humorous twist. Packaged as small hardcovers with four separate stories, or four small paperback books in a slipcover case, there are currently nineteen titles for this series, which debuted in 2000, listed on the publisher’s web site.

Humor in novels for children was often paired with poignancy in 2002. Many children will recognize Zinkoff, of Jerry Spinelli’s *Loser*, either as a classmate, or from their own Zinkoff-like experiences. While Jerry Spinelli’s depiction of a child outside the social norms has heartbreaking moments, it also sparkles with buoyant comic scenarios. Likewise, author Brian Doyle melds humor with warmth, tenderness, and suspense in *Mary Ann Alice*, an environmental-themed account of a dam-building and its disastrous effects on a small Canadian town and its inhabitants in the 1920s.

Memorable characters are a hallmark of Hilary McKay’s writing, and the family in *Saffy’s Angel*, as well as their friends and acquaintances, once again meet the high standard achieved in earlier novels. Confused and hurt by the discovery that she is not a member by birth to the only family she knows, Saffy’s pain and adjustment is tempered by brilliant flashes of laugh-out-loud humor.

Just as Saffy’s doings tend to the outrageous, Jake’s interactions with the eccentric Applewhite family stretch the credibility factor, but in a way so filled with zany fun that readers of Stephanie Tolan’s *Surviving the Applewhites* will happily go with the flow. From the moment Jake arrives at the Applewhites to join their home-schooling program, they shatter his expectations and hoodlum façade with their preposterous doings. Guarded and

cynical, Jake is no match for the artsy Applewhite clan, who soon have him cast as Rolf in an over the top production of “The Sound of Music.”

Fiction for young adults often seems mired in grim reality, with the protagonists shouldering one burden after another, so we welcome what seems to be an unusual amount of humor in notable titles for teenagers this year. Three novels that encompass vastly different themes and genres – from science fiction, to mystery, to contemporary teenage culture – do so in a way that includes wickedly funny moments. The humor of *Feed* and *Gingerbread* is best captured in the fresh, on-target adolescent voices, whose hip slang tells it like it is. The plot of *Martyn Pig* sounds foreboding -- a teenager covering up the accidental death of his abusive father – but it incorporates inspired comedic scenes, such as when Martyn is attempting to persuade a visitor that his dead father is merely dozing.

Carl Hiaasen, long recognized as a master of over-the-top comedy for adults, successfully turns his skills to writing for a younger audience in *Hoot*. Alligators in port-a-potties, poisonous snakes with their jaws taped shut, and bumbling adults all add to the irrepressible ambiance of his story with an environmental message.

Dimple Lala’s voice is guaranteed to stay with readers long after they finish Tanuja Desai Hidier’s *Born Confused*. Dimple’s account of a fitting-room trauma that will be only too familiar to many, and a graphically honest description of the inevitable outcome of mixing nachos with a first over-indulgence in alcohol, infuse painful adolescent experience with humor in a way that welcomes readers to share Dimple’s life as she bumps along the path to maturity.

### **Tearing Down Taboos: Young Adult Novels on the Edge**

Over the past decades, books for young adults have broken new ground as they address an increasingly wide range of subjects once considered off limits. Teenage pregnancy, suicide, eating disorders, abuse, sexuality, drug and alcohol use – each of these topics have been presented, with varying degrees of accuracy and credibility, in books for adolescent readers. In 2002 we noticed an openness to tackling some of the remaining taboos in the arena of young adult literature, often in a type of novel best described as “edgy.”

Some of the books that fell into this category addressed issues of sexuality in ways rarely seen outside of books for adults. *Postcards From No Man’s Land* sets the stage in an early opening scene, when 17-year-old Jacob discovers that a young woman he is attracted to is actually male. Jacob discovers his mistake when the young man purposefully presses Jacob’s hand into his groin under the table at the café where they have met. Later, Jacob’s cousin describes his two friends, one male, one female, and the ongoing sexual relationships he maintains with them both. Both friends are aware of the other, and are comfortable with the relationship as it stands. The cousin goes on to decry monogamy, for himself at least. Jacob himself is ambiguous about the two romantic avenues open to him, one with a young woman, and one with the young man he meets early on, and seems willing to pursue both of them at the book’s conclusion.

In *Born Confused*, Dimple Lala is another 17-year-old who mistakes a man for a woman. Watching a stunning female dancer at club, Dimple later discovers the young woman is in fact a man in drag. *Born Confused*. During the same summer, Dimple also discovers that her cousin, recently arrived in the United States from India to attend university, is a lesbian. Sure that her

parents are unaware of her cousin's sexual identity, Dimple is amazed to learn that they do know, and willingly offer their emotional support when the cousin is recovering from a broken relationship.

The title character of *What Happened to Lani Garver?* by Carol Plum-Ucci (Harcourt) is persecuted, and possibly murdered, for his androgynous appearance and behavior. Gay and bisexual relationships are revealed in *My Heartbeat* by Garret Frehmann-Weyr (Houghton Mifflin), which begins with a young girl's realization that her older brother and his best friend are in love. This scenario is complicated by her brother's unwillingness to commit to a relationship with the young man; he is conflicted in part because of his father's lack of acceptance. When the two boys split up, the novel takes another turn after the girl falls in love with her brother's best friend herself, and the young man reciprocates the feelings.

Garry Disher's elegant novel *The Divine Wind* includes a mature sexual relationship between Mitsy, a young Japanese woman, and Hart, the Caucasian young man who has secretly loved her for years. When the racism of World War II turns feelings against the Japanese, Hart betrays Mitsy and the bond between them.

Although she appears tough on the outside, *Gingerbread's* Cyd Charisse hides the pain of her secret abortion from her mother. When she is kicked out of boarding school for reported drug use, she doesn't feel able to deny the rumors and defend herself with the truth: her leaving school was a way of saving the reputation of the popular boy with whom she'd been having a relationship, despite the fact that he abandons her once he realizes she is pregnant, leaving her to face the abortion on her own.

Some of the novels we recommend in *CCBC Choices 2003* include images of violence that we felt were integral story elements and not in any way gratuitous. Still, the content is potentially disturbing. Fourteen-year-old Mardi is a recent U.S. immigrant who suffers from the memory of a violent murder she witnessed in Haiti, and her own sexual assault by soldiers there in *Fresh Girl*. Unable to cope with the horror of these events, she self-mutilates in secret until her family uncovers the truth and supports her move toward recovery.

In *Martyn Pig*, a teenage boy accidentally causes his father's death in a move to defend himself from the man's abuse. After years of suffering neglect and cruelty, Martyn is unable to feel any sense of loss and attempts to conceal the death to avoid placement in another intolerable living situation. That's just the beginning of the ethical quandaries in a dark, sometimes comical book that includes a murder and double-cross orchestrated by the friend who is helping Martyn.

Perhaps ALA's Michael L. Printz Award, first given in 2000 by the Young Adult Library Services Association to recognize literary excellence in books for readers from 12 through 18, is one of the reasons we are seeing even more outstanding books published for readers in the upper end of that age range. We hope the trend continues.

As with any book in *CCBC Choices*, these titles are not for everyone, but we appreciate the authors' and publishers' boldness in producing books that offer challenging, thought-provoking content without exploiting their audience.

## **Much More Than Facts: Books of Information**

An overview of the nonfiction selected for *CCBC Choices 2003* shows a vast range of approaches to documentation. The subject of documentation in books for children is a hot topic of debate, as we saw in late December, 2002, when members of the *CCBC-Net* electronic book discussion community spent considerable time weighing in on the subject. Many eloquently expressed their views on the ethics, effectiveness, importance, and readability of documentation, with a wide spectrum of thoughtful and strong opinions on the best way to indicate source material. At this time there is no one right answer to this question, as we read and appreciated books that ran the gamut from virtually no documentation to those with several pages of carefully noted sources. Clearly, there is room for variation, but there is also the need for more discussion on this important issue.

One of the continuing trends we noted in 2002 was the number of engaging picture book biographies for children. *Abraham Lincoln* has been the subject of numerous books over the years, but Amy L. Cohn and Suzy Schmidt show there is always room for another, especially one that does such a particularly fine job of capturing the former president's character along with his accomplishments in a book for the early elementary school grades. Nikki Grimes highlights the life and accomplishments of African American aviator Bessie Coleman in *Talkin' about Bessie*, written as a series of fictionalized monologues in the voices of Coleman's relatives and acquaintances.

Several of this year's most dazzling picture book biographies feature artists and musicians, providing access to both their lives and their work. Mordicai Gerstein uses written words and art to convey myriad aural tones and sounds in his biography of Charles Ives. From pages brimming with a cacophony of noise, to pages stunning in their absence of sound, *What Charlie Heard* captures the brilliance of this American composer.

Vocalists Ella Fitzgerald and Marian Anderson both receive top billing in their respective biographies: *Ella Fitzgerald: The Tale of a Vocal Virtuosa*, written by Andrea Davis Pinkney and illustrated by Brian Pinkney, and *When Marian Sang*, written by Pam Muñoz Ryan and illustrated by Brian Selznick. Both volumes convey the women's phenomenal talent, their unique styles, and their important roles in the evolution of American music, all in 40 pages or less.

Jackson Pollack's distinctive approach to painting is the subject of Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan's finely worded picture book text, as well as Robert Andrew Parker's exceptional illustrations, in *Action Jackson*. The drive and energy of a dedicated artist is evident throughout this book, as it is in *Frida*, Jonah Winter's fascinating biography of Frida Kahlo. A focus on Kahlo's childhood and early adult life provides insight into the art she produced in a volume enhanced by Ana Juan's rich illustrations.

Two picture book biographies with more substantial text provide older children with insight into the lives of two great scholars. Known particularly for his substantial books about people and events in U.S. history, Russell Freedman travels back to China of the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. with *Confucius*, bringing this philosopher/teacher's words and life alive for today's children. Fast forward to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and Mexican scholar Juana Inés's passion for books and learning from childhood on is the subject of Pat Mora's absorbing text and Beatriz Vidal's exceptional illustrations in *A Library for Juana: the World of Sor Juana Inés*.

We applaud three new additions to Houghton Mifflin's first-rate series "Scientists in the Field," which bring the work of contemporary scientists to an up-close-and-personal level for elementary school-aged children. *Bug Scientists*, *Secrets of Sound*, and *Project UltraSwan* chronicle the work of entomologists, acoustic biologists, and an interdisciplinary team of biologists and others, respectively. These well-designed, absorbing photodocumentaries feature excellent photographs and text that takes an often lighthearted approach to the topic, allow budding scientists—or any child—an approachable look at the careers of those on the cutting edge of today's science.

*Under the Ice* calls attention to the work of a marine biologist, in another outstanding photodocumentary, this one featuring a contemporary scientist and her research in the frigid waters of the Antarctic. There is a plethora of facts on the endpapers of *Rats*, and a plethora of information about these often reviled rodents inside, ranging from legend to their current role in medical research. The high visual appeal of this volume will ensure its popularity among young readers.

Many children are familiar with Balto, the Disney hero of the 1925 sled dog run that transported desperately needed serum from Anchorage to Nome. Robert J. Blake reveals the unsung canine hero of that real-life event in *Togo*. Although Balto and his team did transport the serum for the final 53 miles of the journey, Togo's monumental effort in carrying that medicine for the previous 350 miles receives well-deserved recognition in this suspenseful page-turner.

Compared to the many excellent informational titles for younger children, it seemed relatively few outstanding books of information for older children and teenagers were produced in 2002.

Two biographies of highly contrasting individuals were among the nonfiction books for older readers that stand out. Elizabeth Partridge drew her multifaceted portrait of musician and activist Woody Guthrie, *This Land Was Made for You and Me*, from a wide range of source material that included interviews with those who knew Guthrie. Her excellent writing based on this extensive research is a seamless work that enriches and informs. James Cross Giblin turned his impressive talents to examining Adolf Hitler in *The Life and Death of Adolf Hitler*, a book that looks beyond the evil of Hitler's actions to try to understand the man himself and how he came to commit such atrocities. Giblin finds that there are no simple answers, even as he reveals a disturbed individual whose brilliance at oratory helped fan the flames of discontent in Germany. One of the most chilling and important aspects of Giblin's work is his depiction of how easily the German government and people relinquished power to Hitler and the Nazi party, capitulating to threats and rhetoric.

World War II also provides the framework for Michael L. Cooper's *Remembering Manzanar: Life in a Japanese Relocation Camp*, which is augmented by archival photographs of the time. Karen Blumenthal steps back a generation earlier in her engrossing account of the devastating 1929 stock market crash in *Six Days in October*. Following the plunge of the stock market, the Depression decade showed a surge in American arts, due in part to the support of the Works Progress Administration, or WPA, as outlined in Duane Damon's *Headin' for Better Times*.

Ocean voyages of two different centuries set the stage for two books of excellent historical nonfiction. Laurie Lawlor's animated style brings Captain James Cook's last voyage to life in *Magnificent Voyage. Revenge of the Whale*, Nathaniel Philbrick's thoughtful adaptation of his adult book *In the Heart of the Sea*, follows the doomed voyage of a 19<sup>th</sup>-century

Nantucket whaler, and includes a heart-stopping description of a whale attack and the shipwrecked sailors' desperate attempt to survive at sea.

### **Literary Debuts: First-Time Authors and Artists**

Reading any excellent new book is rewarding, but discovering that the work is the first publication of a new author or artist on the rise is especially exciting. This year we appreciated several titles that were their author or artist's first book, or the work of an author extending her or his writing to a new audience.

Nancy Andrews-Goebel sets a high standard with *The Pot That Juan Built*. This lively picture book about Mexican potter Juan Quezada tells of his life work within the framework of a cumulative tale, borrowing the format of "The House That Jack Built." While the cumulative story works well on its own, the author achieves even more by offering additional information in a separate text on each two-page spread, and in an excellent afterword.

Another artist was the subject of the first book illustrated by Spanish artist Ana Juan. Juan's art for *Frida*, a picture book biography of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, is extraordinary.

Artist and art teacher Steve Light gives a tradition tale a fresh look with some classic materials in *Puss in Boots*. Light used hand-painted papers, wallpaper, patterned French fabric and other materials to create the collage-like illustrations for the story.

Artist Romare Bearden is the subject of first-time author Claire Hartfield's engaging *Me and Uncle Romie*, a fictional story in which the African American artist is viewed through the eyes of a young nephew who comes to stay with Bearden in Harlem.

*The Harvey Milk Story* is the first published book of author Kari Krakow. Krakow's picture book biography includes welcome information about the personal life and political actions of the gay rights activist. We are pleased to recommend this title from Two Lives Publishing, only the third children's book produced by this small lesbian press located in Pennsylvania.

Small presses devoted to multicultural publishing often make finding and publishing new authors and artists of color one of their priorities. Cherokee author Linda Boyden was the winner of Lee & Low's New Voices Award for *The Blue Roses*, her picture book about the relationship between a young girl and her grandfather, who finds comfort after his death in the garden they once shared. Therese On Louie was a Lee & Low New Voices Honor recipient for *Raymond's Perfect Present*, about a young boy trying to cheer his mother, who is ill. Anita DeLucio-Brock made her children's book illustration debut with *Grandma and Me at the Flea*, written by Juan Felipe Herrera and published by Children's Book Press.

Jaime Adoff, son of esteemed author Virginia Hamilton, published his first book for youth in 2002. *The Song Shoots Out of My Mouth* is a polished volume of poetry that pays tribute to music in many forms.

Kate Bank's fine writing characterizes her memorable picture books, so it was no surprise that her first novel for children, *Dillon Dillon*, is also a fine literary work. The sensitive style and lyrical eloquence that we've come to expect from her picture books were equally evident in this novel of a child redefining his place within his family.

The creator of well-known graphic novels for adults and teenagers, Neil Gaiman turned his talents to a first novel for children, *Coraline*. A child confronted with an eerie alternative reality shows bravery and resourcefulness as she works to save her parents in this tale of horror.



Gaiman skillfully builds suspense and creates a gothic cast of chilling characters without exploiting the story or its readers.

Edwidge Danticat, another author for adults, also turned to writing for children in *Behind the Mountains*, basing elements of the novel on her own experiences coming to the United States from Haiti as a child growing up in Haiti. Another successful author for adults writing a first novel for young readers was Carl Hiaasen, who placed *Hoot* in his trademark south Florida setting, where greed, big business and environmental roulette run rampant in an over-the-top mystery.

Four memorable female protagonists were the creations of first time novelists this year. Hazel, an intelligent and curious twelve year old, wants to know more about the activities of her father and other scientists working on a secret project at a government lab. The place is Los Alamos, the year is 1944, and the answers to Hazel's questions are controversial and far-reaching, in Jacqueline Davies' *Where the Ground Meets the Sky*.

A couple of years older than Hazel, San Franciscan Cyd Charisse most definitely lives in the here and now. Cyd is convinced that life would be better if only she could be with her father in New York City, and fed up with her defiant attitude, her mother and stepfather send her off for a visit in *Gingerbread* by Rachel Cohn. Although Cyd matures during her time with her father and his family, where things are not as easy as she had fantasized, she never loses her distinctive, hip teenage voice and unique perspective on life in this lively young adult novel.

In *The Red Rose Box* by Brenda Woods, Leah Hopper gets her first taste of life without segregation after she spends a summer with her aunt in Los Angeles, making her return to Louisiana difficult in this novel set when Jim Crow laws still gripped the south. Her dream of living in Los Angeles comes true, but is complicated by her grief over the tragedy that has brought her there.

Finally, we're grateful to author Tanuja Desai Hidier for bringing Dimple Lala to the world of young adult literature. Dimple's experiences, as she struggles with her identity as a first generation Indian (South Asian) American poised on the brink of adulthood, are fresh, sincere, and so very true, from the first page to the last of *Born Confused*.

We eagerly anticipate the next work of each of these authors, and hope that they will continue to write to the high standards they have shown in their children's and young adult literature debuts. We also appreciate the editors and others in the publishing community who recognized the talents of these individuals and saw that they had much to contribute to children and young adults today. The continued vibrancy of literature for children and young adults is dependent on new talent constantly entering the field. And not every new author or artist will make a smashing or highly notable debut. The ability of editors to nurture potential is critical, just as it is critical to find that potential among diverse voices that can speak to who we are as a nation.

As our work on this edition of *CCBC Choices* comes to a close, we are already looking forward to new books arriving, to reading, to discussing, to starting the process all over again. In the meantime, we invite you to read, to discuss, to make up your own mind about the books we recommend within these pages.

## The Natural World

Arnosky, Jim. *Field Trips*. HarperCollins, 2002. 96 pages (trade 0-688-15172-8, \$15.95; lib. 0-688-15173-6)

Ready to become a young naturalist? Arnosky explains how easy it is to become an observer of the birds, bugs, and other creatures near us most of the time. Having a good pair of binoculars helps. For Arnosky that probably isn't as necessary as keeping a notebook and pencil handy when walking or traveling. After giving specific safety instructions, on how to avoid ticks, for example, Arnosky offers easily followed directions and easy-to-analyze sketches for a young person to follow independently, with a family member or adult friend, or as part of a group. Arnosky's book can be an outing planner or a guide while on a field trip. It might become a valued family or school manual, or a potential gift to other families throughout any season. (Ages 8-12)

Conlan, Kathy. *Under the Ice*. Kids Can Press, 2002. 55 pages (trade 1-55337-001-5, \$16.95)

“Something was wrong . . . My regulator had frozen open. My air supply was pouring out into the ocean.” Marine biologist Kathy Conlan’s account of a frightening moment while diving in Antarctica is an example of the candid and fascinating narrative put forward in *Under the Ice*. An accessible text and many photographs describe Conlan’s work studying the effects of pollution in Antarctica. Vivid details of the extreme conditions under which she worked convey both the harshness and grandeur of the region. (Ages 8-11)

Conniff, Richard. *Rats! The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*. Crown, 2002. 35 pages (trade 0-375-81207-5, \$15.95; lib. 0-3756-91207-X)

Did you know that rats can swim for three days without drowning, can crawl through a quarter-sized hole, and can enter a house through a toilet? All this and more is engagingly presented in a volume brimming with information about rats. Specifics about rat biology, rats as lab animals, rats as plague carriers, rat lore, rat cuisine, and rats as cuisine, are intermixed in this visually appealing volume, featuring a lively design and numerous photos. (Ages 8-12)

Ehlert, Lois. *In My World*. Harcourt, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-15-216269-0, \$15.00)

The child-sized, die-cut hand on the cover of Wisconsin author/artist Lois Ehlert’s newest book will immediately engage young children. They will want to touch it, to hold their own hands up and compare. Glimpses of the die-cut pages inside make it look as if that little hand has the whole world in its palm. “My world is made of things I like” begins the simple, graceful narrative when the first page is turned. Those things include creeping bugs, wiggling worms, drifting seashells, falling leaves, shining sun, splashing rain, glittering stars, and more. Each page has a die-cut image of the creature or element of nature mentioned. The interconnectedness of everything in nature—and in life—is underscored by the book’s astonishing and marvelous design in which the layered die-cuts suggest both the simplicity and complexity that is the miracle of the natural world. Lois Ehlert is known for her dazzling and unparalleled sense of color, shape, form, and design. She provides children with opportunities to expand their own experience with and

understanding of these elements in each and every book she creates for them. She reaches new heights in this heartfelt acknowledgment of the wonders around us each and every day: “Thank you, world, for everything.” (Ages 3-8)

Jackson, Donna M. *The Bug Scientists*. (Scientists in the Field) Houghton Mifflin, 2002. 48 pages (trade 0-618-10868-8, \$16.00)

The varied career paths entomologists may follow include university professor, forensic entomologist, and Hollywood “bug director.” A lively tone and light touch prevail in this high-interest look at insects and those who study them. Purdue University Professor Tom Turpin’s popularity as a teacher may be explained by his approach to his subject: “People learn more when they’re having fun.” To achieve that, he urges his students to sample fried mealworms and cookies made with dry-roasted crickets. In a more grisly mode, a forensic entomologist describes how she helps solve crimes by examining blow flies found on corpses to determine time of death. An inviting design and captivating material work together to help the author reach her goal of “taking the ‘ug’ out of bug.” (Ages 8-11)

Minshull, Evelyn. *Eaglet’s World*. Illustrated by Andrea Gabriel. Albert Whitman, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-8075-8929-2, \$15.95)

Eaglet’s world expands from its beginning inside his warm egg, to his safe and sturdy nest, to his flight through the wide, blue sky. At each stage, Eaglet first appreciates his habitat’s safety and security, and then is prodded on to the next course of development as he grows too big for his shell, becomes too crowded in the nest, and, finally, is ready to follow his parents in his first attempt at flight. The text hypothesizes Eaglet’s reaction to each new stage of growth, and his eventual delight in independence. The brief, lyrical narrative accompanies realistic illustrations of a Bald Eagle family in a mountain aerie. (Ages 5-8)

Osborn, Elinor. *Project UltraSwan*. (Scientists in the Field) Houghton Mifflin, 2002. 64 pages (trade 0-618-14528-1, \$16.00)

The largest waterfowl in North America, trumpeter swans historically were taught to migrate by their parents. After trumpeter swans east of the Mississippi River were hunted out of existence, no swans were left to teach the migration routes to a small group of swans recently reintroduced to western New York. *Project UltraSwan* describes how the Trumpeter Swan Migration Project trained the young trumpeters to migrate by flying behind a human-piloted ultralight aircraft. The author clearly describes the laborious process, from the imprinting of the cygnets, to accustoming them to the sound of the aircraft motor and teaching them to fly behind the ultralight, to developing the stamina they will need for migration. Despite setbacks, the passion and enthusiasm of those involved in the project remains strong. Many clear color photographs show the swans at all steps of training and migration. Appendices provide information about the three kinds of North American swans, including where to see them and how to tell them apart. (Ages 7-10)

Sayre, April Pulley. *Secrets of Sound: Studying the Calls and Songs of Whales, Elephants, and Birds*. (Scientists in the Field) Houghton Mifflin, 2002. 64 pages (trade 0-618-01514-0, \$16.00) Acoustic biologists are scientists who study animal sounds. The groundbreaking research of three acoustic biologists studying whales, elephants, and birds, respectively, is engagingly presented in this accessible volume. Coming from diverse backgrounds, each of the scientists is clearly dedicated to his or her work, and the excitement they feel for their studies is palpable. A strong message of conservation pervades the text. The concluding chapter suggests that the field of bioacoustics is open to students who are eager for the fun and excitement, as well as the “hours of meticulous and often tedious scientific data analysis.” The many clear color photographs are well chosen, and the book’s excellent design adds to an appealing presentation of contemporary scientists on the job. (Ages 8-11)

Schaefer, Lola M. *What’s Up, What’s Down?* Illustrated by Barbara Bash. Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-06-029757-3, \$15.99; lib. 0-06-029758-1) “What’s up if you’re the grass?” It’s all a matter of perspective. Whether you’re a mole, a wildflower, or a butterfly looking up, or the moon, a whale, or an octopus looking down, one’s point of view is dependent upon the surrounding environment. Schaefer’s playful text invites children to explore the natural world on land and in the sea by thinking about answers to the same two questions about specific parts of an interconnected environment. (Ages 3-7)

Winer, Yvonne. *Birds Build Nests*. Illustrated by Tony Oliver. Charlesbridge, 2002. 32 pages (lib. 1-57091-500-8, \$16.95; pbk. 1-57091-501-6) “Birds build nests / From mud, rich and brown, / Delicately lined with / Velvet and down. / That’s how birds build their nests.” The nests of Fairy Martins, along with 14 other birds, are described in verse and pictured in detailed, full-page, lifelike watercolors. The featured birds from around the world range in size from a Ruby-Throated Hummingbird to a White Stork, and their nest styles are equally diverse. A two-page Nest Identification Guide names each of the birds and offers a paragraph of information about their specific traits. (Ages 5-9)

**See also:** *Bears Make Rock Soup; Birdwatchers; Footprints on the Roof; Frog; Harvest of Color; Hoofbeats, Claws & Rippled Fins; Moon Glowing; Revenge of the Whale; “Slowly, Slowly, Slowly,” Said the Sloth; Togo*

### Seasons and Celebrations

Bronson, Linda, compiler and illustrator. *Sleigh Bells and Snowflakes: A Celebration of Christmas*. Henry Holt, 2002. 45 pages (trade 0-8050-6755-8, \$17.95) From Ogden Nash’s droll poem “Winter Morning” to the lyrics of traditional Christmas carols such as “O Little Town of Bethelhem” and “O Christmas Tree,” this celebration of the Christmas season offers 19 poems and verses of songs, each accompanied by a delightful seasonal tableau made by artist Linda Bronson from clay, collage, and paint. The playful and appealing three-dimensional features clay characters whose painted

brown and tan faces shine. As photographed, the illustrations give each two-page page spread the feel of a seasonal display window, but in miniature. This handsome volume is full of child and family appeal. (All ages)

Grimes, Nikki. *Under the Christmas Tree*. Illustrated by Kadir Nelson. HarperCollins, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-688-15999-0, \$15.99; lib. 0-688-16000-X)

Twenty-three poems about the Christmas season capture the excitement, anticipation, and wonder of the holiday for children, as well as quieter moments of reflection. The poems cover a wide range of topics, referencing the Three Kings and angels, Baby Jesus, and Santa Claus, unpacking decorations at the start of the season and sweeping the last vestiges of the tree out the door at its end. Kadir Nelson's lovely illustrations are filled with African American children and families observing and celebrating the season. They have a warm, glowing feel and capture the essence of each poem in this book that can be enjoyed by all children whose families celebrate Christmas. (Ages 4-8)

Gutman, Anne. *Gaspard and Lisa's Christmas Surprise*. Illustrated by Georg Hallensleben. U.S. edition: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002. 24 pages (trade 0-375-82229-1, \$9.95)

It's a classic problem: what would make the ideal gift for a favorite person? Two dogs, Gaspard and Lisa, deliberate over ideas for their teacher, Mrs. Dupont. Nothing seems quite right, until Lisa remembers how Mrs. Dupont got wet riding her bike to school in the rain. A raincoat would be the perfect gift! Brainstorming over ideas proves easier than producing the desired present, as the dogs labor to construct a raincoat out of a purloined shower curtain. The unguarded use of Crazy Glue causes a setback, as does some fabric dye and an encounter with a too-hot washer and dryer, but Gaspard and Lisa are up to the task. The juxtaposition of the understated text with the appealing illustrations creates a gently humorous story that will be appreciated by anyone who's ever had a hard time getting the end product to match their vision. (Ages 4-7)

Jackson, Ellen. *The Spring Equinox: Celebrating the Greening of the Earth*. Illustrated by Jan Davey Ellis. Millbrook Press, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-7613-1644-2; lib. 0-7613-1955-7, \$22.90)

Throughout history, many cultures and religions around the world have had spring celebrations that recognize the change in seasons as a time of renewal. Jackson tells of ancient Mayan ceremonies, Roman festivals, and mock battles between people representing summer and winter during the Middle Ages in Europe. Contemporary traditions in Iran and India, the Jewish Passover holiday, and the Christian celebration of Easter are also discussed. An adaptation of the legend of the Anglo-Saxon goddess of the dawn and springtime is included, as is a section titled "Spring Activities" which offers directions for making Matzo, celebrating the Iranian New Year feast, and folding an origami butterfly, as well as other seasonal pastimes. (Ages 8-11)

Prelutsky, Jack. *Halloween Countdown*. Illustrated by Dan Yaccarino. HarperFestival / HarperCollins, 2002. 20 pages (trade 0-06-000512-2, \$6.99)

The ghosts that haunt this board book are more playful than spooky, cooking in the kitchen or hanging on the wall. Young children will enjoy counting the ghosts on each

boldly colored, stylized two-page spread as the number descends from 10 down to one. And that last ghost has a not-too-scary surprise in store at the end of this brief, rhyming volume. (Ages 2-4)

Schertle, Alice. *All You Need for a Snowman*. Illustrated by Barbara Lavallee. Silver Whistle / Harcourt, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-15-200789-X, \$16.00)

It all starts with one snowflake. Then billions of snowflakes rolled into one big ball. Add two more balls of snow, bottlecap eyes, and a carrot (of course!) for a nose. Don't forget hat, scarf, mittens, walnut buttons, and a broom to hold! Alice Schertle's text blends masterful pacing with playful rhythm and rhyme, serving up a recipe for winter fun. Barbara Lavallee's stylized illustrations depict the antics of a lively group of children who use all the ingredients to create not one but two winter friends. *Highly Commended, 2003 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 2-5)

Wong, Janet S. *Apple Pie 4<sup>th</sup> of July*. Illustrated by Margaret Chodos-Irvine. Harcourt, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-15-202543-X, \$16.00)

Chinese food on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July? The young Chinese American narrator of this lively, poetic, wonderfully paced picture book can't believe her parents think anyone will come into their store for Chinese food on such a thoroughly American holiday. "Even though my father has lived here / since he was twelve, / even though my mother loves apple pie, / I cannot expect them to know / Americans / do not eat Chinese food / on the Fourth of July." Just as she suspected, the day crawls along with few customers. Those that do stop by purchase matches and soda and potato chips, not sweet-and-sour pork and egg rolls. Janet S. Wong perfectly captures the mood and emotions of a first-generation child who wants to fit in. At the same time, she gracefully extends the young girl's—and readers' -- notion of what an American holiday can look like, and what an American tradition can be, when the child discovers her parents were right after all—Americans, themselves included, do eat Chinese food on the Fourth of July. Margaret Chodos-Irvine's bright, bold graphics complement a story that may be especially resonant for children in immigrant families but has far broader importance. Some readers and listeners may need additional information to fully appreciate the young girl's perspective. *Highly Commended, 2003 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 6-9)

Zolotow, Charlotte. *Seasons: A Book of Poems*. Illustrated by Erik Blegvad. (I Can Read) HarperCollins, 2002. 64 pages (trade 0-06-026698-8, \$14.95; lib. 0-06-026699-6)

Arranged chronologically under the headings "Winter Bits," "Spring Things," "Summer Thoughts," and "The Feel of Fall," this collection of poetry for newly independent readers focuses on the highlights of a child's year. Celebrations and holidays, the natural world, emotions, and family relationships are all encompassed in this volume offering 40 short poems. Illustrations on every page provide a visual entry to the word pictures created by the text: "Light drains slowly from the sky / I almost see / things fade away / and then it's dark / the end of day." (Ages 7-9)

**See also:** *Danitra Brown Leaves Town; Moon Glowing; Owen's Marshmallow Chick; What a Year*

## Folklore, Mythology and Traditional Literature

Bonning, Tony. *Fox Tale Soup*. Illustrated by Sally Hobson. Simon & Schuster, 2002. 24 pages (trade 0-689-84900-1, \$16.00)

A road-weary fox stops at a farm gate, but his request for a little food meets with flat-out refusal from the farm animals. Not to be put off, he calmly pulls a large pot from his backpack and sets out to make stone soup. The animals are taken in by fox's ploy, and eagerly provide him with a turnip, a carrot, a cabbage, and a sprinkling of corn, all the necessary ingredients to complement the flavor of a simmering stone. As expected, the end result is a pot of delicious soup, which fox shares with his unwitting benefactors. Vivid colors and cartoon-like animals add to the fun of this traditional tale. The language is simple and repetitive, well matched to the telling, and retelling, of a trickster on the make. (Ages 3-7)

Chaikin, Miriam. *Angels Sweep the Desert Floor: Bible Legends About Moses in the Wilderness*. Illustrated by Alexander Koshkin. Clarion, 2002. 102 pages (trade 0-395-97825-4, \$19.00)

A companion work to the author's earlier *Clouds of Glory* (Clarion, 1998) is drawn once again from Biblical passages and legends. Chaikin tells of how Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt and into the Holy Land. Her narrative alternates between the Israelites on earth and events in heaven, where God is directing the angels to ease the Israelites' journey. The angels in particular have lively personalities, while Chaikin's spirited storytelling makes for engaging reading overall. The author's introduction explains *Midrashim*, interpretations of Biblical events by ancient rabbis on which many subsequent Jewish Bible legends are based. Her source notes specify story-by-story whether events have been drawn from the Bible, from legend, or from her own imagination. Occasional full-page, full-color paintings round out a book that many families will find of interest. (Age 8 and older)

Cummings, Pat. *Ananse and the Lizard: A West African Tale*. Henry Holt, 2002. 40 pages (trade 0-8050-6476-1, \$16.95)

It isn't often that clever Ananse the Spider is outsmarted, but in this West African tale, Lizard manages to beat Ananse at his own game. When the village chief announces his daughter will marry the first suitor to guess her name, Ananse, being a small spider, is able to go unseen and overhears her name when the Chief's daughter is talking to her servants. As usual, Ananse cannot help bragging about his good fortune, and it's his bragging that leads to his downfall when Lizard convinces him that such an important person needs an official messenger. Pat Cummings traveled to West Africa and listened to several traditional storytellers before she found just the right Ananse story in Ghana to bring home to American children. Her bright watercolor, gouache, and colored pencil illustrations provide just the right complement to her lively retelling. (Ages 4-8)

Hartman, Bob. *The Wolf Who Cried Boy*. Illustrated by Tim Raglin. Putnam, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-399-23578-7, \$15.99)

This hilarious send-up of Aesop's fable "The Boy Who Cried Wolf" involves a family of wolves: apron-clad Mother Wolf, checker-vested Father Wolf, and sneaker-shod Little Wolf. They eat well. The menus of their sumptuous family include Sloppy Does, Chipmunk and Dip, Lamburgers, Chocolate Moose, Three-Pig Salad, and Muskratatouille. "We never have Boy anymore!" Little Wolf complained one evening, remembering Boy Chops, Baked Boy-Potato, and, particularly, Boys-n-Berry Pie. His folks explain that boys are very scarce these days, but Little Wolf is still disgruntled. He delays his next two dinners by calling, "Boy!" These tricks infuriate his folks. As a result, they pay no attention to his third call of alarm when a uniformed pack of Boys actually does appear. A marvelous fractured tale offers high entertainment, a very low threshold of fright, and an unstated moral similar to that in the classic Aesop version. Hartman's engaging concept and Raglin's lively visual action are sure to amuse. (Ages 4-8)

Kuskin, Karla. *The Animals and the Ark*. Illustrated by Michael Grejniec. Atheneum, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-689-82095-5, \$16.95)

Karla Kuskin's energetic version of the story of Noah and the Ark was first published in 1958. Michael Grejniec's delightful watercolor artwork in this newly illustrated edition has a bright, chaotic quality that perfectly matches the tone of this funny, frenzied story told in rhyme. "Then Shem put down a plank for stairs and Ham said he would count the pairs and Japheth made them wipe their feet and gave them each a bite to eat" is Kuskin's rollicking description of the animals boarding the ark. Come along for the journey! (Ages 4-8)

Light, Steve. *Puss in Boots*. Harry N. Abrams, 2002. 24 pages (trade 0-81-0-4368-9, \$14.95)

The tale of the miller's son who pretends to be the Marquis of Carabas and a clever cat dressed in sturdy boots who succeeds in fooling a king comes to life in an entirely new way within these pages. Artist Steve Light used hand-painted papers reminiscent of 19<sup>th</sup>-century French wallpaper, and a patterned French fabric, to create a fresh edition of Charles Perrault's timeless tale of trickery. Light is an art teacher. His note on how he created the illustrations, and how he shares art with children, is inspiring. (Ages 4-7)

Pinkney, Jerry. *Noah's Ark*. SeaStar Books, 2002. 32 pages (trade 1-58717-201-1, \$15.95; lib. 1-58717-202-X)

"God called to the animals, / and from aardvark to zebra they came. / The deer bounded through the tall grass. / The elephants ran and it sounded like thunder. / The wings of the birds / cast a shadow on the earth." Pinkney's strong prose and trademark pencil and watercolor illustrations highlight a retelling of the familiar story of Noah's ark. Pages crowded with pairs of animals on the move, as well as a view of the ark under construction, create a sense of the enormity of Noah's task. An underwater scene of submerged cities and sea creatures swimming beneath the hull of the ark offers an effective visual perspective of a well-known tale. (Ages 4-8)



Wilson, Anne. *Noah's Ark*. Chronicle, 2002. 24 pages (trade 0-8118-3563-4, \$15.95)

The story of Noah's Ark is told in this picture book that blends engaging text with eye-catching collage illustrations. As Noah follows God's directions, he gathered birds, four-footed animals, and "pairs of animals that creep and crawl and buzz about—tiny ants and huge dragonflies, brightly colored butterflies and slithery snakes, bumblebees and beetles, spiders and snails." Anne Wilson's brightly colored artwork is a lively accompaniment to the story. (Ages 4-7)

Young, Ed. *What About Me?* Philomel, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-399-23624-4, \$16.99)

When a young boy approaches the Grand Master asking how he can acquire just a little bit of his knowledge, the Grand Master tells him to come back with a small carpet. The boy then goes to the carpet maker who sends him off in search of thread, then to the spinner who asks for some goats, then to the goatseller who sends him to the carpenter for some wood for his pens. Each person the boy asks has a specific need that seems to be leading the boy further away from the Grand Master, until he ends up back where he began with a surprising amount of knowledge. Ed Young's marvelously textured collage and watercolor paintings suggest the ancient Middle Eastern tradition from which this traditional Sufi story comes. (Ages 4-7)

**See also:** *Manneken Pis*

### **Historical People, Places, and Events**

Blake, Robert J. *Togo*. Philomel, 2002. 40 pages (trade 0-399-23381-4, \$16.99)

The stunning and dramatic cover of *Togo* features the life-size face of a Siberian Husky, its eyes peering intently out from a snow-covered face. Open the book and the drama never ceases as Robert J. Blake recounts the story the unsung hero who helped save the population of Nome, Alaska, during the diphtheria outbreak of 1925. It was the middle of winter, and only sled dogs could traverse the final 300 miles of terrain between Anchorage and Nome. Their cargo was life-saving serum. Togo's handler, Leonhard Seppala, already had discovered Togo was an extraordinary sled dog who had led Seppala to many racing victories. On the serum run, Togo led Seppala and his team across the icy Alaskan terrain in the midst of a winter storm, in temperatures that were as cold as 40 below zero. They not only ran their leg of the journey, but continued on when other teams could not. When they finally were able to pass the serum on to the final handler and team, Togo was spent -- he never raced again. That final team was led by Balto, a sled dog hailed as a hero for bringing the serum into Nome. Balto and his team had run 53 miles. But Togo had led Seppala on an extraordinary 350-mile journey. (Ages 6-10)

Blumenthal, Karen. *Six Days in October: The Stock Market Crash of 1929*. Atheneum, 2002. 156 pages (trade 0-689-84276-7, \$17.95)

You don't need to know anything about the stock market or the 1920s to understand Karen Blumenthal's lively account of the events leading up to the stock market crash of

1929. Not only is her prose cogent and dynamic, pertinent terms and concepts are clearly explained in text boxes in the margins and archival photographs add further information. The events of the notorious week in October are placed in the context of their times, an era when it was widely believed that “anyone not only can be rich, but ought to be rich” and everyone was encouraged to invest, even if they had to borrow money to do so. Blumenthal puts a human face on the history by interweaving personal accounts and quotes from several players, including President Herbert Hoover, vice president of the Stock Exchange Richard Whitney, actor Groucho Marx, and an anonymous car salesman who sold his story to *American Magazine* in February 1930. (Age 13 and older)

Cooper, Michael L. *Remembering Manzanar: Life in a Japanese Relocation Camp*. Clarion, 2002. 68 pages (trade 0-618-06778-7, \$15.00)

What was it like for the Japanese Americans who were evacuated to relocation camps after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941? Michael Cooper combines reminiscences from journals, letters, and personal interviews with people who lived at a single camp, Manzanar, in a desolate California desert. These accounts focus on the incredible adjustments that had to be made in the day-to-day routines of ordinary people, as well as the extraordinary coping mechanisms put into play through work, school, sports, and the arts. Archival photographs by Dorothea Lange, Ansel Adams, and Toyo Miyatake (who, as an inmate, was allowed to set up the camera and compose the shot but could not push the button on the camera himself) accompany the narrative. (Ages 9-14)

Fleischman, John. *Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story About Brain Science*. Houghton Mifflin, 2002. 86 pages (trade 0-618-05252-6, \$16.00)

In 1848, Phineas Gage, a foreman on a railroad construction blasting crew, was horribly injured when an explosion sent a 5-foot tamping iron through his skull. Remarkably, Gage survived. Indeed, he walked away from the accident site on his own two feet. In the years immediately following his accident, Gage's survival was considered a miracle. But Gage was a changed man. Once a smart, thoughtful individual, he now did everything on impulse, with no regard for consequences. He seemed unable to empathize or connect emotionally with people or events. Fleischman recalls the details of Gage's accident, and what is known about the 12 years that followed, until his death, in this fascinating account that also looks at how modern day science and technology has been used to shed further light on Gage's injury and subsequent behavior. (Ages 10-14)

Jaspersohn, William. *The Scrimshaw Ring*. Illustrated by Vernon Thornblad. (The Family Heritage Series) Vermont Folklife Center (Masonic Hall, 3 Court Street, Box 442, Middlebury, VT 05753), 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-916718-19-0, \$15.95)

Set in Newport, Rhode Island, in 1710, this picture story based on a true event centers on six-year-old William Bateman's encounter with pirates. While his parents were away and William was home with the family's cook, he watched as a longboat came ashore and a group of mutineers buried the bodies of the captain and the first mate. When one of the mutineers noticed William watching from the window, he took a scrimshaw ring from his finger and placed it in William's hand. The ring, along with the story, has been passed down through the generations in the Bateman family as an heirloom. Readers will find

suggestions at the back of the book for finding out more about heirlooms from their own families. (Ages 7-10)

Lawlor, Laurie. *Magnificent Voyage: An American Adventurer on Captain James Cook's Final Expedition*. Holiday House, 2002. 236 pages (trade 0-8234-1575-9, \$22.95)

John Ledyard was a 24-year-old American in 1776 when he joined the British Royal Navy in order to accompany the famed explorer Captain James Cook on his third voyage. His became one of the first published accounts of a journey that started with such great expectations and ended in tragedy. Laurie Lawlor's spirited prose makes this account of what turned out to be Cook's final voyage captivating. She often provides readers with Ledyard's own acute observations on events as they went in search of a Northwest Passage to connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans in North America. Sailing south around Africa and up through the Pacific, Cook and his crew encountered many Native peoples, some of whom Cook had known of before, and some of whom were new to him. Ledyard's accounts of those "exotic" people are remarkably favorable considering his own lack of exposure to other cultures and the general beliefs of the times. Often more disturbing to him—and others on the crew—was Cook's erratic, often cruel behavior. On his previous voyages, he had been energetic and even-tempered, and Lawlor includes medical theories on what might have caused this change. Black-and-white illustrations and appendices providing additional information round out a fine work of nonfiction. (Ages 11-14)

Lyons, Mary E., editor. *Feed the Children First: Irish Memories of the Great Hunger*. Atheneum, 2002. 43 pages (trade 0-689-84226-0, \$17.00)

Excerpts from oral histories recorded and housed in Dublin's University Library, a few excerpts from letters, and graphic material representative of the time comprise this book about the Irish Potato Famine. Each brief entry adds to the complete picture of devastation in Ireland, whether it is from an observer lucky enough to remain relatively untouched by events, or from one of the many thousands whose families were ravaged in the mass starvation. Lyons fine selections create a compelling and moving firsthand account of the tragedy. (Ages 11-14)

Myers, Walter Dean. *Patrol: An American Soldier in Vietnam*. Illustrated by Ann Grifalconi. HarperCollins, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-06-028363-7, \$16.95; lib. 0-06-028364-5)

A tense and riveting narrative poem speaks from the point of view of a young Black soldier in Vietnam. "I am so afraid," he says as he and his squad make their way through the jungle. The sound of birds is replaced by the sounds of airplanes, bombs, and gunfire, as they secure the village that is their target. It is occupied by old men, women and babies. "Little enemies with tears running down their dusty cheeks." The young man cannot stop thinking about "the enemy" and yet it is an impersonalized concept until he comes face to face with an armed Vietnamese soldier. "I know he wants me to lift my rifle, to be the enemy. / I want him to lift his rifle. / I want him to run away. / In a heartbeat, we have learned too much about each other." The war is both humanizing and dehumanizing in this thought-provoking piece. The narrator's encounter puts a face on the enemy—two faces, and one of them is his own. It also shatters his illusion that "the

enemy” is anything other than another young man who may not be very different from himself in a book in which the only judgment issued is one that affirms the human toll of war is far too great. The poem is illustrated by Ann Grifalconi’s full-page collages in which she sets images of fear and destruction against the lush natural beauty of the jungle landscape. (Age 11 and older)

Philbrick, Nathaniel. *Revenge of the Whale: The True Story of the Whaleship Essex*. Putnam, 2002. 164 pages (trade 0-399-23795-X, \$16.99)

Nathaniel Philbrick presents an excellent revision of his successful adult title, *In the Heart of the Sea*, in this captivating adaptation for young readers. Maps, diagrams, photographs, and illustrations add dimension to the gripping narrative, which draws heavily on primary sources. In 1820, the Nantucket whaleship Essex was attacked by a sperm whale while voyaging in the Atlantic Ocean. The ship was sunk, and its 20 crew members set out to sail over 1,500 miles to the South American coast, in three small whaleboats, with minimal provisions. The author’s description of the men’s suffering, as they are reduced to daily rations of 2 ounces of hardtack and a sip of water each, is both horrible and mesmerizing. Dehydrated and starving, the men eventually resort to cannibalism as their shipmates die, or are killed for food. When two of the boats finally reach South America, over three months have passed, they have traveled over 4,500 miles from the spot where the Essex was sunk, and over half of the men are dead. This volume is guaranteed to fascinate a wide range of readers, including disaster aficionados, history buffs, and lovers of a good adventure story. (Ages 11-15)

Rogasky, Barbara. *Smoke and Ashes: The Story of the Holocaust*. Revised and expanded edition. Holiday House, 2002. 256 pages (trade 0-8234-1612-7, \$27.50; pbk. 0-8234-1677-1, \$14.95)

A much-lauded book when first published in 1988, *Smoke & Ashes* is a powerful examination of Nazi German’s attack on the Jews of Europe in World War II. In this expanded and revised edition, the intensity of the book’s original narrative remains. As does its clarity. Rogasky places the Holocaust in historical context, and carries her discussion through to current events, including the events of September 11, 2001, and continuing anti-Semitism today. Other additions to this edition include mention of gays and lesbians as being among those persecuted by the Nazi’s in World War II, information that was absent in the first edition. Some readers may find *Smoke & Ashes* emotionally and psychologically painful to navigate. The difficulty of the material is something Rogasky acknowledges in her introduction to both editions: “This book was not written to give you nightmares...To say the truth straight out, this is a book about murder...it is about a time that a nightmare came true.” Archival photographs, maps, and a timeline round out this important work. (Age 13 and older)

Wells, Rosemary and Tom Wells. *The House In the Mail*. Illustrated by Dan Andreasen. Viking, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-670-03545-9, \$16.99)

Twelve-year-old Emily Cartwright lives with her brother, parents, and grandparents in a too-small house. The year is 1927, and Emily’s chronicles her family’s decision to purchase and build a mail-order house in this fictional look at an aspect of Americana that young readers will find intriguing. They choose a model called the Lincoln from the

Sears, Roebuck catalog. It's not long before she and her family are down at the depot to meet the train in which their \$2,500 house takes up an entire car. It's not put together, of course—it takes three trips to haul all the lumber and other supplies home. The foundation has already been laid, and soon a subfloor is completed and frame walls are raised. Emily's narrative describes each phase of the house's completion in this engaging volume illustrated to look like a scrapbook or album, right down to the handwritten notations on the black-and-white photographs of the house being built. (Ages 6-10)

**See also:** *Abraham Lincoln; Across a Dark and Wild Sea; Becoming Joe DiMaggio; Confucius; Divine Wind; Ella Fitzgerald; Fantastic Journey of Pieter Bruegel; Frida; Fruitlands; Headin' for Better Times; Henry David's House; Hero and the Holocaust; Library for Juana; Life and Death of Adolf Hitler; Mary Ann Alice; Me and Uncle Romie; Postcards from No Man's Land; Rap a Tap Tap; Red Rose Box; Ruby's Wish; Scrimshaw Ring; Shrouding Woman; Talkin' About Bessie; This Land Was Made for You and Me; Under the Quilt of Night; What a Year; What Charlie Heard; When My Name Was Keoko; Where the Ground Meets the Sky*

### **Biography and Autobiography**

Adler, David A. *A Hero and the Holocaust: The Story of Janusz Korczak and His Children*. Illustrated by Bill Farnsworth. Holiday House, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-8234-1548-1, \$16.95)

David A. Adler was one of the first authors to write picture book biographies, long before it became a trend, and he is still one of the best. Here he adroitly manages to introduce young readers to a complex person living in nearly incomprehensible times. As a young man in Warsaw, Henryk Goldszmit took the pen name Janusz Korczak to hide the fact that he was Jewish. After receiving his medical degree and working in a children's hospital, Korczak became the Director of a Jewish orphans' home. He became so committed to the children that he refused to leave them after the wall was built around the Warsaw Ghetto, or later as they were all herded onto the train that would take them to Treblinka and certain death. Adler's straightforward declarative sentences are accompanied by dramatic oil paintings of Korczak with the children. (Ages 8-14)

Brown, Don. *Across a Dark and Wild Sea*. Calligraphy by Deborah Nadel. Roaring Brook Press, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-7613-1534-9, \$15.95; lib. 0-7613-2415-1)

There weren't many people in Ireland who could read and write in the early 6<sup>th</sup> century but when Crimthann showed an interest in learning, his parents sent him to study with a bard in Leinster. From there, he attended monastery schools and converted to Christianity, changing his name to Columcille ("dove of the Church"). Most of Don Brown's lyrical account of Columcille's life focuses on his great love of books and learning. His single-minded passion for a Roman book of psalms owned by another monk, Finnian, led him to copy it on the sly, an act which eventually brought on a full-scale war after the High King ruled that Finnian owned the rights to the both the original and the copy. Columcille's own remorse over the bloodshed he had incited caused him to seek refuge on the island of Iona, off the coast of Scotland, where he established his own

monastery. It included a scriptorium where Columcille is said to have transcribed more than 300 books. Detailed illustrations show how books were produced prior to the invention of the printing press, with special attention given to the sources of colored inks. Overall, the somber pen-and-ink and watercolor paintings give an excellent sense of time and place while the poetic narrative serves to underscore the importance of the written word, today as in the time of St. Columcille. (Ages 7-11)

Cohn, Amy L. and Suzy Schmidt. *Abraham Lincoln*. Illustrated by David A. Johnson. Scholastic Press, 2002. 40 pages (trade 0-590-93566-6, \$16.95)

A distinctive picture book biography of Abraham Lincoln has an engaging tone and singular appearance. Authors Amy L. Cohn and Suzy Schmidt draw children into their narrative from the outset: "See that tall, tall man in that tall black hat? Know who he is? That's right, he's the man on the penny—Abraham Lincoln, sixteenth president of the United States." Throughout the book, they make the reader or listener an active observer of Lincoln's life while conveying his humor, his intelligence, and his warmth. They are also clear about his pain and frustration at events in the nation as the country moved toward and through civil war. David A. Johnson's muted illustrations for the tall, slim volume were done in ink and watercolor washes. There are full of angular lines, echoing their subject, yet maintain a friendly, folksy feel that complements the text. Sources would have been a welcome addition to an otherwise notable volume. (Ages 5-9)

dePaola, Tomie. *What a Year*. (26 Fairmount Avenue) Putnam, 2002. 72 pages (trade 0-399-23797-6, \$13.99)

The fourth in his "26 Fairmount Avenue" autobiographical series finds young Tomie DePaola awaiting his sixth birthday, in the year 1940. A classroom birthday celebration gives way to Halloween, quickly followed by Thanksgiving, and, finally, the ultimate child-event, Christmas. Tomie tops off his year by staying up until midnight on New Years' Eve. The upbeat string of events is broken only by a bout with chicken pox. Clear and specific childhood memories generate an effervescent snapshot of the era, distinctly viewed through a child's perspective and priorities. Tomie's extended family, and their frequent gatherings, play a major role in his young life. (Ages 7-10)

Freedman, Russell. *Confucius: The Golden Rule*. Illustrated by Frédéric Clément. Arthur A. Levine Books / Scholastic Press, 2002. 48 pages (trade 0-439-13957-0, \$15.95)

Russell Freedman's compelling biography of the great Chinese teacher and philosopher draws on fact and legend, and separates these from myths about Confucius that have often seen his thoughtful ruminations reduced to jokes in popular culture. Noting that little is known about the actual events of Confucius's life, Freedman relies heavily on sources that have distilled what seems most reliable. The author's voice is an important part of the narrative, informing readers of what is known versus what is conjectured and still drawing a vivid portrait of a warm, intelligent, humorous teacher whose passion for education was linked in part to his desire for governmental reform. A minor governmental official himself, Confucius believed education should be open to boys and young men all classes, not just the nobility, as a means of opening the doors of leadership to all who had something to offer. An author's note describing Freedman's own trip to

China to research the life of Confucius, and sources for further reading, round out this elegant volume that is artfully designed and illustrated. (Ages 10-14)

Gerstein, Mordicai. *What Charlie Heard*. Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2002. 40 pages (trade 0-374-38292-1, \$17.00)

"Charles Ives was born with his ears wide open," begins Mordicai Gerstein's rousing picture book biography of the singular American composer. The lively narrative is full of the sounds that Charlie heard from his infancy through his boyhood and adulthood to the final years of his life. The text incorporates a catalog of sounds on page after page as the story moves forward with energy and ease ("He heard his father's fiddle and the spring peepers. He heard church bells, fire truck bells, the ice cream man's bell, and the train's bell and whistle."). The backdrop for the words on each two-page spread is Gerstein's exceptional artwork, in which a cacophony of sounds are incorporated into the images of Ives's life ("Ratattat," "Riinng!" "Whooooooosh"). When Ives's beloved father died, Gerstein writes, "Charlie heard a great silence." The page is silent, too—the absence of "noise" heightening children's understanding of the emotional impact of that event. Although Ives's music wasn't initially well-received, he lived long enough to see attitudes begin to change. Gerstein's volume is an invitation to young readers and listeners to open their ears to the world around them, and to Ives's music, too. *Honor Book, CCBC Caldecott Award Discussion* (Ages 5-9)

Giblin, James Cross. *The Life and Death of Adolf Hitler*. Clarion, 2002. 246 pages (trade 0-395-90371-8, \$21.00)

In his introduction, James Cross Giblin poses questions that he hopes to answer with this insightful and gripping biography: "What sort of man could plan and carry out such horrendous schemes? How was he able to win support for his deadly ventures? And why did no one try to stop him until it was almost too late?" To answer these questions, Giblin looks closely at Hitler's formative years, writing extensively about his rise to the top and his ability to stir up a crowd with his mesmerizing oratorical skill. He presents Hitler not as evil personified but as a brilliant strategist and a deeply disturbed man with a hunger for power. Archival photographs illustrate an exceptionally gutsy biography of a man who had a tremendous impact on the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. (Age 14 and older)

Greenberg, Jan and Sandra Jordan. *Action Jackson*. Illustrated by Robert Andrew Parker. Roaring Brook Press, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-7613-1682-5, \$17.95; lib. 0-7613-2770-3, \$24.90)

A lyrical, affecting narrative describes artist Jackson Pollack at work in a picture book portrait of the distinctive American artist. Authors Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan let readers see Pollack in the act of creation as they imagine him creating one of his masterpieces, *Lavendar Mist*: "At last he stands. He chooses a stick and dips it into a can of syrupy paint. Slowly he circles the canvas, stepping around the edges, straddling the corners. Black lines form a tangled web." As they describe the artist at work, they also weave in his influences, from the wide open sky of the West where he grew up, to Native American sand painting, to the hours he spends staring at the gulls on the beach near his home. They write about how Pollock differed from other artists, and how his work left many confused and alienated. And they capture the passion and drive of this creative and

self-demanding individual. Robert Andrew Parker's masterful illustrations are a perfect complement to the prose, embodying the artist's energy and frenzy one moment, his exhaustion, or thoughtful repose, the next. *Winner, CCBC Caldecott Award Discussion* (Ages 7-10)

Grimes, Nikki. *Talkin' About Bessie: The Story of Aviator Elizabeth Coleman*. Illustrated by E. B. Lewis. Orchard / Scholastic, 2002. 48 pages (trade 0-439-35243-6, \$16.95)

Twenty single-page monologues, told in the imagined voices of her real family, friends and acquaintances, as well as a few composite characters, create a multidimensional portrait of aviator Elizabeth Coleman. Born in 1892, Bessie Coleman grew up in Texas, working in the cotton fields and caring for her younger siblings, while tenaciously pursuing the education available to her. As a young woman she moved to Chicago, and, after working for several years, launched herself on the path to becoming an aviator. American flight schools wouldn't accept people of color, or women, so after studying French for a year Bessie attended aviation school in France. Achieving her goal of becoming the first colored woman in the world to fly, Bessie went on to gain fame for her skilled stunt piloting, until her death at age 34, when she was thrown from a plane under the control of her copilot. Lewis's handsome, full-page watercolor illustrations are ideal foils to the narration, which closes with words Bessie might have said: "In the end, I count myself twice blessed: / first to have experienced the joy of flight; / and, second, to have shared it with others of my race. / I'll say this and no more: / You have never lived / until you have flown!" (Ages 8-12)

Krakov, Kari. *The Harvey Milk Story*. Illustrated by David Gardner. Two Lives Publishing (508 North Swarthmore Avenue, Ridley Park, PA 19078), 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-9674468-3-X, \$17.95)

An unequivocal picture book biography of the gay rights leader strikes a fair balance between Harvey Milk's personal life and his political activism. Krakow's succinct text portrays Milk as a caring individual who worked to ensure the rights of all people who lived in the San Francisco community he represented as supervisor. The shocking assassination of Milk and San Francisco Mayor George Moscone by fellow supervisor Dan White is neither glossed over nor over-dramatized, and Krakow ends on an upbeat note by writing about Harvey Milk's legacy. Illustrated with cartoon-style drawings, the book is accompanied by excellent author notes and sources for further information. (Ages 6-10)

Mora, Pat. *A Library for Juana: The World of Sor Juana Inés*. Illustrated by Beatriz Vidal. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-375-80643-1, \$15.95; lib. 0-375-90643-6)

At the age of three, Juana Inés followed her older sisters to school and asked the teacher to make her a student too. From that day on, her drive for knowledge never flagged as she defied the traditions of 17<sup>th</sup>-century Mexico to study in ways reserved for men. At age ten Juana began to study with a tutor in Mexico City. She became a lady-in-waiting at the palace when she was 15, where she had access to the palace library. Later, the viceroy invited 40 scholars to quiz Juana, but they were unable to stump her with their questions. Eventually, she chose to continue her learning as a nun, became a renowned



poet, and developed a huge library for her treasured books. Although no sources are cited, an author's note provides additional information about this amazing woman and scholar. (Ages 5-10)

Partridge, Elizabeth. *This Land Was Made for You and Me: The Life & Songs of Woody Guthrie*. Viking, 2002. 217 pages (trade 0-670-03535-1, \$21.99)

Older children and teens who embark on this marvelous biography of Woody Guthrie will find at least one familiar reference point as they read. Most of them have probably joined in on a joyous rendition of "This Land Is Your Land" at school. They might be surprised, however, to learn that "This Land Is Your Land" was written in 1940 as a counterpoint to the romantic sentiments of Irving Berlin's "God Bless America." "His song caught the bittersweet contrasts of America: the beauty of our country, and the desperate strength of people making do in impossibly difficult times," writes Elizabeth Partridge in her preface to this beautifully designed, dynamic volume. "All you can write is what you see," Guthrie wrote across the bottom of his hand-written lyrics for the song, and that is what Woody Guthrie did over and over again in his often difficult lifetime. Through his music, he voiced the struggles and the suffering he saw during the Great Depression, the spirit of and courage of workers fighting for unions, the tragic death of sailors during World War II. He combined his knowledge of the songs sung by everyday people with a genius for storytelling, and words and a passion for social justice. But at the same time that Guthrie was creating an unparalleled legacy he was running—from responsibility (often leaving his first wife alone with their three young children for months), and from fear. He couldn't escape, however, when Huntington's Disease, the same illness that made his mother so erratic and unpredictable when he was a child, began to affect his body and his mind. Elizabeth Partridge interviewed folksinger Pete Seeger and Woody's son, folksinger Arlo Guthrie, and drew on taped interviews of others who knew Woody, as part of her extensive research to create this honest and inspiring work. *Honor Book, CCBC Newbery Award Discussion* (Age 11 and older)

Pinkney, Andrea Davis. *Ella Fitzgerald: The Tale of a Vocal Virtuosa*. Illustrated by Brian Pinkney. Jump at the Sun / Hyperion, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-7868-0568-4, \$16.99; lib. 0-7868-2493-X)

Andrea Davis Pinkney and Brian Pinkney have created an energetic, enthusiastic picture book biography of singer Ella Fitzgerald. A clever arrangement has the text divided into four "tracks," mimicking musical selections on a CD: "Hoofin in Harlem," "Jammin' at Yale," "Stompin' at the Savoy," and "Carnegie Hall Scat." Ella's story is told by a cool cat—literally—a feline named "Scat Cat Monroe." His hip, lively delivery makes for an entertaining narrative, which is paired with the swirling, swaying scratchboard illustrations full of musical motion. An author's note provides additional context for young readers' understanding of Ella's contribution to American music, while an illustrator's note references several artists of the Harlem Renaissance whose works were an inspiration in creating the illustrations. A Videography and a Selected Discography will help children and adults alike find ways to experience Ella's life and music in ways that can complement this vibrant volume. *Winner, CCBC Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award Discussion* (Ages 6-10)

Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *When Marian Sang*. Illustrated by Brian Selznick. Scholastic Press, 2002. 40 pages (trade 0-439-26967-9, \$16.95)

A picture book biography of African American singer Marian Anderson shines—literally. Pam Muñoz Ryan’s captivating narrative is accompanied by Brian Selznick’s dramatic, sepia-toned images in which a source of light illuminates Marian on each and every two-page spread. Ryan writes about Anderson’s stunning voice earning her attention from childhood, and directly addresses the discrimination that made it difficult for Anderson to get formal lessons, and impossible for her to pursue a career in the United States until she had already made a name for herself overseas. Even then, she was unable to sing in Constitution Hall, a decision that led to Eleanor Roosevelt inviting Marian to sing at the Lincoln Memorial. That concert became one of Anderson’s most famous achievements, but it was far from her only one as readers of this appealing volume will discover. An author’s note provides extensive additional information about Anderson. (Ages 6-9)

Winter, Jonah. *Frida*. Illustrated by Ana Juan. Arthur A. Levine Books / Scholastic Press, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-590-20320-7, \$16.95)

Children will be fascinated by life of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo as presented in this stunning picture book biography that blends lush, highly charged art evocative of Kahlo’s own work with a spare, understated narrative. Despite its restraint, the text delivers a bounty of information about Kahlo in short, beautifully weighted sentences that convey more than mere fact: “For little Frida, the world is Mexico.” Kahlo was plagued by illness as a child. As a young adult, she was terribly injured in a bus accident. Art began as her diversion from loneliness and pain. It grew into a spiritual, soul-deep need that illustrator Ana Juan has captured in her fanciful, haunted paintings for this striking book. Both playful and frightening, they convey Kahlo’s escape from physical trauma through her incredibly rich life of the mind, which in turn inspired the artwork she created. A brief author’s note provides additional information on Kahlo’s life, such as her marriage to Diego Rivera, to supplement a narrative that focuses on the relationship of this singular artist to her art. (Ages 6-10)

**See also:** *Degas and the Dance; Emily Dickinson’s Letters to the World; Me and Uncle Romie; Pot That Juan Built; Year I Didn’t Go to School*

### Contemporary People, Places, and Events

Brown, Craig. *Barn Raising*. Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-06-029399-3, \$15.99; lib. 0-06-029400-0)

This picture book about a contemporary Amish barn raising opens with lightning striking a barn roof on the title page, followed by a wordless double-page spread showing farm animals being shooed from the burning structure. A neighbor houses the livestock while “friends and neighbors helped Jacob’s father clear away the burned barn and lay the foundation for a new one.” The majority of the book is devoted to a one-day barn

raising, with helpers arriving in horse-drawn buggies “even before the sun rose over the hills.” The men work steadily all day, building a barn on the new foundation, taking time off only for water breaks and a hearty chicken lunch, served by the women. By the end of an afternoon spent roofing and siding, the barn is finished, just as the sun sets. A concluding note shares additional details about barn raisings such as this one, based on the author’s experience in an Amish community in Iowa. (Ages 5-8)

Cooper, Elisha. *Ice Cream*. Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2002. 40 pages (trade 0-06-001423-7, \$15.95; lib. 0-06-001424-5)

What starts with a cow? (And just a few other things, like grass, the sun, water, hay, grain and rain.) Ice cream, of course! The process of ice cream production, from the five gallons of milk pumped from each cow by the milking machine to the final delivery of a carton of ice cream, is engagingly presented in both words and illustrations. The author’s well-chosen language creates vivid images of the cows in the field, where “mud and brambles mat the hair on their stomachs” and the huge silos at the ice cream factory, which are so big “the worker could swim laps across them.” An army of workers are involved in the process, including farmers, milk truck drivers, ice cream factory workers, scientists, forklift operators, and tasters (with insured tongues). Inventive placement of the text on each page and deceptively simple watercolor and pencil illustrations add to this fascinating examination of a tasty subject. (Ages 6-10)

Eclare, Melanie. *A Harvest of Color: Growing a Vegetable Garden*. U.S. edition: Ragged Bears (413 Sixth Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11215), 2002. 28 pages (1-929927-31-2, \$16.95)

Six diverse children work together to grow a vegetable in a sparkling photodocumentary that includes helpful advice for young garden enthusiasts. Each child picks her or his favorite vegetable to grow in their patch, and each child describes how that vegetable was planted and tended. Carrots, radishes, potatoes, zucchini, and beans are eventually harvested and turned into a beautiful and delicious salad. Specific tips for growing each of the five vegetables are included in this attractive and appealing oversize volume. (Ages 4-9)

Jones, Carolyn. *Every Girl Tells a Story: A Celebration of Girls Speaking Their Minds*. Written by Carolyn Jones in collaboration with Girl Scouts of the USA. Foreword by Laura Bush. Simon & Schuster, 2002. 86 pages (trade 0-689-84872-2, \$19.95)

“I’ve decided that I’m unique,” writes 16-year-old Maribelis, one of the 57 girls who speaks her mind in this collection of personal portraits. Girls from ages eleven to eighteen were photographed in color and black-and-white, wearing the clothes they felt best reflected their personalities. While the photographic portraits are interesting, what makes each girl truly distinctive is her first-person statement about how she sees herself and her place in the world. Girls from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences are included here and there’s just one thing, other than gender, that they all have in common: they’re all Girl Scouts. (Ages 11-16)

Lehn, Barbara. *What Is an Artist?* Photographs by Carol Krauss. Millbrook Press, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-7613-2259-0, \$21.90)

A volume that continues in the vein of Lehn's marvelous *What Is a Scientist?* (Millbrook, 1998) pairs simple, definitive statements about the types of things that an artist does with full-page color photographs of a child or children engaged in a related activity. "An artist gets inspiration and support from others" is one such statement, paired with a photograph of young Luke painting with his dad. "How can I show the fireman inside the truck?" asks Luke. *What Is an Artist?* demystifies the "artist" label, breaking it down into ways of thinking, feeling and doing that any child can understand and claim. Another new volume by this author/photographer pair is *What Is an Athlete?* (lib: 0-7613-2258-2), while *What Is a Teacher* was published in 2000. (Ages 4-7)

Vyner, Tim. *World Team*. U.S. edition: Roaring Brook Press, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-7613-1497-0; lib. 0-7613-2409-7, \$22.90)

"One big round world, one small round ball. Right now, more children than you can possibly imagine are playing soccer." Author/artist Tim Vyner takes young readers on a trip around the world to meet a children in many countries who are all playing soccer at the very same time. Joe is practicing against a school wall at 1 p.m. in England, while Tico is kicking a ball on the beach in Rio de Janeiro, where it is 10 a.m. in the morning. In New York City it's even earlier, only 8, but Lucy is dribbling her way to school, while it is 3 p.m. in Lebanon as Sami scrimmages with his friends. Even though they are miles and nations apart, these and other children are playing soccer together in a book that celebrates love of sport, and underscores how dreams of World Cup glory—and certainly so much more -- are shared by children around the world. (Ages 4-9)

**See also:** *19 Varieties of Gazelle; 911; Bears Make Rock Soup; Behind the Mountains; Every Girl Tells A Story; Fireboat; Flag of Childhood; Fresh Girl; If the World Were a Village; Parvana's Journey; Perfect Harmony; Stone in My Hand; This Place I Know; What Is an Artist?; What Is an Athlete?; With Their Eyes; World Team*

### Issues in Today's World

Cart, Michael, editor. *911: The Book of Help*. Edited by Michael Cart with Marc Aronson and Marianne Carus. A Marcato Book / Cricket Books, 2002. 178 pages (trade 0-8126-2659-1, \$17.95; pbk. 08126-2676-1)

Young adult book creators offer short stories, essays, and poems that capture their own feelings and the feelings shared by many in the days, weeks and months since September 11, 2001. Many young adults will recognize the names of contributors such as Katherine Paterson, Russell Freedman, Nikki Giovanni, Walter Dean Myers, Virginia Euwer Wolff, Naomi Shihab Nye, and others who contributed to this collection. The pieces are divided into sections titled "Healing," "Searching for History," "Asking Why? Why? Why?" and "Reacting and Recovering." In his introduction, editor Michael Cart writes of his hope that these writers' contributions will help "young adults who read their words...to think -- and talk -- about the otherwise unthinkable and unspeakable. That is how healing begins." (Age 12 and older)

Kalman, Maira. *Fireboat: The Heroic Adventures of the John J. Harvey*. Putnam, 2002. 40 pages (trade 0-399-23953-7, \$16.99)

On a sunny day in 1931, the fireboat John J. Harvey first started cruising the waters of New York City. For decades the Harvey was part of the city's fireboat fleet, fighting fires at piers up and down the river until it was just old and worn to continue and was abandoned. In 1995, a small group of friends purchased the Harvey and restored it. When the work was complete, they proudly sailed the Harvey on the water once again—this time the boat was for pleasure rather than work. Until September 11, 2001. On that tragic day, the Harvey went into action as a fireboat once again, its volunteer crew responding to the call for help. At the end of four horrible days, "it was time for the Harvey to go home. Everyone on the boat had never seen anything so terrible. And they had never felt so proud." Maira Kalman's history of the John J. Harvey brilliantly and sensitively weaves the events of September 11, 2001, into a narrative about something more, leaving readers with an important understanding of things having come before, and life continuing on. Her lively, engaging, narrative is appropriately spare when addressing events for which words seem to fail, and her captivating, quirky gouache artwork strikes the same fine balance. (Ages 7-10)

Radunsky, Vladimir. *Manneken Pis: A Simple Story of a Boy Who Peed on a War*. An Anne Schwartz Book / Atheneum, 2002. 28 pages (trade 0-689-83193-5, \$15.95)

There are several stories circulating around Brussels that explain the origin of Manneken Pis, a small bronze statue of a young boy peeing that sits atop a fountain in the middle of the city. What we know for certain is that it's been there for centuries and that it's such a beloved statue that people come from all over the world to see it. They dress it -- it has over 600 custom-designed outfits -- and they tell stories about it. One story claims that he was a real boy who relieved himself against the door of a witch's house and she turned him into stone. Another contends that the statue was commissioned by a grateful father who had promised to have a statue made of his lost son, exactly where he was found, doing what ever he was doing at the moment he was found. Artist Vladimir Radunsky traveled to Belgium and heard many stories about Manneken Pis. The one he liked best was the one he has illustrated here: the story of a little boy who demonstrated against all the fighting going on around his village by peeing on the soldiers on both sides. Radunsky's boldly fanciful illustrations capture the humor and irreverence of the story without undermining the serious anti-war message. (Ages 4-8)

Smith, David J. *If the World Were a Village: A Book about the World's People*. Illustrated by Shelagh Armstrong. Kids Can Press, 2002. 32 pages (trade 1-55074-779-7, \$15.95)

The world's population was "6 billion, 200 million" on January 1, 2002. It can be hard to comprehend a number that large. "But what if we imagined the whole population of the world as a village of just 100 people?" That's the question posed in this volume in which each person in that village of 100 represents 62 million people from the real world. What would that global village look like? Here, its inhabitants are broken down into nationalities (21 are from China...5 are from the United States...2 are from Nigeria), languages (9 speak English, 8 speak Hindi...), ages, religions (32 are Christians, 19 are

Muslims, 13 are Hindus...), food (60 people are always hungry; only 24 have enough to eat), air and water quality (32 breathe air that is unhealthy), schooling and literacy, money and possessions (the richest 20 people have more than \$9,000 each year...the poorest 20 people have less than \$1 a day), and access to electricity. The book also provides a brief glimpse of the village in the past, and a projection of the village in the future. More important, it invites us all to consider ourselves part of that global village, and to ponders the importance of the well-being of all within that community. Each two-page spread examines one aspect of the global village with text and deeply hued acrylic illustrations. (Ages 8-12)

Thoms, Annie, editor. *With Their Eyes: September 11th--The View from a High School at Ground Zero*. Foreword by Anna Deavere Smith. Photographs by Ethan Moses. HarperTempest / HarperCollins, 2002. 228 pages (lib. 0-06-051806-5, \$17.89; pbk. 0-06-051718-2)

Stuyvesant High School in Manhattan is located four blocks from the site of the World Trade Center. On September 11, 2001, many students, staff and teachers witnessed one or both of the planes flying into the Trade Center buildings. All at the school were displaced in the aftermath, evacuated in the first hours following the attacks, they joined the thousands on the chaotic trek out of Manhattan on foot. In the weeks that followed, they were shuffled to an alternate location for classes. Stuyvesant teacher Annie Thoms was inspired by the work of social change playwright and performer Anna Deavere Smith, whose one-woman plays include *Fire in the Mirror*, which featured the voices of 26 individuals swept up in the Crown Heights riots in Brooklyn in the early 1990s. Thoms led a group of Stuyvesant students in the creation of a performance piece comprised of interviews with Stuyvesant students, teachers, and staff about their experiences on September 11 and in the weeks that followed. Each student creator/performer took on the role of several individuals at the school, using the transcribed interviews as dialogue. Each singular narrative performance is one important story of the tens of thousands of stories of how the events of September 11 have affected us all. And each is also a piece of the single story of how one particular community absorbed the impact of those terrible events. (Age 13 and older)

**See also:** *Every Girl Tells a Story; Flag of Childhood; First Day in Grapes; Harvey Milk Story; Home at Last; Hoot; Judy Moody Saves the World; Mary Ann Alice; Parvana's Journey; Patrol; The Pot That Juan Built; Project UltraSwan; Smoke and Ashes; Stone in My Hand; Teddy Bear; This Place I Know; Under the Ice; Visiting Day*

### Understanding Oneself and Others

Harris, Robie H. *Hello Benny! What It's Like to be a Baby*. Illustrated by Michael Emberley. (Growing Up Stories) Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-689-83257-5, \$16.95)

The initial title in a five-book series exploring the first five years of life, *Hello Benny* presents facts about human development from birth to age one, imbedded within the story of baby Benny's first year. Benny's tale is told in large black type on each page, while corresponding information about infant development is made clearly distinct by virtue of its smaller purple font and enclosure in a box. Large illustrations of Benny and his family expand the fictional story, and smaller cartoon-type images accompany the factual content. The expected landmarks of babyhood are included, from birth and baby vocalizations and emotions through rolling over, crawling and first steps. The details presented were selected to be of interest to young children, including a description of the taste of formula ("a stronger taste [than the milk we drink] because extra vitamins, salt, sugar, and fat have been added to it") and early language development ("All around the world, most babies about a year old say words that sound like 'Dada' and 'Mama,' no matter what language their families speak. At first, babies say these sounds because they are trying out all the sounds they can make and it's fun. Later they learn that 'Mama' means 'Mommy' or 'Dada' means 'Daddy.' ") A large picture book format and a realistic baby's debut will hold great appeal to young children nostalgic about their own recent past. (Ages 4-7)

Kuklin, Susan. *From Wall to Wall*. Putnam, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-399-23492-6, \$14.99)  
A slim volume of photographs and text offers much to think about as it examines walls in both their physical and metaphorical form. There are walls of stone and walls of silence. "Fortress—rampart—barricade—fence. A wall can separate a very large space." Walls can contain us, but they can also contain our ideas, offering a place to voice our thoughts and feelings, to tell stories, honor the past, or dream of the future through art and expression. Above all, walls are shared—from opposite sides or the same side—in a book that can serve as a launching point for thinking, writing, and discussion. (Ages 7-10)

Rotner, Shelley and Sheila Kelly. *Good-Byes*. Photographs by Shelley Rotner. Millbrook Press, 2002. 32 pages (lib. 0-7613-1752-X, \$22.90)  
Learning to wave good-bye is a milestone for young children. And yet "good-byes" are often one of the hardest things for children to deal with emotionally. A book that affirms there are many types of good-byes, and many feelings that can accompany the word, features photographs of diverse children saying or waving good-bye and a brief text that catalogs their activities: there are good-byes to parents who drop you off at school, to friends at the end of the day, to a grandparent on the phone. "There's even good-bye to the sun....The hardest good-bye is a good-bye that's forever, but pictures help us to remember the happy times of being together." This volume provides an open invitation for young children to explore their thoughts and feelings. (Ages 3-7)

**See also:** *Apple Pie 4<sup>th</sup> of July*; *Blackberries in the Dark*; *Blue Eyes Better*; *Blue Roses*; *Body Eclectic*; *Born Confused*; *Business in Bangkok*; *Danitra Brown Leaves Town*; *Dillon Dillon*; *Frog*; *Gingerbread*; *Hanging On to Max*; *Jasper's Day*; *Loser*; *Pictures of Hollis Woods*; *Red Rose Box*; *Saffy's Angel*; *The Same Stuff as Stars*; *That Makes Me Mad!*; *Three Questions*; *Wanda's Monster*; *What About Me?*; *What Would Joey Do?*; *White Swan Express*

## The Arts

Andrews-Goebel, Nancy. *The Pot That Juan Built*. Illustrated by David Diaz. Lee & Low, 2002. 32 pages (trade 1-58430-038-8, \$16.95)

Nancy Andrews-Goebel's dynamic first book for children offers multiple points of entry into her subject. Mexican potter Juan Quezada was fascinated with pottery-making from childhood. His interest and passion led to his restoration of the centuries-old tradition of pot-making of the Casas Grandes people in Mexico. At the same time it helped revive his economically struggling community as Quezada trained family members and friends to become artisans, and Mata Ortiz became the bustling artistic enclave it is today. Andrews-Goebels uses three narrative forms to relate these events: a lyrical, language-rich cumulative tale in which she describes his steps in making a pot using the structure of "The House That Jack Built;" brief informational text on each two-page spread that informs and extends the latest piece of the cumulative story; and an afterword that provides more extensive information about Quezada, Mata Ortiz, and pot-making, along with photographs of Juan Quezada at work. The author's lively writing style enriches all three narrative formats. Extensive repetition required by the structure makes the cumulative narrative a bit lengthy for reading aloud in its entirety. But it's dazzling language begs for sharing out loud in the completed cumulative form. The shorter informational narrative can be easily shared as a read-aloud. David Diaz has created stunning, sun-drenched, graphic illustrations as a backdrop on each two-page spread of this striking volume. *Highly Commended, 2003 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 6-10)

Damon, Duane. *Headin' for Better Times: The Arts of the Great Depression*. (People's history) Lerner, 2002. 96 pages (lib. 0-8225-1741-8, \$18.95)

For all the tragedy brought on by the Great Depression, it was also a period of enormous artistic output in this country, in part because of the support provided to artists in a wide range of fields by the Works Progress Administration. The WPA was one of the many reforms for the unemployed brought about under the New Deal. The Federal Arts Project, the Federal Theater Project, the Federal Music Project, and the Federal Writers Project, as well as the Historical Records Survey, all existed under the WPA. Out of these programs came exciting and significant work in many fields, from the Black Theater Project to the American Guides state travel books to murals in public spaces, as well as important documentation of oral histories, American folk art and music, and much more. The scope and volume of work that happened under the WPA is astounding, and Duane Damon provides an introduction to this unparalleled era in the artistic history of our country. Numerous archival photographs add additional interest to the book. Damon and his publisher fail to cite his source material other than web sites listed for the interest of young readers. Nonetheless, this is the most comprehensive overview of the WPA since the publication of Milton Meltzer's *Violins and Shoves: The WPA Arts Project* (Delacorte, 1976), a notable volume which is, unfortunately, out of print. (Ages 11-14)

Fifield, Lisa. *Bears Make Rock Soup*. Paintings by Lisa Fifield. Written by Lise Erdrich. Children's Book Press, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-89239-172-3, \$16.95)



Artist Lisa Fifield's watercolor paintings and quilts have earned her an international reputation. Here Fifield, an enrolled member of the Wisconsin Oneida Nation, shares paintings that reflect her "vision of people and animals helping each other." Her lovely and dramatic images are inspired by Indian stories and traditions. They feature Native peoples interacting with creatures of the natural world in scenes that reflect the sense of balance that occurs when the two are in harmony. Writer Lise Erdrich, a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Plains Ojibway, has written brief, single-page stories to accompany each of Fifield's richly hued, earth-tone paintings. The narratives, also drawn from Native lore and traditions, give children the means of entering each of the paintings more deeply. They also capture a sense of the oral tradition that has sustained the many stories that inspired both the artist and the author of this work. (Ages 7-10)

Hinojosa, Tish. *Cada Niño / Every Child: A Bilingual Songbook for Kids*. Illustrated by Lucia Angela Perez. Cinco Puntos Press (2709 Louisville, El Paso, TX 79930), 2002. 56 pages (trade 0-938317-60-1, \$18.95)

The words and music for ten original and one traditional song in both Spanish and English are accompanied by cheery folk-art style paintings in full color. The author's introductory notes for each song provide both cultural and personal contexts while the illustrations extend the jubilant spirit of the songs. A note at the beginning of the book indicates how to obtain the songs on compact disc. (Ages 3-8)

Raschka, Chris. *John Coltrane's Giant Steps*. A Richard Jackson Book / Atheneum, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-689-84598-7, \$17.00)

A performance of John Coltrane's "Giant Steps" unlike any other graces the pages of this innovative picture book that introduces Coltrane and the brilliance of his musical composition without a single "note" sounding on the page. Instead, author/artist Chris Raschka recreates the essence of "Giant Steps" using raindrops to represent the tempo, a box for the musical foundation, a snowflake for the piano part (the harmony), and a kitten, whose giant steps across the page are the melody of the song. The critical interplay of these four visual images underscores how each component is an essential part of the overall composition. Raschka makes this exceptionally clear when things get out of synch and raindrops, box, snowflake, and kitten end up in a tangle on the page. Raschka goes on to eloquently express the quality of Coltrane's music as the narrative voice provides instruction to each of the musical "players." (To the raindrop: "Keep in mind, when you hear John Coltrane playing, no matter how fast he's going, he always sounds relaxed. It's as if he made time *bigger*.") The book begs to have Coltrane's music played aloud before, during, and after sharing it with children—no doubt just what the author/artist intended. (Ages 6-10)

Rodrigue, George with Bruce Goldstone. *Why Is Blue Dog Blue?* Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 2002. 40 pages (trade 1-58479-162-4, \$16.95)

In an offbeat exploration of color, the creator of the "Blue Dog" paintings asks, "Why is Blue Dog blue?" Rodrigue goes on to say that "artists don't have to paint things the way they really are." Indeed, Blue Dog can be painted "mustard" when the artist is hankering for a hot dog, or "tan" when he visits the beach. Blue Dog becomes a virtual chameleon,

as he is pictured in shades from salmon to moss green, but in the end, Rodrigue is drawn back to his original inspiration: the blue sky. Changes in the color and size of the font, and its creative placement on the page, contribute to this whimsical treatise on Blue Dog, a well-known icon the author first painted in 1984. (Ages 4-8)

Rubin, Susan Goldman. *Degas and the Dance: The Painter and the Petits Rats, Perfecting Their Art*. In association with the American Federation of Arts and the School of American Ballet. Harry N. Abrams, 2002. 31 pages (trade 0-8109-0567-1, \$17.95)

Artist Edgar Degas created more than 1,000 studies of ballet dancers and ballet students between 1855 and 1905. He spent many hours in ballet studios watching young dancers being trained. These children were known as *petits rats* because of their hard, exhausting lives. Susan Goldman Rubin deftly describes the world of the *petits rats* and Degas' own exacting work recreating that world on canvas in a handsome volume that underscores the demands of being an artist in any medium. "Degas drew the same poses again and again, just as the dancers repeated their positions and stops again and again." Degas' sympathy for the young dancers was apparent in his behavior toward them, and especially in his work. Numerous paintings and sketches by Degas are reproduced in full color. Each reproduction is dated and its subject described so that readers will understand what they are seeing, which is often a reflection of what the author has described in her narrative. (Ages 8-12)

Shafer, Anders C. *The Fantastic Journey of Pieter Bruegel*. Dutton, 2002. 40 pages (trade 0-525-46986-9, \$18.99)

Developed as a series of diary entries, this oversized picture book offers a speculative account of young Pieter Bruegel's two-year journey from Antwerp to Rome, and back again, in the mid-1500s. Basing his story primarily on Bruegel's art and the experiences of Bruegel's peers, Schafer has fleshed the bare facts out into an intriguing account of time and place. Bruegel's travels include a stop in Lyon, an arduous trek through the Alps, and journeys by boat between Genoa, Naples, and Palermo. Detailed pencil drawings washed with watercolor and acrylics often show the young artist observing and recording the scenes around him, aspects of which appear in his later works. Reproductions of 16 of Bruegel's drawings and paintings with commentary are included, as well as a lengthy author's note. (Ages 8-12)

**See also:** *Across a Dark and Wild Sea; Action Jackson; Ballerina Flying; Born Confused; Ella Fitzgerald; Frida; Me and Uncle Romie; Perfect Harmony; Pictures of Hollis Woods; Rap a Tap Tap; Song Shoots Out of My Mouth; Saffy's Angel; Surviving the Applewhites; This Land Was Made for You and Me; What Charlie Heard; What Is an Artist?; With Their Eyes*

## Poetry

Adoff, Jaime. *The Song Shoots Out of My Mouth*. Illustrated by Martin French. Dutton, 2002. 48 pages (trade 0-525-46949-4, \$17.99)

Twenty-four playful poems celebrate music from multiple perspectives, from the young drummer in the last row of the fifth period orchestra who waits patiently for his RAT, TAT, RAT-TAT-TAT part to come up in "Percussion Snail" to the student at P.S. 122 who listens for "No school ta day, Mon" from the his favorite d.j. in "Raggae Snowday." Adoff's outstanding poetry is sophisticated and yet completely accessible to young teens because his point of view is right on target. Martin French's boldly colored illustrations are an excellent match for the Adoff's playful sophistication. (Ages 11-14)

Grimes, Nikki. *Danitra Brown Leaves Town*. Illustrated by Floyd Cooper. Amistad / HarperCollins, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-688-13155-7, \$15.95; lib. 0-688-13156-5)

In *Meet Danitra Brown* (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1994), Nikki Grimes introduced young readers to best friends Danitra Brown and Zuri Jackson, who were all but inseparable. In *Danitra Brown Leaves Town*, the two African American girls are spending the summer apart. Danitra is staying with her aunt in a small town and has a summer of new experiences, from pulling weeds and skinny-dipping to navigating the challenges of being the "city kid" in a small town. Left behind, Zuri feels abandoned, until she discovers that change can bring new discoveries, and even new friendship. Thirteen poems that move back and forth between each girl's point of view chronicles a summer that proves to offer each of them opportunities to learn and grow, even as they remain firmly connected to one another through letters, a form that some of the poems take. Floyd Cooper's brown-toned illustrations are especially effective at capturing expressions, and are infused with sun-drenched colors and the feel of summer heat. (Ages 5-8)

Heard, Georgia, selector. *This Place I Know: Poems of Comfort*. Illustrated by eighteen renowned picture book artists. Candlewick Press, 2002. 47 pages (trade 0-7636-1924-8, \$16.99)

In the weeks after September 11, 2001, Georgia Heard was invited to share "poems of comfort" with children who witnessed the attacks on the World Trade Center. Here, she has chosen 18 poems that offer children and adults the opportunity to share feelings of fear and sadness, and also, importantly, hope. "I do not want / fire screaming up the sky. / I do not want / families killed in their doorways....Life is for us, and is shining. / We have a right to sing" writes Gwendolyn Brooks in "A Little Girls' Poem." And from Nancy Wood in her poem "Strengthen the Things That Remain," young readers and listeners are reminded that "A tree is still a tree and a rock is still a rock. A warbler / sings its familiar song and coyotes howl / in disconcerting harmony....Patterns persist, / life goes on, whatever rises will converge." Each of the eighteen poems in the book is paired with a stunning visual interpretation by a noted artist of books for children. (Ages 5-11)

Hopkins, Lee Bennett, editor. *Hoofbeats, Claws & Rippled Fins: Creature Poems*. Illustrated by Stephen Alcorn. HarperCollins, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-688-17942-8, \$15.95; lib. 0-688-17943-6)

Hopkins invited writers to create poems to accompany Alcorn's stunning monochromatic art featuring creatures such as a dog, cat, frog, cow, camel, and turtle. The 13 poets include Karla Kuskin, Prince Redcloud, Janet S. Wong, Joseph Bruchac, and former Madison resident Ann Whitford Paul. In "Full Moon and Owl," Paul writes, ". . . three round eyes watching night . . . Owl's cold gold warns Beware." The book's striking

design involves varying sizes of type and page colors. Some of the poems are "concrete," suggesting their subject visually. The words of "Porcupine" look prickly, while the words of "She Likes to Hide" glide like a fish across a blue page. These poets make writing literally look like fun. (Ages 8-12)

Nye, Naomi Shihab, selector. *The Flag of Childhood: Poems from the Middle East*. Aladdin Paperbacks, 2002. (pbk. 0-689-85172-3, \$3.99)

In 1998, Naomi Shihab Nye brought the voices of men and women from 19 Middle Eastern countries to young adult readers in the United States in *The Space Between Our Footsteps: Poems and Paintings from the Middle East* (Simon & Schuster). *The Flag of Childhood* is a gathering of selected poems from that volume published in response to the events of September 11, 2001. In her introduction, Nye writes that people keep saying "everything has changed." She responds: "I would like to think that nothing has changed...our need to know one another and to care about other people's lives...our ability to grow in our perceptions, to know more than we used to know, to empathize with distant situations and sorrows and joys...the power of words to convey truths, across miles and water and time." Over 50 poems in this paperback collection do indeed convey truths, imbedded in the perspectives of the individual writers whose unique experiences translate into feelings older children, teens, and adults can surely all recognize in one way or another: hopes, dreams, anger, fear, desire, and the need for dignity. These writers are not just citizens of nations far away, but citizens of the world we all share. Nye writes: "We must remember that the one flag we all share is the beautiful flag of childhood that flies with hope in every country." (Age 11 and older)

Nye, Naomi Shihab. *19 Varieties of Gazelle: Poems of the Middle East*. Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2002. 142 pages (trade 0-06-009765-5, \$16.95; lib. 0-06-009766-3)

Nye is a prominent poet for adults, as well as a highly regarded anthologist for teenagers. Her newest volume contains 57 of her own poems written about the Middle East and about being an Arab American, collected here with young readers in mind. Most are very short. All involve impassioned images: people, aromas, happenings. In the title poem Nye writes, "For years the Arab poets used 'gazelle' / to signify grace / but when faced with a meadow of leaping gazelle / there were no words . . . What else had we seen in our lives? / Nothing better . . . 'Don't bother to go there,' said a man at our hotel. 'It's too far.' / . . . There is no gazelle in today's headline . . ." Her poem dated September 11, 2001, ends, "Peace is rough." Nye knows this, and yet she doesn't give up. Neither will her young readers, because her belief in all people shines through in her exquisite poetry. (Age 12 and older)

Prelutsky, Jack. *Scranimals*. Illustrated by Peter Sís. Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2002. 40 pages (trade 0-688-17819-7, \$16.99; lib. 0-688-17820-0)

"The HIPPOPOTAMUSHROOMS / Cannot wander very far. / How fortunate they're satisfied / Precisely where they are." Hippopotamuses and mushrooms might seem an

unlikely combination, but they're just part of the norm in this menagerie of amalgamated animals, fruits, and vegetables. From Bananaconda to radishark, these inhabitants of Scranimal Island haven't been seen before, but one is unlikely to forget them once introduced. Peter Sís's fine visual interpretation of Prelutsky's verse adds to the quirky fun of this highly original work. (Ages 6-12)

Singer, Marilyn. *Footprints on the Roof: Poems about the Earth*. Illustrated by Meilo So. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002. 41 pages (trade 0-375-81094-3, \$14.95; lib. 0-375-91094-8)

Marilyn Singer's nineteen original poems offer perspectives on the natural world that range from lyrical and delicate to boldy unsettling. These poems brim with acute turns of phrase. "The same night the window cracked / the rain turned hard-hearted / the ground turned mean" begins the poem titled "Ice." In "Back to Nature," Singer writes, "We cover the earth / with asphalt / tarmac / concrete / brick / We want to be far away / from humus / moss and leaf mold / from things soft and unpredictable / that slide beneath our feet." And yet, she concludes, even in the city, there is nature, "turning the pavement soft and unpredicable / making it slide beneath our feet." Almost all of the highly accessible poems have a first-person voice in the singular or plural that firmly grounds readers/listeners in the moment and mood. And each of the poems is accompanied by a graceful black-and-white ink drawing by Meilo So. (Ages 10-14)

Smith, Charles R., Jr. *Perfect Harmony: A Musical Journey with the Boys Choir of Harlem*. Jump at the Sun / Hyperion, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-7868-0758-X, \$15.99)

Thirteen original poems about music are accompanied by photographs of the Boys Choir of Harlem in a book that celebrates both music-making in general and the spirit and energy of that one extraordinary group. From the four haiku that evoke each of the four musical voices (soprano, alto, tenor and bass) to poems that pulse with musical rhythms and jangle like a performer's nerves, Charles R. Smith captures essential elements of musical performance in his writing, while his photographs of the Boys Choir of Harlem hum with a music all their own. A glossary of musical terms, and one of poetry terms, rounds out this volume. (Ages 7-11)

Swados, Elizabeth. *Hey You! C'mere: A Poetry Slam*. Illustrated by Joe Cepeda. Arthur A. Levine Books / Scholastic Press, 2002. 47 pages (trade 0-439-09257-4, \$15.95)

"Everybody's talkin' poems! / Everybody's laughin' poems!...Amelia's wearin' poems on her feet!" begins this collection of 16 poems characterized by playful, lively language as seven fictional children engage in their own poetry slam. Their topics range from bravery in the face of bullies ("Tough Kid") to kissing aunts ("Aunt Evelyn") to monsters in closets ("Monsters"), summer storms ("Storm") and more. Each verse is set against the friendly, vibrant urban landscape that the seven diverse children of color inhabit in artist Joe Cepeda's illustrations. Author Elizabeth Swados captures the sounds and rhythms of that landscape in these poems that reach far beyond their city setting in appeal: "schlurp

schlurp schlurp schlurp / Oh no, / How long does this spaghetti grow?" ("Spaghetti").  
(Ages 5-8)

Thomas, Joyce Carol. *Crowning Glory*. Illustrated by Brenda Joysmith. Joanna Cotler Books / HarperCollins, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-06-023473-3, \$15.95; lib. 0-06-023474-1)

"It's breathtaking! The artful way African-American girls adorn their hair. A shimmering mirror of their souls," writes author Joyce Carol Thomas in her note that concludes this collection. In 14 poems, Thomas pays tribute to this form of art, and of all the love and pride that is embodied within it. "Hair / a gift" begins the title poem, "Crowning Glory." And indeed it is a gift, braided or waved, worn natural or in dreadlocks. " ' Why it's understood, / Sister, if it's on your head it's good! ' " ("Good Hair.") And when hair is being tended, or adorned, or admired, there are also bonds being strengthened -- between mothers, fathers, and daughters; between grandmothers and grandchildren; between sisters, cousins, and friends. Brenda Joysmith's shimmering full-page illustrations are a wonderful reflection of the poems, with soft-edged images and colorful hues that capture their tenderness and joy. *Honor Book, CCBC Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award Discussion* (Ages 5-10)

Vecchione, Patrice, editor. *The Body Eclectic: An Anthology of Poems*. Henry Holt, 2002. 192 pages (trade 0-8050-6935-6, \$16.95)

An edgy, provocative, superb collection of poems about the human body offers young adult readers many opportunities to consider how body image affects perceptions of self and others. "In life we have to come to terms not only with an inner self, but also with the outer one," writes compiler Patrice Vecchione in her introduction. "The body and the mind cohabit, and hence this book of poems about who the body is, what the body does, how we feel and what we think about it." From hair to hands, body parts to the body whole, Vecchione has selected poems that illuminate sensuality and sexuality, pride and shame, love and hate, life and death, and more. This collection that does not shy away from mature content, or from the belief that teens can read these poems, think about them, and come away with a deeper understanding—and perhaps appreciation -- of the human body in its myriad forms. (Age 15 and older)

Winter, Jeanette. *Emily Dickinson's Letters to the World*. Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-374-32147-7, \$16.00)

To intrigue children and introduce them to Dickinson, Winter combines scraps of information and a few of Dickinson's poems. The narrator of Winter's attractive small volume is Emily's sister, Lavinia. It was Lavinia who discovered most of the 1,700 unpublished poems her sister had written after Emily died in 1886. Her sister had been a recluse, sometimes up all night. Children can glimpse some of what she had been doing in her house and garden and at her writing table by sampling the 21 brief poems here. They'll find Emily's "letter to the world." They can also discover "I'm Nobody" and "to make a prairie" and "there is no frigate like a book." Some children will only be intrigued by facts about this uniquely gifted woman. There's time for them to grow into her poems.

Just as Dickinson's original papers were small in actual size, this book is small by most standards, but large in scope. Winter's expressive paintings swirl round the narrative and the poems. Both leave a large, lasting impression. (Ages 6-10)

**See also:** *911; Becoming Joe DiMaggio; Birds Build Nests; black is brown is tan; Library for Juana; Patrol; Seasons; Sleigh Bells and Snowflakes; Under the Christmas Tree*

### Board Books

Henkes, Kevin. *Owen's Marshmallow Chick*. Greenwillow / HarperFestival / HarperCollins, 2002. 20 pages (trade 0-06-001012-6, \$6.95)

An original board book featuring Kevin Henkes's mouse character Owen is set at Easter. Owen's basket is full Easter morning. "In it were jelly beans / and gumdrops / and buttercream eggs / and a big chocolate bunny / and a little marshmallow chick." Owen declares each one his favorite, and then gobbles it up. But the marshmallow chick inspires a different response from Owen in this superbly paced story that features a surprising and delightful twist to the patterned text as it concludes. Brightly colored illustrations suggest the pastel candy colors of Easter but with bolder, more vivid hues. *Highly Commended, 2003 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 2-6)

Suen, Anastasia. *Toddler Two / Dos años*. Illustrated by Winnie Cheon. Lee & Low Books, 2002. 16 pages (trade 1-58430-054-X, \$6.95)

A bilingual board book celebrates the joy of the number of two—of having two arms and two legs, two ears and two eyes; of having a playmate and being one of two. Of course, every two-year-old will also delight in the simple text as a celebration of her or his age. "Two is the number just for you." The colorful felt illustrations show two dark-haired children at play in a book that was previously published as a lift-the-flap board book in English only (*Toddler Two*), and is also available in a Spanish-only edition (*Dos Años*). (Ages 1 – 3)

Ziefert, Harriet. *Who Said Moo?* Illustrated by Simms Taback. Handprint Books, 2002. 16 pages (trade 1-929766-47-5, \$7.95)

After letting loose a rousing “cock-a-doodle do” one day, Red Rooster is startled to hear a response: “Moo!” Red Rooster asks the pig “Someone said Moo. Was it you?” “I don’t moo,” answered the pig. “I . . .OINK!” The dog, the donkey, the cat, and the sheep all deny mooing, and demonstrate the special sound they make instead. It isn’t until Red Rooster asks spotted cow that he finally receives an affirmative reply, not only from cow, but from her baby calf, too. A sturdy half-page inset within each double-page spread allows rooster’s story to become a lift-the-flap book. Taback’s saturated colors and lively animal characters work well in this 7 ¼” square board book edition, available previously in picture book format that is now out of print. (Ages 9 months – 3 years)

**See also:** *Halloween Countdown*

### **Picture Books for Younger Children**

Appelt, Kathi. *Bubba and Beau, Best Friends*. Illustrated by Arthur Howard. Harcourt, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-15-202060-8, \$16.00)

Chapter one heralds the arrival of Bubba, the beloved son of Big Bubba and Mama Pearl. Chapter two introduces Beau, puppy of hound dog parents Maurice and Evelyn. Both of these offspring live remarkably parallel lives, with doting mothers, and fathers who loudly proclaim their joy of parenthood, from Maurice’s baying “Ar-ar-arooooo!!!” to Big Bubba honking the horn of his trusty pickup truck “Toot! Toot! Tooooooot!” Not only that, but both Bubba and Beau travel on all fours, like to chew, are not housebroken, are fond of mud, and detest soap. A glorious friendship between them is inevitable. Arthur Howard’s humorous illustrations of humans and hounds are a perfect match for Texan Kathi Appelt’s fond caricature of southern life. To sum up the fun: “One perfect baby. One perfect hound. And a lot of commotion!” (Ages 3-6)

Arquette, Kerry. *What Did You Do Today?* Illustrated by Nancy Hayashi. Harcourt, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-15-201414-4, \$16.00)

“What did you do today, little pig? What did you do today? I found some mucky, muddy ground. I wallowed deep and rolled around. I made my favorite grunting sound. That’s what I did today.” An ear-pleasing picture book uses repetition, rhyme, and language choice to great effect. Set on the rural farm and land where a small, brown-skinned boy lives, each two-page spread features a different animal or insect describing its activities in a lively, lilting narrative framed around the question “What did you do today?” In some of the illustrations, the young child is seen interacting with the various creatures; in others, he is a background figure. But the book starts, and especially ends, firmly centered on the importance of the boy and his immediate world and activities. (Ages 2-4)

Banks, Kate. *Close Your Eyes*. Illustrated by Georg Hallensleben. Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-374-31382-2, \$16.00)



It's nighttime, but one little tiger isn't ready to go to sleep. " 'If I close my eyes,' he said, 'I can't see the sky.' " Or the tree, or the bird with the blue feathers. And the dark is scary. Like any small child, the little tiger is full of reasons for not going to sleep. But his mother leads him to an understanding of the endless possibilities that his own imagination can create in the dark. She is also full of love and reassurance in this superb bedtime (or anytime) story. "Dark is just the other side of light," she tells him. "I will be here. So close your eyes, little tiger." Kate Banks is a writer with a keen understanding of the emotional landscape of small children, and a gift for language. Like her other books illustrated by Georg Hallensleben, here her beautiful words are paired with vivid yet soothing images, creating a perfectly balanced, extraordinarily comforting picture book. *Highly Commended, 2003 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 2-4)

Carle, Eric. "*Slowly, Slowly, Slowly,*" said the Sloth. Introduction by Jane Goodall. Philomel, 2002. 24 pages (trade 0-399-23954-5, \$16.99)

Eric Carle's trademark collages burst with vibrant color, infusing energy into the daily activities of a sloth, which, of course, take place slowly, slowly, slowly. As the sloth hangs upside down through day, night, and rain, a menagerie of Amazonian rain forest animals parades by. The sloth doesn't respond when the howler monkey asks why he is so slow, or the caiman questions why he is so quiet, or the anteater inquires why he is so boring. But after thinking for a "long, long, long time," the sloth finally replies when the jaguar asks "why are you so lazy?" In a rich and lengthy paragraph that contrasts nicely with the simple, repetitive text on the preceding pages, the sloth launches into a thoughtful explanation of his manner, incorporating a veritable thesaurus of words to describe his behavior, including lackadaisical, languid, stoic, impassive, sluggish and lethargic. He concludes, " 'But I am not lazy . . . That's just how I am. I like to do things slowly, slowly, slowly.' " A foreword by Jane Goodall elaborates on sloth behavior in the wild, and concludes with a statement about the destruction of sloth habitat and the human threat to the animal's continued survival. (Ages 3-6)

Carter, Don. *Get to Work Trucks!* Roaring Brook Press, 2002. 24 pages (trade 0-7613-2518-2, \$14.95; lib. 0-7613-2518-2)

For those kids with an insatiable appetite for heavy machinery, *Get to Work Trucks* will provide instant gratification. A line-up of eight trucks heads off to work early one morning, only to be stopped short when a turtle crosses the road in front of them. The obstacle is moved and the convoy continues to its work site. Each truck's function is simply described ("The digger digs a hole. And the bulldozer fills a hole.") as the crew works through the day. The turtle that interrupted the trucks' arrival shows up on every page, but fortunately doesn't appear to hinder progress, despite lolling in the digger's scoop, and perching nonchalantly atop a beam being lifted into place by a crane. A lavish application of acrylic paint gives a sense of depth that borders on three-dimensional to the construction scenes. (Ages 3-6)

Cuyler, Margery. *Skeleton Hiccups*. Illustrated by S.D. Schindler. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-689-584770-X, \$14.95)

An unfortunate skeleton just can't shake the hic-hic-hic-hiccups. He tries all the remedies he and his friend, ghost, can think of, from holding his breath to eating sugar to drinking water upside down (picture a skeleton doing THAT). Ghost even says "boo" to try to scare the hiccups away. But those hiccups get a real fright when ghost has skeleton look in a mirror. Margery Cuyler's succinct text has a bit of a hiccuppy feel, while S. D. Schindler's illustrations add humorous dimension to the story. (Ages 3-6)

French, Simon. *Guess the Baby*. Illustrated by Donna Rawlins. U.S. edition: Clarion, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-618-25989-9, \$14.00)

When Sam brings his baby brother to school for Show and Tell, he highlights the baby's pertinent traits for his classmates: "He has a green carriage, he eats mushy baby food . . . and sometimes his diapers are really yucky." The sharing session leads to a discussion about how everyone was once a baby, and the children bring their own baby photos to school. Mr. Judd, the teacher, posts the photos, and at first all the babies look alike. "A lot of them had no teeth to smile with, and some of them had no hair." But closer inspection singles out Jack, because of his curly hair, and another baby has Sacha's unique smile. Mara is recognized by her orange hair, and Anika by her large, dark eyes. Mr. Judd provides pertinent clues to help the class identify a few of the harder photos, but one picture stumps everyone. At last Mr. Judd gives a tip: "This baby grew up to be very handsome. And very clever. But even though this baby is very grown up, he's still at school." The class catches on, and realizes that even their very adult teacher was once a baby. Amusing illustrations showing the baby Mr. Judd (easily identifiable because of his debonair black mustache!) in a highchair, drawing on walls, and in need of a diaper change, capture the amazement young children often feel when they realize "their" grown-ups were once young, too. (Ages 3-5)

Heap, Sue. *What Shall We Play?* Candlewick Press, 2002. 24 pages (trade 0-7636-1685-0, \$13.99)

Lily May wants to play fairies. "'No, let's play trees,' said Matt." So Matt, Martha and Lily May all play trees. "'Now, let's play fairies,' said Lily May." But Martha wants to play cars, so they do. Patient Lily May continues to suggest playing fairies, but is outvoted by her friends. The trio plays at being cats, and even "wibbly-wobbly Jell-O." At last Lily May produces her toy wand, an enticement that Matt and Martha are unable to resist. Lively acrylic and crayon illustrations vibrate with the energy of the playmates. (Ages 2-5)

Hindley, Judy. *Does a Cow Say Boo?* Illustrated by Brita Granström. Candlewick Press, 2002. 24 pages (trade 0-7636-1718-0, \$15.99)

Animals and the sounds they make have provided inspiration for many picture books, and for good reason. Young children delight in their mastery of matching the appropriate noise with the animal that produces it, and *Does a Cow Say Boo?* is particularly

successful at soliciting that type of audience participation. While the illustrations show a group of young children visiting a farmyard, the rhythmic text asks “But who says BOO? Does a dog say BOO? Oh, no! What does a dog say? Woof! Woof! Woof! And sometimes arf! And sometimes grrrr . . . But I’ve never heard a dog say BOO – have you?” After touching base with the usual assortment of farm animals, the final pages set the stage for a climactic finale: “So isn’t there anyone who says BOO? Hide your eyes and tell me who. What do you say now? You say . . . BOO!” This book will delight children whether shared during a one-on-one lap session, or read aloud to a toddler storytime group. (Ages 18 months – 3 years)

Hutchins, Pat. *We’re Going on a Picnic!* Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-688-16799-3, \$15.95; lib. 0-688-16800-0)

Hen, Duck and Goose decide to go on a picnic together on a day perfect for an outing. Each picks a favorite food to bring. Hen chooses berries, while Duck picks pears. Goose puts apples into the picnic basket. Singing "We're going on a picnic," they begin the search for a perfect picnic spot. One place is too shady, the second too windy, and another too hot. The most observant young children will immediately notice in Hutchins's brightly colored pictures what the three picnickers completely miss. An uninvited "guest," such as a field mouse, squirrel or rabbit, helps itself to part of their treat each time the basket is set briefly on the ground. In addition to honing their powers of observation, small children will also enjoy the cumulative nature of the narrative, a technique at which Hutchins has excelled since her classic *Rosie's Walk* was published in the United States. in 1968. (Ages 2-4)

Keller, Holly. *Farfallina & Marcel.* Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-06-623932-X, \$15.99; lib. 0-06-623933-8)

Farfallina is a caterpillar. Marcel is a gosling. When they meet, the two form an instant friendship. “Farfallina liked his soft feathers and his gentle eyes . . . He liked Farfallina’s smile and her pretty colors.” Kind and considerate toward one another, the two are inseparable playmates. Then one day Farfallina doesn’t feel quite right. “I need to climb up onto a branch and rest for awhile.” Marcel waits for her. And waits. Sadly, he finally leaves. By the time Farfallina appears again, she has greatly changed. Marcel is nowhere in sight. She looks for him every day on the pond, but only sees a beautiful goose gliding around. Holly Keller’s magnificently paced story with its lyrical turns of phrase has children humming with anticipation and excitement as they realize long before Farfallina and Marcel how the two have transformed from caterpillar and gosling to butterfly and goose. Full-page watercolor artwork provides a satisfying visual accompaniment to this quiet yet highly dramatic tale. *Winner, 2003 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 3-7)

McMullan, Kate. *I Stink!* Illus. by Jim McMullan. Joanna Cotler Books / HarperCollins, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-06-029848-0, \$15.95; lib. 0-06-029849-9)

"Who am I? I've got lights. Ten w-I-d-e tires. no A.C., not me...Know what I do at night while you're asleep? Eat your TRASH, that's what." So begins a fast-paced text about a cheerful, personified garbage truck hard at work. Children will almost be able to hear the

scrunch and crunch of the A-B-Cs of refuse enumerated by this rackety raconteur who says, "Ah!" while gobbling "Apple cores Banana peels Candy wrappers Dirty diapers (yes, dirty diapers) Eggshells Fish heads Gobs and gobs of gum..." and much more. Yuck! A delightfully upbeat story about the very vehicle needed to get a sticky job done. Yay! *Highly Commended, 2003 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 2-6)

Mockford, Caroline. *Cleo and Caspar*. Barefoot Books, 2001. 24 pages (trade 1-84148-440-7, \$14.99)

Making new friends can be hard, especially for a cat confronted by a canine newcomer to the household. At first Cleo is alarmed by Caspar's barking and runs to hide on a tree branch, but she soon overcomes her fear and the two creatures become playmates. A spare text ("Cleo runs downstairs. / Cleo hears a sound. / Someone new is in the house! / Cleo looks around.") and striking, boldly-outlined acrylic illustrations combine in an appealing look at new experiences for young children. (Ages 18 months – 3 years)

Partridge, Elizabeth. *Moon Glowing*. Illustrated by Joan Paley. Dutton, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-525-46873-0, \$16.99)

The quiet drama of the natural world is captured in this picture book for very young children as a season turns and animals prepare for winter's ice and snow. As autumn fades, four animals -- a squirrel, a bat, a beaver and a bear -- each prepares for the coming cold. Squirrel stashes nuts, bat munches extra food, beaver makes sure its lodge is strong, and bear eats berries. Each settles into its haven for winter as the snow begins to fly. Elizabeth Partridge's spare and simple text is enhanced by brief information provided about each animal's winter preparations at the end of the story, and by Joan Paley's elegant, eye-catching collage illustrations. (Ages 18 months - 3 years)

Pearson, Tracey Campbell. *Bob*. Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 32 pages (trade 0-374-39957-3, \$16.00)

Bob's a rooster among chickens, and he only knows how to cluck. One day the farm cat finally breaks it to him—he's a rooster, and he needs to learn how to crow. "Will you teach me?" Bob asks. But the cat can only teach him to meow. Setting off in search of a rooster, Bob meets a parade of other animals. He learns how to woof-wag like a dog, ribbet-hop like a frog, moo like cows, and whooo like an owl. Finally, he finds a rooster—and success. Back at the farm, an unsuspecting fox sneaks up on the henhouse, undeterred by Bob's warning crow. But when the fox hears a cat, a dog, frogs, cows, and an owl in the coop as well, he runs quickly away. Tracey Campbell Pearson's amusing tale is illustrated in boldly colored full-page artwork. The singular Bob is particularly striking, standing out on each two-page spread with his handsomely speckled black-and-white feathers and bright red comb. (Ages 3-6)

Shannon, David. *Duck on a Bike*. Blue Sky Press / Scholastic, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-439-05023-5, \$15.95)

What does happen after a child parks a bike and goes inside? In this hilarious picture story, a farmer's duck decides to ride that bike, and each farm animal observes this phenomenon with varying degrees of envy. A cumulative story features a cow, dog, sheep, cat, horse, chicken, goat, two pigs, and a mouse with an ingenious scheme for repetition, and skillful characterization of each animal character through dialogue. A surprising climax perfectly concludes the ride brightly illustrated with Shannon's artwork. *Highly Commended, 2003 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 3-7)

Sís, Peter. *Madlenka's Dog*. Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-374-34699-2, \$17.00)

Little Madlenka was introduced in the book *Madlenka* (Farrar, 2000), in which she showed her loose tooth to various vendors and shopkeepers on her urban block. Now, Madlenka, who wants a dog, must rely on her imagination after her parents say no. Madlenka's dog, represented by the red leash and collar that lead Madlenka around the block, may not be visible to readers and listeners, but most children will understand how very real that dog is to Madlenka. So do the shopkeepers on Madlenka's block, whom she once again visits to introduce her new companion. There are flaps to be lifted on some pages, revealing the dogs and puppies remembered by the adult friends on her block, who come from nations around the world. As in the original *Madlenka*, endpapers represent the earth from space, and then the North American continent with a small red dot for New York City, offering older children the opportunity to consider the way the worlds they know—of neighborhood, block, or community—are at once complete and part of something greater. (Ages 3-7)

Spinelli, Eileen. *Wanda's Monster*. Illustrated by Nancy Hayashi. Albert Whitman, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-8075-8656-0, \$15.95)

Like many children, Wanda is afraid there is a monster in her closet. While most of her family assures her everything is fine, Wanda's creative and understanding Granny agrees with her. But, Granny says, "How would you like to live in a cold, dark closet?" Thinking about this, Wanda not only gets over her fear of the monster, she provides it with a pillow, a stuffed animal, crayons and other comforts and diversions. She even begins to read it bedtime stories. Eileen Spinelli's satisfying story offers a playful twist on very real beliefs of some children. The monster that Wanda never actually sees but fully believes in can be seen by readers in Nancy Hayashi's watercolor illustrations. (Ages 3-6)

Stoeke, Janet Morgan. *Minerva Louise and the Red Truck*. Dutton, 2002. 24 pages 0-525-46909-5, \$14.99)

An intrepid hen and a red pickup truck spell adventure. The fifth book about Minerva Louise centers on her unexpected journey in a farm truck, as the fowl puts her own unique interpretation on everything new she encounters. Golfers on a course are "farmers, hard at work in the fields," overturned clay flowerpots are "a table and chairs"

and a church with a steeple is “a silly barn wearing a hat.” Children will love correcting Minerva Louise’s mistakes, and readers of all ages will savor the hen’s unbridled enthusiasm for life, captured best in the illustration showing her perched in the pickup bed, beak extended, eyes closed, and comb blowing back in the wind, looking just like a delighted canine with its head out the car window. (Ages 3-7)

Swanson, Susan Marie. *The First Thing My Mama Told Me*. Illustrated by Christine Davenier. Harcourt, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-15-201075-0, \$16.00)

“When I was born, the first thing my mama told me was my name,” begins Lucy, the seven-year-old protagonist of this lyrical picture book. “Mama says my name comes from a long-ago word for light. When I was born, she let that name shine on me.” As Lucy grows from infancy to early childhood, we see the many ways in which her name continues to shine: written in frosting on her first birthday cake, engraved on a step stool her uncle made for her when she was two, and Lucy’s own attempts at age three to write her name – everywhere – in magic marker. By the time she starts kindergarten, she is well able to find her special coat hook with her name written above it, and by first grade, she can write it herself in the snow. When Lucy receives a flashlight for her seventh birthday, she is able to swirl it around to write her name in cursive on the dark, starlit sky. Distinctive pen-and-ink illustrations with pastel washes perfectly complement the thoughtful yet upbeat mood of the book, and sometimes suggest pieces of the story not mentioned in the understated narrative. *Honor Book, 2003 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 3-8)

Westerhout, Lynn. *Business in Bangkok*. Illustrated by Chum McLeod. U.S. edition: Second Story Press (720 Bathurst Street, Suite 301, Toronto, Canada M5S 2R4), 2002. 24 pages (trade 1-896764-48-7, \$11.95)

Corey’s mom is leaving for a ten-day business trip to Bangkok, but Corey insists she can’t go. When his father asks why, Corey is quick with a list of reasons, including “Who will make my lunch?” and “Who will tie my laces?” To each query, his dad has a reassuring answer, which often includes the phrase “I could, but ... so could you.” When Corey throws out the really important question of who will give him Mommyhugs, his father replies, “Only Mommy can do that. Look, she’s thinking about you, too. She’s sent you something special.” His mother has sent Corey a loving e-mail, reminding him that she’s missing him as much as he’s missing her. Children whose parents travel for business, or who must be away for any reason, will take comfort from the calm and supportive message presented here. (Ages 2-6)

Wilson, Karma. *Bear Snores On*. Illustrated by Jane Chapman. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-689-83187-0, \$16.00)

“In a cave in the woods, / in his deep, dark lair, / through the long, cold winter / sleeps a great brown bear . . . The cold winds howl / and the night sounds growl. But the bear snores on.” And snores. And snores. One animal after another seeks shelter from those howling winds and a raging storm inside bear’s cozy cave. Each has something to share,

and soon there's a party, but bear sleeps through it all...until a tiny fleck of pepper from the pot of stew they are cooking wafts up his nose. Oh-oh. Aachoo! Karma Wilson's rollicking text delights young readers with its rhyme, rhythm, and repetition. Jane Chapman's acrylic illustrations evoke the warmth and coziness of the cave and the cold blue-white chill of the night storm outside and are especially effective from a distance, making this a great choice to share as read-aloud with groups of children. *Highly Commended, 2003 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 3-6)

**See also:** *All You Need for a Snowman; Ballerina Flying; Birdwatchers; Dahlia; Fox Tale Soup; Frog; Gaspard and Lisa's Christmas Surprise; Giggle, Giggle, Quack; Good-Byes; Hello Benny!; I Love Saturdays y domingos; In My World; Jasper's Day; Jethro Byrd; Rap a Tap Tap; Raymond's Perfect Present; That Makes Me Mad!; What about Me?; What's Up, What's Down; White Swan Express; Why Is Blue Dog Blue?;* section on Board Books

### Picture Books for Older Children

Ada, Alma Flor. *I Love Saturdays y domingos*. Illustrated by Elivia Savadier. Atheneum, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-689-31819-7, \$16.95)

A young girl spends Saturdays with her English-speaking grandparents and *los domingos* (Sundays) with her Spanish-speaking grandparents, and each household offers love and support. On Saturdays she has scrambled eggs and pancakes for breakfast, watches the fish in her grandpa's aquarium, and listens to her grandmother tell stories about her grandmother coming to California in a covered wagon. On Sundays, she has *huevos rancheros* for breakfast, sits on the pier with her *abuelo*, and listens to her *abuelita* talk about her Native American grandmother. The story concludes with the entire family coming together for the narrator's seventh birthday party. Spanish words and phrases are naturally woven into a gentle story of a bicultural/bilingual child. (Ages 4-8)

Boyden, Linda. *The Blue Roses*. Illustrated by Amy Córdova. Lee & Low, 2002. 32 pages (trade 1-58430-037-X, \$16.95)

When she was born, Rosalie's grandfather planted a rosebush in their yard. Throughout her childhood, he shares his gift for nurturing things that grow with her. Of course Rosalie, too, is nurtured by this gentle, loving man who lives with Rosalie and her mother. The gardening they share becomes an important way for Rosalie to understand the cycle of life, death, and renewal. As she grows older, Papa, as she calls her grandfather, grows older, too. Eventually, it is his time to die. Linda Boyden's first book for children is a richly told first-person narrative grounded in child-centered details and emotions. Rosalie's sadness at Papa's death is real, as is her gradual healing. Comfort comes from a dream in which Papa appears to her, from carrying on their gardening traditions, and from a special discovery at Papa's grave. Amy Córdova's full-color acrylic and pencil artwork reflects the characters' Native heritage, which is implied but not expressed in the story. The author is an enrolled member of the United Lumbee Nation of the Cherokee. (Ages 5-8)

Brandenberg, Alexa. *Ballerina Flying*. HarperCollins, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-06-029549-X, \$15.95; lib. 0-06-029550-3)

Mina loves everything about dance, especially ballet. She loves her tutu, her teacher, her ballet class, and, most especially, dreaming of flying like a ballerina. Mina also knows that it is “not as easy as it looks. Ballet takes a lot of practice and hard work.” The girls and boys in Mina’s racially diverse class demonstrate the basic stretches and five positions Miss Viola teaches them. Their barre exercises are described simply, and include a pronunciation guide. Brandenburg’s illustrations show Miss Viola demonstrating each step, as well as her students’ appropriately child-like attempts to recreate her precision. As the class draws to a close, Mina imagines that she is dressed in her tutu, and “bowing to a real audience. I am one step closer to flying.” (Ages 4-7)

Bridges, Shirin Yim. *Ruby’s Wish*. Illustrated by Sophie Blackall. Chronicle, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-8118-3490-5, \$15.95)

Young Ruby loves the color red, and she loves to learn. Living in China at a time when few girls were taught to read or write, Ruby eagerly studies with the tutors her grandfather has hired for any child in his house who wants to learn. Ruby excels, and her grandfather takes great pleasure in her success. So he’s saddened and puzzled when he reads a poem Ruby has written lamenting her fate as a girl in a house “where only boys are cared for.” Ruby’s dream is to attend university—an option open to her boy cousins, but not to girls in China. Shirin Yin Bridges based this charming and ultimately uplifting story on the life of her grandmother, who, like the fictional Ruby, was accepted as one of the first female students at a university in China. Sophie Blackwell’s elegant gouache illustrations are a perfect accompaniment to Bridge’s narrative. (Ages 6-9)

Cooper, Susan. *Frog*. Illustrated by Jane Browne. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2002. 24 pages (trade 0-689-84302-X, \$17.00)

Everyone else in his family is an adept swimmer, but Little Joe can’t swim. His brother and sister laugh when he splashes around, which makes Little Joe sad. When a frog accidentally hops into the swimming pool, the other family members exert plenty of energy trying to get it out by splashing, grabbing, and scooping with a net, but the frantic frog eludes their efforts. Left alone with the exhausted creature, Little Joe slowly and gently picks the frog up and places him carefully on the pool deck. Inspired by the frog, Little Joe mimics its movements, and finds himself swimming “all the way ... across the pool, / just like Frog.” This tale of patience and bravery on a small scale is accompanied by full-color realistic paintings of Little Joe’s success. (Ages 4-7)

Cronin, Doreen. *Giggle, Giggle, Quack*. Illustrated by Betsy Lewin. Simon & Schuster, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-689-84506-5, \$15.95)

When Farmer Brown sets out on vacation, he leaves his brother Bob in charge of his farm with the parting words, “I wrote everything down for you. Just follow my instructions and everything will be fine. But keep an eye on Duck. He’s trouble.” As Farmer Brown’s



car heads down the lane, Duck, with a gleam in his eye, spies a pencil in the dirt. The first note that Bob reads informs him “Tuesday night is pizza night (not the frozen kind!).” Furthermore, “The hens prefer anchovies.” Meanwhile, as Duck and the hens observe Bob through an open window, they let loose a “Giggle, giggle, cluck.” Bob knows how to follow instructions, and “Twenty-nine minutes later there was hot pizza in the barn.” As the week progresses, Bob diligently obeys the penciled notes he finds about the house, giving the pigs a bubble bath and drying them off with the monogrammed “good towels” (“Giggle, giggle, oink”), and popping corn as the cows settle themselves in the living room for movie night (“Giggle, giggle, moo”). Only a routine telephone call from the vacationing Farmer Brown puts an end to the animals’ week of high living. The expressions on the animals’ faces as Duck successfully pulls the wool over Bob’s eyes – a hen smothers a giggle beneath her wing, while two cows share a smirk of delight -- invite children to share the joke in this amusing tale of good-natured trickery. (Ages 4-7)

Dillon, Leo and Diane Dillon. *Rap a Tap Tap: Here’s Bojangles – Think of That!* Blue Sky Press / Scholastic, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-590-47883-4, \$15.95)

A tribute to the great tap dancer Bill “Bojangles” Robinson skillfully uses repetition and toe-tapping rhythm to involve young listeners in the narrative. Each simple, staccato line of text reveals something about Robinson, who danced for rich and poor, Black and white, at a time when an African American entertainer faced many restrictions. The author/artists artfully capture energetic movement in the illustrations, while phrasing the words so that the social issues referenced make sense on both a literal and a metaphorical level (e.g, “He danced past doors; some were open, some closed.”). “Rap a tap tap—think of that!” (Ages 4-7)

Elya, Susan Middleton. *Home at Last*. Illustrated by Felipe Davalos. Lee & Low, 2002. 32 pages (trade 1-58430-020-5, \$16.95)

Ana’s mother is having a hard time adapting after the family moves from Mexico to the United States. At school, Ana is learning English. She and Papá practice each night at home. But her mother is home alone all day with Ana’s twin baby brothers. She misses her friends and relatives. And she dreads going to the market, where the impatient store clerk snaps at her for not knowing English. Susan Middleton Elya realistically portrays some of the difficulties faced by immigrants to this country who don’t speak English in a sensitive and engaging story that is told in third-person but maintains a child’s perspective on events. Felipe Davalos fine illustrations reflect all the warmth in Ana’s family, as well as the weariness, uncertainty, and, finally, pride that Ana’s mother feels as she begins to tackle the challenges she faces head on. (Ages 5-8)

Freymann, Saxton. *Dog Food*. Arthur A. Levine Books / Scholastic Press, 2002. 24 pages (trade 0-439-11016-5, \$12.95)

What is truly amazing about *Dog Food*, in which cauliflower, oranges, onions, potatoes, and other ingredients have been transformed into dogs, is the incredible success the illustrator has in capturing emotions, moods, actions, and energy in his unique creations.

Twenty-six familiar phrases, all containing the words “dog,” “puppy,” or “pup,” are literally portrayed through the edible art. A pepper hound peeks out of a lettuce leaf tent for “Pup tent,” a pear pooch whacks a radish racket in “Dog paddle,” and three couch potato puppies, made of broccoli, green pepper, and yellow pepper, gaze at a mushroom television for “Dog show.” Readers will relish the word play and humor, and, perhaps, never view their dinner plates in quite the same way. (Ages 5-9)

Geisert, Arthur. *The Giant Ball of String*. Walter Lorraine Books / Houghton Mifflin, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-618-13221-X, \$16.00)

The fictional mining town of Rumpus Ridge, Wisconsin, populated by pigs, has one claim to fame: the collected effort of generations of young piglets has resulted in the largest ball of string in the world. The giant ball is a popular tourist destination until a thunderstorm floods the town creek, washing the string downstream to the town of Cornwall. The Cornwallians decide to run with this stroke of luck, and claim the string as their own. However, the youngsters of Rumpus Ridge are determined to regain what is rightfully theirs, and an elaborate plot involving a sluice, water wheel, windmill, and meticulous timing is enacted. Tunnels are dug, a fuse is ignited, dandelion seeds are involved, and the string is returned to its place of honor in Rumpus Ridge. The deadpan tone is a perfect match for the elaborate machinations of the porcine heroes. An understated text and detailed, intricate illustrations offer much to enjoy by those who appreciate dry humor. (Ages 5-10)

Graham, Bob. *Jethro Byrd, Fairy Child*. Candlewick Press, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-7636-1772-5, \$15.99)

“Annabelle’s dad had little time for fairies.” But Annabelle, a preschooler, “had lots of time, and every day she looked.” Her diligence pays off. One day Annabelle meets a boy “as big as her finger.” His name is Jethro Byrd, he wears jeans, a baseball cap and wings, and he’s a Fairy Child. Annabelle is delighted to make Jethro’s acquaintance, and also to meet his father, mother, grandma and baby sister. The Byrd family is en route to the Fairy Travelers’ Picnic, an annual event that sounds suspiciously similar to human gatherings, with hugging aunts, biting flies, and running races in which Jethro always places last. They’ve landed their diminutive ice cream truck near Annabelle’s home to take a short break from their travels, and Annabelle is quick to ensure the Byrds that her mother will be delighted to provide their tea. When Annabelle introduces Jethro to her parents, they respond to what they perceive as their child’s whimsy in a kindly fashion and produce a snack, but are clearly too grown up themselves to be able to see the unexpected guests. Bob Graham’s affectionate watercolor and ink rendering of the fairies show them as a down-to-earth lot you could imagine encountering at any urban summer picnic, minus the wings, of course. (Ages 4-7)

Hartfield, Claire. *Me and Uncle Romie: A Story Inspired by the Life and Art of Romare Bearden*. Illustrated by Jerome Lagarrigue. Dial, 2002. 40 pages (trade 0-8037-2520-5, \$16.99)

Sent to stay with family in New York City while his parents await the birth of twins, young James is not thrilled about spending time with his uncle, an artist who looks like a “bald-headed, fierce-eyed giant.” But Uncle Romie spends his days behind the closed door of his studio. It is Aunt Nanette who takes James all over the city, and it’s Harlem that James especially loves. When Aunt Nanette has to leave unexpectedly, James finds himself facing days alone with Uncle Romie, and the prospect for a bleak birthday celebration. Then he ventures into Uncle Romie’s studio. “What a glorious mess!...It’s Harlem, I thought. The people, the music, the rooftops, and the stoops...I could *feel* Harlem—its beat and bounce.” A fictional story features African American collage artist Romare Bearden and his work, as conveyed through the eyes of a young African American boy who not only discovers the wonders of his uncle’s art but also the warmth of his character. Information for children on creating storytelling collages is included at the end of this volume that is supported by the Romare Bearden Foundation “as a way to introduce his art and personal history to children.” (Ages 6-10)

Herrera, Juan Felipe. *Grandma and Me at the Flea / Los Meros Meros Remateros*. Illustrated by Anita DeLucio-Brock. Children’s Book Press, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-89239-171-5, \$15.95)

A bilingual (Spanish/English) story full of hope, generosity, and humor is set at a Fresno flea market, where a Mexican American boy and his grandmother spend a Sunday as vendors, or *remateros*. At the flea market, Juanito discovers that everything old can be new again. Vendors sell blankets and hardware, boots and belts, jewelry and flowerpots, even chiles. Running from booth to booth with his friends, he is witness to and participant in a community in which everyone helps one another, exchanging wares for good deeds and vice versa. The colorful narrative features carefully measured sentences and wonderful word choice, making the English text a delight to read aloud. Spanish words incorporated into the English are well defined in context. Vibrant illustrations capture all the warmth, energy, and excitement of the flea market as experienced by Juanito. *Highly Commended, 2003 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 7-10)

Hopkinson, Deborah. *Under the Quilt of Night*. Illustrated by James E. Ransome. An Anne Schwartz Book / Atheneum, 2001. 32 pages (trade 0-689-82227-8, \$16.00)

Brief vignettes titled “Running,” “Waiting,” “Watching,” “Hiding,” “Traveling,” and “Singing” chronicle the flight of a young slave girl to freedom on the Underground railroad. The spare, riveting, first-person narrative embodies all of the girl’s fear, tension, uncertainty and anxiety as they make their way north, pursued by her master and his men, aided by sympathizers to their plight. The book ends before her journey is complete, but she is well on her way to freedom: “I take a deep breath / and when I let go / my voice flies up in a song...I’ll jump every fence my way.” James Ransome’s rich oil paintings dramatically convey each and every event and emotion on their journey. (Ages 6-9)

Howitt, Mary. *The Spider and the Fly*. Illustrated by Tony DiTerlizzi. 32 pages (trade 0-689-85289-4, \$16.95)

Even young readers will know that things do not bode well for Fly, when Spider invites her to “walk into my parlor.” DiTerlizzi stages his adaptation of Mary Howitt’s tale as a gothic horror film, circa Hollywood of the 1920s and ’30s. Fly is an innocent ingénue, fresh off the bus, and Spider is cast as a wealthy predator in top hat and tails. He urges Fly to indulge in his hospitality, while licking his lips in anticipation of his prey. Insect ghosts of Spider’s previous meals point to a volume of “The Joy of Cooking Bugs” in an attempt to warn Fly of Spider’s evil intentions. But oblivious Fly falls victim to her own vanity and Spider’s smooth talk. The blatant moralizing of this 19<sup>th</sup>-century cautionary tale is wonderfully offset by the humor of the grisly illustrations, which seem to glow with a silvery light, created using black and white gouache reproduced in silver and black duotone. (Ages 5-9)

James, Simon. *The Birdwatchers*. Candlewick Press, 2002. 24 pages (trade 0-7636-1676-1, \$15.99)

Jess’s granddad is a birdwatcher, and a bit of a tall-tale teller to boot. To hear him talk, the birds are as interested in drawing him as he is in drawing them, and one day all kinds of birds got together to sing the dawn chorus just so he could record it for her. “Birds are amazing,” he tells her. And so she decides it’s time to see them for herself. At first her birdwatching trip with Granddad is a disappointment—she can’t see anything. But once they are inside the birdwatching hut, all kinds of birds appear! Jess can now share in her granddad’s enthusiasm for birdwatching. But that’s not all she can share in. “Granddad, I liked it best when the dancing penguins came and shared my sandwich,” she tells him. “Dancing penguins?” he replies. “I must have been looking the other way.” Once again, Simon James’s droll, understated humor infuses both the words and watercolor art of his story. (Ages 4-7)

Karas, G. Brian. *Atlantic*. Putnam, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-399-23632-5, \$15.99)

The Atlantic Ocean speaks in first-person voice in the lyrical text of a book that invites children to think about the ocean in myriad ways, even to embody it. “I begin where the land runs out at the end of yards and streets and hills...I rub shoulders with North America and bump into Africa...The moon so far out in space pulls at me and then lets go...Artists paint pictures of me with cerulean, cobalt and ultramarine.” G. Brian Karas describes the ways that the Atlantic Ocean occupies the geography of earth, map and imagination, illustrating his words with a multitude of blue and greens in water-inspired artwork rendered in gouache, acrylic and pencil. (Ages 6-10)

Louie, Therese On. *Raymond’s Perfect Present*. Illustrated by Suling Wang. Lee & Low, 2002. 32 pages (trade 1-58430-055-8, \$16.95)

When his mother is sick in bed, a neighbor suggests that Raymond should stay inside after school, so his mother won’t worry. As he sits inside the quiet apartment, Raymond watches the world going by outside his window. One day, he sees a woman happily receive a gift of flowers, and he remembers how his mother had once lived on a farm, and how their city life made her miss “living, growing things.” Raymond resolves to get her

flowers, but a trip to the florist reveals that he doesn't have enough money to buy a bouquet. The low-cost alternative of growing flowers from seeds seems to be the perfect solution, and indeed, his windowsill pots soon yield beautiful blossoms. But Raymond's mother's health declines and she is hospitalized. His flowers peak and wilt before his mother is discharged, and Raymond's disappointment adds to the worry and fear he already is feeling. When his mother finally returns home, Raymond dreads the sadness she is sure to feel when she sees the withered plants. To his amazement, the next morning he hears her laugh with delight, and together they watch birds gather on the windowsill to strip seeds from the drooping stems. This unexpected and happy conclusion provides satisfying closure to a quiet story about the love between a Chinese American child and his parent. (Ages 4-8)

Macaulay, David. *Angelo*. Walter Lorraine Books / Houghton Mifflin, 2002. 48 pages (trade 0-618-16826-5, \$16.00)

As he works repairing the facade of a church in Rome, the last thing Angelo wants or needs is an injured pigeon, but there she is, tucked into the detailed stone work, unable to move. Reluctantly he takes her home. It is, as has been said before, the start of a beautiful friendship. Man and pigeon each have something to give the other. Angelo offers tender first aid, his favorite songs, and restorative weekend trips into the country. The pigeon, eventually called Sylvia, provides a little lunchtime song and dance, and later coos encouragement and fans Angelo with her feathers as the work becomes more and more difficult for the aging artisan. David Macaulay artfully balances genuine warmth with humor that is outrageous yet wholly grounded in the context of this beguiling, satisfying story. It is a story that will delight, and that offers the opportunity to think about compassion, and about the importance of an artist's work, done with love and care. (Ages 6-10)

McClintock, Barbara. *Dahlia*. Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-374-31678-3, \$16.00)

Barbara McClintock creates another picture book with a Victorian look and feel while its young protagonist is wholly in step with many contemporary children. Charlotte has never like dolls, so when her elderly Aunt Edme gives her one, "dressed in linen and lace and delicate silk ribbons" Charlotte is not very excited. In her bedroom filled with bugs and birds nests, Charlotte explains to the newcomer that she and her dog, Bruno, like "digging in dirt and climbing trees....You'll just have to get used to the way we do things." The doll—whom Charlotte names Dahlia after flowers in her mother's garden—turns out to be more resilient than she looks. After a day spent accompanying Charlotte and Bruno on their many activities and adventures, Dahlia is muddy and torn and tangled, but she feels wonderful. When Aunt Edme arrives and asks to see her gift to Charlotte, the little girl is anxious because of Dahlia's unruly state. But her aunt surprises her: "When I saw your doll in a shop window, I thought she needed to be out in the sunshine, and played with, and loved. I knew that is just what you would do for her." (Ages 4-8)

McPhail, David. *The Teddy Bear*. Henry Holt, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-8050-6414-1, \$15.95)

A teddy bear accidentally left in a restaurant by a little boy ends up in the trash, where a homeless man finds and claims him. The little boy is heartbroken at losing his bear. And the bear misses the child. But as time passes the boy thinks about the bear less and less, and the bear is not unhappy in his new life. The man loves and cares for him. A chance encounter months later in a park reunites boy and bear, until the boy sees that the man loves the bear, too. And, more important, the man needs him. David McPhail's touching story is sparely yet wonderfully told. It never strays to sweetness or moralizing even as it offers children the opportunity to think deeply about generosity, compassion, and love. Watercolor and ink illustrations add visual richness to a story already brimming with warmth. (Ages 4-7)

Muth, Jon J. *The Three Questions*. Based on a story by Leo Tolstoy. Scholastic Press, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-439-19996-4, \$16.95)

When is the best time to do things? Who is the most important one? What is the right thing to do? Based on a story by Leo Tolstoy, a handsome, provocative allegory poses these queries in more than one way as a boy searches for knowledge and finds it in unexpected ways: The author's note at the end clarifies his intent regarding his use of Tolstoy's idea, explains his decisions about names for his characters, and cites the classic story. An unusual picture story for the families and elementary school-age children responsive to a thoughtful provocation. *Honor Book, CCBC Caldecott Award Discussion* (Ages 5-10)

Okimoto, Jean Davies and Elaine M. Aoki. *The White Swan Express: A Story about Adoption*. Illustrated by Meilo So. Clarion, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-618-16453-7, \$16.00)

On one side of the world, it's a special day for a couple in Miami, a couple near Seattle, another in Toronto, and a woman in Minnetonka, Minnesota. They are leaving for China, to meet the little girls who will become their daughters. On the other side of the world, four little girls in an orphanage in Guangzhou, China, don't know it, but their special day is coming soon. Fine storytelling is at the heart of this singular book that follows the journey of the parents-to-be to China, and the lives of the little girls whom they can't wait to meet. The authors have worked in myriad details about the preparations and journey of the adults that children will find fascinating. At the same time, they create a sense of each of the four little girls as unique individuals as the story moves back and forth from the adults traveling east to the children they will meet. The emotions are always genuine in this heartfelt story in which the telling never strays to sweetness. The title of the book comes from the White Swan Hotel, where many adoptive parents stay when they are in China. The adoptive parents in this story include a middle-aged man and woman, a lesbian couple, a young Japanese Canadian man and woman, and a single woman. *Highly Commended, 2003 Charlotte Zolotow Award* (Ages 4-7)

Pallotta, Jerry. *The Skull Alphabet Book*. Illustrated by Ralph Masiello. Charlesbridge, 2002. 32 pages (lib. 0-88106-914-0, \$16.95; pbk. 0-88106-915-9)

There's nothing predictable about this alphabet book other than the order of the letters themselves. B follows A, G follows F, and so on. But X is for armadillo, and the reason why is the only thing that's readily explained in this book full of riddles about the animal skull pictured for each letter from A to Z. "Every skull tells a story. Be a detective," invites author Jerry Pallotta. "Why would a cow be on the J page?...H is for . . . Here is the only creature on the earth that can read this book!" The answers for each letter take a little detective work, too. They can be found in small type on a double-page spread near the book's end. One other puzzling aspect to the book is the incorporation of U.S. presidential portraits into Ralph Masiello's illustrations. While a bit of a stretch conceptually (granted, they are heads), they won't distract from the overall appeal of the volume, and for kids who just can't get enough of brain-teasers, they may actually add an inviting dimension. (Ages 7-10)

Parker, Marjorie Blain. *Jasper's Day*. Illustrated by Janet Wilson. Kids Can Press, 2002. 32 pages (trade 1-55074-957-9, \$15.95)

A young boy describes the final day of his dog's life, a day his family has proclaimed Jasper's Day. Their aging, beloved pet has cancer, and they have decided to end his suffering. But first, they spend a day doing many of the things Jasper has loved over the years. Then the boy and his mother wait at home while their father takes Jasper to the vet. When he returns, the family buries Jasper in their yard. "Today *was* the hardest day of my life," the boy says. "But I'm glad we celebrated Jaspers Day. Because it was a good day, too." Marjorie Blain Parker's sensitive, realistic story about the illness and death of a pet addresses the topic with emotional honesty. The story is illustrated in full-color art done in chalk pastels. (Ages 4-8)

Pérez, L. King. *First Day in Grapes*. Illustrated by Robert Casilla. Lee & Low, 2002. 32 pages (trade 1-58430-045-0, \$16.95)

Moving from one migrant camp to another as his parents follow the crops throughout California, Chico has started at new schools many times. Yet it never gets any easier being the new kid. At the start of third grade, Chico is dreading another first day once again. Even getting on the bus is scary when the driver greets him gruffly. But his new school turns out to have Ms. Andrews, a teacher who makes Chico feel welcome and who quickly recognizes and praises his math abilities. When two kids start to tease and verbally bully Chico, he understands for the first time the meaning behind his mother's simple act of having him stand tall at the start of the day. She is telling him to be proud and have courage. He is able to draw upon his math skills, not his fists, to stand up to the boys in a hopeful story that will resonate with many children. (Ages 5-8)

Potter, Giselle. *The Year I Didn't Go to School*. An Anne Schwartz Book / Atheneum, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-689-84730-0, \$16.95)

Artist Giselle Potter first appeared on the children's book illustration scene in the late 1990s, and her lively, quirky, distinctive style became immediately recognizable. Now,

she gives children a glimpse into the childhood that no doubt helped foster her development as an artist in *The Year I Didn't Go To School*, an autobiographical picture book chronicling the year that seven-year-old Giselle and her younger sister, Chloë (also an artist today), performed as part of their parents puppet theater company throughout Italy. The Mystic Paper Beasts traveled in and lived out of an old wooden carnival truck. Giselle and Chloë were part of each performance in theaters and on street corners. From a run-in with dour police to helpful nuns who pushed when the truck got stuck between two buildings in a narrow street, it was one adventure after another throughout the year. At the heart of it all was their family: two artistic and creative parents who fostered two artistic and creative little girls. In a brief author's note Potter provides additional context for her extraordinary year abroad, and also reveals that the lively, childish drawings on the endpapers of this engaging volume are excerpts from the journal she kept throughout her year in Italy as a child. (Ages 5-8)

Smith, Lane. *Pinocchio, the Boy: Incognito in Collodi*. Viking, 2002. 40 pages (trade 0-670-03585-8, \$16.99)

Pinocchio became a real boy, and they all lived happily ever after ... right? Wrong. Innovator Lane Smith picks up Pinocchio's tale where author Carlo Collodi left off, and inserts a critical plot twist: Pinocchio doesn't *realize* he's a boy because the "nutty fairy had changed him while he was asleep." Geppetto is confined to his bed with the ill effects of internal whale travel, and Pinocchio helpfully sets off to town in search of medicinal chicken soup. In an attempt to earn money for the soup, Pinocchio tries a shtick that worked for him in the past, dancing as a marionette puppet in the theater, and is bewildered when the audience throws him off the stage. A stint as a department store mannequin fails as well. To add insult to injury, his Cricket, so very helpful in past moments of crisis, doesn't recognize the new human version of his old friend. A chance encounter with a bossy girl earns him a street-savvy friend, who tags after him, openly commenting on Pinocchio's far-fetched stories ("Talking bugs? A long nose? . . . What will you think of next?"). Just when he's at his lowest, Pinocchio catches sight of Geppetto, broadcast live on a big-screen TV in the city center, talking to a reporter about his son's disappearance ("he's about so high ... red cap ... red boots ...") and begging Pinocchio to come home. All the story lines are neatly tied together as Pinocchio finally discovers his fleshly self, and his new friend is revealed as the daughter of the well-intentioned but blundering Blue Fairy. The wintry mixed-media illustrations, perfected in a retro style, ideally complement this comic take on a familiar melodrama. (Ages 6-10)

Stevenson, James. *The Castaway*. Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-688-16965-1, \$15.95; lib. 0-688-16966-X)

When he accompanies his family to see the movie "The Island of No Return" Hubie gets scared, just as his older brother predicted. So the young mouse is hardly thrilled when his family decides to take a vacation to a real island. But being the youngest means Hubie is often at the fate of decisions made by others. Island of Barabooda-bound, Hubie finds



himself on a dirigible (this *is* 1937) when his penchant for picture-taking leads to an unexpected journey: out an emergency exit and onto an almost-deserted tropical island (with the help of a passing pelican). Although easily scared, young Hubie has always stood tall in the face of a challenge, as readers of Stevenson's earlier picture books featuring the adventure-prone mouse know. As with those earlier titles (*All Aboard*, 1995; *The Seaview Hotel*, 1978; and *The Stowaway*, 1990), author/artist James Stevenson uses an energetic, comic-book style well-suited to the offbeat, comic absurdity of his story. (Ages 5-9)

Thoreau, Henry David. *Henry David's House*. Edited by Steven Schnur. Illustrated by Peter Fiore. Charlesbridge, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-88106-116-6, \$16.95)

With words taken from Thoreau's own journal, this quiet and observant picture book offers young readers the natural world as Thoreau experienced it—acutely. Steven Schnur has chosen entries from Thoreau's journals in which he describes building his house on Walden Pond, and then a sampling of what he saw there through the seasons. "We can never have enough of Nature," Thoreau stated. That sentiment concludes this picture book illustrated with serene, full-page watercolor paintings. (Ages 7-10)

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Visiting Day*. Illustrated by James E. Ransome. Scholastic Press, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-590-40005-3, \$15.95)

A young African American girl describes the one day a month when she and her grandma go to visit her daddy, who is in prison. *Visiting Day* has the feel of something special from the moment the girl awakens. She imagines her daddy getting ready to see her, and smells of fried chicken come from the kitchen, where her grandma is making food to share on the bus trip. But there are moments of sadness, too: a neighbor too poor to afford the bus fare stops by with gifts for her son; and the girl's joy at an afternoon spent on her daddy's lap is replaced by a missing-daddy feeling that begins on the trip back home. Jacqueline Woodson's text is accompanied by James Ransome's affecting illustrations, in which he captures a multitude of feelings and expressions that often speak as clearly as the author's fine words. Both the author and the artist contributed personal notes to this story that will deepen its resonance for young readers and listeners, some of whom may choose to share some stories of their own. (Ages 5-9)

**See also:** *Abraham Lincoln; Action Jackson; Animals in the Ark; Apple Pie 4th of July; Barn Raising; Crowning Glory; Danitra Brown Leaves Town; Duck on a Bike; Ella Fitzgerald; Emily Dickinson's Letters to the World; Farfallina & Marcel; Fireboat; First Thing My Mama Told Me; Frida; Hey You! C'Mere; House In the Mail; John Coltrane's Giant Steps; Library for Juana; Madlenka's Dog; Manneken Pis; Minerva Louise and the Red Truck; Noah's Ark (Pinkney); Noah's Ark (Wilson); Pot That Juan Built; Puss in Boots; Scrimshaw Ring; Spooky A B C; Togo; What about Me?; What Charlie Heard; Wolf Who Cried Boy; World Team*

### **Books for Beginning and Newly Independent Readers**

Edwards, Michelle. *The Talent Show*. (A Jackson Friends Book) Harcourt, 2002. 56 pages (trade 0-15-216403-0, \$14.00)

A chapter book for newly independent readers features a young African American girl who can't wait to perform in her school's talent show. Howie has practiced her song, her grandmother has made her a special dress, and she has sparkly barrettes to wear in her hair. But at the all-school assembly that is serving as a practice run for the show, she freezes in front of the audience. Not even when her two best friends, Pa Lia and Calliope, hold her hands is she able to get a word or a note out. Howie's understanding grandmother takes her home and offers her comfort. Most important, she lets Howie realize on her own that she and she alone must decide whether to try again at the show that night. This is the third Jackson Friends book by Michelle Edwards. The first story, *Pa Lia's First Day* (Harcourt, 1999), features Pa Lia, who is Hmong. The second title, *Zero Grandparents* (Harcourt, 2001), has Calliope, who is white, as its protagonist. (Ages 5-8)

Fine, Anne. *The Jamie and Angus Stories*. Illustrated by Penny Dale. Candlewick Press, 2002. 108 pages (trade 0-7636-1862-4, \$15.99)

It is love at first sight when Jamie glimpses Angus "staring forlornly" out of a store window. Jamie, a preschooler, convinces his mother that Angus, a toy bull, should be purchased for his Christmas gift, even though the holiday is months away. His mother capitulates, but warns him that Angus must wait on the closet shelf until Christmas Day arrives. The anticipation endures for months, while Jamie patiently prepares a farm for Angus to live on, constructed realistically out of sewing scraps, Popsicle sticks, and painted cardboard tubes. Christmas morning arrives at last, and Angus is installed as Jamie's companion and confidant. Six chapters chronicle Jamie and Angus's adventures together, all created from credible aspects of a preschooler's world including a visit from a favorite uncle, a near-disaster when the dry-clean only toy is tossed in the washing machine, and the wedding of a beloved babysitter. Jamie is a likable child without being overly precious, and his relationship with Angus is one that will feel familiar to anyone whose cherished toy has attained family member status. Frequent pencil illustrations add visual interest to a book perfectly suited for bedtime reading-aloud. (Ages 4-7)

Guest, Elissa Haden. *Iris and Walter: The Sleepover*. Illustrated by Christine Davenier. Gulliver Books / Harcourt, 2002. 44 pages (trade 0-15-216487-1, \$14.00)

The first sleepover at a friend's house is a milestone event for many children. Bubbling in anticipation, Iris and Walter plan a sleepover night. It isn't until a classmate confides that he doesn't like sleepovers, because he gets homesick, that Iris begins to worry about her ability to cope with this new experience. However, she sets off gamely for the big event, and has a great time. Then comes bedtime, when the loss of her comfort zone of home hits hard. Walter's parents understandingly drive her home, where she finds her entire family surprisingly unchanged, despite her step toward independence. This

familiar scenario is presented in four short chapters, aptly suited in both content and format to its intended audience. (Aged 5-8)

Martin, David. *Piggy and Dad Play*. Illustrated by Frank Remkiewicz. (Brand New Readers) Candlewick Press, 2002. Four 8-page booklets in a case (trade 0-7636-1333-9, \$4.99)

Candlewick's marvelous "Brand New Readers" series debuted in 2000. The latest entry is four short stories collectively titled *Piggy and Dad Play*. Each short, east-to-read entry ends with a droll twist -- the equivalent of a punchline in a joke. Despite the simplicity of the text, there is a definite beginning, middle, and end to each and every piece, and the impact of the final line leaves young readers feeling more than satisfied. Simple, full-page illustrations assist emergent readers with visual clues. Here, the four small paperback books are packaged together in one cardboard slipcover. There are also hardcover entries in the series that have the separate stories bound in a single small book. Nineteen titles currently appear on the publisher's web site ([www.candlewick.com](http://www.candlewick.com)) as part of the series. They are by various authors, and feature diverse children as well as animal characters as their protagonists. (Ages 3-7)

Lottridge, Celia Barker. *Berta: A Remarkable Dog*. Illustrated by Elsa Myotte. A Groundwood Book / Douglas & McIntyre, 2002. 99 pages (trade 0-88899-461-3, \$14.95; pbk. 0-88899-469-9, \$4.95)

Only Berta's family -- nine-year-old Marjory Miller and her parents -- know what a truly remarkable dog she is. To the outside world, she seems like a perfectly ordinary, slightly lazy dachshund. Even Marjory acknowledges that Berta's favorite pastimes are "eating and sleeping and, if necessary, taking short walks." But one spring Berta develops a sudden interest in baby farm animals. She tries her hand at mothering baby chicks and a neighbor's newborn kitten, none of whom particularly need or want Berta for a mother. Patrick the lamb, however, is another story. Rejected by his own mother, he needs special care and Berta is equal to the task. Episodic chapters and a gentle, humorous tone make this short novel perfect for newly independent readers. Like Marjory, they will come to see exactly what makes Berta remarkable: her ordinary dogginess. (Ages 5-9)

McDonald, Megan. *Judy Moody Saves the World!* Illustrated by Peter Reynolds. Candlewick Press, 2002. 144 pages (trade 0-7636-1446-7, \$15.99)

Studying the environment in her third-grade class has inspired Judy Moody to make the world a better place. Never one to tackle any commitment lightly, Judy is driving everyone around her crazy with her earth-friendly attitude. She tries prohibiting her family from using anything made with rain forest materials, but gum, chocolate, and coffee are too much for them to give up. Inspired by Julia Butterfly Hill, the woman who lived in an ancient redwood to protect it from foresters, Judy dubs herself "Judy Monarch Moody" and tries taking up residence in her tree house to draw attention to the plight of all trees. Her enthusiasm is finally directed into a manageable campaign, and Judy leads her class in a massive recycling drive that raises money to plant trees in the Costa Rican

rain forest. Occasional black-and-white illustrations appear throughout the narrative of the third great read-aloud chapter book featuring Megan McDonald's irrepressible young hero. (Ages 6-9)

Rylant, Cynthia. *Henry and Mudge and the Tall Tree House: The Twenty-First Book of Their Adventures*. Illustrated by Carolyn Bracken. (The Henry and Mudge Books) Simon & Schuster, 2002. 40 pages (trade 0-689-81173-X, \$14.95)

Uncle Jake arrives at Henry's home with a truckload of boards in his pickup truck. Armed with a toolbox and an instructional pamphlet, he announces that he is about to provide adventure, in the form of a tree house. Henry is thrilled with the idea of a tree house, until he realizes their fatal flaw: Mudge can't climb trees, so Henry will not be able to share the adventure with his dog. Henry begins to worry, as an oblivious Uncle Jake completes construction in just two hours. Despite a gallant effort, Henry can't enjoy the tree house, and his frequent trips into his real house because he "forgot something" soon tip the adults off that all is not well. An innovative solution is at hand and the final chapter of this easy reader. (Ages 5-7)

Smith, Cynthia Leitich. *Indian Shoes*. Illustrated by Jim Madsen. HarperCollins, 2002. 66 pages (trade 0-06-029531-7, \$15.95; lib. 0-06-029532-5)

Cynthia Leitich Smith's books feature contemporary American Indian characters, something that is far too rare in publishing today. Her picture book *Jingle Dancer*, featuring a young Muscogee/Obiway girl, was published in 2000, and last year saw the release of her young adult novel *Rain Is Not My Indian Name*, about a mixed race teenager who is part Creek, Cherokee, and Obiway. Now Smith, who is an enrolled member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, has written an interconnected collection of short stories that reads like a chapter book and is perfect for newly independent readers. *Indian Shoes* features a young boy named Ray Halfmoon, who lives with his grandpa in Chicago. Each chapter of this appealing, accessible volume places the two in a believable situation drawn from everyday life. In the title story, Ray hopes to buy Grandpa a pair of Indian moccasins he finds in an antique shop, but he can't beat the price offered by another customer. When he overhears the customer ask if the shoes were "worn by a real Indian" Ray comes up with a delightful and surprising offer that the customer can't refuse. When Ray and his Grandpa can't go back to Oklahoma for Christmas they spend the holiday pet sitting for all of their neighbors, turning their loneliness into an adventure when the power goes out. Smith has adroitly woven cultural details about her characters' Seminole-Cherokee heritage into the stories, and uses colloquial language to further enhance this fine collection of brief contemporary fiction. (Ages 6-9)

**See also:** *Blackberries in the Dark; Seasons; What a Year*

**Fiction for Children**

Banks, Kate. *Dillon Dillon*. Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2002. 150 pages (trade 0-374-31786-0, \$16.00)

Young Dillon has wondered but never inquired why he has the same first and last names. Like most children who simply know without ever asking that they're unconditionally loved within their family, Dillon has lived from year to year on assumptions he's never thought to question. It occurs to him to wonder out loud about his name during the family observance of his birthday. Along with shocking new information about himself, Dillon receives wonderful birthday gifts. He uses one of these, a red rowboat, to travel to a nearby island, where this curious boy discovers a pair of nesting loons. He's unable to "shake the feeling that something was happening to him. Something deep within, undetectable to the naked eye." Banks has the rare gift of writing about a child's thoughts while at the same time creating memorable characters, interspersing sly humor, and staging a devastatingly tragic event. Her slim novel is so easy for children to read that it's startling to realize how seamlessly she's interlaced depths of meaning within Dillon's story. Every word matters. Every chapter offers multiple insights undetectable at first, just below the surface. Everything comes full circle, kind of like a boomerang. With this startling, sensitive, lyrical first novel, Kate Banks extends her reputation as one of today's finest writers for children. (Ages 8-11)

Clinton, Cathryn. *A Stone in My Hand*. Candlewick Press, 2002. 191 pages (trade 0-7636-1388-6, \$15.99)

Set in the Middle East in 1988, eleven-year-old Malaak's story centers around the disappearance of her father, who left to find work in Gaza City a month ago, and has not returned home. As Malaak closes down, turning inward with her worry and grief, her brother Hamid finds comfort in action, and joins the Islamic Jihad against the wishes of his mother and sisters. Meanwhile, although the family attempts to maintain some level of normality in their daily lives, they are under constant strain. Soldiers patrol the neighborhood, schools are closed, curfews imposed, and children throwing stones may provoke gunfire in retaliation. Malaak's story contains no easy answers, but offers compassionate insight into individual lives impacted hugely and constantly by the conflict that surrounds them. (Ages 10-14)

Danticat, Edwidge. *Behind the Mountains*. Orchard / Scholastic Inc., 2002. 166 pages (trade 0-439-37299-2, \$16.95)

Celiane, her mother and older brother, Moy, are living in Haiti while her father is in Brooklyn, New York. During the violent presidential elections in Haiti in the year 2000, both Celiane and her mother are injured in a bomb explosion. The family decides the time has come to be reunited. Celiane is sad to be leaving her beautiful country and relatives, but so eager to see Papa. Her joy fades quickly, however, overwhelmed by the changes in her life. Her new middle school in Brooklyn is huge. When she gets lost the first time she tries to get back to their apartment on her own, she feels she's failed her Papa. At home, her father and brother begin arguing—Moy wants to pursue art, while Papa wants

him to attend the university once he learns enough English. Even her parents, who had missed each other so much, are fighting. Their 2-bedroom apartment seems so very small in the midst of it all. Edwidge Danticat's first book for young reader's is written as journal entries in Celiane's sensitive, first-person voice. It's a swiftly paced novel grounded in details that lend weight and realism to Celiane's situation as she chronicles the events in her life, which unfold to reveal both pleasures and disappointments and, ultimately, a future she looks toward with hope. Danticat briefly recounts her own story of coming to the United States from Haiti as a child in an afterword. (Ages 11-14)

Davies, Jacqueline. *Where the Ground Meets the Sky*. Marshall Cavendish, 2002. 224 pages (trade 0-7614-5105-6, \$14.95)

First-time novelist Jacqueline Davies has written a work of fiction set in Los Alamos, New Mexico, at the time the nuclear bomb was being developed. Twelve-year-old Hazel moves to the nameless community called "The Hill" with her parents in 1944. Her dad is joining the dozens of scientists at work on the secret government project in the laboratory there—a project that could bring the war to an end. Hazel sees her family's move as the opportunity to reinvent herself. She's always been the smart one in her school back east, and not very popular because of it. Now, she's determined to be nothing but normal. Her first day on The Hill, she meets Eleanor, and the two establish an immediate friendship. Soon Hazel is caught up in the routine of school and play in the burgeoning, thrown-together town. Like other children at Los Alamos, she has learned not to ask about the work at the lab. But even though Hazel doesn't know what her dad is working on, she can tell by the conversations she overhears that it's important—and controversial. Inspired after reading oral histories of adults who were living as children in Los Alamos during World War II, author Davies has woven a an engaging story based on factual events and embellished by her imagination. If she has occasionally pushed the limits of imaginative license (it is questionable whether Hazel and her mother would have really been able to sneak off The Hill and witness the first test of the nuclear bomb from a distance, or that Hazel would have eventually been able to figure out what the work at the lab was all about), and not given other issues their full due (racism and classism on The Hill were much more prevalent that suggested here) she has nonetheless created a compelling work of fiction that invites discussion of larger ethical issues. (Ages 11-14)

Doyle, Brian. *Mary Ann Alice*. A Groundwood Book / Douglas & McIntyre, 2002. 166 pages (trade 0-88899-453-2, \$15.95; pbk. 0-88899-454-0)

Twelve-year-old Mary Ann Alice McCrank is an aspiring poet who is waiting for just the right moment for her first kiss, with Mickey McGuire, Jr. In the meantime, life in her small Quebec town of Low in the 1920s is about to change forever. A power company and the government are building a dam that will flood much of the farmland and destroy some family's homes. And they have no plan to compensate the families if they can avoid it. "It's the beginning of the end!" cries store owner Mr. McLaughlan when the blasting starts, and in some ways it is. Mary Ann Alice sees a whole town go up near the dam site in two weeks. Among the many workers are boys from her school, and men from across

eastern Canada. Her beloved teacher, Patchy Drizzle, who has shared his love of rocks and fossils and with Mary Ann Alice, works as a consultant on the geology of their valley. And Mary Ann Alice herself serves food in one of three great mess halls for the workers. Brian Doyle's story is told from the point of view of a bright, funny, spirited girl who is both witness to and participant in a period of great change in her community, and great change in individual lives. It features a deft blend of character-driven and situational humor, straight-from-the-heart honesty ("My mother never tells me that I'm beautiful. She says it's what's in your heart and in your head that counts and all the rest is nonsense."), and poignant truths about human frailty and resilience. The people of Low are powerless to stop the forces of the government and corporate interests. But the people of Low—memorable, quirky, moving—are survivors, too, as readers of this lively novel set in the same small town as *Up to Low* and *Uncle Ronald*, two of Doyle's previous novels, will discover. (Ages 10-14)

Ellis, Deborah. *Parvana's Journey*. A Groundwood Book / Douglas & McIntyre, 2002. 199 pages (trade 0-88899-514-8, \$15.95, pbk. 0-88899-519-9)

"All my girls are smart," Parvana's father used to tell her. "You will grow into strong, brave women and you will rebuild our poor Afghanistan." Now 13, Parvana has just buried her father. Separated from her mother and siblings in war-ravaged Afghanistan, where the Taliban still rules, she travels by foot across the country, holding out hope that she will find them again. When Parvana finds a baby in an abandoned, burned out village, she cannot leave him behind. She trades the burden of her father's beloved books for the weight of the boy she names Hassan. Soon, Asif, a prickly, wounded boy who has lost a leg, has joined them, and then they meet Leila, a spirited, nine-year-old girl who wears her wounds in the way she moves through the world, touched by the belief she cannot be killed by land mines. This foursome takes refuge in the valley where Leila has been living with her aging grandmother. The Green Valley, Parvana calls it, using the name she had given to the place of ideal refuge she had created in her daydreams. But the Green Valley isn't a dream, it's part of the real world, where the war eventually finds them once again. Deborah Ellis's sequel to her 2001 novel *The Breadwinner* (Groundwood) is an important and moving book that humanizes the headlines, distilling for young readers a conflict and recent history that can sometimes seem incomprehensible to a story about children they can know and understand, children like them. While the accomplishments of Parvana and her companions may seem occasionally unrealistic (could a starving 13-year-old girl really carry a heavy baby for so long and so far?), their situation is compelling and their interactions feel authentic (the relationship between Parvana and Asif is especially satisfying). And despite the tragedy of their situation, Ellis manages to tell their story without overwhelming young readers. (Ages 10-14)

Ellsworth, Loretta. *The Shrouding Woman*. Henry Holt, 2002. 151 pages (trade 0-8050-6651-9, \$16.95)

During pioneer days, before the advent of funeral homes, a "shrouding woman" was often called upon to prepare a dead body for burial. Mae's Aunt Flo is just such a woman, and Mae, still reeling from the recent death of her mother, is horrified by both Aunt Flo's profession and her arrival in their home, usurping her mother's role.

Compassionate Aunt Flo understands Mae's misery and patiently waits for Mae to accept her presence, while Mae's little sister welcomes her aunt's affection. Despite her initial repugnance, Mae becomes intrigued by the shrouding process, and is especially curious about the mysterious wooden box that Flo takes with her to a death. As time and events pass, Mae slowly comes to accept Aunt Flo, and respect her ability to comfort bereaved families with her shrouding skills, even discovering that she, too, may have a natural gift for this work. The novel's quiet tone weaves realistic details of prairie life into a message about the inevitability of life and death. (Ages 10-14)

Farmer, Nancy. *The House of the Scorpion*. A Richard Jackson Book / Atheneum, 2002. 380 pages (trade 0-689-85222-3, \$17.95)

There is much for older children, teens, and adult to think about and discuss after they read Nancy Farmer's disturbingly believable imaginings of life 100 years from now. Young Matt lives in Opium, a small country tucked between the United States and Aztlan (known today as Mexico) where drugs are the sole product, exported around the world to great economic profit for Opium's leader, El Patron (not to mention the two neighboring governments). When he is six, Matt discovers he is the clone of the 130-year old El Patron. Clones are considered subhuman creatures, and the only reason Matt has not been subjected to a life of torture and inhuman treatment is that El Patron insists his clone be treated with the same respect he himself is due. As he grows, Matt begins to learn how Opium functions -- how people who are captured trying to cross the border -- human traffic between Aztlan and the United States now runs in both directions as people seek a better life -- are implanted with a microchip that turns them into ijits, mindless automatons who work the opium fields until they literally drop dead. He sees how El Patron leads with a cold heart and iron fist, but feels a confused kind of love for the old man with whom he shares the closest imaginable physical bond. But under the guidance of Celia, the older woman who has cared for Matt since he was a baby, and Tam Lin, one of El Patron's body guards who has been assigned to help protect the him, and with the help of Maria, the young daughter of a U.S. senator who often visits El Patron and his family, Matt begins to realize that even though he IS El Patron, he has the free will to choose the kind of person he will be. Whether he will ever get to execute that free will becomes a chilling question when Matt discovers he is not being groomed to take over the leadership of Opium as he thought. All the care and education that El Patron ordered for Matt was nothing more than the old man creating the childhood he never had. Matt's fate will be the same as the eight El Patron clones that came before him -- provide the old man's failing body with organs to survive. A finely crafted work of science fiction that is unsettling, provocative, and hard to put down. *Winner, CCBC Printz Award Discussion; Honor Book, CCBC Newbery Award Discussion* (Age 11 and older)

Gaiman, Neil. *Coraline*. Illustrated by Dave McKean. HarperCollins, 2002. 162 pages (trade 0-380-97778-8, \$15.99; lib. 0-06-623744-0)

Some teens will be familiar with Neil Gaiman's work as creator of the *Sandman* graphic novels. *Coraline* is Gaiman's first novel written specifically for older children and young



teens, and it's deliciously scary, perfect for those who like spine-tingling reading. The novel is about Coraline, who finds a mysterious passageway in her new home that leads to another flat strikingly like her own, right down to the furniture in the rooms and the pictures on the walls. There is also a mother and father there—and they look and sound a lot like Coraline's own parents, with the exception of their pale skin and button eyes. And unlike her real parents, Coraline's "other" mother and father, as they call themselves, seem eager to spend time with her. Too eager. When they show Coraline the pair of black buttons they've been saving just for her, she swiftly retreats to the safety of her real home, only to find her real parents are missing. They've been taken prisoner by her "other" mother to lure Coraline back to that frightening place. Coraline goes, uncertain of her bravery but sure in her determination to get her parents back. Gaiman's eery, edgy story features a world that is an empty, chilling mockery of Coraline's real life, and one frightening turn of events after the other. But that world—and the story—is warmed and tempered by the courage and heart of its hero. Illustrator David McKean has worked with Gaiman on some of the *Sandman* titles and other ventures. In *Coraline*, his occasional black-and-white illustrations enhance the story's gothic feel, while his cover image will help attract readers who like to be scared while deterring those who don't. (Ages 10-14)

Gantos, Jack. *What Would Joey Do?* Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2002. 229 pages (trade 0-374-39986-7, \$16.00)

In Jack Gantos's third novel about Joey Pigza, the ten-year-old's life is as chaotic as ever. But it's not Joey's ADHD that's the problem this time. It's his parents. Joey's taking his medication and his behavior is on an even keel, but his mom and dad are tangling again and again. His mom has a new boyfriend, and his dad's back in town trying, it seems, to make her regret ever leaving him. Instead, his childish behavior brings out the worst in Joey's mom. Joey's brash and ailing grandmother knows no good can come from any of it. She wants Joey to have a different outlook on life than his family alone can provide and encourages him to make a friend. It seems an unlikely prospect. The only kid Joey has contact with since his Mom decided he should be homeschooled is Olivia Lapp. Olivia's mom teaches both Joey and Olivia, who is blind. Each day, Mrs. Lapp greets Joey at the door by asking him "What would Jesus do?" And each day Joey provides an unexpected yet thoughtful response. Joey can't imagine making friends with Olivia, who is mean-spirited and selfish. But there is more to Olivia, to her mother, and, as always, to Joey himself than meets the eye in this funny, sensitive, provocative story that includes an extraordinary scene when Joey wakes one morning to find his grandmother has died in her bed. It is one of many quiet, touching moments in the midst of the turmoil that so often surrounds Joey, and in it, as always, his goodness shines. (Ages 10-14)

Giff, Patricia Reilly. *Pictures of Hollis Woods*. Wendy Lamb Books / Random House, 2002. 166 pages (trade 0-385-32655-6, \$15.95; lib. 0-385-90070-8)

When she was six, Hollis Woods's teacher asked her class to draw a picture of something that began with the letter "W." Orphaned Hollis drew her ideal family: a mother, a father,

and two children. "I don't see one 'W' word here," said her teacher. But Hollis had been thinking of "wish," and "want" and "Wouldn't it be lovely." Now a teenager, Hollis has become an expert at running away from foster homes. Her latest placement is with Josie, a retired art teacher, and Hollis, an artist herself, senses kinship with this distinctive woman. But Hollis can't forget about the family with whom she spent the previous summer. The Old Man, Izzy and Steven were Hollis's childhood picture come to life, and she, a daughter, made it complete. But things had fallen apart, as they always did, and Hollis ran again. In a story that alternates between Hollis's first-person, present-day voice, and her descriptions of drawings she made throughout that idyllic summer, Hollis mourns what she has lost even as she is fiercely determined to hang on to what she now has: the love of an aging woman whose memory is beginning to fail. Patricia Reilly Giff's novel about a girl learning what it means to be part of a family is lyrically written and movingly told, grounded in the honest voice of a perceptive young woman who can beautifully capture the people around her in her drawings, but who doesn't always see the more fundamental truths about love and family that are revealed in each and every picture she creates. (Ages 10-14)

Hiaasen, Carl. *Hoot*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002. 292 pages (trade 0-375-82181-3, \$15.95; lib. 0-375-92181-8)

Best-selling author for adults Carl Hiaasen has taken his distinctive over-the-top portrayal of south Florida's petty criminal low-life to a new and younger audience. Hiaasen strikes just the right tone in this story of middle-schoolers fighting big business to preserve a habitat for burrowing owls. The construction site for a new Mother Paula's All-American Pancake House appears to be just another vacant lot, but a renegade adolescent known as Mullet Fingers recognizes that the area harbors underground dens for burrowing owls, which will be destroyed by development. He single-handedly attempts to sabotage the site by pulling up survey stakes, putting alligators in the port-a-potties, and letting loose a posse of cottonmouth snakes (albeit with their mouths taped shut) to delay work. He's joined in his crusade by a recent newcomer to Florida, a lonely teenager named Roy, and Mullet Finger's no-nonsense, soccer-playing sister Beatrice. Together they conspire to protect the owls, both by creatively disrupting construction and by raising awareness of Mother Paula's under-handed attempt to bypass a required Environmental Impact Study. Although Mullet Finger's acts of vandalism are illegal, his intentions are undeniably sterling, and readers cannot help but cheer him on. The kids are clever, the dialogue is witty, and almost all of the adults (with the notable exception of Chuck Muckle, Mother Paula's sleazy company V.P.) turn out to have at least one redeeming quality. Chuck Muckle and a few minor local officials are unmasked as money-grubbing villains, and the owls are saved, in a humorous and satisfying conclusion. (Ages 11-15)

McKay, Hilary. *Saffy's Angel*. U.S. edition: Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2002. 152 pages (trade 0-689-84933-8, \$16.00)

All of the Casson children have paint color names, given to them by their artist mother: Cadmium, Saffron, Indigo, and Rose. Their names, and their close bond with each other,

add to the confusion and isolation Saffy (Saffron) feels when she discovers that she is adopted, and that the others are actually her cousins rather than siblings. When Saffy was three, her mother died in a car crash, and she was brought by her Grandfather to live with the Cassons. Saffy pulls away from the family as she tries to come to terms with her muddled emotions, and embarks on a quest to find a stone angel, a bequest from her Grandfather. Sarah, a new friend of Saffy's and an unstoppable force, determines that the two girls will search for the angel at Saffy's mother's last residence. Doing so necessitates a trip to Siena, but Sarah is up to the challenge and soon Saffy is a stowaway as Sarah's family embarks on an excursion to Italy. Although the plot borders on preposterous, the memorable characters in this unique and chaotic family, the excellent dialogue, and the laugh-out-loud humor conspire to create a thoroughly enjoyable book. Several entertaining sub-plots and distinctive secondary characters add to this masterfully orchestrated exploration of the definition of family. (Ages 9-13)

Park, Linda Sue. *When My Name Was Keoko*. Clarion, 2002. 199 pages (trade 0-618-13335-6, \$16.00)

Growing up in occupied Korea during World War Two, Kim Sun-hee is ten years old when she learns that she and her family, like all Koreans, must take new Japanese names. Overnight she becomes Kaneyama Keoko and her 13-year-old brother, Tae-yul, becomes Nobuo. This is just the latest in a long string of new laws aimed at suppressing Korean culture. Already Sun-hee has excelled in Japanese at school where speaking, writing, and reading Korean is forbidden, to such an extent that she is sometimes called *chin-il-pa* (lover of Japan). Spanning the years between 1940 and 1945, the story unfolds in the alternating points of view of Sun-hee and Tae-yul, who respond quite differently to the same events. Whereas Tae-Yul wants to follow in the footsteps of their politically subversive uncle who works for the underground, Sun-Hee tries to follow the example set by her scholarly father, quietly subversive in his own right as he struggles to maintain a Korean identity for his family. *Winner, CCBC Newbery Award Discussion; Honor Book, CCBC Printz Award Discussion* (Ages 11-14)

Paterson, Katherine. *The Same Stuff as Stars*. Clarion, 2002. 242 pages (trade 0-618-24744-0, \$15.00)

With her daddy in jail and her Verna, her mother, unpredictable and unreliable, it's eleven-year-old Angel who's learned to be the responsible one in her family. When Verna leaves Angel and Bernie, with Grandma, whom Angel barely remembers, Angel tries to convince herself her mother will be back. Grandma is poor—even poorer than Angel and Bernie and Verna had been. In her cupboard are peaches and beans. That's all. And Grandma is clearly not thrilled at Angel and Bernie's presence. Angel is angry at Verna one moment, and heartbroken the next at the thought that she's been abandoned. Her only solace comes in looking at the stars. And it is in Grandma's yard on a dark, clear night that she meets the star man, whose telescope, and whose knowledge of stars, opens Angel's eyes and mind to the possibilities of the universe. The star man's mysterious presence—he lives in a trailer in Grandma's yard but she never sees him by

day—is the first of many discoveries that Angel makes. At the library there is the elderly Miss Liza, who feeds Angel’s hunger for information about the stars with books, and introduces Bernie to the delight that reading can be. At home there is Grandma, gruff and blunt, unsure of how to love, incapable of caring for Angel and Bernie, but gradually proving herself willing to try. And there is the real identity of the star man and why he is so reclusive, a truth that reaches into family history so clouded by pain and regret that Angel can only wonder at the ways in which people hurt one another without trying. Katherine Paterson’s finely told story offers literary richness and a resilient young protagonist. *Honor Book, CCBC Newbery Award Discussion* (Ages 10-14)

Rodda, Emily. *Rowan and the Keeper of the Crystal*. U.S. edition: Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2002. 197 pages (trade 0-06-029776-X, \$15.95; lib. 0-06-029777-8)

Australian author Emily Rodda has created a fantasy series perfectly suited to newly independent readers in search of literary adventure. First introduced in *Rowan of Rin* (Greenwillow, 2001), quiet Rowan is an underdog hero who discovers unexpected strength of character inside himself when his fellow villagers are in need. In *Rowan and the Keeper of the Crystal*, he must solve a word riddle in order to find an antidote to a poison threatening his mother’s life. Unable to reach a solution on his own, Rowan works to unite two members of competing clans to aid him in his quest. Riddles are also a central theme in *Rowan and the Zebak* (trade 0-06-029778-6, \$15.95; lib. 0-06-029779-4), when the words of a wise woman’s prophesy are the only directions Rowan has as he attempts to rescue his younger sister after she is abducted by a mysterious winged creature. As he undertakes his quest, Rowan is tormented by his feelings of guilt, that he should have prevented his sister’s kidnaping, and by overwhelming responsibility, as he discovers that his entire community is in danger from a monstrous plot. Once again, with the help of a few friends, each of who contribute their own strengths to the task, Rowan successfully completes his quest with an exciting and unpredictable rescue. (Ages 8-11)

Spinelli, Jerry. *Loser*. Joanna Cotler Books / HarperCollins, 2002. 218 pages (trade 0-06-000193-3, \$15.99; lib. 0-06-000483-5)

Donald Zinkoff is so enthusiastic about starting school that he frequently jumps up, pumps his fist in the air, and yells out “Yahoo!” from his seat in the very back row. While his awkward exuberance is seen as rather charming in first grade, by third grade it makes him stand out as different to his classmates and teachers. Zinkoff’s utter lack of social skills and athletic prowess earn him a nickname by fourth grade: Loser. In spite of his loving family and a terrific, understanding fourth grade teacher, the nickname marks him as a social outcast at school, not bullied so much as completely excluded. By the end of fifth grade, he nearly gives into defeat, skipping school to avoid the embarrassment of participating in the races during Field Day. Spinelli’s unflinching portrayal of six years in the life of a kid who’s painfully different offers no easy answers or sugar-coated resolutions. The author’s detached, almost breezy tone, allows readers to see Zinkoff from both the inside and the outside. Sometimes funny, sometimes sad, and always provocative, this original novel is sure to open discussion among upper elementary-

school-aged kids, whether they are like Zinkoff themselves or prone to teasing kids like Zinkoff. (Ages 9-12)

Tolan, Stephanie S. *Surviving the Applewhites*. HarperCollins, 2002. 216 pages (trade 0-06-623602-9, \$15.99; lib. 0-06-623603-7)

Jake Semple is a bad kid. He's been kicked out of one school after another, including one that he is suspected of burning down. In a last ditch attempt, his grandfather places Jake at the "Creative Academy," a home school run by the artistic Applewhite family for their own children. The adult Applewhites maintain a hands-off policy towards their children's education, allowing them to develop their own lessons based on their interests of the moment. Only E.D., twelve years old and the "non-artistic" Applewhite, shows an academic bent, and Jake is directed to tag along on her self-directed, carefully orchestrated curriculum. The two are immediately at odds with one another, but the rest of the Applewhite clan surprise Jake with their tolerance for his radical hair color, multiple facial piercings, and off-color language. The larger-than-life plot includes a color- and gender-blind production of the *Sound of Music*, in which Jake finds his niche playing Rolf. Jake surprises everyone, himself included, with his real musical talent and interest in theater. At the same time, E.D. begins to appreciate her own strengths as she excels in the position of stage manager. The entertaining Applewhite's eccentricities provide a colorful backdrop as two young adolescents begin to travel the path to self-discovery. (Ages 11-14)

Wallace-Brodeur, Ruth. *Blue Eyes Better*. Dutton, 2002. 106 pages (trade 0-525-46836-6, \$15.99)

This insightful treatment of the impact of death on a family is centered on eleven-year-old Tessa, whose older brother, Scott, has died in a drunk driving accident. Tessa's mom begins to withdraw after the tragedy—at first just emotionally, and then literally as she retreats to their summer place alone. As Tessa and her dad carry on at home, Tessa feels anger and resentment at both her brother and her mom, even as she misses them both. She's especially confused when she dwells on the things about Scott she didn't like -- shouldn't she only think good thoughts about him now that he's gone? She finds help and solace from an understanding teacher and an elderly neighbor, and in fits and starts her family begins to heal. There are no huge swings of emotion in this even-handed novel, just quiet grief and gradual emergence. Tessa learns that intense sorrow doesn't dissipate quickly, but with time and honesty, her family has hopes of once again being whole. (Ages 10-14)

Whelan, Gloria. *Fruitlands: Louisa May Alcott Made Perfect*. HarperCollins, 2002. 117 pages (trade 0-06-623815-3, \$15.99; lib. 0-06-623816-1)

Gloria Whelan has based this fictional story about the eight months Louisa May Alcott and her family lived in an idealistic community called Fruitlands on the few surviving entries from Louisa's childhood journals about the experience. In an engaging narrative, she uses a dual journal format, both in Louisa's fictional voice. One journal is written for

her parents' eyes ("I will put down a record of all that happens, for Father says that a journal is the way to come to know yourself, and it is only by knowing yourself that you are free to become yourself."). The other is a secret journal that ten-year-old Louisa keeps hidden, knowing her Mother and Father sometimes "peek into our diaries." ("Mother says our diaries ought to be a record of pure thoughts and good actions... Yet Father tells us that we must be honest in our thoughts. I don't see how the two fit together.") Each type of entry illuminates the other as together they tell story of those 8 austere, hard-working months. Much of Louisa's "public" journal writing chronicles the business of their days, instances in which she failed to hold her tongue in her criticism of some of the others in their community, and her resulting remorse for not being "good." In her private journal, Louisa's spirit shines as she writes, unfettered, of life at Fruitlands, and makes acute observations about the various members of their community and the often dire situation in which they find themselves as they rely wholly on the land's meager output for food. Readers familiar with *Little Women* will be especially drawn this story featuring Louisa and her sisters that is full of humor and warmth, even as it imagines how an often difficult time in the childhood of a beloved writer played out. (Ages 8-12)

Woods, Brenda. *The Red Rose Box*. Putnam, 2002. 136 pages (trade 0-399-23702-X, \$16.99)

Leah Hopper lives in Sulphur, Louisiana, a small town where everyone seems to know everyone else's business, and a helping hand is always near. On her 10th birthday, in June, 1953, Leah and her family receive an invitation to spend the summer with her mother's sister, Olivia, in Los Angeles. She's dazzled by her aunt and uncle's fine home and lifestyle—nothing in her experience has prepared her for the world of a middle class, politically active, black urban family. And she's dismayed to discover a place where Jim Crow doesn't exist. In fact, it is in getting away from the south that Leah realizes how much her perception of the world has been defined by racial division, and even fear. "I started to think about the word freedom." Returning home to Sulphur, Leah can't stop talking about how wonderful Los Angeles is, much to the annoyance of her friends, and she dreams of going back to stay. Her dream comes true, but it is delivered with unbearable harshness when a tragedy orphans Leah and her sister. They return to Los Angeles, but for Leah everything has changed. Trying to adjust to Los Angeles as "home" only underscores everything she has lost, and coming to terms with that loss is too hard to imagine, despite the help of her aunt and uncle, and new neighbors and friends, including her first young love interest. Brenda Woods offers young readers a quiet yet emotionally charged story of love, grief, and new awakenings in her fine debut novel. (Ages 10-13)

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Hush*. Putnam, 2002. 181 pages (trade 0-399-23114-5, \$15.99)

Thirteen-year-old Toswiah Green loves her name, not just because it's unusual, but also because it was the name of her grandmother and her grandmother's mother. The African American girl lives a picture-perfect life in Denver, Colorado, with her parents and older sister until her dad testifies against two of his fellow police officers who shot and killed an African American teenager. Once her family starts getting death threats, her parents make the difficult decision to enter the Witness Protection Program, and Toswiah is given a completely new identity in a different part of the country. Toswiah's greatest challenge

initially is in losing her name and her best friend, Lulu, with whom she can no longer have any contact. Now known as Eve, she does her best to make friends in her new school, and is especially intrigued by a sophisticated, wise-cracking girl who is also named Toswiah. Her compelling story, told mostly in flashbacks, reveals the slow unraveling of her family, cut off from everything familiar and everyone they know and love, making for a richly complicated backdrop against which the more typical story of a teenager's search for identity is played out. *Winner, CCBC Coretta Scott King Author Award Discussion* (Ages 11-14)

**See also:** *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland; Berta; Dorp Dead; From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler; Gina. Jamie. Father. Bear; Holly Starcross; Indian Shoes; Judy Moody Saves the World; Legend of Lady Ilena*

### **Fiction for Young Adults**

Anderson, M. T. *Feed*. Candlewick Press, 2002. 237 pages (trade 0-7636-1726-1, \$16.99)

In M.T. Anderson's dystopic future, people rely heavily on their "feeds" – an uplink hard-wired into their brains which bombards them with constant advertising and personalized buying guides, as well as allowing immediate "chats" with friends both near and far. Vocabularies have declined, disturbing news is repressed, and unbridled consumerism is the activity of choice. Teenager Titus and his friends spend without caution, from a Spring Break trip to the moon (which turns out to "completely suck") to buying clothes and updating hairstyles constantly (styles change throughout the course of a day). When Titus meets Violet, he's immediately attracted to this girl who stands out as different. As their relationship develops he discovers that Violet *is* different – she was home schooled, raised by parents who resisted popular culture, and didn't receive her feed until she was seven. She's interested in world events and isn't afraid to ask questions. When a hacker disrupts the teens' feeds, Violet's feed is damaged beyond repair, and she faces inevitable death. Eventually Titus isn't able to withstand his peers' condemnation of Violet's nonconformity, and he hides from the horror of her decline. Although he finally learns from his experience and begins to look beyond the self-absorption rampant around him, it is too little, too late. This brilliant satire works on every level, from the slang evolved from today's jargon and the recognizable television shows that have descended another step into vapidness, to the characters of Titus and Violet, who struggle to save a doomed relationship. Some elements of the story are repulsive, like the mysterious lesions that the teens develop (and adopt as a fashion statement, even resorting to artificial lesions weeping latex), and the language is sometimes raw and profane, but the entire thought-provoking package will challenge readers to take a hard look at consumerism and media control. (Age 14 and older)

Bechard, Margaret. *Hanging On to Max*. Roaring Brook Press, 2002. 142 pages (trade 0-7613-1579-9, \$15.95; lib. 0-7613-2574-3)

This unusual twist on the adolescent pregnancy novel focuses on the role a teenage boy plays in his infant son's early life. A senior, Sam has left his traditional high school to attend an alternative school designed to help "at-risk" kids graduate, including those who are raising children of their own. Max is eleven months old, and Sam drops him off at an on-site daycare each morning when he arrives at school. The rest of the young parents are mothers, and Sam is the uncomfortable recipient of attention as the lone father participating in the program. Throughout the book Sam struggles with the overwhelming burdens of caring for an infant while finding his own future options have narrowed to a single track: a construction job immediately following graduation, so he can earn the money to pay back the expenses his parenthood has entailed. Meanwhile, flashbacks tell of Sam's relationship with Brittany, her unplanned pregnancy, and her decision to give the baby up for adoption shortly after his birth. Sam's feeling of connection to his newborn son lead to his struggle to raise him, with the reluctant consent of his own emotionally distant father. The appearance of Claire, a girl whom Sam has admired from afar for years, with a baby of her own both enriches and complicates Sam's already difficult life. The author does an admirable job of portraying both Sam's deep love for Max, as well as his desperation at being caught in a bind that only grows tighter over time. Sam's emotional agony when deciding whether to keep Max or put him up for adoption is heartfelt and riveting. (Age 13 and older)

Brooks, Kevin. *Martyn Pig*. The Chicken House / Scholastic, 2002. 230 pages (trade 0-439-29595-5, \$15.95)

The only person worse than Martyn's abusive alcoholic dad is his Aunt Jean. "Think of the worst person you know, then double it, and you'll be halfway to Aunt Jean." But living with Aunt Jean seems inevitable when Martyn accidentally kills his father with a self-defensive shove, causing the drunken man to fall and hit his head on the fireplace. Years of reading Sherlock Holmes and watching Inspector Morse on television inspire a fearful Martyn to hide his father's death. He disposes of the body with the help of his neighbor and secret love-interest, Alex, who is full of ideas for how to handle the details. It's a tricky situation that's about to get worse when Martyn discovers his father was about to receive an inheritance. Just as the suspense becomes almost unbearable, another unexpected plot twist strikes without warning. Despite its macabre content, Martyn's compelling tale contains moments of inspired comedy, as when he and Alex must convince Aunt Jean that his father's dead body is actually just a sleeping one. Moral questions that plague Martyn are seamlessly integrated with the entertaining and engrossing mystery. (Ages 14 and older)

Chambers, Aidan. *Postcards from No Man's Land*. U.S. edition: Dutton, 2002. 312 pages (trade 0-525-46863-3, \$19.99)

Winner of the 1999 Carnegie Medal, this complex novel elegantly melds the contemporary experiences of 17-year-old Jacob with those of his grandfather, a British



soldier also named Jacob who was killed in Holland in 1944. Recently arrived in Holland to attend a ceremony commemorating the battle at Arnhem in which his grandfather fought, Jacob feels displaced and confused. His thoughts and impressions are constantly evolving, as many of his initial impressions of people and places prove incorrect. Jacob's story, in the form of "postcard" chapters, alternates with his grandfather's tale, narrated by Geertrui, a Dutch woman who fell in love with the wounded (and married) soldier, later giving birth to his child. The fog surrounding Jacob's trip begins to lift as he learns of his grandfather's wartime love affair, and meets the aunt and cousin he never knew he had. He also meets Geertrui, who is dying of cancer. The intricate plot across generations is just one aspect of this ambitious work, which raises questions about loyalty, euthanasia, art, age, and family. Mature sexual content includes a frank discussion of simultaneous relationships Jacob's cousin maintains with a male and a female partner. Jacob finds himself sexually attracted to both a young man and a young woman he meets on his trip, and shows an openness to exploring both of these potential relationships. (Age 16 and older)

Clarke, Judith. *Wolf on the Fold*. U.S. edition: Front Street, 2002. 169 pages (trade 1-886910-79-0, \$16.95)

Six short stories span four generations of one Australian family. The title story, set in 1935, introduces eleven-year-old Kenny Sinclair, whose father has just died and who now must find work to help support his family. The disappearance and murder of two boys in the area is on Kenny's mind as he pedals the long distance into town to look for work. Certain of his own safety, but less certain of anyone hiring him, Kenny stops to warm himself at a man's fire on a desolate stretch of road, and it is only presence of mind and sheer will that keeps him from becoming a third victim when the man turns suddenly sinister. Each of the subsequent stories features Kenny and his family as direct or peripheral characters. Kenny's two daughters are featured in three selections. In two of them they are still children or teenagers, navigating the complexities of their own relationship and their understanding of others. In "Jerusalem the Golden," Kenny's daughter Frances is grown and living in Israel, married to a Jewish man. Set at the start of the Gulf War, the story follows Frances, who has been involved in the Israeli peace movement, as she takes her young son to the Arab market in search of figs from his favorite vendor. She is frightened to go, and shameful of her fear. In "Dhikulsha," Kenny is a kindly older neighbor to an immigrant Indian family in which two young brothers struggle to deal with both daily racism and memories of the devastation wrought on their family before they came to Australia. What happened is an unspoken tragedy in their home, the little sister they left behind in Africa an unspoken memory clamoring for attention. The final story, set in 2002, comes full circle as Kenny's great-grandson is visited by an image of his great-grandfather at a time when he needs strength to help his own family survive. Judith Clarke's singular, stirring collection is heartbreaking and emotionally sustaining all at once, illuminating the ways in which we love each other, hurt each other, and, above all, help one another heal. (Age 12 and older)

Cohn, Rachel. *Gingerbread*. Simon & Schuster, 2002. 172 pages (trade 0-689-84337-2, \$15.95)

A rag doll named Gingerbread is the one constant in the life of San Francisco teenager, Cyd Charisse. Her biological father purchased it for her in an airport gift shop when she was five years old on the occasion of their first and only meeting. Since then, Cyd Charisse has clung to her doll, as well as to the fantasy that her life would be better if she were part of Frank real-dad's family in New York City. Instead, she is his dirty little secret, an unwanted love child being raised by her materialistic mom, Nancy, and her wealthy, loving stepfather, Sid. Cyd Charisse has some secrets of her own: she has just been kicked out of an exclusive New England boarding school, reportedly for drug use but in actuality to save the reputation of Justin, the wealthy boy who got her pregnant and then abandoned her after she made the decision to have an abortion. Finding love and acceptance with a surfer dude named Shrimp who attends the same alternative high school, and an elderly psychic named Sugar Pie who resides in the nursing home where she does community service, Cyd Charisse seems finally to be getting her act together. But her late-night hours and sassy attitude have Sid and Nancy at wit's end. When grounding her doesn't seem to work, they take drastic action by sending Cyd Charisse to spend some time with Frank real-dad. All is not perfect harmony in New York. Cyd's older half-sister bristles at her presence, and she and Frank don't quite know what to do with one another. It is her gay half-brother and his partner who give Cyd the family attention and acceptance she's been craving. Cyd's trip ultimately affords her the opportunity to understand a bit more about her mother, who was perhaps not so very different from Cyd when she was young, and also herself in this animated first novel distinguished by memorable characters and lively dialogue. (Age 14 and older)

Disher, Garry. *The Divine Wind: A Love Story*. U.S. edition: Arthur A. Levine Books / Scholastic Press, 2002. 153 pages (trade 0-439-36915-0, \$15.95)

Hart has been in love with Mitsy Sennosuke for years but he's never told her. As the war in the Pacific begins to mount, his unspoken feelings become tainted by suspicion, guilt, and remorse in this novel set during World War II in Australia. Because Mitsy and her parents are Japanese, they are looked upon with some hostility as soon as the war begins, despite their longstanding presence in their coastal community. Mitsy's father, Zeke, has worked as a pearl diver for Hart's father for years. In the midst of raging storm, Zeke saves Hart's life and then is lost at sea, leaving Mitsy and her mother alone in an increasingly dangerous town. Eventually, even Hart finds himself wondering about Mitsy's family, betraying her trust and devastating what has finally become an intimate relationship. Hart's sister, Alice, is itching to leave the town, and her initial plan of escape includes marriage to a rancher, but she abandons that plan after seeing his cruelty toward an aboriginal named Derby Boxer—a cruelty that plays out as systemized racism when Derby is put on trial for an assault he didn't commit but for which he makes a convenient scapegoat. Garry Disher's complex novel reveals the many forms of destruction that war can create, at the same time it is a certain indictment of racism in both its overt and subtle forms. (Age 15 and older)

Doherty, Berlie. *Holly Starcross*. U.S. edition: Greenwillow / HarperCollins, 2002. 186 pages (trade 0-06-001341-9, \$15.99; lib. 0-06-001342-7)

Two mysterious elements in Holly Starcross's life create immediate suspense in this novel set in England. First, Holly is deeply involved in a cyber-correspondence with someone called Zed, on whose advice she has come to rely. Secondly, an oddly painted car is seen lurking near her school, and the driver has been asking about Holly Starcross. Holly feels alienated from her younger siblings, her beautiful but cold mother, who is wrapped up in her television career, and her kind but ineffective stepfather. When Holly meets the car's driver, she is flooded with memories of her life as a young child, and recognizes that the man is her father. Rashly she drives off with him, and together they begin to rebuild the strong bond they shared in the years before Holly's mother spirited her away without warning. Questions that have haunted Holly since childhood are finally answered, and she resonates with her father's simple rural lifestyle in the few days they have together before Holly's mother arrives to reclaim her. Holly's mother forces Holly to choose, Solomon-like, between the two parents. Holly's father withdraws—literally -- and she thinks he doesn't want her. She eventually understands that he was sparing her the pain of making such a momentous decision, a realization that makes her decision suddenly clear. Although there are a few issues of credibility, such as how Zed (actually Holly's paternal grandmother) conveniently stumbled across Holly on-line, and why Holly and her father aren't discovered more quickly in their time together, Holly's story is absorbing and poignant, with many lyrical references to stars and astronomy for readers to discover and enjoy. (Ages 12-15)

Hartnett, Sonya. *Thursday's Child*. U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2002. 261 pages (trade 0-7636-1620-6, \$15.99)

During the Depression, young Harper Flute and her family are barely getting by. The dry, dusty farmland in Australia where they have settled yields no crops, and Harper's well-meaning father is too full of dreams, and later bitterness and sorrow, to pay it any mind. The land yields in its own way, however, to Harper's younger brother, Tin. At the age of 4, Tin begins to burrow. He starts by digging holes, but soon the holes become tunnels, and not long after Tin slips beneath the surface of the earth into his own subterranean world, coming up into the light only when strong reason warrants. As the now young adult Harper looks back on her childhood, she tells in a voice as lyrical as her name how Tin's ever-more-shadowy presence and her family's harsh struggle for survival were forces that shaped her own outlook and the lives of her family members through those difficult years. Sonya Hartnett's beautifully written, highly original story is a dance of dark and light, told in the voice of a young woman who never loses hope or heart. (Age 13 and older)

Hidier, Tanuja Desai. *Born Confused*. Scholastic Press, 2002. 413 pages (trade 0-439-35762-4, \$16.95)

Seventeen-year-old Dimple Lala is a first generation Indian American living in New Jersey. The end of Dimple's junior year of high school marks the start of a summer of

self-discovery for this young woman who loves taking photographs but doesn't think of herself as a photographer. She fails to claim her passion just as she fails to embrace her Indian heritage as a positive part of her identity. Dimple's parents seem determined to hook her up with a suitable boy, and they believe they've found one in Karsh, the son of an old friend from medical school in India. At first, as Dimple tells her best friend, Gwyn, she is seriously uninterested in Karsh. But just as she's taking a second look, tall, thin, blonde-haired, picture-perfect Gwyn, whose just been dumped, looks too, complicating Dimple's feelings for both her best friend and this young man who has begun to intrigue her. Dimple is also becoming immersed for the first time in a vibrant South Asian club culture in New York City, thanks in part to her cousin Kavita, recently arrived from India and a student at NYU. Kavita also invites Dimple to attend a student conference on South Asian identity. That Gwyn participates even more eagerly than Dimple, throwing herself into "becoming more Indian" because of her interest in Karsh, and her need to find something to fill the void of an emotionally barren family, is just one of the many funny, embarrassing, authentic, and genuine moments that abound in this sparkling, complex, appealing first novel from Tanuja Desai Hidier. Some of Dimple's revelations over the summer initially shock her, such as her cousin coming out as a lesbian, and her own realization that the beautiful young woman she's seen dancing in the clubs is actually a young man in drag, but she is able to absorb these experiences into her understanding of these individuals without judgment. (Less easy for Dimple to face is the aftermath when she gets drunk for the first time, and her first experience getting high. Yet it seems unlikely that Dimple will seek out either activity in the future, even though neither are wholly condemned by her or her peers.) It's hard for Dimple to navigate her changing relationship with Gwyn, especially after discovering that her best friend, whom she thought she knew so well, has been holding back a lot from her. But perhaps the greatest revelation she has by summer's end -- beyond her own newfound ability to embrace who she is and what she cares about -- is that her parents are so much more complex and extraordinary than she ever imagined. Their greatest wish is not for Dimple to find a husband, but rather a soul-mate, whoever that might be. (Age 15 and older)

Lyon, George Ella. *Gina. Jamie. Father. Bear.* A Richard Jackson Book / Atheneum, 2002. 135 pages (trade 0-689-84370-4, \$15.95)

A contemporary family story intertwined with a wintry woods fairy-tale from an unnamed past offers a rich tapestry of words and themes to thoughtful readers. Gina lives in Ohio, where she, her father, and brother are struggling to redefine their family after her mother's departure. Jamie cares for his two sisters in an isolated stone cottage. Although separated by time and reality, both Gina and Jamie are wrestling with the same fear and uncertainty: their fathers disappear regularly, and they don't know where or why. Through alternating chapters, their parallel stories unfold, and the lines between real and magical begin to blur. Does Jamie's father actually become a bear at times, and then resume a human form? Is Gina's father in a relationship with an unknown woman? (The discovery that her pragmatic father is meeting with a psychic for consultation is more shocking to Gina than the thought of a romantic liaison.) Gina and Jamie's distinct voices and the author's poetic storytelling create a memorable short novel about the universality of family. (Age 12 and older)

Malone, Patricia. *The Legend of Lady Ilena*. Delacorte Press, 2002. 232 pages (trade 0-385-72915-4, \$15.95; lib. 0-385-90030-9)

Legends of King Arthur have provided the impetus for myriad adult books over the years, and have lately played a role with increasing frequency in original fiction for teenagers as well. In sixth century Britain, fifteen-year-old Ilena has been raised by parents who always remained strangely silent on the subject of her family lineage. Unexpectedly orphaned, Ilena vows to follow her father's final directions: "Go to Dun Alyn. Find Ryamen." Her quest takes her on a dangerous trip across Britain, during which her warrior skills provoke a chance encounter, and eventual friendship, with one of King Arthur's loyal men. Other allies and enemies appear as Ilena journeys to Dun Alyn, where she must confront a powerful foe who plots to deprive her of her birthright. A young person's search for identity is a timeless topic, but *The Legend of Lady Ilena* is firmly grounded with fascinating details of life in the Dark Ages. Clashes between warring factions of raiders and the growing unease between Christians and Druids add interest and depth to Ilena's tale. Although her search is somewhat predictable, the book's upbeat conclusion provides satisfying answers to Ilena's many questions. Readers will revel in this colorful depiction of a strong young woman succeeding despite the best efforts of her rivals. (Ages 12-15)

Placide, Jav. *Fresh Girl*. Wendy Lamb Books / Random House, 2002. 216 pages (trade 0-385-32753-6, \$15.95; lib. 0-385-90035-X)

First-time novelist Jav Placide draws on her Haitian heritage in this stirring story about a 14-year-old Haitian American girl. Born in the United States to Haitian parents, Mardi was four when her mother and father sent her and her older sister back to Haiti to live with their grandmother. Now she is back, having fled Haiti with her relatives in the midst of political turmoil and rising danger. It's a difficult adjustment for Mardi. A good student, she is small for her age and uncomfortable with the social pressures of junior high school. She tries to be invisible and to ignore the taunts of classmates who call her names like FOB for "fresh off the boat." At home, Mardi's relationship with her mother is often tense. There, she is "fresh" for not always giving her parents respect. In her journal for English class, a notebook Mardi has christened "Malice," Mardi records thoughts and feelings about her new life, and about her final days in Haiti. In a frantic rush to flee the soldiers and get safely out of the country, Mardi was briefly separated from her family. She's told no one that she was assaulted by soldiers and witnessed a brutal murder. But when her beloved Uncle Perrin, whom she hasn't seen since before leaving Haiti, rejoins her family, Mardi is overwhelmed by memories she can no longer keep inside. When she reveals the truth of what happened, her horrified family is shocked, but responds with tenderness and love, supporting her as she takes her first real steps toward healing. The terrifying reality of Mardi's past is balanced with the details of her daily life at home and school, which offer their own challenges but also solace and hope. Jav Placide's sensitive portrayal of a traumatized child beautifully captures her character's fragility and resilience. *Honor Book, CCBC Coretta Scott King Author Award Discussion* (Age 13 and older)

Salisbury, Graham. *Island Boyz: Short Stories*. Wendy Lamb Books / Random House, 2002. 260 pages (trade 0-385-72970-7, \$16.95)

One poem and ten short stories set in Hawaii feature boys doing nothing more nor less than living their lives. In doing so, they are nonetheless tackling questions both small and large. From the humorous misattempt of a young teen to outwit a teasing bully in “Frankie Diamond Is Robbing Us Blind,” to the very real adolescent cruelty of “The Doi Store Monkey” and “Mrs. Noonan,” to the edginess of “Forty Bucks” and “The Hurricane,” in which anything might happen, Salisbury’s characters are wonderfully unpolished in the way that kids and life are unpolished, full of uncertainties. They are of Hawaiian, Japanese, Filipino and European descent. One even hails from Texas, a young man stationed at Pearl Harbor who connects with two young Hawaiians over a horse in “Waiting for the War,” personalizing World War II for the two boys in a way it hadn’t been before. The Vietnam War has a very personal, and devastating, effect on one member of a family in “Hat of Clouds,” in which the oldest son loses his leg and his interest in life in a story told from his younger brother’s perspective. While these stories focus on boys, strong, memorable girls make an appearance in several of them, among them “The Ravine,” “Frankie Diamond,” and, most notably, “Angel-Baby.” The authenticity of these teen voices will resonate with readers of this fine collection. (Age 13 and older)

Testa, Maria. *Becoming Joe DiMaggio*. Illustrated by Scott Hunt. Candlewick Press, 2002. 51 pages (trade 0-7636-1537-4, \$13.99)

Joseph Paul was born in 1936, and named for the Yankees new center fielder, Joe Dimaggio. “I should have been Alfonso / by right / The first son / after three beautiful daughters / should always be named for / the father / wherever he may be.” But Joseph Paul’s unreliable father is in jail, and it is his beloved grandfather, Papa-Angelo, who whispers the name Joseph Paul to his relieved mother at the baptism. “ ‘Joseph Paul,’ Mama said out loud, / loving the name from / the beginning, / accepting the promise.” Over the years, Joseph Paul’s father makes occasional appearances, a confusing embarrassment to his son—never quite staying out of trouble, creating fear and tension at home. But it is Papa-Angelo who stuffs the boys pockets full of tomatoes so his mother can stretch the sauce. It is Papa-Angelo who nurtures his dream of playing baseball, and, later, of becoming a doctor. Maria Testa’s moving novel spans the first 16 years of Joseph Paul’s life, as he speaks in first-person poems of moments that define his sense of self and family, and, above all, his love for the grandfather who gave him the courage to dream. (Age 12 and older)

**See also:** 911; *Crystal*; section on Fiction for Children

**New Edition of Old Favorites**

Adoff, Arnold. *black is brown is tan*. Illustrated by Emily Arnold McCully. Amistad / HarperCollins, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-06-028776-4, \$15.95; lib. 0-06-028777-2)

Arnold Adoff's groundbreaking picture book about an interracial (African American/white) family has been completely reillustrated in a larger format by Emily Arnold McCully, the book's original illustrator. Although Adoff's love poem to his multiracial family has continued to resonate since its first publication in 1973, McCully's original illustrations had dated, so this new edition is especially welcome. (Ages 3-7)

Carroll, Lewis. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Illustrated by Arthur Rackham. A Peter Glassman Book / SeaStar Books, 2002. 172 pages (trade 1-58717-152-X, \$19.95)

When the original copyright expired on the ever-popular *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* back in 1907, Arthur Rackham's edition was one of several newly illustrated editions that British publishers rushed into print. Published in a time when many critics thought it blasphemous to compete with Tenniel's original illustrations, the Rackham edition received mixed reviews but today it is thought by many to be the finest illustrated edition of *Alice*. His full-color watercolor illustrations provide a strong sense of Alice's strength and vulnerability, as well as the dreamlike nature of Wonderland. Peter Glassman's afterword gives more information about the book's publishing history and about Arthur Rackham who, he tells us, was so troubled by the negative reviews that he refused an offer to illustrate *Through the Looking Glass*. (Age 9 and up)

Cunningham, Julia. *Dorp Dead*. Afterword by Betsy Hearne. Illustrated by James Spanfeller. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002. 103 pages (trade 0-375-82255-0, \$14.95; lib. 0-375-92255-5)

This classic work of children's literature is back in print along with an afterword written by Betsy Hearne that places it in historical perspective. Hearne notes that the publication of *Dorp Dead* in 1965 followed the selection of *Where the Wild Things Are* for the Caldecott Medal, and *It's Like This, Cat* for the Newbery Medal, in 1964. In all three books, the myth of childhood as safe, cozy, and innocent was shattered. "None of these books revealed more clearly than *Dorp Dead* the child's vulnerability to a sinister environment," Hearne writes. The protagonist of the story, an eleven-year-old boy named Gilly Ground, is up against something terrible when he's apprenticed to the ladder-maker, Mr. Kobalt. But Gilly doesn't realize it at first. He's thrilled to be out of the orphanage, thrilled to have his own room, thrilled he no longer has to interact with other children. The almost constant silence and unwavering routine demanded by Kobalt is a bit unsettling, but Gilly, who has always been a loner, seeks companionship in Kobalt's old dog, Mash. It is only later that Gilly begins to realize that Mash, although he appears well-cared for, has been psychologically beaten down and abused. He is "absent from his skin." Kobalt's need to control everything in his environment, to make it bend to his will, will extend to Gilly. When Gilly discovers Kobalt has made a cage to hold him, just as he has one for Mash, he makes a daring and frightening escape in this chilling story that intends to disturb, to give voice to the powerlessness that children know and understand. Gilly's ultimate triumph is hard-won, but with it comes his first real

understanding of the importance of true companionship, of reaching out and meaningfully connecting with another living thing. There is a folkloric quality to the setting and elements of the story but a contemporary resonance as well. (Ages 10-13)

Jukes, Mavis. *Blackberries in the Dark*. Illustrated by Thomas B. Allen. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002. 48 pages (trade 0-394-87599-0, \$14.95; lib. 0-394-97599)

After the death of his grandfather, Austin's first visit to Grandma's home is filled with painful memories and an acute sense of loss for both her and the boy. After Austin and Grandma make a few attempts to comfort each other, they begin anew while going fly fishing, one of Grandpa's favorite pastimes. Jukes's expert uses of word imagery conveys deep emotions. Simple acts depict character and give remarkable depth to this short story so welcome now that it's back in print once again. Allen's occasional artwork rendered in black and white underscores the love wrapped around every page of a warmly created summer story perfect for newly independent readers. (Ages 5-11)

Konigsburg, E. L. *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*. With a 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary afterword by the author. Atheneum, 2002. 162 pages (trade 0-689-85322-X, \$16.95)

Can it really have been 35 years since Claudia and her little brother, Jamie, first took up residence in the Metropolitan Museum of Art? A lot has changed in New York City since Konigsburg's 1968 Newbery winner was first published but the story itself about a young girl's search for identity has certainly stood the test of time. This special 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition includes an extremely thoughtful and characteristically witty afterword by E. L. Konigsburg in which she talks about some of the changes that have occurred since the book was first published. "Olivetti no longer has a typewriter on a stand outside a building on Fifth Avenue. Olivetti no longer makes manual typewriters. (Does anyone?) The Donnell Branch Library on 53<sup>rd</sup> Street still caters to children – even though the card catalog Claudia and Jamie used has gone the way of the manual typewriter." Also included in the back matter is a copy of the letter of acceptance the author received from her editor Jean Karl back in 1966, and a dialogue between Jamie and Claudia about the Newbery Medal which was specially written for attendees at the 1968 Newbery-Caldecott Awards banquet. (Age 9-13)

Kroll, Steven. *That Makes Me Mad!* Illustrated by Christine Davenier. SeaStar Books, 2002. 32 pages (trade 1-58717-183-X, \$15.95; lib. 1-58717-184-8)

Nina gives voice to the frustrations of childhood, as she lists the things that make her mad. They include being talked about like she's not even there, trying very hard and still not succeeding, and being blamed for something not her fault. Each double-page spread states something that makes Nina angry, and then gives a brief, specific example of such an instance. She concludes by acknowledging "it makes me feel better when you let me tell you how angry I am!" Originally published with the art of Hilary Knight (Pantheon, 1976), this new edition features Davenier's cartoon-like watercolor illustrations. (Ages 4-8)



Merriam, Eve. *Spooky ABC*. Illustrated by Lane Smith. Simon & Schuster, 2002. 32 pages (trade 0-689-85356-4, \$16.95)

When illustrator Lane Smith created 26 images for what he imagined would be a wordless book, his publisher solicited Eve Merriam to match poems to his pictures. Her resulting words required that some of the visual images be redone, and the end product was *Halloween A B C* (Macmillan, 1987). A fascinating endnote describes this evolution, and states that *Spooky A B C* is a revised edition of the original, with the reinstatement of some of the original, unused illustrations. Not for the faint-hearted, the dark pages are populated with sinister demons, fiends and vipers, not least of which is simply the “Crawler.” “Creepy crawlers / ... creeping from the north / crawling from the south / creeping down your forehead / crawling in your mouth / creeping on your tongue / crawling down your throat / into your gizzard / where they float float float.” (Ages 6-9)

Myers, Walter Dean. *Crystal*. Amistad / HarperCollins, 2002. 196 pages (lib. 0-06-008350-6, \$15.89; pbk. 0-06-447312-0)

Myers’s novel about an African American teenage model is just as pertinent today as it was when it was first published in 1987. Crystal Brown’s rapid ascent to the top as the latest modeling sensation reveals that the world of high fashion is a lot less glamorous than one might imagine. Complexity and conflict emerge through Crystal’s outward development as a successful rising star and her inward development as a maturing, thinking young woman. A provocative novel raises questions about society’s standards of beauty, women as objects, racism, and ethics, and it does so with intelligence, style, and grace. (Age 12 and older)

**See also:** *Smoke and Ashes*; *Who Said Moo?*; section on Folklore, Mythology, and Traditional Literature

## **Appendix I**

### **How to Obtain Books Listed in *CCBC Choices* and CCBC Publications**

#### **Obtaining the Books in *CCBC Choices***

The Cooperative Children's Book Center is not a bookstore. Please do not write or phone with the expectation of ordering the books in *CCBC Choices* from the CCBC itself.

Ask for these books at your public library, school library media center or bookstore. Be specific concerning the edition, noting the publisher, illustrator (if applicable) and ISBN (international standard book number) of the book you want to secure.

The CCBC can be of assistance by verifying up-to-date publisher and vendor addresses and phone numbers if you do not have access to the most recent annual *Children's Books in Print* (R.R. Bowker) or to regular information about the larger U.S. publishers from the Children's Book Council ([www.CBCBooks.org](http://www.CBCBooks.org)) in New York City. Please contact the CCBC for address verification if you experience difficulty in locating any of the books recommended in *CCBC Choices*. We are aware that publishers of all sizes and in all regional locations change addresses and phone numbers frequently. The CCBC's public service hours, address and public service phone number are listed in a section at the end of this publication.

The citations in *CCBC Choices 2003* include book prices and ISBNs are for any hardcover trade, library, and/ or paperback editions that we were able to determine were available for each title as of late December, 2002. Many of the books in *CCBC Choices 2003* are currently available in hardcover only, and sales is a considerable factor in determining whether they will subsequently be available in paperback editions.

Addresses are provided for small publishers not affiliated with a wholesaler. A search of the internet may locate a web site with additional contact and ordering information for these publishers. CCBC experience with small/alternative publishers for more than 18 years underscores the observation that their books will no doubt be in print for a long time, maybe even longer than many of the books published by larger houses.

#### **Obtaining CCBC Publications**

##### ***CCBC Choices 2003***

If you live in Wisconsin, send \$2.25 or the equivalent in U.S. postage stamps to the Cooperative Children's Book Center, 4290 Helen C. White Hall, 600 N. Park St., Madison, WI 53706-1403 USA.

If you live outside of Wisconsin, send \$7.00 to the Friends of the CCBC, Inc., P.O. Box 5288, Madison, WI 53705-0288 USA. You may also inquire about the rates for ordering copies of

*CCBC Choices 2002* in quantity, and about the availability of earlier editions of *CCBC Choices*. Please do not phone the CCBC to ask for this information.

Regardless of where they live, current members of the Friends of the CCBC, Inc., receive a copy of this edition of *CCBC Choices* as one benefit of annual Friends of the CCBC, Inc., membership. To request a membership form, write to the Friends of the CCBC, Inc., at the address noted in the previous paragraph.

### ***Other CCBC Publications***

Many CCBC bibliographies are available on the CCBC's web site. Go to [www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/public2.htm](http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/public2.htm) for a complete list of CCBC publications and to access full-text items.

All CCBC publications are available free for postage and handling costs to Wisconsin residents. If you are a Wisconsin resident and don't have Internet access, send a self-addressed, stamped business envelope to receive a current list of available CCBC publications. Address this request to: Cooperative Children's Book Center, 4290 Helen C. White Hall, 600 N. Park St., Madison, WI 53706-1403.

## **Appendix II**

### **The Cooperative Children's Book Center**

#### **Vision Statement**

All children and young adults deserve excellent literature which reflects their own experience and encourages them to imagine experiences beyond their own, which satisfies their innate curiosity, and which invites them to dream. We believe such literature fosters a fundamental understanding of themselves and one another, stimulates their creativity, and, most importantly, enriches their lives.

At the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC), a library of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, we are committed to identifying excellent literature for children and adolescents and bringing this literature to the attention of those adults who have an academic, professional, or career interest in connecting young readers with books. The identity of the Cooperative Children's Book Center is grounded in literature for children and young adults. This is reflected in its collections, its role as a book examination center and research library, and its staff expertise in book arts, book evaluation, multicultural literature, alternative press publishing, and intellectual freedom. Within each of these areas, the CCBC is acknowledged as a leader and a catalyst for change. We are committed to fulfilling these roles by advocating and actively modeling a philosophy that embraces diversity, promotes understanding and respects the rights of the individual child.

The concepts of access and inclusiveness are vital to the discussion and evaluation of literature for children and young adults. These elements are also central to any discussion of the CCBC itself with regard to its collections and information services. Therefore, the CCBC seeks to expand both the means by which CCBC information is made available and the types of information to which users have access. We will be at the forefront in:

- collecting a wide range of contemporary and historical literature for children and young adults, including literature published by alternative presses and that created by current and former Wisconsin residents;
- encouraging awareness and discussion of issues essential to literature for children and young adults;
- advocating the First Amendment rights of children and young adults by:
  - 1) providing Wisconsin teachers and librarians with in-depth information on literature whenever a minor's access to books is questioned, and 2) preparing Wisconsin teachers and librarians to respond to challenges to intellectual freedom;

- providing educational support for students in higher education and individuals with an interest in literature for children and young adults;
- shaping electronic means of access to and dissemination of information about literature for children and young adults, within the School of Education, across the university, throughout the state of Wisconsin, and beyond; and
- networking nationally and internationally with colleagues in related fields to create coalitions which recognize the importance of high quality materials for all children and young adults.

The CCBC is a unique and vital gathering place for books, ideas and expertise. The CCBC vision for the future is the continued pursuit of excellence in literature for children and young adults by whatever resources are available, unwavering commitment to the First Amendment rights of children and young adults, and the establishment of a national and international network to connect all who share the belief that excellent literature can insure a brighter future for the world's children.

Adopted by the External Advisory Board, September 1994  
Reaffirmed September 1999

### **Intellectual Freedom Information Services Mission Statement**

The Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) will provide free, extended information services at the time of any attempt to limit access to a book available for use by a minor in a Wisconsin classroom or library. If additional assistance is requested by a Wisconsin teacher, school library media specialist, public librarian, or school or library administrator, the CCBC professional staff will connect or refer the individual to others in the state who can provide additional types of information.

The CCBC will serve as a first point of contact for professionals responsible for selecting materials to which minors in Wisconsin have access when there are attempts to limit their access to non-print materials, or to non-book print materials.

The CCBC will develop and maintain relationships with other organizations that share the library's commitment to upholding the First Amendment rights of all Wisconsin citizens, including minors.

According to professional ethics exercised in all libraries, all CCBC Intellectual Freedom Information Service interactions are confidential.

Affirmed by the CCBC Advisory Board  
September 20, 2002

## **Purpose**

The Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is a noncirculating examination, study and research children's and young adult literature library for adults. The purposes of the CCBC are: 1) to provide a collection of current, retrospective and historical books for children and young adults; 2) to provide Wisconsin librarians, teachers, students and others informational and educational services based on the collection; and 3) to support teaching, learning and research needs related to children's and young adult literature.

The CCBC is funded for these purposes by the UW-Madison School of Education and by an annual contract from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction/Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning. The CCBC was established in 1963.

## **Collection**

The library collection contains review copies of newly published juvenile trade books; recommended children's and young adult trade books; historical children's books; contemporary and historical reference materials related to children's and young adult literature; children' and young adult books by Wisconsin authors and illustrators; and alternative press books for children.

The Dewey Decimal classification system is used to catalog all materials except the Alternative Press and Wisconsin Collections. Subject analytics are used extensively for card catalog access to reference materials. Author, title, illustrator, translator and subject access is provided for children's and young adult books and reference materials. Any known national award or distinction or selection tool recommendation is noted on the endpaper in the front of each children's and young adult title in the collection.

With the exception of the library's historical materials, most of the CCBC's holdings are in the University of Wisconsin-Madison's electronic library on-line catalog, MADCAT. The CCBC collection is noncirculating.

## **Services**

Reference assistance from a professional librarian/children's literature specialist is available most weekdays between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Reference assistance from student assistants is available to anyone on a walk-in basis on evenings and weekends, and at other times when a librarian is unavailable during the week. University students and faculty and Wisconsin librarians and teachers wishing to speak with a professional librarian/children's literature specialist are advised to make advance arrangements. Specialized reference assistance and children's literature consultation is also available by mail and phone to the above constituents anywhere in the state. Intellectual freedom information services are available to anyone serving minors in Wisconsin libraries and schools.

Tours and/or lectures are arranged as possible for university classes, library and school book selection groups, and public library system and school inservice groups coming to the Book Center.

Publications on selected children's and young adult literature topics are available along with selected award and distinction lists and annual CCBC Wisconsin-related literature publications.

Children's and young adult literature displays can be seen by walk-in library users. Monthly book discussions and annual award discussions apply literary standards and book evaluation techniques to new books and are open to any student, faculty member, librarian, teacher or other interested adult who reads some of the scheduled books beforehand, as are the annual awards discussions. Interested persons are welcome to contact the CCBC for a schedule or to indicate if information about a particular discussion is needed.

The CCBC's web site is at [www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/](http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/). Special features include a Book of the Week review by one of the CCBC librarians, links to recommended sites related to children's and young adult literature, and information about upcoming events at the CCBC.

*CCBC-Net* is an electronic forum of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison designed to encourage awareness and discussion of ideas and issues essential to literature for children and young adults. *CCBC-Net* is a community of individuals with an interest in children's and young adult literature extending across Wisconsin, the nation, North America and beyond.

*CCBC-Net* provides opportunities for guided discussions of contemporary children's and young adult literature, including multicultural literature, translated books, outstanding and award-winning books, and various themes and topics in literature. This unique listserv provides a forum for discussion of the book arts and book publishing for the young. Specific books to be discussed are announced in advance. To subscribe to *CCBC-Net*, inquire at the CCBC, visit the CCBC-s web site at [www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/listserv.htm](http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/listserv.htm), or send e-mail to [cdowling@ccbc.education.wisc.edu](mailto:cdowling@ccbc.education.wisc.edu).

Continuing education courses are taught throughout the year by the CCBC professional staff. As possible, the CCBC participates in statewide and regional conferences through the provision of book examination exhibits and/or leadership in scheduled sessions. The CCBC often cosponsors conferences and workshops provided by UW-Madison Extension Programs.

Anyone interested in specific information is invited to visit the CCBC web site or write to request a current list of CCBC publications or a copy of *The CCBC This Season*, a flyer briefly listing current CCBC on-campus and off-campus information and program services.

## **Governance**

The University of Wisconsin - Madison School of Education is responsible for policies and funding of the Cooperative Children's Book Center. W. Charles Read is the dean of the School of Education.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning, provides contract support for the CCBC services to Wisconsin libraries and schools. Richard Grobschmidt, Assistant Superintendent of the Division, administers the DPI contract.

The Cooperative Children's Book Center is a member of the Arts Institute at UW-Madison.

The CCBC Advisory Board represents CCBC users on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus and from libraries and schools throughout Wisconsin. Members of the 2002-2003 Advisory Board are:

Kathleen Hofschield (Chair), Manager, Children's Services  
Mead Public Library, Sheboygan

Catherine Beyers, LMC Director  
Southern Bluffs Elementary School, LaCrosse

Kathy Boguszewski, Instructional Technology Consultant  
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Betsy Bradley, LMC Director  
Peshtigo Elementary Learning Center

Randall B. Colton, Grade 3 Teacher  
D.C. Everest Schools, Schofield

Julia Davis, IMC Director  
Kiel Middle School

Kathy Dettman, Children's and Young Adult Librarian  
Brown County Library, DePere Branch

Chris Dowling, Network Administrator  
School of Education, UW-Madison

Becki George, LMC Director  
Rice Lake School District

Sandra Grambsch, Youth Librarian  
Waupaca Public Library



Beth Graue, Professor  
Curriculum & Instruction, UW-Madison

Philip Hamilton, Professor  
Art Department, UW-Madison

Karen Herrera, Grade 7 English Teacher  
Madison Metropolitan School District

Barbara Huntington, Youth Services/Special Services Consultant  
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Terri Iverson, Director of Instructional Technology  
Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) #3, Fennimore

Jacque Karbon, Reading Education Consultant  
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Ruhama Kordatzky, Youth Services Librarian  
Burlington Public Library

Susan Kuck, Library Media Specialist  
Urban Middle School, Sheboygan

Ellen Last, English/Language Arts Consultant  
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Caroline G. Majak, Professor  
Curriculum & Instruction, UW-Eau Claire

Tessa Michaelson, Grades 3-4 Teacher  
Wingra School, Madison

Nancy Oldham, Youth Services Coordinator  
Black River Falls Public Library

Pamela Penn, District Library Media Specialist  
Milwaukee Public Schools, Technology Support Center

Sue Pesheck, Children's Librarian  
River Falls Public Library

Patricia Curtis Pfitsch, Freelance Writer  
Gays Mills

Hélène Pohl , Library Media Director  
Iola -Scandinavia Schools

Louise Robbins, Director  
School of Library and Information Studies, UW-Madison

Cindy Robertson, Grade 4 Teacher  
Burlington Area School District

Miriam Thompson, Youth Services Librarian  
Baraboo Public Library

Spencer Warren, Library Media Specialist  
Prairie View Elementary School, Mukwonago School District

Kris Adams Wendt, Assistant Director/Children's Librarian  
Rhineland District Library

Mary Whittington, Youth Services Librarian  
Portage County Public Library

## **The Staff**

In addition to Acting Director Kathleen T. Horning, Librarians Merri V. Lindgren and Megan Schliesman, and former Director Ginny Moore Kruse, who retired in August, 2002, the CCBC staff when *CCBC Choices 2003* was being created included undergraduate and graduate students who helped carry out the daily responsibilities of assisting individuals on campus, in schools and in libraries who are working in many ways to meet the interests of all young readers.

The student staff during 2002 and early 2003 included Carin Bringelson, Missy Buer (2002), Nicole Busch, Jason Ertz, Kim Foley, Emily Gibson (2002), Juliet Irvin, Erin McCarty, Jamie Ahlman Ng (2002), Phil Rumpf (2002), Sarah Patschke, Anjelica Valadez (2002), and Kori Wex (2003).

Robin Friedman was a volunteer at the CCBC during the summer of 2002.

## **Public Service Schedule**

The CCBC is open twelve months a year for public service to adults interested in contemporary or historical children's and young adult literature. The CCBC is open for public service 54 hours weekly during the Fall and Spring semesters: Monday-Thursday 9 a.m. - 7 p.m., Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday 12:30 – 4 p.m.

During Summer School, the CCBC is open weekly Monday-Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday 12:30 – 4 p.m. During Intersession and University breaks, the CCBC is open Monday-Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Phone 608/263-3720 to confirm the public service hours and to inquire about the availability of a professional librarian/children's literature specialist at a specified time. Extended public service hours can be arranged to accommodate campus course schedules as well as out-of-town users' arrivals and departures. Requests for extended service must be made more than two weeks in advance and will be accommodated if at all possible according to staff availability.

### **Appendix III Guidelines for Book Discussions**

Cooperative Children's Book Center

#### **Look at each book for what it is, rather than what it is not.**

- C Make positive comments first. Try to express what you liked about the book and why. (e.g. "The illustrations are a perfect match for the story because....")
- C After everyone has had the opportunity to say what they appreciated about the book, you may talk about difficulties you had with a particular aspect of the book. Try to express difficulties as questions, rather than declarative judgments on the book as a whole. (e.g. "Would Max's dinner really have still been warm?" rather than "That would never happen.")
- C Avoid recapping the story or booktalking the book. There is not time for a summary.
- C Refrain from relating personal anecdotes. The discussion must focus on the book at hand.
- C Try to compare the book with others on the discussion list, rather than other books by the same author or other books in your experience.

#### **All perspectives and vocabularies are correct. There is no "right" answer or single correct response.**

- C Listen openly to what is said, rather than who says it.
- C Respond to the comments of others, rather than merely waiting for an opportunity to share your comments.
- C Talk with each other, rather than to the discussion facilitator.
- C Comment to the group as a whole, rather than to someone seated near you.

These guidelines may be reproduced as long as credit is given to the CCBC librarians Kathleen T. Horning and Ginny Moore Kruse.

**Appendix IV**  
**Results of the 2002-2003 CCBC Award Discussions**

**CCBC Caldecott Award Discussion** (Distinguished illustration by a U.S. citizen or resident)

**Winner:** *Action Jackson* illustrated by Robert Andrew Parker. Written by Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan. Roaring Brook Press, 2002.

**Honor Books:** *The Three Questions* illustrated and written by Jon J Muth. Based on a story by Leo Tolstoy. Scholastic Press, 2002.

*What Charlie Heard* illustrated and written by Mordicai Gerstein. Frances Foster Books/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002

**CCBC Coretta Scott King Author Award Discussion** (Distinguished writing by an African American author)

**Winner:** *Hush* written by Jacqueline Woodson. Putnam, 2002.

**Honor Book:** *Fresh Girl* written by Jaira Placide. Wendy Lamb Books/Random House, 2002.

**CCBC Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award Discussion** (Distinguished illustration by an African American artist)

**Winner:** *Ella Fitzgerald : The Tale of a Vocal Virtuoso* illustrated by Brian Pinkney. Written by Andrea Davis Pinkney. Jump at the Sun/Hyperion, 2002.

**Honor Book:** *Crowning Glory* illustrated by Brenda Joysmith. Written by Joyce Carol Thomas. Joanna Cotler Books/HarperCollins, 2002.

**CCBC Newbery Award Discussion** (Distinguished writing for children by a U.S. citizen or resident)

**Winner:** *When My Name Was Keoko* by Linda Sue Park. Clarion, 2002.

**Honor Books:** *The House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer. A Richard Jackson Book / Atheneum, 2002.

*The Same Stuff as Stars* by Katherine Paterson. Clarion, 2002.

*This Land Was Made for You and Me: The Life and Songs of Woody Guthrie* by Elizabeth Partridge. Viking, 2002.

**CCBC Michael L. Printz Award Discussion** (Literary excellence in young adult literature)

**Winner:**        *The House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer.  
A Richard Jackson Book/Atheneum, 2002.

**Honor Book:** *When My Name Was Keoko* by Linda Sue Park. Clarion, 2002.

## Appendix V

### The Compilers of *CCBC Choices 2003*

**Kathleen T. Horning** is a librarian and acting director at the Cooperative Children's Book Center of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She coordinates the Charlotte Zolotow Award and Lecture for the CCBC. For nine years she was also a children's librarian at Madison Public Library. She is the author of *From Cover to Cover: Evaluating and Reviewing Children's Books* (HarperCollins, 1997). With Ginny Moore Kruse, she coauthored *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults, 1980 - 1990*, and with Ginny Moore Kruse and Megan Schliesman, *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults, 1991-1996*. Kathleen is currently serving on the ALA/ALSC Board of Directors and is President of the United States Board on Books for Young People (USBYY). She has chaired the Américas Award Committee, under the auspices of The Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs (CLASP), University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; ALA/ALSC's 1997 Mildred Batchelder Award Committee; ALA/ALSC's 1995 John Newbery Committee; has served on ALA/ALSC's Notable Children's Books Committee and an earlier Newbery Award Committee. She also chaired USBYY's Hans Christian Andersen Award Committee, which selected U.S. nominees for the international award in 1992. She served on the NCTE Lee Bennett Hopkins Award Committee and the ALA/SRRT Coretta Scott King Award Committee and chaired ALA/ALSC's first Committee on Social Issues in Relationship to Materials and Services for Children. Kathleen frequently lectures to librarians on issues in evaluating literature for children and young adults. She has a B.A. in Linguistics and a Master's Degree in Library and Information Studies, both from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

**Merri V. Lindgren** is a librarian at the Cooperative Children's Book Center of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She coauthored *CCBC Choices* during the years 1990 through 1993, and 2002, while previously employed at the CCBC. She is the editor of *The Multicolored Mirror: Cultural Substance in Literature for Children and Young Adults* (Highsmith, 1991). She compiled and edited the *CCBC Resource List for Appearances by Wisconsin Book Creators* (2nd edition, 1990, and 3rd edition, 1993). She has worked as a youth services librarian at the Helen M. Plum Memorial Library in Lombard, Illinois, and as an instructor of Adolescent and Young Adult Literature at Edgewood College. She served on the 2001 Charlotte Zolotow Award Committee and chaired the 2002 Charlotte Zolotow Award Committee. Merri graduated from UW-Madison with a B.A. Degree in Psychology and has a Master's Degree in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

**Megan Schliesman** is a librarian and administrator at the Cooperative Children's Book Center of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. With Katy and Ginny Moore Kruse, Megan coauthored *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults, 1991-1996*. She has written articles on poetry for *Book Links* and *Booklist* and with Katy and Merri writes a monthly children's book column for the *Wisconsin State Journal*. Megan served on the 1998, 1999 and 2002 Charlotte Zolotow Award committees and chaired the 2003 Charlotte Zolotow Award committee. She teaches distance continuing education courses for librarians and teachers

across the state, and speaks to teachers and librarians around Wisconsin and to classes at UW-Madison. She served on the committee that created the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's *Planning Curriculum in English Language Arts* (DPI, 2001) and created the bibliography for DPI's *Teaching Character Education Using Children's Literature* (DPI, 2001). Megan has worked as a writer and editor on several publications in the Madison area and continues this work in various capacities outside the CCBC. Megan is a former member of South Central Library System Board of Trustees in Wisconsin. She has a B.A. degree in English from UW-Whitewater and a Master's Degree in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

**Ginny Moore Kruse** retired as director of the Cooperative Children's Book Center in August, 2002. She is a former public school teacher, school librarian, and public librarian. Ginny founded the award-winning CCBC Intellectual Freedom Information Services and participated in developing the Charlotte Zolotow Award and the CCBC-Net electronic book discussion group. She is a frequent speaker at professional conferences. With CCBC colleagues she plans and leads adult continuing education courses and conferences on and off campus and by means of distance education technology. Ginny has chaired or served on many national children's literature award and distinction committees including the Newbery, Caldecott, Batchelder, Arbuthnot, Wilder, Belpré, King, Boston Globe-Horn Book, and Teachers' Choices. Currently she coordinates the Jane Addams Children's Book Awards, chairs the ALA/ALSC 2003 Laura Ingalls Wilder Award Committee, and serves as an advisory board member of *Riverbank Review* and *The New Advocate*. She is a regular commentator on WISC/TV, with Katy and Megan she writes a monthly column for the *Wisconsin State Journal*. Ginny chaired the *Book Links* Editorial Advisory Board during its first four years and has served on the board of the United States Board on Books for Young People. She is a former member of ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee and trustee of both the Freedom to Read Foundation and the LeRoy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund. Ginny is a coauthor of both volumes of *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults*, and a contributor to *The Multicolored Mirror: Cultural Substance in Literature for Children and Young Adults*. Ginny has received formal acknowledgments of her leadership: Distinguished Service Award (Association for Library Service to Children - ALA); SIRS Intellectual Freedom Awards (American Association of School Librarians - ALA and Wisconsin Library Association) and Roll of Honor (Freedom to Read Foundation - ALA); Hope S. Dean Memorial Award (Foundation for Children's Books, Boston); SLATE Intellectual Freedom Award (National Council of Teachers of English); Distinguished Service Award (School of Education, UW-Madison); Alumna of the Year Award (School of Library and Information Studies, UW-Madison); Burrell Intellectual Freedom Award (Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English); Award of Excellence (Wisconsin Educational Media Association); Librarian of the Year (Wisconsin Library Association); Member of the Year Awards (Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators and Children's Reading Round Table, Chicago); and the Christopher Latham Sholes Award (Council for Wisconsin Writers). Ginny has a B.S. Degree in Education from UW-Oshkosh and a Master's Degree in Library Science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



**Tana Elias**, who created the index for *CCBC Choices 2003*, is a librarian at Madison Public Library and a freelance indexer. Tana previously created the index for *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults, Volume Two: 1991-1996*, and the 2002, 2001, 2000, 1998, 1997, 1996, and 1995 editions of *CCBC Choices*. While a student reference assistant at the CCBC, Tana compiled *Children's Books by Wisconsin Authors and Illustrators and Children's Books About Wisconsin: An Identification Record of Titles Published in 1992* (CCBC, 1993). Tana was a member of the 2000 Charlotte Zolotow Award Committee and chaired the 2001 Charlotte Zolotow Award Committee. She was the editor of the Friends of the CCBC newsletter from 1996-2000, and has reviewed books for *School Library Journal*. Tana has a B.A. in History from Hamline University and a Master's Degree in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

## **Appendix VI**

### **The Friends of the CCBC, Inc.**

This membership organization sponsors programs to develop public appreciation for children's and young adult literature and supports special projects at the CCBC. Members of the 2002-2003 Friends of the CCBC, Inc., Board of Directors are: President Anne Irish, Vice-President Allen Cross, Recording Secretary Maureen Conklin, Membership Secretary Susan Herr-Hoyman, Treasurer Patricia Schultz, and Directors-at-Large Amy Brandt (2002), Geri Cupery (2003) and Jean Elvekrog. Committee chairs include Jason Anderson, Nancy Beck, and Meg Kavanagh. The *Newsletter* editor is Geri Ceci Cupery.

Friends members receive invitations to events open only to the membership and to other opportunities for adults who share an interest in children's and young adult literature to meet with each other formally and informally. Members receive a quarterly newsletter with children's and young adult literature information as well as advance announcements about CCBC publications and services.

The Friends provide volunteer assistance at the CCBC, and hospitality for CCBC Advisory Board meetings and other special events. Friends provide other volunteer services on behalf of the CCBC, such as promotion and distribution of selected CCBC and Friends' publications and special editions of original notecards. The Friends provide funding for public lectures on the UW-Madison campus. The committee that selects the annual Charlotte Zolotow Award is comprised of Friends members.

Annual membership benefits include a copy of *CCBC Choices* and a limited edition publication of the annual Charlotte Zolotow Lecture. Membership is open to all.

The membership year runs from January through December. Dues paid after October 1st each year apply to membership for the next year. Membership dues are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Individual membership categories are: Student--\$9; Personal--\$20; Sustaining--\$30; Supporting--\$50; and Patron--\$100. Group membership categories are: Honor (2-5 individuals)--\$75; Award (6-10 individuals)--\$150; and Distinguished (11-15 individuals)--\$250.

To join the Friends, send a check payable in U.S. funds to Friends of the CCBC, Inc., to: Treasurer, Friends of the CCBC, Inc., Box 5288, Madison, WI 53705-0288, USA.

