

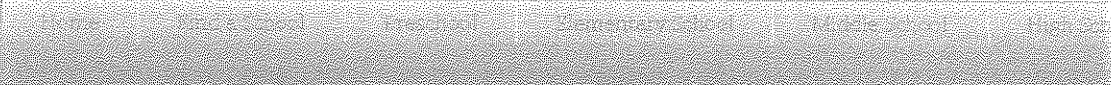


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Favorite Books for Third-Graders

Our panel of children's book experts recommends these great books for your third-grader.

By GreatSchools Book Nook Experts



2030: A Day in the Life of Tomorrow's Kids

by Amy Zuckerman and Jim Daly, illustrated by John Manders (Dutton, 2009). A talking dog, a housecleaning robot and a three-dimensional "data orb" are among the many cool features that kids might enjoy in the future, according to this lighthearted

look at 2030. The breezy narrative follows one boy through a typical day, highlighting many interesting aspects of his world. Fanciful cartoon drawings show a lively and appealing world full of new and intriguing activities that correspond neatly to modern equivalents. Schools are now made from plasticized blocks that snap together, for example, while recess features virtual batting practice and a "smart trampoline." Recreational activities include magnetized hovering skateboards and a virtual-reality "Fanta-trek Center." Some social changes are briefly noted, such as new career paths and the increase of

marriages between different ethnicities. Interaction with the natural world is not mentioned, although many of the new technologies have eco-friendly components and the food is all meatless and delicious. 32 pages. Steven Engelfried, School Library Journal Fiction

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All About Friends

Silliness and Humor	<i>Best Friends for Frances</i> by Russell Hoban, illustrated by Lillian Hoban (Harper Collins, 1969). Frances can't imagine being friends with her little sister Gloria until she is excluded from the all-boys baseball game. To her surprise, Gloria makes a good friend, but can she ever be a best friend? If your child enjoys this book, introduce her to other stories in this series including <i>A Birthday for Frances</i> . 32 pages. Reading Level: Grades 2-3, Read to Self. PBS Bookfinder
Sports and Games	
Nonfiction	
Biographies	
Books About Food	
History	
Science and Nature	
Seasonal Books	
Sports and Games	
Meet Our Experts	

The Facts and Fictions of Minna Pratt

by Patricia MacLachlan (HarperCollins Children's Books, 2004).

Minna grows up with some odd friends and relatives. MacLachlan's stories are a rarity in today's children's books — simple, gentle tales of children who manage to be reasonably nice kids without being insipid. *Minna Pratt* is an amazingly delightful book, a book that makes you smile all through it, a book that makes you want to know all of the characters in real life. 144 pages.

Read the complete review on the Common Sense Media Web site.

Read Aloud: Ages 8+. Read Alone: Ages 9+.

Common Sense Media

George and Martha

by James Marshall (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974).

George and Martha are two hilarious hippo friends who invariably get themselves into sticky situations. Your child will love finding out what happens when George does not like the split pea soup that Martha has made for him in "Split Pea Soup," just one of the five humorous stories in this collection. 48 pages.

Third-grader Read to Self. PBS Bookfinder

Hedgie's Surprise

by Jan Brett (Putnam Juvenile, 2000).

Henny wants to raise little chicks, but an elf keeps stealing her eggs before they hatch. Your child will be surprised to learn how her friend Hedgie helps Henny scare off the bothersome elf once and for all. Make a special point to draw your young child's attention to the nearly hidden pictures that border each page of this book. 32 pages.

Third-grader Read to Self. PBS Bookfinder

A Letter to Amy

by Ezra Jack Keats (Puffin, reprint edition, 1998)

In this classic book about friendship, Peter has a falling-out with his friend Amy. Peter fears the worst - that Amy will not come to his birthday party. Children will relate to this story's themes, and Ezra Jack Keats's collage illustrations will intrigue children and parents alike. 32 pages.

Reading Level: Grades 2-3, Read to Self. PBS Bookfinder

Stellaluna

by Jahell Cannon (Harcourt Children's Books, April 30, 1993).

Stellaluna is a baby fruit bat happily flying along with her mother when an owl attacks. The poor little bat is knocked out of her mother's grasp and lands in a birds' nest. The mother bird accepts Stellaluna as long as she acts like a bird, not a bat. Soon enough, Stellaluna learns to eat bugs and stop hanging by her feet. When she finally has a chance to show her bird siblings, Pip, Flutter and Flap, what life as a bat is like, they are left all in a muddle: "How can we be so different and feel so much alike?" one asks. Anyone who has ever been in a position where they can't be who they really are will relate to Stellaluna's predicament. Cannon's award-winning illustrations convey the nocturnal world beautifully. Readers will be enchanted by this book with its messages of acceptance, friendship and a mothers' love. 46 pages. Pauline Harris

That's What Friends Are For

by Florence Parry Heide and Sylvia Van Clief, illustrated by Holly Meade (Candlewick, 2003).

Theodore, the lumbering elephant, hurts his leg so badly he can't walk to the edge of the forest to meet his cousin. Will his friends' advice help him solve his problem, or does he need something more? The collages of painted paper and repeating text pattern will make this reprint of the 1968 classic one of your child's favorites. 40 pages.

Reading Level: Grades 2-3, Read to Self. PBS Bookfinder

Books About Food

Fairy Tale Feasts: a Literary Cookbook for Young Readers and Eaters

written by Jane Yolen and Heidi E. Stemple, illustrated by Philippe Beha (Crocodile Books, 2006).

Jane Yolen retells familiar fairy tales in a brief and lively style, while her daughter, co-author Heidi Stemple, pairs them with at least one kid-friendly recipe that connects with the story's theme or references. For example, "Cinderella" is presented with a recipe for pumpkin tarts, while "The Runaway Pancake" is matched with, of course, a recipe for pancakes. The tales are divided into four sections: breakfast, lunch, dinner and dessert. The colorful illustrations add to the fun, and margin notes provide additional information on main ingredients and the stories and their origins. Adult supervision will be necessary for completing the recipes, but this book would be a great way for the whole family to share a reading and eating experience. 197 pages.

Reading grade level: 3, Interest grade level: K-5. Eifen Phillips

How to Make an Apple Pie and See the World

by Marjorie Priceman (Dragonfly Books, 1996).

A young baker travels the world to find the finest ingredients for her apple pie. On her journey, she introduces the reader to cultures and products from around the globe. After the raw ingredients are prepared for the pie, the baker invites children from around the world to share it with her. The recipe is included at the end of the book. PBS Bookfinder

Books About the Joy of Reading

Frindle

by Andrew Clements, illustrated by Brian Setznick (Aladdin, 1998).

When clever yet precocious Nick decides to invent a new word for pen, it puts him at odds with his no-nonsense teacher, a stickler for grammar and proper word usage. What begins as a classroom duel over the usage of the word "frindle," escalates into a national word craze. Krisha Roach

I and You and Don't Forget Who: What is a Pronoun?

by Brian P. Cleary, illustrated by Brian Gable. (Lerner Publishing Group, 2004).

This book tells a story in rhyme, using different types of pronouns, leading children to become more apt to remember what pronouns are. The colorful illustrations feature funny monster-like creatures taking part in everyday activities. Children's Choices



Summer Reading is Killing Me

by Jon Scieszka, illustrated by Lane Smith (Puffin, 2000).

This installment of the popular Time Warp Trio series is homage to some of the best-ever summer reading lists. Sam, Fred and Joe happen to have in their possession a bona fide time traveling book. When one of the boys absentmindedly puts their summer reading list in the book, they find themselves in the midst of a literary battle of evil against good! Krisha Roach

Books About School

Dexter the Tough

by Margaret Peterson Haddix, illustrated by Mark Elliott, (Simon & Schuster, 2007).

Dexter is tough! On the first day of school, he lashes out when he trips and the other kids laugh at him. He punches another kid in the bathroom. But like so many kids with a gruff demeanor, Dexter is acting out because of a painful circumstance at home. He learns to express his emotions because of a gifted teacher and a writing assignment. I can think of no better lesson for a child to learn — feelings come out, one way or another — and finding a healthy way to sort them out is important. Perfect for a third-grader who has been bullied, or who can be too tough with others. 144 pages. Danielle Marshall and the Kids' Team at Powells.com

Mapping Penny's World

by Loreen Leedy (Owlet Paperbacks, 2003).
Lisa's class is learning how to make maps in school. For a homework assignment, she decides to make a map of her dog Penny's world. She includes the places where Penny likes to hide her toys and the best walking routes. This fun story will also help your child learn about the important features of maps.
32 pages. PBS Bookfinder



La Mariposa

by Francisco Jiménez, illustrated by Simón Silva (Houghton Mifflin, 1998).
La Mariposa is a beautifully illustrated book about author Francisco Jiménez's childhood as a member of a Mexican migrant farm family. Young Francisco prepares himself for English-only first grade, without knowing a word of this new language. As the days pass, he becomes more and more uncertain if he will ever learn English, learn to read or find a friend. However, his beautiful drawings of butterflies help him win over the class bully and begin to transcend the barrier of language. Krishna Roach



Thank You, Mr. Falker

by Patricia Polacco (Philomel, 1985).
Patricia Polacco describes what it was like to be unable to read in the fifth grade. She was taunted by classmates and plagued with her own self-doubt until a teacher finally recognized that she couldn't read and gave her the assurance and help she needed to succeed. 40 pages. PBS Bookfinder

Books with Positive Messages

Are We There Yet?

by Alison Lester (Kane/Miller Book Publishers, 2005).
Alison Lester, an Australian-born author and illustrator, has written a lovely introduction to Australia for young readers. Through the eyes of 8-year-old Grace, we tag along for a six-month journey around Australia with her family. 32 pages.
Krisha Roach

Babe the Gallant Pig

by Dick King-Smith, illustrated by Mary Rayner (Random House Inc., 1995).
The highly appealing story line is engaging, emotionally provocative and at times suspenseful. Illustrations are simple line sketches, but they supplement the story well. 118 pages.
Boston Globe-Horn Book Honor.
Read the complete review on the Common Sense Media Web site.
Publisher's Recommended Reading Level: Ages 9-12, Read Aloud: 6-8, Read Alone: 9-12. Common Sense Media

Because of Winn-Dixie

by Kate DiCamillo (Candlewick, 2001).
Because of a hysterical encounter with Winn-Dixie, a stray but lovable dog, India Opal's life changes forever. Opal is forced to

deal with the absence of her mother and a father who is absorbed in his work. One day she stumbles upon a stray dog in the Winn-Dixie grocery and it's love at first sight. Opal adopts the dog and he helps her make friends with people that the town-folks have labeled as strange and different. This is a beautiful story about friendship, forgiveness, and tolerance. Jennifer Thompson



The Conquerors

by David McKee (Andersen Press, 2005).

Imagine an army that is treated so well by the country it invades that it loses its will to conquer. This one deserves a place alongside Seuss's *The Butter Battle Book*. It is the kind of well told story that parents can refer back to during difficult conversations for years. The artwork is warm and subtle and the message is timeless: Love is always more fun than war. 32 pages. © Parents' Choice

Dare to Dream!

by Carl Sommer; illustrated by Jorge Martinez, Greg Budwine and Kennon James (Advance Publishing, 2007).

By listening to stories told by his father and grandparents, a young boy learns how choices can lead to overcoming adversity. The lives of Abraham Lincoln, George Washington Carver, Ben Franklin and Helen Keller are highlighted. 48 pages. Children's Choices

Dream: A Tale of Wonder, Wisdom, & Wishes

by Susan V. Bosak, illustrated by various artists (TCP Press, 2004).

Children are whisked away on a vibrant journey of hopes and dreams. The book's message, to embrace your dreams, is told through poetic verse and the beautiful artwork of 15 celebrated illustrators. 40 pages. Children's Choices



Gilda Joyce, Psychic Investigator

by Jennifer Allison (Puffin Books, 2006).

Move over Nancy and Sammy, there's a new crime-solving girl in town and her name is Gilda Joyce! When her teacher asks what she is doing for the summer, Gilda tells the class she's going to San Francisco to work on a novel. Of course, this isn't true, but that doesn't stop our intrepid heroine. After writing a hilarious letter of introduction, she manages to score a trip to visit her mother's estranged relative, and she's off to San Francisco to win the hearts of her unknown family. Things don't quite turn out the way she expects, however. Her uncle is cold and distant, as is his daughter — a cousin she didn't know she had. In their amazing "painted lady" house, a secret holds the two of them in a state of fear, and Gilda's psychic intuition tells her that its time to investigate. 321 pages. Kepler's Books

The Golden Dream of Carlo Chuchio

by Lloyd Alexander (Henry Holt & Company, 2007).

This book is the author's last, a rousing, delightful adventure.

There's a fair amount of violence here, some rather brutal, though none graphically described. Many deaths occur by a variety of weapons and methods, and a major character is beaten unconscious. Families can talk about the popular literary theme of setting out into the world to find one's fortune. Do people really do that? Do you expect to one day? Is there a modern equivalent that, perhaps, involves less violence? 306 pages.

Read the complete review on the Common Sense Media Web site.

Publisher's Recommended Reading Level: Ages 9+, Read Aloud: 9+, Read Alone: 9+. Common Sense Media

Hachiko Waits

by Leslea Newman, illustrated by Machiyo Kodaira (Henry Holt, 2004).

This Japanese story of a dog whose devotion inspired a nation is an ideal bridge from picture books to chapter books. Short illustrated chapters, author's notes, and a glossary honor a faithful Akita that met the commuter train from Shibuya Station every afternoon for 10 years, patiently waiting for a master who never returned. Newman's touching story can't be read or heard without tears and a true understanding of the word 'loyalty'. Dr. Jan LaBonty



Humphrey the Lost Whale: A True Story

by Wendy Tokuda & Richard Hall, illustrated by Hanako Wakiyama (Heian International, 1986).

This is based on the journey of a California humpback whale, "wrong way" Humphrey, who finds his way back to the sea with the help of many people. 32 pages.

Third-grader Read to Self. PBS Bookfinder

Judy Moody

by Megan McDonald (Candlewick, 2002).

Yes, Judy is a third-grade girl but she is very much the tomboy and boys love this series as much as girls. The series does a great job of captivating unmotivated readers who are making the transition into chapter books.

Children will relate to Judy's constant dilemmas and will laugh their way through the book as Judy comes up with the most intriguing solutions to problems such as having to sit next to a kid who eats paste and a toad that pees on her! Jennifer Thompson



Letters from Rapunzel

by Sara Lewis Holmes (HarperCollins, 2007).

This is a bittersweet and uplifting story of a young girl coping with the fact that her father is hospitalized for clinical depression. "Rapunzel" (you don't learn her real name until the end of the book) comes home one day to find the lights off and her father curled up in his favorite red chair, crying. Soon he's in a mental institution and her mother refuses to talk about it. By chance, she finds a letter in her father's chair addressed to a post office box. She writes to this post office box, hoping that the person her father was writing to will help her understand what is happening. Told through her letters, this novel is

poignant and emotionally raw. "Rapunzel" is the type of character you immediately bring into your heart. Her humor, courage and intelligence will resonate with the reader. 184 pages. Kepler's Books

Loser

by Jerry Spinelli (HarperCollins Children's Books, 2003). It's moving, funny, lyrical and has powerful appeal. There is so much to discuss here that a family, or a class, could spend days talking it over, which is why it is already a favorite with discussion groups. Two of the biggest topics are what it means to be human and what it means to grow up. Try combining it with a movie about growing up, such as *Wide Awake*, or one about not growing up, such as *Peter Pan*. 218 pages. Read the complete review on the Common Sense Media Web site.

Publisher's Recommended Reading Level: Ages 8-12, Read Aloud: 8+, Read Alone: 9+. Common Sense Media

Paint the Wind

by Pam Munoz Ryan (Scholastic Press, 2007). Uniquely told by weaving together the adventures of 11-year-old Maya with those of Artemesia, a wild horse in the remote Wyoming wilderness, this is a beautiful coming-of-age story about relationships and making tough decisions. With the death of her grandmother, Maya is thrust into a totally foreign lifestyle. Accustomed to a rigid and formal urban household, Maya suddenly finds herself on a rural ranch surrounded by loving and caring people. Artemesia, who runs in a herd near Maya's new home, is also forced into a new situation when a horse round-up separates her from the rest of her herd. Discovering one another, the two develop a bond that will be tested under severe conditions. The addition of a glossary and a list of Web sites dealing with the subject of wild horses in America make this a must-read for any horse lover. 327 pages. Kepler's Books



The Penguin's Peril: Taylor-Made Tales #4

by Ellen Miles (Scholastic, 2007). Jason's teacher, Mr. Taylor, loves a challenge. Give him five objects and he'll work them all into a story of his own creation. When Jason gives Mr. Taylor the

"ultimate challenge" list — a penguin, a polar bear, a cactus, quicksand and a baseball — he enthralles the class with an arctic adventure. Meanwhile, in Jason's day-to-day life, he has to take flak from his classmates when they find out that he loves to cook. And he just can't seem to convince his chef dad to let him help out at the family restaurant. Both stories end happily — especially when Jason's dad and classmates get a taste of his signature sandwich, the Amazin' Jason. *The Penguin's Peril* is a testament to the power of storytelling and will inspire young readers to be true to themselves. 110 pages. Click here to buy the book on Powells.com.

Sheila Ashdown and the Kids' Team at Powells.com

Please Write in This Book

by Mary Amato, illustrated by Eric Brace (Holiday House, 2006).

Ms. Wurtz hides a book in the writer's corner, inviting her students to write on its blank pages. Conversations, pictures, charts and stories find their way into it. Children's Choices

The Quiltmaker's Gift

by Jeff Brumbeau, illustrated by Gail de Marcken (Scholastic Press, 2001).

This beautifully written and illustrated book will appeal to a wide range of ages. Its story of materialism verses charity addresses the value of giving and encourages children to reach out to help others. The story of a greedy king and the lesson he learns helps children get perspective on what is important. Darlene Kenny



The Quiltmaker's Journey



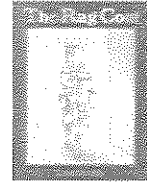
by Jeff Brumbeau, illustrated by Gail de Marcken (Orchard, 2005).

A prequel to *The Quiltmaker's Gift*. The vivid, intricately designed watercolor illustrations add drama and life to the story of a young wealthy child who, one night, steps out of a walled city to find the world beyond. She becomes a quiltmaker after her elders reject her idea of helping the needy. Another poignant message for children of all ages. Darlene Kenny

The Rag Coat

by Lauren Mills (Little, Brown Young Readers, 1991).

This is a heartwarming story of how a community comes together to help Minna, a little girl who so badly wants to attend school, but has no coat. The story deals with death and poverty in a real and positive way with a loving solution. It's a sweet, sober tale about love and goodwill. Darlene Kenny



Thunder Rose



by Jerdine Nolen, illustrated by Kadir Nelson (Harcourt Brace, 2003).

Nolen and Nelson give us a spunky cowgirl heroine of the West who names herself Thunder Rose. Rose is resourceful and fearless, and no challenge defeats her, not stampeding cattle, drought, tornadoes, hooligans nor desperadoes. With a sweet disposition, sassy pigtailed and a 'can do' attitude, Rose's story stretches both the imagination and the vocabulary. Dr. Jan LaBonty

Classic Childhood Favorites

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

by Roald Dahl, illustrated by Joseph Schindelman (Alfred A. Knopf, 1964).

Poor Charlie Bucket is practically starving to death, but his luck

changes for the better when he wins a lifetime supply of candy — and a chance to visit Willy Wonka's fabulous, top-secret chocolate factory. This charming, irreverent tale, one of Roald Dahl's best, has captivated children for more than thirty years. In the best fairy-tale tradition, Dahl doesn't hide the fact that the world can be a grim and unfair place. Charlie's depressing life of poverty at the beginning of the novel reflects this bleak view. But, also in the best fairy-tale tradition, Dahl appeals to the strong sense of natural justice in children, and invites them to revel in a marvelously imagined world where people, both good and bad, get exactly what they deserve. 176 pages. Read the complete review on the Common Sense Media Web site.

Read Aloud: Ages 5-8. Read Alone: Ages 9-12.

Common Sense Media

Half Magic

by Edward Eager (Oxford University Press, 2000, originally published in 1954).

Half Magic was the *Magic Tree House* of its day. As if wizardry was not enough, our four main characters take on multiple adventures with only "half" the magical prowess they need from a found coin. The kids devise clever ways to utilize the coin's capacity and the result is a very cool and captivating story. If your child falls in love with *Half Magic*, there are several sequels to quench their thirst for more. 208 pages.

Danielle Marshall and the Kids' Team at Powells.com

Homer Price

by Robert McCloskey (Puffin, reissue 1976, originally published in 1943).

Homer Price's six sidesplitting exploits included here will keep your child reading and rolling in the aisles. Author of many wonderful books, including the award-winning *Make Way for Ducklings* and *Blueberries for Sal*, Robert McCloskey was truly inspired by his funny bone when he wrote these stories. 160 pages.

Danielle Marshall and the Kids' Team at Powells.com

Little House in the Big Woods

by Laura Wilder, illustrated by Garth Williams (HarperCollins Children's Books, 2007).

Little House In The Big Woods is a classic reborn with great illustrations by Garth Williams. New readers and those familiar with Laura Ingalls and her family will love following along as Laura takes them through a year in the life of the little family of pioneers. This story is a straightforward, fun read with a child's look into the life of a pioneer. It's great to see Laura and her sisters take simple pleasure in playing with their dolls, making homemade goodies and listening to their father's stories. Laura Ingalls is a kid who loves to help her family, is afraid of wolves and hates her "boring" brown hair. She lives in a little house in the big woods where she and her siblings work hard at their many chores, mind their ma and pa, go to school all in one room and have lots of frontier adventures. 256 pages.

Read the complete review on the Common Sense Media Web site.

Read Aloud: Ages 9-12. Read Alone: Ages 9-12.

Common Sense Media

Peter Pan

by J.M. Barrie (HarperFestival, 2003).

The original language is rich, and the story, so much a part of our culture, inspires children to dream. Some of the racial and gender stereotypes, typical for their time, will need explanation. 240 pages.

Read the complete review on the Common Sense Media Web site.

Publisher's Recommended Reading Level: Ages 9-12, Read Aloud: 8+, Read Alone: 10+. Common Sense Media

Rabbit Hill

by Robert Lawson (Puffin, reissue 2007, originally published in 1944).

Rabbit Hill is a time-honored book about a family of rabbits and the meaning of community. The characters are the same as they are in any neighborhood; you get a little of everything, both funny and frustrating. The inspired vocabulary makes for a welcome challenge and the environmental element of the story inspires discussion. Perfect for a parent-child book club. 128 pages.

Danielle Marshall and the Kids' Team at Powells.com

The Wheel On the School

by Meindert DeJong, illustrated by Maurice Sendak (Harper Trophy, 1972).

Set in Holland in a tiny fishing village, this is the story of Lina and her classmates. After doing some research for a school report, Lina is determined to lure storks back to their village as they are believed to bring good luck. This book won the 1955 Newbery Award. 320 pages. Krishna Roach

The Wolves of Willoughby Chase

by Joan Aiken, illustrated by Pat Marriott (Dell Yearling, 1987).

First published in 1963. *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* possesses all the attributes that make a book a favorite and that you want to pass down to the next generation. Bonnie and Sylvia, residents of a British estate in the 19th century, are left in the care of a cruel governess while their parents are away on holiday. The girls can hardly believe what is happening to their once happy home. The servants are dismissed, the furniture sold and the girls sent to a prison-like orphan school. Full of intrigue and mystery, this is a book for a strong reader and is guaranteed to transport them to another time and place. 192 pages.

Danielle Marshall and the Kids' Team at Powells.com

Fantasy Books***Bone #3: Eyes of the Storm***

by Jeff Smith (Graphix, 2006).

Fone Bone, a fanciful character, hides from the rat creatures with Gran'ma Ben (a former queen) and his human friend, Thom (who finds out she is a princess). This graphic novel weaves together intrigue and humor. 192 pages. Children's Choices

The Castle Corona

by Sharon Creech, illustrated by David Diaz (HarperCollins, 2007).

This is a clever, fun fairytale with positive messages. There is mild fairytale violence and of course, budding romance. A storyteller tells a story in which parents and siblings die and thieves are killed; the killings are shown as unjust. Families can talk about being grateful and what the characters learned about the responsibilities that come with privilege. Why was the princess so unhappy? Why weren't riches enough for the royals? How did the peasants feel about the royals once they met them? 336 pages.

Read the complete review on the Common Sense Media Web site.

Publisher's Recommended Reading Level: Ages 8-12, Read Aloud: 8+, Read Alone: 8+. Common Sense Media

Cinderella (As if You Didn't Already Know the Story)

by Barbara Ensor (Random House, 2006).

This version of the familiar story allows girls to connect with Cinderella as they dive deep into the life of a fairy-tale princess. The modern-day twist allows the readers to hear the story in a unique and interesting way. 128 pages. Children's Choices

How to Train Your Dragon

by Cressida Cowell (Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2004).

This story of Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III, son of a Viking chief, is filled with slightly rude humor that often appeals to preadolescent boys. Clever wordsmithing engages readers in the plight of a scrawny boy and his extraordinarily small dragon. 224 pages. Children's Choices



In the Ice Age: Andrew Lost #12

by J.C. Greenburg (Stepping Stone, 2005).

In this installment of the *Andrew Lost* series, Andrew and Judy must save their Uncle Al — a top-secret scientist and inventor of the Time-A-Tron time-travel machine — from the Ice Age. They use their creative problem-solving skills to escape from saber-toothed tigers and make friends with a group of Ice Age people, all while avoiding the clutches of the evil Doctor Kron-Tox. This book has it all: adventure, humor and a super-smart robot named Thudd who peppers the story with true facts about the Ice Age. 85 pages. Click [here](#) to buy the book on Powells.com. Sheila Ashdown and the Kids' Team at Powells.com

Knights of the Kitchen Table

by Jon Scieszka (Puffin, 2004).

This first book in the Time Warp Trio Series is an imaginative and humorous read. The book begins with three boys celebrating a birthday. One of the presents happens to be a book with a card that states, "Be careful what you wish for." Once the book is opened, the boys are transported back to the time of knights, giants and dragons. If you enjoy adventure and fantasy this is a must read! Jennifer Thompson



Lost Treasure of the Emerald Eye, Geronimo Stilton Series,

by Geronimo Stilton (Scholastic, 2004).

This series is a favorite for boys who are reluctant readers. Hip language and vocabulary, cultural references, multi-colored fonts, colorful illustrations and maps are both eye catching and motivating factors for young readers. Geronimo Stilton is a mouse who is editor-in-chief of a popular newspaper, and he has found himself in a particularly interesting situation.

Geronimo's sister, Thea, discovers a treasure map, where an X marks the spot, of hidden treasure. Come join Geronimo and his sister as they travel to a faraway island in search of the Emerald Eye. Will a hurricane stop them or a sinking boat? You must read to find out. Jennifer Thompson

The McElderry Book of Grimms' Fairy Tales

by Emma Chichester Clark, illustrated by Saviour Pirotta (Simon & Schuster/Margaret K. McElderry, 2006).

First published in England in 2002, this nicely designed collection of 10 Grimms' tales includes both the well-known - "The Sleeping Beauty" (Briar Rose), "The Golden-Haired Girl in the Tower" (Rapunzel), and "The Magic Gingerbread House" (Hansel and Gretel) - and the less familiar - "Little Mouse and Lazy Cat," "The Swans and the Brave Princess" (The Six Swans), and "The Magic Bear and the Handsome Prince" (Snow White and Rose Red). Pirotta's retellings are straightforward and colloquial without soft-pedaling the darker aspects of the stories (evil witches get burned at the stake, trusting rodents get eaten and a handsome prince in the guise of a frog winds up in the bed of a princess). ... 128 pages. © Parents' Choice

Mightier Than the Sword: World Folktales for Strong Boys

by Jane Yolen, illustrated by Raul Colon (Silver Whistle, 2003).

Jane Yolen, a prolific, award-winning children's author, selected and reworked these stories from China, Germany, Ireland, Afghanistan, Finland, Angola and more. This anthology for boys serves to remind us of the virtue of strength without force. Yolen has written a similar anthology for girls, *Not One Damsel in Distress: World Folktales for Strong Girls*. 128 pages. Krishna Roach

My Curious Uncle Dudley

by Barry Yourgrau, illustrated by Tony Auth (Candlewick Press, 2004).

When 11-year-old Duncan Peckle's parents take an unexpected vacation, he is left in the temporary care of his curious, definitely eccentric Uncle Dudley. There are adventures ahead that include enchantments, elixirs, and a few amusing goblins. 224 pages. Children's Choices

The Tail of Emily Windsnap

by Liz Kessler, illustrated by Sarah Gibb (Orion Children's Books, 2004).

The best compliment for a book is that you hope it will never end. That is exactly the sentiment expressed when a child tells me about reading *The Tail of Emily Windsnap*. Although Emily lives on a boat, her parents are very wary of her being in the

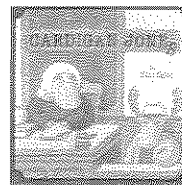
water. Emily discovers that she is half-mermaid and she begins to pursue the mystery of her father's disappearance. First in a series, your child will occupy many enjoyable hours with this engaging "tail." 208 pages.

Danielle Marshall and the Kids' Team at Powells.com

The Trial of Cardigan Jones

by Tim Egan. (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004).

Cardigan Jones, clumsy new moose in town, finds himself in the middle of the case of a missing apple pie. As he moves past many misperceptions, all is resolved in court in this Law & Order take-off for kids. Children's Choices



Tuck Everlasting

by Natalie Babbitt (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1975).

In many ways, the story is a fairy tale, with a magical spring, a kidnapped heroine, an enchanted handsome prince and even a bittersweet ending. Babbitt's eloquent descriptions of woods, ponds and animals, though, elevate the novel from mere story to a lyrical meditation on the natural order. The dog days of summer, when the earth cracks and lightning flashes without thunder, are described with exquisite clarity. Cows, fish, and even one of the most memorable toads in children's literature are given personality and respect. The Tucks have discovered the Fountain of Youth — but is it a blessing or a curse? Ten-year-old Winnie must consider this question even as she is kidnapped, witnesses a murder and assists in a jailbreak. Along the way, the reader is treated to a richly imagined setting that is every bit as memorable as the story. 139 pages.

Read the complete review on the Common Sense Media Web site.

Read Aloud: Ages 8-9. Read Alone: Ages 9+.

Common Sense Media

Two Bad Ants

by Chris Van Allsburg (Houghton Mifflin, 1988).

A Caldecott Medal author, Van Allsburg takes us into the world of ants. The story begins when a scout brings his queen a strange new treasure, a crystal that appeals to her sweet tooth. The ants want to please "the mother of them all," so they march off in search of more crystals for their queen. They trek through woods (grass) and survive a thunderstorm (the sound of crickets combined with dropping dew drops and the light of a passing firefly). They climb a mountain (the wall of a house) and go through a tunnel (window) to a glassy curved wall (sugar bowl). In their haste to leave "this unnatural place," they fail to notice that two have stayed behind to enjoy the feast. The artwork lends itself to the sense of mystery; all bold lines and earth tones. Will they make it home? Read the book and find out. 32 pages. Pauline Harris

The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet

by Eleanor Cameron (Little Brown & Co., reprint edition, 1988).

An early classic in children's science fiction, the story concerns two young boys who take off to a "nearby" planet in their homemade spaceship. The tiny planet is in dire trouble, and

the boys are recruited to save it from certain galactic extinction. Mr. Bass and the Mushroom People are unforgettable, and the appeal of the adventures is timeless. 226 pages. © Parents' Choice

Zathura

by Chris Van Allsburg (Houghton Mifflin, 2002).

With the movie release of Chris Van Allsburg's book, *Zathura*, children of all ages will be eager to read the book version. Many Allsburg fans waited a long time to finally find out what happened after Judy and Peter discarded the Jumanji game in the park. We were left with the Budwing brothers as they stumbled upon the mysterious box. When they open the box, they see the Jumanji game board and another space-themed board. This board transports the players from earth to a purple planet called Zathura. Before they know it the boys are swept up in a nail-biting, outer-space adventure. Will they survive a black hole, space ships and robots? This is a must read if you've always wondered what happened to Danny and Walter Budwing. Jennifer Thompson

Historical Fiction

Dog Diaries: Secret Writings of the WOOF Society

by Betsy Byars, Betsy Duffey and Laurie Myers; illustrated by Erik Brooks (Henry Holt, 2007).

These short stories show life through a dog's eyes. Some have historical settings like ancient Egypt, and some explain quirky dog behavior. All are told simply and humorously, as a dog might, so they are easily understood by younger readers. 64 pages. Children's Choices

Great White Sharks

by Sandra Markle, illustrated with photographs. (Lerner Publishing Group, 2004).

The nonfiction aspect of this text appealed to many students, especially male students, because of the ferocious-looking shark on the cover and the many details on these predators of the deep, including their feasts on other ocean life. Children's Choices

The Invention of Hugo Cabret

by Brian Selznick (Scholastic, 2007).

The hero of the story has a sad life. Orphaned, alone and homeless, he lives by stealing and scavenging, and no one is kind to him until late in the book. Families who read this book could discuss some of the research-based themes the author includes. How can an automaton be made to write poems and draw pictures? How do they work? How were the earliest films made? Many kids will want to learn more about mechanical machines and automata, and about the history of film, especially the work of Georges Melies. And they may also want to see the films referred to in the story. Awards: Caldecott Medal, Horn Book Fanfare. 533 pages.

Read the complete review on the Common Sense Media Web site.

Publisher's Recommended Reading Level: Ages 8-11, Read Aloud: 8+, Read Alone: 9+. Common Sense Media

Molly's Pilgrim

by Barbara Cohen, illustrated by Daniel Mark Duffy (HarperCollins, 1998).

Molly's Pilgrim is a heartwrenching story that illustrates the true meaning of Thanksgiving.

Molly, a Russian immigrant, finds herself in an American school. Instead of being welcomed as the new student in the class, she is treated as an outcast.

Taunting and bullying are two themes explored in this book.

The children in Molly's class learn one of life's most valuable lessons - pilgrims, like people, come in all denominations, and to this day they are still coming to America in hopes of finding freedom. 32 pages. Jennifer Thompson

***Morning Girl***

by Michael Dorris (Hyperion Books for Children, 1992).

Simple story, beautifully told. appeals to kids who like thoughtful character-based stories. This lyrical look at pre-Columbian Taino culture stresses the bonds of family, and behavioral changes involved in growing up, and raises the issue of culture differences in a powerful way. 74 pages.

Read the complete review on the Common Sense Media Web site.

Publisher's Recommended Reading Level: 9-12, Read Aloud: 7+, Read Alone: 8+. Common Sense Media

Samuel Eaton's Day: A Day in the Life of a Pilgrim Boy

by Kate Waters, with photographs by Russ Kendall (Scholastic, 1996).

Samuel Eaton's Day, one of the author's trilogy of books about the Pilgrims, transports the reader back to life during Pilgrim times. Samuel shares the excitement and the hard work that is involved with his first harvest. Samuel quickly discovers how difficult the harvest can be. Though exhausted from the day's work, Samuel learns a valuable lesson about perseverance and the pride that comes from working together as a family. 40 pages. Jennifer Thompson

Sarah Morton's Day: A Day in the Life of a Pilgrim Girl

by Kate Waters, with photographs by Russ Kendall (Scholastic, 1993).

Sarah Morton's Day is an excellent book about a day in the life of a Pilgrim girl and another book in Kate Water's Pilgrim trilogy. The story is set in the year 1627. Told in the first person, Sarah takes young readers on a historic field trip back in time. Photographs in the book were taken at the Plymouth Museum, which is a replica of the 1627 settlement. The historic backdrop and the words of 9-year-old Sarah invite children of all ages to experience the Pilgrim way of life. Colonial dress, food, chores, family relations, friendships, religion and play are all part of Sarah's day. 32 pages. Jennifer Thompson

Traveling Man: The Journey of Ibn Batutta 1325-1354

by James Rutherford (Houghton Mifflin, 2001).

How better to involve your child in geography, history and the art of picture books than through the pages of a masterfully told story about one of the world's most famous travelers? Ibn Batutta's journey represents one of the first travel diaries we

have; author/artist Rutherford takes young readers along on this trip through space and time. 40 pages. © Parents' Choice

Mysteries

Freddy the Detective

by Walter Brooks, illustrated by Kurt Wiese (Puffin, 2001). Originally published in 1932, *Freddy the Detective* is an overlooked classic. Freddy is a pig who finds his true calling when he finds a copy of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* in the barn one day. The witty and still very fresh vocabulary in which Freddy expresses himself is just delightful! 272 pages. Krishna Roach

Lizard Music

by Daniel Manus Pinkwater (Yearling, 1996). Eleven-year-old Victor is up way past bedtime when he sees something very unusual on television: a band of giant lizards performing wild music! Night after night, Victor watches this same strange yet addictive show...that apparently doesn't even exist. 144 pages. Krishna Roach

Shredderman: Secret Identity

by Wendelin Van Draanen, illustrated by Brian Briggs (Yearling, 2004). Nolan is tired of Bubba Bixby's bullying! When the kids receive an assignment to create a newspaper expose, Nolan thinks that this is the perfect chance to truly expose Bubba. After gathering some very compromising information, Nolan creates shredderman.com, a Web site that will shield his identity while fighting back against Bubba's tyranny. 144 pages. Krishna Roach

Seasonal Stories

The Case of the Sreaky Snowman

by Carolyn Keene, illustrated by Macky Pamintuan (Aladdin, 2006). Nancy Drew continues to march into the 21st century with its ubiquitously pen-named writer, Carolyn Keene. In this fifth book in the new Nancy series, "Nancy Drew and the Clue Crew," a mystery unfolds in a wintry setting. After pretending to read her hot chocolate marshmallows to predict the future, Nancy's friend Deirdre is surprised when her predictions begin to come true! Classic Nancy Drew sleuthing ensues and makes for a perfect, cozy winter's night read. 96 pages. Danielle Marshall and the Kids' Team at Powells.com

Jan Brett's Christmas Treasury

by Jan Brett (Putnam Juvenile, 2001). This beautiful Jan Brett collection features some of her best winter and Christmas stories. Some of the titles included in the treasury are "The Mitten" and "Christmas Trolls." Jan Brett's signature illustrations adorn each story, filling it with bright, festive colors. PBS Bookfinder



Latkes, Latkes, Good to Eat: A Chanukah Story

by Naomi Howland (Clarion Books, 2004).

Sadie's kindness is rewarded when an old woman gives her a magical frying pan. When magic words are spoken, the pan fills with delicious latkes. Unfortunately, trouble occurs when Sadie leaves the pan in the hands of her younger brothers. PBS Bookfinder

The Long Winter

by Laura Ingalls Wilder (HarperTrophy, 2004).

In this, the most exciting of all the "Little House" books, young Laura learns about adversity when the Ingalls family faces a terrible winter in 1880. Modern kids who think deprivation means having no cable TV will be amazed by the fortitude of the hardy family, who holed up in their kitchen during a blizzard living on bread and tea, and twisting hay into sticks to keep the stove going. 352 pages.

Danielle Marshall and the Kids' Team at Powells.com

Winter of the Ice Wizard

"Magic Tree House" series #32, by Mary Pope Osborne (Random House, 2004).

It's hard to believe that the beloved "Magic Tree House" series has spawned almost 40 books. Mary Pope Osborne is committed to creating these captivating, quality tales for her wide-eyed, newly minted, chapter-book readers. This one is pure wintertime fun as Jack and Annie take on the Ice Wizard, while the story gently introduces the world of myths and legends. 128 pages.

Danielle Marshall and the Kids' Team at Powells.com

Silliness and Humor

Babymouse: Camp Babymouse

by Jennifer L. Holm & Matthew Holm (Random House, 2007).

The sixth installment of the Babymouse series finds our heroine at summer camp. She doesn't like the great outdoors, but that fact shouldn't get in the way of her having fun, right? Babymouse has her usual daydreams of how she'll be the best camper around, but all she finds is trouble. Babymouse's cabin-mates, the Buttercups, soon become frustrated with her shenanigans, as she racks up nothing but demerits for her team. The illustrations are as fun and humorous as ever, in the familiar black, white and pink. Graphic novels are incredibly popular with tweens and teens, so it follows that younger kids want them as well. And those for the very young — especially for young girls — are few and far between, but gaining a foothold. Here is a well-established series that fills that void with a spirited, likable, adventurous character. 96 pages.

Pauline Harris

Danny: The Champion of the World

by Roald Dahl, illustrated by Quentin Blake (Puffin, 1998).

Kids who loved the recent movie version of Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* will surely agree that *Danny: Champion of the World* is fabulous! Danny is a boy who has a great life with his father. Danny thinks he knows everything there is to know about his dad, until one day he learns about



his father's secret life. Danny's dad is a poacher. If you want to know what a poacher does, and you want to laugh your way through Danny and his father's dealings with a bad neighbor and pheasants, you must devour this hilarious book. Jennifer Thompson

Doctor DeSoto

by William Steig (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1990).
A very cheerful story about a mouse-dentist who treats mammals bigger than himself, wearing rubbers to keep his feet dry when he's in their mouths. Steig's cartoony color illustrations make up the bulk of the book, and they are nothing short of urbane and funny. The climax comes when a dapperly dressed but hungry fox comes for a new gold tooth, and the quick-witted dentist saves himself from ingestion by means of his professional skills. 32 pages. © Parents' Choice

Runny Babbit: A Billy Sook

by Shel Silverstein (HarperCollins Children's Books, 2005).
Nonsensical word play will entice readers to try reading this poetry aloud. A simple switch in the beginning letters of certain words makes language fun and the resulting sounds smile-crackingly funny. 96 pages. Children's Choices

Wayside School Gets a Little Stranger

by Louis Sachar (Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2004).
Surely, Wayside School was already strange enough. The builders built a 30-story school sideways with the rooms piled one on top of another - except for the 19th floor where Miss Zarves teaches class. There is no 19th floor, and there is no Miss Zarves. Nevertheless, there is a 13th floor, where nice Mrs. Jewis presides over her eccentric pupils. Mrs. Jewis, however, takes a maternity leave. Before she returns with her little stranger, Wayside School gets a little stranger. While reading this ridiculously funny book, children will not only be laughing, they will be learning. 169 pages. © Parents' Choice

The Worst Band in the Universe

by Graeme Base (Harry N. Abrams, 1999).
Alien fantasies come and go, but this one has focus. Base has created a universe where music, or the lack thereof, separates the planets and gives them their distinct personalities. It's all about freedom of musical expression, as Sprocc, a young Spingtwanger-player, enters the annual competition for Worst Band in the Universe, a true award of honor. Base's rhyming verse is delicious fun, and there is the added bonus of a CD of intergalactic songs, composed and performed by the author himself. This is a gift of cosmic proportions and hours of fun. 48 pages. © Parents' Choice

Sports and Games

The Dog That Stole Home

by Matt Christopher (Little, Brown, 1996).
Mike owes his success in baseball to his advisor, his dog Harry. It turns out that Harry is a great base coach. Sports-minded children will love this book as well as *The Dog That Pitched a No-Hitter* and *The Dog*



That Stole Football Plays and more by the same author. PBS Bookfinder

Girl Wonder: A Baseball Story in Nine Innings

by Deborah Hopkinson, illustrated by Terry Widener (Atheneum, 2003).

This nine-part story was inspired by the life of Alta Weiss, a girl who pitched for a semi-pro men's baseball team in 1907. Alta has a killer fastball and a hot glove that earn her the nickname "Girl Wonder." When Alta finishes her pitching career she heads to medical school, the only woman in her graduating class. A chronology of the highlights of women in baseball concludes the book. It only took 108 years and a lawsuit for girls to get to play Little League and Hopkinson honors all the women along the way who insisted that a woman's place was on the field. Dr. Jan LaBonty

Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear

by Lensey Namioka (Yearling, 1994).

Yingtao is the only one in his family with no musical talent. His father, however, insists that he continues to play the violin. How will he survive daily music lessons and recitals when all he really wants to do is play baseball, his true, natural talent? PBS Bookfinder

Nonfiction

Biographies

Amelia to Zora: Twenty-six Women Who Changed the World

by Cynthia Chin-Lee, illustrated by Megan Halsey and Sean Addy (Charlesbridge Publishing, 2005).

The author creates an alphabet book using the first names of the 26 women who have made impressive contributions to the world. The women came from different ethnic groups and countries. 32 pages. Children's Choices

Author: A True Story

by Helen Lester (Houghton Mifflin/Walter Lorraine Books, 1997).

Author Helen Lester writes a humorous tale about her life from age three to adulthood. She describes how she became a writer, citing her achievements and challenges, including overcoming dyslexia, along the way. This cheerful book will inspire the writer within your child. 32 pages. PBS Bookfinder

Bill Peet: An Autobiography

written and illustrated by Bill Peet (Houghton Mifflin Children's Books, 1989).

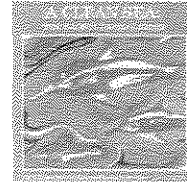
Bill Peet, a former Disney illustrator, shares his life story in this book. Written as a simple children's story, this irresistible autobiography boasts lots of funny drawings, including favorite Disney characters. 189 pages.

Read the complete review on the Common Sense Media Web site.

Read Alone: 9-12 Common Sense Media

Clean Sea: Story of Rachel Carson

by Carol Hilgartner Schiunk, Barbara Metzger, illustrated by David Katz (Cascade Pass, Inc. 1995).



Rachel Carson has long been considered the original environmentalist. Her publication of *Silent Spring* in the 1960s was the impetus for President Kennedy to call for a scientific study of the questions she raised about the environment. Here now we have an accessible, empowering biography of this unsung heroine for boys and girls that care about the environment. Included are several lesson plans, as well as recommended reading on steps to save the environment. A DVD entitled *Cartoon Sea* stresses the importance of keeping oceans free from pollution. Krishna Roach

Houdini: World's Greatest Mystery Man and Escape King

by Kathleen Krull, illustrated by Eric Velasquez (Walker and Company, 2005).

In this picture book biography of the magician Harry Houdini (born Erik Weiss), the author emphasizes the qualities of perseverance, dedication and a commitment to self-improvement that made Houdini so successful. Even as a young boy he was performing a trapeze act in his backyard for paying audiences, billing himself as "Prince of the Air." Interspersed throughout the book are presentations of his most famous and amazing performances, narrated by a costumed master of ceremonies with the readers cast as audience members. This would be the perfect book for kids fascinated by all things magical. 28 pages.

Interest grade level: 2-5. Ellen Phillips

Leonardo da Vinci

by Diane Stanley (HarperCollins, 2000).

The picture-book format and outstanding illustrations make it highly appealing for children. The text is friendly and loaded with interesting details about the subject. 44 pages.

Read the complete review on the [Common Sense Media Web site](#).

Publisher's Recommended Reading Level: Ages 9-12, Read Aloud: 5-7, Read Alone: 8-12. Common Sense Media

Reaching for the Moon

written by Buzz Aldrin, illustrated by Wendell Minor (HarperCollins, 2005).

Buzz Aldrin, the second man to walk on the moon, writes this autobiographical work as page-long vignettes of highlights from his life. He writes about how he got his unusual nickname (from his sister), his favorite movie hero (the Lone Ranger), how he almost drowned one summer, his military life, and his training and missions as an astronaut. The beautiful paintings that illustrate the book add to the appeal, especially the images of Aldrin's space flights. Aldrin closes his book with an inspirational message to young readers: "If you set your sights high, you may accomplish more than you ever dreamed was possible." This would be the perfect choice for aspiring young astronauts. 40 pages.

Reading grade level: 4, interest grade level: K-3. Ellen Phillips

So You Want to be An Explorer?

by Judith St. George, illustrated by David Small (Philomel, 2005).

From Buzz Aldrin to Charles Yeager, Caldecott award winners Judith St. George and David Small take us on a fun romp through the excellent discoveries (and great mishaps) of the great and infamous explorers of the world. Krishna Roach

The Tree of Life: A Book Depicting the Life of Charles Darwin: Naturalist, Geologist & Thinker

written and illustrated by Peter Sis (Farrar Straus & Giroux, 2003).

For just the right child between the ages of 8 and 12 this book will be a treasure trove, but many children may need a bit of parental help to make sense of the book's design and give a context for the bountiful amount of information. Some of the exquisitely drawn illustrations are small and subtle in meaning, and the typeface used in the illustrations could be challenging for young readers as well. The subject matter of the biography will be of interest to adult as well as child readers, and this book might best be enjoyed in a joint first reading. 32 pages. Read the complete review on the Common Sense Media Web site.

Publisher's Recommended Reading Level: 9-12, Read Aloud: 8+, Read Alone: 9+. Common Sense Media

Where Was Patrick Henry on the 29th of May?

by Jean Fritz, illustrated by Margot Tomes (Penguin Putnam, 1975).

This is a fast-paced account of one of America's most influential statesmen. Patrick Henry's childhood and career are described in simple sentences, using a clever plot device (the date in the title); both the black-and-white and color illustrations are very simple. 48 pages.

Read the complete review on the Common Sense Media Web site.

Publisher's Recommended Reading Level: 9-12, Read Aloud: 9+, Read Alone: 9+. Common Sense Media

Who Was Harry Houdini?

by Tui Sutherland, illustrated by John O'Brien (Grosset & Dunlap, 2002).

This is an excellent series of biographies and includes books on Benjamin Franklin, Harriet Tubman and Leonardo da Vinci. Written in a fun, conversational style that grabs even the most reluctant reader! Krishna Roach

Books About Food***Ice-Cream Cones for Sale***

by Elaine Greenstein (Arthur A. Levine Books, 2003).

In spring our thoughts turn to flowers, baseball, and ICE CREAM! With winter's chill a memory, the lines at the local Dairy Queen appear over night and everyone is ready for that first, delicious chocolate-dipped ice cream cone. In an excellent informational book, Greenstein



uses careful research to answer the question, "Who was that sainted person who invented the ice cream cone?" We know ice cream cones first appeared nationally at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904. But there were over fifty ice cream sellers and dozens of waffle makers, so who put the two together? Five men and one woman claim they were the first to combine tasty waffles, shaped into a cone, with yummy ice cream. But the frozen delight honor goes to Italo Marchiony, an Italian immigrant who was selling ice cream cones from a push cart on the streets of New York in 1895. No one knows for sure how he came up with the idea of an edible cone to replace glass dishes, but it's a mystery worth pondering, while licking that perfect ice cream cone, of course. Dr. Jan LaBonty

History

The American Story: 100 True Tales from American History

by Jennifer Armstrong, illustrated by Roger Roth (Random House, 2006).

This big, 360-page book tells stories drawn from the archives of American historical events, large and small. Its 100 short tales - each typically one to five pages - recount in cogent and chronological order stories of courage, struggle, discovery and freedom that shaped the American experience, from the 1565 founding of America's first city to the confounding 2000 presidential election. ... Smart and written in a lively fashion featuring clever watercolor illustrations, this book makes history digestible in appetizing bite-size pieces. 368 pages. © Parents' Choice

Animals in the House: A History of Pets and People

by Sheila Keenan (Scholastic Nonfiction, 2007).

Fascinating facts, historical details, endearing animal photographs and some famous people with their pets are presented in a colorful and inviting format that provides young pet lovers with an abundance of reasons for why we love our furry or feathered friends. 112 pages. Children's Choices

So You Want to Be President?

written by Judith St. George, illustrated by David Small (Philomel Books, 2000).

Books about the presidents are usually boring, but not this one. This is a lighthearted look at the presidency, including the ages, looks, backgrounds, occupations, pets, favorite sports and personalities of the men who've lived in the White House. St. George outlines the positive points about being president (big house with its own swimming pool, bowling alley and movie theater) and negative points (having to dress up, never get to go anywhere alone and lots of homework). David Small's cartoon-style illustrations add to the fun. The book concludes with the oath of office, and there is an appended list of brief biographical sketches of each of the presidents. This would be a timely read with the presidential race that's already beginning. 56 pages.

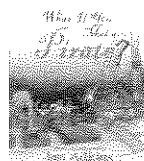
Reading level: Ages 4-8, Interest grade level: 3-6. Ellen Phillips

What if You Met a Pirate?

by Jan Adkins (Roaring Brook Press, 2004).

Every pirate myth and fact is chronicled in detail in Adkins'

meticulously illustrated informational text. Real pirates weren't flashy dressers, seldom carried pistols, swords, or cutlasses, did wear earrings, and were experts with a needle and thread. Furthermore, rats and lice and the threat of a bath were greater enemies than the British Navy. Readers will learn about grog, hardtack, buccaneers, the dead man's chest, and who Blackbeard was in this outstanding book that really is a treasure. Dr. Jan LaBonty



Science and Nature

Easy to Be Green: Simple Activities You Can Do to Save the Earth

by Ellie O'Ryan, illustrated by Ivanke & Lola (Simon Scribbles, 2009).

What can kids do to protect the environment? A lot! *Easy to Be Green* is filled with simple eco-friendly tips and activities children can try at home. A perfect way to make the concept of green living accessible and fun. 32 pages. Danielle Marshall

Garbage and Recycling (Young Discoverers: Environmental Facts and Experiments)

by Rosie Harlow and Sally Morgan (Kingfisher, 2002).

Part of Kingfisher's wonderful Young Discoverers series, *Garbage and Recycling* illustrates the difference between biodegradable and nonbiodegradable garbage. Explanations of how glass, metal and wool can be easily recycled; "how can I help?" sections; and lots of tips will inspire your child to be a young environmentalist who wants to recycle at home. 32 pages. Danielle Marshall

Great White Sharks

by Sandra Markle, illustrated with photographs. (Lerner Publishing Group, 2004).

The nonfiction aspect of this text appealed to many students, especially male students, because of the ferocious-looking shark on the cover and the many details on these predators of the deep, including their feasts on other ocean life. Children's Choices



Living Color

by Steve Jenkins (Houghton Mifflin, 2007).

This book examines how the amazing range of colors in the animal world works to help animals survive in their natural habitats. Animals use color to attract a mate, lure prey, camouflage themselves or startle enemies. Organized by colors, the book is illustrated by Jenkins' signature torn- and cut-paper illustrations of each animal, with a short paragraph explaining how color works for that species. Additional information about animal coloration and the particular species pictured is found at the end of the book. This book is a visual treat, as well as fascinating reading for young naturalists. 32 pages.

Interest grade level: 2-5. Ellen Phillips



Polar Bears and the Arctic (Magic Tree House Research Guides)

by Mary Pope Osborne (Stepping Stone, 2007).

In this nonfiction companion to *Polar Bears Past Bedtime*, the *Magic Tree House* characters Jack and Annie take

their readers on a chilly journey to the Arctic as they find out what it's really like to live there. The familiar twosome cover a lot of ground - landscape, animals, the lives and cultures of native people, and the effects of global warming. The style — narrative with a healthy smattering of illustrations, photos and weird facts — will easily hold a young reader's attention. 119 pages. Click here to buy the book on [Powells.com](#). Sheila Ashdown and the Kids' Team at [Powells.com](#)

Storms

by Seymour Simon (Morrow Junior Books, 1989).

Brilliant full-color photographs of thunderstorms, hailstorms, tornadoes and hurricanes accompany the factual text of this beautiful informational book. Simon carefully explains how storms form and describes the havoc they wreak on humans who are still fascinated with the power of weather. Simon includes not only what we do know, but also what we don't, in a book that sheds light on all those mysterious symbols, diagrams and maps on the weather channel. Dr. Jan LaBonty

365 Ways to Live Green for Kids: Saving the Environment at Home, School, or at Play — Every Day!

by Sheri Amsel (Adams Media, 2009).

As more parents realize the importance of teaching their children about green living, the need for everyday, eco-friendly lessons grows. With activities for home and school and during playtime, *365 Ways* shows how easy and fun it is to prepare your kids for a better future. 224 pages. Danielle Marshall

Seasonal

The Story of Kwanzaa

by Donna L. Washington, illustrated by Stephen Taylor (HarperTrophy, 1997).

Learn about the origins of Kwanzaa. The seven principles or beliefs of the holiday are explained in detail and accompanied by lovely illustrations. Recipes and crafts ideas are also included. [PBS Bookfinder](#)

Sports and Games

Hey Batta Batta Swing! The Wild Old Days of Baseball

by Sally Cook and James Charlton, illustrated by Ross MacDonald (M.K. McElderry Books, 2007).

Who can resist the title of this book? Certainly not young baseball fans who will delight in this comical history of the great American pastime. Readers learn tantalizing tidbits about the history of the game, like the facts that in the early days teams had no specific uniforms and that base running was once a contact sport. The amusing illustrations add to the fun, and

colorful baseball slang is defined in page margins. 48 pages.
Interest grade level: 3-6. Ellen Phillips

Ultimate Chess

by Jon Tremaine (Scholastic Inc., 2006).

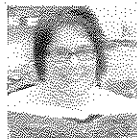
Opening this 8-by-8-inch book reveals a magnetic chess board on the inside back cover, so all the lessons can be played as they're read. Forty-seven spiral-bound pages contain valuable lessons: names and images of the playing pieces, the set-up, how each piece moves, castling, how a pawn becomes a queen, check, checkmate, notation (so you can keep track of both players' moves), relative strength of the pieces, classic game openings, attacks and defenses. Finally all the lessons are put to use in the playing of two complete games. The first is a 20-move game with comments on the reasons for certain moves; next is the analysis of an actual 45-turn game played by two grand masters. ... 48 pages. © Parents' Choice

Meet Our Experts

Pauline Harris is a children's librarian with the San Francisco Public Library, and the mother of three daughters, all under the age of 6.

Darlene Kenny is the librarian at San Francisco's Clarendon Elementary School, a California Distinguished School. Darlene has been Clarendon's librarian for 20 years, during which time both her son and her nephew graduated from the school.

Dr. Jan LaBonty is a professor in the School of Education at the University of Montana.



Danielle Marshall is a former longtime bookseller, most notably for Powell's Books in Portland, Oregon. She continues her love of all things book related by now working as the marketing manager for Beyond Words Publishing, best known as the publisher of *The Secret*. When not working or reading, you can find Danielle with a saucepan or an iPod in her hands.

Ellen Phillips holds a master's degree in library and information management and has been a librarian in the Saddleback Valley Unified School District in California for 22 years. She has worked in both elementary and secondary libraries, created recommended book lists for K-12 teachers and managed motivational reading programs for both elementary and secondary school students. Ellen is the mother of two grown daughters, both avid readers.


Krishna Ashley Roach is an early education administrator. As a former book seller for over 16 years she created reading lists for K-12 teachers. Krishna is the mother of three boys, ages 13, 10 and 2.

Jennifer Thompson is a Reading Specialist for the Manassas City Public Schools in Virginia. She was recently awarded the Washington Post's Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award. Jennifer has 18 years of teaching experience, a

Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction, and a Reading Specialist
License for K-12.


Children's Choices, a project of the International Reading Association and The Children's Book Council, is an annual list of favorite books chosen by children.



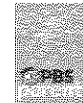
 Common Sense Media is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping parents make informed media and entertainment choices for their families.

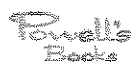
Kepler's Books, a half-century old, full-service general bookstore in Menlo Park, California. Antonia Squire is the buyer and manager of the children's department there. Squire believes that a reluctant reader is one who has not yet found the right book, and takes great pleasure in putting the right book in the hands of the right child.



 The Parents' Choice Foundation is an independent, not-for-profit evaluator of children's books, videos, toys, audios, computer software, television and magazines. Its mission is to "search out and recommend products that help kids grow - imaginatively, physically, morally and mentally ..."

PBS Parents On PBS Parents, a section of the PBS Web site, you'll find a feature called Bookfinder, where you can discover books geared to the age of your child.



 From a storefront in 1971 in Portland, Oregon, Powell's Books, an independent family-owned bookstore, has grown into a mecca for book lovers with six locations in the Portland area and an award-winning Web site.

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