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### BOOKS WORTH KNOWING

#### PICTURE BOOKS:

**AHLBERG, ALLAN** *The Pencil*; illus. by Bruce Ingman. Candlewick, 2008. 4-7 yrs  
It all starts with a pencil in this droll literary creation story, wherein a pencil, aided by a paintbrush (named Kitty), drafts the various human, animal, and other elements of a world only to find that the eraser he's drawn endangers his creations.

**AMATO, MARY** *The Chicken of the Family*; illus. by Delphine Durand. Putnam, 2008. 6-9 yrs  
Teased by her older sisters that she is actually a chicken, young Henrietta resists at first but then turns the tables on her sibs by not only accepting but championing in the idea; lively, goofily appealing art adds further entertainment to the funny story.

**BLACKFORD, HARRIET** *Elephant's Story*; illus. by Manja Stojic. Boxer, 2008. 3-6 yrs  
This inviting picture book uses gentle humor and glowing yet cozy artwork to describe the birth and development of a baby elephant.

**CROW, KRISTYN** *Cool Daddy Rat*; illus. by Mike Lester. Putnam, 2008. 5-8 yrs  
Crow's text swings with scat-along possibilities ("Cool Daddy Rat/ shooby dooby doo dat/ grabbed his hat in his rat flat/ zowie zowie zoo zat") in this lively tale of little son Ace, who stows away to join his cool Daddy Rat from gig to gig one night.

**CUTBILL, ANDY** *The Cow That Laid an Egg*; illus. by Russell Ayto. HarperCollins, 2008. 5-8 yrs  
When her kind barnyardmates try to give Marjorie the cow a sense of achievement by convincing her she's laid an egg, a PR pandemonium breaks loose in this wacky picture book.

**DIPUCCHIO, KELLY** *Grace for President*; illus. by LeUyen Pham. Hyperion, 2008. 5-8 yrs  
When ginger-skinned, dreadlocked Grace runs for school office, the result is a microcosm of the good, bad, and realistic of the political process in this relevant and inviting electoral picture book.

**FRAZEE, MARLA** *A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever*; written and illus. by Marla Frazee. Harcourt, 2008. 6-9 yrs  
Frazee captures the joys of a summer vacation with a friend, with the best times turning up where you find them rather than where they're planned, in this picture-book account of two obstreperous boys' week at Nature Camp.

**HILLS, TAD** *Duck & Goose 1 2 3; What's Up, Duck?: A Book of Opposites*; written and illus. by Tad Hills. Schwartz & Wade, 2008. 2-3 yrs

Hills' *Duck and Goose*, with friends in brief hop-on roles, offer brief but effective concept books with unusual charm.

**HOPKINSON, DEBORAH** *Abe Lincoln Crosses a Creek: A Tall, Thin Tale (Introducing His Forgotten Frontier Friend)*; illus. by John Hendrix. Schwartz & Wade, 2008. 7-10 yrs

A Lincoln history with a difference, this tale of an event from Lincoln's youth slyly examines storytelling and history as it offers a glimpse of an early experience of our sixteenth president.

**HORÁČEK, PETR** *Beep Beep; Choo Choo*. Each book: written and illus. by Petr Horáček. Candlewick, 2008. 1-3 yrs

Get out of town literarily with these two sturdy board books ripe with transportation noises; *Beep Beep* chronicles a family's trip to Grandma's house, while *Choo Choo* follows a group of kids heading to the beach via an old-fashioned steam engine.

**JI, ZHAOHUA** *No! That's Wrong!*; written and illus. by Zhaohua Ji and Cui Xu. Kane/Miller, 2008. 3-6 yrs

Despite the helpful efforts of an unseen narrator, a sequence of animals persist in wearing bright red underpants every way but the correct one, a confusion that will leave young listeners giggling.

**KELLEY, TRUE** *The Dog Who Saved Santa*; written and illus. by True Kelley. Holiday House, 2008. 5-8 yrs

Kids will howl at this Yuletide comedy about Santa's hardworking pooch, Rodney, who whips the formerly lazy St. Nick into the beloved and diligent figure he is now.

**KIMMEL, ERIC A.** *Stormy's Hat: Just Right for a Railroad Man*; illus. by Andrea U'Ren. Farrar, 2008. 5-8 yrs

A hardworking train engineer needs a suitable hat, but none of them works until his wife finally devises the classic cap; kids will be tickled to find that there's truth underlying this picture-book tale of invention and problem-solving.

**KOHARA, KAZUNO** *Ghosts in the House!*; written and illus. by Kazuno Kohara. Roaring Brook, 2008. 3-5 yrs

Simple yet high-impact graphics of black on orange partner with an accessible text for a Halloween tale about an unflappable young girl who's not only unfazed by the adorable ghosts in her new home, she turns them into useful domestic linens.

**LOWELL, SUSAN** *The Elephant Quilt: Stitch by Stitch to California!*; illus. by Stacey Dressen-McQueen. Kroupa/Farrar, 2008. 5-9 yrs

Young pioneer Lily Rose is traveling the Santa Fe trail in 1859, and along the way she's recording the sights and experiences in a quilt in this bouncily narrated, vividly illustrated historical tale.

**MANSFIELD, HOWARD** *Hogwood Steps Out: A Good, Good Pig Story*; illus. by Barry Moser. Porter/Roaring Brook, 2008. 4-7 yrs

Kids will snicker at the mayhem in this picture-book tale wherein 600-pound pig Christopher Hogwood goes on a spontaneous spring outing, treating gardens, lawns, and construction digging as creations for his pleasure.

**MCCARTHY, MEGHAN** *Astronaut Handbook*; written and illus. by Meghan McCarthy. Knopf, 2008. 4-7 yrs

McCarthy's cartoony style keeps things lively in this picture-book introduction to the key points of preparing for and taking "the ride of your life."

**MCCLEMENTS, GEORGE** *Baron von Baddie and the Ice Ray Incident*; written and illus. by George McClements. Harcourt, 2008. 5-8 yrs

Clever collage art illustrates this comedic picture-book take on superhero tales, wherein young evil genius Baron von Baddie finally defeats his heroic nemesis only to find that villainy gets boring when there's nobody to fight.

**MCGILL, ALICE**, ad. *Way Up and Over Everything*; illus. by Jude Daly. Houghton, 2008. 5-8 yrs

McGill retells her family's own version of "The People Could Fly," deftly interweaving family history into this folktale of Africans who flew their way out of slavery.

**MILGRIM, DAVID** *Santa Duck*; written and illus. by David Milgrim. Putnam, 2008. 5-8 yrs

Clothes apparently make not only the man but the duck: when Nicholas Duck puts on the Santa suit and hat he found at his front door, he's immediately assumed to be Santa and given hopeful requests by all the animals he meets. Wacky, even quacky dialogue in speech balloons adds to the quirky humor.

**PATERSON, KATHERINE** *The Light of the World: The Life of Jesus for Children*; illus. by François Roca. Levine/Scholastic, 2008. 4-8 yrs

In language both plainspoken and graceful, noted author Paterson retells the story of Jesus, emphasizing his roles of teacher and healer, accompanied by full-page paintings that complements Paterson's tone with stark simplicity.

**PATRICELLI, LESLIE** *Baby Happy Baby Sad; No No Yes Yes*. Each book: written and illus. by Leslie Patricelli Candlewick, 2008. \$6.99 1-3 yrs

This appealing duet of board books treats the vagaries of baby life; *No No* is a study in toddler etiquette, with dos and don'ts (humorous and realistic) on facing pages, while *Baby Happy* features kid-pleasing and kid-thwarting contrasts to comic and enjoyable effect.

**RAY, JANE** *The Apple-Pip Princess*; written and illus. by Jane Ray. Candlewick, 2008. 6-9 yrs

A princess tale for a contemporary young royal, this folk-like story tells of three sisters vying for the throne, with the youngest choosing to beautify the kingdom by planting seeds.

**REYNOLDS, AARON** *Metal Man*; illus. by Paul Hoppe. Charlesbridge, 2008. 6-9 yrs

A boy's fascination with a local artist, who welds junk into sculpture, gives him a chance to demonstrate his own talent in this tough yet comradely picture book.

**ROSENTHAL, AMY KROUSE** *Little Hoot*; illus. by Jen Corace. Chronicle, 2008. 3-6 yrs

Humor comes from both puns and the basic premise in this story of a generally happy little owlet who struggles with owl notions of bedtime ("when you're an owl, you have to stay up late, late, late") and wants to go to bed early like his friends.

**SAVADIER, ELIVIA** *Will Sheila Share?*; written and illus. by Elivia Savadier. Porter/Roaring Brook, 2008. 2-4 yrs

Toddler Sheila initially refuses to share her toys or treats, until wise Nana gently intervenes and leads Sheila into this challenging social

**SHEA, BOB** *Dinosaur vs. Bedtime*; written and illus. by Bob Shea. Hyperion, 2008. 2-4 yrs

Nothing can stop this fierce little dinosaur, who emerges victorious against foes such as a bowl of spaghetti, a couple of talking grownups, or toothbrush and toothpaste, but is he a match for bedtime? Vigorous visuals and lively repeated phrases make this a roaring good time.

**SMITH, LANE** *Madam President*; written and illus. by Lane Smith. Hyperion, 2008. 6-10 yrs

Katy charges through her day as self-proclaimed President of the United States, treating family as staff, passersby as constituents, and school as the Executive Office in this zany governmental comedy.

**STONE, TANYA LEE** *Sandy's Circus: A Story About Alexander Calder*; illus. by Boris Kulikov. Viking, 2008. 5-9 yrs

This picture-book biography of artist Alexander Calder focuses on his miniature mechanical circus, which amazed audiences in New York and Paris and which will certainly entice youngsters everywhere (check the YouTube videos of the circus in action!).

**BEGINNING AND EARLY READERS:**

**APPLEGATE, KATHERINE** *Roscoe Riley Rules #1: Never Glue Your Friends to Chairs; Roscoe Riley Rules #2: Never Swipe a Bully's Bear*; illus. by Brian Biggs. HarperCollins, 2008. Gr. 2-3

Strong, streamlined writing and energetic narration will make these books about first-grader Roscoe, who has a little trouble remembering all the rules, an easy sell to novice readers.

**ENGLISH, KAREN** *Nikki & Deja*; illus. by Laura Freeman. Clarion, 2008. Gr. 3-5

Third-graders and next-door neighbors Nikki and Deja are close friends, but the duo's dynamics get thrown into a tizzy when a new girl moves into the neighborhood in this authentic tale of grade-school daily life.

**KENNEMORE, TIM** *Alice's Birthday Pig*; illus. by Mike Spoor. Eerdmans, 2008. Gr. 2-4

This gentle British early reader offers a humorous take on the struggles of Alice, teased by her older brother and hoping for special pet for her birthday.

**LAYTON, NEAL** *The Mammoth Academy*; written and illus. by Neal Layton. Holt, 2008. Gr. 2-4

Layton's young mammoths successfully embark on a school career and have an entertaining encounter with Ice Age humans in this warm, quirky easy chapter book.

**LOOK, LENORE** *Alvin Ho: Allergic to Girls, School, and Other Scary Things*; illus. by LeUyen Pham. Schwartz & Wade, 2008. Gr. 2-4

This humorous yet sympathetic chapter book features Alvin Ho, who's scared of everything but trying, despite a series of mishaps, to be a gentleman like his father.

**MORSE, SCOTT** *Magic Pickle*; written and illus. by Scott Morse. Graphix/Scholastic, 2008. Gr. 2-4

This splendidly ludicrous graphic novel features young Jo Jo, who's happy to assist the heroic Magic Pickle that lives under her bedroom floor in his efforts to thwart an evil vegetable uprising.

**REES, DOUGLAS** *Uncle Pirate*; illus. by Tony Auth. McElderry, 2008. Gr. 2-4

Fourth-grader Wilson is surprised and delighted to find that his newfound long-lost uncle is a colorful pirate in the classic mold, and things only get better when Uncle Pirate accompanies Wilson to school in this rib-tickling early chapter book.

**THOMSON, MELISSA** *Keena Ford and the Second-Grade Mix-Up*; illus. by Frank Morrison. Dial, 2008. Gr. 2-3

Pell-mell Keena loves second grade, but her enthusiasm brings her mishaps as well as fun in this easy reader about a lively, strong-minded heroine.

**MIDDLE GRADES FICTION:**

**AVI** *The Seer of Shadows*. HarperCollins, 2008. Gr. 4-7

Nineteenth-century photography, fraudulent spiritualism, and a real ghost combine in this adventurous period romp by master storyteller Avi.

**BELL, TED** *Nick of Time*. St. Martin's Griffin, 2008. Gr. 5-8

This time-travel component of this red-blooded adventure means that its twelve-year-old hero battles Britain's enemies in the Napoleonic Wars as well as World War II.

**BRUCHAC, JOSEPH** *March toward the Thunder*. Dial, 2008. Gr. 5-9

Abenaki teen Louis Nolette joins the Union to fight in the Civil War, finding more meaning in the bonding of the men in his mismatched brigade than in the cause itself in this intriguing historical novel.

**BUTLER, DORI HILLESTAD** *The Truth about Truman School*. Whitman, 2008. Gr. 5-8

In this easily readable but thoughtful novel, eighth-graders Zebby and Amr decide to mount a completely uncensored website where anybody can tell the truth about their school, but they find that democracy has some real weaknesses when the site becomes a popular venue for cyberbullying.

**CHEN, DA** *Sword*. Geringer/HarperCollins, 2008. Gr. 4-7

Folktale elements and martial arts lore blend together in this high action tale of a young Chinese girl who discovers that her destiny is to avenge her swordmaker father by killing the emperor.

**DOWELL, FRANCES O'ROARK** *Shooting the Moon*. Atheneum, 2008. Gr. 4-8

When Jamie's beloved older brother follows family tradition by enlisting in Vietnam, Jamie soon finds out that his experiences—and her father's—aren't as glamorous as she had imagined.

**ELISH, DA N** *The Attack of the Frozen Woodchucks*; illus. by Greg Call. Geringer/HarperCollins, 2008. Gr. 4-6

Loopy science fiction adventure and entertaining absurdity are the hallmarks of this tale of ten-year-old Jimmy, who wants his abducted father back from the extraterrestrial woodchucks and has to save the planet to do it.

**GAIMAN, NEIL** *Coraline*; ad. and illus. by P. Craig Russell. HarperCollins, 2008. Gr. 4-7

Gaiman's seductively spooky novel becomes a terrific graphic novel that's faithful to the original story about a girl who finds a parallel version of her own home and family that isn't as wonderful as it first appears.

**GAIMAN, NEIL** *The Graveyard Book*; illus. by Dave McKean. HarperCollins, 2008. Gr. 5-9

After his parents are killed, toddler Bod is rescued from their assassin by the ghostly residents of a graveyard, which then becomes his strange yet oddly cozy home as his

incorporeal guardians devote their energies to raising the “live boy” in this blend of imaginative and humor-touched world-building and adventure mystery.

**GOLDING, JULIA** *The Diamond of Drury Lane*. Roaring Brook, 2008. Gr. 4-7

Cat, an eighteenth-century orphan communally raised by the actors and crew of London’s famous Drury Lane Theatre, happens on a secret that endangers the life of all those who keep it in this colorful period mystery.

**HAHN, MARY DOWNING** *All the Lovely Bad Ones: A Ghost Story*. Clarion, 2008. Gr. 4-7

Pranksters Travis and his younger sister, Corey, arrive at their grandmother’s inn planning to fake its haunting, but they’re in for a shock when their fakes arouse a host of real ghosts that they must now lay to rest.

**HALE, SHANNON** *Rapunzel’s Revenge*; by Shannon and Dean Hale; illus. by Nathan Hale. Bloomsbury, 2008. Gr. 4-7

Award-winning author Hale turns here to graphic-novel format for a rootin’, tootin’, high-adventure take on the Rapunzel tale.

**KIMMEL, ELIZABETH CODY** *Spin the Bottle*. Dial, 2008. Gr. 5-8

New seventh-grader Phoebe is thrilled that she can finally join the Drama Club and act in a real play, but she’s thrown by the prospect of the opening-night tradition of a game of Spin the Bottle; Kimmel’s zesty comedy and authentic anxiety makes this believable as well as memorable.

**LARSON, HOPE** *Chiggers*; written and illus. by Hope Larson. Seo/Atheneum, 2008. Gr. 5-9

This graphic novel authentically captures the experience of summer camp, with protagonist Abby torn between new and old friends and crushing on a boy.

**LAW, INGRID** *Savvy*. Dial/Walden Media, 2008. Gr. 4-7

On Mibs’ thirteenth birthday, she will, like the rest of her family, come into a supernatural gift termed a “savvy,” but when her father is seriously injured in a car accident, she and a cohort of family and friends hit the road in the hope that her soon-to-arrive gift can save him in this warmhearted, supernaturally touched story.

**MORRIS, GERALD** *The Adventures of Sir Lancelot the Great*; illus. by Aaron Renier. Houghton, 2008. (The Knights’ Tales) Gr. 3-5

Affection and irreverence combine in this witty chronicle of the great knight’s adventures aimed at early graders.

**PRINEAS, SARAH** *The Magic Thief*; illus. by Antonio Javier Caparo. HarperCollins, 2008. Gr. 5-9

This rich and characterful fantasy features Conn, a raggedy street urchin who catapults himself into a magic quest when he picks the pocket of a powerful wizard.

**RODDA, EMILY** *The Key to Rondo*. Scholastic, 2008. \$16.99 Gr. 5-9

A magical music box sucks sensible Leo and his impetuous cousin into a strange fantastical world, where they get a chance to right some wrongs and save their family's honor.

**SELZER, ADAM** *I Put a Spell on You*. Delacorte, 2008. Gr. 5-8

Multiple narrators each reveal different facets of school life and classroom dynamics in this funny, satire-edged story of a spelling-bee-mad community, the top contenders for the prize, and the corruption behind the contest.

**TRONDHEIM, LEWIS** *Kaput & Zösky*; tr. by Edward Gauvin; illus. by Eric Cartier. First Second, 2008. Gr. 4-6

The absurd misadventures of the daring Kaput and Zösky, space explorers and hapless would-be conquerors, appear in brief, full-color installments that, when combined, form a graphic novel detailing several attempts at planet takeovers and a complete glimpse into the humorously bizarre psyches of the two comic protagonists.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL/YA:**

**ABBOTT, TONY** *The Postcard*. Little, 2008. Gr. 6-9

This atmospheric Floridian mystery combines family history, 1950s pulp serial fiction, and local landmarks as reluctant visitor Jason and local girl Dia attempt to uncover secrets about Jason's grandmother's romantic past.

**BARNES, JENNIFER LYNN** *Perfect Cover: The Squad*. Laurel-Leaf/Random House, 2008. Gr. 7-10

Deliciously campy adventure ensues in this book about a cheerleading squad that's a cover for an elite team of government operatives.

**BENWAY, ROBIN** *Audrey, Wait!* Razorbill, 2008. Gr. 9-12

When Audrey dumps her boyfriend, he turns their breakup into a hit song, making Audrey into a pop-culture phenomenon and her life into a roller-coaster ride in this witty and knowing comedy.

**BRADBURY, JENNIFER** *Shift*. Atheneum, 2008. Gr. 9-12

Win and Chris' post-graduation cross-country bicycle trip turns to mystery when Win disappears, and Chris must piece the clues together in this road trip story with a difference.

**CALETTI, DEB** *The Fortunes of Indigo Skye*. Simon, 2008. Gr. 9-12

In this rich and thought-provoking novel, Indigo has been happy with her simple life revolving around family, boyfriend, and waitressing job, and she's stunned by how much it affects her when a customer leaves her a \$2.5 million dollar tip.

**DAVIS, TANITA S.** *A La Carte*. Knopf, 2008. Gr. 7-10

Professional drive and relationship naïveté sit side by side in Lainey, who’s dreaming of being the first female African-American celebrity chef—but she’ll have to figure out her feelings for Simeon first.

**DEKEYSER, STACY** *Jump the Cracks*. Flux, 2008. Gr. 6-9

In a mixture of pique, projection, and protectiveness, Victoria semi-accidentally kidnaps a toddler on a train at New York’s Penn Station, determined to keep him safe from his teenaged mother’s drug-dealing boyfriend, and finds herself on the lam with a cute kid as she tries to figure out how to keep her charge and herself from the law on the one hand and angry criminals on the other.

**DOWD, SIOBHAN** *The London Eye Mystery*. Fickling/Random House, 2008. Gr. 6-9

Richard, who looks at the world a little differently, joins with his older sister to solve the mystery when their visiting cousin disappears.

**FLETCHER, CHRISTINE** *Ten Cents a Dance*. Bloomsbury, 2008. Gr. 9-12

Ruby Jacinski is perfectly resigned to leave school and become the breadwinner for her widowed mother, but the 1940s economy and social structure doesn’t leave her many options, so she finds herself working as a taxi dancer, renting dances to customers at a dance hell, trying to dance on the right side of that narrow line between respectable hostessing and the after-hours scamming and prostitution.

**GRIFFIN, PAUL** *Ten Mile River*. Dial, 2008. Gr. 8-10

Fifteen-year-old José and fourteen-year-old Ray, currently AWOL from children’s protective services, are actually doing quite nicely on the mean streets of New York, but their partnership begins to see strain when it becomes clear that it’s time to decide whether to rejoin the mainstream or continue their fringe existence.

**HARRIS, JOANNE** *Runemarks*. Knopf, 2008. Gr. 7-10

Fourteen and shunned by her village because of her magical ability, Maddy finds her life irrevocably changing when she’s sent on a quest to find a powerful object that will help tip the balance in the brewing battle between good and evil in this dramatic and compelling fantasy.

**HOGAN, MARY** *Pretty Face*. HarperTeen, 2008. Gr. 9-12

Basically *Enchanted April* for YAs, this lush travel tale features Hayley, an uncertain American teen whose idyll in the Italian countryside brings her perspective on her family, a new appreciation of her own body, and a handsome local boyfriend.

**JEAPES, BEN** *Time’s Chariot*. Fickling/Random House, 2008. Gr. 9-12

When time travelers show up in the mid-twenty-first century and bring a peck of trouble with them, it’s up to maverick operative Rico Garron to set things right and save the time stream in this sprawling, funny SF adventure.

**JUBY, SUSAN** *Getting the Girl: A Guide to Private Investigation, Surveillance, and Cookery*. HarperTeen, 2008. Gr. 6-10

Sherman may be a nerdy outsider, but when it looks like the girl he's crushing on is about to suffer his high school's cruelest social punishment, he decides he's hero enough to expose and stop the terrible tradition in this funny yet thoughtful novel.

**KADOHATA, CYNTHIA** *Outside Beauty*. Atheneum, 2008. Gr. 6-9

Shelby, twelve in the summer of 1983, is the second of the four girls her gorgeous mother had with four different men, but this tight feminine world is challenged when their mother's hospitalization means that Shelby must at last get to know her father.

**KATCHER, BRIAN** *Playing with Matches*. Delacorte, 2008. Gr. 7-12

Wisecracking nerd Leon falls into first a friendship and then a romance with school outsider Melody, severely facially disfigured from a childhood accident, but what happens when the blonde cheerleader of his dreams takes an interest as well?

**KLAM, CHERYL** *The Pretty One*. Delacorte, 2008. Gr. 7-10

Accustomed to living in the shadow of her glamorous older sister, Megan finds herself in a new world when post-accident plastic surgery turns her into the school beauty.

**LES BECQUETS, DIANE** *Season of Ice*. Bloomsbury, 2008. Gr. 8-12

Seventeen-year-old Genesis, a tough, self-reliant resident of northern Maine, needs all her strength when her father disappears from his boat just before the lake ices over, leaving her to face the winter torn between accepting his almost certain death and believing that he's survived but abandoned his family in this emotional and atmospheric novel.

**LOMBARDI, TOM** *My Summer on Earth*. Simon Pulse, 2008. Gr. 9-12

An alien tracking down another of his species ends up in California passing as a hot teen beach boy who doesn't quite get the way things work in this funny, satiric look at the life we take for granted.

**MCLAUGHLIN, LAUREN** *Cycler*. Random House, 2008. Gr. 9-12

Jill's a typical high-school girly girl—except for four days out of every month, when she turns into testosterone-laden Jack, in this funny but genuinely thoughtful exploration of gender identity.

**MCMAHON, JENNIFER** *My Tiki Girl*. Dutton, 2008. Gr. 8-12

Tenth-grader Maggie, still grieving the loss of her mother, is thrilled with the friendship of glamorous and eccentric Dahlia, which soon blossoms into a romance that changes Maggie's image of herself.

**MCNAMEE, GRAHAM** *Bonechiller*. Lamb, 2008. Gr. 7-12

In this splendidly taut and literally chilling supernatural thriller, Danny's marked by a huge pale monster as his prey, and he and his new friends in small-town Ontario must find a way to destroy the historic monster to prevent Danny's doom.

**MYERS, WALTER DEAN** *Sunrise over Fallujah*. Scholastic, 2008. Gr. 7-12

After growing up on family stories of the Vietnam War, Robin Perry finds himself in Iraq after he enlists in the army in 2003, and he finds the situation there grimmer and less triumphant than he had expected.

**NA, AN** *The Fold*. Putnam, 2008. Gr. 7-10

This thoughtful novel explores cultural, familial, and individual identity as Korean-American Joyce contemplates whether or not to accede to her aunt's wishes and undergo the popular cosmetic surgery that will give her eyes a Caucasian fold.

**OKORAFOR-MBACHU, NNEDI** *The Shadow Speaker*. Jump at the Sun/Hyperion, 2007  
Gr. 7-9

Fourteen-year-old Ejii sets across the 2070 Nigerian landscape, heading toward a monumentally important meeting that will decide the fates of the five non-Earth worlds, on a quest in which she finds herself as well as seeks to save the world in this unusual, atmospheric future tale.

**PEARSON, MARY E.** *The Adoration of Jenna Fox*. Holt, 2008. Gr. 8-10

Gradually recovering after a terrible car accident, Jenna is stunned to realize the illegal lengths to which her family has gone to restore her in this science fiction exploration of identity and ethics.

**QAMAR, AMJED** *Beneath My Mother's Feet*. Atheneum, 2008. Gr. 7-10

Nazia, a modern fourteen-year-old girl living in Karachi, Pakistan, finds her life upended when her family hits hard times, her older brother steals her dowry and puts an end to her upcoming marriage, and she and her mother must become the family's financial support in this vivid picture of a girl finding new strength in herself.

**RIVERA, RAQUEL** *Tuk and the Whale*; illus. by Mary Jane Gerber. Greenwood/House of Anansi, 2008. Gr. 6-10

In this understated, low-key story with you-are-there immediacy, young Tuk, a seventeenth-century Inuit, witnesses the beginning of a relationship between his wary people and the nervous European traders exploring the Arctic in a story that manages to keep the viewpoint of its time even as it hints at the perspective of later experience.

**RUNHOLT, SUSAN** *The Mystery of the Third Lucretia*. Viking, 2008. Gr. 7-10

Good old-fashioned teen mystery joins with art and feminism in this tale of a teenager and her best friend who track a cunning art forger across Europe.

**SANDERS, SCOTT LORING** *The Hanging Woods*. Houghton, 2008. Gr. 6-9

What initially seems like a story of small-town buddyhood stealthily turns into a tale of human desperation and tragedy in this dark story of a trio of friends in post-Vietnam Alabama.

**SCHUMACHER, JULIE** *Black Box*. Delacorte, 2008. Gr. 7-10

Elena is devastated when her older sister, Dora, is hospitalized with depression, and Elena finds herself unable to sustain her family role as the always accepting, never questioning daughter and sister in this sensitive, authentic story of family challenge and change.

**SCOTT, ELIZABETH** *Living Dead Girl*. Simon Pulse, 2008. Gr. 9-12

This harrowing, lacerating novel defies myths about victimhood as it follows fifteen-year-old Alice, who for five years has been the captive of her abductor and rapist, and who is now presented with a possible escape if she finds her own replacement.

**SNOW, MAYA** *Sisters of the Sword*. HarperCollins, 2008. Gr. 6-9

Kimi gets her chance to buck the rules of thirteenth-century Japan and become a samurai warrior when the murder of her father forces her and her sister to disguise themselves as boys and enter a school for samurai.

**STURM, JAMES** *Satchel Paige: Striking Out Jim Crow*; illus. by Rich Tommaso. Center for Cartoon Studies/Jump at the Sun/Hyperion, 2007 Gr. 6-10

This graphic novel, narrated by a fictional has-been black ball player, tells of the great Satchel Paige and his significance to his downtrodden fans in compelling text and spare, sinewy artwork.

**TANEN, SLOANE** *Appetite for Detention*; illus. with photographs by Stefan Hagen. Bloomsbury, 2008. Gr. 8-12

High-school satire has never been so fluffy as in this hilarious captioned photographic gallery that features fuzzy yellow Easter-decoration chicks as the protagonists of startlingly perceptive teen drama.

**TRACY, KRISTEN** *Crimes of the Sarahs*. Simon, 2008. Gr. 7-12

This absorbing blend of adventure and psychological drama focuses on the Sarahs, a quartet of high-school girls whose tight-knit bond involves modest crime sprees, careful manipulation of others, and anxiety about inclusion.

**VAIL, RACHEL** *Lucky*. HarperTeen, 2008. Gr. 6-9

This tale of Phoebe, who's threatened with social ostracism when her mother's job loss spells trouble for their family's plush lifestyle, is witty yet sympathetic.

**VOLPONI, PAUL** *The Hand You're Dealt*. Atheneum, 2008. Gr. 7-10

Mr. Abbott, the most hated teacher in Huck Porter's high school, has been the personal bane of Huck's family as well, but tables may turn when a disguised Huck uses all his up-close student knowledge to challenge the teacher in the local poker tournament.

**WALTERS, ERIC** *Splat!* Orca, 2008. Gr. 6-10

This quick-moving read offers the comedic chronicle of mischievous buddies Keegan and Alex, who take over the Tomato Toss at their small town's Tomato Festival with riotous results.

**WATERS, DANIEL** *Generation Dead*. Hyperion, 2008. Gr. 9-12

This clever and witty novel combines a zombie story with a look at discrimination as Goth girl Phoebe bucks school prejudice to bond with the newly risen dead faction among her classmates.

**WERLIN, NANCY** *Impossible*. Dial, 2008. Gr. 9-12

Using the ballad “Scarborough Fair” as her seed, Werlin tells a fascinating and romantic story of a contemporary girl cursed to perform impossible tasks unless she can find a way to defeat the magic.

**WINSTON, SHERRI** *The Kayla Chronicles*. Little, 2007 Gr. 7-10

High-spirited and smart writing abounds in this story of Kayla, who’s trying to follow in her grandmother’s steps and be a strong black woman but who gets caught in an ethical dilemma when she tries out for the school dance team to expose its sexist standards and then discovers she actually likes it.

**WOOD, JAMIE MARTINEZ** *Rogelia’s House of Magic*. Delacorte, 2008. Gr. 8-10

Three fifteen-year-old Latinas try to learn magic from a wise curandera and find power in the bonds of friendship and family as well as in the supernatural.

**YOO, DAVID** *Stop Me If You’ve Heard This One Before*. Hyperion, 2008. Gr. 7-10

This funny, poignant story follows high-school junior Albert Kim, who’s finally moving from geeky outsiderhood as the new boyfriend of the popular hottie Mia--until Mia’s charismatic ex-boyfriend is diagnosed with cancer, leaving her loyalties divided.

**YOO, PAULA** *Good Enough*. HarperTeen, 2008. Gr. 7-10

Scholar, musician, and churchgoer Patti Yoon appears to be the Perfect Korean Daughter, but inside she’s yearning for more possibilities than her parents are willing to allow in this warm and funny novel.

## **NONFICTION:**

### **POETRY:**

**LARIOS, JULIE** *Imaginary Menagerie: A Book of Curious Creatures*; illus. by Julie Paschkis. Harcourt, 2008. Gr. 3-6

An enticing gallery of mythical animals are featured in elegant verse and dramatic, stylized illustrations.

**REX, ADAM** *Frankenstein Takes the Cake*; written and illus. by Adam Rex. Harcourt, 2008. Gr. 3-7

Sixteen monstrously funny poetic entries range in subject from the Headless Horseman’s blog to Edgar Allan Poe’s struggles to write a poem to the Frankenstein monster’s upcoming nuptials, partnering with amazingly varied styles of art in a versatile collection that will serve well for reading aloud as well as alone.

**HISTORY, BIOGRAPHY, SOCIAL STUDIES:**

**BECCIA, CARLYN** *The Raucous Royals: Test Your Royal Wits: Crack Codes, Solve Mysteries, and Deduce Which Royal Rumors Are True*; written and illus. by Carlyn Beccia. Houghton, 2008. Gr. 4-8

Thirteen beliefs about rulers receive an acerbic and irreverent interrogation in this compact blend of royal-watching and skeptical investigation in a lively, browsable format.

**CARLSON, LORI MARIE**, ed. *Voices in First Person: Reflections on Latino Identity*; illus. by Flavio Morais and with photographs by Manuel Rivera-Ortiz. Atheneum, 2008. Gr. 9 up

Twenty-two prominent Latino authors contribute brief, dramatic monologues for this compact, visually atmospheric blend of compelling prose and dramatic photography.

**FLEISCHMAN, SID** *The Trouble Begins at 8: A Life of Mark Twain in the Wild, Wild West*. Greenwillow, 2008. illus. with photographs Gr. 5-9

Adults looking to interest young readers in the classic author will find Fleischman's savvy and appreciative biography, which celebrates Twain's talent for humbuggery as well as literature, an inviting introduction.

**FRADIN, DENNIS BRINDELL** *Duel!: Burr and Hamilton's Deadly War of Words*; illus. by Larry Day. Walker, 2008. Gr. 3-5

Fradin traces the life of the two opponents in that most famous of all American politically motivated duels in this slender yet dramatic historical account.

**KRULL, KATHLEEN** *Fartiste*; written by Kathleen Krull and Paul Brewer; illus. by Boris Kulikov. Simon, 2008. Gr. 3-6

The story may be told in rollicking verse, but there's little embellishment of this account of the legendary French stage performer who rode to fame on a wave of gas.

**KRULL, KATHLEEN** *The Road to Oz: Twists, Turns, Bumps, and Triumphs in the Life of L. Frank Baum*; illus. by Kevin Hawkes. Knopf, 2008. Gr. 2-4

Krull manages to pack quite a bit of information about the creator of Oz into this compact and witty picture-book biography of L. Frank Baum.

**NELSON, KADIR** *We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball*; written and illus. by Kadir Nelson. Jump at the Sun/Hyperion, 2008. Gr. 4-8

Dramatic portraiture and compelling narration makes this faux-memoir into a gripping history.

**NELSON, SCOTT REYNOLDS** *Ain't Nothing But a Man: My Quest to Find the Real John Henry*; by Scott Reynolds Nelson and Marc Aronson. National Geographic, 2008. Gr. 4-8

Recrafting his *Steel Drivin' Man: John Henry* for a young audience, historian Nelson offers not only startling speculation on the authenticity of the John Henry legend but also

fascinating insight into how a historian conducts his research in this compact, fascinating volume.

**NOBLEMAN, MARC TYLER** *Boys of Steel: The Creators of Superman*; illus. by Ross MacDonald. Knopf, 2008. Gr. 3-5

This trim picture-book biography uses the visual idiom of the hero comic to explore the often unhappy lives of the creators of Superman.

**OFANANSKY, ALLISON** *Harvest of Light*; illus. with photographs by Eliyahu Alpern. Kar-Ben, 2008. Gr. 2-5

A young Israeli girl narrates this photoessay describing her family's harvesting and pressing of the olives that become the ritual lamp oil for Hanukkah.

**SCIESZKA, JON** *Knucklehead: Tall Tales and Mostly True Stories about Growing Up Scieszka*. Viking, 2008. Gr. 3-6

Scieszka brings his broad comedy of guyhood to an account of his happy rough and tumble childhood with five obstreperous brothers in an easy-reading account formatted to suggest the beloved comics of his youth.

**SHIELDS, CHARLES J.** *I Am Scout: The Biography of Harper Lee*. Holt, 2008. Gr. 7-10

Despite the daunting task of writing about a person who refuses interviews, Shields does a masterful job of painting a vivid portrait of the life and writing contexts in this adaptation of his adult biography of the author of *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

**YEP, LAURENCE** *The Dragon's Child: A Story of Angel Island*; by Laurence Yep and Dr. Kathleen S. Yep. HarperCollins, 2008. Gr. 4-6

At the beginning of the twentieth century, ten-year-old Gim Lew is thrilled by his father's return to China from America, but he's more daunted than excited by the news that he will be accompanying his father when he returns and facing the battery of questioning required for entry.

#### **ANIMALS:**

**HELMAN, ANDREA** *Hide and Seek: Nature's Best Vanishing Acts*; illus. with photographs by Gavriel Jecan. Walker, 2008. Gr. 2-4

Clever photographs of animals in their natural habitats provide some real-life search-and-find action while demonstrating the effectiveness of the creatures' natural camouflage.

**KERBY, MONA** *Owney: The Mail-Pouch Pooch*; illus. by Lynne Barasch. Foster/Farrar, 2008. Gr. 2-4

This lively picture-book-style history documents the life and fame of Owney, who rose from stray mutt to the toast of the nineteenth-century postal service as a result of his mascot position in Albany and his international travels.

**MILLER, HEATHER LYNN** *This Is Your Life Cycle*; illus. by Michael Chesworth. Clarion, 2008. Gr. 3-6

Dahlia the Dragonfly is the guest on the titular insect television show, with host Bob Beetle covering the details of her hatching and growth, in this comic natural history that begs for in-class performance.

**MOFFETT, MARK W.** *Face to Face with Frogs*; written and illus. with photographs by Mark W. Moffett. National Geographic, 2008. Gr. 3-5

Amphibian aficionados will rejoice at *National Geographic* contributor Moffett's photo-rich, personally chatty yet informative account of froggy lives.

**OTHER:**

**AGUILAR, DAVID A.** *11 Planets: A New View of the Solar System*. National Geographic, 2008. illus. with photographs Gr. 3-6

Aguilar, Director of Science Information at the Harvard Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, shepherds Pluto back into the planetary flock along with its two dwarf planet buddies, Ceres and Eris, offering readers a readjusted and inclusive view of our Sun's orbiters in this conveniently compact title.

**NATHAN, AMY** *Meet the Dancers: From Ballet, Broadway, and Beyond*. Holt, 2008. Gr. 4-8

Nathan compactly showcases sixteen working dancers, chronicling their youthful dance experience, the rigors they endure, and the rewards that they find in this fascinating overview of a demanding profession.

**NICHOLS, TRAVIS** *Punk Rock Etiquette: The Ultimate How-to Guide for DIY, Punk, Indie, and Underground Bands*; written and illus. by Travis Nichols. Flash Point/Roaring Brook, 2008. Gr. 7-12

This offbeat, humorous nonfiction how-to, decked with lively line drawings, gives wise and genuinely helpful advice on rock necessities ranging from types of bandmates to survival on road trips to making and marketing merchandise.

**PIETROMARCHI, SOPHIE BENINI** *The Book Book: A Journey into Bookmaking*; written and illus. by Sophie Benini Pietromarchi. Tara, 2007 Gr. 4-9

This lively and imaginative craft book will entice youngsters to try their hand at different kinds of book creation, from the traditional to the inventive, the text-based to the illustrative.

**PRELUTSKY, JACK** *Pizza, Pigs, and Poetry: How To Write a Poem*. Greenwillow, 2008. Gr. 4-6

The children's poet laureate combines highly practical advice for writing with sample poems and entertaining stories of his life and writing inspirations.