

J Newbery Rylant Missing May*

After the death of her beloved aunt who has raised her, Summer and her uncle Ob leave their West Virginia trailer in search of the strength to go on living.

J Sachar There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom*

An unmanageable, but lovable, eleven-year-old misfit learns to believe in himself when he gets to know the new school counselor, who is a sort of misfit too.

J Soto Taking Sides*

Lincoln Mendoza, an aspiring basketball player, must come to terms with his divided loyalties when he moves from the Hispanic inner city to a suburban neighborhood.

J Newbery Spinelli Maniac Magee*

After his parents die, Jeffrey Lionel Magee's life becomes legendary, as he accomplishes athletic and other feats which awe his contemporaries.

J Spinelli Loser*

Even though his classmates consider him a loser, Donald's optimism and his family's support keep him from feeling that way about himself.

J Van Draanen Secret Identity*

Fifth-grader Nolan Byrd, tired of being called names by the class bully, has a secret identity--Shredderman!

J Newbery Voight Dacey's Song*

After being abandoned by her mother, Dacey finds starting again requires love, trust, humor and courage.

sequel to YA Voigt Homecoming

* = part of a series or check out other books by this author



Realistic Fiction

J Chapter Books

J Avi Nothing But the Truth: A Documentary Novel*

A ninth-grader's suspension for humming "The Star-Spangled Banner" during homeroom becomes a national news story.

J Bauer On My Honor*

When his best friend drowns while they are both swimming in a treacherous river that they had promised never to go near, Joel is devastated and terrified at having to tell both sets of parents the terrible consequences of their disobedience.

also: J Bauer Squashed

J Blume Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*

Faced with the difficulties of growing up and choosing a religion, Margaret talks over her problems with her own private God.

J Byars The Not-Just-Anybody Family*

With a young brother in the hospital, a grandfather in jail, and their mother traveling with a rodeo, Maggie and Vern try to settle family problems.

J Newbery Cleary Dear Mr. Henshaw*

In his letters to his favorite author, Leigh reveals his problems in coping with his parents' divorce, being the new boy in school, and generally finding his own place in the world.

J Clements Frindle*

When he decides to turn his fifth grade teacher's love of the dictionary around on her, clever Nick Allen invents a new word and begins a chain of events that quickly moves beyond his control.

also: J Clements The Janitor's Boy

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J Cooney The Face on the Milk Carton*

A photograph of a missing girl on a milk carton leads Janie on a search for her real identity.
sequels

J Newbery Creech Walk Two Moons*

After her mother leaves home suddenly, thirteen-year-old Sal and her grandparents take a car trip retracing her mother's route.
also: J Creech Bloomability

J Curtis The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963*

The ordinary interactions and everyday routines of the Watsons, an African American family living in Flint, Michigan, are drastically changed after they go to visit Grandma in Alabama in the summer of 1963.
also: J Curtis Bud, Not Buddy

J Danziger P.S. Longer Letter Later*

Best friends Elizabeth and Tara*Starr continue their friendship through letter-writing after Tara*Starr's family moves to another state.

J DeClemnts Nothing's Fair In the Fifth Grade*

A fifth grade class, repelled by the overweight new student who has serious home problems, finally learns to accept her.

J DiCamillo Because of Winn-Dixie*

Ten-year-old India Opal Buloni describes her first summer in the town of Naomi, Florida, and all the good things that happen to her because of her big ugly dog Winn-Dixie.

J Fleischman Seedfolks*

One by one, a number of people of varying ages and backgrounds transform a trash-filled inner-city lot into a productive and beautiful garden, and in doing so, the gardeners themselves are transformed.

J Gantos Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key*

To the constant disappointment of his mother and his teachers, Joey has trouble paying attention or controlling his mood swings when his prescription meds wear off and he starts getting worked up and acting wired.

J Howe The Misfits

Four students who do not fit in at their small-town middle school decide to create a third party for the student council elections to represent all students who have ever been called names.

J Jimenez The Circuit*

The stories of a migrant farmer worker family are told from the point of view of the young son as the

family makes “the circuit” from one labor camp to the next.

J Newbery Konigsburg The View From Saturday*

Four students, with their own individual stories, develop a special bond and attract the attention of their teacher, a paraplegic, who chooses them to represent their sixth-grade class in the Academic Bowl competition.

J Lowery Anastasia Krupnik*

Ten-year-old fourth grader Anastasia has a trying year as she experiences rejection over a long labored poem, fights acceptance of a coming arrival of a baby brother or sister, deliberates about becoming a Catholic (in order to change her name) and has a crush on a boy.

J McDonald Judy Moody*

Third grader Judy Moody is in a bad mood on the first day of school until she gets an assignment to create a “Me” collage.

J Newbery Naylor Shiloh*

When he finds a beagle in the hills near his home, Marty tries to hide it from his family and the dog's real owner, a mean-spirited man known to mistreat his dogs.

J Newbery Paterson Bridge to Terabithia*

The life of a boy in rural Virginia expands when he befriends a newcomer who subsequently meets an untimely death trying to reach their hideaway, Terabithia, during a storm.

J Paterson The Great Gilly Hopkins*

An eleven-year-old foster child tries to cope with her longings and fears as she schemes against everyone who tries to be friendly.

J Paulsen Molly McGinty Has a Really Good Day*

When supremely organized seventh-grader, Molly McGinty, loses the notebook she relies on to keep her life in order she spends the day in chaos.

J Perkins Criss Cross

Teens in a small town question their identities as they search for the meaning of life and love.

J Ryan Becoming Naomi Leon*

When Naomi's absent mother resurfaces to claim her, Naomi runs away to Mexico with her great-grandmother and younger brother in search of her father.

J Snicket The Bad Beginning*

The first in the thirteen book series “A Series of Unfortunate Events”, this sets the Baudelaire children off on a bad beginning with their evil relative Count Olaf.

J Speare The Sign of the Beaver*

Left alone to guard the family’s wilderness home in eighteenth-century Maine, a boy is hard-pressed to survive until local Native Americans teach him their skills.

J Sperry Call It Courage

Ever since his mother drowned, Mafatu has been afraid of the ocean and is called a coward by his island people. He decides to conquer his fear, even if it means certain death.

J Stevenson Treasure Island*

While going through the possessions of a deceased guest who owed them money, the mistress of an inn and her son find a treasure map to a pirate’s fortune and danger too.

J Taylor The Cay*

After his freighter is torpedoed during World War II, Phillip is left blinded, struggling to survive and dependent upon Timothy, a Black man also cast away from the ship.

J Voigt Homecoming*

After their mother has a nervous breakdown, Dicey and her brother and sister must find their way hundreds of miles to their grandmother’s. But what if she doesn’t want them?

* = series or



ADVENTURE

J Aiken The Wolves of Willoughby Chase

Wicked wolves without and a grim governess within threaten Bonnie and her cousin when Bonnie’s parents leave for a sea voyage.

J Alexander The Illyrian Adventure*

In search treasure and an army of magical warriors, Vesper Holly is plunged into a between rebel forces and their overlords.

J Avi The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*

Thirteen year old Charlotte becomes the center of a deadly sea voyage feud between captain and crew that challenges her courage.

J Burnford The Incredible Journey

A cat and two dogs face starvation, exposure and wild animals in their perilous 250-mile trek through wilderness to find their beloved family.

J Creech The Wanderer*

Thirteen year old Sophie is the only girl on board “The Wanderer” as her family struggles to survive their voyage across the Atlantic.

J Curtis Bud, Not Buddy*

Bud sets out to find his real father. His only clues are some old jazz posters and rocks with mysterious numbers on them.

J DiCamillo The Tale of Despereaux*

Despereaux is a mouse in love with music, stories and a princess named Pea. But the rat Roscuro lives in darkness and is determined to bring Despereaux’s plans to ruin.

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J DiTerlizzi The Spiderwick Chronicles*

When the Grace children stay at their aunt's house, they discover a field guide to fairies that leads them into some unusual adventures.

J Newbery DuBois The Twenty-one Balloons

The incredible adventures of Professor Sherman who sets off in a hot-air balloon across the Pacific Ocean and makes it to the Atlantic.

J Farmer A Girl Named Disaster*

Twelve year old Nhamo flees an impending marriage to a cruel man as she struggles to escape drowning and starvation alone on the Musengezi River on the way to Zimbabwe.

J Newbery Fleischman The Whipping Boy*

Orphan Jemmy takes the whippings for the Prince whenever the Prince does something wrong. The two find themselves thrown together as they try to escape their situations.

J Newbery George Julie of the Wolves*

Eskimo girl Miyax runs away from her Alaskan home but gets lost in the Alaskan tundra and is taken in by a pack of wolves.

J Herge The Adventures of Tintin*

The adventures of young reporter Tintin and his dog Snowy are chronicled in this series of graphic novel adventure stories.

J Hesse Stowaway

To escape the life he hates in London, 11-year-old Nicholas stows away on a ship only to find himself on a 3-year voyage with Captain Cooke.

J Hiaasen Hoot*

New to Florida, Roy is caught up in adventures with potty-trained alligators, burrowing owls, a fake-fart champion, a renegade eco-avenger, and poisonous snakes.

J Hobbs Far North*

Stranded in a world of ice, snow, moose, wolves and bears, Gabe and Ray struggle to survive the frozen Canadian wilderness.

J Jacques Redwall*

Matthias, the young mouse, is determined to find Martin the Warrior's legendary sword to help Redwall defeat its enemies. A great series.

J London The Call of the Wild*

Buck, a California dog, is kidnapped and made to pull a sled by gold seeking men where he faces a world of violence, brutality and danger.

J Newbery Lowry Number the Stars*

During the German occupation of Denmark, 10-year-old Annemarie learns to be brave when she shelters her Jewish friend from the Nazis.

J Mikaelson Stranded

Having lost a foot in an accident, Koby tries to prove her self-reliance by rescuing two stranded pilot whales near her Florida Keys home.

J O'Dell Island of the Blue Dolphins*

Alone on an island for 18 years, Indian girl Karana must face wild dogs, cruel Aleutian hunters, and a precarious food supply to survive.

J Newbery Patron The Higher Power of Lucky*

Fearing that her legal guardian plans to abandon her to return to France, Lucky Trimble decides to run away while seeking stability in her life.

J Paulsen Hatchet*

After a plane crash, Brian learns to survive in the wilderness with only his hatchet as he hopes he will be rescued before it's too late.

J Pearce Tom's Midnight Garden

Tom expects a boring summer at his great-aunt and uncle's house, but when the clock strikes "Thirteen", things become anything but boring.

J Pierce Alanna: The First Adventure*

Eleven year old Alanna aspires to be a knight, She disguises herself as a boy to become a royal page and learns many hard lessons along her path of high adventure.

J Rawls Where the Red Fern Grows

A boy and his two dogs could be the finest hunting team in the whole county. Glory and victory may be coming to them, but sadness waits too.

J Newbery Sachar Holes*

Stanley is sent to detention camp in a dried up lake where he is forced to dig holes. The warden claims it builds character which is a lie, and Stanley must try to dig up the truth.

J Newbery Schlitz Good Masters! Sweet Ladies
Short one-person plays featuring characters, between ten and fifteen years old, who live in or near a thirteenth-century English manor.

J Schmidt Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy

In 1911, Turner Buckminster hates his new home in Maine. When he meets a new friend, Lizzie, who lives on an island founded by former slaves, trouble begins.

J Selznick The Invention of Hugo Cabret
Hugo, an orphan living and repairing clocks within the walls of a Paris train station in 1931 tries to keep his undercover life and his biggest secret from being jeopardized.

J Spinelli Milkweed*
Set in Warsaw during World War II, a young Jewish orphan steals to survive and changes his name to avoid capture by Nazis. His positive attitude helps him survive.

J Taylor The Cay*
When their freighter is torpedoed by a German submarine during World War II, Philip is blinded by a blow to the head, and set adrift. He and an old black man are stranded on a tiny island where the boy faces his prejudice.

J Taylor Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry*
A black family in the South of the 1930's is faced with extreme prejudice and discrimination.

J Yep Serpent's Children*
In 19th-century China, a girl struggles to protect her family from bandits, famine, and a family conflict.

* = part of a series or check out other books by this author

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Historical Fiction

J Chapter Books

J Anderson Fever, 1793
In 1793 Philadelphia, Matilda Cook, separated from her sick mother, learns about perseverance and self-reliance when she is forced to cope with the horrors of a yellow fever epidemic.

J Anderson Octavian Nothing, Vol. 1 & 2*
Diaries and letters tell the story of Octavian, a young African American, who is part of a science experiment in the years leading up to and during the Revolutionary War.

J Boyne The Boy in the Striped Pajamas
Bored and lonely after his family moves from Berlin to a place called "Out-With" in 1942, Bruno, the son of a Nazi officer, befriends a boy in striped pajamas who lives behind a wire fence.

J Choldenko Al Capone Does My Shirts*
In 1938, Moose's family moves to Alcatraz where his father is a prison guard. He faces life on the prison island and problems with his autistic sister,

J Newbery Curtis Elijah of Buxton*
In 1859, Elijah, the first free-born child in Buxton, Canada, a haven for slaves fleeing the American south, tries to bring to justice the preacher who has stolen money to be used to buy a family's freedom.

J Cushman Catherine Called Birdy*
Set in 1290, Birdy's diary tells of her life in a cold, damp manor house, and her ambition to escape her dismal life and avoid a set-up marriage.

J Cushman Lucy Whipple*
Lucy, her mother, and young brother leave their comfortable life in Boston for the rowdy gold country of 1849 California.

J Dowell Dovey Coe

Accused of murder in her Carolina mountain town in 1928, 12-year-old Dovey Coe comes to a new understanding of others, including her deaf brother.

J George My Side of the Mountain*

Thirteen-year-old Sam leaves home to live alone in the Catskill Mountains. He tells about his struggle for survival and his ultimate realization that he needs human companionship.

J Jimenez The Circuit*

Stories told by the son of a migrant family about their back-breaking work picking strawberries, cotton, carrots, and enduring extreme poverty. Filled with faith and hope and love.

Also : Breaking Through and Reaching Out

J Karwoski Quake! Disaster in San Francisco, 1906

The story of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake as seen through the eyes of Jacob, a 13-year-old Jewish boy who lives in a boarding house with his father and younger sister.

J Laurgaard Patty Reed's Doll

In 1846, the Donner Party is stranded by severe snow storms. Patty's doll tells the story of hardship, death and survival.

J Lawrence Dolphins of Laurentum*

A ragged stranger and the prospect of losing the family's fortune lead a Roman girl and her friends to a seaside villa where danger and treasure are close at hand.

series: Roman Mysteries

J Lester Pharaoh's Daughter, A Novel of Ancient Egypt

A fictionalized account of the Biblical story in which an Egyptian princess rescues a Hebrew infant who becomes a prophet of his people while his sister finds her true self as a priestess to the Egyptian gods.

J Newbery Lowry Number the Stars*

In 1943, during the German occupation of Denmark, 10-year-old Annemarie learns how to be brave and courageous when she helps shelter her Jewish friend from the Nazis.

J McCaughrean Kite Rider

In 13th-century China, 12-year-old Haoyou has life-changing adventures when he takes to the sky as a circus kite rider and ends up meeting the great Mongol ruler Kublai Khan.

J Napoli Bound*

Xing-Xing endures a life of neglect and servitude, as her step-mother mutilates her own child's feet so that she alone might marry well. Based on Chinese Cinderella tales.

J Nixon Orphan Train Adventures*

In 1860, when their widowed mother can no longer support them, six siblings are sent on the orphan train from New York City to live with farm families in Missouri.

J O'Dell Sarah Bishop*

After the deaths of her father and brother in the Revolutionary War, Sarah flees from the British and struggles to shape a life for herself in the wilderness.

J Park A single Shard*

Tree-ear, a 13-year-old orphan in medieval Korea, lives under a bridge in a potters' village and longs to learn how to throw delicate celadon ceramics.

J Paterson Jip, His Story*

Jip lives in a orphanage/asylum in Vermont in 1855. He befriends a deranged old man and struggles to find why his parents abandoned him.

J Paterson Lyddie*

In 1883, abandoned by their parents, Lyddie and her brother work as servants. Lyddie runs away to work in a factory to save money to buy back the farm.

J Peck A Long Way From Chicago

A Boy recounts his annual summer trips to rural Illinois with his sister during the Great Depression to visit their larger-than-life grandmother.

J Peck The Teacher's Funeral*

Set in 1904, Russell dreams of quitting school and thinks he's in luck when the old teacher dies. But his dreams are shattered when his older sister takes over the teaching.

J Rawls Where the Red Fern Grows

A young boy living in the Ozarks in the 1930's, achieves his heart's desire when he becomes the owner of two redbone hounds and teaches them to be champion hunters.

J Ryan Esperanza Rising*

Esperanza and her mother must leave their life of wealth and privilege in Mexico to go work in the labor camps of Southern California, where they must adapt to the harsh circumstances facing Mexican farm workers.

J Nixon The Name of the Game Was Murder

While visiting her great-uncle at his fortress-like home on Catalina Island, Samantha becomes involved in his game that leads to murder

J Newbery Raskin Westing Game

The mysterious death of an eccentric millionaire brings together an unlikely assortment of heirs who must uncover the circumstances of his death before they can claim their inheritance.

J Roberts Twisted Summer

Cici hopes for a romantic summer at the beach but instead finds herself trying to solve a murder which occurred there the previous year.

J Stewart Mysterious Benedict Society

After passing a series of mind-bending tests, four children are selected for a secret mission that requires them to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, where the only rule is that there are no rules.

sequels

J Taylor Sniper

Fifteen-year-old Ben must cope alone when a mysterious sniper begins shooting the big cats in his family's private zoological preserve.

also: Sweet Friday Island by the same author

J Van Draanen Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief*

Thirteen-year-old Sammy gets in trouble when she involves herself in the investigation of a robbery at the "seedy" hotel across the street from the seniors' building where she is living with her grandmother.

series: Sammy Keyes



MYSTERY

JET Early Chapter Books (grades 3-4)

JET Adler Cam Jansen and the summer camp mysteries*

Cam Jansen and her best friend are spending three weeks at Camp Eagle Lake, where they play sports, do crafts, and solve three mysteries.

series: Cam Jansen

JET Roy The Zombie Zone*

Reports of zombies and grave-robbers alarm the people of a Louisiana swampland village, but Ruth Rose, Josh, and Dink are suspicious.

series: A to Z Mysteries

JET Stilton Lost treasure of the Emerald Eye*

When Geronimo's sister discovers a mysterious map of a faraway island, the gang of the "Rodent's gazette" goes on a treasure hunt.

series: Geronimo Stilton

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J Series Books

- J series A American Girl Mysteries*
- J series B Boxcar Children Mysteries*
- J series G Get a Clue*
- J series H Hank the Cowdog*
- J series H Hardy Boys mysteries*
- J series M Mysteries in Our National Parks
- J series N Nancy Drew mysteries*

J Chapter Books (grades 4-5)

J Broach Shakespeare's Secret

Named after a character in Shakespeare, misfit 6th grader Hero explores this connection because of a diamond supposedly hidden in her new house, an intriguing neighbor, and the unexpected attention of a popular boy in school.

J Bunting The Lambkins

Kidnapped by the lonely widow of a brilliant geneticist, Kyle finds himself shrunk to doll-size and living with other children in a dollhouse from which there seems to be no escape.

also: The Ghost Children by the same author

J Hale The Big Nap: from the tattered casebook of Chet Gecko, private eye*

Who is turning the students at Emerson Hickey Elementary into zombies? It's up to 4th-grade private eye Chet Gecko to find out.

series: A Chet Gecko Mystery

J Howe Bunnacula : a rabbit tale of mystery*

Though scoffed at by Harold the dog, Chester the cat tries to warn his human family that their foundling baby bunny must be a vampire.

sequels

J Newbery Konigsburg From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler

A young girl runs away with her brother to live in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The two unravel a mystery behind a famous sculpture.

J Roberts The View from the Cherry Tree*

When Rob sees his neighbor get murdered, no one believes him—except the murderer.

J Sobol Encyclopedia Brown, Boy Detective*

Is there any mystery 5th-grader Encyclopedia Brown can't solve? Solve the cases right along with him.

series: Encyclopedia Brown

J Stanley The Mysterious Case of the Allbright Academy

Eighth-grader Franny investigates why most of the students at their new boarding school are brilliant, beautiful, and perfectly behaved.

J Warner Boxcar Children*

Four orphans take shelter in an old boxcar, and turn it into a safe, cozy home..

sequels: Boxcar Mysteries in J series

J Wright The Dollhouse Murders*

A dollhouse filled with a ghostly light in the middle of the night and dolls that have moved from where she last left them lead Amy and her sister to unravel the mystery surrounding grisly murders that took place years ago.

J Chapter Books J (grades 5 and up)

J Avi Wolf Rider: a tale of terror*

After receiving an apparent crank call from a man claiming to have committed murder, Andy finds his close relationship with his father crumbling as he struggles to make everyone believe him.

also: Something Upstairs and Devil's Race by the same author

J Balliet Chasing Vermeer

When seemingly unrelated and strange events start to happen and a precious Vermeer painting disappears, 11-year-olds Petra and Calder combine talents to solve an international art scandal.

J Cooney The Face on the Milk Carton*

Here the crime is kidnapping and the kidnappers are the people that Janie has loved and known as her parents. It's the face on the milk carton that Janie recognizes as her 3-year-old self that turns her previously carefree existence upside down.

sequels

J Duncan I Know What You Did Last Summer*

Four teen-agers who have desperately tried to conceal their responsibility for a hit-and-run accident are pursued by a mystery figure seeking revenge.

also: Killing Mr. Griffin and Don't Look Behind You by the same author

J Hamilton The House of Dies Drear

An African-American family tries to unravel the secrets of their new home which was once a stop on the Underground Railroad.

J Stewart Beyond the Deepwoods

Young Twig lives in the Deepwoods, among the Woodtrolls, but he isn't one of them. To find where he belongs, Twig wanders into the dangerous world to find his roots, not in the trees, but in the skies. . . .
series: The Edge Chronicles

J Stroud The Amulet of Samarkand

Nathaniel, a magician's apprentice, summons up the 5,000 year old djinni Bartimaeus. But summoning Bartimaeus and controlling him are two different things. Nathaniel finds himself in a whirlwind of magical espionage, murder, blackmail, and revolt.
series: The Bartimaeus Trilogy

J Thompson The New Policeman

Irish teenager JJ Liddy discovers time is leaking from his world into the land of the fairies. When he attempts to stop the leak he finds out about his own family, the music that he loves, and a crime his great-grandfather may or may not have committed.

J Tolkien The Hobbit

All you need to know is that if you like fantasy, *The Lord of the Rings* series is one you must read!
series: The Lord of the Rings

J Travers Mary Poppins

It all starts when Mary Poppins is blown to the Banks' house. She becomes a *most* unusual nanny to Jane, Michael, and the twins. Who else but can slide *up* banisters, pull an armchair out of a carpetbag, and make medicine taste like a lime-juice cordial?
series

J Winthrop The Castle in the Attic

A gift of a toy castle, complete with silver knight, introduces William to a magical adventure when he finds he can enter the world of the castle.
Series

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J Chapter Books

J Alexander The Book of Three

Taran, the assistant pig-keeper, finds his chance to be a hero on a mission to save his homeland.
series: The Prydain Chronicles

J Anderson Whales on Stilts

Lily Gefelty and her friends are all that stands in the way of an evil plot by a devious whale-human hybrid. A silly plot; a funny book.

J Baum The Wizard of Oz

After a tornado hits Kansas, Dorothy and her dog, Toto, find themselves in the strange land of Oz.
series

J Collins Gregor the Overlander

When eleven-year-old Gregor and his two-year-old sister are pulled into a strange underground world, they trigger an epic battle involving men, bats, rats, cockroaches, and spiders while on a quest foretold by ancient prophecy.
series: Underland Chronicles

J Cooper Over Sea, Under Stone

Three children on vacation in Cornwall find an ancient manuscript which sends them on a dangerous quest that entraps them in the eternal battle between the forces of the Light and the Dark.
series: Dark is Rising

J Coville The Dragonslayers

A brave squire, an earnest page, and a strong-willed princess set out to try to slay the dragon created to carry out a witch's revenge.

J DiTerlizzi The Field Guide

When the Grace children go to stay at their Great Aunt Lucinda's house, they discover a field guide to fairies and their adventures begin.

series: The Spiderwick Chronicles

J Duane So You Want to Be a Wizard

Thirteen-year-old Nita, tormented by a gang of bullies, finds help in a library book on wizardry which guides her into a dimension where magic transforms machines and other weird wonders.

series: Young Wizards

J Eager Half Magic

During a very boring summer, Jane finds a coin which grants wishes. The problem is that only half the wish comes true, making wishing very tricky.

series

J Funke Dragon Rider

Firedrake, a silver dragon, is joined by a brownie and an orphan boy in a quest to find the legendary valley known as the Rim of Heaven, encountering friendly and unfriendly creatures along the way, and trying not to be caught by an old enemy.

J Newbery Gaiman The Graveyard Book

Nobody Owens is a normal boy, except that he has been raised by ghosts and other denizens of the graveyard.

J Gardner I, Coriander

In 17th century London, Coriander, a girl who has inherited magic from her mother, must find a way to use this magic to save herself and an inhabitant of the fairy world where her mother was born.

J Le Guin A Wizard of Earthsea

A boy grows to manhood while attempting to undo the evil he unleashed on the world as an apprentice to the Master Wizard.

series: Earthsea

J Lewis The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe

Four English children find their way through the back of a wardrobe into the magic land of Narnia and assist its ruler, the golden lion Aslan, in defeating the White Witch who has cursed the land.

series: The Chronicles of Narnia

J McKinley The Blue Sword

Harry, the Homelander orphan girl becomes King's Rider and heir to the Blue Sword which no woman has wielded since Lady Aerin bore it into battle.

sequel: The Hero and the Crown

J Mull Fablehaven

When Kendra and Seth stay at their grandparents' estate, they discover a sanctuary for magical creatures and a battle between good and evil.

series: Fablehaven

J Nesbit Five Children and It

Written by one of J.K. Rowling's favorite authors, this is the story of children who find an old, hideous and short-tempered sand fairy, which awards them a tricky wish that lasts only until sunset.

J Nimmo Midnight for Charlie Bone

Charlie is mostly happy until his father's strange family observes his uncanny talent, and sends him to a school with a sinister headmaster. Soon Charlie and his new friends become part of an ancient battle.

series: The Children of the Red King

J Nix Mister Monday

Seven days. Seven keys. Seven virtues. Seven sins. One mysterious house is the doorway to a strange world - where one boy is about to go and unlock fantastical secrets.

series: Keys to the Kingdom

J Pierce Sandry's Book

Four children, outcast and misfit among their families and peoples, are brought to Winding Circle to learn a new way of life and their hidden talents.

series: Circle of Magic

J Pullman The Golden Compass

Lyra, along with her daemon familiar Pantalaimon, is drawn into the heart of a terrible struggle, born of stolen children and witch clans, never suspecting that she is destined to win, or lose, an epic battle.

series: His Dark Materials

J Riordan The Lightning Thief

Percy Jackson is trying to make it through 6th grade without getting expelled – again, when he discovers his teacher is a monster, his best friend is a satyr, and he is the son of a mortal woman and a god.

series: Percy Jackson and the Olympians

J Sage Magyk

After learning she is the Princess, Jenna is whisked away by the Extraordinary Wizard, and those she believed were her father and brother along with Boy 412—all pursued those who killed her mother.

series: Septimus Heap

J Reeve Larklight

In an alternate Victorian England, young Arthur and his sister Myrtle, residents of Larklight, a floating house in one of Her Majesty's outer space territories, uncover a spidery plot to destroy the solar system.

J Rex The True Meaning of Smekday

When her mother is abducted by aliens on Christmas Eve (or "Smekday" Eve since the Boov invasion), 11 year-old Tip hops in the family car and heads south to find her and meets an alien Boov mechanic who agrees to help her and save the planet from disaster.

J Silverberg Pond Scum

Eleven-year-old Oliver enjoys tormenting insects, until his family moves into an old house which an assortment of animals doesn't want to vacate.

J Sleator House of Stairs

Five 15-year-old orphans with very different personalities are involuntarily placed in a house of endless stairs as experimental subjects.

also: J Sleator The Boxes and The Boy Who Reversed Himself

J Verne 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea

In the mid-19th century, a French professor and his two companions, trapped on a submarine as prisoners of the deranged Captain Nemo, see exotic ocean creatures and strange sights hidden from the world above.

J Waugh Who Goes Home?

On his 13th birthday, Jacob learns a secret about his birth and becomes involved in his father's work to protect others from the planet Ormingat who live on Earth.

* = part of a series or check out other books by this author

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**J
E
T
S**

BTR Beginning-to-Read

BTR Yolen Commander Toad and the Big Black Hole*

The space ship Star Warts, commanded by Commander Toad, encounters a black hole which threatens the vehicle of doom.

series: Commander Toad

JET Early Chapter Books

JET Benton Lunch Walks Among Us*

Franny K. Stein is a mad scientist who likes creepy things, but when she has trouble making friends at her new school she experiments with fitting in-- which works until a monster erupts from a trash can.

series: Franny K. Stein

JET Greenburg On The Dog*

When ten-year-old Andrew invents a shrinking machine, he does not expect to be sucked into the machine along with his cousin Judy, only to end up in a dog's nose.

series: Andrew Lost

J Series

J series Animorphs The Invasion*

Endowed by a dying alien with the power to morph into any animal they touch, friends Jake, Rachel, Cassie, Tobias, and Marco investigate the wonders of the world with their unusual powers.

J series Magic Tree House Dinosaurs Before Dark*

Eight-year-old Jack and his younger sister Annie find a magic tree house, which whisks them back to an ancient time zone where they see live dinosaurs.

J series Star Wars The Rising Force*

Qui-Gon Jinn will not accept Obi-Wan as his jedi apprentice until he learns to control his anger and fear.

series: Star Wars Jedi Apprentice

J Chapter Books

J Anderson Whales on Stilts

Racing against the clock, shy middle-school student Lily and her best friends must foil the plot of her father's evil boss to conquer the world using an army of whales.

J Cameron The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet*

A mystery man inspires two boys to build a space ship which takes them to the planet of Basidium to help the Mushroom people.

series: The Mushroom Planet

J Carman Atherton: The House of Power*

Edgar, an 11-year-old orphan, finds a book that reveals secrets about Atherton, where an elite few to live off the labor of others.

series: Atherton

J Christopher The White Mountains*

Young Will Parker and his companions make a perilous journey to escape from the Tripods, who capture mature human beings and make them docile, obedient servants.

series: Tripod Trilogy

J Clements Things Not Seen*

When fifteen-year-old Bobby wakes up and finds himself invisible, he and his new blind friend Alicia try to find the cause and how to reverse it.

series: Things Not Seen

J Colfer The Supernaturalist

In futuristic Satellite City, fourteen-year-old Cosmo Hill escapes from his orphanage and teams up with three others who share his ability to see supernatural creatures. Together they find the swarming blue Parasites that are invisible to most humans.

J Coville Aliens Ate My Homework*

A miniature spaceship lands in Rod's school science project and reveals five tiny aliens, who ask his help.

series: Alien Adventures

J Dunkle The Sky Inside*

Martin lives in the "perfect world" of HM1 where every year new genetically-engineered children are shipped out to meet their parents. When a stranger comes to take the children, Martin has to choose whether to remain in the dubious safety of HM1, or to break out into the unknown.

J DuPrau City of Ember*

The city of Ember was built deep underground as a last refuge for the human race. Two hundred years later, 12-year-old Lina finds an ancient message that she and her friend Doon must decipher before the lights go out on Ember forever!

sequels: People of Sparks, Diamond of Darkhold, and Prophets of Yonwood

J Farmer The Ear, The Eye and The Arm*

In Zimbabwe in the year 2194, General Matsika's children are kidnapped and put to work in a plastic mine. Three mutant detectives use their special powers to search for them.

J L'Engle A Wrinkle in Time*

Meg and her friends become involved with unearthly strangers and a search for Meg's father, who has disappeared while doing secret work for the government.

J Lowery The Giver*

Given his lifetime assignment at the Ceremony of Twelve, Jonas becomes the receiver of memories shared by only one other in his community and discovers the terrible truth about the society in which he lives.

sequels: Gathering Blue and Messenger

J McCaffrey Dragonsong*

Forbidden by her father to indulge in music, a girl on the planet Pern runs away, taking shelter with the planet's fire lizards who open a new life for her.

sequels: Dragonsinger and Dragondrums

J McKinley Dragonhaven

When Jake Mendoza, who lives in the Smokehill National Park where his father runs the Makepeace Institute of Integrated Dragon Studies, goes on his first solo overnight in the park, he finds an infant dragon.

J Peterson Among the Hidden*

In a future where Population Police enforce the law limiting a family to only two children, Luke has lived his 12 years in isolation and fear on his family's farm, until he meets another "third".

series: Shadow Children

J Philbrick The Last Book in the Universe

After a destructive earthquake, an epileptic teenager nicknamed Spaz begins the fight to bring human intelligence back to the Earth.

More Ideas for Grades 6-8

Adler, David A. ***B. Franklin, Printer***. Holiday House, 2002. Biography/Autobiography.

This biography of Benjamin Franklin is filled with original quotations by Franklin. The text is accompanied by archival prints and includes maps, chronologies, source notes, recommended Web sites, a bibliography, and index.

History/Social Science.

Agra, Carmen. ***Yellow Star, The: The Legend of King Christian X of Denmark***.

Illustrated by Henri Sorensen. Peachtree, 2000. Historical Fiction.

This legend relates how King Christian X of Denmark sewed a yellow star onto his clothing, thus defying Hitler's orders and empowering his people to proclaim solidarity with their Jewish friends and neighbors in World War II. An author's note separates fact from fiction.

Jewish/Jewish American Culture. Picture Book. Christopher Award.

Alexander, Lloyd. ***Gawgon and the Boy, The***. Dutton Books, 2001. Fiction.

In Philadelphia during the 1920s, David becomes ill with pneumonia. During his convalescence he is taught by the Gawgon, a distant cousin of his grandmother. Mixed with details of the 1920s and David's Jamaican family, the story is woven with fantasy and involves David and the Gawgon.

Multicultural Culture. History/Social Science, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Alvarez, Julia. ***Before We Were Free***. Knopf, 2002. Historical Fiction.

Twelve-year-old Anita is faced with the average adolescent obsessions: boys and her appearance. She becomes aware of the mounting political danger to her family in the Dominican Republic of the early 1960s. With her mother, Anita goes into hiding and keeps a secret diary as a means of coping with traumatic events. The first-person narrative and suspenseful plot will elicit thought-provoking discussions about growing up, family ties, courage, the cost of freedom, and political views. Useful in the study of Latin American history and culture.

Latino/Latino American Culture. Pura Belpre Narrative Winner. English-Language Arts/Writing, History/Social Science.

Ancona, George. ***Fiesta U.S.A.*** Illustrated by George Ancona. Dutton Books, 1995. Nonfiction.

Colorful photographs and engaging text describe four holidays celebrated by Latin Americans in different communities of the United States. Holidays include Day of the Dead, Las Posadas, New Year's Day, and Day of the Three Kings. Emphasis is on the involvement of the total community. Useful in Latin American studies at all levels.

Latino/Latino American Culture. Photo-Essay. Pura Belpre Narrative Honor. History/Social Science, Visual and Performing Arts.

Grades 6-8

Anderson, Laurie Halse. ***Fever, 1793***. Simon and Schuster, 2000. Historical Fiction.

This book is set in Philadelphia in 1793. Sixteen-year-old Matilda Cook is separated from her sick mother and learns about perseverance and self-reliance when she is forced to cope with the horrors of a yellow fever epidemic. She flees the city with her grandfather and soon discovers that the sickness is everywhere. Mattie must learn quickly how to survive in a city turned frantic with disease.

History/Social Science, Science.

Andrews-Goebel, Nancy. ***Pot That Juan Built, The***. Illustrated by David Diaz. Lee and Low Books, 2002. Biography/Autobiography.

This picture book biography explains how Juan Quezada rediscovered the art of pottery making practiced by the ancient Casa Grandes people of Mexico and how this discovery led to the revitalization of the village of Mata Ortiz. The left-hand pages tell the story with the cumulative pattern similar to "The House That Jack Built," and the right-hand pages describe in narrative text details about Juan's life and work. Includes photographs and explanation of Quezada's work. Luminous illustrations enhance the text. Useful for learning about pottery, economics, and cultures. California author and illustrator.

Latino/Latino American Culture. Picture Book. Pura Belpre Illustration Honor. Visual and Performing Arts.

Appelt, Kathi. ***Kissing Tennessee and Other Stories from the Stardust Dance***.

Harcourt Brace, 2000. Short Story.

The book presents eight short stories on heartbreak, including love troubles, abuse, and identity. The topics will appeal to both middle and high schoolers as the stories are full of hope and depict resourcefulness. This book addresses controversial issues of interest to many adolescents and includes scenes and language that reflect mature content. Before handing the text to a child, educators and parents should read the book and know the child.

English-Language Arts/Writing.

Avi. ***Crispin: The Cross of Lead***. Hyperion Press, 2002. Historical Fiction.

This tale is set in fourteenth-century England. "Asta's son" is suddenly orphaned, and everything he owns is taken away. Accused of murder, he flees his village and finds protection from a juggler who mentors him. Asta's son learns his true name is Crispin, and he eventually learns the secret of his true identity. Use with history units on feudalism.

Newbery Winner. History/Social Science.

Avi. ***Don't You Know There's a War On?*** HarperCollins, 2001. Historical Fiction.

Nearly everyone's life is touched by World War II in 1943. Howie's father is serving in the merchant marine, and his mother is working long hours. Howie is lonely and frightened and feels helpless in his family situation. But when he learns his favorite teacher is losing her job, he feels empowered to fight to keep her. This funny, sad,

Grades 6-8

and touching book shows what it was like to be a child in the United States during the war.

History/Social Science.

Banks, Kate. *Dillon Dillon*. Frances Foster Books, 2002. Fiction.

Dillon Dillon often wondered but never inquired why he had identical first and last names until the family's annual summer vacation at Lake Waban. At his tenth birthday celebration, Dillon learns the story behind the double names and sets out to make sense of life and ultimately bring magic and healing. Two gifts he receives, a red rowboat and a boomerang, teach him about responsibility and loss.

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. *Black Potatoes: The Story of the Great Irish Famine, 1845-1850*. Houghton Mifflin, 2001. Nonfiction.

This book is an effectively written description of the struggle of the Irish people during a bleak period in history, complete with newspaper accounts and personal stories. Readers are reminded to compare the hunger, poverty, and human suffering to the present.

Western European Culture. Golden Kite Author Winner. History/Social Science.

Batt, Tanya Robyn (reteller). *Fabrics of Fairytale: Stories Spun from Far and Wide, The*. Illustrated by Rachel Griffin. Barefoot Books, 2000. Folklore.

Folktales from seven cultures are told using fabrics and woven materials as a storytelling vehicle. The story and artwork go hand-in-hand. The cultures included are Armenian, Swahili, Chinese, Hawaiian, Swedish, Jewish, and Indonesian. The border patterns are especially interesting as sewing materials are used to illustrate the stories.

Multicultural Culture. Picture Book. Visual and Performing Arts.

Bierhorst, John (reteller). *People with Five Fingers: A Native Californian Creation Tale, The*. Illustrated by Robert Andrew Parker. Marshall Cavendish, 2000. Folklore.

This creation myth explains why every valley in California had a separate Native American nation, each with different customs and languages. In the beginning, Coyote and all the animals busily prepared California for people. Upon the people's arrival, there was so much laughing and talking, all in different languages, that the animals went to the woods, waters, and sky and never spoke again. Good read-aloud.

Native American Culture. Picture Book, Read Aloud. History/Social Science.

Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker. *For Freedom: The Story of a French Spy*. Delacorte Press, 2003. Historical Fiction.

A young girl is recruited into the French Resistance as a messenger after her village is bombed during World War II. This true story is told in the first person. The intriguing

Grades 6-8

plot and subject matter detail the young heroine's bravery and courage in the face of war.

History/Social Science.

Brenner, Barbara. *Voices: Poetry and Art from Around the World*. National Geographic Society, 2000. Poetry.

More than 350 poems and art pieces from six continents are collected in this combination of poetry, art, and geography. A representative work of art matches at least one of the poems on each page. The artwork includes painting, sculpture, ceremonial objects, textiles, and photographs, making this a multicultural masterpiece.

Multicultural Culture. Visual and Performing Arts.

Byrd, Robert. *Leonardo, Beautiful Dreamer*. Illustrated by Robert Byrd. Dutton Books, 2003. Biography/Autobiography.

This biography about Leonardo Da Vinci is filled with detailed illustrations and interesting facts about both Da Vinci and the Renaissance, as well as quotations from his notebooks. Da Vinci was a painter, sculptor, scientist, mathematician, and architect. However, he had little formal schooling and throughout his lifetime left many projects unfinished. An author's note, timeline, and bibliography are included.

Picture Book. Golden Kite Author Winner. Visual and Performing Arts.

Cameron, Ann. *Colibri*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003. Realistic Fiction.

This story set in Guatemala tells of a young Mayan girl who is kidnapped by an unscrupulous man and is forced to lie and beg to get money. She endures an abusive life and longs for the parents she can hardly remember. A fortune-teller gives her the courage to leave, and the pace quickens.

English-Language Arts/Writing, History/Social Science.

Clements, Andrew. *Things Not Seen*. Philomel Books, 2002. Science Fiction.

When fifteen-year-old Bobby wakes up and finds himself invisible, he, his parents, and his new blind friend Alicia try to find out the cause of his condition and the remedy. Bobby is a smart boy who handles his unusual situation with humor and intelligence. This story about self-discovery blends reality with fantasy to keep readers in suspense until the very end.

Science.

Conover, Sarah (adapter). *Kindness: A Treasury of Buddhist Wisdom for Children and Parents*. Eastern Washington University Press, 2001. Nonfiction.

Told in a soft, lyrical voice, this collection of stories and quotations from the Buddhist tradition will be useful for a study on religions of the world. Detailed source notes for the quotes, sayings, and stories are included.

East Indian/East Indian American Culture. English-Language Arts/Writing, History/Social Science.

Grades 6-8

Cooper, Michael. ***Fighting for Honor: Japanese Americans and World War II.*** Houghton Mifflin, 2000. Nonfiction.

This book examines the history of the Japanese in the United States from 1942 to 1945, focusing on their treatment during World War II. It presents a vivid account of heroic combat experiences of Japanese Americans in the American military as well as the mass relocation of Japanese Americans to internment camps.

Japanese/Japanese American Culture. History/Social Science.

Cooper, Michael. ***Remembering Manzanar: Life in a Japanese Relocation Camp.*** Clarion Books, 2002. Biography/Autobiography, Nonfiction.

This is a look at the first relocation camp built for Japanese evacuees living on the West Coast after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Photographs by Ansel Adams and Dorothea Lange, as well as excerpts from diaries and journals, provide first-person accounts of life behind the barbed wire. The biography is framed by the author's participation in the 2001 Manzanar pilgrimage and serves as an introduction for all ages. California setting.

Japanese/Japanese American Culture. History/Social Science.

Creech, Sharon. ***Heartbeat.*** HarperCollins, 2004. Fiction in Verse.

Life has rhythms in the life of twelve-year-old Annie, who loves to run, as she ponders the many progressions of adolescence. Each heartbeat in this free-verse novel reflects her journey as a runner and the obstacles that she must overcome in the self-discovery process. Readers will take pleasure in this tender portrait of Annie.

English-Language Arts/Vocabulary, English-Language Arts/Writing, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Creech, Sharon. ***Love That Dog.*** Joanna Cotler Books, 2001. Fiction in Verse.

Told in free verse, this story tells of a boy who comes to enjoy poetry through a wise teacher's introduction. His reluctance becomes interest, then enjoyment, and finally a passion for reading and writing poetry. Through poetry he is finally able to communicate his feelings and thoughts.

Read Aloud. Christopher Award. English-Language Arts/Writing.

Creech, Sharon. ***Ruby Holler.*** Joanna Cotler Books, 2002. Fiction.

Thirteen-year-old twins, Dallas and Florida, have grown up in an orphanage and are convinced they're clumsy, stupid, and unlovable until they are taken in by Sairy and Tiller. Time, patience, plenty of home-cooked food, and caring prove to the twins that they are worthy of love. Filled with humor, adventure, mischief, mystery, and good will, this book is an entertaining read.

Grades 6-8

Crowe, Chris. *Mississippi Trial, 1955*. Phyllis Fogelman Books, 2002. Historical Fiction.

In Mississippi in 1955, a sixteen-year-old finds himself at odds with his grandfather over issues surrounding the kidnapping and murder of fourteen-year-old Emmett Till, an African American from Chicago. This powerful fiction narrative describes the racially motivated murder and the aftermath of that crime that launched the Civil Rights Movement.

Black/African American Culture. History/Social Science.

Crutcher, Chris. *King of the Mild Frontier: An Ill-Advised Autobiography*. Greenwillow Books, 2003. Biography/Autobiography.

Popular young adult novelist Crutcher writes about his own life, growing up in a small town, Cascade, Idaho. Here is a clear portrait of how a writer's own experience both infuses his fiction and remains separate from imagined stories he writes.

English-Language Arts/Writing.

Cushman, Karen. *Matilda Bone*. Clarion Books, 2000. Historical Fiction.

Matilda, an orphan, is sent to serve the town's local bonesetter, Red Peg, in this story set in the fourteenth-century. She has no interest in or knowledge of medical practices and prefers to call on the saints for answers. However, the saints aren't much help when it comes to the practical work of serving the sick and needy, and eventually she acquires healing skills. Useful in the study of life during medieval times. California author.

History/Social Science.

Danticat, Edwidge. *Behind the Mountains*. Orchard Books, 2002. Historical Fiction.

Thirteen-year-old Celiane documents in her diary life with her mother and brother in Haiti and the immigration of her family to Brooklyn in January 2001 to reunite with her father. This well-written novel explores a variety of themes: immigrant experiences, cultural similarities and differences, and family strength in difficult times. Useful for teaching writing in the first person and discussing multicultural issues, diversity, and the Haitian American immigrant experience. This book is part of the First Person Fiction series.

Multicultural Culture. English-Language Arts/Writing, History/Social Science.

Demi. *Emperor's New Clothes: A Tale Set in China, The*. Illustrated by Demi. Margaret McElderry Books, 2000. Fairy Tale.

Set in ancient China, this story is a retelling of the classic Hans Christian Andersen tale about the vain emperor. Chinese symbols are used throughout the tale and displayed in the colorful illustrations. The author's note explains these symbols and where to look for them in the book. Can be used as a picture book for older readers.

Chinese/Chinese American Culture. Picture Book.

Grades 6-8

Demi. ***Gandhi***. Illustrated by Demi. Margaret McElderry Books, 2001.
Biography/Autobiography.

This story of Gandhi's life and work is told in a simple, straightforward manner, presenting his social and political goals with reverence. Includes author's notes. The author/illustrator's signature artwork using gold borders and accents of brilliant color evoke the East Indian culture. Can be used as a picture book for older readers.

East Indian/East Indian American Culture. Picture Book. History/Social Science.

Demi. ***Muhammad***. Illustrated by Demi. Margaret McElderry Books, 2003.
Biography/Autobiography.

This easy-to-read narrative tells the story of Muhammad's life and the beginning of Islam. The artwork depicts the religion and the culture of that time. Included are a one-page description of Islam, a map of Muhammad's world, and a bibliography of text and art references. This work can be used as a tie-in with seventh grade social science and as a picture book for older readers.

Middle Eastern Culture. Picture Book. History/Social Science.

Dickinson, Peter. ***Ropemaker, The***. Delacorte Press, 2001. Fantasy.

When the magic that protects their valley starts to fail, Tilja and her companions journey into the evil empire to find the ancient magician Faheel, who originally cast those spells in this quest fantasy.

Michael L. Printz Honor.

Divakaruni, Chitra Banerjee. ***Conch Bearer: A Novel, The***. Roaring Book Press, 2003.
Fantasy.

Challenges await twelve-year-old Anand, accompanied by a mysterious man and a headstrong street child, whose task is to return a conch shell that possesses mystical power to its home in the Himalayas, hundreds of miles away. The exotic journey draws on the setting of India's culture, is devoted to peacefulness, and affords a glimpse of the lad's growth and maturation in an intriguing and suspenseful adventure.

**East Indian/East Indian American Culture, Middle Eastern Culture.
History/Social Science.**

Draper, Sharon M. ***Double Dutch***. Atheneum, 2002. Fiction.

Set in Cincinnati, Ohio, this novel features eighth graders Delia, Randy, and the Tolliver twins. All of them have secrets. Delia does not tell anyone she cannot read. Randy is afraid to tell anyone that his father is missing. The Tolliver twins project the image of bullies, yet they are shy. There is realistic teen dialog and a plot involving a tornado hitting the school. Can be used for discussing fears and acceptance of self and others. This book addresses controversial issues of interest to many adolescents and includes scenes and language that reflect mature content. Before handing the text to a child, educators and parents should read the book and know the child.

Black/African American Culture. English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Grades 6-8

Ellis, Deborah. ***Mud City***. Groundwood Books, 2003. Historical Fiction.

Fourteen-year-old Shauzia, an Afghan girl disguised as a boy, leaves home to avoid a prearranged marriage, becomes independent, and eventually goes to France. She arrives at a refugee camp (Mud City) in Pakistan but opts for life on the streets with Jasper, a dog companion. Political background information, a glossary, maps, and a Web site are included. This can be a stand-alone book or introduced as the third title in the Breadwinner Trilogy.

East Indian/East Indian American Culture. English-Language Arts/Vocabulary, History/Social Science, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Engdahl, Sylvia Louise. ***Enchantress from the Stars***. Illustrated by Leo Dillon and Diane Dillon. Walker and Company, 2001. Original ©1970. Science Fiction.

This thought-provoking novel combines science fiction with fantasy and tells the story of contact on the planet Andrecia between three civilizations. Narratives from members of each group give the reader different versions of this interaction. There are handsome new illustrations by the Dillons in this reprint of the 1971 Newbery Honor Book. May be useful for literature and social science assignments.

Newbery Honor. English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Farmer, Nancy. ***House of the Scorpion, The***. Atheneum, 2002. Science Fiction.

In a future where clones are despised, Matt enjoys special favors as the clone of El Patron, the powerful patriarch of a drug family in the country of Opium. When Matt discovers the true reason for his existence, he plans an escape to the neighboring country, Utopia. But even there, he finds that all is not right, and he must go back to fight the evil El Patron and his family.

Read Aloud. National Book Award, Newbery Honor, Michael L. Printz Honor. Science.

Ferreira, Anton. ***Zulu Dog***. Frances Foster Books, 2002. Fiction.

In post-apartheid South Africa, a three-legged bush puppy secretly reared and trained to become a hunting dog becomes the center of an unlikely friendship that develops between Vusi, a Zulu boy, and Shirley, the daughter of a racist white farmer. In a country experiencing complex issues of land rights and cultural disparity, the novel explores difficulties encountered with various lifestyles and offers an optimistic solution.

African Culture. History/Social Science.

Ferris, Jean. ***Once Upon a Marigold***. Harcourt Brace, 2002. Fantasy.

Christian has been raised from childhood by a troll. When he reaches age eighteen, it is decided that he should find his way in the world. He doesn't go too far, because he notices the beautiful, lonely princess in the castle across the lake. He journeys to the town to find a way to meet her. Christian gets more than he bargains for when he

Grades 6-8

uncovers a plot by the Queen to rid herself of the King and her daughter, so she can be the sole ruler of the land. California author.

English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Flake, Sharon. *Money Hungry*. Jump at the Sun, 2001. Realistic Fiction.

Raspberry, aged thirteen, looks for opportunities to earn money however she can so she and her mother will not be homeless again. When her mother suspects Raspberry of stealing money, her mom throws most of it out the window and it appears that they will be homeless again.

Coretta Scott King Author Honor.

Fleming, Candace. *Ben Franklin's Almanac: Being a True Account of the Good Gentleman's Life*. Atheneum, 2003. Biography/Autobiography.

This book brings together eighteenth-century etchings, artifacts, and quotations to create the effect of a scrapbook of the life of Benjamin Franklin. An engaging narrative of his childhood, family, scientific, political, and civic achievements is chronicled. Interesting facts and many illustrations are included. A reading list, bibliography, index, and Web sites complete this title.

History/Social Science, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Fletcher, Ralph. *Uncle Daddy*. Henry Holt and Company, 2001. Realistic Fiction.

When his long-absent father suddenly reappears, nine-year-old Rivers struggles with conflicting feelings and reexamines his relationship with the great-uncle who had served as his father.

Christopher Award.

Franklin, Kristine L. *Grape Thief*. Candlewick Press, 2003. Historical Fiction.

In a small Washington state coal-mining community made up of families from different ethnic backgrounds, twelve-year-old Cuss likes to learn and wants to stay in school, but finances are tight in 1925. The story shares how his family and friends persevere with faith and optimism in spite of multiple hardships. This first-person narrative is a quick read and combines the challenges of earlier times with humor and effective characterizations.

History/Social Science, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Freedman, Russell. *Confucius: The Golden Rule*. Illustrated by Frederic Clement. Arthur A. Levine Books, 2002. Biography/Autobiography.

This book acquaints readers with Confucius, who was born in 552 B.C. in China. Freedman weaves facts, legends, and the philosopher's words to reveal a man of deep beliefs and great humor. It includes many of Confucius' wise sayings. Beautiful collage paintings and designs add to this outstanding work. Useful in character education and for investigating religions, philosophy, biographies, ancient Chinese culture, and Confucius' influence.

Chinese/Chinese American Culture. History/Social Science.

Grades 6-8

Freedman, Russell. ***Give Me Liberty!: The Story of the Declaration of Independence***. Holiday House, 2000. Nonfiction.

Freedman makes history come alive in this telling of the making of the Declaration of Independence. The text is filled with quotations, sayings, and paintings that depict what was happening at the time of the writing. A copy of the original document is included along with the full text. An interesting section on what happened to the document after it was written, where it is today, and how it has been protected and cared for is a useful addition.

History/Social Science.

Funke, Cornelia Caroline. ***Thief Lord, The***. Scholastic, 2002. Fiction.

Prosper and Boniface, orphaned after the death of their parents, run from Hamburg to Venice to escape being adopted by an evil aunt. They are befriended by a gang of thieves headed by the Thief Lord and become involved in mystery and adventure. The reader is treated to the wonders of Venice, as well as fantasy, intrigue, and magic.

Fuqua, Jonathon Scott. ***Darby***. Candlewick Press, 2002. Historical Fiction.

Set in the 1920s, this novel portrays nine-year-old Darby, who stirs up trouble in her small South Carolina town when she writes a story for the local newspaper promoting racial equality. The Ku Klux Klan responds by burning a cross in her front yard and pelting her father's store with bricks. Written in the first-person narrative.

Black/African American Culture. English-Language Arts/Writing, History/Social Science.

Gaiman, Neil. ***Coraline***. Illustrated by Dave McKean. HarperCollins, 2002. Horror.

A neglected young girl discovers a parallel world behind the mysterious 14th door in her new house. Once she enters the other world, she encounters a home much nicer in many ways than the one she left and yet somehow horrific. She finds her "other mother and father" to be mirror images but with long claw-like fingers and buttons for eyes. They want Coraline to stay forever, but she knows that she must find a way back to her real world before it's too late.

English-Language Arts/Writing.

Gantos, Jack. ***Hole in My Life***. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2002.
Biography/Autobiography.

The noted author of children's and young adult books relates in this autobiography how, as a young adult, he became a drug user and smuggler, spent time in prison, went to college, and then became a successful and popular author.

Michael L. Printz Honor.

Grades 6-8

Gerstein, Mordicai. *Man Who Walked Between the Towers, The*. Illustrated by Mordicai Gerstein. Roaring Book Press, 2003. Narrative Nonfiction.

In 1974, when the World Trade Center was being completed, a young French tightrope walker could not resist the challenge and spent over an hour walking, dancing, resting, and doing tricks a quarter of a mile above pedestrians on the streets below. Fascinating ink work and oil paintings provide a real sense of perspective and daring to the story. A picture book for older readers.

Picture Book. Caldecott Winner. English-Language Arts/Writing, History/Social Science, Literacy/Motivation.

Giff, Patricia Reilly. *Pictures of Hollis Woods*. Random House, 2002. Realistic Fiction.

A troublesome twelve-year-old orphan, staying with an elderly artist suffering from the beginning stages of Alzheimer's disease, remembers the only other time she was happy in a foster home. In the end, she is reunited with the family she has longed for.

Newbery Honor. English-Language Arts/Writing, History/Social Science.

Greenberg, Jan. *Heart to Heart: New Poems Inspired by Twentieth-Century American Art*. Abrams, 2001. Poetry.

This is a compilation of poems about American art in the twentieth century. Writers include artists and authors. Each piece of art is enhanced by the carefully crafted text. This will be especially useful in writing and art classes as examples of creativity in a variety of media.

Michael L. Printz Honor. Visual and Performing Arts.

Greenberg, Jan. *Romare Bearden: Collage of Memories*. Illustrated by Romare Bearden. Abrams, 2003. Biography/Autobiography.

This picture book biography illustrates the lifetime memories of Romare Bearden through his collages. His bold art form shows the influences of his childhood in the South, life in New York and Paris, and his love of jazz. Includes author's note, important dates, bibliography, text notes, glossary, and some places to view artwork by Romare Bearden.

Black/African American Culture. Picture Book. Visual and Performing Arts.

Grimes, Nikki. *Talkin' About Bessie: The Story of Aviator Elizabeth Coleman*.

Illustrated by E. B. Lewis. Orchard Books, 2002. Biography/Autobiography.

An imagined monologue on each page tells about the life of Bessie Coleman by those who knew her best. As a young girl, Bessie was determined to be the first African American female pilot. This picture book biography for older readers is filled with facts about a brave woman and enables young readers to understand her spirit.

Black/African American Culture. Picture Book. Coretta Scott King Author Honor, Coretta Scott King Illustrator Winner.

Grades 6-8

Gutman, Dan. *Million Dollar Shot, The*. Hyperion Press, 1997. Fiction.

Eleven-year-old Eddie, who lives in a Louisiana trailer park with his widowed mother, gets a chance to win a million dollars by sinking a foul shot at the National Basketball Association finals.

California Young Reader Medal.

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *Running Out of Time*. Simon and Schuster, 1995. Science Fiction.

When a diphtheria epidemic hits her village, thirteen-year-old Jessie discovers it is not 1840, but actually 1996, and her family lives in a reconstructed historic site that is really a secret science experiment. Jessie escapes from the village to save the dying children and finds herself in the middle of a very different and most unfamiliar world.

Hamilton, Virginia. *Girl Who Spun Gold, The*. Illustrated by Leo Dillon and Diane Dillon. Blue Sky Press, 2000. Fairy Tale.

In this West Indian version of Rumpelstiltskin, Quashiba, a young spinner, is married to Big King, who insists that she produce gold. A cruel-looking little creature appears and says he'll spin gold for her if she can guess his name. The acrylic illustrations use gold lavishly, and the easygoing West Indian text makes this a fun read-aloud.

Multicultural Culture. Read Aloud.

Harley, Avis. *Fly with Poetry: An ABC of Poetry*. Boyds Mills Press, 2000. Poetry.

This collection of poems, one for each letter of the alphabet, uses examples of poems to show types of poetry. Each original poem is an example of the poetic device presented, and an explanation at the bottom of each page adds to the usefulness.

Alphabet Book. English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Henkes, Kevin. *Olive's Ocean*. HarperCollins, 2003. Realistic Fiction.

Olive Barstow is dead, hit by a car while riding her bicycle. Martha is sorry, but because they had not been friends, Olive's death does not really touch her until Olive's mother brings Martha a journal page that Olive had written before her death. Olive and Martha are connected in ways that change Martha's summer and probably her life.

Newbery Honor.

Hesse, Karen. *Aleutian Sparrow*. Margaret McElderry Books, 2003. Fiction in Verse.

After the Japanese bombed Unalaska Island in 1942, the U.S. government relocated the Aleut people to an inhospitable camp near Ketchikan, Alaska, so their island could be used as a military base. The tragic story is told in free verse, each poem depicting life through the eyes of an Aleut girl.

Native American Culture. History/Social Science.

Grades 6-8

Hesse, Karen. ***Witness***. Scholastic, 2001. Historical Fiction, Poetry.

Two young girls move to a small Vermont town in 1924, become best friends, and turn into targets of the Ku Klux Klan because of their race. Leonora, twelve, is black, and Esther, six, is Jewish. Eleven residents speak of personal experiences, fears, and prejudices and reflect on happenings: murder attempts, a dramatic rescue, a teenager on the run, and a suicide. This play in free-verse style weaves prejudice and hatred, the lure of the Klan, and the response of the people who desire to learn tolerance. Opportunities for reader's theater abound with this title.

Black/African American Culture, Jewish/Jewish American Culture, Multicultural Culture. Christopher Award. History/Social Science, Visual and Performing Arts, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Hiaasen, Carl. ***Hoot***. Knopf, 2002. Realistic Fiction.

Roy, who has recently moved to Florida from Montana, encounters a strange, barefooted running boy and his sister, the school bully, and some tiny owls. Ties into endangered species discussions.

Newbery Honor. Science, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Hill, Christine. ***Ten Hispanic American Authors***. Enslow, 2002.

Biography/Autobiography.

This collection of ten short biographies profiles successful Hispanic American poets and novelists. Among those presented are Sandra Cisneros, Julia Alvarez, Gary Soto, and Richard Rodriguez. Black-and-white photographs, a list of each author's published works, further readings, Web sites, chapter notes, and an index are included. Useful for English language learners studying biography and twentieth-century Hispanic American literature. Part of a series.

Latino/Latino American Culture. English-Language Arts/Writing.

Hobbs, Valerie. ***Sonny's War***. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2002. Historical Fiction.

The world of fourteen-year-old Corey is turned upside down after the death of her father and brother Sonny's enlistment and assignment to Vietnam. The multifaceted plot and vivid characterizations capture the drama of life during the 1960s and express the effects of war on those people left behind. California author.

History/Social Science.

Hobbs, Will. ***Wild Man Island***. HarperCollins, 2002. Fiction.

Readers will be captivated by the wilderness adventure of resourceful fourteen-year-old Andy, marooned on Alaska's remote Admiralty Island after a storm veers his kayak off course. He is on a pilgrimage to place a whittled cedar canoe paddle at the place of his father's death. Andy encounters a myriad of perils, including animals, hunger, hypothermia, a maze of unexplored caves, and a mysterious wild man who holds the key to his rescue. This tale of survival, mystery, and archaeological

Grades 6-8

discoveries blends vivid landscape imagery, a credible plot, and realistic setting for entertaining and informational reading.

History/Social Science, Science.

Hoffman, Mary. ***Stravaganza: City of Masks***. Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2002. Fantasy.

In the first volume of a fantasy series, one protagonist is a modern boy dying from cancer and another is the girl he befriends in a parallel world similar to the historic Venice of the Renaissance. The imaginative tale with its complex plot, intriguing setting, and well-rounded characters will transport readers into a world of fantasy and suspense. The next two titles of the series are *City of Stars* and *City of Flowers*.

Western European Culture. English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Holt, Kimberly Willis. ***Keeper of the Night***. Henry Holt and Company, 2003. Fiction.

Set in Guam, this haunting story looks at thirteen-year-old Isabel Moreno and her family trying to cope with the suicide of her mother. The story is presented in short vignettes, each taking the reader closer to discovering the full story of her mother's death. Through the course of the story, the reader learns about the culture and beliefs of the people of Guam. The story was inspired by Holt's childhood when she lived in Guam. This work is an accurate description of grief, deep sorrow, and healing.

Pacific Islander Culture.

Hooper, Mary. ***At the Sign of the Sugared Plum***. Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2003. Historical Fiction.

In June 1665, country girl Hannah excitedly arrives in London to work in her sister's sweetshop, capture a beau, reunite with a childhood friend, and taste the city's food, and engage in fashion life. The sisters become increasingly aware of the dreaded bubonic plague that has taken hold of the city. Laced with vivid historical and physical details, the book features a fast-paced story and believable characters challenged to survive the entrapment. A 2004 sequel, *Petals in the Ashes*, finds the girls returning to London to face the city's Great Fire of 1666.

Western European Culture. History/Social Science, Science.

Hopkins, Lee Bennett. ***My America: A Poetry Atlas of the United States***. Illustrated by Stephen Alcorn. Simon and Schuster, 2000. Poetry.

The diversity found in the United States is captured in this anthology of poems that represent each section of America. Included in the collection of 51 poems are some by Carl Sandburg, Langston Hughes, and Myra Cohn Livingston. Each poem is accompanied by a full-color stylized painting. Useful for integrating literature with history/social science.

History/Social Science.

Grades 6-8

Hopkinson, Deborah. ***Shutting Out the Sky: Life in the Tenements of New York, 1880-1915***. Orchard Books, 2003. Nonfiction.

Photographs and text document the experiences of five individuals who immigrated to live in the Lower East Side of New York City as children or young adults from Belarus, Italy, Lithuania, and Romania at the turn of the twentieth century.

Multicultural Culture. Photo-Essay. History/Social Science.

Horvath, Polly. ***Canning Season, The***. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003. Fiction.

Sent to Maine for the summer, a thirteen-year-old girl finds herself in an isolated house on the coast with Great-Aunts Tilly and Penpen. From the author of the Newbery award-winning book, *Everything on a Waffle*, this offbeat, dark, and ultimately positive tale is filled with unforgettable characters and lessons about life. This book addresses controversial issues of interest to many adolescents and includes scenes and language that reflect mature content. Before handing the text to a child, educators and parents should read the book and know the child.

National Book Award. English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Horvath, Polly. ***Everything on a Waffle***. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2001. Realistic Fiction.

Eleven-year-old Primrose lives in a small fishing village in British Columbia. She recounts her experiences and all that she learns about human nature and the unpredictability of life in the months after her parents are lost at sea.

Newbery Honor.

Howe, James. ***Misfits***. Atheneum, 2001. Fiction.

At a small-town middle school, four misfits decide to create a third party for the student council elections to represent students who have ever been called names. Their platform proposes the end of name-calling and bullying. This funny and tender story is told with a light touch.

Science, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Hoyt-Goldsmith, Diane. ***Celebrating a Quinceanera: A Latina's 15th Birthday Celebration***. Illustrated by Lawrence Migdale (photographer). Holiday House, 2002. Nonfiction.

This easy-to-read text describes ten-year-old Ariana helping cousin Cynthia prepare for her upcoming quinceanera. Includes index, glossary, some terminology in Spanish, and information about Our Lady of Guadalupe. Useful for units on religious celebrations, family and community life, traditions, and diversity. California author.

Latino/Latino American Culture. Easy Reader, Photo-Essay. History/Social Science.

Grades 6-8

Hoyt-Goldsmith, Diane. ***Celebrating Ramadan***. Illustrated by Lawrence Migdale (photographer). Holiday House, 2001. Nonfiction.

This book provides a thorough but brief introduction to Islam and the holy month of Ramadan. American fourth grader Ibraheem and his family live in New Jersey and follow the teachings of the Koran. Color photographs and inserts illustrate the customs. Useful for learning about religions, Islam, Muslims, Ramadan, and respecting differences. California author.

Multicultural Culture. Photo-Essay. History/Social Science.

Jimenez, Francisco. ***Breaking Through***. Houghton Mifflin, 2001. Realistic Fiction.

Since coming from Mexico to California ten years ago, fourteen-year-old Francisco is still working in the fields, fighting to "break through" to improve his life and complete his education. Social issues of poverty and prejudice in the 1950s are related through his adolescent experiences. Photos are included. Sequel to *The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child*. California author and setting.

Latino/Latino American Culture. Pura Belpre Narrative Honor. History/Social Science.

Johnson, D. B. ***Henry Climbs a Mountain***. Illustrated by D. B. Johnson. Houghton Mifflin, 2003. Fiction.

This is the third in a series about a bear named Henry whose activities are based on incidents in the life of Henry David Thoreau. There are many faces of courage, and in this story Henry goes to jail rather than sacrifice his principles even though freedom is something he highly values. Others in the series are *Henry Hikes to Fitchburg* and *Henry Builds a Cabin*.

Picture Book. History/Social Science.

Johnston, Tony. ***Any Small Goodness: A Novel of the Barrio***. Illustrated by Raul Colon. Blue Sky Press, 2001. Realistic Fiction.

After moving from Mexico to the barrio of East Los Angeles with his family, Arturo and his friends share experiences dealing with a teacher who wants to Americanize their names, playing basketball, and championing the school librarian. Short, upbeat vignettes make this a good read-aloud choice. Includes a glossary of Spanish words. California author and setting.

Latino/Latino American Culture. Read Aloud. John and Patricia Beatty Award.

Jones, Lynda. ***Kids Around the World Celebrate!: The Best Feast and Festivals from Many Lands***. Illustrated by Michele Nidenoff. John Wiley, 2000. Nonfiction.

"Welcoming the New Year," "Celebrating Before and After Fasts," "Giving Thanks," and "Renewing the Spirit" are the four main headings. Festivals and holidays of various countries are divided into those topics. Jones describes each celebration and related hands-on projects. Useful in the studies of cultures around the world and holidays.

Multicultural Culture. History/Social Science.

Grades 6-8

Katz, Bobbi. ***We the People: Poems***. Illustrated by Nina Crews. Greenwillow Books, 2000. Poetry.

Each of the 65 poems in this collection tells the story of a person from a specific period in American history. The poems are in chronological order, beginning with "The First Americans" and working through history up to the year 2000. Full-page color illustrations depicting the time period are found at the beginning of each of the five sections.

History/Social Science.

Kerley, Barbara. ***Dinosaurs of Waterhouse Hawkins: An Illuminating History of Mr. Waterhouse Hawkins, Artist and Lecturer, The***. Illustrated by Brian Selznick. Scholastic, 2001. Nonfiction.

This is the true story of Victorian artist Benjamin Waterhouse Hawkins, who built life-sized models of dinosaurs in the hope of educating the world about what these ancient animals were like. The text is illustrated with Victorian paintings. Extensive notes from the author and illustrator convey the thrill of research to young readers.

Picture Book. Caldecott Honor. History/Social Science, Science, Visual and Performing Arts.

Kidd, Sue Monk. ***Secret Life of Bees, The***. Viking Press, 2002. Historical Fiction.

Fourteen-year-old Lily and her caregiver Rosaleen, an African American woman, flee their home after Rosaleen is victimized by racist police officers. They find a safe haven in South Carolina with three bee-keeping sisters. An uplifting, coming-of-age story.

Black/African American Culture. History/Social Science, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Konigsburg, E. L. ***Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place, The***. Atheneum, 2004. Fiction.

Twelve-year-old Margaret Rose Kane, first featured as an adult in *Silent to the Bone*, is delighted to be rescued from horrible Camp Talecqua by Great-Uncles Alex and Morris. She spearheads a campaign to preserve three unique towers that the two men have been building in their backyard for more than 40 years. Memorable characters fill this imaginative and thoughtful story. Useful not only for literature units, but also for discussions on art, community, and nonconformity.

Visual and Performing Arts.

Konigsburg, E. L. ***Silent to the Bone***. Atheneum, 2000. Fiction.

Branwell's baby sister, Nikki, has been abused and is in a coma. The babysitter accuses Branwell. He's jailed, and the trauma causes him to become mute, unable to defend himself. Branwell's best friend, Connor, devises a system of flash cards and blinking, and the communication begins. The themes of friendship, family, loyalty, and trust, combined with the who-done-it mystery, serve to fascinate young readers.

Grades 6-8

Korman, Gordon. ***No More Dead Dogs***. Hyperion Press, 2000. Humor, Realistic Fiction.

Eighth-grade football hero Wallace Wallace is sentenced to detention attending rehearsals of the school play. In spite of himself, he becomes wrapped up in the production and begins to suggest changes that improve not only the play but his life as well.

Visual and Performing Arts.

Korman, Gordon. ***Son of the Mob***. Hyperion Press, 2002. Fiction, Humor.

Seventeen-year-old Vince's life is constantly complicated by the fact that he is the son of a powerful Mafia boss, a relationship that threatens to destroy his romance with the daughter of an FBI agent. The novel's quick pace and upbeat style offers readers comedy, romance, and suspense.

Krull, Kathleen. ***Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez***. Illustrated by Yuyi Morales. Harcourt Brace, 2003. Biography/Autobiography.

This picture book biography relates the life of Cesar Chavez and his efforts to organize the National Farm Workers Association to improve working and living conditions for migrant farm workers. The illustrations evoke the settings and the Hispanic culture. The Spanish version of this book is *Cosechando esperanza: La historia de Cesar Chavez*, translated from the English by F. Isabel Campoy and Alma Flor Ada. California author, illustrator, and setting.

Latino/Latino American Culture. Picture Book. Pura Belpre Illustration Honor. History/Social Science.

Krull, Kathleen. ***Lives of Extraordinary Women: Rulers, Rebels (and What the Neighbors Thought)***. Illustrated by Kathryn Hewitt. Harcourt Brace, 2000. Biography/Autobiography.

Lively stories of 20 historically significant women are told with humor and interesting facts. Three- to four-page entries include caricature drawings and an "Ever After" section that gives interesting tidbits of information about the women. California author.

History/Social Science.

Lawrence, Iain. ***Buccaneers, The***. Random House, 2001. Historical Fiction.

In this sequel to *The Wreckers* and *The Smugglers*, the first two books in the High Seas Trilogy, sixteen-year-old John Spencer sails *The Dragon*, to the Caribbean to bring back sugar. Spencer encounters fierce storms, illness, and buccaneers, making this a high-seas adventure filled with mystery and intrigue.

Grades 6-8

Lekuton, Joseph Lemasolai. ***Facing the Lion: Growing Up Maasai on the African Savannah.*** National Geographic Society, 2003. Biography/Autobiography.

The author offers his personal account of growing up in Kenya and includes anecdotes about lions, drinking blood, and other experiences ripe for reading aloud. Useful for lessons in history and the culture of Africa.

African Culture. Read Aloud. History/Social Science.

Lester, Julius. ***Ackamarackus: Julius Lester's Sumptuously Silly Fantastically Funny Fables.*** Illustrated by Emilie Chollat. Scholastic, 2001. Fable.

This is a collection of six original animal fables, laced with humor, absurdities, wordplay, and alliteration. Each fable includes both a silly and a serious moral. Acrylic and collage illustrations are bright and exhilarating. Useful for reading aloud and discussing individuality, acceptance, and expression of negative feelings.

English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Lester, Julius. ***Blues Singers: Ten Who Rocked the World, The.*** Illustrated by Lisa Cohen. Jump at the Sun, 2001. Biography/Autobiography.

Ten of the world's top blues and blues-related singers are included in this collective biography. Both the text and the illustrations convey the importance of Bessie Smith, Robert Johnson, Mahalia Jackson, Muddy Waters, Billie Holiday, B. B. King, Ray Charles, Little Richard, James Brown, and Aretha Franklin. Lester writes as if he were telling the stories to his granddaughter, making the text folksy and conversational.

Black/African American Culture. Visual and Performing Arts.

Lewis, J. Patrick. ***Freedom Like Sunlight: Praisesongs for Black Americans.***

Illustrated by John Thompson. Creative Editions, 2000. Poetry.

Thirteen African Americans, all known for their courage and outstanding contributions, are presented through poetry and art in this work. Arthur Ashe, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Louis Armstrong, Martin Luther King, Jr., Satchel Paige, Rosa Parks, Langston Hughes, Jesse Owens, Marian Anderson, Malcolm X, Wilma Rudolph, and Billie Holiday are featured with biographical notes. The powerful poetry and the poignant full-page paintings make this an outstanding work.

Black/African American Culture. History/Social Science.

Locker, Thomas. ***Mountain Dance.*** Illustrated by Thomas Locker. Silver Whistle/Harcourt, 2001. Poetry.

The majesty of mountains is celebrated in this beautiful book that tells the geologic evolution of mountains, beginning with volcanic eruptions and continuing with the natural forces of nature building them up or wearing them down. The text, told in free-verse poetry, creates a feeling of power, movement and grace, expressing nature's "dance" through time. An oil painting opposite each text page helps to describe each lyric. Can be used as a picture book for older readers.

Picture Book. Science.

Grades 6-8

Love, D. Anne. *Puppeteer's Apprentice, The*. Margaret McElderry Books, 2003. Historical Fiction.

Set in England during the Middle Ages, this is the story of Mouse, an abandoned baby, who was raised as a scullery maid. She runs away, discovers a puppet show, and becomes a puppeteer's apprentice, carving and manipulating puppets. This fast-paced adventure of friendship makes a good read-aloud. Includes a history of puppetry and a bibliography of medieval life.

Read Aloud. History/Social Science, Visual and Performing Arts.

Lowry, Lois. *Gathering Blue*. Houghton Mifflin, 2000. Fiction, Science Fiction.

Kira's world of the future is almost medieval, filled with violence, bleakness, anger and hostility. She has the unusual skill of embroidery and is given the honorable job of Threader. She enlists her friend Matt to go out into the unknown world to look for blue thread. This powerful story is bleak at times, but it also portrays hope, change, and enlightenment.

Mannis, Celeste Davidson. *Queen's Progress: An Elizabethan Alphabet, The*. Illustrated by Bagram Ibatoulline. Viking Press, 2003. Nonfiction.

Every summer, Elizabeth I, Queen of England, goes on a holiday known as the royal progress. As she and her entourage travel through the English countryside, they meet with Adventure (A), Bear (B), and so on until all of the letters of the alphabet are presented. Both the illustrations and the text bring to the reader many details of country and courtly life in Elizabethan England. California author and illustrator.

Alphabet Book, Picture Book. English-Language Arts/Vocabulary, History/Social Science.

Markel, Michelle. *Cornhusk, Silk, and Wishbones: A Book of Dolls from Around the World*. Houghton Mifflin, 2000. Narrative Nonfiction.

This book presents a collection of dolls from 1000 B.C. to the present, from all the continents. The dolls are arranged in alphabetical order according to type, accompanied by an informative paragraph about the doll, including its origin and time period, as well as cultural and historical information. A full-color photograph helps to reveal clothing and the culture of the time. A section on the art of doll collecting is included along with a bibliography and a two-page map showing the origin of each doll.

Multicultural Culture. Visual and Performing Arts.

Martin, Ann M. *Corner of the Universe, A*. Scholastic, 2002. Realistic Fiction.

With the surprising arrival of a mentally disabled uncle, twelve-year-old Hattie's world is turned upside down. Set in the 1960s, this novel by Ann Martin draws on her own childhood.

Newbery Honor. English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Grades 6-8

Mazer, Norma Fox. ***Girlhearts***. HarperCollins, 2001. Realistic Fiction.

Thirteen-year-old Sarabeth Silver's life is turned upside down when her mother dies suddenly, leaving her orphaned, confused, and at the mercy of everyone who seems to know what is best for her. This novel combines gentle humor with serious relationship issues and ends on a positive note. Useful for discussions about death and grieving.

McCaughrean, Geraldine. ***Kite Rider: A Novel, The***. HarperCollins, 2001. Historical Fiction.

In thirteenth-century China, Haoyou, the young son of a murdered sailor, confronts scheming relatives, becomes a kite maker to support his widowed mother, and eventually takes to the sky and spirit world as a kite rider in a traveling circus. He ultimately reaches the courts of the great Mongol ruler Kublai Khan. The story has plot twists. An insightful cousin, Mipeng, supports his growth from childhood to wisdom as Haoyou grapples with the Chinese philosophy of obedience to elders.

Chinese/Chinese American Culture. History/Social Science.

McDermott, Gerald. ***Jabuti, the Tortoise: A Trickster Tale from the Amazon***. Harcourt Brace, 2001. Folklore.

This trickster tale from the Amazon is about a flute-playing tortoise who wants to play for the King. Vulture offers him a ride but deliberately drops him, causing his shell to break. Other animals gather him up and glue his pieces back together. Vivid colors and geometrically drawn shapes help to tell the story.

Latino/Latino American Culture. Picture Book.

McKay, Hilary. ***Saffy's Angel***. Margaret McElderry Books, 2002. Fiction.

Saffron, nicknamed Saffy, didn't possess a color name as the other three children in her family (Cadmium, Indigo, and Rose). When she is eight years old, she learns why. She is an orphan and goes on a whirlwind trip to her birthplace in Siena, Italy, to seek and reunite with an inherited stone angel in a garden. The theme of family and friendships offers memorable characterizations and humor.

Western European Culture. English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Medina, Tony. ***Love to Langston***. Illustrated by R. Gregory Christie. Lee and Low Books, 2002. Biography/Autobiography, Poetry.

Fourteen free-verse poems written from the point of view of the African American poet Langston Hughes, provides an overview of key events and themes in his life: childhood, dreams, love of words, travels, and overcoming obstacles. Vivid, colorful, and exaggerated illustrations accompany the engaging poems. The notes at the end of the book interpret each poem. Can be used as an introduction to the life of a Harlem Renaissance poet and/or for biography and poetry units.

Black/African American Culture. Picture Book. English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Grades 6-8

Mikaelsen, Ben. *Touching Spirit Bear*. HarperCollins, 2001. Realistic Fiction.

Cole's anger erupts into violence. To avoid going to prison, he agrees to participate in a sentencing alternative based on the Native American Circle Justice. He is sent to a remote Alaskan island where an encounter with a huge Spirit Bear changes his life.

Native American Culture. California Young Reader Medal.

Mitton, Jacqueline. *Kingdom of the Sun: A Book of the Planets*. Illustrated by Christina Balit. National Geographic Society, 2001. Mythology.

The Greeks and Romans attempted to explain natural phenomenon through myths. This book combines modern-day knowledge about the sun, moon, and planets with ancient mythology. The vivid illustrations depict the mythological aspects and incorporate shades of golds, yellows, oranges, blues, and black, the colors of the universe. A chart at the back of the book gives current information about each topic presented.

History/Social Science, Science.

Myers, Walter Dean. *Bad Boy: A Memoir*. HarperCollins, 2001. Biography/Autobiography.

This autobiography depicts the life of an African American child growing up in Harlem during the 1940s and 1950s before the Civil Rights Movement. Myers describes his life as a tough street kid who excelled in sports but secretly loved to read and write. His ability to endure hardships yet maintain his love for learning and reading is an inspiring story.

Black/African American Culture. Literacy/Motivation.

Myers, Walter Dean. *Blues Journey*. Illustrated by Christopher Myers. Holiday House, 2003. Nonfiction.

Text and image are combined into a work of art as the story explains and defines the blues by taking fragments of blues songs and creating poetry with them. A call-and-response accompanies each painting. Beautiful poetry and collage artwork in blue ink and brown paper will entice. Includes a timeline and glossary of blues terms. Useful for units on music and poetry.

Black/African American Culture. Picture Book. Visual and Performing Arts, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Myers, Walter Dean. *Patrol: An American Soldier in Vietnam*. Illustrated by Ann Grifalconi. HarperCollins, 2002. Historical Fiction.

Told in poetic format in the first person, this book tells the story of a frightened American soldier facing enemy combat in the forests of Vietnam. The two-page layout features lush collages of the terrain on one page and the text on the other page. Although the depicted soldier is African American, his fears, experiences, and feelings of despair might belong to any soldier who fights in a war. A picture book for older readers.

Picture Book, Read Aloud. History/Social Science.

Grades 6-8

Na, An; and Roxburgh, Stephen (editor). ***Step from Heaven, A***. Front Street, 2001. Realistic Fiction.

This is the story of Ju from her childhood in Korea until she goes to college in America. After immigrating to America, she tries to adjust to American ways and remain a good Korean daughter despite her father's alcoholism and abuse.

Korean/Korean American Culture. Michael L. Printz Winner. History/Social Science.

Naidoo, Beverley. ***Other Side of Truth, The***. HarperCollins, 2001. Historical Fiction.

This terrifying story follows two Nigerian children, twelve-year-old Sade and her ten-year-old brother Femi, caught in the civil strife of their country during the mid-1990s. Complex events explore issues of freedom, family, and the African refugee experience.

African Culture. History/Social Science.

Naidoo, Beverley. ***Out of Bounds: Seven Stories of Conflict and Hope***.

HarperCollins, 2001. Realistic Fiction, Short Story.

From the perspective of children from various ethnic backgrounds, seven stories chronicle the system of racial segregation, or apartheid, in South Africa. Each story is set in a different decade. The year 1948 was the beginning of apartheid, and the story continues through 2000. This powerful collection features well-crafted stories that are suspenseful and taut. Includes a timeline of events related to apartheid. Will elicit provocative discussions on human rights. A picture book for older readers.

African Culture. History/Social Science.

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. ***Alice Alone***. Atheneum, 2001. Realistic Fiction.

Part of the long-running series that began with *The Agony of Alice* (1985), this book describes Alice's freshman year in high school. Ninth grade begins with promise and then deteriorates when her boyfriend Patrick breaks up with her. As she shows Alice working her way through the break-up and the school year, the author has again captured the joy and pain of being a modern teenage woman.

English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Nelson, Marilyn. ***Carver: A Life in Poems***. Front Street, 2001.

Biography/Autobiography, Poetry.

In a series of 59 lyrical poems, accompanied by black-and-white photographs, the life of George Washington Carver is revealed. The personal achievements and significant contributions of this scholarly botanist, inventor, educator, and artist are shared in poetry meant to be read aloud.

Black/African American Culture. Read Aloud. Coretta Scott King Author Honor, Newbery Honor. History/Social Science.

Grades 6-8

Nelson, Theresa. *Ruby Electric: A Novel*. Atheneum, 2003. Realistic Fiction.

To twelve-year-old Ruby, movies are better than real life. The ones she writes are the best of all because the stories all work out. The dads in her movies always show up when they've promised, the moms don't hold onto secrets, and little brothers don't curl up with sorrow over some missing stuffed animal. California setting.

English-Language Arts/Writing.

Nye, Naomi Shihab. *19 Varieties of Gazelle: Poems of the Middle East*. Greenwillow Books, 2002. Poetry.

Features 60 new poems about the Middle East in response to the tragic events of September 11, 2001. The author draws on her Palestinian and American heritage to look at both the Middle East through the eyes of an American and the United States through the eyes of a Palestinian. The poems explore universal issues of hope, conflict, war, peace, people, and relations.

Middle Eastern Culture. English-Language Arts/Writing.

O'Connor, Barbara. *Fame and Glory in Freedom, Georgia*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003. Fiction.

Sixth-grader "Bird" Weaver is pretty much ostracized by her classmates and when Harlem Tate, a new student, comes to school, it's clear that this glaring, silent, smelly boy will be ostracized too. That's when Bird decides to make him her friend, and she soon discovers a wealth of things in him to like. Bird and Harlem, with the help of Miss Delphine Reese find fame and glory, friendship, and worth in Freedom, Georgia.

Read Aloud. English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Osa, Nancy. *Cuba 15: A Novel*. Delacorte Press, 2003. Realistic Fiction.

This book features tenth grade Chicago suburbanite Violet Paz, daughter of a Polish American mother and Cuban-born father, who describes herself as "American" but is reluctantly preparing for the celebration of her fifteenth birthday, a traditional quinceanera, which her grandmother insists on her having. Using engaging characters and humor, the coming-of-age story looks at racial identity, family relationships, the first boyfriend, and friendship. Useful for discussing adolescent issues and growing up in biracial families.

Latino/Latino American Culture, Multicultural Culture. Pura Belpre Narrative Honor. English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Paolini, Christopher. *Eragon*. Knopf, 2003. Fantasy.

In Aagaesia, a fifteen-year-old boy of unknown lineage called Eragon finds a mysterious stone that weaves his life into an intricate tapestry of destiny, magic, and power, peopled with dragons, elves, and monsters.

Grades 6-8

Park, Linda Sue. ***Single Shard, A***. Clarion Books, 2001. Historical Fiction.

A thirteen-year-old orphan in medieval Korea, living under a bridge, longs to become a potter of celadon ware. He becomes an assistant to a master potter and is entrusted with the delivery of two precious pots.

Korean/Korean American Culture. Newbery Winner.

Park, Linda Sue. ***When My Name Was Keoko***. Clarion Books, 2002. Historical Fiction.

During World War II, a brother and sister face the increasingly oppressive occupation of Korea by Japan, which threatens to erase the Korean culture entirely. The author draws on the experiences of her parents as well as extensive research to show how the politics of war affects ordinary families.

Korean/Korean American Culture. History/Social Science, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Paterson, Katherine. ***Same Stuff as Stars, The***. Clarion Books, 2002. Realistic Fiction.

Angel Morgan is as steadfast and self-reliant as Polaris, "shining strong and bright and fixed in a swirling world of darkness." She is constantly challenged by adult issues but is an amazingly resourceful parent, supportive, encouraging, and sympathetic. Amidst the turmoil two luminaries stand tall: a mysterious man who shares his telescope and knowledge about the universe and the librarian who provides books and poems about stars.

English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Pattou, Edith. ***East***. Harcourt Brace, 2003. Fairy Tale, Fantasy.

In an elegant and sophisticated retelling of the folktale, East of the Sun, West of the Moon, superstitions are examined and used to propel the plot. This novel tells the adventures of Rose, a Scandinavian girl, and a white bear who needs her help to become a man again.

Western European Culture. English-Language Arts/Writing, History/Social Science, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Pearsall, Shelley. ***Trouble Don't Last***. Knopf, 2002. Historical Fiction.

Eleven-year-old Samuel tells how he is forced to run with an old slave from a plantation in Kentucky to freedom in Canada. They encounter prejudice and hardship as well as heroism on their journey. Always there is the memory of daily life under slavery and the anguish of family separation.

Black/African American Culture. Scott O'Dell Award.

Pierce, Tamora. ***Trickster's Choice***. Random House, 2004. Original ©2003. Fantasy.

The popular and witty fantasy author introduces a new series. Aly, sixteen years old and trained as a spy, is captured by pirates but outwits them only to get involved in a political battle with an insane king.

English-Language Arts/Writing.

Grades 6-8

Pratchett, Terry. *Amazing Maurice and His Educated Rodents, The*. HarperCollins, 2001. Fantasy.

In this imaginative Discworld spin on the Pied Piper tale, an enterprising talking cat, a clan of intelligent rats, and a young musician run successful scams together until they get to the wrong town. Dark humor, thoughtful social commentary, and a memorable cast of characters make this fast-paced, action-filled story a good read.

Visual and Performing Arts, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Pratchett, Terry. *Wee Free Men, The*. HarperCollins, 2003. Fantasy.

Armed only with a frying pan and a book on sheep husbandry, nine-year-old (and witch-to-be) Tiffany Aching sets off to find her little brother, who has been kidnapped by the Elf Queen of Fairyland. She teams up with a clan of six-inch-high blue pictsies in kilts, and together they battle the frightening creatures that threaten the fate of her brother and her own world. Filled with humor, action and shrewd commentary on people and community, this is another tale set in Discworld.

English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Rappaport, Doreen. *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* Illustrated by Bryan Collier. Jump at the Sun/Hyperion, 2001. Biography/Autobiography.

This picture book biography of Dr. Martin Luther King pairs words from his speeches with striking collage illustrations to present important moments in his life. Each collage combines cut-paper, photographs, and watercolor to interpret the big words spoken by Dr. King.

Black/African American Culture. Caldecott Honor, Coretta Scott King Author Honor. History/Social Science.

Rappaport, Doreen. *No More!: Stories and Songs of Slave Resistance*. Illustrated by Shane W. Evans. Candlewick Press, 2002. Nonfiction.

This book includes stories, spirituals, poems, narratives, and biographies of enslaved African Americans who fought for their freedom. The accounts are arranged in chronological order and include incidents of rebellion. The bold and dramatic oil paintings depict the reality of each situation described in the text.

Black/African American Culture. History/Social Science.

Rees, Celia. *Pirates!* Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2003. Historical Fiction.

When sixteen-year-old Nancy Kingston's wealthy father dies in 1722, she is sent to her father's Jamaican plantation where she is betrothed to the despicable, cruel, but wealthy Bartholome. She refuses to marry him and runs away with her slave Minerva who joins with her to become pirates. This adventure depicts life in the eighteenth century, particularly women's roles, slavery, and shipping.

History/Social Science.

Grades 6-8

Richardson, Bill. *After Hamelin*. Firefly Books, 2000. Fantasy, Folklore.

Penelope is one hundred one years old. She recalls that on her eleventh birthday two things happened: she can no longer hear and the Piper spirited away all but two of the children (one blind and one deaf) because folks in Hamelin refused to pay him for piping away the rats. She and her companions embark on a magical quest to rescue the stolen children. Sprinkled throughout the book are unique jump rope rhymes and songs that blend into the tale of suspense, humor, and excitement. Have a jump rope ready to book talk this classical myth.

English-Language Arts/Writing.

Rosen, Michael J. *Shakespeare: His Work and His World*. Illustrated by Robert Ingpen. Candlewick Press, 2001. Biography/Autobiography.

This fascinating, well-paced biography recreates the life and times of playwright William Shakespeare. It also interprets themes of four major plays and analyzes a scene from *Romeo and Juliet* in lively narrative. The style blends quotes, plot summaries, cultural information, and history in a variety of formats. Watercolor and pencil illustrations, schematics, and figures offer visual enchantment and significance to the historic period. An extensive timeline and bibliography add credibility to the text.

Western European Culture. English-Language Arts/Vocabulary, English-Language Arts/Writing, Visual and Performing Arts, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Rumford, James. *Traveling Man: The Journey of Ibn Battuta, 1325-1354*. Houghton Mifflin, 2001. Biography/Autobiography.

Ibn Battuta, a fourteenth-century Muslim, was twenty-one when he left home to travel to Mecca. He traveled 75,000 miles through Africa, Asia, India, China, Turkey, and back to Morocco. His story was recorded in Arabic, and the original manuscript is in the National Library in Paris. This book tells his tale, along with maps showing his travels and beautiful Arabic writing and Chinese calligraphy.

Middle Eastern Culture. History/Social Science.

Ryan, Pam Munoz. *Esperanza Rising*. Scholastic, 2000. Realistic Fiction.

This novel tells of a Mexican girl's fall from riches and her immigration to California in the 1930s. The story highlights her awareness of Mexico's post-revolution tensions, the rivalry with Oklahoma Dust Bowl victims, and struggles of Mexican workers trying to organize themselves to ask the U.S. government for better living conditions. California author and setting.

Latino/Latino American Culture. Pura Belpre Narrative Winner. History/Social Science.

Ryan, Pam Munoz. *When Marian Sang: The True Recital of Marian Anderson*. Illustrated by Brian Selznick. Scholastic, 2002. Biography/Autobiography.

African American classical singer Marian Anderson perseveres during the vicious segregation era. The story covers her rejection from music school, her triumphant concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in 1939, and her performance with the

Grades 6-8

Metropolitan Opera. Selznick's compelling artwork adds drama. Includes afterword, discography, and bibliography. Useful in the study of singers, singing, American history, civil rights, prejudice, and courage. Can be used as a picture book for older readers. California author.

Black/African American Culture. Picture Book. History/Social Science, Visual and Performing Arts.

Rylant, Cynthia. *God Went to Beauty School*. HarperCollins, 2003. Fiction in Verse, Poetry.

Although catalogued as fiction, this is a small collection of poems in which Rylant describes God, temporarily in human form, discovering the joys and pains of the world that he has created. A charming, insightful and thought-provoking work that can be used in writing and social science units.

English-Language Arts/Writing, History/Social Science.

Salisbury, Graham. *Island Boyz: Short Stories*. Wendy Lamb Books, 2002. Humor, Short Story.

This short-story collection set in the state of Hawaii during the twentieth century draws from the author's own experiences as an island boy. Adolescent issues over cultural identity and disabilities are explored in stories that include humor.

Pacific Islander Culture. English-Language Arts/Writing.

San Souci, Robert D. *Cinderella Skeleton*. Illustrated by David Catrow. Harcourt Brace, 2000. Fairy Tale.

This unique and humorous version of Cinderella is told in rhyming verse. Cinderella is a skeleton living in a graveyard with her stepmother. The illustrations conjure up the worst in each person, making the entire book spooky, gruesome, and very funny. California author.

Picture Book.

Schmidt, Gary D. *Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy*. Clarion Books, 2004. Historical Fiction.

This story revolves around the forbidden friendship and struggles of two coming-of-age protagonists: Lizzie, an island girl, and Turner, a mainlander, who even defy nature to preserve the bond that exists between them. The author parallels the imagery of glorious landscapes alongside of the divisive and sinister acts of the supporting cast. Metaphors sprinkled throughout the book elicit memorable comparisons between whales and freedom and Darwin and knowledge. Based on the actual 1912 destruction of an island settled by former Civil War slaves, this powerful novel sends a strong message of the hope and despair that has existed between races. Pair it with *Witness* by Karen Hesse.

Black/African American Culture. Newbery Honor, Michael L. Printz Honor. English-Language Arts/Vocabulary, History/Social Science, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Grades 6-8

Schwartz, David M. ***Q Is for Quark: A Science Alphabet Book***. Illustrated by Kim Doner. Tricycle Press, 2001. Nonfiction.

Science terms from A to Z are included in this comprehensive alphabet book. Each entry includes a light-hearted two- to-three-page explanation of the topic and cartoon drawings that illustrate the concept. An extensive glossary is included. Can be used as a picture book for older readers.

Picture Book, Read Aloud. Science.

Shusterman, Neal. ***Full Tilt***. Simon and Schuster, 2003. Horror.

When sixteen-year-old Blake goes to a mysterious, by-invitation-only supernatural amusement park controlled by Cassandra, he soon learns that much is at stake in meeting the challenge presented. A unique story with suspenseful and exciting twists that shows how someone under pressure finds courage and lives with decisions.

English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Sleator, William. ***Parasite Pig***. Dutton Books, 2002. Science Fiction.

In this sequel to *Interstellar Pig*, sixteen-year-old Barney, infected with an alien parasite, is taken by extraterrestrials along with his friend Katie. Filled with "gross-out" humor and silliness, it nonetheless offers well-developed characters and an engaging plot.

English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Smith, Jr., Charles R. ***Tall Tales: Six Amazing Basketball Dreams***. Dutton Books, 2000. Short Story.

Six short stories about basketball are told with the use of brightly colored print, various fonts, and words splashed across the pages in energetic arrangements. The photographs in the background depict mostly inner-city basketball and include all sizes, genders, and abilities. This page size is extra tall, making these truly "tall" tales. Basketball lovers will enjoy the action and energy.

Physical Education.

Spinelli, Jerry. ***Stargirl***. Knopf, 2000. Realistic Fiction.

This story is about the perils of popularity, the courage of nonconformity, and the thrill of first love when a new student named Stargirl changes Mica High School forever. This book will elicit provocative discussions.

Literacy/Motivation.

St. George, Judith. ***John and Abigail Adams: An American Love Story***. Holiday House, 2001. Biography/Autobiography.

Drawing largely on the correspondence between this famous husband and wife, St. George provides a fascinating account of their individual personalities, equal partnership and marriage, and the major historical events of that era.

Golden Kite Author Honor. History/Social Science.

Grades 6-8

Stanley, Diane. ***Michelangelo***. HarperCollins, 2000. Biography/Autobiography.

In this extended-text picture book, Stanley uses the chronology of Michelangelo's life to explain the style, technique, and meaning of his sculpture, architecture, and paintings. Computer-manipulated drawings of his actual work and Stanley's original watercolors work together to make this a thorough, easy-to-understand, and informative biography.

Picture Book. History/Social Science, Visual and Performing Arts.

Stanley, Diane. ***Saladin: Noble Prince of Islam***. Illustrated by Diane Stanley. HarperCollins, 2002. Biography/Autobiography.

This biography depicts the life of Saladin, an influential Muslim leader and sultan who led his people during the time of the twelfth-century Crusades. It discusses the Crusades and the political and religious history of the Middle East and Western Europe. The author's detailed color paintings are inspired from Islamic art of the period. The text includes a glossary and a bibliography.

Middle Eastern Culture. Picture Book.

Stanley, Jerry. ***Hurry Freedom: African Americans in Gold Rush California***. Crown Publishing, 2000. Nonfiction.

The author recounts the activities of African Americans during the Gold Rush. The book concentrates on the life and work of Mifflin Gibbs, who came to San Francisco in 1850 and was dedicated to protecting the civil rights of African Americans in California. Includes an index, a bibliographic note, and archival photos and prints. California author and setting.

Black/African American Culture. John and Patricia Beatty Award. History/Social Science.

Tanaka, Shelley. ***New Dinos: The Latest Finds! The Coolest Dinosaur Discoveries!*** Illustrated by Alan Barnard. Simon and Schuster, 2003. Nonfiction.

The author relates information about new dinosaur discoveries in the Sahara, Madagascar, China, and Patagonia. She discusses eggs, dung, feathers, and physiology. Includes a bibliography and an index.

Picture Book. Science.

Taylor, Charles A. ***Juneteenth: A Celebration of Freedom***. Open Hand Publishing, 2002. Historical Fiction.

This title explores the Juneteenth holiday that symbolizes the freedom of enslaved African Americans in Texas who were told two months after the end of the Civil War that slavery had ended. The detailed historical background is complemented by poetry, songs, documents, quotations, archival photographs, a glossary, and a list of resource organizations. It includes examples of family-centered celebrations from 1866 to the present. An authentic and engaging study of the oldest African American celebrations in the United States.

Black/African American Culture. Photo-Essay. History/Social Science.

Grades 6-8

Taylor, Mildred D. ***Land, The***. Phyllis Fogelman Books, 2001. Historical Fiction.

This novel chronicles the triumphs and life struggles of the son of a white slaveholder and an enslaved African-Indian woman. Set in Mississippi during the late 1800s, the book introduces readers to the grandfather of Cassie Logan, the impassioned hero of Taylor's 1977 Newbery Award winner, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*.

Black/African American Culture. Scott O'Dell Award, Coretta Scott King Author Winner. History/Social Science.

Tolan, Stephanie S. ***Surviving the Applewhites***. HarperCollins, 2002. Realistic Fiction.

A troubled teen is sent to live with an eccentric family in this funny, contemporary story. Humorous style and characterization make this an excellent read-aloud novel.

Newbery Honor. English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. ***Flipped***. Random House, 2001. Realistic Fiction.

Juli Bake flipped when seven-year-old Bryce Loski moved across the street. For six years he avoided her, but then in eighth grade the infatuation reverses due to her science fair project. Each one tells the story in alternating chapters in this romantic comedy of friendship and growing up.

California Young Reader Medal. History/Social Science, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. ***Swear to Howdy***. Knopf, 2003. Realistic Fiction.

Rusty and Joey are best friends. Joey is often on the edge of reckless mischief, but he also carries the painful secret of a father who beats him. Rusty is grateful to have a friend like Joey but is pushed over the limit by peer pressure. When an innocent prank causes a death and destroys a family, the time for secrets is over. California author.

Literacy/Motivation.

Vijayaraghavan, Vineeta. ***Motherland: A Novel***. Soho Press, 2001. Realistic Fiction.

Fifteen-year-old May is sent by her mother back to India to spend the summer. As a result, she must come to terms with her feelings about India, America, and with her own identity. Many Indian terms and traditions are included. Can be useful for discussing the conflicts between the East and the West.

East Indian/East Indian American Culture. Alex Award. History/Social Science, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Webb, Sophie. ***My Season with Penguins: An Antarctic Journal***. Illustrated by Sophie Webb. Houghton Mifflin, 2000. Narrative Nonfiction.

Author, artist, and ornithologist Sophie Webb studied and documented the eating, swimming, and travel habits of Antarctica's Adélie penguins while gathering data for two months on a research expedition. Gouache and watercolor paintings, some highlighted with full-page stark gray/white backgrounds, help readers interpret the

Grades 6-8

behavior of the birds engaged in typical activities. A glossary provides definitions of unfamiliar terms.

English-Language Arts/Writing, Science.

Weeks, Sarah. *Guy Time*. HarperCollins, 2000. Humor, Realistic Fiction.

This book is a humorous account of thirteen-year-old Guy's dealing with the separation and the possible divorce of his eccentric parents and his own newfound interest in girls. Can be useful for discussions of adolescent issues.

Werlin, Nancy. *Black Mirror*. Dial Books, 2001. Mystery.

Frances is convinced that her brother's overdose was not an accident and begins to suspect that the student service group at the high school is not what it seems. The multilayered plot explores many different themes in this novel: drugs, society, lies, truth, and betrayal.

English-Language Arts/Writing.

Winters, Kay. *Voices of Ancient Egypt*. Illustrated by Barry Moser. National Geographic Society, 2003. Poetry.

Individual workers who live in ancient Egypt during the time of the Olden Kingdom describe the work they do. The text is free verse and expressed in the voices of a scribe, a farmer, a bird netter, a weaver, an embalmer, a carpenter, and seven other workers. Each page has the title of the occupation in English and in hieroglyphics. Includes a historical note.

African Culture. Read Aloud. History/Social Science.

Woods, Brenda. *Red Rose Box, The*. Putnam Publishing, 2002. Realistic Fiction.

On her tenth birthday, Leah receives a traveling case decorated with red roses from her glamorous Aunt Olivia. This is a touching story of a girl and her younger sister growing up between two worlds, the deep south of Louisiana and Los Angeles in the 1950s.

Black/African American Culture. Coretta Scott King Author Honor. English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Hush*. Putnam Publishing, 2002. Realistic Fiction.

This intriguing story tells of a devastating situation. A middle-class African American family is forced to enter the federal witness protection program after the father decides to testify against two policemen who killed an innocent boy. The family must leave a comfortable and familiar life. Just as Evie learns to cope with her new name and all new names and biographical details, she must also learn that her parents aren't as capable of readjusting as circumstances require. Useful in units on family life, social problems, and moral responsibility.

Black/African American Culture. History/Social Science, English-Language Arts/Literary Elements.

Grades 6-8

Woodson, Jacqueline. ***Locomotion***. Putnam Publishing, 2003. Realistic Fiction.

Eleven-year-old Lonnie Collins Motion has had a rough life - both parents are dead, and he and his little sister are sent to different foster homes. Then in school, he learns to express himself through poetry. In learning to communicate, he learns to cope with his present and even look forward to the future.

Black/African American Culture. Coretta Scott King Author Honor. English-Language Arts/Writing.

Yee, Lisa. ***Millicent Min, Girl Genius***. Arthur A. Levine Books, 2003. Realistic Fiction.

Written as journal entries, eleven-year-old child prodigy Millicent Min records the highs and lows of the summer before her senior year in high school. They include a college poetry class and many attempts by her Chinese American parents and grandmother to give her a more "normal" childhood. This funny, heartwarming tale can be used for units on journal writing and Asian Americans.

Chinese/Chinese American Culture. English-Language Arts/Writing.

Yep, Laurence. ***Lady of Chi'ao Kuo: Warrior of the South, Southern China, A.D. 531***. Scholastic, 2001. Historical Fiction.

Using diary entries written in the sixth century, sixteen-year-old Princess Redbird of the Hsien tribe reveals her role as liaison between her own people and the local Chinese colonists in southern China during times of peace and war. The epilogue presents the historical facts about the real Lady of Ch'ao Kuo and a historical note provides a summary of the period. Includes family tree, map, and archival reproductions. From the Royal Diaries series. California author.

Chinese/Chinese American Culture. History/Social Science.

Yin. ***Coolies***. Illustrated by Chris Soentpiet. Philomel Books, 2001. Historical Fiction.

During the mid-1800s, many Chinese immigrants made their way to San Francisco and were hired to build the Transcontinental Railroad. They were called "coolies," a derogatory term for Chinese workers. They were given the most dangerous jobs and were paid the least. This beautifully illustrated book gives a good picture of the part the Chinese laborers played in the building of America and especially California.

Chinese/Chinese American Culture. Picture Book. History/Social Science.

Yolen, Jane. ***Girl in a Cage***. Philomel Books, 2002. Historical Fiction.

The daughter of Robert the Bruce, the newly crowned king of Scotland, is taken captive by the English and placed in a small cage and put on display in the town square, where she is subjected to various humiliations and indignities. In this intense drama that alternates between the present and the past, readers experience the protagonist's painful struggles for survival amidst the turbulent events of Scotland's history.

History/Social Science.

Primarily...

5th & 6th Grade

FICTION

J Alexander GYPSY RIZKA
A trickster gypsy girl's schemes expose the village elders as foolish clods.

J Coville THE MONSTERS OF MORLEY MANOR
Werewolves, vampires, mad scientists, wizards, aliens, and more!

J NEWB Curtis BUD, NOT BUDDY
When Bud runs away from a foster home to find the man he thinks is his father, his adventure only begins.

J Duane SO YOU WANT TO BE A WIZARD
Nita finds a library book that transports her into another world where helicopters, cars and other things are alive and evil is ready to take over our world.

J Gantos JOEY PIGZA SWALLOWED THE KEY
Joey's attention-deficit disorder makes life a challenge for him and those around him.

J NEWB Hesse OUT OF THE DUST
While others flee Oklahoma's Dust Bowl, Billie Jo must deal with breathing in dirt and coughing up mud.

J Ibbotson DIAL-A-GHOST
A family of ghosts protects an orphan from the diabolical plans of his evil guardians.

J Janes SHOEBAG
Don't ask! Just read it. You'll be glad you did. Funny!

J Jimenez THE CIRCUIT
A must read for anyone growing up in California about the struggles, loves, and joys of a migrant farm worker family struggling to make ends meet.

J Jennings UNCANNY!
Eight short stories that will make you sick, make you laugh, or make you both.

J Levine ELLA ENCHANTED
Can she undo a foolish fairy's spell that makes her obey every order? Living happily ever after isn't easy.

J NEWB Park A SINGLE SHARD
Tree-ear lives off what he can find in other people's rubbish heaps until one fortuitous day when he is caught at the potter's house. Newbery Award winner.

J Peck A LONG WAY FROM CHICAGO
Visiting their eccentric grandmother makes Joey and Mary Alice's summers different than most.

J Pinkwater THE WORMS OF KUKUMLIMA
Ronald goes on safari in search of intelligent, chess-playing earthworms. Pinkwater at his weirdest!

J Roberts THE VIEW FROM THE CHERRY TREE
Can Rob convince everyone he saw a murder before the murderer murders him?

J Ryan ESPERANZA RISING

After her father's murder, Esperanza and her mother must leave their privileged lives in Mexico to work as farm laborers in California.

JP Scieszka THE STINKY CHEESE MAN AND OTHER FAIRLY STUPID TALES
Yeah, it's a picture book, but you're going to love it anyway. Stupid, silly, hilarious!

J Sleator AMONG THE DOLLS
Dolls come to life and seek revenge on Vicky for treating them so badly.

J Snicket THE BAD BEGINNING
No, it's not! It's the great beginning to a very funny, weird, perverse series that you can't put down.

J Spinelli WRINGER
Palmer must either accept the violence of becoming a wringer or find the courage to oppose it.

J Wright THE DOLLHOUSE MURDERS
Can the dolls in the old dollhouse hidden in the attic lead Amy to the truth about unsolved mysteries not talked about in years?

NON-FICTION

J031M Masoff OH, YUCK! THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF EVERYTHING NASTY
That is so disgusting! Everything from acne, eye gunk and farts to pus, toilets, and vomit. Yeah!

J576S Snedden YUCK! A BIG BOOK OF LITTLE HORRORS
Really, REALLY close up photos of yucky things like dust mites, cockroaches, aphids and other things that make you want to gag!

J600M Macaulay THE WAY THINGS WORK
How does a laser work? What makes a car go? How does the picture get to your

television set? The answers to these questions and more are here.

J609J Jones MISTAKES THAT WORKED
Why are there holes in donuts? Who first made potato chips and why? Why does Ivory soap float? These and more were all mistakes that worked!

j641.5G Gillies THE KIDS CAN PRESS JUMBO COOKBOOK
Why wait for mom or dad to fix you something when you're hungry. Here are some great things to eat that are easy to make. Yum!

J741.2K Kistler MARK KISTLER'S DRAW SQUAD
Here's a how-to-draw book that will have you creating funny drawings in no time! Check it out!

J759V Ventura GREAT PAINTERS
An introduction to great painters and paintings that really gives you an idea of the size of the paintings in real life and not as squinched up on a page in a book.

J791C Cook ROLLER COASTERS: OR I HAD SO MUCH FUN, I ALMOST PUKED
The history and design of roller coasters along with examples of some of the most awesome ones.

POETRY

j811P Prelutsky NIGHTMARES: POEMS TO TROUBLE YOUR SLEEP
Gross, scary, and funny poems that will haunt your head and keep you awake long past bedtime.

j821D Dahl ROALD DAHL'S REVOLTING RHYMES
You've heard Cinderella, Goldilocks and Snow White before, but not the way Dahl tells them. Weird fun!

BIOGRAPHIES

j921C Cleary A GIRL FROM YAMHILL: A
MEMOIR

Ramona Quimby's creator tells the
story of her childhood in Oregon.

j921F Fleischman THE ABRACADABRA
KID

The author of THE WHIPPING BOY
and many other great children's books
started out with a ghost-and-goblins magic
show. This is his story.

j921F Fritz HOMESICK: MY OWN
STORY

The author of many children's
biography books tells her own story of
growing up in China.