

## EXTRAVAGANZA OF BOOKS

### PICTURE BOOKS

**AESOP** *The Lion & the Mouse*; illus. by Jerry Pinkney. Little, 2009. 5-8 yrs  
Pinkey takes this classic fable wordless, telling the whole story in oversized art with dramatic full-bleed watercolors punctuated by only the occasional animal sound.

**BROWN, MONICA** *Pelé: King of Soccer/El Rey del Fútbol*; Spanish text by Fernando Gayesky; illus. by Rudy Gutiérrez. Rayo/HarperCollins, 2009. 5-9 yrs  
In this bilingual picture-book biography, art and text do full credit to the dynamism of the Brazilian soccer champ.

**CRUM, SHUTTA** *Thunder-Boomer!*; illus. by Carol Thompson. Clarion, 2009. 5-8 yrs  
Evocative description is the hallmark of this picture-book tale of a sudden thunderstorm that brings a farm family a surprise in its wake.

**DAVIES, JACQUELINE** *Tricking the Tallyman*; illus. by S. D. Schindler. Knopf, 2009. 7-10 yrs  
If you're prepping for a census explanation, this playful tale set in 1790 and focusing on the very first U.S. Census offers a demonstration of the census' importance as well as a rollicking story.

**EVANS, FREDDI WILLIAMS** *Hush Harbor: Praying in Secret*; illus. by Erin Bennett Banks. Carolrhoda, 2008. 5-9 yrs  
Slaves find power and spirituality in a forbidden prayer meeting in this dramatic picture-book tale of faith in difficult circumstances.

**FUCILE, TONY** *Let's Do Nothing!*; written and illus. by Tony Fucile. Candlewick, 2009. 4-7 yrs  
Springy, airy illustrations that recall Jules Feiffer add to the humor in this tale about two energetic boys who attempt rise to the challenge of doing absolutely nothing—and fail, with hilarious results.

**GREY, MINI** *Egg Drop*; written and illus. by Mini Grey. Knopf, 2009. 6-10 yrs  
In this blackly comedic cautionary tale, Egg dreams of flying and isn't prepared to wait for hatching; use this as an irreverent accompaniment to the old egg-drop experiment.

**HARPER, CHARISE MERICLE** *Milo's Special Words*; written and illus. by Charise Mericle Harper. Coreya/Random House, 2009. 3-5 yrs

Zesty art and clever paper engineering partner with compact energetic text in this story of a young boy (well, kitten) who discovers the power of the word "Please."

**JOCELYN, MARTHE** *Same Same*; illus. by Tom Slaughter. Tundra, 2009. 3-6 yrs

Bold graphics, an inventive design, and an accessible concept make for an attractive romp through pre-math set skills.

**MAHY, MARGARET** *Bubble Trouble*; illus. by Polly Dunbar. Clarion, 2009. 6-9 yrs

The lively verse is as bubbly as the plot in this whimsical story about a baby who takes a bubble-borne voyage and leads his family on a merry chase.

**MCCORMACK, CAREN MCNELLY** *The Fiesta Dress: A Quinceañera Tale*; illus. by Martha Avilés. Cavendish, 2009. 5-8 yrs

Lolo, the baby of the family, is used to getting lots of positive attention, but when the time comes for her big sister Eva's *quinceañera*, Lolo suddenly finds herself out of the spotlight in this affectionate tale of family closeness and a perky nose temporarily out of joint.

**PHILLIPPS, J. C.** *Wink: The Ninja Who Wanted to Be Noticed*; written and illus. by J. C. Phillipps. Viking, 2009. 6-9 yrs

Young Wink, thrilled to join the Summer Moon School for Young Ninjas, but his tendency to holler "Look at me!" and wear brightly flowered outfits suggests he hasn't quite grasped the concept in this laugh-out-loud title suitable for reading alone as well as aloud.

**PICHON, LIZ** *Penguins*; written and illus. by Liz Pichon. Orchard/Scholastic, 2008. 4-6 yrs

A flock of zoo-dwelling penguins turn shutterbugs when a young visitor drops a camera into their enclosure, leaving the surprised owner with some unusual and hilarious images when the camera returns.

**RODMAN, MARY ANN** *Surprise Soup*; illus. by G. Brian Karas. Viking, 2009. 4-7 yrs

A friendly bear family sounds awfully human as Dad, older brother Josh, and narrator Kevin try to negotiate sibling rivalry and general ineptitude in preparing a meal in Mama's absence.

**RYDER, JOANNE** *Panda Kindergarten*; illus. with photographs by Katherine Feng. Collins/HarperCollins, 2009. 3-6 yrs

The gentle and descriptive text fills in the spaces, but the real draw here is the gallery of irresistible close-ups of the baby pandas at China's Wolong Nature Preserve.

**SAKAI, KOMAKO** *The Snow Day*; written and illus. by Komako Sakai. Levine/Scholastic, 2009. 4-6 yrs

You can feel the hushed wonder of a snow-covered world in this Japanese import featuring a little bunny spending an intimate and unexpected day with her mother when the weather closes school.

**SCANLON, LIZ GARTON** *All the World*; illus. by Marla Frazee. Beach Lane/Simon, 2009. 4-8 yrs

Softly poetic verse pointing out human connection provides the frame for a detailed visual story featuring branches of an interracial family coming together for a family holiday.

**SCHWARZ, VIVIANE** *There Are Cats in This Book*; written and illus. by Viviane Schwartz. Candlewick, 2008. 3-6 yrs

The cats in this engaging picture book need the audience's help to play, and their direct address and the appealing, creatively shaped liftable flaps will ensure that viewers can't resist the invitation.

**SCIESZKA, JON** *Robot Zot!*; illus. by David Shannon. Simon, 2009. 4-8 yrs

In this larger-than-life comedy of chaotic misunderstanding, diminutive Robot Zot, attacking from another planet, fights his way through an average human home and finds his true love in a cell phone.

**TANKARD, JEREMY** *Boo Hoo Bird*; written and illus. by Jeremy Tankard. Scholastic, 2009. 3-6 yrs

A hearty repetition of "Boo hoo hoo!" offers comic participation possibilities in this story of Bird, who resists his friends' efforts at cheering him up after he's bonked on the head during a game of catch.

**THOMAS, JAN** *Can You Make a Scary Face?*; written and illus. by Jan Thomas. Beach Lane/Simon, 2009. 2-5 yrs

Lively audience participation is the order of the day in this energetic let's-pretend that leads viewers through an encounter with a fictional ladybug and a lot of funny faces.

**WEBER, ELKA** *The Yankee at the Seder*; illus. by Adam Gustavson. Tricycle, 2009. 7-10 yrs

In this picture book inspired by a historical event, the close of the Civil War sees a Jewish Confederate family hosting an occupying Union soldier as a surprise—and not entirely—welcome guest at the family seder.

**WEILL, CYNTHIA** *Opuestos: Mexican Folk Art Opposites in English and Spanish*; illus. with photographs by Sergio A. Gómez. Cinco Puntos, 2009. 4-8 yrs

This triple-faceted gem shines as a concept book, a bilingual vocabulary primer, and an appealing introduction to Oaxacan folk art.

**WILLEMS, MO** *Naked Mole Rat Gets Dressed*; written and illus. by Mo Willems. Hyperion, 2009. 5-9 yrs

Wilbur may be a naked mole rat, but he can't resist a natty shirt and tie, much to the dismay of his fellow rats in this hilarious story about nonconformity.

**WILLIAMS, KAREN LYNN** *My Name Is Sangoel*; by Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed; illus. by Catherine Stock. Eerdmans, 2009. 6-10 yrs

When eight-year-old Sangoel arrives in Sudan from America, he's dismayed to discover that no one seems to be able to manage his name—until he comes up with a clever way (which audiences will immediately wish to emulate) to share it with people.

**ZUCKERMAN, ANDREW** *Creature ABC*; written and illus. with photographs by Andrew Zuckerman. Chronicle, 2009. 2-8 yrs

The alphabetical entries sport not only the relevant letters and words but also some of the most vivid and delectable color animal photographs an alphabet book could offer.

#### **BEGINNING AND EARLY READERS**

**BRUEL, NICK** *Bad Kitty Gets a Bath*; written and illus. by Nick Bruel. Porter/Roaring Brook, 2008. Gr. 2-4

Snarky interpolations and illustrations featuring a maniacal kitty adorn this tale of grim hilarity about the difficulty of bathing a bad, bad cat.

**DOHERTY, BERLIE** *The Goblin Baby*; illus. by Lesley Harker. Random House, 2009. Gr. 2-4

Allusions to "Tam Lin" and lively depictions of the faery world enhance this easy reader about a boy whose little sister is swapped for a goblin.

**FELDMAN, EVE B.** *Billy & Milly, Short & Silly*; illus. by Tuesday Mourning. Putnam, 2009. Gr. K-3

What could be a tedious lesson in phonics is instead an emergent reader funfest, in which a series of In this clever invitation to emergent readers, three or four rhyming words accompanied by cleverly sequenced pictures transform into complete stories: Billy sits on a "Dock," with legs and fishing lure dangling over a "Rock"; readers share his "Shock" when the partially submerged form proves to be a "Croc!"

**FLEISCHMAN, PAUL** *The Dunderheads*; illus. by David Roberts. Candlewick, 2009. Gr. 3-6

Witty and subversive, playfully illustrated with art recalling Edward Gorey, this follows a group of kids maligned by their horrible teacher as "dunderheads" as they concoct a caper to retrieve their confiscated treasures from her lair.

**GRIMES, NIKKI** *Make Way for Dyamonde Daniel*; illus. by R. Gregory Christie. Putnam, 2009. Gr. 2-3

Lively language and zesty illustrations enliven this story of third-grader Dyamonde who's busting at the seams with self-confidence yet still struggling to make friends at her new school until she finds commonality with another new kid, a boy named Free.

**LOUX, MATTHEW** *The Legend of Old Salty; A Climb up Mt. Barnabas*; Each book: written and illus. by Matthew Loux Oni, 2008. Gr. 3-5

This new graphic-novel series takes the goofy boyish camaraderie of *A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever* and mixes it with the thrill of summer night tall tales in this comic chronicle of two brothers enjoying somewhat fantastical adventures on their summer vacation.

**MARINO, NAN** *Neil Armstrong Is My Uncle & Other Lies Muscle Man McGinty Told Me*. Roaring Brook, 2009. Gr. 3-5

In this tough yet tender story set in the summer of 1969, forceful fifth-grader Tamara can't forgive the scrawny, eager new kid, Douglas McGinty, for replacing her best friend at the nearby foster home, but why can't she make the rest of the gang see that he doesn't deserve to be included?

**MILGRIM, DAVID** *My Dog, Buddy*; written and illus. by David Milgrim. Cartwheel/Scholastic, 2008. Gr. K-2

Restricted vocabulary doesn't restrict the liveliness of the story in this tale of an obstreperous pet who disobeys everyone ("Mom says 'STOP, STOP, STOP!' Buddy goes, goes, goes") except the narrator.

**MILLS, CLAUDIA** *How Oliver Olson Changed the World*; illus. by Heather Maione. Farrar, 2009. Gr. 2-4

The fate of the ex-planet Pluto and the independence of helicopter-parented-third-grader Oliver Olson are brilliantly tied together in this hilarious, perceptive, and understanding story.

**PETERSEN, P. J.** *Wild River*. Delacorte, 2009. Gr. 3-6

In this quick-moving and quick-reading adventure, couch-potato Ryan, reluctantly joining his brother on a camping trip, must call upon all the problem-solving skills he's learned from his beloved videogames when his brother is injured far away from civilization.

**ROBERTS, KEN** *Thumb and the Bad Guy*; illus. by Leanne Franson. Greenwood/House of Anansi, 2009. Gr. 3-6

While twelve-year-old Thumb and his friend Susan do solve a quirky little mystery, the real pleasure here is the affectionately humorous depiction of everyday life in their tiny, isolated, and eccentric Canadian fishing village.

**SALISBURY, GRAHAM** *Calvin Coconut: Trouble Magnet*; illus. by Jacqueline Rogers. Lamb, 2009. Gr. 2-4

Fourth-grader Calvin Coconut, growing up in Kailua, Hawaii, has a penchant for the problematic, and the series of jams he gets in and out of combine to make an entertaining picture of Calvin's lively world.

**SPIRES, ASHLEY** *Binky the Space Cat*; written and illus. by Ashley Spires. Kids Can, 2009. Gr. 3-6

Compact, wryly funny text pairs with contemporary, slightly odd, elegantly controlled artwork in this graphic novel about a cat's hopes of taking one large step for cat-kind—if he can bear to leave his humans behind.

**THOMAS, JAN** *Rhyming Dust Bunnies*; written and illus. by Jan Thomas. Atheneum, 2009. Gr. K-2

The titular dust bunnies—Ed, Ned, Ted, and Bob—goof around with one-syllable rhymes, save for Bob, who initially seems not to be grasping the game but then proves to be warning of a pending sweep in this funny picture-book story eminently suitable for beginning readers.

**TOWNSEND, MICHAEL** *Kit Feeny: On the Move*; written and illus. by Michael Townsend. Knopf, 2009. Gr. 2-5

Take the zany irreverence of the Captain Underpants books and put them into a comparatively realistic (although the protagonist does seem to be some sort of critter) school and home story told in graphic panels in black and orange, and you've got the howlingly hilarious story of young Kit Feeny, struggling to find a friend in his new home.

#### **MIDDLE GRADES FICTION**

**COMERFORD, LYNDIA B.** *Rissa Bartholomew's Declaration of Independence*. Scholastic, 2009. Gr. 4-6

Sixth-grader Rissa has to find her own identity when her former best friend drifts in a new direction.

**DALY, NIKI** *Bettina Valentino and the Picasso Club*; written and illus. by Niki Daly. Farrar, 2009. Gr. 4-6

Fifth-grader Bettina has her eyes opened to art by the dynamic art teacher Mr. Peppard, so she's appalled when his job is threatened.

**DOWELL, FRANCES O'ROARK** *The Kind of Friends We Used to Be*. Atheneum, 2009. Gr. 5-7

This sequel to *The Secret Language of Girls* (BCCB 7/04) sees Kate and Marilyn starting their seventh-grade year and beginning to develop their own identities in a story remarkable for its blend of accessibility and sympathetic perception.

**GRAFF, LISA** *Umbrella Summer*. Geringer/HarperCollins, 2009. Gr. 4-7

After losing her older brother to a freak accident, Annie attempts to deal with life's uncertainties by protecting herself from all possible risks—until a new friend brings her a different perspective.

**GRATZ, ALAN** *The Brooklyn Nine: A Novel in Nine Innings*. Dial, 2009. Gr. 5-9

From the nineteenth through the twenty-first centuries, baseball has run in the veins of the Schneiders, and nine short stories follow subsequent generations of the family as they follow their favorites, play their own game, and find that it provides a thread that links the generations together.

**HOUTS, MICHELLE** *The Beef Princess of Practical County*. Delacorte, 2009. Gr. 4-7

This solidly homespun title, set in Indiana, follows twelve-year-old Libby, who'd rather raise calves than fulfill her mother's dream of competing to be the county fair princess.

**KELLER, JULIA** *Back Home*. Egmont, 2009. Gr. 4-7

When Rachel's father comes home from Iraq with traumatic brain injury, Rachel and her family are stunned by his impairments and thrown by the changes it means for the family in this simply written yet poignant story.

**KELLY, JACQUELINE** *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*. Holt, 2009. Gr. 5-8

This story of a small-town Texas girl looking into the twentieth century with a thirst for science and a wonder about what the future will hold for her is a winning blend of humorous family story and natural-history exploration that recalls memoirs by Sterling North, Farley Mowat, and Gerald Durrell.

**KNUDSEN, MICHELLE** *The Dragon of Trelan*. Candlewick, 2009. Gr. 5-8

When Princess Meg asks Calen, the royal mage's apprentice, for help with the young dragon she has secreted in a cavern beyond the castle grounds, the two form an unlikely friendship that turns into a partnership in adventure when they try to uncover a mystery behind the sabotage of a royal marriage.

**LIN, GRACE** *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon*; written and illus. by Grace Lin. Little, 2009. Gr. 4-6

In this folklore-inspired fantasy, a young Chinese girl journeys from her poor village in the Fruitless Mountain to change her family's fortunes and meets an enchanting cast of characters along the way.

**PARRY, ROSANNE** *Heart of a Shepherd*. Random House, 2009. Gr. 5-7

Brother, the youngest boy of five and the only one still at home on his Oregon sheep ranch, has to step up and care for the place when his father is called up for service in Iraq, and he begins to think about his own part in the family military tradition.

**PHILBRICK, RODMAN** *The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg*. Blue Sky/Scholastic, 2009. Gr. 5-8

Homer Figg is on a quest to find his brother, who was illegally conscripted into the Union Army as a result of the machinations of the boys' nasty uncle, and in his search for his brother Homer experiences a series of wild adventures before coming face to face with the realities of the Civil War in this high-action historical romp with a serious side.

**PITCHFORD, DEAN** *Captain Nobody*. Putnam, 2009. Gr. 4-6

After the injury of his superstar older brother, ten-year-old Newt Newman steps out from the shadows and becomes a not-entirely-successful superhero in this warm family story touched with disaster humor.

**ROLLINS, JAMES** *Jake Ransom and the Skull King's Shadow*; illus. by Joel Tippie. HarperCollins, 2009. Gr. 5-8

Ever since his archaeologist parents went missing, Jake has been preparing himself to solve the mystery of their disappearance and to carry on in their profession; when he and his sister are sucked through a portal into a strange land, his adventures start earlier than he expects in this Indiana Jones–style action thriller.

**SALA, RICHARD** *Cat Burglar Black*; written and illus. by Richard Sala. First Second/Roaring Brook, 2009. Gr. 4-7

Atmospheric adventure is the name of the game in this graphic novel, wherein an orphaned teen discovers that her new boarding school is actually the cover for a criminal enterprise that sends the girls breaking into houses in search of clues to finding a hidden treasure.

**SEAGRAVES, DONNY BAILEY** *Gone from These Woods*. Delacorte, 2009. Gr. 5-7

In this quietly empathetic novel, everything changes for fifth-grader Daniel one crisp November day in the Georgia woods, when he goes out hunting with his beloved young uncle, Clay, and an accidental discharge of Daniel's gun results in Clay's death.

**SMELCER, JOHN** *The Great Death*. Holt, 2009. Gr. 5-8

This taut and dramatic survival story follows a pair of native Alaskan sisters, whose village has been wiped out by European-brought disease and who must find some remaining human settlement on their own.

**STEAD, REBECCA** *When You Reach Me*. Lamb, 2009. Gr. 4-7

Miranda is already dealing with a shift in the friendship dynamic when she begins to receive strange notes that seem to predict the future in this intriguing and original book that adds a big surprise to a seemingly familiar everyday-life story.

**SUMA, NOVA REN** *Dani Noir*. Aladdin, 2009. Gr. 5-8

Thirteen-year-old Dani loves mysterious plots and femme fatales, but when she finds a secret in her own daily life, is it really a film thriller or is she the one doing the projecting?

**UMANSKY, KAYE** *Clover Twig and the Magical Cottage*; illus. by Johanna Wright. Roaring Brook, 2009. Gr. 4-6

When eleven-year-old Clover Twig takes a job with the local witch, even she's surprised by the extent of the magic she finds in this delightful British fantasy.

#### **MIDDLE SCHOOL/YA**

**ABDEL-FATTAH, RANDA** *Ten Things I Hate About Me*. Orchard/Scholastic, 2009. Gr. 6-9

As a Lebanese Muslim in Australia, Jamilah hides her feisty and proud self at school until circumstances press her to embrace her true identity.

**ANDERSON, LAURIE HALSE** *Wintergirls*. Viking, 2009. Gr. 9 up

Elegant imagery marks the story of Lia, a supposedly recovered anorexic who's still as dangerously obsessed as ever, only now she's haunted by real or imagined ghost of her late friend and partner in self-destruction.

**BRASHARES, ANN** *3 Willows: The Sisterhood Grows*. Delacorte, 2009. Gr. 6-9

Middle-school girls familiar with the famous Sisterhood develop their own tight friendship in this younger counterpart to Brashares' bestseller.

**BRENNAN, SARAH REES** *The Demon's Lexicon*. McElderry, 2009. Gr. 7-10

Murderous magicians, demons on the attack, and brothers whose relationship may not be all it seems—what more can a fan of supernatural chills ask for?

**BROWN, CHRIS CARLTON** *Hoppergrass*. Holt, 2009. Gr. 8-12

It's Virginia in 1969, Bowser's landed in a reform school after a spate of delinquency, and there he negotiates tensions between black and white residents to get to the heart of a mystery behind the institution.

**BROWN, JENNIFER** *Hate List*. Little, 2009. Gr. 7-10

After her boyfriend's disaffection leads him to a murderous and suicidal shooting spree, Valerie faces a senior year of suspicion from classmates and family in this ethically tinged, flashback-punctuated drama.

**CADNUM, MICHAEL** *Peril on the Sea*. Farrar, 2009. Gr. 6-10

Want drama on the high seas in Elizabethan England? Join Sherwin Morris, who's saved by a marauding privateer and included in its members on the condition that he compose a flattering ballad about the captain's exploits—but little does Sherwin know that he'll be undergoing plenty of exploits of his own.

**CASHORE, KRISTIN** *Graceling*. Harcourt, 2008. Gr. 8-10

Katsa is one of a rare few born with a special ability called a Grace; her special talent, however, is killing, which has been used by her uncle the king to his advantage—until Katsa finally finds an opportunity to rebel and atone.

**COOK, EILEEN** *What Would Emma Do?* Simon Pulse, 2009. Gr. 7-12

In this taut novel consciously drawing on Miller's *The Crucible*, a series of Trinity Evangelical Secondary's most popular girls fall suddenly ill, ostensibly from poisoning, and suspicion is cast on any teens that deviate from the local average; Emma knows that the charges are bogus, but if she reveals what she knows, it will destroy her life as well.

**DAVIS, TANITA S.** *Mare's War*. Knopf, 2009. Gr. 7-10

Octavia and Tali are dreading driving cross-country with their grandmother, Mare, but the experience gives them a new window on Mare's life when she reveals her tough and hard-working past, especially her service in the 6888th African American Battalion in the World War II Women's Army.

**ENGLE, MARGARITA** *Tropical Secrets: Holocaust Refugees in Cuba*. Holt, 2009. Gr. 7-10

This moving free-verse historical novel tells the tale of thirteen-year-old Daniel, a Jewish refugee who escapes Nazi Germany in 1939 in hopes of finding safety abroad and then must struggle to find stability and security in Cuba.

**FORD, JOHN C.** *The Morgue and Me*. Viking, 2009. Gr. 9-12

Eighteen-year-old Christopher Newell, part-time morgue cleaner, teams up with a beautiful young journalist to get to the bottom of a mystery involving a corpse in the cooler and likely coroner bribery in this heady whodunit.

**GILL, DAVID MACINNIS** *Soul Enchilada*. Greenwillow, 2009. Gr. 9-12

Bug, an eighteen-year-old half-black, half-Tejana girl living on her own, discovers she's been an unwitting cosigner to a deal with the Devil, and supernatural intrigue flows fast and clever (and gross) in the spirit of a downhome ballad as she wheels and deals her way out of her plight.

**GOODMAN, ALISON** *Eon: Dragoneye Reborn*. Viking, 2008. Gr. 7-10

Eon—secretly a girl, named Eona—hopes to be selected by one of the twelve energy dragons as an apprentice in this compelling story drawing on Asian history and folklore and spicing it up with martial arts and otherworldly battles.

**HARDINGE, FRANCES** *The Lost Conspiracy*. Bowen/HarperCollins, 2009. Gr. 7-10

Hathin's sister Arilou is thought to be one of the Lost, people whose senses are only loosely tethered to their bodies and who protect the inhabitants of the island, but when the Lost are mysteriously wiped out, Hathin must protect his sister against the suspicious inhabitants in this finely crafted story set in an original and atmospherically evoked world.

**HAUTMAN, PETE** *How to Steal a Car*. Scholastic, 2009 Gr. 7-12

Kelleigh Monahan is nobody's pick for criminal, and she's not even a licensed driver, but when circumstances give her the chance for a joyride, it's just the beginning of what becomes a regular practice of boosting cars.

**HOFFMANN, KERRY COHEN** *It's Not You, It's Me*. Delacorte, 2009. Gr. 7-10  
Sort of like *Fatal Attraction* from Glenn Close's POV (but much gentler), this sympathetic yet wise novel follows sixteen-year-old Zoë as she reels into crazy desperation following her breakup with her boyfriend.

**JINKS, CATHERINE** *The Reformed Vampire Support Group*. Harcourt, 2009. Gr. 6-10  
This classy comedy sends up vampire enthusiasm along the way as it follows young-ish (seeming fifteen, really fifty) Nina, as she assists the poor endangered vampires now stalked by murderous anti-vampire forces.

**KARIM, SHEBA** *Skunk Girl*. Farrar, 2009. Gr. 8-12  
Nina, growing up in a conservative Pakistani Muslim family in small-town America, has a wry, witty take on her attempt to avoid the shadow of her brilliant older sister, negotiate a social life despite her family's strictures, and get the new boy to notice her.

**LIBBY, ALISA M.** *The King's Rose*. Dutton, 2009. Gr. 7-10  
Fans of *The Tudors* will particularly appreciate this title, wherein Libby gives full dramatic value to the story of literal teen queen Catherine Howard, fifth wife of Henry VIII of England, who in this conception fails to realize just how out of her depth she really is as she marches unknowingly toward doom.

**LINKER, JULIE** *Crowned*. Simon Pulse, 2008. Gr. 7-10  
Linker doesn't stint on the details of the weird and wonderful world of Southern pageantry in this funny, enjoyable tale of pageant queen Presley, whose rivalry with longterm nemesis Megan kicks into high gear when Presley's boyfriend turns his attentions to Megan.

**LLOYD, SACI** *The Carbon Diaries 2015*. Holiday House, 2009. Gr. 9-12  
After enduring a series of ecodisasters, Great Britain introduces carbon rationing, and sixteen-year-old Laura and the rest of her family find their own ways to cope and adapt—or not.

**LO, MALINDA** *Ash*. Little, 2009. Gr. 8-12  
In this rich and emotional retelling of Cinderella, Ash comes into her own after her mother's death when she meets Kaisa, the King's huntress, and falls in love.

**OAKS, J. ADAMS** *Why I Fight*. Jackson/Atheneum, 2009. Gr. 9-12  
Eighteen-year-old Wyatt has spent the last few years in the dubious care of his unbalanced uncle, traveling from town to town and earning both their keep as a savage barroom boxer, and becoming increasingly numb to the damage he's inflicting on himself as well as others.

**MAGOON, KEKLA** *The Rock and the River*. Aladdin, 2009. Gr. 7-10  
In this dramatic historical exploration set in Chicago in 1968, two brothers, sons of an associate of Martin Luther King, Jr., struggle to find their activist path amid the growth of the Black Panther movement.

**MEYER, CAROLYN** *The True Adventures of Charley Darwin*. Harcourt, 2009. Gr. 6-9  
This fictionalized account of the early years of the groundbreaking naturalist hews closely to well-researched fact and creates a compelling picture of his youth and early career.

**MICHAEL, TED** *The Diamonds*. Delacorte, 2009. Gr. 7-10  
The Diamonds are the four A-list girls who rule the school, and when they're drafted into the mock-trial team the result is popular power gone amuck—until a former Diamond decides it's smackdown time.

**MITCHELL, SAUNDRA** *Shadowed Summer*. Delacorte, 2009. Gr. 6-9  
“Where y’at, Iris?” whispers a ghost into Iris’ ear, and suddenly fourteen-year-old Iris’ enduring game of spirit-hunting with her friend Collette takes on a frightening reality in this classic yet contemporary ghost story.

**MORAN, KATY** *Bloodline*. Candlewick, 2009. Gr. 7-10  
In an atmospheric story set in seventh century Britain, Essa, son of a storyteller, gets pulled into political intrigue.

**NELSON, R. A.** *Days of Little Texas*. Knopf, 2009.R\* Gr. 7-10  
In this involving mixture of ghost story and spiritual exploration, teen preacher Ronald Earl “Little Texas” Pettway finds that a girl he yearns for is in fact a ghost, and she begs him to help her in healing a savage psychic wound inflicted on an old plantation by slavery.

**NORTHROP, MICHAEL** *Gentlemen*. Scholastic, 2009. Gr. 9-12  
Is Mr. Haberman’s assignment of *Crime and Punishment* a key to his involvement in the disappearance of one of his students, or is that belief the real motivation for crime?

**OCKLER, SARAH** *Twenty Boy Summer*. Little, 2009. Gr. 8-12  
Sad longings and bittersweet possibilities fill the tale of Anna, whose secret romance with her best friend’s older brother was cut short by his shocking death, and who now yearns to share the truth with her friend as the two share a summer beach vacation and encounter new romantic possibilities.

**PERKINS, MITALI** *Secret Keeper*. Delacorte, 2009. Gr. 7-12  
This novel set in India in the mid-1970s is told from the perspective of Asha, a smart, impulsive girl who pours her heart into the pages of her diaries as she and her family stay with relatives while waiting to hear from her father about his new fortunes in America.

**PETERFREUND, DIANA** *Rampant*. HarperTeen, 2009. Gr. 7-12  
Unicorns take on a sinister hue in this story of a girl who discovers that she belongs to an ancient order of unicorn hunters and must then join her hunting sisters in learning her craft and taking on its challenge.

**PROSE, FRANCINE** *Touch*. HarperTeen, 2009. Gr. 7-10

Maisie is attending therapy and pursuing a lawsuit—at her stepmother’s behest—against the freshmen boys (her former friends) who groped her on the bus, but even she’s not entirely sure what happened, how it all got to this point, and whose fault it all is in this thoughtful and discussion-provoking novel about sex and power, friendship and betrayal.

**SMITH, SHERRI L.** *Flygirl*. Putnam, 2009. Gr. 7-12

In this gripping and thoughtful historical novel, a young black woman in 1940s New Orleans doesn’t have a prayer of getting a pilot’s license, so when America enters World War II Ida Mae decides to enlist in the Women Airforce Service Pilots—which will require her to pass as white.

**STIEFVATER, MAGGIE** *Shiver*. Scholastic, 2009. Gr. 7-10

Grace is funny, independent, and sharp-witted, Sam is bookish and gentle, and their romance is touching—and complicated by the fact that he’s a werewolf.

**STORK, FRANCISCO X.** *Marcelo in the Real World*. Levine/Scholastic, 2009. Gr. 9-12

Seventeen-year-old Marcelo, who has a cognitive disorder similar to Asperger’s Syndrome, finds working in his father’s law office an intense and challenging education as he learns more about human interaction, legal ethics, and his father.

**STROUD, JONATHAN** *Heroes of the Valley*. Hyperion, 2009. Gr. 7-10

Halli lives in a valley steeped in stories of the legendary heroics of his ancestors, and as he attempts to live in the spirit of those glorious tales, he discovers that there’s both magic and storytelling lurking behind what he’s learned as history.

**THARP, TIM** *The Spectacular Now*. Knopf, 2008.R\* Gr. 9-12

Amiable, girl-loving Sutter Keely considers himself “God’s own drunk” and drifts through high school in a haze; Tharp cleverly allows Sutter’s narration to reveal the hurt and abandonment behind the alcoholic in a downward spiral even as Sutter relates his story as the best of all possible times.

**VALENTINE, JENNY** *Broken Soup*. HarperTeen, 2009. Gr. 7-10

Since the death of her older brother, Jack, Rowan is the one holding her family together; her burden is lightened when she makes a new friend and finds a new romance, but they also lead her to a family secret in this poignant novel.

**WALLACE, RICH** *Perpetual Check*. Knopf, 2009. Gr. 7-10

Brotherly rivalry and an overbearing father make this account of a chess tournament as taut and compelling as any contest on gridiron or field.

**WARMAN, JESSICA** *Breathless*. Walker, 2009. Gr. 8-12

Richly drawn characters and perceptively explored relationships mark this novel about Katie, whose brother’s mental illness is destroying her family and who struggles to find a new life at boarding school.

**WHITCOMB, LAURA** *The Fetch*. Houghton, 2009. Gr. 9 up

In this unusual, genre-crossing ghost story, Calder is a Fetch, a “death escort” who guides the dying person out of life, and his noninterference policy crumbles when he falls for the beautiful young Anastasia Romanov and crosses into the living world to help her.

**WILLIAMS-GARCIA, RITA** *Jumped*. Amistad/HarperTeen, 2009. Gr. 8-12

In this tense exploration of human dynamics and ethics set at an urban high school, a chance encounter between three girls results in one’s plan for vengeance against another, unless the third takes action to stop it.

**WRIGHT, RACHEL** *You’ve Got Blackmail*. Putnam, 2009. Gr. 6-9

Froth and menace enjoyably combine in this effervescent British mystery starring likeable Lauren, known as Lozzie.

**NONFICTION:**

**ASHMAN, LINDA** *Come to the Castle*; illus. by S. D. Schindler. Flash Point/Roaring Brook, 2009. Gr. 3-6

This rollicking rhymed take on the Middle Ages follows the hasty and not always diligent labors of the Earl of Daftwood’s servants as they prepare the estate for a tournament.

**BRUCHAC, JAMES**, ad. *The Girl Who Helped Thunder and Other Native American Folktales*; ad. by James Bruchac and Joseph Bruchac; illus. by Stefano Vitale. Sterling, 2008. Gr. 4-8

Bruchacs father and son produce a handsome collection of smoothly retold Native American folktales, drawn from a wide geographical range and soundly supported with historical and cultural notes.

**DAVIES, NICOLA** *Just the Right Size: Why Big Animals Are Big and Little Animals Are Little*; illus. by Neal Layton. Candlewick, 2009. Gr. 3-5

Biologist Davies, aided by Layton’s scruffy, irreverent illustrations, explains with welcome clarity the complex physiological reason why water bugs can walk on water, why lungs are built the way they are, and why apes can’t actually grow as tall as skyscrapers: it’s the simple math of the “Big Thing, Little Thing” rule.

**FLOCA, BRIAN** *Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11*; written and illus. by Brian Floca. Jackson/Atheneum, 2009. Gr. 2-5

Poetic text that fairly begs to be read aloud partners with line-and-watercolor art that moves smoothly from homey to luminous in this stellar (lunar?) account of the first moon landing.

**HEILIGMAN, DEBORAH** *Charles and Emma : The Darwins’ Leap of Faith*. Holt, 2009. Gr. 7-12

Solid research, evocative writing, and perceptive analysis make this an anniversary-year biography to savor.

**HOOSE, PHILLIP** *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*. Kroupa/Farrar, 2009. illus. with photographs Gr. 5-10

Rosa Parks may be famous, but teenager Claudette Colvin did it first; this biography explores both her initial act of civil disobedience and the reasons why Parks' refusal to give up her seat and not hers became the spark for the Montgomery bus boycott.

**JENKINS, STEVE** *Never Smile at a Monkey: And 17 Other Important Things to Remember*; written and illus. by Steve Jenkins. Houghton, 2009. Gr. 2-4

This introduction to natural history touches on the appeal of the Discovery Channel's Shark Week in its gallery of eighteen animal caveats that warn readers about venomous octopuses and lethal cassowaries, killer hippos and aggressive monkeys.

**JULES, JACQUELINE** *Unite or Die: How Thirteen States Became a Nation*; illus. by Jef Czekaj. Charlesbridge, 2009. Gr. 3-6

With its *Simpsons*-style cartooning, this exploration of the states' sometimes stormy decision to create a federal Constitution (enacted by a cast of kids putting on a play about the subject and taking the various states' positions) is a surprisingly lively and welcome introduction to an often abstruse topic.

**LAROCHE, GILES** *What's Inside?: Fascinating Structures around the World*; written and illus. by Giles Laroche. Harcourt, 2009. Gr. 3-6

A guessing-game structure and fabulously detailed collages offer some surprising revelations about building use and architecture in this work that will intrigue fans of Biesty and Macaulay.

**MARSHALL, JAMES VANCE**, ad. *Stories from the Billabong*; illus. by Francis Firebrace. Frances Lincoln, 2009. 6-10 yrs

Marshall, known for his classic *Walkabout*, offers here an adaptation of ten ancient legends from the Yorta-Yorta people of Australia, and the lively animal tales are partnered with strongly graphic art by Yorta Yorta artist Firebrace.

**MCDONOUGH, YONA ZELDIS** *Louisa: The Life of Louisa May Alcott*; illus. by Bethanne Andersen. Ottaviano/Holt, 2009. Gr. 3-5

This attractively formatted and prettily illustrated introduction to the classic author will be an appealing stepping stone as well as accompaniment to *Little Women*.

**OLSON, TOD** *How to Get Rich in the California Gold Rush: An Adventurer's Guide to the Fabulous Riches Discovered in 1848*; illus. by Scott Allred. National Geographic, 2008. Gr. 4-7

This clever tongue-in-cheek approach to history focuses on a fictional adventurer to create a guidebook for survival in the goldfields and elsewhere in 1848 California.

**ROCKWELL, ANNE** *Open the Door to Liberty!: A Biography of Toussaint L'Ouverture*; illus. by R. Gregory Christie. Houghton, 2009. Gr. 5-7

Rockwell offers a simply written yet challenging biography of Toussaint, son of African slaves, who led “the first triumphant slave rebellion in history” in the country now known as Haiti.

**ROCKWELL, ANNE** *What's So Bad about Gasoline?: Fossil Fuels and What They Do*; illus. by Paul Meisel. Collins/HarperCollins, 2009. (Let's-Read-and-Find-Out Science) Gr. 2-3

Rockwell pushes beyond dogma to discuss why a commodity that has lurked around benignly for millennia has now become a threat to our entire global ecosystem and what other possibilities show promise as alternatives.

**ROSS, TONY, comp.** *Three Little Kittens and Other Favorite Nursery Rhymes*; comp. and illus. by Tony Ross. Holt, 2009. 2-5 yrs

This collection of nearly fifty classic nursery verses features noted British illustrator Ross' usual rumply, comfortable, personable line and watercolor in friendly period scenes with some clever elements, making this a stalwart anthology.

**STONE, TANYA LEE** *Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream*. Candlewick, 2009. illus. with photographs Gr. 6-10

The anniversary hoopla over Apollo 11 makes this little known piece of history all the more relevant: the fact that a cadre of female pilots were secretly considered and tested for their own fitness for space travel, a dream that was abruptly denied them when politics, jealousy, and sexism reared their heads.

**STURM, JAMES** *Adventures in Cartooning*; written and illus. by James Sturm, Andrew Arnold, and Alexis Frederick-Frost. Center for Cartoon Studies/First Second/Roaring Brook, 2009. Gr. 2-5

A story, itself in comic-book form, tells of a princess who wants to create her own comics, and in the process she and her readers learn the nuts and bolts of the craft of comic-making.

**STUTT, RYAN** *The Skateboarding Field Manual*. Firefly, 2009. Gr. 5-10

This appealing title, rife with glossy glamour shots, offers a wealth of instruction and an older-brotherly approach that will boost the confidence and ability of novices.

**THOMAS, LYN** *100% Pure Fake*; illus. by Boris Zaytsev and with photographs by Cheryl Powers. Kids Can, 2009. Gr. 3-6

Kids who didn't know they liked how-to won't know how to resist when it comes to this well-crafted “cookbook” for grossout and scary tricks ranging from very realistic fake barf through exciting faux-scarring to your classic mock dog poo.

**TURNER, PAMELA S.** *The Frog Scientist*; illus. with photographs by Andy Comins. Houghton, 2009. (Scientists in the Field) Gr. 5-8

This absorbing volume follows researcher Dr. Tyrone Hayes and his exploration of the possibility that frogs are suffering environmental damage, and along the way it offers a explanation and demonstration of the scientific method itself.

**WALKER, SALLY M.** *Written in Bone: Buried Lives of Jamestown and Colonial Maryland*. Carolrhoda, 2009. illus. with photographs Gr. 6-10

Forensic anthropology seeks to uncover the cause behind the death of early Marylanders in an account that combines the pleasures of a detective story with solid and fascinating history.

**WARWICK, ELLEN** *Everywear*; illus. by Bernice Lum. Kids Can, 2008. Gr. 5-8

There's genuine sleepover appeal in this collection of over a dozen DIY projects from jewelry to hair adornments to purses.

**WEITZMAN, DAVID** *Pharaoh's Boat*; written and illus. by David Weitzman. Houghton, 2009. Gr. 4-8

Weitzman offers an absorbing, visually impressive reconstruction of the rituals and boat building procedures involved in making an ancient Egyptian funerary boat and then recounts the efforts on the part of Egyptologist Hag Moustafa to rebuild the boat from its original pieces.

#### **POETRY**

**AGEE, JON** *Orangutan Tongs: Poems to Tangle Your Tongue*; written and illus. by Jon Agee. Hyperion/Disney, 2009. Gr. 3-6

Thirty-four poems celebrate, imitate, and revivify tongue-twisters in verse form in this collection sure to have kids trying their linguistic luck.

**MADDOX, MARJORIE** *Rules of the Game: Baseball Poems*; illus. by John Sandford. Wordsong/Boyd's Mills, 2009. Gr. 6-10

There's real muscle and technical knowledge in these thirty-eight poems about America's favorite pastime.

**RUDELL, DEBORAH** *A Whiff of Pine, a Hint of Skunk: A Forest of Poems*; illus. by Joan Rankin. McElderry, 2009. Gr. 3-5

An array of crisp yet thoughtful poems in a variety of rhyme schemes focus largely on animal dwellers of the natural world, and their wit and aptness invite recitation as well as reading.

**SIDMAN, JOYCE** *Red Sings from Treetops: A Year in Colors*; illus. by Pamela Zagarenski. Houghton, 2009. Gr. 3-5

Gifted poet Sidman turns her attention to the colors of the seasons in this image-rich collection illustrated with cleverly crafted mixed-media art in appropriately glowing hues.

**SMITH, HOPE ANITA** *Mother Poems*; written and illus. by Hope Anita Smith. Holt, 2009. Gr. 4-7

This touching sequence of poems follows a young African-American girl as she celebrates her mother and then deals with a world without her.

**SOTO, GARY** *Partly Cloudy: Poems of Love and Longing*. Harcourt, 2009. Gr. 5-8

Romance of the earliest variety is chronicled in this series of accessible poems divided into one section for the girl's point of view and another for the boy's.