

April 2012 Book Reviews

Butterflies

By Seymour Simon

Egg, caterpillar, pupa, and adult. These are the four stages of butterflies and moths. Seymour Simon uses bright and beautiful pictures to explain the anatomy, life cycle, and types of Lepidoptera. Children and adults alike will be thrilled with the information. Mr. Seymour invites them to study the insects first hand and plant a butterfly garden. As we learn about our world, we learn about each other. Photos with brilliant color make the butterflies and moths come alive. This book is appropriate for Public or School Libraries and recommended for grades 2nd through 6th.

Lenell Quinn, Winside Public School

The Kid Table

By Andrea Saigel

Ingrid and her six cousins are stuck forever at “the kid table” at all of the family functions, until the oldest cousin, Brianne, brings Trevor home from college. Exit kid table. This story deals with the complex relationships and idiosyncrasies of a modern his, hers, mine, yours family. Ingrid is the central character and she has always been supportive of her cousins but now she has met the most interesting guy at her Uncle Kurt’s Bar Mitzvah and it turns out he’s the love of Brianne’s life. Follow them right on down the aisle and find out if Dom is let out of the closet, if the mime and Brianne really love one another, or if Ingrid and Trevor live strangely and happily ever after. This book is recommended for both school and public libraries and for ages 13-18.

Lenell Quinn, Winside Public School

Under Siege

By Andrea Warren

Lucy, Willie, and Fred are 3 children brought together in the Battle of Vicksburg. Lucy is a curious and lively girl who spends the siege in a cave. Willie admires his father for keeping the citizens of Vicksburg calm and rallying the Troop. Fred just happens to be the son of Ulysses S. Grant. He spends the summer of 1863 with his father experiencing the beauty of strategy and the horrors of war. These stories are heartwarming and real. There are various paintings, photos, and maps of the people, battles, and landscapes of surrounding Vicksberg. Appropriate for public or school libraries, recommended for middle school grades.

Lenell Quinn, Winside Public School

Little White Rabbit

By Kevin Henkes

This book is very colorful and easy to read. This book is about a white rabbit who goes out on an adventure. Everything he sees is new. This book shows you what it is like when you go out on your own first adventure. It is a very good book and easy to read. It keeps you entertained. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades Kindergarten through 2nd.

April Myer

What Happened on Fox Street

By Tricia Springstubb

Mo lives on Fox Street with her father and sister Dottie. Mo calls Dottie the “problem child” because Mo has to watch her much of the time and she seems to always be in trouble. Fox Street has everything a girl could want, even a boy who wants to teach her to skateboard. The one thing it does not seem to have is a fox. When someone makes her dad an offer on their home Mo is distressed as the most important part about this street is the memories it holds of Mo’s mom. Can Mo convince her father that to sell is the wrong thing to do? There is a lot of rambling about a lot of nothing through the first 2/3rds of the book. If you can force yourself to continue reading the final third gives you the plot of the story. Once the story picks up it moves along nicely and you learn the meaning of family and friendship. This book is recommended for grades 3rd through 5th.

Diane Limoges.

Fox and Phoenix

By Beth Bernobich

Long City's king is dying and his daughter Lian is going to the University in the Phoenix Empire. When Lian does not return home the King Ghost Dragon, friend to the dying King, encourages Kai Zou to bring Lian home before it is too late. Now Kai Zou and his friend Yun travel through rain and snow that slows them down. Peril seems to follow everywhere. They soon realize that someone does not wish for them to reach Lian and they must be cautious of everyone they meet. Will they reach Lian in time? This Sci-fi/fantasy is a combination of ancient China and the modern world. The storyline is good but rather draggy. There is a lot of fluff at the beginning that is not needed and there are times when you will wonder when the story will truly be revealed. This book is recommended for grades 6th through 9th.
Diane Limoges

Willie and the All Stars

By Floyd Cooper

I enjoyed this story and the pictures. It tells about Willie, a young boy who lives in Chicago during the WWII years. The book gives you a good idea of how poor Willie and his grandmother are. They live in a one bedroom apartment and his toys consist of a wad of tape and string for a ball and a stick for a bat that he uses to play ball with his best friend, Sean O'Carroll. Colored men weren't allowed to play on major league teams and formed their own. The older men on his street point out this fact to Willie which makes him feel really bad. One day his friend O' Ezra gives Willie an envelope that contains two tickets to a ball game at Wrigley Field. Sean and Willie are ecstatic. It is beyond their wildest imagination to be able to go to a real ball game. An enjoyable book, describes the beginning of the colored teams and how eventually they all played together. This book is recommended for grades Kindergarten through 3rd.
Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

Boys Without Names

By Kashmira Sheth

Gopal and his family live in rural India. When a bad crop means the loss of their farm and a debt they can never repay, Gopal's family must leave in the early morning to avoid being caught. They travel to the city with the hope of a better life. A shortage of money and the fact that Gopal's father cannot read makes their travels even more difficult. While Gopal's uncle searches for Baba who has gotten lost, Gopal tries to earn money to help out the family. Now he's locked in a sweat shop with five other boys with little to eat and getting sick from the glue fumes. Stories like the one he told his brother and sister to keep him going and give him the idea of how to escape. Will all six boys be able to get away? Once again we have a book with the promise of a great subject. And again we have the problem of too much detail leading up to the real story. Most young readers will give up on this book before they are halfway through and so will have missed the premise of the story. This book is recommended for grades 4th through 6th.
Diane Limoges

I Didn't Do It

By Patricia MacLachlan and Emily MacLachlan Charest

This book is a collection of poems about puppies and dogs. This would help children who have dogs and even those who do not have dogs, to get a sense of what dogs are like. The pictures in the book really add a personality to the dog poems. The words of these poems brought back memories of experiences I have had with dogs. Personal experiences really add so much to the book. The authors have a companion book about other canines entitled "Once I Ate a Pie". Appropriate for school and public libraries, and recommended for grades preschool through 6th.
Kathy Muller

Mo Wren, Lost and Found

By Tricia Springstubb

Mo Wren and her sister and dad are moving from the home and neighborhood they had enjoyed when their mother was with them. Then Dad sells the house and buys a fixer upper restaurant in another part of town. Mo has problems adjusting to school and finding new friends. Her sister seems to adjust very well. The whole family and their friends need to support the restaurant. This book really discusses changes in a pre-teen life like loss of a parent, changes in homes, loss of friends, support and pulling together. Another important point is realizing who is a good friend and a support to trust. Appropriate for both public and school libraries, and recommended for grades 4th through 6th.

Kathy Muller

Haunted House, Haunted Mouse

By Judy Cox

Most of us love Halloween, the candy, the costumes, the decorations. But for a little mouse it can be a pretty scary time. Like the rest of us he really likes candy so when a kid sets his sack down he climbs inside and samples the best. After a while he gets bored and decides to nibble a hole in the sack which allows the candy to drop out piece by piece. This Halloween night turns nasty when a strong rainstorm begins. He runs down the street trying to find a safe, dry place when he spots an open door of an abandoned house. Boy, the inside of the house was dark and scary and the mouse is afraid. Read the book to find out how Mouse solves his problem. I liked the story very much, but wasn't enthused about the pictures. Many of them were hard to distinguish exactly what the picture was depicting. This book is recommended for grades Preschool through 2nd.

Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

The Littlest Evergreen

By Henry Cole

Imagine being a tiny tree, an evergreen tree growing up on the side of a hill with a lot of other trees that are a lot larger than you. Then one day in the cool fall, men come and start chopping the trees down around you. But, because you are so small, you are completely dug out of the ground and taken to a tree lot where you are sold to make someone's Christmas happy. Then the family takes you out in the yard and plants you. A lovely story, great pictures and the kids really enjoyed it. Hope you will too. This book is recommended for grades Kindergarten through 3rd.

Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

A Suitcase Surprise for Mommy

By Cat Cora

Zoran is a small boy who has a mother who travels for her job. She is leaving for New York and he doesn't like being left behind. When his mother suggests that he send something of his along with her he looks through his room trying to find the perfect item. Too big, too little, too noisy, nothing seems right. So he finally thinks about the special picture he drew for his mom on the fridge. They both think it's perfect. The pictures add much to the story and the book definitely radiates empathy. Nice story. This book is recommended for grades Preschool through 3rd.

Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

Cock-a-doodle-doo, Creak, Pop-pop, Moo

By Jim Aylesworth

This is the run, rhyming story of a busy family on a turn of the century farm. The onomatopoeias of all the animals and tools and such make this a great read aloud. The illustrations which are a bit reminiscent of Norman Rockwell are full of color and movement and fun. This book is recommended for any collection and for people of any age.

Heather Reid, home school parent, Omaha, NE

Boy Dumplings

By Ying Chang Compestine

When I picked up the book I thought, well you could use this for multicultural literature. After reading it I was rather disappointed. The pictures are okay, the storyline is outrageous. A ghost who wants to take a chubby boy and make dumplings, give me a break! The short version is that the boy manages to capture the garbage eating ghost and he never bothers anyone again. This book is recommended for grades Preschool through 2nd.

Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

Peanut Butter and Homework Sandwiches

By Lisa Cook

Martin McGregor has just had his world turn upside down. His most favorite teacher, Mr. Elliot, is sick and Mrs. Payne is substituting. He has been waiting to bring his pet tarantula to school. When he arrives he is met at the door by Mrs. Payne, who loves to give lots of homework. When he gets home and starts his homework he accidentally drops some of his peanut butter and jelly sandwich on the paper and his dog grabs it and really does eat his homework. Now he is in trouble with Mrs. Payne. Things continue to go from bad to worse for Martin as misadventures continue to befall. Read this cute book and find out what happens. The pictures really add to the story. This book is recommended for grades 1st- 4th.

Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

Spacey Snakey Buggy Riddles

By Katy Hall and Lisa Eisenberg

This was a good book. I didn't think I would enjoy it but once I started reading the book I really enjoyed it. I recommend a lot of people to read this book. My favorite riddle was, "What kind of shoes do reptiles wear?" Snakers! There are lots of colors and pictures of different types of animals. This book was really funny and I feel like everyone should take the time to read some of the riddles. Appropriate for both school and public libraries, and recommended for grades Preschool through 6th.

Ceanna Jones

Hurricanes

By Gail Gibbons

Hurricanes are a very scary storm if you live along the coast. This book informs you of all the categories of hurricanes from the least harmful to the most dangerous. They also give all the damages that the different categories can cause. The hurricanes make-up is also described in this book. The areas where hurricanes are along the coast but there are certain parts of the coast where different hurricanes occur. There are many interesting facts all throughout the book. Appropriate for both public and school libraries, and recommended for grades Kindergarten through 3rd grade.

Michelle Bauer

Crunch

By Leslie Connor

Dewey Marris had quite the struggle over his summer. The Marris's children were left home alone when their parents were on vacation and ran out of fuel on the way home. While your average children would be playing with friends all summer long, the Marris's never got the opportunity. They had to keep the family farm going. Along with the daily chores, Dewey and his brother Vince had to run the little family bike business called the Bike Barn. But it wasn't easy. With large numbers of bikes coming in each day and transportation being an issue, it was hard to keep up and get more parts. The parts slowly started disappearing. Finally the parents got enough fuel to make it home. But just when it seemed like things were turning for the better, their father got attacked and was hospitalized all because of his ration cards. The Bike Barn was running very far behind so they put together a free bike repair clinic. The parents eventually made it home safely. This book will keep your students alert because of all the unexpected events that occur. I would recommend this book for classes to read aloud. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and for students up to 3rd grade. This book was easy to read and left you thinking so it kept it interesting.

Michelle Bauer

The Runaway Mummy: A Petrifying Parody

By Michael Rex

This story is about a little mummy that wants to run away from Mother Mummy. She will always be there for him, no matter what type of creature he turns himself into. In the end the little mummy decides to stay with Mother Mummy forever and ever. This book contains illustrations that are vivid and colorful, and that really tell the story. I feel this story has enough illustrations, repetitiveness and storyline that can be understood by pre-schoolers up to 4th grade. Appropriate for both school and public libraries.

Karen Beyke

Furious George Goes Bananas

By Michael Rex

George is an ape who gets captured by a man in a funny hat. The man tricked George with bananas. As the book goes on, George keeps getting tricked by this man into doing things he doesn't want to do. Finally after going "bananas" enough, George tricks the man into a space ship and sends him off to space. George finally stood up for himself, which is a good thing to do. This book has very funny and entertaining illustrations. I would say this book would compare to any other book trying to send a strong message through about standing up for yourself. I would definitely use this book in my classroom. Not only is it entertaining but teaches people not to use others to get what you want, and also to stand up for yourself. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades Kindergarten through 3rd.

Abby Houghtelling

Sprout

By Dale Peck

This story is about Daniel Bradford, a teenager who is on a self-discovery journey. Daniel's alcoholic father moved them from big city living to rural Kansas to escape memories of his deceased wife. Already deemed different by his classmates, Daniel went one step further and colored his hair green. Hence the nickname Sprout. Admittedly gay, Sprout, through his life experiences, is wondering what his secret is that everyone else knows. Parts of this story were written and narrated in essay form. This book deals openly and realistically with teen issues of homosexuality, alcoholism, abuse, and acceptance. The teen pregnancy issue was left unaddressed. A book comparable to this one would be *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*, about four teenage girls discovering secrets about themselves through their summer experiences. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 9th through 12th.

Karen Beyke

Small Persons with Wings

By Ellen Booraem

Mellie is a young girl with a peculiar family. Both of her parents are artists, and she has a small person with wings named Fidius. Mellie and Fidius have fun playing together turning her room into a jungle and her squash into candy corn. When Mellie begins school, she is faced with the social pressures of trying to fit in and tells the others in her class about Fidius, saying she will bring him to school on Monday. Fidius becomes very angry when he hears the news and leaves Mellie to be tortured and taunted by her peers for years. Years later Mellie's parents find out that her grandfather has passed so the family packs and moves to the Inn in which he worked. Once there, Mellie learns of the family secret, and discovers many small persons with wings flying around in the pub of the Inn. Timmo, the neighbor boy, also discovers the secret when walking into the pub. Upon learning the secret a "real-estate agent" named Gigi Kramer comes and tries to get the precious moonstone which the small persons with wings need to survive. After failing the second time, she turns Mellie into a frog. Will Mellie be able to give the moonstone back to the small persons with wings without Gigi Kramer getting in the way? You'll have to read the book to find out. This book has colorful descriptions, allowing you to feel as though you are alongside Mellie and her family. I thought it was very detailed and great at holding the reader's attention. Booraem did a great job of keeping the reader guessing and I would recommend this book to others interested in fantasy stories. This book reminds me of the Harry Potter and Twilight series because of the unnatural changes that occur. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 4th and up.

Lacey Bunn-Sateren

I Didn't Do It

By Patricia MacLachlan and Emily MacLachlan Charest

Through charming poems, this book walks you through the thoughts and actions of a dog. The different dogs in the book portray the different likes and dislikes of dogs, as well as their justifications on what their owners perceive they are doing. They talk about what they feel and why they act the way that they do. Each page has another perspective that a human would not recognize or notice. This book is very light-hearted and interesting to read. It does a great job of showing the perceptions of a dog than any other book I have read for this age group. This book gave children the opportunity to feel as though they were in the story with that dog as their own. The authors did a great job of incorporating humor and short sentences in poem form to keep the audience interested in the story. This book is full of colorful descriptions as well as realistic illustrations of different breeds of dogs. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades Kindergarten through 3rd.

Lacey Bunn-Sateren

Lost and Found

By Jim LaMarche

Lost and Found is a collection of three stories of children and their relationships with the dogs in their lives. Each story tells of the adventures they share and the way their relationship with their dog is special. Anna and Molly get lost in the woods together when Anna decides she doesn't want to live at home anymore. In the end Molly helps Anna get back home by sniffing out the trail. Jules loses Ginger on a hiking trip, but finds her lying on his jacket he laid out for her to find. Jack and Yuki are strangers in the beginning, but soon become close friends and get to stay with each other even when Yuki's owner comes to claim her. This book is a great book to read to children who have pets of their own or family pets. They can connect and relate to the children in the stories. This is a book I would recommend to certain students instead of just everyone. It would also be a good book for a child who is a new owner to a pet. I would definitely want to have this in my own personal library someday. This book has beautiful illustrations of the children and their canine friends in nature. The pictures went along very well with the book so the children could get a more vivid image of what was happening. Lost and Found is a little different from ordinary children's books because it has three different stories inside. It's more of a touching and sentimental book than others would be. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for Preschool and above read aloud, and 3rd and up independent reading.

Savannah Carlton

Word After Word After Word

By Patricia MacLachlan

A group of students in fourth grade get a chance to have an author spend six months working in their classroom. Ms. Mirabel was trying to teach the students different ways to write and express themselves. Each student looked at writing in different ways. They wrote about what their lives could be, what they wanted their lives to be, and how they wanted their lives to stay. Every student enjoyed having Ms. Mirabel in the classroom because every day was different. Every student should have an experience like this in the classroom, and also read this book! This is a very different book than the many others I have read. It teaches children to want to write while entertaining them. Each student in the book writes a poem, some write more than others, and those poems are part of the book so you can read them. I would like to own this book to keep in my own personal library. I would recommend this book to every child that asked for a book recommendation. Appropriate for both public and school libraries and recommended for up to 3rd grade read aloud and 4th and up independent reading.
Savannah Carlton

The Smallest Girl Ever

By Sally Gardner

The Genies had their first child but they wanted a son, not the girl they got. They were famous for their magical talents. Several years after Ruby was born, her parents passed away. She was sent to Grimlocks School for Conjurers and Magicians since she had no family to look after her. But Ruby didn't know how to do magic. All she could do was make herself shrink. She had two valuable objects that were left for her when her parents died, a magic lamp and a wand. Alfonso came along and told the school he was Ruby's uncle so he took her from the school only so he could confiscate the magic wand and lamp. She couldn't do magic so Ruby was no good to Alfonso and he put her tiny body in a hand bag and threw her out the window. She was discovered by Aunt Hat. She and Aunt Hat started doing magic together and became famous. Ruby was in danger because Alfonso came back to get her since she learned how to do magic. In the end Ruby ends up living happily ever after with Aunt Hat. The book had good illustrations and the print was larger so it made it easier to read quickly. It was easy to understand and keep you entertained while reading it. Over all it was a good book to read. It would be fun to read to the children aloud. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 4th and up.
Amber Classen

Creature

By Andrew Zuckerman

This is a very good book for preschool and 1st graders. The book not only teaches them their alphabet, but also gives an example. Kids have a visual of an animal that would start with the ABCs. The pictures are very realistic and the book is very informational. It not only teaches but also allows children to think and see what letter the objects start with. I read this book because it is informational for children. It helps them to learn the alphabet and also an animal that starts with the corresponding letter. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades preschool and 1st.
Carissa Fehringer

New Kid in School

By Ruth McNally Barshaw

This book is about a young girl named Ellie who doesn't want to move away to a different school. Ellie has a hard time leaving and saying good bye to all her friends. As Ellie and her family travel two hours away to the new house, Ellie draws and writes in her journal. She loves to read and when she gets to the new house she goes on an adventure to check out the town. She then finds her new favorite place, the town library. Ellie goes in and meets the librarian and they start to look at books she may be interested in. She doesn't have a library card so the librarian goes ahead and lets her check out the books if she promises to bring them back the next day. Ellie got books that she thought described her life at that moment. Finally it's the first day of school and she doesn't know anyone. She walks in and she is crowded by a lot of people. She then meets a girl that saves her from the older kid's hallway and shows her a better way to walk into the school every day to avoid the older kid's chaos. Ellie meets kids in her grade and realizes moving wasn't all that bad. She and her friends get along great. They are all unhappy that their class is always last in the lunch line and only gets 5 minutes to eat every day. So they decide to write a paper to the principal and get their class moved up in line, but that doesn't work because the other kids are mad that they are last. Her class goes back to the end of the line. Ellie and her friends decide to make fake people out of cardboard and show the school how long the line is and how long they have to wait to eat every day. So the school listens and her whole grade is finally happy that the lunch line moves faster now. Ellie loves her new life and realized it is okay for a change. This book is like a lot of children's books. It is easy for children to understand and enjoy. Children who love to doodle or draw in journals will mostly enjoy this book. It is interesting and gives a good message that change isn't always a bad thing. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 3rd and up.

Carissa Fehringer

First Grade Jitters

By Robert Quackenbush

The first day of school can be nerve-racking for anyone. In this story a young boy has something you would call the first grade jitters. He is scared that his friends won't be there and his teacher will expect him to know everything. By the end of the story he finds out that everything will be fine and his jitters disappear just like that. This is like any other book where someone is nervous about the first day of school or just starting something new. This would be a good read aloud book for the first day of first grade. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 1st through 3rd.
Katie Mann

Dirty Little Secrets

By C.J. Omololu

Lucy is in high school and pretends to live a normal life. She has many secrets about her and her family, but she keeps them from everyone, even her best friend Kaylie. She spent many of her nights over at Kaylie's house and one morning she comes home to find her mom dead. The decisions she makes from then on and the secrets she keeps trying to hide get more difficult as the days go on. This story is a very emotional and deep book that will keep you wanting to read more as you get pulled into Lucy's life. I thought this book did a very good job at using vivid words and calling attention to situations that many young adults can relate to. I would recommend this to students who are looking for a good book to read during their free time. It is a book that you can get lost in. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 6th through 9th.

Abby Houghtelling

Testing the Ice

By Sharon Robinson, Kadir Nelson

This true story about Jackie Robinson is about how Jackie started baseball in the All-Black Leagues and showed bravery by joining the pros. Then when he quit he showed bravery by marching with Dr. Martin Luther King. And he also tested the ice for his kids to skate on showing bravery again. This book has good pictures and is easy to read. It is a good book with good lessons in it about showing bravery. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades Kindergarten through 3rd.
Derek Loseke

Late Nate in a Race

By Emily Arnold McCully

This is an "I like to Read" book for about a 1st grade reading level. But the story of a little mouse, who really doesn't want to race but ends up finding his stride in the end, is one that kids any age will enjoy. The illustrations are simple and colorful and help with context. Recommended for any collection that has early reading books.

Heather Reid, home school parent, Omaha, NE

Half-Minute Horrors

By Lemony Snickett, Neil Gaiman, James Patterson, and many more!

This book is full of all different stories by different authors. It is full of humor and ghost stories. It even has some poetry and a limerick or two. In this book you may find a dog that eats children, a haunted house, and an evil nanny. Read at your own risk! The few illustrations and comic strips are very fun and entertaining. I loved this book. It is very creative and fun. I think any child would enjoy its witty charm and frightening humor. Also, I feel most adults would enjoy reading it to a child. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 3rd through 5th.

Alexie Mobley

Underpants on My Head

By Jessica Harper

You think it is summer but once you blink it is winter. The Small family went to visit Gram in the mountains and decided to go for a hike on Mount Baldy. The three younger children stay with Gram while the three older go with their parents. When they go on their hikes they always bring extra underpants for when they go swimming. Instead they put them on their heads when snow and wind come out of nowhere. Not only is this a great memory but now they have extra hats during the winter. This is like any other book where characters are bonding with their family. This is a great book for children just starting to read chapter books. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 3rd through 5th.

Katie Mann

Goodnight Goon, A Petrifying Parody

By Michael Rex

One monster says goodnight to all the other monsters and "things" living in his house. He even says goodnight to pictures of mummies and Martians. He says goodnight to a hat, a skull, and even a shoe. Eventually he gets them all to bed as he lies down to sleep, as well. This book uses great illustrations and rhymes and is a fun twist to the original book, Goodnight Moon. Michael Rex is a fun children's writer. I recommend this book to little children who love fantasies. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades Kindergarten through 2nd.

Alexie Mobley

Scooter in the Outside

By Anne Bowen

This is the very realistic story (from a dog's point of view) of trying to get out of the gate, only to find that all the unfamiliar people and places isn't all he's been dreaming. Of course, his little girl finds him and all is right in the world. The illustrations are cute and colorful. Any young child or elementary student would enjoy reading this story and relating to it. This book is recommended for any collection.

Heather Reid, home school parent, Omaha, NE

Layla, Queen of Hearts

By Glenda Millard

This book is about a girl named Layla and her best friend Griffin. Layla doesn't have anyone to take to senior citizen day, so they go with Griffin's grandma Nell and meet a lady named Merie. Griffin and Layla learn the importance of memories and of the small miracles that warm the heart. This is one of the best books I have read. It shows the importance of friendship and how Layla and Griffin deal with death. I enjoyed reading it very much. It kept me interested the whole time. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 4th and up.

April Myers

13 Words

By Lemony Snicket

Throughout the entire book a dog is trying very hard to cheer up his friend the bird. He gets him cake then keeps his friend busy painting eleven ladders any ten colors he wants. The dog has a green convertible with a goat driver who takes him down a twisty two-lane highway. Then the dog decides to get the bird a hat to cheer him up., so they go to a haberdashery with a scarlet door that is owned by a baby. The dog looks everywhere and finally finds a hat with panache for his friend. The bird has just finished painting all the ladders when the dog comes home and surprises him with a hat. At that moment a mezzo soprano walks through the door and decides to sing a song about their day. Everyone then sits down for some more cake after their wonderful day. Unfortunately the bird is still a little down. The illustrations are very colorful and fun and will keep a child interested. To be honest, this book only reminded me of Snicket's other book, 'A Series of Unfortunate Events'. There were a lot of very upset people in those books just like the bird is in '13 Words'. This is a very colorful book, good book if you want to teach your child new words, I think some children might not know what the bigger words, such as Haberdashery, mean. I love how the dog is going to all this trouble to cheer up his friend. At the end, the bird even though he is still despondent, does not let his friend know. I think because he went to all that trouble to make him feel better. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 3rd and 4th.

Kyla Patten

Ready for Anything

By Keiko Kasza

Duck and Raccoon first start off talking about going on a picnic and they think about all of the things that could go wrong, but then they think positive and end up going on the picnic and have a great time, after all. This book contained many great illustrations. I thought that it would be a great book to read to younger kids because it is easy to understand and has great pictures. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades Kindergarten through 3rd.

Chase Schwarz

Friends (Mostly)

By Barbara Joosse

Ruby and Henry have a very special relationship. Like each friendship they have some faults and don't always get along. In the end they are always friends no matter what happens between them. The pictures are great and demonstrate a lot of character. This book is easy to read, to capture the pictures and meaning of them, and most importantly to enjoy and laugh at what is happening. I loved this book. It made me laugh and smile. It made me think about my friendships also. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades Kindergarten through 3rd grade.

Britni Patterson

The Mysterious Mr. Spines: Wings

By Jason Lethcoe

Edward Macleod is a fourteen year old boy who has lost his mother and never knew his father. His aunt sends him to a boarding school for hopeless cases. Everybody at his new school makes fun of Edward because he just happens to be six feet tall! Edward is saved from 'Whiplash' Scruggs in the nick of time by Mr. Spines. Whiplash wants to cut off Edward's wings and make him a Groundling before he even has a chance to be a Guardian. Guardians guide souls to the Afterlife after they have completed their unfinished business on Earth. Edward has no interest in any of it...until he finds out his mother's soul is trapped in the Afterlife! He must construct a plan to get himself through the Afterlife and get his mother and himself back out again. The cover was what really caught my attention, it has amazing illustrations and it shimmers, which to me would be a great way to catch a child's interest. I love the page at the beginning of the book where Mr. Lethcoe explains where the idea for the Mr. Spines series came from; from a simple what if question. This book reminds me of the Percy Jackson series. Percy starts off thinking his father was just a normal human being and that there was no spectacular reason for him always getting in trouble other than bad luck. It isn't until he is older that he finds out different. Edward always thought his father was a normal human being until he gets older and sprouts wings. They both thought themselves as freaks until they find out there is a supernatural reason for the way they are. I loved this book, it has mystery and suspense. It even has someone risking their life for a loved one. It really keeps a reader hooked, after I finished the book I couldn't wait to read the second in the series. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 4th through 6th.

Kyla Patten

Frannie

By AJ Stern

This girl Frannie wants to be all grown up. She uses grown up words and tries to act like a grown up. What Frannie doesn't know is that grownups have a lot of hard work. They also know not to mess with other people's things. This was a great book! It teaches kids to keep their hands to themselves and not touch things that aren't theirs. The illustrations were great and described the story very well. I loved this chapter book. It was funny and very fun to read. I would read it over most books.

Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades Kindergarten through 6th.

Britni Patterson

Soar, Elinor

By Roca Brown

Soar, Elinor is an inspirational book for young kids, ages eight up to teenage years. I would recommend this book to grades 3rd to high school. Elinor is a young girl who has a dream and does everything she has to do in order to accomplish this dream. Any child through teenage years can read this book and feel that whatever dream they have, can be fulfilled. Many people may find it hard to accomplish their dreams because of the lack of faith and support from their peers and elders. In reading this book they will find that Elinor fought the same problem, but managed to be brave and prove wrong anyone who doubted her. Elinor accomplished something that many adults couldn't even imagine accomplishing. She is a hero to many children, teenagers and adults. The illustrations and colors are very bright, upbeat, and catch your eye, and they are very explanatory. This is comparable to any inspirational book. I loved this book. When I am a teacher I will read it to the class on the first day of school. Appropriate for school and public libraries, as well as home libraries, and recommended for grades 3rd through High School.

Allison Nicole Rosentrater

Katie Kazoo, Switcheroo; Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow!

By Nancy Krulik

Katie is a fourth grader preparing for her first band concert. Katie is extremely nervous for her upcoming concert, and her best friend convinces her that a new hair style is the best way to get rid of all her jitters. When Katie and her friend arrive at the town's best hair salon, magic dust appears and turns Katie into the hair stylist! This book has short chapters with at least one picture per chapter, making it an easy read. The humor here reminded me a lot of the Judy B. Jones and Frankly Fanny Books. It's always fun to imagine being switched into someone else so I think that girls would love reading this book. It also teaches girls to be comfortable with their own appearance. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 3rd and 4th.

Bonnie Schlickbernd

Love, Splat

By Rob Scott

It's Valentine's Day and Splat the Cat has a special valentine for a special someone named Kitten. Splat likes Kitten very much, but is afraid she doesn't like him back. Splat's rival, Spike, likes Kitten too, and Splat's valentine for Kitten isn't near as amazing as Spike's. Surely Kitten will like Spike's better...or will she? The illustrations in this book are wonderful and clearly depict the story. It was full of brightly colored pictures with a cute story plot kids can relate to. I think this story is perfect for reading aloud especially around Valentine's Day. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades Kindergarten through 4th.

Becky Shafer

Hand-Off

By Michael Teitelbaum

Every kid growing up finds at least one or more things to be nervous about. Pablo, the main character in this book, is a natural born athlete, but is new to football. This book shows kids that by working hard at something, and practicing all the time, it will pay greatly in the end. I would recommend this chapter book to kids 4th through 8th grade. After being put in a nerve-wracking situation, Pablo shows kids that if you just believe in yourself, and with all the support from your team, anything is possible. And most importantly, you can do it! This is a great book to read to the kids who want to join athletics but are too nervous. Hand-Off shows that both male and female athletes can play together for a win. This book contains many great illustrations; although the pictures are black and white they show friendship and teamwork. The rest of the series, and pretty much any book that shows kids working together and helping each other with their fears, is comparable to this one. I absolutely loved it! It made me think of when I was a kid in flag football! It brought back good memories. Appropriate for both school and public libraries.

Allison Nicole Rosentrater

Crow Call

By Lois Lowry

Liz is a young girl who never had a chance to build a relationship with her dad since he was at war. When her dad comes home, he is merely a stranger to her until a father-daughter hunting trip changes everything. The illustrations are very detailed and life-like. This is a very realistic book with great illustrations. It is a realistic-fiction book with a serious tone. I really enjoyed this story and I think that many girls could relate to it, especially with the war going on now I'm sure many girls feel like Liz. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 3rd and 4th.

Bonnie J. Schlickbernd

Fancy Nancy and the Mermaid Ballet

By Jane O'Connor

This is yet another installment in the Fancy Nancy series that is full of drama and fancy words and ideas. This story is about how Nancy and her friend, Bree, are anxiously awaiting their ballet teacher's decision for their parts in a mermaid ballet. Both are disappointed at first, but when Bree gets the coveted mermaid part, Nancy has to work through feelings of jealousy. It's a sweet story and little girls will love it. This book is recommended for any collection.

Heather Reid, home school parent, Omaha, NE

Betty Bunny Wants Everything

By Michael B. Kaplan

This is the clever and realistic story of a little bunny who is a pill and has to learn that she can't have everything she wants the hard way. Her parents come up with a clever solution for their little materialistic girl and it appears she's learned the lesson, but there's a clever twist on the end. Cute illustrations and easy text will make this a favorite for early elementary students. It's recommended for any public collection and would be a good addition to a child's personal library as well.

Heather Reid, home school parent, Omaha, NE

Little Dog Lost

By Monica Carnesi

This is the true story of a dog lost on the ice in the Baltic Sea and his amazing rescue. Elementary children will love that this true story has plenty of adventure and a happy ending all in a simple text that they can read alone. The illustrations are simple and helpful and the last page has the real story with real photos. This book is recommended for any collection.

Heather Reid, home school parent, Omaha, NE

I'm Fast

By Kate and Jim McMullan

This is part of a series for little guys all about vehicles of every kind. This one is about a race car and a train racing to Chicago. On the way, kids will learn about the different cars a train can pull and enjoy the onomatopoeias throughout. The illustrations are simple and colorful and lots of kids will want to copy them and read and retell the story. This book is recommended for kids in preschool and early elementary school and for any public or school collection.

Heather Reid, home school parent, Omaha, NE

Frisky, Brisky, Hippity, Hop

By Alexina B. White

This is the adorable story in photographs of a few squirrels and their day of adventure. Kids will love to look at the photos that show so much of the character of squirrels. The text is simple and fun with rhymes throughout that make it a great read aloud. This book is recommended for people of any age and any collection.

Heather Reid, home school parent, Omaha, NE

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind

By William Kamkwamba

This is an autobiographical story of a boy in a poor village in Africa who when faced with drought and famine, used his keen mind and the books at his disposal to make a windmill, first to bring electricity and then to bring water to his family and village. The last page has real photos and more info about what William is doing now. The illustrations are wonderful, full of detail and help kids get a better idea of life in Africa. This book is recommended for any collection and for any audience.

Heather Reid, home school parent, Omaha, NE

One Cool Friend

By Toni Buzzeo

This is a cute story of a boy who decides to visit the aquarium and zoo and brings home a penguin...who really is a lot like him. He takes care of his new friend all while trying to avoid his father, but in the end, of course, his father finds out and then...fun, surprise ending. Kids will love this story (although may need to be cautioned about how taking zoo animals is not a real life scenario) and the fun illustrations and ending. This book is recommended for early elementary kids and any library's collection.

Heather Reid, home school parent, Omaha, NE

School Days according to Humphrey

Betty G. Birney

Humphrey is the classroom hamster for Room 26. When students return for school in the fall, Humphrey is confused and concerned about all the unfamiliar faces coming in to his room. And more surprising is the teacher, Mrs. Brisbane, does not seem alarmed. As the year progresses Humphrey realizes who these new faces are and what they are doing in his classroom. Along the way Humphrey, in his hamster way, helps the new students adjust to school and become better students. This book is recommended for grades 3-4. This would be a fun book for maybe reluctant readers. Easy to read and follow. It is one in a series of books about Humphrey. Excellent pictures from the mid 1800's. This story puts a smile on your face. Children would probably giggle through this book. It teaches some positive lessons as Humphrey is a very thoughtful and caring hamster. I would recommend for young readers.

Deb Daehnke

Chocolate Moose

By Maggie Kneen

The moose goes to a bakery run by mice. He is so big the mouse has trouble finding a job for him. Finally she uses him as a babysitter to her children. This book would interest children because of the cute illustrations that follow the story line. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades preschool through mid-elementary.

Sharon Kinnan

It's Christmas, David!

By David Shannon

This book is about a little boy who cannot wait for Christmas. He is trying to stay out of trouble so that Santa Claus can bring him what he wants. Towards the end of the book they let you know that David was dreaming. Although this is a cute book, I think that there are way better Christmas books out there to read. It has some good pictures that young children would like. Appropriate for both public and school libraries and recommended for grades Preschool and Kindergarten.

Jessica Vazquez

Cat Diaries

By Betsy Byars

Cat Diaries is a book about cats in the MEOW (Memories Expressed in Our Writing) Society who gather each year to read diaries of a variety of cats. Stories are told about cats from all over describing their life such as a gypsy cat or a cat from Egypt. The story is a collaboration of diary entries from various cats and the entries are then read to the entire society. This book is a good read for newly independent readers; probably best for first to fourth graders. It is full of cultural information so kids who read this book will learn more about the world around them. It is somewhat of an easy read but would be good practice for young readers who love cats. This book is good for any library but best for a public library. Kids who read this book will not only learn but are able to let their imaginations run free and expand their reading abilities.

Becky Shafer

Bloody Times

By James L. Swanson

This is an adaptation for young people of the adult book *Bloody Crimes* by the same author. It relates the span of time when the Civil War ended, Lincoln was assassinated and there was a man hunt for Jefferson Davis, President of The Confederacy. Do you think your students know who Jefferson Davis was? How long from the day Lincoln died until he was buried and where? Why was there a funeral train for Lincoln to his final resting place? How did Lincoln's wife respond to his assassination? Were there more men involved in the assassination than John Wilkes Booth? How did Davis' wife Varina compare to Mary Todd Lincoln? Without the use of phones, internet, etc., how did people receive news about these two men and how did it affect the way people thought? These are only a few questions answered in this very interesting book. This book is highly recommended for grades 6-8. I believe a school library would find this useful as a research text for studying Abraham Lincoln, the Civil War and Jefferson Davis. Excellent pictures of this era and it contained a Who's Who of people from both the North and South and a glossary. There were additional sections on Civil War places to go and additional books to read. Very interesting book. I enjoyed reading about the contrast between these two men and their similarities as well. The contrast of their two wives was very interesting to me as well. Since Lincoln's body was to be viewed along the route, his body had special coroners accompany him on the two week trip train trip to Springfield, Illinois, where he was buried. And although a little macabre, their job was to keep his body acceptable to be viewed. The book also included pictures pertaining to both Lincoln and Jefferson Davis. This would be a nice addition to resources on the Civil War.

Deb Daehnke

Froggy's Best Babysitter

By Jonathan London

Froggy's Best Babysitter is an adorable book about a young frog, Froggy. Froggy's parents leave and get him a babysitter. At first Froggy does not feel he needs a babysitter, but soon finds out his babysitter is cool. Froggy does some ornery things, but the babysitter always picks up after him. She really was his best babysitter! This book was very fun and entertaining. It's a great book for an adventurous child. There are fun illustrations, and contains some bigger words that make it exciting. Appropriate for both school and public libraries, and recommended for students in Preschool.

Molly Smith

Anne Frank: Her Life in Words and Pictures

By Menno Metselaar and Ruud van der Rol

This book is the life story of Anne Frank. Her family was forced into hiding because they were Jewish. Jews were forced into concentrations camps. Anne wrote a diary about her days in hiding. She overcomes problems and is still positive. After years of hiding, the Nazis finally find them and they are sent to the camps. This book was very informational and I learned a lot about Anne's past and events going on in the world at that time period. I think every child should learn about Anne Frank. There are good illustrations and actual photos of family and setting, and there are maps, as well. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for children ages 3 and up.

Molly Smith

The Little Red Hen and the Passover Matzah

By Leslie Kimmelman

The Passover is coming soon and the little red hen needs to prepare the matzah for the celebration. The matzah, a flat bread, takes a while to prepare and the little red hen would like some help from her friends. Every time she needs help she asks. Will her friends help her? Will the little red hen allow her friends to join in on the celebration and eat the matzah with her? This book teaches about the value of friendship and forgiveness. It also teaches children about the Passover holiday. I recommend this book to those children who love animals and like to learn about new things. The illustrations are very colorful and the animals look somewhat lifelike but still cartoonish. This is a very good book. I like the bright images. Young children will love the pictures. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades Kindergarten through 5th.

Stormie Surrell

Forever Amber Brown

By Paula Daniger

Amber Brown is a girl that is going through many changes in life. For instance: her mother and father are divorced, her best friend Justin moves away, and her mother has a new boyfriend, Max. The change that she wants is to redo her bedroom, but that might not be possible. Max asks her mother's hand in marriage and more change would come along if her mother says yes because they would have to move to another place and start a new life. Amber just wants her life to be normal without any more changes, but soon realizes that change is actually good and a part of life. One think that she knows that will forever remain the same is that she will forever be Amber Brown. While reading this book, it reminded me of the book Junie B. Jones in a way, because Amber acts a little like Junie B., since she is curious about things and a little bit random at times. This book is very relatable for little kids growing up and trying to understand changes occurring. Even with my own experiences, kids always have changes occurring through life, but soon they have to realize they have to accept the changes the world gives them because the changes could be for the best. It has many funny illustrations that really depict who the characters are and what they are like. Appropriate for both public and school libraries and recommended for students in grades 3rd through 4th.

Sondra Wellington

Most Wanted

By Kate Thompson

The baker's son, Marcus, is handed the reins to a horse and told to keep him safe. Soon he discovers that this is not just any horse but the famous Incitatus, who is one of two consults to the emperor. Soon the rumors are flying that the emperor Gaisu is dead and that the soldiers are searching for Incitatus. Determined to keep his family, Marcus decides to return Incitatus. This is a short piece of fiction based on history, and there is really not much substance to the story. There must be a better way to get young readers interested in history and reading in general. Appropriate for both school and public libraries.

Diane Limoges

One Crazy Summer

By Rita Williams-Garcia

Three sisters travel 3,000 miles to meet their mother who left them as babies. With plans for Disneyland and other sightseeing, the sisters end up spending their time with the Black Panthers and gaining a whole experience there. This book shows the culture of the 1960's and I think teens would find this book interesting. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for Middle School through High School grades.

Sharon Kinnan

Elsie's Bird

By Jane Yolen

Elsie is a young, lively, happy British girl who sings her heart out to the birds. Tragedy strikes as her mother passes away and as time progresses her father wants to start a new life in a place called Nebraska. Elsie feels sad because she is away from her Boston home and living on the Nebraska prairie. The only friend she has is her canary, Timmy Tune. But one day he escapes and she searches far and wide to find him. Thinking she will never see him again, she starts singing a song that brings him back to her and other birds follow the sweet melody of the song also. In the end her papa has a surprise for her; the gift of a dog, and she finally feels like she is at home on the Nebraska Prairie. The illustrations are very colorful and grab the reader's attention. This book has a great story line and is very sweet. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades Preschool through 4th.

Sondra Wellington

Henry and the Bully

By Nancy Carlson

Henry and the Bully is an excellent picture book and is very realistic fiction. Henry is struggling with an older bully at school, named Sam, and can't seem to find peace with him. Every day Henry and the first graders play soccer during recess. Sam, the new third grader, will humiliate Henry and pick on him during the soccer games. Many children will be able to relate to this story. Will Henry ever make peace with Sam and actually be able to have fun at recess? I would read this book aloud to my students and show them the fantastic illustrations. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades Kindergarten through 3rd.

Kristen Windhorst

How to Talk to Dads

By Alec Greven

Alec Greven gives many good tips for children and even teens on how to talk to our own dads. It relates to many issues and difficulties we may have with our fathers. This book has great illustrations demonstrating the problems and frustration we might have. *How to Talk to Dads* keeps you glued and wanting to know more tricks to maintain a good relationship with your dad. This is a helpful book that teaches you tricks to stay on your dad's good side. It kept my interest and I was able to relate to many things that were discussed in this book. I also enjoyed the pictures that showed the frustration of the dad and his son. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 3rd - 8th.

Kristen Windhorst

A Boy Had a Mother Who Bought Him a Hat

By Karla Kushin

A boy had a mother who bought him a hat and everything else a kid could want. He loved everything his mother bought him. He loved everything so much that he took everything with him wherever he went. The great illustrations matched the story very well. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 1st through 3rd.

Shane Young

Liar

By Justine Larbalestier

Ever pick up a book and wonder after reading several pages just what you read or why you wasted your time reading it? Well, this book definitely fits in that category. I tried to read this several times, even skimming rather than reading and yet I could not force myself to waste any more of my time.

Diane Limoges

POP

By Gordon Korman

Marcus has moved to a new town and is determined to become the starting quarterback for the Hudson Valley Raiders. The problem is, the Raiders had a perfect season last year and lost few of their starting lineup. Their returning quarterback is Troy, son of Charles Popovich, who played for the NFL. While practicing, in Three Alarm Park, he meets an old guy, Charlie, who doesn't seem to have a job but loves football. When Alyssa, Troy's on-again-off-again girlfriend, hits on Marcus it just compounds Marcus' problems, not only with Troy but with his sister Chelsea. So Marcus is involved in Troy's family in more ways than one and he is left with a mystery to unfold. Finally, a read worth encouraging young people to pick up. Along with the game of football, young readers will get a grasp for what it is like to deal with Alzheimer's and some of the things that cause the disease. Appropriate for both school and public libraries, and recommended for grades 7th and up.

Diane Limoges

Emma-Jean Lazarus Fell in Love

By Lauren Tarhis

As Emma Jean and her friends prepare for the spring dance, love is in the air for other students as well as the adults in the school and at home. This is easy reading with an attention getting story line.

Young teenagers would definitely identify with the story. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for upper elementary to High School grades.

Sharon Kinnan

Mary and Her Little Lamb

By Will Moses

This story explains where the words to the nursery rhyme “Mary Had a Little Lamb” came from. This book would be of interest because of the familiarity of the nursery rhyme, and has good illustrations that support the story. It would be an appropriate addition for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades preschool through lower elementary.

Sharon Kinnan

Rascal and the Pelican Rescue

By Lynn Rowe Reed

Tony is going on vacation to visit his Aunt and Uncle. They live in Louisiana. During his stay Tony learns that the beach he so badly wanted to visit is closed because of an oil spill. While on the beach he sees some birds that have become sick because they are covered in oil. See what Tony and his family do to help the birds. The illustrations in this book are child-like in nature. Children will be able to connect with them. This book gives a real-life account of what happens to animals during an oil spill. The author does a nice job of telling the story so students will understand how important it is to help others. This would be a great book to read during the week of Earth Day. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for elementary grades.

Lara Morrow

Gabby and Grandma “Go Green”

By Monica Wellington

Gabby loves to “Go Green” with her grandma. Grandma and Gabby think of ways to help the earth. They make grocery bags out of recycled materials, shop for fresh produce and go to the library to find books on how to save the Earth. The illustrations are a mixture of real pictures and drawings to create a book that is visually appealing to students. This was a cute book that shares a message that should be important to all people. “Everyone can be green” and “Every little bit helps.” Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for grades 2nd through 3rd.

Lara Morrow

A Voice of Her Own: Becoming Emily Dickinson

By Barbara Dana

Without being a stuffy, straightforward biography, Dana creates a look into the young and developing life of Emily Dickinson. From her nine year-old thoughts in 1840 to her challenges with her overbearing father, and through her romantic notions and flings, readers get a glimpse of the young lady and her commitment to poetic thought. Containing phrases from her poems and personal letters, we are introduced to her inner feelings and her independent demeanor, quite different from the common practice of her era. Included at the end of the book are Author’s Notes, basic facts about Emily Dickinson, and a list of recommendations for further reading. This may appeal to a limited readership. It will probably be enjoyed the most by those who appreciate a leisurely read, mild romance, or value historical fiction. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for ages 11 and older.

MeMe Smith, Schuyler Public Library

Higgledy-Piggledy Chicks

By Barbara Joosse

Seven little chicks “pip” their way out of their shells and discover many of the interesting and dangerous things to be found in a barnyard. They run higgledy-piggledy through the barnyard, learn the nuances of Mother Hen’s different calls, and zip to safety under her generous wings. At the conclusion of the book the author provides a short explanation about the growth of little chicks. The book was illustrated by Rick Chrustowski. He raised a flock of chicks for inspiration while working on this book. He details his artistic process of using collage to illustrate the story presented in the book. This book serves as an easy introduction to one of the creatures commonly found on farms. This picture book contains minimal text, letting the illustrations tell much of the story. I expect that it will be enjoyed by both country and city kids and will evoke excited discussion. Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended as a read aloud for preschoolers and early elementary youth.

MeMe Smith, Schuyler Public Library

Farmer Boy Goes West

By Heather Williams

In the style of the Laura Ingalls Wilder’s book, *Farmer Boy Goes West* continues the story of Almanzo as he and his family make the move from Malone, New York to Spring Valley, Minnesota. What adventures meet the Wilder family as a new school is attended, land purchased, new pets are acquired and a new house and barn built! The story continues to reveal Almanzo’s love for farming, animals, good eating, and family. What a delight to read another volume in the Ingalls Wilder story. Written for middle elementary the “Laura” fan of any age will want to get a hold of this book. A must have for any collection that already has the “Little House Series” books.

Pat Thompson WSC

When You Meet a Bear on Broadway

By Amy Hest

A short sweet book perfect for a quick bedtime read. A young girl, walking down a New York street, finds a sad little bear who has lost his mother. She talks to him calmly and politely, takes him to a park, and helps him find his mother. All ends well and the young girl then runs home to her mother to recount her adventures of the day. Illustrated by Elivia Savadier, there are simple pencil sketches filled in with water color that take up most of each page with only a small amount of text. The little bear portrayed in the book resembles “Winnie-the-Pooh” and may appeal to the same audience. Youngsters who are not familiar with life in a large city may need to have “Broadway” described and explained to them. This book could also be used as a good starting point for a discussion of the safe and appropriate things to do when a youngster becomes separated from a parent or care-giver.

Appropriate for both school and public libraries and recommended for preschoolers and up.

MeMe Smith, Schuyler Public Library

Five 4ths of July

By Pat Raccio Hughes

This novel looks at the life of Jake Mallery, a teenager in New Haven, Connecticut, over five different 4ths of July starting the year after Independence was declared. In 1777, he is just a boy who wants to be free from his father, his chores, and tending the family ferry. In 1778, he becomes a rebel by joining the local militia - a life full of drills and boredom only broken by arguing with Hannah, the indentured servant of his best friend, Tim. In 1779, he becomes a soldier when the British attacks New Haven and he must defend not only his town, but his blossoming romance with Hannah. Both he and Tim are captured defending the ferry and are sent to a prison ship as maritime prisoners. In 1780, Jake and Tim are still prisoners aboard the prison ship, living day-by-day through rampant disease, abuse and death. When Jake’s actions lead to Tim’s death, Jake retreats into a deep depression until he only to later come to his senses and escape. In 1781 we find him living with Loyalists until he finally decides to take up his role as a Patriot to return home to see if Hannah is still there waiting for him.