

Fiction Books

Arnosky, Jim. I'm a Turkey! (32pp.) Scholastic Press, \$16.99 (ISBN-13: 978-0-439-90364-6) *In spoken-word song with rhyming text, a turkey describes his life in a large flock, always looking out for other creatures that might find him tasty.*

Auch, Mary Jane. The Plot Chickens (32pp.) Holiday House, \$16.95 (ISBN-13: 978-0-8234-2087-2) *Henrietta the chicken loves to read so much that she decides to write a book herself, but she has trouble finding someone to publish a book written by a chicken. It's a funny picture book that could be used as a writing lesson.*

Cocca-Leffler, Maryann. Princess K.I.M. and the Lie That Grew (32pp.) Albert Whitman and Co., \$16.99 (ISBN-13: 978-0-8075-4178-4) *Kim lies about her name and claims to that she comes from a royal family, all to impress her new classmates. She gets herself into real trouble after her classmates beg to meet her grandmother—the QUEEN. Excellent to use with a counseling lesson on telling the truth.*

Golding, Theresa Martin. Abby's Asthma and the Big Race (32pp.) Albert Whitman & Co., \$16.99 (ISBN-13: 978-0-8075-0465-9) *Abby is practicing for the big race, but she is worried that her asthma will stop her from winning. This book explains asthma to children in a nonthreatening, easy-to-understand manner. Includes endnote by a pediatrician.*

Holub, Joan. Apple Countdown (32pp.) Albert Whitman & Co., \$16.99 (ISBN-13: 978-0-8075-0398-0) *This rhyming text describes a school field trip to an apple orchard, where the students count down all the things they see, from twenty to one. Kindergarten classes really enjoyed!*

Javernick, Ellen. The Birthday Pet (32pp.) Marshall Cavendish Children, \$16.99 (ISBN-13: 978-0-7614-5522-6) *Danny can have a pet for his birthday and he knows exactly what he wants, but everyone in his family has a better idea. Young readers will enjoy the rhyming text.*

Jules, Jacqueline. Duck for Turkey Day (32pp.) Albert Whitman, \$16.99 (ISBN-13: 978-0-8075-1734-5) *When Tuyet finds out that her Vietnamese family is having duck rather than turkey for Thanksgiving dinner, she is upset until she finds out that other children in her class did not eat turkey either. Great message for all students, especially ESOL students.*

Kimmel, Eric A. The Three Little Tamales (34pp.) Marshall Cavendish Children, \$17.99 (ISBN-13: 978-0-7614-5519-6) *Excellent addition to collections of fairy tale retellings. This variation of "The Little Pigs" set in the Southwest, tells of three little tamales escaping from a restaurant before they can be eaten, and setting up homes in the prairie, cornfield, and desert.*

Kimmelman, Leslie. Mind Your Manners, Alice Roosevelt! (32pp.) Peachtree, \$16.95 (ISBN-13: 978-1-56145-492-1) *This fictionalized account of a very independent girl makes for a great read aloud. Explains what life was like for Theodore Roosevelt during his political career, with his oldest daughter, Alice, a strong-willed and somewhat wild young woman, who loved to do things that shocked the public, even when she lived in the White House.*

McClure, Wendy. The Princess and the Peanut Allergy (32pp.) Albert Whitman & Co., \$16.99 (ISBN-13: 978-0-8075-6623-7) *Regina must find a solution when she learns her best friend has a peanut allergy and cannot eat Regina's fabulous planned birthday cake. Endnote from a pediatric allergist is included.*

Spinelli, Eileen. Silly Tilly (32pp.) Marshall Cavendish Children, \$16.99 (ISBN-13: 978-0-7614-5525-7) *Tilly drives the other barnyard animals crazy with her silliness, but after gruffly telling her to stop, they discover that they miss her old ways. A good introduction to writing couplets.*

Nonfiction Books

Bishop, Nic. Nic Bishop Marsupials (48pp.) Scholastic Nonfiction, \$17.99 (ISBN-13: 978-0-439-87758-9) *Photographs and text present the diversity, beauty, habits, and life cycles of various marsupials from Australia, including quolls, quokkas, potoroos, and padamelons. Includes a glossary and index.*

Bruno, Elsa Knight. Punctuation Celebration (32pp.) Henry Holt and Co., \$17.95 (ISBN-13: 978-0-8050-7973-9) *Fourteen fun poems highlight various types of punctuation. What a fun way to learn new punctuation!*

Burleigh, Robert. One Giant Leap (40pp.) Philomel Books, \$16.99 (ISBN-13: 978-0-399-23883-3) *An illustrated retelling of Neil Armstrong and Buzz*

Aldrin's lunar landing in 1969. The illustrations are quite detailed and lifelike. Great commemoration of the first Moon landing's 40th anniversary.

Ketteman, Helen. The Three Little Gators (32pp.) Albert Whitman & Co., \$16.99 (ISBN-13: 978-0-8075-7824-7) *An adaptation of the "Three Little Pigs" set in an east Texas swamp where three little gators each build a house hoping for protection from the Big-bottomed Boar. Illustrations are vibrant and have great texture.*

Lunis, Natalie. Leggy Centipedes (24pp.) Bearport, \$15.95 (ISBN-13: 978-1-59716-752-9) *Simple nonfiction text with close up pictures introduces readers to physical characteristics, hunting & eating, habitats, and behavior of centipedes. Excellent examples of text features: Headings, Captions, Labels, Illustrated Glossary, and Index. Boys will love!*

Sill, Cathryn P. About Penguins: A Guide for Children (44pp.) Peachtree, \$15.95 (ISBN-13: 978-1-56145-488-4) *An introduction to the physical characteristics, behavior, and habitats of penguins. It will work for very primary students, while other students can read the seven-page afterward that contains an informative paragraph to match each illustration.*

Stewart, Melissa. Under the Snow (32pp.) Peachtree, \$16.95 (ISBN-13: 978-1-56145-493-8) *Describes how different animals survive the long, cold winter months. Wonderful complement to the science curriculum and makes a great read aloud for winter and habitats.*

Wargin, Kathy-Jo. Alfred Nobel: The Man Behind the Peace Prize (32pp.) Sleeping Bear Press, \$17.95 (ISBN-13: 978-1-58536-281-3) *This picture book biography explores Alfred Nobel's invention of dynamite and how his feelings about how it was used led him to create the Nobel Prizes.*

Reference Books

National Geographic Kids Beginner's United States Atlas (128pp.) National Geographic, \$18.95 (ISBN-13: 978-1-42630-512-2) *A beginner's United States atlas for children ages 6-10 that contains full-color maps highlighting physical features, capitals, towns and cities of each state and includes photographs. Also includes information on land, water, animals, people, and other points of interest with an index and glossary.*

Bucket List Books for 2009

Reading Circle Favorites (so far) Intermediate Level

Extreme Cuisine Series

Baby Bug Dishes by Meish Goldish

Bug-a-licious by Meish Goldish

Mammal Menu by Meish Goldish

Shocking Seafood by Dinah Williams

Slithery, Slimy, Scaly Treats by Dinah Williams

Spider-tizers and Other Creepy Treats by Meish Goldish

Little Dogs Rock! Series

Beagle: A Howling Good Time by Duncan Searl

Chihuahua: Señor Tiny by Natalie Lunis

Dachshund: The Hot Dogger by Natalie Lunis

Jack Russell Terrier: Bundle of Energy by Natalie Lunis

Pomeranian: Pom Pom Ado by Sunita Apte

Pug: What a Mug! By Lori Haskins Houran

Toy Poodle: Oodles of Fun by Meish Goldish

Yorkshire Terrier: Tiny but Tough by Margaret Fetty

A foot in the mouth : poems to speak, sing, and shout by Paul B. Janeczko

Storm Chaser by Chris Platt

A taste for red by Lewis Harris

Also known as Harper by Ann Haywood Leal

The battle of the red hot pepper weenies by David Lubar

The Magician's Elephant by Kate DiCamillo

Lincoln and his boys by Rosemary Wells

Autism and me: Sibling stories by Ouisie Shapiro

Season of Gifts by Richard Peck

Partners in Excellence Conference

October 15-17, 2009

Jan's Favorites – from 2009 selections

Jan Percival
Indian Hills Middle School
Shawnee Mission USD 512

Member Kansas Reading Circle Commission
Middle School Level
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★ **All the Broken Pieces by Ann E. Burg: Scholastic Press grades 5 up** War has two sides. After being air-lifted out of Viet Nam leaving his mother and badly wounded brother behind, Matt has a hard time understanding and so does Rob whose soldier brother died there, but with help, especially from their baseball coaches, the boys begin to heal. Told in verse.

Beast of Blackslope – the Sherlock Files by Tracy Barrett: Henry Holt grades 4-8 Xena and Xander- great-great-great- grandchildren of Sherlock Holmes have 2 important things, curiosity and Sherlock's book of unsolved crimes. While vacationing with their parents they tackle the case of this mysterious beast.

Brooklyn Nine A Novel in Nine Innings by Alan Gratz: Dial grades 5-9 Fascinating story of generations of a family tied together through baseball and set in the context of historic events. Some of the historical tie-ins include the Civil War, WWII, segregation and sputnik that make this a great read.

★ **City Boy by Jan Michael: Clarion grades 6up** Sam has grown up in the city in Malawi complete with cars, electricity, game boys and computers. When his mother dies his aunt takes him back to her village where there are none of the necessities like beds or running water and where he is expected to share his possessions with these new cousins Sam struggles to understand while dealing with his shock and loss.

City of Fire Bk1 in the City trilogy by Laurence Yep: Tom Doherty grades 5up With everything from a flying carpet to dragons and fire gods this action - fantasy will keep you interested even if fantasy isn't your preference as an unlikely group will try to recover the ancient rings and prevent evil from gaining control.

Closed for the Season by Mary Downing Hahn: Clarion grades 4-8 When Logan and his parents move into a house where a woman had been murdered stories of embezzlement, lies and the abandoned amusement park about to be destroyed intertwine. Another success by Hahn.

Cold Hands, Warm Heart by Jill Wolfson: Holt grades 7-9 Born with an inefficient heart that has kept her in and out of hospitals all her life 15 year-old Dani wonders if she will ever get to lead a normal life, so when a transplant is possible we get to take a look at the process from all perspectives, both families, the recipients and even the drivers who transport the organs. (Note Milo's reference to the "Fucked and Foolish" stupid ways people often die as opposed to death from illness)

Comfort by Joyce Mayer Hostetter: Calkins Creek grades 5-8 (sequel to Blue) Ann Fay is glad to be out of the polio hospital, but being home has problems too, with Dad home from the war more damaged than his shoulder. Ann Fay really feels alive at Warm Springs, GA where President Roosevelt established the center for rehabilitation of polios, but can the rest of the family survive without her? Broader audience appeal than Blue.

Cupcake Queen by Heather Hepler: Dutton grades 6-9 Moving from the city to tiny Hog's Hollow when her parents separate is tough enough, but when a cupcake disaster marks her as a social outcast at her new high school all she wants to do it go "home". Making friends with Tally, Blake and Marcus and some art talent may make it difficult to decide where "home" should be.

★ **Denied, Detained, Deported Stories from the Dark Side of American Immigration: National Geographic grades 5-8** With immigration talk in the forefront today this book takes a fascinating look back at the policies and treatment of immigrants and draws parallels and understanding to some of today's views. Excellent timeline.

Double Eagle by Sneed B. Collard III: Peachtree grades 4-8 Mike, 13, is again spending the summer with his dad off the Alabama coast. Shipwreck Island doesn't hold much for him until he meets Kyle & together they explore the old fort in search of gold left over from the Confederacy's mint that may have ended up there. Others are searching too and the approaching hurricane heightens the dangers.

11 Birthdays by Wendy Mass: Scholastic Press grades 4-6 Born on the same day in the same hospital Amanda and Leo have been best friends even sharing all their birthday parties until Amanda hears Leo's hurtful words on their 10th birthday. As birthday 11 arrives without them speaking all year strange things happen as their birthday and history repeat themselves.

Elly – My True Story of the Holocaust by Elly Berkovits Gross Scholastic Press grades 4-8 Born a Jew in 1929 Hungary, Elly's early privileged life quickly turned to confusion and deprivation. Deported to Auschwitz in 1944, separated from a family she would never see again. Elly tells her story of survival softly, if such a thing is possible, through her words and poems.

Episodes My Life as I See It by Blaze Ginsberg: Roaring Brook Press grades HS only This autobiography gives insight for students and teachers into the life of this high functioning teenager living with autism.

Forget Me Not by Coleen Murtach Paratore: Scholastic Press grades 5-9 This book has all the pieces for the perfect novel, book lovers, a beach setting, teen girlfriends, a boyfriend, weddings, food, candy, a dog and a surprise ending leaving it wide open for a sequel.

Fortune's Folly by Deva Fagan: Holt grades 4-8 Mix together a little Cinderella, Rapunzel, Hansel & Gretel with Sword in the Stone and you have this fun fairy tale adventure where evil tries to overcome good every step of the way.

Jane in Bloom by Deborah Lytton: Dutton grades 6-9 Lizzie, the perfect one, seemed to get all the attention until she lost her battle with an eating disorder. Jane, now left alone to the void with her parent's grief, begins to find her own strength through photography. (Kleenex)

Just One Wish by Janette Rallison: G.P. Putnam's Sons grades 5 up When 17 year-old Annika creates a genie to grant her 6 year-old brother a wish before his cancer surgery he asks for the real Teen Robin Hood to come and give him archery lessons instead of the action figure he wanted. Annika decides to head to California to try and make his wish come true never imagining what could happen along the way. (Kleenex)

Kaleidoscope Eyes by Jen Bryant: Knopf grades 4-8 Everyone dreams of finding treasure, but when Lyza's grandfather dies and leaves her some maps and a key she gets real hope of finding Captain Kidd's buried treasure. Set during the Viet Nam war, Lyza and her friends, Malcolm and Carolann, put their heads together to work out the secret details.

The Last Leopard by Lauren St. John: Dial Books grades 4 and up (3rd to White Giraffe and Dolphin Song) (2008) Martine continues to be in touch with the animals and is now faced with saving the last leopard from being hunted down for sport and greed. When Grandmother takes her to the Motobo Hills of Zimbabwe Martine, with the help of Ben, must follow the clues and struggle for survival.

Lost by Jacqueline Davies: M Cavendish grades 7 up Set in the early 1900's, Essie is working 6 days a week at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory when Harriet joins the workforce. Educated, upper crust and unsure how to boil water and afraid to light a match, Harriet needs Essie's help to survive and keep her secret.

★ **Love, Aubrey by Suzanne LaFleur: Wendy Lamb Books grades 6-8** After losing her father and little sister in a terrible car accident Aubrey's mother, in her grief, takes off and forgets about her. Grandmother shows up and takes Aubrey back to Vermont. Very slowly Aubrey begins to think about and deal with the terrible losses, make friends and heal. (Kleenex)

Man's Inhumanities Set: Erickson Press grades 7 up Titles included are Genocide (graphic photos), Human Trafficking, Murder, Racism & Intolerance and Torture. This collection shows and introduction to each topic with explanation of the definition, background history, current and ongoing world situations. Glossary, Index, websites notes and sources. This is a starting place for research.

Mr. Lincoln's High Tech War by Thomas B. Allen & Roger MacBride Allen grades 5-8 Very readable story of how technology was immersed in the civil war including war timelines, drawings and photographs. Good for history buffs and research.

My Darling Clementine by Kristian Gregory: Holiday House grades 5-8 With the old-time song as inspiration, Gregory portrays the life of Clementine in the gold mining /Civil War era in Idaho. From gambling and saloon girls, vigilantes and courting, a heartwarming story of one girl's struggle.

★ **News for Dogs by Lois Duncan: Scholastic grades 3-7 (sequel)** After closing the Hotel for Dogs, Andi and Bruce start a newspaper for dogs, The Bow-Wow News. Expanding onto the internet brings them problems and then the dognapping begins. With the help of Aunt Alice's detective skills can there be a happy ending?

Our Country's Presidents by Ann Bausum: National Geographic grades 5 up Contains biographical fact list, but has an excellent piece on each president highlighting important actions, decisions, and changes in government during his presidency set in context of what was happening in the US and world. Interspersed with informative pieces on White House traditions and interesting sidebars. Quotes, election statistics, index.

Peace, Locomotion by Jacqueline Woodson: G.P. Putnam's sons grades 4 up Lonnie (Lo-co-motion) is back with heartfelt letters to his sister and is trying to help them both remember their parents while dealing with separate foster moms, school, friends and the war. Good example when teaching voice in writing.

★ **Response by Paul Volponi: Viking High School (due to authentic but graphic language and violence)** Hate is a powerful enemy. Noah and his 2 friends find that out when they venture into the white neighborhood to steal a car. Abandoning the car but attracting the attention of 3 white boys, Noah is beaten with a baseball bat and a trial follows. With encouragement from family and a teacher Noah pushes himself to study, work to help support his young daughter and grow into the kind of person he wants to be.

Secret Subway by Martin W. Sandler: National Geographic grades 5-8 More than the story of the NY City Subway, it is a mini-history of the city, its inventions and the political corruption era of "Boss" Tweed. Numerous quotes, drawings and index.

Slob by Ellen Potter: Philomel grades 6-8 Owen remembers a time before he was fat, it was only 2 years ago, before he was laughed at and bullied all the time, before that horrible night his parents were murdered. If he can just get his Nemesis gizmo to work he'll find out all the answers – to the murders, his weight, and his life.

★ **Soldier's Secret by Sheila Solomon Klass: Ottaviano/Holt grades 5-8** Given away by her mother, Deborah Sampson worked through her indenture and earned her freedom. Well-read and full of ideas, she was not content with a woman's place so she disguised herself as a man and joined up to fight in the War for Independence.

Storm Chaser by Chris Platt: Peachtree grades 3-8 When lightning burns down the barn and new hay crop, Jessica's dad finally agrees to open the ranch to vacationers which Jess hopes means new friends. Her brother, Duncan, is helping Jess break and train the new filly, Storm Chaser. As she grows attached to the filly she has to try to accept that the horses on the ranch are being trained to be sold.

Tropical Secrets by Margarita Engle: Holt grades 5-8 Written in verse is the story of refugees from Nazi Germany following Kristallnacht trying to escape to America only to have the ship denied entry and ending up in Cuba. Daniel faces an unknown future in a strange land, alone and afraid to trust.

Umbrella Summer by Lisa Graff: Laura Geringer/Harper Collins grades 4-8 Everyone has some sadness that touches them. For Annie the sudden loss of her brother took the sunshine out of her family. Annie becomes overly obsessed with caution and illness and it takes a lot of friends to help to close the umbrella and let the sun shine again.

Watersmeet by Ellen Jensen Abbott: Marshall Cavendish grades 6 and up Abisina, saved from death at birth because of her green eyes and potential to be a healer like her mother, is outcast and nearly starved to death due to her skin and hair color. During the revolt she escapes death to search for Watersmeet and the father she has never met. With the unlikely guide Haret, a dwarf, they seek the place where all are welcome and equal.

Yes, I Know the Monkey Man by Dori Hillestad Butler: Peachtree grades 5-8 In this sequel T.J. is headed to Iowa to stay with the family she just found out she had, a twin sister and mom who's getting remarried. As much as she wants to find out about them her loyalty to Gran and Joe, the dysfunctional dad that has raised her, almost destroys her chance.

Note: Some of these books were not necessarily from Reading Circle choices - but from Teacher's Choice or just something I found.

<p>Allen, Thomas B and Roger McBride Allen. <i>Mr. Lincoln's High-Tech War</i>. National Geographic. This book gives stunning insight into the technological advances that Lincoln and the troops used during the Civil War: telegraph, railroads, surveillance balloons, ironclads and high-powered weapons.</p>
<p>Barnes, John. <i>Tales of the MADMAN Underground</i>. Viking. The members of the Madman Underground, the school therapy group, have serious issues: parents who have been run-over by cars, abusive relatives, alcoholic parents, dead parents, etc. The narrator, Karl, wants to be normal "one day at a time" so he can avoid being in therapy his senior year.</p>
<p>Bowler, Tim. <i>Blade: Playing Dead</i>. Philomel. Blade lives quietly, on the streets by day and in empty homes by night. But they start following him. Written as a conversation between Blade and "Big Eyes" this is an action-packed book.</p>
<p>Calame, Don. <i>Swim the Fly</i>. Candlewick Press. Fifteen-year-old Matt and his two buddies have a tradition of setting a summer goal. This year's is to see a real-live naked girl. Add barbell disasters, laxatives, fart jokes, a nudist colony and you have a book made for teen-age boys.</p>
<p>Leal, Ann Haywood. <i>Also Known As Harper</i>. Henry Holt. With a narrator's voice that reminded me of "Winn-Dixie," the book takes on the incredibly difficult issue of homelessness. Best for grades 6-10.</p>
<p>Lynch, Janet Nichols. <i>Messed Up</i>. Holiday House. With his mom in prison and his grandmother off with her new boyfriend, R.D.—a fifteen-year-old Mexican American—has a fairly comfortable life with his grandmother's ex-boyfriend, Earl, until Earl dies.</p>
<p>Rottman, S. L. <i>Out of the Blue</i>. Peachtree. Stuart is the new kid in town, but since his mother is the new base commander, he is used to being new. The book focuses on fitting in and the powerlessness upon witnessing physical and verbal child abuse.</p>
<p>Sander, Martin W. <i>Secret Subway</i>. National Geographic. Sandler's well-researched book helps us understand Alfred Beach as he secretly worked to create a luxurious subway underneath the hubbub of the dangerous NYC streets.</p>
<p>Springer, Nancy, <i>Somebody</i>. Holiday House. She was always told her mom was a slut and left her. She always wondered why her father moved her and her brother around so much and her name changed from city to city. Then she remembers her real name and begins a search for identity that will reveal secrets about her past.</p>
<p>Wolfson, Jill. <i>Cold Hands, Warm Heart</i>. Henry Holt. 14-year old gymnast Amanda is dead after a freak accident on the uneven bars. 15-year old Dani is victim of a malformed heart. Teens cope with mortality and celebrate life in this book on organ donation and its effects on donor families and recipients alike.</p>