

BEST

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Books for Great Kids

The Chicago Public Library recommends the following books as some of the best published in 2005 for kids. For some suggestions of other outstanding books available at your neighborhood library, please check our web site at chicagopubliclibrary.org or ask your librarian for assistance.

Best of the Best is made possible by a generous grant from Kraft Foods.

Read, Learn, Discover!

Toddlers

Bears

By Ruth Krauss, illustrated by Maurice Sendak
HarperCollins/Michael di Capua, Ages 2-6
Max is back with a bunch of bears to infuse fresh fun into this wild, romping rhyme.

The First Day of Winter

By Denise Fleming
Holt, Ages 2 and up
Add daily accessories to Fleming's vivid and fresh snowman to create a ten-day romp through winter that's really something to sing about!

Shhhhh! Everybody's Sleeping

By Julie Markes, illustrated by David Parkins
HarperCollins, Ages 2-4
At the end of a long day everyone in the neighborhood is tucked in, from the librarian in her bed of books, to the grocer in his vegetable bins, to the young child in a cozy bed.

Waddle, Waddle, Quack, Quack, Quack

By Barbara Anne Skalak, illustrated by Sylvia Long
Chronicle, Ages 2-6
Join Mama Duck and her five little ducklings as they hatch and begin to explore their new intriguing world in a safely rhythmic, read-aloud pace. But with a mighty boom a storm strikes—what will happen when one baby duck gets separated?

Wiggle

By Doreen Cronin, illustrated by Scott Menchin
Atheneum, Ages 2-5
Wiggle, wiggle all the livelong day with this bundle of fun doggy love.

Picture Books

The Birthday Fish

By Dan Yaccarino
Holt, Ages 4-8
A birthday wish comes true for Cynthia who has always wanted a pony and gets more than she expects.

The Bravest of the Brave

By Shutta Crum, illustrated by Tim Bowers
Knopf, Ages 3-7
As skunk is traveling home one day through the dark and scary woods, he finds the courage to make it through his journey, thanks to his loving family.

Captain Raptor and the Moon Mystery

By Kevin O'Malley, illustrated by Patrick O'Brien
Walker, Ages 5-10
Captain Raptor and his crew head to the moon of Eon to investigate a mysterious flash of light—and what they find may surprise you.

Chato Goes Cruisin'

By Gary Soto, illustrated by Susan Guervara
Putnam, Ages 5-9
Chato and Novio Boy have to make the best of things when their vacation cruise goes to the dogs.

Cowboy José

By Susan Middleton Elya, illustrated by Tim Raglin

Putnam, Ages 5-9

Ride along with Vaquero José as he enters a rodeo contest and wins something much better than he bargained for in this clomping fun, rhyming tale sprinkled with Spanish.

The Giant Hug

By Sandra Horning, illustrated by Valeri Gorbachev

Knopf, Ages 3-8

Since he can't be with her for her birthday, Owen sends his grandmother a giant hug that brightens everyone's day as it's passed along on its way.

Grandpa Gazillion's Number Yard

By Laurie Keller

Holt, Ages 4-8

When the number two turns into a tooting saxophone it's time to put in your earplugs, otherwise known as the number twelve.

The Hello, Goodbye Window

By Norton Juster, illustrated by Chris Raschka

Hyperion/Michael di Capua, Ages 5-8

This colorful story explores the many different things one little girl can see through the kitchen window, but the best sight of all is her loving grandparents.

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands

Illustrated by Kadir Nelson

Dial, All ages

This beloved, traditional spiritual is interpreted in a glowing manner which underscores the message that we're all one world together.

Hewitt Anderson's Great Big Life

By Jerdine Nolen, illustrated by Kadir Nelson

Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman, Ages 5 and up
With two giants for parents, no one can figure out how Hewitt got to be so tiny; but no matter how small, he surely knows how to take care of himself and those around him.

Hot Air: The (Mostly) True Story of the First Hot-Air Balloon Ride

By Marjorie Priceman

Atheneum/Anne Schwartz, Ages 3-6

This colorful, energetic, and wacky book shows how a duck, a rooster, and a sheep (probably) flew into the history books on a perilous journey through the skies.

How the Amazon Queen Fought the Prince of Egypt

By Tamara Bower

Atheneum, All ages

In ancient times, Queen Serpot and her brave warriors from the Land of Women fought against the army of Prince Pedikhons before joining together as allies, and their story is told here with the help of Egyptian-style hieroglyphics.

I Ain't Gonna Paint No More!

By Karen Beaumont, illustrated by David Catrow

Harcourt, Ages 3-6

Read-aloud fun spills all over the place in this exuberant explosion of color.

Leaf Man

By Lois Ehlert

Harcourt, Ages 4-8

In Ehlert's wonderful world of nature, a colorful collection of leaves creates animals, shapes, and the story of Leaf Man's autumnal travels.

Leonardo the Terrible Monster

By Mo Willems

Hyperion, Ages 3-6

This is one book (and monster) that will *not* scare the tuna salad out of you!

Our Tree Named Steve

By Alan Zweibel, illustrated by David Catrow

Putnam, Ages 4-8

Steve has stood firmly in his yard while the family around him hung a swing, jumped rope, put clothes out to dry, and grew up, but when a bad storm hits, things change.

Papa, Do You Love Me?

By Barbara M. Jooisse, illustrated by Barbara Lavalle

Chronicle, Ages 1-5

The love between a Maasai father and child is celebrated through the lovely watercolors and rhythmic text in this book that celebrates family love around the world.

Reading Makes You Feel Good

By Todd Parr

Little, Brown/Megan Tingley, Ages 3-7

From making pizzas to visiting faraway places, reading can help you do a lot of things, especially having fun.

Show Way

By Jacqueline Woodson, illustrated by Hudson Talbot

Putnam, Ages 6 and up

The stitches and patterns of quilts connect many generations of African American women in one family as they love their babies up and share traditions to keep their history alive.

Silly Chicken

By Rukhsana Khan, illustrated by Yunmee Kyong

Viking, Ages 4-6

Rani is certain her mother loves her pet chicken, Bibi, more than her, but she comes to understand how her mother feels when Bibi's baby chick becomes the apple of Rani's eye.

So Happy!

By Kevin Henkes, illustrated by Anita Lobel

Greenwillow, Ages 3-7

This gentle story makes a seed, a boy, a rabbit and the reader, all so very happy.

So What's It Like to be a Cat?

By Karla Kuskin, illustrated by Betsy Lewin

Atheneum, Ages 6-9

Don't miss this exclusive interview to find out the truth of what life as a feline is really like.

Terrific

By Jon Agee

Hyperion/Michael di Capua, Ages 3-8

After sarcastic Eugene's ship sinks and he's stranded on an island, he and a parrot strike up a truly terrific friendship.

The Three Silly Billies

By Margie Palatini, illustrated by Barry Moser

Simon & Schuster, Ages 5-7

The tale of the Three Billy Goats Gruff gets a fractured new life with twists, turns, and some familiar traveling companions.

Traction Man is Here!

By Mini Grey

Knopf, Ages 4 and up

You're invited to come along on some amazing adventures with Traction Man and his trusty sidekick Scrubbing Brush.

Wild & Woolly

By Mary Jessie Parker, illustrations by Shannon McNeill

Dutton, Ages 4-9

Can two creatures who look different, live in different places, and like different things both be sheep . . . and can they ever become friends?

You and Me Together: Moms, Dads, and Kids Around the World

By Barbara Kerley

National Geographic, All ages

This worldwide tour of love celebrates all families, wherever they may be.

Zen Shorts

By Jon J Muth

Scholastic, Ages 5-9

Through gentle watercolors and expressive brush strokes, Stillwater the panda shares wise tales with his new friends Addy, Michael, and Karl.

Younger Fiction

Andy Shane and the Very Bossy Dolores Starbuckle

By Jennifer Jacobson, illustrated by Abby Carter

Candlewick, Ages 6-9

Bullied by the class know-it-all and tattletale, Andy Shane hates school until his Granny Webb shows him how to turn the tables on Dolores Starbuckle.

Big Surprise in the Bug Tank

By Ruth Horowitz, illustrated by Joan Holub

Dial, Ages 6-9

In this sequel to *Breakout at the Bug Lab*, two bug-loving brothers attempt funny, creative, and scientific solutions to the population explosion resulting from their giant hissing cockroach pets.

The Book without Words: A Fable of Medieval Magic

By Avi

Hyperion, Ages 10-14

Odo, a talking raven, and Sybil, both servants of an evil alchemist, must protect *The Book without Words* and its secret of immortality from greedy readers with greedy desire, or lose their own lives.

The Boys of San Joaquin

By D. James Smith

Atheneum/Richard Jackson, Ages 10-13

Set in Orange Grove, California in 1951, this is the story, of twelve-year-old Paolo, his six-year-old brother, and his cousin Billy in their pursuit of the source of a half-eaten \$20 bill, stolen money, which creates matters of conscience along the way.

Chicken Boy

By Frances O'Roark Dowell

Atheneum, Ages 9-12

Caught in a family feud following the death of his mother, seventh-grader Tobin McCauley finds comfort and a new meaning in life by raising chickens with his friend Henry.

Clarice Bean Spells Trouble

By Lauren Child

Candlewick, Ages 8-12

Clarice Bean does want a starring role in the school play *The Sound of Music*; she does not want, however, to be humiliated in the school spelling bee. Because trouble is Clarice's middle name, once again she seeks guidance from her heroine, girl detective Ruby Redfort.

Cork & Fuzz

By Dori Chaconas, illustrated by

Lisa McCue

Viking, Ages 6-9

Cork, a muskrat, and Fuzz, a possum, don't like the same games or eat the same foods, but all good friends share something in common.

Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa

By Erica Silverman, illustrated by

Betsy Lewin

Harcourt, Ages 4-8

Known as a cowgirl "from the boots up", Kate and her cow-horse Cocoa share stories, surprises, cooperative counting and lullabies.

A Dog's Life: The Autobiography of a Stray

By Ann M. Martin

Scholastic, Ages 9-12

In her own words, Squirrel shares a story of family, loss, danger, abuse and neglect and mutual love-all parts of this dog's life.

Each Little Bird That Sings

By Deborah Wiles

Harcourt/Gulliver, Ages 9-12

Having attended 247 funerals so far, ten-year-old Comfort Snowberger (Explorer, Recipe Tester, and Funeral Reporter) celebrates life and learns about what is really important in this funny and touching book.

Gentle's Holler: A Novel

By Kerry Madden

Viking, Ages 10-14

Livy Two and her family struggle through some hard times in the mountains of North Carolina during the 1960s but make it through with music and their love for each other.

Lowji Discovers America

By Candace Fleming

Atheneum/Anne Schwartz, Ages 8-11

When nine-year-old Lowji Sanjana moves with his family from Bombay to Hamlet, Illinois, U.S.A., he has great hopes of having a pet and making friends. His first American expression "bummer" describes this experience.

Lucky Days with Mr. and Mrs. Green

By Keith Baker

Harcourt, Ages 5-8

Mr. and Mrs. Green, a loving alligator couple, try their luck with detective work, a gumball-guessing contest and shared talents in the third book in this series.

Mercy Watson to the Rescue

By Kate DiCamillo, illustrated by

Chris Van Dusen

Candlewick, Ages 4-8

This early reader adventure will delight all kids who love pig tails and pig tales.

Mr. Chickee's Funny Money

By Christopher Paul Curtis

Random House/Wendy Lamb, Ages 9-12

First book in the new Flint's Future Detectives series. The Flint Future Detectives have to outsmart a team of Top Secret Government Agents that wants the quadrillion dollar bill Mr. Othello Chickee gave to Steven!

The Other Side

By istvan banyai

Chronicle Books, All ages

Look, think, and look again at familiar things as seen from different points of view. This contemporary wordless picture book explores the other side of things from top to bottom, backwards and forward, and around every turn, often leading to the reader's surprise.

Out Standing in My Field

By Patrick Jennings

Scholastic, Ages 8-12

With self-deprecating humor untalented eleven-year-old Ty Carter shares his story from the dugout and right field between plays of a Pee Wee playoff game. Although he loves baseball, Ty hates being the favored player and son of an overbearing coach, but quitting baseball is not an option for Ty Cobb's namesake.

The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy

By Jeanne Birdsall

Knopf, Ages 8-12

In addition to laughing a lot, readers will meet fun new friends and delight in the old-fashioned family adventures in this book, which is sure to become a classic.

Project Mulberry

By Linda Sue Park

Clarion Books, Ages 9-12

Julia is so worried that the silkworm project she is working on with her friend, Patrick, is not American enough that she discusses it with the author while her story unfolds.

The Scarecrow and His Servant

By Philip Pullman

Knopf, Ages 9-12

A scarecrow and his servant, a young boy named Jack, try to stay a step ahead of the rotten Buffaloni family and find their place in the world, finding adventure and friendship along the way.

Stanford Wong Flunks Big-Time

By Lisa Yee

Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine, Ages 9-12

Stanford Wong is used to being a sixth-grade basketball hero, but if he doesn't stay home from basketball camp and pass English in summer school, he'll lose his spot on the team.

Stink: the Incredible Shrinking Kid

By Megan McDonald

Candlewick, Ages 7-11

Judy Moody's brother may be little, but since even some presidents have been small, why should that stop Stink from being the irrepressible star of this new book?

Whales on Stilts!

By M. T. Anderson, illustrated by

Kurt Cyrus

Harcourt, Ages 9-12

On Career Day at her father's lab, Lily discovers that earth is under attack by an army of mind-controlled, laser-eyed whales on stilts! Only Lily and her pals Katie Mulligan, star of a horror fantasy series, and Jasper, techno geek, can foil the plot and save the world in this first book in a new series, M. T. Anderson's Thrilling Tales.

The Xanadu Adventure

By Lloyd Alexander

Dutton, Ages 10-13

Book Six in the Vesper Holly Adventures series finds spunky Vesper Holly, her guardian Professor Brinton Garrett, and friends journeying to Asia Minor in 1876 in search of the ancient city of Troy. The expedition is fraught with peril and plot twists as they once again encounter the malevolent Dr. Desmond Helvitus.

Older Fiction

Birdwing

By Rafe Martin

Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine, Ages 11-14

Part fairy tale and part adventure story, this retelling of the Brothers Grimm's "The Six Swans" follows the youngest brother of the six, the one who was left with a wing where his left arm should be, on his escapades.

Confessions of a Closet Catholic

By Sarah Darer Littman

Dutton, Ages 9-12

Poor Justine is convinced that confusion over her religious identity has made her responsible for the death of her beloved grandmother, a survivor of the Nazi death camps.

The Convicts

By Iain Lawrence

Delacorte, Ages 10 and up

After his father is thrown into debtor's prison, Tom sets out on a quest to settle his accounts in rough and gruesome 19th-century London and ends up a prisoner himself.

Crackback

By John Coy

Scholastic, Ages 13 and up

Miles is a football star, but he can't seem to please his coach, he can't seem to please his dad, and he discovers that in order to please, some of his teammates are using steroids. Will Miles decide to do anything to please?

Day of Tears: A Novel in Dialogue

By Julius Lester

Hyperion/Jump at the Sun, Ages 12-15

Based on a true story about the largest auction of slaves in America's history, this novel tells many stories at once: those of slaves, masters and mistresses, buyers, auctioneers; all witnesses to a most terrible piece of our past.

Drums, Girls & Dangerous Pie

By Jordan Sonnenblick

Scholastic, Ages 11-13

Life for eight-grader Stephen Alper appears to be normal, as he dreams of himself as an extraordinary drummer and revels over his latest crush, however, his journey through life changes when his five-year-old brother Jeffery is diagnosed with leukemia.

From Charlie's Point of View: A Mystery

By Richard Scrimger

Sleuth Dutton, Ages 11-13

When Charlie's father is accused of a crime his son knows he did not commit, Charlie takes it upon himself to track down the real criminal, a task made much more interesting when the sleuth is blind.

Guys Write for Guys Read

Edited by Jon Scieszka

Viking, Ages 11-14

If you're a guy, there's something great here for you. Famous authors and illustrators contribute to this book, their views and stories, as to how "real" men read.

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince

By J. K. Rowling

Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine, Ages 10 and up
Harry returns to Hogwarts for another magical mystery-filled year where he suffers the loss of a loved one while sharpening his wizarding skills in his quest to put an end to Voldemort's evil ways.

Harry Sue

By Sue Stauffacher

Knopf, Ages 9-13

All this girl wants is to end up in prison so she can finally be reunited with her mother, and although she makes every attempt to be hard-hearted, she finds she just cannot commit the crime in order to do the time.

Keeper

By Mal Peet

Candlewick, Ages 13 and up

How does a young, gawky boy from a remote logging village in the jungle become the greatest soccer goalie in the history of South America?

The Lightning Thief: Percy Jackson & the Olympians, Book 1

By Rich Riodan

Hyperion/Miramax, Ages 10-14

Evidently the gods and goddesses of Greek mythology are still kickin' in the twenty-first century and their kids are causing trouble at summer camp. This is perfect for Harry Potter fans that are asking, "What can I read next?"

Magyk

By Angie Sage

HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen, Ages 9-13

In the opening book of the "Septimus Heap" series, Septimus, the seventh son of a seventh son, encounters baby switching and spell castings, boggarts and brownies, evil villains and extraordinary wizards, on his quest to find out who he truly is.

Maya Running

By Anjali Banerjee

Random House/Wendy Lamb Books, Ages 11-14

It's hard to fit in when you are the only Indian-born kid in your tiny Canadian town and your beautiful cousin visiting from India steals the heart of the boy on whom you have your heart set.

My Brother's Keeper

By Patricia McCormick

Hyperion, Ages 12-15

After dad has left them and mom and the boys are struggling financially and emotionally, Toby's older brother Jake turns to drugs to numb the pain and Toby feels he must cover Jake's tracks to keep things on an even keel.

The Old African

By Julius Lester

Dial, All ages

This powerful story, based on legend, tells of an elderly slave who brought hope to his fellow sufferers and led them back to Africa.

Quicksilver

By Stephanie Spinner

Knopf, Ages 13 and up

In this often funny story of the fleet-footed messenger and his dealings with the characters of Greek mythology, Hermes finds pleasing his father is more difficult than it is for most kids because his dad is Zeus, the god of all gods.

Raven's Gate: Book One of the Gatekeepers

By Anthony Horowitz

Scholastic, Ages 10-14

Matt was in the wrong place at the wrong time and he's been given a choice – he chooses to live in a small village with an old lady instead of going to jail, but he may second guess his decision when he finds himself about to become a human sacrifice.

Totally Joe

By James Howe

Atheneum/Gineeo Seo, Ages 12-14

Joe Bunch from *The Misfits* is back to share a humorous and realistic "alpha biography" describing the A to Z's of his life as a young gay teen.

Wolf Brother

By Michelle Paver

HarperCollins, Ages 10-15

In this first installment of the Chronicles of Ancient Darkness series, Torak and his wolf guide, while on a quest to destroy the demon-possessed bear that killed Torak's father, discover that evil is terrorizing the forest and that Torak is prophesied to destroy it and save their world.

Folk & Fairy Tales

Doña Flor: A Tale About a Giant Woman with a Great Big Heart

By Pat Mora, illustrated by Raul Colón

Knopf, Ages 4-8

A giant mountain lion is terrorizing the village with his bellowing Rrrr-oarr and Doña Flor has set out to fix the problem (and boy is she in for a surprise) in this original tall tale.

Kibitzers and Fools: Tales My Zayda Told Me

By Simms Taback

Viking, All ages

What should you not do with a sick chicken? The answer is found in one of these wise tales from the Jewish tradition.

Lies and Other Tall Tales

By Zora Neale Hurston, illustrated by

Christopher Myers

HarperCollins, Ages 6 and up

Oh yeah? You think your tales are tall? These tales are so tall, well, you'll soon get the picture in these lies and tales originally documented by Zora Neale Hurston.

Nacho and Lolita

By Pam Muñoz Ryan, illustrated by

Claudia Rueda

Scholastic, Ages 4-8

Nacho uses his colorful feathers to guide the renowned swallows, including his love, Lolita, back to San Juan Capistrano after they migrate to South America for the winter.

The Pea Blossom

By Amy Lowry Poole

Holiday House, Ages 3-6

This beautiful and unique re-imagining of one of Hans Christian Andersen's lesser known tales is set in China and encourages readers to find their dreams and contentment wherever they may be.

The Sun's Daughter

By Pat Sherman, illustrated by R.

Gregory Christie

Clarion, Ages 5-9

Iroquois tales of the Corn Maiden inspired this wonderful read-aloud story of Maize, daughter of the sun, who brings summer with her whenever she visits the earth.

You Read to Me, I'll Read to You: Very Short Mother Goose Tales to Read Together

By Mary Ann Hoberman, illustrated by

Michael Emberley

Little, Brown/Megan Tingley Ages 4-9

Rhythm, rhyme, and reading practice make this book of slightly fractured Mother Goose tales perfect for sharing.

Poetry

Good Dog

By Maya Gottfried, illustrated by Robert

Rahway Zakanitch

Knopf, Ages 4-9

With pictures that just make you want to take one of these loyal, lovable pooches home with you, this collection is just right for curling up on the couch with your canine friend.

Jazz A-B-Z: An A to Z Collection of Jazz Portraits

By Wynton Marsalis, illustrated by Paul

Rogers

Candlewick, Ages 8 and up

An entertaining mix of alphabet book, jazz history lesson, guide to poetic form, discography, and music-poster-like art, you have to see it to believe.

Jerusalem Sky: Stars, Crosses, and Crescents

By Mark Podwal

Doubleday, Ages 9 and up

This beautifully illustrated poem in picture book format tells the story of how Jerusalem comes to be at the center of the stories of three major traditions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

A Kick in the Head:

An Everyday Guide to Poetic Forms

By Paul B. Janeczko, illustrated by Chris

Raschka

Candlewick, Ages 9 and up

Quatrain and Haiku and Ode...oh my! This is an easy to understand, beautifully illustrated instruction manual with examples of things like elegies and concrete poems.

Mural on Second Avenue and Other City Poems

By Lilian Moore, illustrated by Roma Karas

Candlewick, Ages 4-8

We experience the city through the eyes of one young boy as he encounters rooftops, bridges, parks, pigeons, strangers, construction sites, and much, much more.

Poems to Dream Together/Poemas para Soñar Juntos

By Francisco X. Alarcón, illustrated by Paula Barragán

Lee & Low, Ages 9-12

This is a vibrant collection of nineteen bilingual poems all celebrating family, community, and the world around us.

Rin, Rin, Rin/Do, Re, Mi

By José-Luis Orozco, illustrated by David Díaz

Scholastic/Orchard, Ages 3-8

Orozco's Spanish lyrics are colorfully illustrated by David Díaz and partnered with an easy English rhyme to encourage early literacy.

Schoolyard Rhymes: Kids' Own Rhymes for Rope Skipping, Hand Clapping, Ball Bouncing, and Just Plain Fun

By Judy Sierra, illustrated by Melissa Sweet

Knopf, Ages 6-10

If you want to read some fun, This very book is the one.

Song of the Water Boatman & Other Pond Poems

By Joyce Sidman, illustrated by Beckie Prange

Houghton Mifflin, Ages 5-10

Meet and greet the denizens of a pond and explore the world they inhabit through these delightful poems and the informative explanations that accompany them.

Summertime Waltz

By Nina Payne, illustrated by Gabi Swiatkowska

FSG, All ages

The theme of taking advantage of a warm summer night when there is dimming light to run outside and play after dinner is universal to young kids, but the art, language, and poetic form of this book make it a great choice to share with older readers as well.

Winter Lights: A Season in Poems & Quilts

By Anna Grossnickle Hines

HarperCollins/Greenwillow, Ages 4-9

Considering winter is a time of year when mother nature doesn't provide much light, Hines' original quilt illustrations show where to find it: in Hanukkah and Kwanzaa candles, in Christmas trees and farolitos, in Chinese lanterns, and in the aurora borealis!

A Wreath for Emmett Till

By Marilyn Nelson, illustrated by Philippe Lardy

Houghton Mifflin, Ages 14 and up

The poet has created a crown of sonnets that tell the history and dive deeply into the emotional aftermath of the lynching of a fourteen-year-old boy.

Zoo's Who: Poems and Paintings

By Douglas Florian

Harcourt, Ages 5-10

These short, simple poems about a variety of animals, some familiar and some more unusual, are funny and have great rhythm for reading aloud.

Younger Non-Fiction

Amazing You!: Getting Smart About Your Private Parts

By Gail Saltz, illustrated by Lynne W. Cravath

Dutton, Ages 4-8

Answers that age-old question "Where do babies come from?" and encourages positive body images for young, curious children.

Chameleon, Chameleon

By Joy Cowley, illustrated by Nic Bishop

Scholastic, Ages 5-8

Be sure to check out the photo of the really long, flexible tongue in action as it snatches a caterpillar from a faraway leaf!

A Grand Old Tree

By Mary Newell DePalma

Arthur A. Levine, Ages 4-8

This beautiful life cycle story is just right for lap-sharing or using as part of a classroom discussion about ecology.

I See a Kookaburra: Discovering Animal Habitats Around the World

By Steve Jenkins and Robin Page

Houghton Mifflin, Ages 6-10

Dozens of amazing cut paper illustrations present an array of creatures featured in their home sweet homes.

Let's Talk About Race

By Julius Lester, illustrated by Karen Barbour

HarperCollins, Ages 5 and up

"What's your story?" Julius Lester wants to know. He tells a little bit of his own story to start the conversation about how, in many ways, we are all alike because "Beneath everyone's skin are the same hard bones."

The Librarian of Basra: a True Story from Iraq

By Jeanette Winter

Harcourt, Ages 5-9

Alia hid the entire collection of books (30,000) in her neighbor's restaurant just before the library building was burned; then she moved them again to her home and the homes of friends.

Prehistoric Actual Size

By Steve Jenkins

Houghton Mifflin

Ages 8-12

Get up close and personal with a ten-foot-tall terror bird and other creatures in an amazing cut-paper presentation of creatures that lived millions of years ago.

Ready, Set, Preschool

By Anna Hays, illustrated by True Kelley Knopf, Ages 2-4

For excited and anxious children and parents, this active book introduces many of the concepts and routines that are a part of this exciting time of life.

Rosa

By Nikki Giovanni, illustrated by Bryan Collier

Holt, Ages 7-10

This beautiful tribute to Mrs. Rosa Parks presents her pivotal role in our history in a powerful and unique way.

Science Scoops: Planets!

By Lisa Jo Rudy

HarperCollins, Ages 4-8

There are never enough books about the planets, and this easy reader is a great addition to the planetary pack.

Science Scoops: Spiders!

By Nicole Iorio

HarperCollins, Ages 4-8

Creepy and, at the same time, fascinating! Check out this easy reader to learn more about arachnids.

Older Non-Fiction

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

By Cynthia Chin-Lee, illustrated by Megan Halsey and Sean Addy

Charlesbridge, Ages 10-13

One beautifully illustrated and engaging snapshot biography for each of the twenty-six letters of the alphabet covering a variety of careers, cultures, eras, and missions.

Built to Last: Building America's Amazing Bridges, Dams, Tunnels, and Skyscrapers

By George Sullivan

Scholastic, Ages 9 and up

This book takes us inside some of the greatest feats of engineering in the modern age, including the Sears Tower.

Children of the Great Depression

By Russell Freedman

Clarion, Ages 9-12

Many first-hand accounts and heart-wrenching photos round out this book dedicated specifically to how this terrible time in our history affected the youngest Americans.

Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth & John Wilkes Booth

By James Cross Giblin

Clarion, Ages 12 and up

One of the greatest stage families of their day, the Booths were well-loved until one of their own took the direction of the nation into his own conspiratorial hands.

The Great Brain Book: an Inside Look at the Inside of Your Head

By H. P. Newquist

Scholastic, Ages 9 and up

Everything you ever wanted to know about your brain and more is provided for you in this readable book from why you need a brain in the first place, to how it works, to what we can hope for in the future.

Hatshepsut: The Princess Who Became King

By Ellen Galford

National Geographic, Ages 8-12

Explore the history of ancient Egypt and get to know an extraordinary woman who was the daughter of a king, was married to her half-brother to become a queen, and then through unusual circumstances became a female pharaoh.

Hitler Youth: Growing Up In Hitler's Shadow

By Susan Campbell Bartoletti

Scholastic, Ages 10 and up

This is a history comprised of the first-person accounts of a dozen or so children involved one way or another in the misguided and tragic Hitler Youth movement.

Into the Volcano

By Donna O'Meara

Kids Can Press, Ages 9-12

We're talking dangerous work here! The author and her husband explore volcanoes risking life and limb to collect information about these mysterious forces of nature.

Joe Louis: America's Fighter

By David A. Adler, illustrated by

Terry Widener

Gulliver, Ages 8-12

As difficult as boxing is, Louis fought under conditions much more so: racism, Nazism, and war, which elevated him to hero status in American history.

Our Eleanor: A Scrapbook Look at Eleanor Roosevelt's Remarkable Life

By Candace Fleming

Atheneum/Anne Schwartz, Ages 12 and up

This fascinating biography of one of our most famous (and infamous) first ladies is beautifully illustrated with photos, articles, and letters spanning her entire action-packed life.

Outbreak: Plagues That Changed History

By Bryn Barnard

Crown, Ages 10 and up

Focuses on six major diseases and how they influenced the directions of politics, government, thought, science, behavior, and civilization – sometimes for the better...and sometimes not.

Prairie Builders: Reconstructing America's Lost Grasslands

By Sneed B. Collard

Houghton Mifflin, Ages 10-14

The enthusiastic work to restore the flora and fauna of the Midwest's native tallgrass prairie by a dedicated group of volunteers is depicted in this useful Scientists in the Field title.

Real Revolution: The Global Story of American Independence

By Marc Aronson

Clarion, Ages 12 and up

The complexities and impact of the founding of the United States are thoughtfully uncovered and examined in a revolutionary way by this insightful author.

So You Want to Be an Explorer?

By Judith St. George, illustrated by

David Small

Philomel, Ages 9-12

All it takes to be a good explorer, like Alexander the Great, Bjarni Herjolfsson, Amelia Earhart, and Christopher Columbus, is a sharp eye, respect, willingness to take risks, and determination.

Understanding the Holy Land: Answering Questions about the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

By Mitch Frank

Viking, Ages 12-14

This book's basic style and clear presentation go a long way in helping readers to grasp a complex situation.

2005 Award Winners

Newbery Award

Criss Cross

By Lynne Rae Perkins

Greenwillow, Ages 11-14

Caldecott Award

The Hello, Goodbye Window

By Norton Juster, illustrated by

Chris Raschka

Hyperion/Michael di Capua, Ages 5-8

Coretta Scott King Award

for Text

Day of Tears: A Novel in Dialogue

By Julius Lester

Hyperion/Jump at the Sun, Ages 12-15

Coretta Scott King Award for Illustration

Rosa

By Nikki Giovanni, illustrated by

Bryan Collier

Holt, Ages 7-10

Theodor Seuss Geisel Award

Henry and Mudge and the Great Grandpas

By Cynthia Rylant

Simon & Schuster, Ages 5-8

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