

SPACER

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January 1996

Christian Library

J O U R N A L



This issue features:

- **CLS Book Fair**
- Mississippi Madness: a novel project
- Home educators: using your public library
- **Journalism with grades three through five**
- Acting out stories with elementary children
- **Running your library on a shoestring**
- Get published: earn prize money
- Fairy tales and their messages



A Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

This issue carries twice the reviews found in the last. The next two issues, dated March and May, will do the same. With these three “double” issues, we will call our publishing year complete. The two “single” issues you received, and the three “double” amount to about eight issues of the length you were promised. To make sure you get your money’s worth, we are extending everyone’s subscription through one extra “double” issue, which means one extra next fall for most of you.

Next year we will go to a bi-monthly schedule, publishing in September, November, January, March, and May. We will have about 250 reviews per issue, double that which we promised you on a monthly schedule. With this new schedule, our small staff will be able to do a a better job of getting issues out on time, and our costs will be less.

We hope you will enjoy the longer issues. Please let us know how you feel about these changes.

In our first two issues I shared with you our hopes for this journal and how the journal came to be. Now we would like to hear from you.

Are you finding the journal useful? How so? Do you wish we were doing something differently? Are there topics you would like to see addressed in articles? Titles or authors you would like to see reviewed?

Please fax your ideas, send them on the Internet, or in the mail; I love talking with you on the phone, but it's costly, and I don't have a written record of your ideas when we hang up.

Subscriptions are still coming in daily as more and more people see a copy of the journal. If you'd like us to send a copy to someone you know, send us their name and address and we'll do it.

We ask that you pray with us for an increase in advertisements to help us fund the journal. Your subscription pays for 1.5 issues per year, and advertising makes up the difference. May God bless you as you continue to share books with others.

Sincerely,

Nancy L. Hesch

Nancy L. Hesch
Publisher

P.S. We look forward to an interview with author Clint Kelly next month.

Our Readers Write

I am thrilled to see that you are publishing a journal for Christian school librarians. It fills a large gap in professional journals which are available for Christians. I am looking forward to reading my issues when they arrive.

*Truly yours,
Rachel Schwedt
Liberty University
Lynchburg, Virginia*

CORRECTIONS FOR THE NOVEMBER, 1995 ISSUE.

Cover Picture: We gave two credits. It should have read: *Cover illustration by Tomie De Paola from his Tomie de Paola's Book of the Old Testament. Putman, 1995. Used by permission.*

Store Up for Yourselves Treasures:

The first sentence in the second paragraph should read: *Whether I became a first grade teacher because I love children's books, or whether I love children's books because I am a first grade teacher, I cannot say.* The last sentence of the article should read:

As they become rich in memories, our future generations may be spared from materialistic collections based on monetary value and instead store up for themselves "...treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal." Matt. 6:20

An Apple a Day by Jennifer Story Gillis, p.41, is published by Storey Communications, but distributed in Canada by Whitecap Books.

We apologize for these errors.

Christian Library

J O U R N A L

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The purpose of the *Christian Library Journal* is to provide readers with reviews of library materials from a Christian point of view. About 250 books, cassette tapes, and videos from both Christian and secular publishers will be reviewed each issue, along with subject lists of older materials. Materials reviewed may reflect a broad range of Christian doctrinal positions and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors and reviewers of the *Christian Library Journal*.

Nancy Hesch **Publisher
Editor-in-Chief**

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M A R Y J ' S
BOOK NOOK

A PLACE EACH MONTH WHERE OUR READERS SHARE
THEIR GOOD IDEAS FOR USING BOOKS WITH
CHILDREN

"Oh for a book and a shady nook,
either indoors or out."

John Wilson



By Mary Jarvis

A wildly waving hand from a back row desk caught my eye. Shy and frail, James was busting his buttons to get my attention.

"Teacher can I be the BIG billy goat?" he pleaded. This first grader was usually the last one in the class to draw notice to himself. Taking the role of the big Billy Goat Gruff would certainly challenge him. Could he speak and act forcefully enough? Taking the chance, I called him forward and cast other volunteers for the remainder of the parts for our dramatization of "The Three Billy Goats Gruff."

Props were stick puppets of the head of each character fashioned from tagboard and tongue depressors. The bridge was a long low reading table with a small chair placed next to each end. Our troll stationed himself under the bridge as the three billy goats prepared to trip-trap across it.

Excitement built as the first two billy goats promised the troll their big billy goat brother would be along soon. I held my breath as this diminutive "Big" Billy Goat Gruff stomped with heavy feet to the middle of the bridge

and with a deep roar challenged the dreaded troll to combat. The troll's head barely appeared before he was thumped flat and the victorious billy goat tripped over the bridge to wild cheers and applause. A star was born!

To act out a story or scene is to understand it, to live it. Dramatizing stories and scenes can be done by kindergarten kids, high school seniors, and all ages in-between. Acting out what they read enables students to shine and have fun while gaining a greater understanding and love for what they read. If you want to imprint words or values indelibly on young minds, having them memorize short passages and act out specific scenes will be valuable vehicles to that end.

Fran Cole, fifth grade teacher in Arlington, Washington, says, "Take a story everyone knows. Get the kids involved in making backdrops and props. Keep it as simple as possible." When her students have developed a small play she will have them perform for younger classes. She especially enjoys having her classes dramatize historical events or characters.

You can write scenes, obtain scripts for a drama, or simply have your pupils read a scene from a story and then stop and act it out on the spot. You may

want to take ten minutes to role play a situation or you may spend days developing and practicing for a production to be viewed by parents or others.

Kelly McAleer of Hartland, Wisconsin, frequently uses scripts read by her students to introduce other stories or books by the same author. She then relates background and works of that writer. "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" is a good introduction to Mark Twain. All the props you need are a shoebox with a couple of rubber frogs and some play money. Read the story, let the kids imagine the scene, and you're off and running.

Bryan Ross, high school English teacher from Tacoma, Washington, also uses Twain to develop understanding for characters. He has his senior highs discuss how Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn are different and alike. Then he puts his students into small groups to brainstorm a brief scene showing a Tom-type character reacting to a modern situation; a second scene shows a Huck-type reacting to the same situation. His students bring Tom and Huck into the world in which they live.

Wake up your students, stimulate them to think and imagine. Read good literature.

Few projects are as inclusive, challenging, and fun as putting together a newspaper with children ages eight through eleven. At these ages, horizons expand beyond home and school to the community and world around them. Newspapers are easily accessible and readable for most children. This age group is old enough to have special interests encompassing art, sports, geography, science, and world events--all

subjects that make good newspaper fare.

The newspaper genre itself is an excellent way to improve and expand writing skills, but it provides other opportunities as well. To effectively plan a newspaper, a student group must employ skills such as photography, cartooning, polling, interviewing, researching, planning, computer use, and critical thinking. Resources from the library to the printer down the street become familiar to students taking part in a newspaper project. Perhaps most important--and most challenging!--is the fact that newspaper students learn how to work as a team, each playing his or her own part to create something new.

To begin working with a group of students, bring several newspapers into the classroom and divide them into sections. Start making a list of section headings with the students, such as "editorials," "sports," and

"metro." Discuss and list the types of information found under each of these sections. Be sure to include mundane or easily overlooked sections such as the want ads and stock market listings. You may not use them in the newspaper you create with your students, but the students should know as much about the newspaper's

structure and purpose as possible.

Now it's time for a brainstorming session with the class. With your section list prominently displayed, discuss the types of stories the students want to "cover" in their newspaper. For the third-grade newspaper my son's class worked on, the students included original cartoons, movie reviews, school and classroom news, opinion pieces, want ads, interviews with people from outside the school who were important to its smooth running, school sports events, and video game reviews.

After the class has decided on the content, teach the fundamentals of planning and writing a news story. Give each student a copy of a short, simple story from one of the newspapers and have them list the types of questions answered in the story. This exercise leads into the standard and easy-to-remember "five W's and the H": who, what, when, where, why, and how. Explain the importance of writing short, simple sentences to communicate the answers to each of these questions. Practice this skill by using a paragraph or two from a piece of fiction, showing the children how to rewrite the paragraphs in factual newspaper style.

Another skill to introduce is the inverted pyramid of news writing. Again, illustrate this with an actual story from a newspaper. Ask the children to list what they think were the most important facts of the story. Then request that they identify where in the story these important facts were placed. Discuss how vital it is to put those facts near the beginning of the story (the top of that inverted pyramid), tapering off with the least important. Again, rewriting a piece of fiction in the inverted pyramid style is an excellent way of honing this skill. It allows the children to concentrate on the structure of the story without having to worry about collecting facts and writing from scratch.

The next skills to introduce are planning a story and interviewing for it. This can be a difficult set of skills to conquer, as most children this age like to grab a project and go without a lot of planning. But helping them rein in all that youthful enthusiasm will pay off in areas besides newspaper writing, so it is worth the effort! It's at this point that I equip each "reporter" with the tools of the trade: a reporter's notebook, pencil, and press card (a local newspaper or TV station might be induced to donate official-looking press

Junior Journalists

Newspapers with
Third, Fourth and Fifth Graders



*by Georgia
Beaverson*

cards). This gives students the impetus to acquire the skills.

After assigning a story to each student, remind them of the list of questions answered in their sample newspaper story. Ask them to list questions they should ask their interview subject that cover the “five W’s and the H.” Have them choose and write down the most central question they want answered in their interview, telling them to keep that question in mind during the entire interview.

Planning questions makes it easier to write the story once the answers are in hand. One of my son’s first assignments was to interview a police officer who often monitored speeders in his school zone. He asked questions like why put up orange cones in front of the school, how the officer tells when a motorist is speeding, what happens to the motorist caught speeding, the general crime level in our town, and the in-school drug program in which the officer took part. Michael chose to end the story with a brief description of the officer’s family.

After the class has written all the stories, taken photos to go with the stories, produced the artwork, and solicited ads, it’s time to edit. Editing is an invaluable tool to learn better writing skills. Reminding them to keep the inverted pyramid and the “five W’s and the H” in mind, have the children pair up and trade stories with each other. Discussing weaknesses and strengths in each story heightens writing, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills.

Older students might enjoy laying out the paper, either by hand or by using computer software (if available). If younger students find this too challenging, the teacher should lay out the paper. There’s no need to reproduce an actual tabloid format; just lay it out on a standard 8 1/2" x 11" piece of paper. A local printer might trade printing for a small note of thanks in the paper.

Finally, be sure to have the students distribute the finished newspaper to school classrooms themselves. After all, even junior journalists take a reporter’s pride in their work!



Next month: Teaching Children Who Hate to Write

Making Their Mark

Symbols fascinate children, especially in late elementary school. The fun of “secret symbols” can make manipulating and improving a piece of writing exciting, instead of the deadly drudgery so many adults seem to recall.

As your students prepare to edit each other’s news stories, give them a writing tool that makes the job challenging and fun--and gives them the feeling they’re joining an exclusive club. Introduce them to basic editing marks.

This was one of the most successful parts of working on a newspaper with third graders. The mysterious symbols made them feel important and professional and helped them pay attention to grammar and style issues. And it’s a skill they carried on with them to fourth grade and beyond.

Here’s a list of basic editing marks children can easily use:

SYMBOL	MEANING
	leave it the way it was originally; ignore editing marks here
	paragraph
	insert comma or other punctuation mark
	place period here
	reverse these words or letters
	capitalize this letter
	make this letter lower case
	delete

Read On, Write On, Get Published



by Penny Lent

Penny Lent lives in Puyallup, Washington, with her husband, two sons, two orange cats, and assorted northwest slugs. Lent is a frequent conference and school speaker and has freelanced over six hundred articles for radio, magazines, and her newspaper columns. She is editor and designer of two national newsletters and has authored seven books, including Young Writer's Market Manual, Young Writer's Contest Manual and Young Writer's Manuscript Manual from Kaleidoscope Press.

GET PUBLISHED

I Love Cats is a bimonthly magazine focusing on felines and their families, including health, environment, travel, and experiences. They accept stories, poetry, art, and letters for the students' "Kitten's Page." Young writers get a byline and four free copies of the issue containing their work. Buys all rights, no simultaneous submissions or reprints.

Manuscripts must be typed; response in one month. Send \$3 for a sample copy and a #10 SASE for free guidelines and theme list. Top quality color slides or B&W photos are always welcome. Fillers on cats, up to 500 words, pay to \$25. Editor Lisa A. Sheets says, "Please, no talking cats, outdoor-trained cats, mystical, or gory pieces. Be witty and humorous."

Send to 950 3rd Ave., 16th Floor, New York, NY 10022-2705 (212) 888-1855.

TEENS GET PUBLISHED

Freeway, a take-home Sunday School paper for high school and college students, seeks to show Bible principles in daily living. Pays \$25-150 for 300-1200 word profiles on teens who make a difference and on articles on family, holidays (six months in advance), humor, the environment, and controversial topics. Same pay for similar length fiction about parents, family, and ethnic themes. Humor is encouraged. Pays \$15-50 for up to 30 lines of poetry (send five maximum), short anecdotes, word puzzles, and quizzes. Buys one-time rights; pays on acceptance; gives byline. Response in eight weeks on manuscripts. Ms must be typed and accompanied with a cover letter. Free sample copies and guidelines for a #10 SASE with one stamp. Write for teens, about teen interests, with a Christian focus. "Don't

send stories that are unnatural, preachy, or have a 'tacked-on' resolution," says Editor Amy Cox. Send to *Freeway*, Box 632 Glen Ellyn, IL 60138 (706) 668-6000.

STUDENT CONTESTS

The quarterly "Writers and Illustrators of the Future Contest" wants science fiction or fantasy short stories (to 10,000 words) and B&W original sci-fi or fantasy art. Deadline is December 31. Send one typed manuscript per quarter, with numbered pages, SASE, title sheet, word count, without a name on each page. Free guidelines for SASE. Send photocopies of art unfolded, flat, 9x12" maximum, without signature. No returns. Include cover sheet with return address, phone and art title. Writing prizes: Publication in anthology, trophies, certificates and--1st, \$1,000; 2nd, \$750; 3rd, \$500. Yearly grand prize is \$4,000. Three \$500 art prizes. Contest Administrator Rachel Denk, P.O. Box 3190, Los Angeles, CA 90078 (213) 466-3310.

WRITER'S WORDS TO KNOW

Anthology—A collection of work

Cover sheet—Page on top of work, listing title, return address, phone

Simultaneous submission—Duplicate of a submission elsewhere at the same time

On acceptance—Payment when work is accepted rather than when published

Reprints—Work that has been published before

Word count—Stating number of words in piece, to closest 50, on cover sheet or first page

Using Your Library for Home

Parents who home teach their children (full time or to supplement other educational options) might be amazed to find what an incredible resource their local library can be. Home schoolers can find resources through curriculum catalogs and conventions where home-school materials are sold. But your library should be a primary resource, because:

1 The library can help you find home-school resources. Using library-loaned resource guides and home-school magazines, you can find addresses of companies selling learning materials, objective reviews of available curricula, and phone numbers of home-school organizations.

2 All library materials can be borrowed FREE, making home schooling much less expensive. This includes materials to teach subjects like history, literature, and science, supplementing or replacing textbooks. The library also offers materials written to encourage and instruct home schoolers. These include personal experience stories that reveal different styles of home schooling and books with organizational, legal, and/or curriculum planning tips. Some

also include statistics on the academic excellence of home schoolers. (Look under home education, home learning, and home schooling.)

3 The library adds variety and interest to home schooling. The scope of materials on thousands of subjects is remarkable--often including materials I wouldn't think to look for. Even if your tiny local library has limited shelf space, remember that the library system is a connection of dozens of libraries sharing materials. Books in the system number in the tens of thousands. (The Timberland system where I live has about seven thousand videos alone.)

One subject search on the Revolutionary War period uncovered a gold mine of books for home school use. These included biographies of famous Americans (i.e., George Washington's childhood); books on colonial crafts; and books on the war itself--with maps, battle descriptions, even illustrations of how cannons worked.

By studying topics in depth, children's interest is sustained, making learning a joy versus a chore. Consequently, you and your children will remember much more about what you study.

Why don't home schoolers use the library more?

PROBLEM: Many don't know what services the library offers.

SOLUTION: Schedule a library tour with your home-school group or family. Learn how to use the catalog indexes on the computer. Learn how to do subject searches on topics, authors, or titles which interest you. Materials include books, magazine articles, videos, and audio tapes. My son did his first subject search (on bugs) when he was four years old.

PROBLEM: Some Christian home schoolers fear the library offers only (or too many) materials which contradict their faith.

SOLUTIONS:

1) Realize that libraries carry excellent books by Christian authors. Try doing an author search for your favorite Christian writer. (On the shelves, books by Christian authors are sorted by topic: i.e., Dobson under parenting. Keep in mind that hundreds of books are simply neutral, offering good, useful information without referring to the Christian faith, but not anti-Christian either. Many books describe Christian principles or character qualities (honesty, courage) even if they do not have biblical references.

2) Screen books for questionable material. Librarians who purchase books are obligated to be unbiased, meeting the needs of all library patrons. This means there are books at both ends of the spectrum. If something seems inappropriate for your child, select an alternate or use the book as a discussion starter.

Many books offer excellent information, but with an obvious bias. One example might be an elaborately illustrated book on apes written from an evolutionist versus a creationist point of view. You, as teacher, get to choose your focus. You can be selective about what portions of books you read. It is important to allow your child to learn about opposing viewpoints. However, you need not read long passages of material leading your child to accept the author's bias.

Teach your child that bias affects how material is researched and written, and that no single library book should be taken as the final authority on any subject. Look for objective material if you can find it. If not, find good quality books offering alternate biases for comparison. Show your child how to check copyright dates to see how current the information is.

3) If a specific book or magazine you want is not in the system, request it. Your library system may purchase it, especially if others request it too. You can also opt to buy books (new) and donate them to your library system.

PROBLEM: Home schoolers with babies or toddlers find library visits stressful and exhausting

SOLUTIONS:

1) Keep a running list of books or topics that interest you. If you can't get to the library when open or have a toddler who quickly dismantles shelves, telephone your librarian and ask him to do a subject search for you. He will send you a printout with search results. Then you can choose books you want from the list and reserve them by phone, to be picked up at your local library after they are delivered there.

2) However, try to get to a library at least once a month (it's worth paying a sitter) to spend half an hour or so using the library computer yourself. Since your mind runs differently from anyone else's, spotting a key word in a book description may send you off on a totally new subject search--which the research librarian may not know interests you.

3) Even better, the ultimate, is to use a modem to call your local library. You get the same library catalog information on your home computer. This is a life saver for home schoolers with small children. During my preschooler's nap time or the minute my elementary-aged child asks an interesting question, I can sprint to my computer and log on. I can browse topics or specific titles, type in my library card number, and--ta da--the books are on their way to me.

One useful strategy I've found is to keep a file of book reviews, book club mailings, and book lists (especially for award-winning children's books). I take my file to the library (or upstairs to my computer) then type in names of those I want. What a thrill it is to order dozens of beautiful books without spending a penny--you can "have" them all--at least, for a time.

Beware: you can easily end up swamped with twenty books at a time. Then again, this may turn your children into voracious readers. During the last school year (nine months) my children read/had read to them over a hundred library books.

Naturally, there will be books whose description in the computer sounds interesting but you discover they don't meet your needs. Return them as soon as possible since someone

else may want them.

Other books you will renew repeatedly, then feel distressed when you must return them. I experienced this with *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Stowe). I ordered it to supplement our studies of the Civil War. It turned out to be a dramatic, touching novel about slaves whose faith in Christ was remarkable and inspiring. Another useful book was a home-school resource guide called *Good Stuff* (Rupp) with much material I wanted to highlight or copy.

Such books you may want to buy rather than borrow. Check the publisher's name on the copyright page and order the book through your local bookstore (assuming the book is still in print). Thanks to the library, you can learn from and enjoy volumes of borrowed books, while buying for your own shelves only those which you truly love. ■■■

Laurie Winslow Sargent is a freelance writer, contributing editor for Christian Parenting Today magazine, and a contributing author in the book, Christian Parenting Answers--Before Birth to Five Years. She and her husband Gordon home school nine-year-old Tyler and four-year-old Aimee, in South Bend, Washington.

Mississippi Madness

A Culminating Group Project for Huckleberry Finn

BY KATHRYN BURNS

As my students complete Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, I want to create a culminating experience that will incorporate all modes of learning and give the students one more opportunity to ponder the many adventures Huck has in the novel.

"Mississippi Madness," as this project is named, has positive and practical features. Research shows that the more modes a teacher uses in a learning experience, the more memorable that learning will be. We know from research that themes and major concepts are understood more fully if they are expressed visually as well as orally. Mississippi Madness incorporates all modalities and cognitive styles. The project can be adapted to other novels and reading experiences.

The time line leading up to this project is extremely straightforward. The students are assigned the novel a few chapters at a time and are held accountable for the reading by the use of quizzes, small group discussions, class discussion, and reading and study guides. This accountability not only motivates the students to read the novel, but also assures they will be prepared to participate fully in the group project.

As an introduction to "Mississippi Madness," I introduce the literary concept that the novel *Huckleberry Finn* is actually a collection of short stories held together by the Mississippi River. As a class we discuss the importance and dynamics of the river. While the students volunteer ideas, I ask them to support those ideas from

the book. In Chapter Eight examples such as "food source," and "hiding place" are given. Further on in the novel they mention "transportation," "means of escape," and "source of beauty." As this discussion continues, the students begin to see the vital place of the Mississippi in Huck's story.

At this point, the group project is assigned. The students in my classes sit at tables in groups of four to six, an ideal number for an endeavor such as this. Each group is assigned a section of the novel, usually nine to eleven chapters. The actual assignment is put on the overhead:

1. Create a visual depiction of the river on your paper.
2. Indicate the places Huck visited, who was with him, and how the adventure affected him. Make a visual and written description of each place.
3. Compose a song that represents Huck's adventures in your section of the novel. Clue: make up words to a familiar tune such as "Row, Row, Row Your Boat," or "The Brady Bunch."
4. A due date is stated.

After the assignment has been given, students are supplied with five-foot sections of butcher paper and felt tip markers. The groups begin the process of scanning their sections and listing the adventures. The way each group functions will be unique, but the students usually assign each other to be artists, writers, and lyricists, according to each person's special abilities. Completing the project takes at least two ninety-minute class periods.

Presentation day is an exciting time for both students and teacher. As each group holds up its poster, members orally present the material they have gathered and written. Each student is expected to participate as his group sings the song they have composed. They are prepared to discuss the moral dilemmas Huck faces and be able to support or refute his decisions with scripture. For instance, Huck has broken a law by taking a slave away from his owners. Why did he choose to do this?

When other groups are presenting, each student is expected to take notes. These notes become a possible ten points of their evaluation. The rest of the evaluation is based on the following:

Visual depictions	(30)
Oral descriptions	(30)
Song	(20)
Group evaluations	(10)

Many extra benefits of this assignment become apparent. The students become comfortable working with a group and their skills at speaking in front of a group increase. Also, the students' listening skills grow and they learn to display courtesy while others are presenting. A final advantage for this endeavor is the fact that it provides an excellent review for the final test over the novel. ■

Kathryn Burns is a teacher and the English department head at King's High School in Seattle, Washington. The above article was presented by her at the Northwest ACSI convention in October, 1995.

RUNNING A LIBRARY ON A SHOESTRING

BY MRS. DIANE L. PURDIN

Can you run a library on your budget? Sure you can. You should concentrate on what you have. Most of us started the same way, in an empty room with boxes of books that no one else wanted. Yet others of us started with an existing library and now we have the challenge of keeping up with technology while still providing an inviting atmosphere and functioning programs.

How do we do it? Where does the money come from? Lately even the largest of Christian schools have felt the crunch of budget cut-backs. But we can keep our programs going and even growing if we tap into money and resources that are out there and learn how to make the most of what we already have.

FUND RAISERS :

1. Book Sponsorship can be done at various times when parents are there for back to school night, PTF meetings, fairs or open houses. Tables can be set up with new books that you would like to add to your collection.

Book Sponsor "ship" Make a cardboard or wooden ship to stand on the table where parents will stop to donate money for specific titles they would like to see added to the library.

Adopt-a-Book Set a table up to look like a hospital. Add a white square of felt and diaper pins to the bottom part of a few books. Print up "adoption papers" to act as receipts for donations.

2. Birthday Book Club can be run every year by inviting parents to donate a book to the library in honor of their child's birthday.

Send out forms to parents which includes a space for the child's name and birth date including the year.

Make or use a large 12 month calendar to

record the names and dates.

- Purchase birthday cards or postcards (preferably from your Christian bookstore.)
- Order bookplates (from your library supply house.)
- Purchase the books you would like and try to match up age and interest levels with the list of donors.
- Place bookplates on the inside of the front cover. Type the name of the school and child and their birthdate.
- Mail cards just before the child's birthday. Include the name of the book that was given to the library.
- Invite all students who participated to a birthday party at the end of the year. Have cupcakes, ice-cream etc., play a library game, and feature all the books that were donated.

3. Book Swap and Sale can be a lot of fun as students are willing to swap those "used" books on their shelves. Parents are even more motivated to clean out those shelves and closets of unwanted books. This activity gives students a brand new batch of books to enjoy, while giving the library exposure and providing sale income.

• Schedule the swap and sale to be held during a school wide function such as a fair or festival.

• Send a flier asking students to bring in those used children's books to the library. There they will get tickets marked with the number of books they are entitled to get at the swap. Parents would be asked to drop off used adult level Christian books for the "sale table." These would be sold for approx. 25¢ or whatever you think is fair.

• At the fair, arrange the books on tables standing in open boxes for the best exposure.

• Use library aides or volunteers to collect tickets and money.

• Sell or give away all books at the end of the day (you don't want to take any home with you.)

4. Christmas Shopping Book Fair can be

a holiday treat for students and parents alike while making quite a profit for your library.

- Schedule your fair for just before Thanksgiving if possible.
- Arrange for a bookseller or bookstore to supply you with Christian books, gifts, and a percentage of the profit. (See list of vendors.)
- Schedule a preview day where students walk through and write down titles they want and prices. (Teachers of upper grades might use this as a lesson on estimating.) Parents will know how much money to send in with the child on fair day.
- Allow at least two days for the sale itself with one day of scheduled time for each class to shop and another day for parents as well as those students who forgot the previous day or who have more money to spend.

5. Book Fair to be held later in the year. Again, choose a time around a school-wide event such as Open House, where not only students will shop, but parents, board members, prospective school families, and even grandparents.

- Arrange for a Book Fair company (see resource list) to deliver books, bookmarks, posters, etc. Most large companies use cabinets on wheels. If using a secular company, carefully screen those titles that might offend your school families or conflict with your Christian values. Most companies bring so many hundreds of titles that you need not worry about having to remove numerous items. Some companies will work with private schools and will customize your order before shipping.
- Schedule preview and sale to precede and include Open House Day.
- Use library aides and Moms to collect money and help students.
- Publicize the event with fliers, posters, banners, balloons, etc.

FUND STRETCHERS

1. Volunteer Library Aides can be a wonderful help to you. Ask for help right at the start of the school year with a flier or item in the school newsletter. Invite new and veteran library aides to a welcome "tea" in

the beginning of the year where you can introduce the work and give some initial training. This will also provide an opportunity for the aides to fellowship and get to know you better.

2. Displays from nothing can be made if you keep your eye out for everyday items that can spark an idea. These "props" that make a book table display special can be found almost anywhere. I once found one in my cereal box. It was a strip of "Caution, Disaster Area" tape. I took it to school, cleared off a section of shelving, gathered all of the disaster books, displayed a replica of a newspaper from April 16, 1912, (the Titanic sinking), and roped off the area with the tape to make a "Disaster Area" book display.

3. Use budget book houses for real bargains on quality books. These companies specialize in overruns and overstocked titles. Books are usually hardbound and perfectly good. Some companies offer free shipping and free catalog cards as well. (See resource list.)

4. Borrow items from parents to help make bulletin boards, displays, etc. This will also help to get parents involved with your library. Don't be afraid to ask; the response may surprise you.

5. Create contests for needed artwork; instead of buying posters, invite students to design them. This would work well during Childrens' Book Week in November or National Library Week in April. Display all entries in the hallway and always remember to give a prize to your winner.

6. Reuse everything. Save book jackets for bulletin boards. Use old catalog cards for note paper, magazine ads for clip art.

7. Use church resources by asking Awana or VBS people for their used displays, artwork, or extra prizes.

8. Hang on to what you have by teaching book care in the younger grades to instill ideas of stewardship. Reinforce book care with the upper grades and lengthen the life of your books. Cover all paperbacks with self-adhesive clear paper.

9. Use area vendors for free materials. World Book Publishers have a program called PIE; Partners in Excellence encourages students to get sponsors for reading and awards the school with free sets of

encyclopedias or CD ROMS. Campbell Soups also helps schools by exchanging product labels for audiovisual equipment.

10. Ask store managers for displays; most are happy to give away their large product displays to a school rather than throwing them out.

WHERE NOT TO CUT CORNERS

1. Don't stop attending workshops.
2. Don't resort to purchasing just paperbacks.
3. Don't substitute cheaper brands of supplies that work for you: tape, catalog cards, contact adhesive paper, etc.

RESOURCES

Book fair companies:

Scholastic Great American Book Fairs
1030 Campus Dr. W.
Morganville, NJ 07751

School Book Fairs
401 E. Wilson Bridge Rd.
Worthington, OH 43085

Budget book houses:

Publishers Quality Library Service
P.O. Box 518
Dublin, OH 43017

Bound-To-Stay-Bound Books, Inc.
West Morton Rd.
Jacksonville, IL 62650

EDITOR'S NOTE:

*Christian Library Services
will provide book fairs.*

See page 80.

TRUTH IN A GINGERBREAD MAN

by Judy Driscoll

Up to my elbows in flour and molasses, I was hardly in a position to preach a sermon or even offer good advice when Tom came home from teaching with his latest mission problem. He had been counseling a teenager at school who was questioning not only her own faith, but the whole necessity of faith at all. It had been going on for some time; Tom talking to her at school, then coming home and asking my advice in answer to her latest question. I had been offering him my most precious nuggets of wisdom culled from ten years of marriage, nine years of motherhood, two years of teaching, and a lifetime of Sunday School. Bonnie had problems in her family, problems in her faith, and problems with her future. For the most part, I had dismissed them as the usual overstatements of an emotionally-charged teenager. But there was something in Tom's voice today warned me that the latest problem could be a matter of life and death.

"She's decided to run away from home. She showed me deep cuts on her wrist. What do I say now?" Tom had tried scripture, preaching, and prayer, but there seemed to be no answer that would satisfy her.

The despair in his voice filled me with dread as I pulled the last pan of gingerbread men from the oven. Then anger rushed in to divert me. How dare she spread this cold blanket over our Christmas celebration? Why should I have to spend my precious time on some other family's problem? Didn't I have enough to cope with? She was just using this as an attention-getting mechanism, trying to worm herself into the center of our family! Well, I would have none of that!

But the Spirit has a way of poking and prying at me even in my most stubborn moments. Later that evening, while squeezing white frosting on a triple batch of gingerbread men, I found myself musing on the incongruity of Bonnie and these cheerful little men smiling at me with their chocolate chip eyes. Suddenly, the Spirit found its entrance; ah hah, it was worth a try!

The next morning I handed Tom a plastic wrapped gingerbread man with a note to Bonnie tied around its neck: "Remember what

happened to the gingerbread man when he tried to run away from his maker?"

Tom looked curious and shrugged. "That's pretty silly, but I guess at this point anything is worth a try."

While playing the organ at the Christmas Eve service a week later, I became aware of someone standing nearby. I turned just as Bonnie reached out and hugged me. "Thank you for caring," she said, and left.

Who would have thought that God could use a silly old folk tale and a spicy cookie to reach one of his own? It certainly had never occurred to me. But I, too, learned a lesson that would prove itself over and over. Bible stories aren't the only Christian messages our children receive. God has inspired many great fairy and folk tale writers of the past and many children's authors of the present with his message. It may not be in measured thee's and thou's, but anytime he uses one of these stories to open our children's eyes to the wonder and beauty of his world, and touches their souls with the truth of his wisdom, his message is being heard.

That experience so many years ago has led me on a spiritual treasure hunt. I continue matching up children's stories with inspirations from God's Word. When I find an especially appropriate one, I laminate a copy of it onto the inner back cover of the book with wide clear packaging tape. There it waits, a shining little gem for some unsuspecting reader to mine.

My copy of *Apple Pigs* sports Luke 13:6-9 at the end of the apple feast, and Psalms 34:8 and 19:7-10 grace the back cover of Patricia Polacco's *The Bee Tree*. I also make a notation in my Bible of the title of the book or poem I have found. Then while preparing Bible lessons, I have a ready resource for added interest. Consequently, my Bible bears notes like this: "Compare 1 Sam. 16:8-13 [the anointing of David] with Cinderella fitting the glass slipper." At the beginning of the book of Ecclesiastes I have written "Solomon was an Eeyore." Some notes show sayings that may have had their roots in scripture like Ecclesiastes 10:20, "a little birdie told me."

Next to the story of Nicodemus visiting Jesus, I have penned "Who Has Seen the Wind?" Christina Rossetti's picturesque poem bears at its end John 3:8, "The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." That may not be what the poet had in mind when she wrote it, but it can very well serve as a light to turn a child's heart toward God. In the same poetry book after the poem "The Duel," I have penned Galatians 5:15 "If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other." My Bible carries "The Gingham Dog and the Calico Cat" in its margin next to that verse.

Am I the only one who reads Arnold Lobel's story of *Frog's Garden* and immediately thinks of I Corinthians 3:6-9... "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow..." I hope not. Why not tape those verses in your book and give your children something more to think about?

Other things are taped in my library books, too. News articles and science and history books are made for each other. My copy of *The Butter Battle Book* now contains a picture of the Berlin wall being

torn down and a map of Berlin showing how the wall divided the city. I hope that children will learn that some authors write stories based on real happenings even though they may seem like just a silly story.

On my shelf, Fred Gwynne's *The King Who Rained* now has the news picture and account of Mr. Gwynne's life, detailing his career. *Amelia Bedelia* carries a copy of Peggy Parrish's obituary. *And To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street*, Dr. Seuss' first, has a copy of his obituary as well as a cartoon honoring him. I want my children to take an interest in the people who write their books, to know that they are real people.

This isn't a project for the person who can't stand to mark in a book. Some of my books may have a slight scrapbook air, but the payoff comes in seeing children relate what they read to what they are learning about the world and about their God who created it and works in it.

Children who grow up studying scripture and relating it to life seem to have an easier time in high school and college literature classes learning to read for themes and thinking critically, because the same skills are brought to play. I firmly believe that even a young child can develop critical thinking skills more easily and naturally when they have grown up being enticed into something more by comparing their stories and poems with God's Word.

Share the stories.

Share His Word.

Share His Spirit.



Sharing the story of "The Gingerbread Man" with your child.

- ✓ Think about the child who opened the oven door. Why has God given us rules to follow? (*Possible answer: To keep us from putting ourselves and others in even greater danger.*)
- ✓ What do you think might have become of the gingerbread man if he had not run away? (*He might have been eaten.*)
- ✓ If the old woman had just been hungry she wouldn't have bothered making a gingerbread man, she would have just made gingerbread cake or a plain cookie. How else could the gingerbread man have been used? (*He might have been given a place of honor in her home, like on the Christmas tree.*)
- ✓ Think about the story of Adam and Eve disobeying in the Garden. Did God give Adam and Eve rules to follow? (*Don't eat the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.*)
- ✓ What might have happened to Adam and Eve if they had not eaten from the tree? (*They would have continued to live in the Garden with God as their friend.*)
- ✓ What happened to Adam and Eve when they tried to run away from God, their Maker? (*God found them and made them live with sin outside the Garden.*)
- ✓ Why does God give us rules to follow? (To keep us safe so we can live with him.)
- ✓ What are the rules He has given us? (*The Ten Commandments and Matthew 22: 37-39, The Golden Rule*)

POEM AND BOOK LIST:

"Who Has Seen The Wind?" Christina Rossetti

"The Duel" Eugene Field

Apple Pigs Ruth Orbach

Frog And Toad Together, "The Garden" Arnold Lobel

The Butter Battle Book Dr. Seuss

The King Who Rained Fred Gwynne

Amelia Bedelia Peggy Parish

And To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street Dr. Seuss

"The Gingerbread Man" (various authors)

"Cinderella " (various authors)

The Bee Tree Patricia Polacco

Christian Library

J O U R N A L

B O O K R E V I E W S

Picture Books	16
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Adult Fiction	59
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R A T I N G S Y S T E M

Quality of Material

- 5 Excellent - among the very best of this type
- 4 Good - well written; strong recommendation
- 3 Average - readers will enjoy, but not the best
- 2 Fair - can recommend, but not as well written
- 1 Poor - cannot recommend

Acceptability of Material

- 5 No questionable elements
- 4 Slight concerns
- 3 Moderate concerns
- 2 Barely acceptable
- 1 Too questionable to recommend



Karen Ackerman
Walking with Clara Belle
Illustrated by Debbie Mason
St. Paul Books & Media, c1993
Trade \$9.95
PS - Gr. 2

As a young girl and the elderly Clara Belle walk, they talk. Clara Belle answers the young girl's questions about her life in a colorful, roundabout way. The pictures suggest a turn-of-the-century setting. At the end of the story is a list of questions that parents and teachers can use to help young children develop a positive attitude toward the elderly.

The text requires some imagination. Many of the answers Clara Belle gives the young girl are descriptive rather than direct. What Clara Belle is trying to say will not always be immediately clear to the child or to the adult reading the book. There may need to be some explanation of what happens when we die. The young girl asks Clara Belle about her children, and she answers that one flew away on a cloud.

The drawings by Debbie Howard have a unique perspective, coming across more like movie stills than a typical picture book. There are close-ups of Clara Belle's hand as she opens the door and an overhead shot of the young girl and Clara Belle together.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Elizabeth Coleman
Freelance Writer
Tumwater, Washington

Jon Agee
The Return of Freddy LeGrand
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1994
Paper \$4.95, Trade \$15.00
K - Gr. 3

Freddy LeGrand is determined to fly across the Atlantic Ocean to Paris, but his plane runs out of gas, forcing him to bail out! Two farmers, Sophie and Albert, rescue him. Freddy shares all he knows about flying and airplanes with the farmers, and they teach him about farming. Freddy is definitely not suited to farming, so he

returns to the city, leaving his wrecked plane in the care of Sophie and Albert. Freddy's love of flying motivates him to build a new plane. This time he determines to fly around the world! However, disaster strikes again! Who should fly by to rescue him, high in the Alps? None other than Sophie and Albert!

This is a delightful story of adventure and friendship. Jon Agee presents a picture book full of underlying themes, such as facing challenges and setting goals. His simple, yet captivating, text and colored, sketched illustrations create a whimsical story. This would be a fun quick read-aloud book for a class or at home, and children will enjoy reading it on their own.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Cathie Coffin
Educational Consultant
Kirkland, Washington

AD

Catherine and Laurence Anholt
Sun Snow Stars Sky
Viking, 1995
Trade \$13.99
PS - Gr. 1

Whimsical, colorful illustrations introduce the young child to weather and the seasons. Each concept is introduced through a simple wash-and-line drawing. Youngsters will identify with familiar activities such as drinking hot chocolate on cold winter days or playing in a pool during the summer. New concepts such as animals hibernating and birds migrating are introduced through pictures and brief narrative. Questions interspersed among the pictures provoke thought and discussion. Pictures and words suggest many creative experiences. The preschooler will need the book read aloud by an adult, but the older child will enjoy reading the easy captions.

This book is simple enough to use with toddlers yet sufficiently open-ended to hold the interest of first graders.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Mary Jarvis
Retired Teacher
Marysville, Washington

Artie Ann Bates
Ragsale
Illustrated by Jeff Chapman-Crane
Houghton Mifflin, 1995
Trade \$14.95
PS - Adult

It's ragsale day a generation ago in the mountains of Appalachia. As the wind whips at their faces, mother and daughters, along with grandmother, aunt, and cousin, set out to find useful clothes and household items and maybe some unknown treasure in the barrels, racks, and tables of three different sales. As they make their choices at each stop, the reader is swept up in the warmth of familiar faces, the excitement of the search, and the pleasure of a day of freedom from regular tasks. At the final sale, each daughter gets a surprise bundle of clothes, which she anxiously waits to open upon their arrival home, where father is smiling at them from the front porch.

Author and illustrator (both natives of Appalachia) combine their talents and backgrounds to recreate a day of simple joy and family pleasure in yesterday's Appalachian mountains. Children will enjoy realistic illustrations, rich with detail, the faces expressing distinct personalities, acquainting the reader personally with each character. Adults will remember their own childhoods and feel at home in the pages of this beautiful book.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Catherine W. Ockey
Freelance Writer
Camano Island, Washington

V. Gilbert Beers
1-2-3's : Learn About Counting
with Moses and Other Bible
Friends
(Toddlers Bible Videos)
Victor Books, 1995
Video \$9.99
PS

This video teaches counting to ten using characters and stories from the *Toddlers Bible*. There are ten different, very simple, Bible stories. After each story, an item from the story is counted to ten. Then, a children's choir sings a song to recount the item again. For example, after the story of Jacob's dream, angels are counted. While some of the stories are children's standards, for example, Daniel in the lion's den, Joshua and Jericho, wise men visiting Jesus, not all are so familiar. Jacob's dream and God providing quail for the Israelites to eat may not be Bible stories toddlers would recognize.

For children who are used to the frenetic pace of Sesame Street or Barney, this video will seem slow. The counting song, which is sung after each story and at the beginning of the video, provides a great deal of repetition--something toddlers and preschoolers thrive on. Because the illustrations on the video are identical to those found in the *Toddlers Bible*, children may recognize the characters in the video. In light of today's video animation technology, the animation in this video is simplistic. The characters do not have whole body animation and often all that is moving is an arm stiffly up and down.

An area of concern, depending on the child, is in the story of God providing the Israelites with quail to eat. Cute white birds are flying in the sky, then suddenly drop and land limply in the waiting Israelites arms or on the ground. The story also makes it clear that the people catching the birds, as they are dying, will be eating them. Most children that age have not yet made the connection that the chicken in their story books is the chicken on the dinner table.

This video is an alternative to the secular educational videos on the market. It is also one of the few Christian videos that is designed for very young children.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Elizabeth Coleman
Freelance Writer
Tumwater, Washington

Marc Brown
Arthur Babysits
(An Arthur Adventure)
Little, Brown, 1994, c1992
Paper \$4.95
K - Gr. 3

The terrible Tibble twins test Arthur, an aardvark, when he accepts a babysitting job. D.W., his sister, tries to give him advice and warnings. Friends tell him trouble awaits. Apprehensively, Arthur receives instructions from the twins' grandmother, but as soon as she walks out the front door, the twins' actions are worse than Arthur's apprehensions. A quiet card game becomes 52 card pickup. Sheriff Arthur gets tied up by bad guys. Hide and seek almost turns into lost twins, until clever Arthur entices them out of hiding with a story. A big, slimy, green, swamp thing that likes to eat twin boys might find them before Arthur. He uses this scary story to his babysitting advantage and grandmother returns to find her grandsons snuggled on Arthur's lap, thinking he's the best and bravest babysitter!

Once again Marc Brown creates an Arthur Adventure that touches the experiences of children. Young readers and listeners will feel the fun and fears, bravery, teasing, and responsibilities of Arthur and friends. Brown fills each page with detailed, colorful pictures which spark imaginations and add life to the text. This humorous approach to responsibilities will certainly attract children to Arthur, even if it's their first time meeting him!

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Cathie Coffin
Educational Consultant
Kirkland, Washington

Marc Brown
Arthur's April Fool
(An Arthur Adventure)
Little, Brown, c1983
Paperback and Cassette Tape \$8.95
K - Gr. 3

Arthur's worried! Binky Barnes, alias class bully, has threatened to pulverize him. Between nightmares and anxieties, Arthur practices his magic tricks for the April Fool's Day Assembly. Buster, Arthur's best friend, promises to help him on stage (so he'll feel better about Binky!) until he gets sent to the principal's office. So, when Arthur asks for a volunteer from the audience to help in a trick, bully Binky jumps on stage. At first he succeeds in embarrassing

Arthur, but quick, clever thinking turns the tricks on Binky. Arthur accomplishes his best magic ever by pretending to perform a new trick, saw the man in half. Instead it becomes a disappearing act as Binky runs off stage. Arthur's final trick, a magic, all seeing telescope, and April Fool's joke, ends Binky's bullying for good. Marc Brown has once again, sensitively added humor to a childhood fear, class bullies. Children will feel the anxieties and triumphs right along with Arthur. Brown's full page illustrations enhance the text with color, details, and wonderful expression. The audio cassette which accompanies this book includes an opening "Arthur Song" with the read along story. One side has audible page turning signals, one does not. Although the idea of bullies may be universal, the references to magic, and a brief mention of black magic, may be controversial to some. Also, the implied message of what the magic telescope can see, may not be appropriate.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 3

Cathie Coffin
Educational Consultant
Kirkland, Washington

Marc Brown
Arthur's First Sleepover
(An Arthur Adventure)
Little, Brown, c1994
Trade \$14.95

K - Gr. 3

Arthur, an Aardvark, excitedly plans his first sleepover. Accompanying the preparations for his big night are rumors of aliens and UFO's, but Arthur and his best friends Buster and the Brain aren't about to let a little talk spoil their backyard campout. Finally, the friends crawl into the tent for fun, food, and games. They tell jokes, trade baseball cards, and play 'Go Fish,' forgetting all about aliens. D.W., Arthur's younger sister, works out her own alien invasion, transforming peace into panic. However, Arthur refuses to let D.W. "win" this one. The three friends devise their own secret attack to beat D.W. at her own game!

Marc Brown's presentation of a favorite childhood adventure is sure to captivate young listeners and readers. He gives just the right amount of attention to the normal concerns children experience about UFO's, first sleepovers, darkness, and being away from home. His sensitivity to a child's feelings allows readers to "feel" this adventure with Arthur. Marc Brown's colorful, detailed illustrations enhance every page, bringing wonderful visual images to the text. This fun filled Arthur Adventure will compliment any collection of children's books.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Cathie Coffin
Educational Consultant
Kirkland, Washington

Marc Brown
Arthur's Pet Business
An Arthur Adventure
Joy Street Books, c1990
Paperback and Cassette Tape \$8.95
K - Gr. 3

Arthur eagerly enters the world of business to prove to his parents he can take care of a puppy. One evening at dinner, D.W., a typical sister, blabbers that Arthur wants a puppy. Of course, Mom and Dad agree Arthur should show responsibility in order to own a puppy. After a few suggestions from friends, Arthur comes up with an idea that launches him into a neighborhood business, pet care. Perky, a seemingly not so friendly dog, becomes customer number one for an entire week. With the addition of a snake, an ant farm, frogs, and a canary, Arthur's first week in business is an exhausting challenge! Just when it's time to go home, Perky disappears, but Arthur averts disaster and proves his responsibility. He not only finds Perky, but also Perky's puppies. No wonder she had acted so unfriendly. To everyone's surprise, Arthur receives a puppy along with his pay for such great care!

Marc Brown has created a humorous story around a common childhood wish. He touches on all the feelings of wanting and owning a pet. His understanding of these childhood emotions is evident as the story develops. His colorful, full page illustrations bring delightful images to the text. This audio cassette and book package is a fun combination. An Arthur song opens both sides of the cassette and one side has audible page turning signals, while the other does not. Pet lovers or not, this is another enjoyable Arthur Adventure.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Cathie Coffin
Educational Consultant
Kirkland, Washington

Nancy White Carlstrom
Baby-O
Little, Brown, 1994, c1992
Paper \$4.95
PS - Gr. 3

Get out your dusty guitars, homemade marimbas and the kitchen clatter instruments for a family band to accompany this story-song with a Calypso beat. By way of introduction to her story-song book, Carlstrom presents a score

Ask for our writer's and / or reviewer's guidelines

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with some of the words and the music to which the rest of the colorful pages may be set. The lyrics comprise a delightfully illustrated narrative of peasant life on some idyllic Caribbean island. Piled high with chickens, mangoes, home-dyed cloth, fish, farm produce and baskets, Baby-O is a fantastically decorated old bus serving to transport happy natives and their goods to market.

Productive industry and loving family is celebrated on every page, and if you can resist singing the joy-filled story, surely you will have to clap to its happy beat. With so much racial hatred and violent realism pervading our media, especially in coverage about this part of the world, here is an avenue for accentuating the positives of native cultures.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Olivia Wheatley Stachorek
Freelance Writer
Carlsborg, Washington

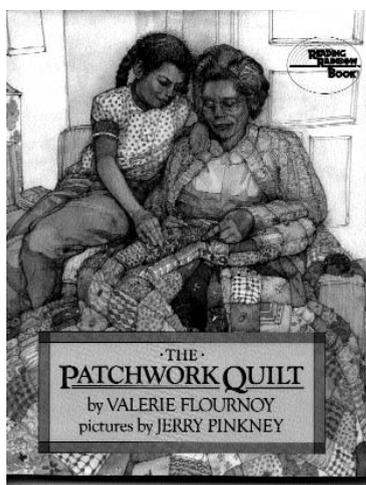
Lois Ehlert
Eating the Alphabet : Fruits and
Vegetables From A to Z
Harcourt Brace, c1989
Trade \$14.95
PS - Gr. 2

Colorful watercolor apricots, artichokes, and avocados start readers on an edible alphabet

adventure. Using a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, Lois Ehlert identifies for young children a world of produce, while reinforcing letter and letter sound recognition. Many of the fruits and vegetables are commonly eaten; however several may be new to young readers and listeners. Included is a glossary containing pronunciation and information on each fruit or vegetable pictured, inviting young and old readers to discover more about fruit, vegetables, and the alphabet.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Joanne Hotchkiss
Co-director, Liberty Lake Christian School and Child Care
Liberty Lake, Washington



★
Valerie Flournoy
The Patchwork Quilt
Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney
Dial Books for Young Readers,
c1985
Trade \$14.99, Lib Ed \$14.89
PS - Gr. 4

The Patchwork Quilt is a Reading Rainbow book and recipient of the Coretta Scott King Award. In it, author Valerie Flournoy uses a quilt to stitch this tale of a Black American family's unity. Youngest Tanya is the first to catch the vision of the patchwork quilt from her grandmother. They work together until Mother joins in. When Grandma gets ill, Tanya and her mother endeavor to finish the work. Gradually, each member of the family is drawn into the project. "A quilt won't forget. It can tell your life story," Grandma says. And so, through the year it takes to finish the masterpiece, memories are added from favorite clothes too old to wear; a Halloween costume; and Christmas material. The ideals of keeping memories alive and valuing the aging are "caught and taught" in the development of the characters.

Multiplying the effectiveness of the story itself is the pen, ink and watercolor illustration artistry of Terry Pinkney. His work is not only detailed and colorful, but also denotes strong familial closeness. There are no questionable elements in this book. This is a secular story, but Grandma always refers to the sunlight as "the Lord's light." Tanya's age is not given, but is evidently early to intermediate elementary, perhaps third or fourth grade. The reading level corresponds to these ages, as well, but could be read to children much younger, and those older may enjoy hearing it as well.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Dona Kachele
Teacher, Neighborhood Christian School
Bellevue, Washington

Don Freeman
Corduroy
Puffin Books, 1976, c1968
Paper \$3.99
PS - Gr. 2

A brightly colored, loving account of Corduroy, a small toy bear, for sale in a department store, who wishes for someone to purchase him. When a young girl asks her mother to allow her to buy Corduroy, it becomes known to Corduroy he is missing a button, so the mother considers him unacceptable. Following an evening of adventure, unsuccessfully searching the store for a button, Corduroy awakens to find the girl waiting to purchase him. The young girl takes the little bear to her apartment, and lovingly provides Corduroy with a new button, a home and a friend.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Joanne M. Hotchkiss
Co-Director, Liberty Lake Christian School and Child Care
Liberty Lake, Washington

Donna Guthrie
A Rose for Abby
Illustrated by Dennis Hockerman
Abingdon Press, c1988
Trade \$11.95
K - Gr. 4

Abby, the daughter of an Afro-American minister at a poor, inner city congregation, watches daily as a homeless woman digs through the trash bins by the church. Winter has begun and Abby is determined to help her. First, she brings mittens and a hat from the church's lost and found and leaves them by the trash can where they will be found. After seeing the old woman pull a box over a warm air grate, Abby is determined to help her further.

She enlists her father and other members of the neighborhood to set up a soup kitchen in the church basement. In this multi-cultural neighborhood each neighbor has something to contribute: Mr. Levine the pot to cook in, Mr. DeVito the vegetables to cook, Mrs. Snyder the cooking, and Mr. Snyder the muscle to move table and chairs in for serving and eating.

Guthrie has given us a multi-ethnic neighborhood where all are willing to help. Soup is made and served in the church basement while all involved reap the benefits of helping others. Not only is it better to give than to receive but each is reminded that "To the least of these my brethren...do it unto me."

Dennis Hoffman's illustrations convey the bleak, dreariness of life for the homeless in the inner city especially as winter begins. Sepia illustrations are set off in black frames with framed silhouettes. The only color to break the bleakness is the red flower Abby has drawn and the rose given her by the woman she has befriended. Illustrations capture the spirit of the characters, particularly the full page illustration of soup being served where readers see the joy of the givers and the thankfulness of those enjoying the gift. A video version with teacher's guide produced by Chip Taylor Communications 1995 @ \$149.00 is also available. This heartwarming story that will provoke much discussion with younger readers.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Leslie Greaves Radloff
Teacher/Librarian
Emanuel Lutheran School (WELS)
W. St. Paul, Minnesota

★
Donald Hall
Lucy's Christmas
Illustrated by Michael McCurdy
Browndeer Press, c1994
Trade \$15.00
Gr. 1 - 3

Author Donald Hall turns us back to the beginning of this century for a glimpse of life for young Lucy Wells (actually Mr. Hall's own mother) and her family as they prepare for Christmas. Lucy busies herself with sewing sheep's wool stuffed pincushions, wooden clothespin dolls, flannel pen wipes, and calendars for her family and friends, all the time expecting to get the traditional book and doll that her parents give her every Christmas. She is in for a great surprise when the heavy little box does not reveal a doll, but instead a cast iron replica of the new Glenwood Kitchen Range the family had ordered from the Sears Roebuck catalog.

Nostalgia buffs will delight in the detailed, tinted woodcuts by artist Michael McCurdy in *Lucy's Christmas*. They depict with wonderful accuracy the furnishings, clothing, and circumstances of early 1900's living. Children who have followed the Ingalls family through the end of the 19th century in the Little House Books will delight at this peek into the early 20th century.

Teachers can use this book easily for a lesson in comparison and contrast for life then and now.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington



★
Mary Hoffman
Amazing Grace
Illustrated by Caroline Binch
Dial Books for Young Readers,
1991
Trade \$14.99
PS - Gr. 3

Amazing Grace is a story of a young girl with a vivid imagination. Grace loves stories and loves acting them out. When the class decides to perform Peter Pan, Grace's classmates tell her she can't be Peter because she's black and a girl. Grace's loving mother and grandmother help her to see that she can be anything she wants to be.

Mary Hoffman has written a heart-warming story about that inevitable moment when innocence and optimism clash with the sometimes harsh reality of other people's opinions. Grace is a well-developed character with whom children will identify. Children want to feel successful and to be acknowledged for their accomplishments, just like Grace. And just like Grace, they need the support of a loving family. Caroline Binch's watercolors are a perfect match for the story, reflecting the

warmth of Grace's loving family and vividly portraying her imagination.

Although unstated, Grace's loving family reflects the unconditional love our Father has for all people. Adults may want to discuss the last sentence of the book with children. Grace's grandma says, "If Grace put her mind to it, she can do anything she want." Is determination all it takes? Or is there more to it than that?

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Trudi Kolk
Elementary Media Specialist
Watson Groen Christian School
Seattle, Washington

Linda Jennings
Tom's Tail
Little, Brown, c1995
Trade \$14.95
K - Gr. 2

In *Tom's Tail* a little piglet named Tom is never satisfied. He complains so much about his curly tail that the other animals in the barnyard decide to help him straighten it out. After a day of torture, Geraldine the cow has an idea that makes Tom's tail as straight as a pencil; however, Tom finds out that getting what you want is not always the best thing for you. After a very uncomfortable night Tom gets his old tail back but at that point, instead of Tom learning a good lesson, he shows he didn't learn a thing when he begins wishing he had a longer nose. The artwork by Tom Warnes shines. The animals are wonderfully done and make the book worth reading for the artwork alone.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Tonie Lagasca
Parent Volunteer, West Hills Christian School
Portland, Oregon

★
Angela Johnson
One of Three
Illustrated by David Soman
Orchard Books, 1991
Paper \$5.95
K - Gr. 1

In *One of Three*, by Angela Johnson, a young girl explains the joys and frustrations of what it means to be the youngest of three sisters. The joys are when you are included in fun "adventures" such as dress-up, playing games, taking walks, and shopping. Extended family fun is also a considered joy. An added benefit to being the youngest is the special time you get to spend alone with Mom and Dad. Frustration comes when you are left behind because your older sisters think you are too little.

Any youngest child will identify with this brief, well written, easy-to-read book. Impressive watercolor illustrations by David Soman tell a story in themselves. You can almost smell the cookies at a bakery! Highly detailed settings and facial expressions capture a multitude of thoughts from confusion, sadness, and distress to joy, security, and love. Overall, it is easy to see that this is a family that cares about each other.

This book will be a positive addition for any family and a help for any youngest child dealing with his or her position in the family.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Paula Stewart Marks
Principal, Morning Star Christian School
Bend, Oregon

Angela Johnson
Tell Me a Story, Mama
Illustrated by David Soman
(A Richard Jackson Book)
Orchard Books, 1992, c1989
Paper \$4.95
PS - Gr. 2

As a mother tucks her daughter into bed, the little girl asks her Mama to tell a story. They then relate back and forth a number of stories from the mother's childhood. The little girl begins the stories and the mother adds brief comments. Clearly this is a familiar ritual between mother and daughter. The bedtime stories explore two generations of an African American family. They also explore how sad it is when people go away, either for a short time or because they die. At one point the little girl asks her mother if their grandmama will live forever. The mother answers no, but the little girl can always remember how much her grandmama loves her.

The title of the book clearly suggests that an alternative to reading a story is simply telling a story, especially one about family and the past. The illustrations which depict both the storytellers and the subjects of the stories are watercolor paintings.

Some dialogue may require an explanation to young readers. The family is either from the South or has a distant connection to the South. If the reader has not been exposed to "sir" and "ma'am," the mother's responses to the daughter may not be understood.

For parents trying to teach children about the consequences for bad behavior, one story may be problematic. The mother as a little girl, throws mud at a mean neighbor's fence. Her mother makes her apologize to the neighbor,

but kisses her afterwards and gives her an extra sweet roll after dinner.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Elizabeth Coleman
Freelance Writer
Tumwater, Washington

Mary Ellen King
A Good Day for Listening
Morehouse, c1995
Trade \$11.95
PS - Gr. 2

Benjamin and Theodore are two teddy bear brothers who learn that listening is very important. It begins in the morning when their mother tells them to wear their boots. Benjamin doesn't listen and gets soggy feet. Theodore listens and not only keeps his feet dry, but notices all the exciting things a day can hold. Benjamin is a grumpy bear and misses out on everything because he doesn't take the time to listen. Benjamin does learn the value of listening, however, when he takes time to hear Theodore whisper "I love you" as he falls asleep.

This is a heartwarming story with simple but very descriptive text. The importance of listening is heavily stressed in kindergarten and first grade. This book will serve as a good example and valuable resource. It is perfect for drawing the child into the story and giving them a lesson at the end. Mary Ellen King has done a beautiful job of enhancing the text with illustrations in soft colors and full of hearts, creating a decorative country flair. You will fall in love with this book at first sight.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Marcia Snyder
Librarian, Valley Christian School
Missoula, Montana

Kathryn Lasky
The Gates of the Wind
Illustrated by Janet Stevens
Harcourt Brace, c1995
Trade \$15.00
PS - Gr. 3

The spirit of adventure is uniquely captured by Kathryn Lasky in her book, *The Gates of the Wind*. In the story an old woman, Gamma Lee, leaves her snug mountain village for the gates of the wind high up at the source of a mountain stream. Her neighbors can not imagine anyone wanting to leave the "best place in the world," but Gamma Lee says, "maybe so, maybe not."

When Gamma Lee finally arrives, the fierce wind nearly blows her donkey, her cat, and all

her belongings back to the valley. They learn how to live with the wind and stay.

Many years later, a young girl asked her great grandmother if the story of Gamma Lee was true. She decided to go see the gates of the wind; and, after she found it, maybe keep right on going.

The picturesque language and clever illustrations make this a story that is read over and over again. It may inspire children to leave the familiar and follow their own adventures.

This book is a good story-time book for preschool or kindergarten children. The illustrations are excellent to use in teaching children how the illustrator communicates the story in picture language. Both the cat and the donkey are interesting to follow on the trip up the mountain and in adventures with the wind.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Marie Knaupp
Retired Librarian
Monmouth, Oregon

Tony Maddox
Fergus's Upside-Down Day
Barron's, 1994
Trade \$12.95, Paper \$4.95
PS - K

Fergus the dog is left in charge of the farm and the animals when Farmer Bob and his wife go to town for the day. What starts out as a quiet and uneventful day, ends up with pigs eating spaghetti and beans in the kitchen, ducks watching television in the living room, and the cow taking a bubble bath in the tub upstairs. When Fergus realizes it is almost time for Farmer Bob to return, he successfully rounds up all the animals and gets them back outside and cleans up the house. He thinks it may have all been a dream as he looks around at how peaceful and orderly everything is. The last page, however, shows a bathtub still full of bubbles and muddy cow prints on the bathroom towels.

The illustrations, done by author and illustrator Tony Maddox, are fun. This short story will be interesting for very young children.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Janet Hicks
Librarian, Maple Valley Christian School
Renton, Washington

Melissa Madenski
In My Mother's Garden
Illustrated by Sandra Speidel
Little, Brown, c1995
Trade \$14.95
PS - Gr. 2

Soon it will be Mom's birthday, and Rosie wants to surprise her with a special gift. *In My Mother's Garden*, a Read-to-Me book by Melissa Madenski, we are introduced to young-but-considerate Rosie; her mother, whose passion is gardening; and the kindly neighbor, Joe. The illustrations by Sandra Speidel are an important part of the story. The soft watercolors add a hazy dream-like quality to the narrative. We anticipate the solution to Rosie's problem, but we can keep a secret, along with the heroine.

Madenski's anecdote is charming, allowing the imagination of listeners to draw them into the story, feeling the quandary of what to get Mom for her birthday, experiencing the delicious keeping of the secret, plotting to surprise an appreciative parent, and envisioning the completion of a task. The senses are also engaged: sight, smell, and touch. "The garden is shiny, and the spiderwebs are like bridges between the rosebushes." Throughout the book, a respect for old-fashioned values of neighborliness and family togetherness is shown. Although the story is written as an account of how hard work makes a dream come true, there are questionable components in the account. The main character, Rosie, keeps the truth of the gift hidden from her mother by duplicity, telling her that she's out bike riding when she's actually at the nursery with Joe.

The vocabulary of *In My Mother's Garden* should challenge those who love words. This is the kind of book that even a pre-reader would find entertaining.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 3

Su Hagerty
Freelance Writer
Issaquah, Washington

Charles Mills
My Talents for Jesus ; When I
Grow Up
Pacific Press, c1992
Paper \$8.95
K - Gr. 3

Smiling, making friends, playing music, praying, helping. These are some of the many talents that can be used for Jesus. Author Charles Mills describes nineteen talents, each one something children can do now and develop further with practice. Each page presents one talent with a photograph of a boy

or girl who describes how he or she uses that special ability. The young narrators also tell readers how Jesus used the same talents when he was here on earth. Some of the talents also include a "Use Your Talent--Watch It Grow" section which suggests more ways children can exercise their budding abilities. Flip the book over and readers can learn about occupations they might like to explore when they grow up. Mills presents a wide spectrum of jobs, from flower shop owner and business person to photographer, cook, and missionary. Special sections on this side feature children describing a family member or friend who has the particular occupation and what that person's day on the job is like.

Mills' understandable text and large print make this book suitable for independent reading beginning at the second grade level. The author's presentation of a wide spectrum of activities as talents ensures that every youngster will identify something special at which he or she is good. Particularly noteworthy are the color photos of children engaged in each activity. Children from a variety of backgrounds and ethnic heritage are depicted, and Mills avoids obvious stereotypes by showing girls, boys, and physically handicapped children engaged in a variety of talents and occupations.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Janet Smith
Freelance Writer
Latrobe, Pennsylvania

Ruth Sanderson
The Enchanted Wood
Little, Brown, 1995, c1991
Paper \$5.95
K - Gr. 3

After the death of his queen, the king and the land over which he reigns wither in depression. In an attempt to save the kingdom, the king's three sons set out to find the Heart of the World in the Enchanted Woods. At the gate of the woods, they are warned to stay on the path. The two eldest sons have difficulty with the warning and fall prey to the temptations alongside the path. They stray off and are lost.

Galen, the third son, is tempted also, but with the encouragement of the gatekeeper's daughter, Rose, he does not stray. He keeps his eye on his goal and continues to the Heart of the World, thus freeing his brothers and other captives. The land, animals, and people are again happy and prosperous. Galen and Rose rule happily the rest of their days.

This delightful fairy tale demonstrates the rewards of staying on the sometimes difficult path and avoiding the temptations of our desires along the way. It could be used as a value lesson for students of all ages.

Sanderson's beautiful art work was done in oil on canvas and makes this book worth keeping and enjoying many times.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Rosalie M. Dahlvang
Librarian, St. Anthony School
Renton, Washington

Roni Schotter
Passover Magic
Illustrated by Marilyn Hafner
Little, Brown, c1995
Trade \$14.95
PS - Gr. 4

While Christians know the story of Passover, few are familiar with how Jewish families celebrate the holiday. Molly, an elementary-school age girl, narrates the story of her family's Passover celebration.

Without overwhelming the reader with details, Molly gives the reader a feel for how many Jewish families celebrate Passover. She not only gives the nuts and bolts of their traditions, but also the feeling of her family's gathering. Each member of her extended family is lovingly described and given life. The characters in the book seem real and the illustrations add beautifully to the narration. While written for children, this would be a good resource for adults who are looking for a simple guide to how Passover is celebrated.

The title of the book alludes to there being some "magic" to Passover. One of Molly's relatives, Uncle Harry, is a dentist during the week and a magician on the weekends. When Uncle Harry arrives he performs several simple magic tricks for the children. Later, when Uncle Harry hides the matzoh for the children to find, it requires a magic spell to find the unleavened bread. The "magic spell" is the children closing their eyes and saying what Passover means to them. As part of the Jewish celebration of Passover, the adults drink wine and there is a glass of wine set out for the prophet Elijah.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Elizabeth Coleman
Freelance Writer
Tumwater, Washington

Maggie Smith
Counting Our Way to Maine
Orchard Books, c1995
Trade \$14.99
PS - Gr. 1

Author and illustrator Maggie Smith has drawn on her experiences as a child vacationing in Maine with her family. This is a great counting book with vivid illustrations and story that includes many things to count on each page.

The family of two parents, three children and two dogs, begins to get ready to go on vacation by packing "one baby" and finishes the vacation in the end chasing "twenty fire flies." All the numbers in between are portrayed by everything from the number of slugs on the cabin steps to the amount of blueberry pies they bake together. The story illustrates a very positive family vacation and all the good times together as well as some of the frustrations such as mosquito bites.

Counting Our Way to Maine is an appealing book both as a story and as a counting book for younger children.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Janet Hicks
Librarian, Maple Valley Christian School
Renton, Washington

Reta Spears-Stewart
Before I Was a Kid
Illustrated by Mary Rumford
Pacific Press, c1991
Paper \$5.95
PS - Gr. 4

Take a journey back in time as a loving mother carefully answers her child's questions about the beginning of life. "Before I made you in your mother's womb I chose you. Before you were born, I set you apart for a special work" Jeremiah 1:5. These words are the thread that runs through the pages of author Reta Spears-Stewart's charming story, *Before I Was A Kid*.

Imagine a young child settling himself on his mother's lap with the question, "Where did I come from?" And after that, "What was I then?", the question repeating itself again and again until the mother has gone back to the moment when God planned and created the child.

It is a creative and comforting book to share with young ones. Children will find themselves feeling special and loved by God after hearing this story and visually studying the fascinating drawings of a child at different stages of development. Biblically sound and easy to grasp, *Before I Was A Kid* is a book parents could utilize in explaining procreation and the

biological process. A quick read that will inspire thought provoking questions as the child's age increases.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Michele Howe
Freelance Writer and Homeschool Mother
LaSalle, Michigan

★
Daisy Corning Stone Spedden
Polar the Titanic Bear
Illustrated by Laurie McGaw
Little, Brown, c1994
Trade \$16.95
All ages

This dramatic true story was written by an American heiress for her son's eighth Christmas. It is the story of his own stuffed polar bear which miraculously survived the sinking of the Titanic along with the fortunate family. After lying amid family mementos for over eighty years, this labor of love is published just as Daisy Spedden wrote it. The skillful illustrations detract nothing from the authenticity of the work and are augmented by actual family photographs and other depictions of the early 1900's.

Clearly, this is much more than a child's picture book; it is a fine collection of intimate and interesting data relating to the most famous maritime disaster of the century. Even the most sophisticated reader is bound to be fascinated by the story, illustrations, and epilogue. Here is an excellent instructional springboard, not only into a study of history, but into physics.

Hailed as the greatest engineering feat of its day, recently retrieved sections of the Titanic's hull reveal by 1912 steel-making technology had failed to keep pace with engineering advances. Thus, a tragedy which has mystified the world for nearly a century is now being unraveled, and valuable lessons await the probing scholar.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Olivia Wheatley Stachorek
Freelance Writer
Carlsborg, Washington

Nancy Sweetland
God's Quiet Things
Illustrated by Rick Stevens
W.B. Eerdmans, 1994
Trade \$14.99
PS - K

A delightful picture book for younger children that tells in verse and pictures of the quiet things God has created.

Rick Stevens' gentle pastel illustrations beautifully tell the story from sun-up to bedtime as a young boy spends his day exploring the world around him.

Young children can learn to look and listen as they follow this boy through his day of discovering quiet things. He listens for a worm's wiggle, for the sun shining in the garden, and for darkness falling. God is presented as creator of these things.

An intriguing story with great illustrations for young children.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Toni MacAdam
Librarian, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

Tynia Thomassie
Feliciana Feydra Le Roux : A
Cajun Tall Tale
Illustrated by Cat Bowman Smith
Little, Brown, 1995
Trade \$14.95
K - Gr. 3

Cajun history and culture, as it exists today, is first explained in the author's notes, then happily detailed in a day in the life of Feliciana. Possessing every simple pleasure a young Cajun girl could wish for, Feliciana had one impossible desire: to hunt "halligators" with the man and boys of her family.

The "Cajun Tall Tale" that follows is cunningly illustrated by Cat Bowman Smith in a way that makes you sense the heavy Southern humidity with burgeoning life in all forms found in the deep, dark Louisiana bayou. Besides a generous sprinkling of dialect, Thomassie has provided a helpful glossary of Cajun terms. While the dialect would be difficult for a young reader, this book should be a worthwhile read-aloud book, providing ample opportunity for the adult reader to add some Cajun spice to his performance. While Feliciana's daring adventure in the night hours by slipping from her bedroom is not behavior to emulate, the title is prefaced with the definitive words, "Cajun Tall Tale."

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Olivia Wheatley Stachorek
Freelance Writer
Carlsborg, Washington

Ellen Stoll Walsh
Theodore All Grown Up
Harcourt Brace, 1995
Paper \$5.00
K - Gr. 3

Theodore discovers advantages to being his parent's little boy that outweigh the advantages of being all grown up, at least for "yesterday and tomorrow."

In *Theodore all Grown Up*, Theodore can touch the foot and the head of his bed at the same time. This must mean he is all grown up and now he can do many grown up things. Mother and Father suggest some other little boy will probably want to enjoy his toys since he won't need them.

As he looks at each of his toys, his perspective changes and Theodore decides he is not ready for all those changes.

Growing up is a universal theme faced by children of all ages. The perspective gives good insight for any age reader. The whole process results in Theodore's being satisfied to be where he is--yet he recognizes small areas of growth have occurred.

Preschool children will enjoy this book, especially if they have older siblings they struggle to keep up with.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Marie Knaupp
Retired Librarian
Monmouth, Oregon

Rosemary Wells
Waiting for the Evening Star
Illustrated by Susan Jeffers
Dial Books for Young Readers,
c1993
Trade \$15.00, Lib Ed \$14.89
Gr. 1 - 3

Waiting for the Evening Star is a book with breathtaking illustrations by award-winning artist Susan Jeffers depicting life in rural America just after the turn of the century. The book traces a span of time that covers the seasonal happenings of a farm family explaining quite simply and clearly events like ice cutting and the production of dairy products. The story traces the growth of two brothers, ending with the departure of the older to fight in W.W.I. This is a thoughtful book with illustrations that contribute more than their share to the story.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Sally Kuhns
Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

Lucy M. Williams
Please Pass Up the Salt
 Illustrated by Tom C. Williams
 (Red Apple Zoo Series; 1)
 Sandridge Publishing, 1995
 Trade \$14.95, CD ROM \$19.95
 PS - Gr. 10

In this, the first of a series of nutrition books for children, author Lucy Williams tells the amusing story of a young elephant named Congo who lives in a zoo with his mother and delights in being fed salty snacks by the many children who visit him each day. He is dismayed when the zookeeper puts up a sign that says, "Please don't feed the animals," but when the popcorn cart is left just the other side of his wall at the end of the day, Congo reaches into it with his trunk and eats all the popcorn, including the salt shaker. That night he becomes very sick, and the next day the children tell him he looks like a big gray balloon. The zoo doctor diagnoses the problem as "salty-osis," and Congo goes with the children on a trip to the market to find a new diet of healthy and delicious, low-salt foods. With colorful, full-page illustrations and entertaining text, children learn about the dangers of eating too much salt and some practical alternatives to the salty snack habit.

With the interactive CD-ROM a child can be read the book in its entirety, with or without accompanying text. In addition, four different games allow the child to discover which foods are lowest in sodium and to put together meals with acceptable sodium content. Congo's low-salt cookbook, found on the CD and in the book, contains four recipes for low-salt favorites. An important asset to both the book and the CD-ROM is the section of information for teachers and parents, which contains additional facts about sodium, helpful references, and interesting home or classroom activities to extend learning.

Either of these products would be a valuable addition to nutrition education for children. They contain almost identical material (with the exception of the games on the CD-ROM), so they can be used separately. Unfortunately, the text of the book in the CD-ROM contains a spelling error and some minor punctuation errors, but the user has the option of not viewing the text while being read the story, and the voice of the reader is clear and makes good use of sound effects. The book would be of most value in a teacher directed classroom, while the CD-ROM allows a child to learn the material on an individual basis.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Catherine W. Ockey
 Freelance Writer
 Camano Island, Washington

Audrey Wood
Oh My Baby Bear!
 Voyager Books/Harcourt Brace,
 1990
 Paper \$6.00
 PS - K

Author and illustrator Audrey Wood has captured the joy of a child making the transition from baby to child in this story of a baby bear who, with his parents' encouragement, learns to dress, feed, and bathe himself. When he learns to put himself to bed his parents declare him no longer a Baby Bear, "From now on we must call him Little Bear." And even though Little Bear can now stay up later, visit with his parents, and eat a late dessert, he is happy to know that he is still not too old to be tucked in and kissed good-night. Preschool and kindergarten children will delight in the entertaining illustrations of baby bear trying to feed, dress and bathe himself. They will probably also identify with the cozy feeling of being young enough to enjoy being tucked into bed.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
 Teacher, Christ the King Academy
 Poulsbo, Washington

Jane Yolen
The Girl in the Golden Bower
 Illustrated by Jane Dyer
 Little, Brown, c1995
 Trade \$15.95
 K - Gr. 3

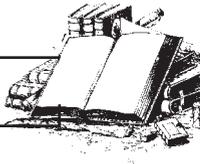
Aurea, the orphaned daughter of a woodsman, is mistreated by the wicked sorceress who is searching for a treasure which she believes the child possesses. The animals and woods protect Aurea from the greed of the evil one. Aurea is united with her grandfather, the king, who had been turned into a beast, and they live happily for the rest of their lives.

A pleasant new fairy tale for the older child or adult who appreciates fantasy.

The artist, Jane Dyer, brings the story to life. The illustrations are enchanting, detailed, and delightful. I would recommend this book to people who appreciate beautiful art work along with an imaginative story.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Rosalie M. Dahlvang
 Librarian, St. Anthony School
 Renton, Washington



Rudolfo A. Anaya
The Farolitos of Christmas
 Illustrated by Edward Gonzales
 Hyperion Books for Children,
 c1995

Trade \$14.95
Library Ed., \$14.89
Gr. 1 - 6

In *The Farolitos of Christmas* Rudolfo Anaya tells the story of a Mexican family as they prepare for Christmas.

Each year the pastores (shepherds) come to Luz's house on Christmas Eve to perform a play that shows the journey of the first shepherds. Her house was chosen because it had the brightest luminarias (small bonfires of stacked wood).

This year things are different. Luz's papa is away because of the war and her grandfather is sick. She is afraid he is not strong enough to cut the logs. Luz finds a way to light their abuelo with candles and everyone is happy - especially when her father comes home in time for the procession to the church on Christmas Eve.

Full color portraits of family scenes add greatly to the warmth of the story.

A glossary gives the meaning of the many Mexican words used which would be wise to review before reading the story. Although the words make some difficulty in understanding the story, this problem is overshadowed by the appreciation of the customs of the people using them.

Santa Claus is mentioned, but the primary emphasis is on the shepherds and Santo Nino, baby Jesus.

This book is a valuable resource in presenting Christmas in other lands.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Marie Knaupp
 Retired Librarian
 Monmouth, Oregon

Carrie Bender
Whispering Brook Farm
 Herald Press, c1995
Paper \$6.95
Gr. 4 - 6

Nancy lives with her Amish family on their farm. With her three brothers, three sisters, her parents, and grandparents, she has an idyllic life, clouded faintly by the possibility of outward intrusions into their lifestyle. Most of these happen as the older brothers and sister pair up, and as some ridicule the Amish way of life.

The birds seem to be always singing when Nancy or her siblings are happy and things are going well for them. Characterization is pretty stereotypical. The worldly "villains" drive a fancy car recklessly or sneak around smoking cigarettes. The depth of the character's struggles are not convincing. Their feelings of lost loves are worked out smoothly, and their lives go on in kind of a happily-ever-after way.

The first page of each chapter begins with the same, well done pencil sketch of the farm. The other sketches illustrate Amish life in a way that would be helpful for young readers. Relationships portrayed are clean and respectful. Parents, grandparents, and elders are quickly obeyed and respected. Life on Whispering Brook Farm is portrayed as very pleasant, and the reader does have an informative peek at the Amish way of life.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Belcher
 Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
 Bremerton, Washington

Esther Bender
April Bluebird
 Illustrated by Edna Bender
 Herald Press, 1955
Paper \$6.95
Gr. 1 - 4

When a boy and his sister find an early returning bluebird frozen in an April snow their teacher uses it as a science lesson on creation and a research and writing lesson. The children then take the bluebird to an artist who uses it for a wood carving model. What could have become a maudlin story of death is transformed into innocent and inspiring meditations on life

and death for the children in *April Bluebird* as well as for the reader. Using simple sentences to tell a simple tale, Esther Bender has written a sensitive and moving story of death and resurrection. Beautiful watercolor illustrations by Edna Bender enhance the drama of the story perfectly. Our fourth graders read this book when one of their classmates brought a dead bird to school. They gave the story a high rating. This book might be useful for the child who is grieving a loss.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
 Teacher, Christ the King Academy
 Poulsbo, Washington

John Bibee
The Mystery of the Homeless Treasure
 (The Home School Detectives; 1)
 InterVarsity Press, c1994
Paper \$4.99
Gr. 3 - 5

The Mystery of the Homeless Treasure is the first book in The Home School Detectives series by John Bibee. Six friends share in the same home school co-op and attend church together. These children, from three families in one community, range in age from ten to twelve.

When they find a gold cup that was part of an unsolved robbery, they put together clues to solve the mystery. The children research newspapers about the thirty-year-old robbery and talk with people about what could have happened. They also witness a kidnapping and try to help the police solve new mysteries.

Since the characters are home schooled, they have many opportunities to be involved with this case. The book gives the reader a glimpse into the day of a home-schooled student and his schedule and activities. These children are also involved in their church and helping homeless people in their town. The unsolved robbery, the kidnapping, and a couple of mysterious characters make this book suspenseful. The children demonstrate their belief in God and faith in his protection when they are in danger.

Each book in this series involves these six friends in a mystery that plunges them into detective work on their own and puts their faith

into practice. The books can be read independently, but the first book in the series gives a more in depth description of each of the children and their relationships.

Other title in this series:

The Mystery of the Missing Microchips

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Janet Hicks

Librarian, Maple Valley Christian School
Renton, Washington

**Eve Bunting
Dandelions**

**Illustrated by Greg Shed
Harcourt Brace, c1995
Trade \$15.00
Gr. 2 - 4**

Caldecott Award winning author, Eve Bunting, relies on her own past experience with emigration to tell the touching story of a pioneer family emigrating from Illinois to Nebraska Territory. The endless grass offers no break from the loneliness of the prairie for Rebecca and Zoel's mother, Emma Bolton. "Mama would stand for hours looking at the curve where grass and sky met. 'Always nothing,' she'd say. 'Always the sameness.' It was true that the soddie did disappear almost as you stepped away from it, turning into just another hump in the ground."

Unable to share her husband's and children's excitement over their new sod home, Emma's unhappiness increases. On a rare trip to town with her papa to buy supplies, Zoe finds just the thing to help dispel her mother's loneliness. She digs a patch of yellow dandelions growing by the trail and takes them home to plant on the roof of their soddie. There she hopes they will thrive and spread covering the roof with a blaze of yellow to comfort her mother and mark their home.

Dandelions is a haunting tale of the prairies as experienced by the pioneers. Illustrator, Greg Shed has wonderfully captured the vastness of the prairies and the loneliness of the mother. This is a relatively long story however for a young reader. Even a second grader may want to read it in two sittings.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll

Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

**Matt Christopher
Double Play at Short
Illustrated by Karen Meyer
Little, Brown, c1995
Trade \$14.95
Gr. 1 - 6**

Matt Christopher has made a name for himself among elementary students who like to read sport stories. His characteristic style is to describe the games that take place in his books in great detail. This might become monotonous for adults, but kids really like it. In all his books the main character needs to deal with a problem of some sort--acceptability, confidence, etc. They always work it out and grow in some way as a result. Christopher's books each center around a different sport such as basketball, football soccer, hockey, etc., but the following reviews are all for books about baseball.

Gr. 4 - 6

Double Play at Short is among this author's best books. It tells the story of Danny and Tammy--twins who were separated at birth and adopted by different families. When they are about twelve years old they meet up with each other at baseball games. They each play short stop position for opposing teams. As the season progresses they discover that their looks, actions, abilities, and even their birthdays are the same! What begins as a competitive, mysterious relationship ends in friendship as they discover and accept their twin-ship.

Gr. 3 - 6

Pressure Play is about a boy who finds acceptance on a new team and also learns a lesson about priorities. An objection to this book is that the boy's hobby is watching and making horror movies. He seems to be obsessed by them and is supported in this activity by his parents.

Gr. 3 - 5

Baseball Flyhawk is a typical Christopher story--told in a simple style. A new boy finds acceptance from his team-mates. As he proves himself to the other players on his team, he also learns to accept himself.

Gr. 1 - 3

Man Out at First is a sports story for the younger elementary student. It is a nice "early-reading" book. It's about a young boy who gets hurt in a hall game and becomes afraid of getting hit by the ball again. As the story progresses he learns to be confident.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Sharon Westra

Librarian, Mt. Vernon Christian School
Mt. Vernon, Washington

**Mary Duplex
Mystery at Maple Street Park
(Starburst)
Pacific Press, c1994
Paper \$7.95
Gr. 4 - 6**

What do you have when you take four oddy-matched fifth grade students, a missing dog, a little black book, a mysterious box with money and letters from World War II, a lonely homeless woman, and add a class project to clean up the infamous Maple Street Park? If you add these together you have *Mystery at Maple Street Park* and four kids with a mission. Pete, Harry, Julia, and Lorrinda are teamed up to clean Maple Street Park, a park that had been taken over by a gang and trashed to the point where people don't go there for recreational purposes anymore. The fifth grade classes have a community clean-up competition, with prizes for the winning team. Harry doesn't think that his team has a chance of winning. This project was supposed to be a six person project, and there are only four of them to do the job: Pete, who is confined to a wheel chair, and who is troubled because his dog Sparky is missing, Harry, an overweight boy, Julia, the "princess", and Lorrinda, a small girl with big ideas. With God's help, they succeed in their mission to clean the park, and solve two mysteries, one involving missing pets, one involving a mysterious box. During this story, they learn that by trusting God and by working together, they can overcome obstacles and achieve their goals.

This fast-paced mystery will appeal to young readers who will be drawn into this story by the struggles of Pete, Harry, Julia and Lorrinda to believe in themselves and their ability to accomplish their goals.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Vicki McCuiston

Librarian, Falls Christian Academy
Post Falls, Idaho

**Mary Duplex
The Rockhound Mystery
(Starburst)
Pacific Press, c1993
Paper \$7.95
Gr. 4 - 6**

How can a person get away from the house to solve a mystery when he has to help entertain a large group of relatives who drop in for a visit? This is part of Casey's dilemma in *The Rockhound Mystery*. Casey, his friend Myca, and his cousin Josie are friends with Mr. Beckerman, the elderly master rockhound who always has time to share his knowledge of rocks with them. Strange things start

happening after Mr. Beckerman's grandson, Hal, visits after a long absence. Suddenly there is talk of Mr. Beckerman making plans to move into a nursing home, of selling his home, antiques, and treasured rock collection. The children's plans to solve this mystery keep getting thwarted by Casey's mother's order to leave Mr. Beckerman alone so that he can enjoy visiting with his grandson, her requests for Casey to help entertain his numerous cousins who have dropped by for an unexpected family reunion, and by Hal's surprisingly unfriendly attitude. In this story, Casey, Myca, and Josie experience lessons in patience, compassion, and thinking about the needs of others before thinking about themselves.

The Rockhound Mystery would be a good choice, both from the enjoyment of solving the mystery, and from the lessons it teaches about friendship among peers, neighbors, and family members. In this story, the children value Mr. Beckerman's wisdom and friendship. Through this friendship, and their concern about him, they become exposed to some problems that we may face as we age.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Vicki McCuiston
Librarian, Falls Christian Academy
Post Falls, Idaho

Peter J. Dyck
The Great Shalom
Illustrated by Sherry Neidigh
Herald Press, c1990
Paper \$5.95
Gr. 3 - 6

"Who is he? What's he doing?" In *The Great Shalom*, the first in a series of hero books, Rabbit and all his woodland friends watch, from their hiding places, as the man with the ax destroys the forest and takes away their homes. Calling a meeting, Rabbit builds a sense of community among the animals and birds as each creature creates a scheme of how to drive the man away from their homes. But the man is ruthless. Animals and birds die and are injured as the man's determination drives him to clear the forest. A peaceful solution is suggested by rabbit to restore a relationship between the animals and man. Yet, sometimes harsh and violent means become involved in defending their causes.

In *Shalom at Last*, the second book in the series, Peter Dyck continues and completes the story of this quest for peace. In spite of Rabbit's belief in peace, Wolf feels the farmer will come back to cut more forest trees, destroying their homes, and should be taught a lesson. However, a peaceful approach finally

gains the farmer's friendship. Peter Dyck subtly weaves themes of conservation and other environmental concerns in these simple stories of make believe, where animals cooperate and communicate in their conflict with man.

In the first book, Dyck becomes a little specific in his approach to cruelty to animals and it appears he uses this book as a platform to support organizations like SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals). In the second book he strongly develops environmental issues, including pollution, toxic waste, and the EPA. At times, the depth of information goes a step beyond the simple storytelling format of the book. Although the books do not contain a high degree of action, adventure, or suspense, they do promote thoughts and possible discussions for class and home on environmental concerns. They may be used simply as fiction readers for enjoyment and as curriculum support for lessons on ecology and habitats.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 3

Cathie Coffin
Educational Consultant
Kirkland, Washington

Eleanor Estes
Ginger Pye
Harcourt Brace, 1990, c1951
Paper \$3.95
Gr. 4 - 6

Ginger Pye is a dog. Not an ordinary dog, mind you, a very intelligent dog. Jerry and Rachel Pye are the proud owners of Ginger Pye, and are deeply saddened when he turns up missing on Thanksgiving Day. Who has stolen Ginger Pye, because surely he was stolen? An "Unsavoury Character" with a mustard yellow hat is the main suspect. Life is more innocent and simple at the time of this story so even the "vilyun" as Rachel calls him, is not too unsavoury.

Ginger Pye is a reprint of a 1951 children's classic, which won the Newbery Medal. The author adds a lot of rabbit trails and sidelights to enhance her story. An advanced and dedicated reader would enjoy it best.

Other titles by this author:

Pinky Pye
The Moffats
Rufus M.
The Moffat Museum

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Jannet Hoeffner
Parent Volunteer, Prairie Baptist Church School
Prairie City, Oregon

Patricia Reilly Giff
Ronald Morgan Goes to Camp
Illustrated by Susanna Natti
Viking, 1995
Trade \$13.99
Gr. 1 - 3

Now that school is out Ronald Morgan has nothing to do until his friend, Michael, suggests going to camp. Ronald doesn't think he will be good at anything at camp but Billy is able to convince him to go. Ronald has a lot of fun with his friends as they go hiking, swimming, and telling scary stories together. Traditionally, on the last day of camp, medals are handed out to those who were the best at something but Ronald is sure he will not receive one. He's not good at anything. Or is he? The story doesn't seem to flow very smoothly. It is choppy and lacking in details but concludes with a satisfying ending.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Tonie Lagasca
Parent Volunteer, West Hills Christian School
Portland, Oregon

Barbara Diamond Goldin
The World's Birthday
Voyager Books/Harcourt Brace,
1990
Paper \$5.00
K - Gr. 2

When Daniel's father tells him that Rosh Hashanah is the celebration of the time when God created all things, Daniel begins to wonder how he can have a party for the world. "I would have a cake and burn candles and invite the whole world." Ignoring the nay saying of his sister, Naomi, and his own misgivings about how he will carry out his plan, Daniel remains faithful to his purpose and buys the biggest cake in the bakery complete with candles. But how will he invite the guest of honor? As Daniel creates a birthday card for the world and remembers how God created it, he is inspired by the solution to his problem. With his family and the baker following him, Daniel carries the cake "... into the night, close to the sky and the trees and the grass and the animals and the whole world." There they light the candles and sing "Happy Birthday World."

Author Barbara Diamond Goldin not only piques the reader's imagination but delightfully weaves the history and traditions of Rosh Hashanah into her story. Watercolor illustrations by Jeanette Winter faithfully depict

the costumes, traditions and symbols of this important Jewish holiday.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll

Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

Marcia Hoehne
A Place of My Own
(The Adventures of Jenna V.; 1)
Crossway Books, c1994
Paper \$4.99
Gr. 5 - 8

In *A Place of My Own*, by Marcia Hoehne, ten-year-old Jenna Vander Giffen longs to have a place of peace and quiet, which is not easy in a household of ten people. At her suggestion, the family builds a small house in the backyard as a place of respite. When the house is accidentally destroyed, Jenna goes through anger, self-examination, forgiveness, and healing. Jenna's emotional struggles are further complicated by her parent's decision to take in Sherry, a ten-year-old foster girl. The author has captured the inner tumult of a pre-teen girl's emotions. Jenna eventually finds a place of her own through a combination of her diary writings to Jesus, her mother's gentle guidance, and her family's love.

Jenna's vivid observations about her family and the world around her are insightful as well as striking. The Vander Giffens provide a lively look at a present day Christian family.

In the sequel, *A Pocket in My Heart*, Sherry is adopted into the Vander Giffen family. The author deals with this issue in a sensitive manner. Another aspect of the book is Jenna's desire to have a "secret side." Again her solution comes from her relationship with her earthly parents and her heavenly Father. The author handles well the issues of rebellion, disobedience, and accountability.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Pam Webb

Free Lance Writer, Volunteer Librarian
House of the Lord Christian Academy
Oldtown, Idaho

Marcia Hoehne
The Fairy Tale Friend
(The Adventures of Jenna V.; 3)
Crossway Books, c1994
Paper \$4.99
Gr. 3 - 6

Eleven-year-old Jenna and her large extended family arrive to spend the summer at her grandparents' cottage by the lake. Jenna is fascinated by the reclusive young woman,

Maralissa Rose, who lives in the cottage next door. Jenna is determined to meet the beautiful fairy tale princess in the flowing white dress. She knows they'll have a lot in common. But how can she get away from all the other children so she can go to the cottage alone?

The happy vacation is shattered when Grandfather has a heart attack and dies. This is especially traumatic for Jenna who wanted to tell her grandfather about God but hesitated too long. Jenna is happy when Maralissa accepts her overtures of friendship. However, while reading her Bible, Jenna realizes she should tell Maralissa about God. The thought is too scary.

The plot of *The Fairy Tale Friend* is a little slow. It takes four chapters to get to the theme of the book: how children cope with death and the possibility of having a loved one go to hell. The story gives frank Christian answers to troubling questions about heaven and hell. It emphasizes the need to follow the biblical injunction to take the good news of the Gospel to those around us. Author Marcia Hoehne has done especially well in allowing Jenna to reach out to Maralissa even though frightened and embarrassed to talk about her faith. Through the deaths of her grandfather and Maralissa Rose, Jenna learns that even her feeble attempts to share Christ can bear fruit and win souls.

The clues that let an adult know that Maralissa is not well may be lost on a young reader. Therefore, her death may be quite unexpected. This would be a good book for a parent and child to read together.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Myrtlema Pittman Crane

Freelance Writer, Editor, Speaker
Alderwood Manor, Washington

Jo Hoestlandt
Star of Fear, Star of Hope
Illustrated by Johanna Kang
Walker, 1995
Trade \$15.95
Reinf., \$16.85
Gr. 2 - 5

The scene is France during the early 40's. The Germans have invaded and Jews are being persecuted. Against this background, we meet Helen and Lydia. Their days were filled with school, play, and each other. When Lydia's mother sewed a gold star on Lydia's jacket, Helen only sees a "pretty star." She senses the star causes some distress but doesn't understand why, so promptly forgets about it. When Lydia gets permission to spend the night at Helen's for her ninth birthday, Helen is overjoyed.

It's July 15, 1942, and the girls are telling scary stories in bed when they are interrupted by people coming up the stairs, one at a time, and knocking on the door across the hall. When Helen's parents get home from work, the girls tell them about the strangers. Helen's father finds a woman hiding on the stairs. She is hiding from Germans who are arresting Jews. When Lydia hears this she insists on being taken home. She leaves Helen a present, but Helen is so angry about being left on her birthday, she yells at Lydia. The next day when Helen sees Jews being herded down the street, she has her mom take her to find Lydia, but Lydia and her family are gone. Helen tells the story *Star of Fear, Star of Hope* as an old woman who is still looking for Lydia. Her appeal to anyone who may have seen or heard of Lydia will tug at your heart. The artwork by Johanna Kang is somber and adds to the feeling of loss and sadness.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Tonie Lagasca

Parent Volunteer, West Hills Christian School
Portland, Oregon

Marian Hostetler
We Knew Paul
Herald Press, 1992
Paper \$4.95
Gr. 4 - 8

Luke writes to Theophilus once again. This time he sends a collection of letters written by a variety of young people for Theophilus to share with his grandchildren (and us!). Each letter tells about a personal encounter with the apostle Paul. Arranged chronologically, these letters present a vivid biographical overview of a very colorful leader in church history. Writings about Saul include a tearful account by Simeon, Lazarus' nephew, and one by the son in the house where Ananias prayed for Saul. Later descriptions of Paul range from those of the young Timothy to those of a lame girl, the young man who fell from the window as Paul preached, and the son of a Jewish high priest.

While certain liberties are taken in *We Knew Paul* in order to produce complete and wellrounded reports, the details are plausible and have an air of authenticity. Marian Hostetler knows well the geographical and historical setting. She provides a warm and, at times, humorous insight into the life of Paul that does not detract from his ardor and devotion to Christ. Some of the additions could be controversial: baptism is described in more than one place as water being poured upon the head, and Paul's thorn in the flesh is identified as a headache. The reader will gain a clear perspective of the life of a Christian in the early

days of the church, as well as an idea of what true commitment involves.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Betty Venables
Principal/Teacher
Haines Christian School
Haines, Alaska

Dave and Neta Jackson
Abandoned on the Wild Frontier
(Trailblazer Books)
Bethany House, c1995
Paper \$4.99
Gr. 6 - 10

The Trailblazer Books are biographical fiction. In each story the authors present a period of time in the life of a well known Christian that illustrates their significant work and their heart. We get a compelling view through the eyes of a young person eleven to fifteen years of age. God's love and work are seen clearly through his servants, but these people are seen realistically. For example, Gladys Aylward in *Flight of the Fugitives*, is sometimes very anxious in the face of her struggles (who wouldn't be?); and in *The Chimney Sweep's Ransom*, "Mr. Wesley preached as loud in this small room as he did at the town gate!"

The last chapter in each book gives an account of the person's life; and a paragraph before the first chapter explains where this story parted from the actual facts. Often the character whose viewpoint we follow is fiction, or the specifics of what happened to him or her are created, but lifestyle and problems are based on common experiences at the particular time and place. Some events in the life of the central figure are consolidated into a shortened time span.

Culture and setting are well developed. They are frequently portrayed with vocabulary from the native peoples, like the "Amma" (mother) in *The Hidden Jewel*, Amy Carmichael; or through maps and geographical information, as in *Escape from the Slave Traders*, David Livingston and *Spy for the Night Riders*, Martin Luther.

Each account takes a biblical or spiritual theme, such as the "give us this day our daily bread" of George Muller in *The Bandit of Ashley Downs*, or the "Oh, Lord, I'm goin' to hold steady on to You, and You've got to see me though," of Harriet Tubman in *Listen to the Whippoorwill*. The themes are developed in subtle ways, not preachy or moralistic.

The pain and violence inherent in life are referred to in a realistic, but non-offensive manner. The hanging of Adriaen's mother in

The Betrayer's Fortune, Menno Simons, actually happened, as well as her incredible letters of faith written to her son. The suffering of Adoniram and Ann Judson in *Imprisoned in the Golden City* are heart-breaking, but also faith-building when one sees how God used the work of their hands. These instances of man's inhumanity to man are all accurate historically.

These books are well worth reading. Young people will be drawn into each one because they can identify with the main character and there is plenty of action. God can teach magnificent lessons through the lives of his people, such as D. L. Moody, in *Danger on the Flying Trapeze*: "If this world is gonna be reached for Christ, it's gotta be done by men and women of average talent."

Other titles in this series:

Attack in the Rye Grass
Kidnapped by River Rats
Shanghai'd to China
The Queen's Smuggler
Trial-by-Poison

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Belcher
Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

Madeleine L'Engle
Dance in the Desert
Illustrated by Symeon Shimin
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1988,
c1969
Paper \$6.95
Trade, \$14.95
K - Gr. 6

The desert is filled with terror, from the burning sands of the day to the creatures that lurk in the shadows at night. Yet, on this one special night, the night the Holy Family had to flee into Egypt from King Herod, we see the beauty of possibilities presented in an inspiring allegory.

The language flows with rhythm and grace that bring the reader into a dance of worship and awe by God's creatures. The illustrations are stunning and fill the pages with the feel of all that happened on the edge of desert campfires.

A unicorn and dragon are included in this allegory of all creatures giving homage to the Babe, but they do not distract or intrude into the message of reverence presented. *Dance in the Desert* could open great discussions with students of any age.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Mary McKinney
Freelance Writer and Teacher
Port Orchard, Washington

Astrid Lindgren
A Calf for Christmas
Illustrated by Marit Tornqvist
R&S Books, c1991
Trade \$13.95
Gr. 2 - 5

It is just before Christmas in Sweden. Johan is a boy whose family cow has died and his family cannot afford a new one. Johan is mad at God for not protecting their cow and for spending so much time watching over their rich neighbor, Peter Jonsson's cows. On the day Johan is angry with God, Peter Jonsson is in town drinking and picking up his new calf. On the sleigh ride home from town, Peter Jonsson falls asleep. He wakes up to the sound of his new calf bellowing and in his delirium he thinks it's the devil. He vows never to drink again and throws the calf out of the sleigh. Johan finds the calf and assumes it's a gift from God. When Johan and his father go to Peter Jonsson's to buy milk and inquire about the calf, they learn the truth. However, Peter Jonsson loves to make children happy and allows Johan to keep the calf.

Well written and beautifully illustrated, *A Calf for Christmas* shows God's love in many different ways. God does love Johan and his family, no matter what Johan thinks. God's redemption and love for all is seen through the neighbor. This story could evoke discussion on many topics. Too long and questionable subject matter with the neighbor drinking for early self-readers to try by themselves. The cow eating the nail is described as "killing herself" and there is some talk of death as related to the cow at the beginning. This may be too intense for some children. Very detailed exquisite paintings offer the reader a sense of what a Swedish farm would have been like long ago.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Elizabeth Coleman
Freelance Writer
Tumwater, Washington

Mark R. Littleton
Winter Thunder
(The Crista Chronicles; 2)
Harvest House, c1992
Paper \$3.99
Gr. 3 - 6

This is a series of six books about Crista Mayfield, a twelve-year-old girl who lives with her father. She has some unusual adventures as well as day-to-day responsibilities with school,

baby-sitting, and tutoring. Crista becomes involved in situations that test her faith and cause her to mature in her Christian walk. With the recent death of her mother, Crista has become the main cook for herself and her father who is a doctor in their small, lakeside community. After school, she has a job babysitting and tutoring a younger girl until her parents come home from work. Her friends on the lake include a boy her age who lives with his grandparents, a young couple with newborn twins, and a retired couple who let Crista and her friends come over and ride their horses. Crista tries to share her faith with all her friends and help them in various situations such as coming up with ways to earn money, catching thieves, and once even helping to capture an escaped circus bear. The adventures are realistic and are often mysteries which Crista helps solve.

These would be good books to read aloud to children as well as have them read themselves. The action would hold their interest and the ongoing relationships with Crista and her friends as well as her growing faith in God include good values and important lessons.

Titles in this series:

- Robbers on Rock Road; 3
- Escape of the Grizzly; 4
- Danger on Midnight Trail; 5
- Friends No Matter What; 6

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Janet Hicks

Librarian, Maple Valley Christian School
Renton, Washington

Max Lucado
The Song of the King
Illustrated by Toni Goffe
Crossway Books, c1995
Trade \$12.99
PS - Gr. 7

Max Lucado writes a story of three knights seeking to win the hand of a beautiful princess. The king's son explains their test is a journey to the king's castle by way of Hemlock, an evil forest where sly creatures called Hopenots live. The knights could be guided by an ivory flute played by the king. Only the king and the prince possessed this type of flute. One knight, Carlisle, was known for his strength. Alon was known for his speed. Cassidon was known for his wisdom. Each knight would be able to choose one companion to go with them. They rode off on their journey. Many days later two figures could be seen coming from the forest.

The king commanded they be brought in without anyone knowing who they were. A feast was prepared. That evening, the king played his flute and the surviving knight, wise Cassidon, followed the sound of the flute to the king and bowed before him. Cassidon told of his journey through the forest and how the Hopenots played flute imitations. The king asked how Cassidon had heard his song. Cassidon explained it was because he chose the right companion, the prince with the flute. The prince played his flute until Cassidon knew his song in his heart. The message in the story is that if children learn the "song of the King", and follow Him, God will bring them through problems and temptations.

The Song of the King is beautifully illustrated by Toni Goffe, in what appears to be watercolor and ink. The scenes he chooses are simple, yet interesting. Children in elementary grades will enjoy reading or listening to this story. *The Song of the King* could effectively be used as a discussion starter for the topic of following the Lord's will.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Anita Utley

Administrator, Faith Christian School
Mead, Washington



Patricia Polacco
Pink and Say
Philomel Books, 1994
Trade \$15.95
Gr. 4 - Adult

Author and artist Patricia Polacco reaches into her own family tree for the Civil War story of her great great grandfather, Sheldon Russell Curtis, "Say". As a mere fifteen year old Union soldier, the wounded and nearly dead Say is rescued by a young black Union soldier, Pinkus Aylee, "Pink". The two young soldiers become fast friends as they recuperate in hiding at the home of Pinks' mother sweet Moe Moe Bay. It is here that Say understands first hand what it means for a southern slave to fight in the Civil War. It is also here that Say has to confront his fear of returning to the War. Finally, as Pink and Say try to make their way back to their units, they are captured by Confederate soldiers and imprisoned at Andersonville prison, where Pink is executed and Say survives to return and raise a family in Michigan. It is to the memory of Pinkus Aylee who saved Say's life and gave his own that Say passed this story down to his children and grandchildren. And it is to the memory of Pinkus Aylee that Patricia Polacco has written *Pink and Say*.

Published as a picture story book, this stirring story might easily be missed by the junior high crowd, and yet it is on these very students, in their study of the Civil War, that this story can have its greatest impact. This is a tremendous story of brotherly love which should not be missed.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll

Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

Glen Robinson
The Mysterious Treasure Map
Illustrated by Mark Ford
(The Shoebox Kids)
Pacific Press, c1995
Paper \$5.95
Gr. 2 - 4

After finding a newspaper clipping in an old reading primer, Chris starts on an adventure that takes him and his friends on a search for hidden treasure. Following the map proves to be harder than they anticipated due to changes in geography and population. Even the river changed its course after the flood of 1911.

At the same time, Chris is also involved in a search for heavenly treasure. As Chris and his friends follow the clues on the treasure map, Chris wrestles with the value of water baptism. Chris feels confused whenever he tries to make up his mind. Is baptism really a Pearl of Great Price or is it dumb as his friend, Ryan, says it is? Does he really need to be baptized or is it for wimps?

When Chris has a nightmare about the Rapture, his mom explains what water baptism really means in a way that kids can understand. Seeing the actions of his unsaved friend, Ryan, compared to the actions of his saved friends helps Chris see the truth. The Shoebox Kids eventually find the treasure, but Chris finds a better treasure in his heart.

Jerry D. Thomas, who wrote the original Shoebox Kids stories, said it best in his forward when he wrote, "Reading about Shoebox Kids is more than just fun--it's learning what the Bible really means." The black-and-white drawings by Mark Ford are well done, and the cover art by Stephanie Britt will create interest in *The Mysterious Treasure Map*.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

The Case of the Secret Code
Gr. 3 - 5

In the second book of the Shoebox Kids, Willie gets coded messages on his computer. The mysterious person behind the messages uses the handle, g.o.d. Is God really sending Willie

messages or is it someone who knows a lot about him? The reader, along with Willie, will learn a lot about computers, modems, codes, and, best of all, prayer. The reader will also enjoy trying to decode the messages with Willie. As the second in a series, *The Case of the Secret Code* stands well on its own.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Tonie Lagasca
Parent Volunteer, West Hills Christian School
Portland, Oregon

Cynthia Rylant
Mr. Putter and Tabby Pick the Pears
Illustrated by Arthur Howard
Harcourt Brace, c1995
Trade \$11.00
K - Gr. 3

When dreams of pear jelly are overshadowed by a problem of cranky legs, an inventive alternative is discovered--by accident.

The story line of this "I can read" book will cause beginning readers to choose it over and over again.

Tabby, the cat, is always present, but when Mr. Putter's neighbor and her dog, Zeke, come by, the excitement escalates. Even though Mr. Putter cannot pick his pears, he enjoys what he can do. The story ends even better than he had planned. It could only happen with neighbors working together. This would be a good story to use with a discussion of what a good neighbor is.

Cynthia Rylant has used a simple plot with familiar things to weave an exciting adventure. The illustrations convey action and creativity on every page.

Preschool and kindergarten children would enjoy hearing *Mr. Putter and Tabby Pick the Pears* read to them. It can also be used to encourage a student to read by himself.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Marie Knaupp
Retired Librarian
Monmouth, Oregon

Maxine Schur
Day of Delight : A Jewish Sabbath
in Ethiopia
Illustrated by J. Brian Pinkney
Dial Books for Young Readers,
c1994
Trade \$15.99
Gr. 3 - Adult

This story is told through the eyes of an Ethiopian Jewish boy, Menelik. Menelik describes the work that must be done each day in his village and how the routine changes in preparation for Sabbath the Day of Delight. Everyone in the village, no matter how small, has a job to do and knows that others are depending on him to complete it. Menelik takes his first try at pulling the metal from the fire and pounding it into a perfect long cool curve. We see each member of the family as they progress through the day. Then as the sun sets all work stops and there is peace. The Sabbath has come. The book concludes with the Sabbath service in the synagogue and looking forward to the promise of another Day of Delight.

Maxine Rose Schur has created a good balance of blending unfamiliar vocabulary with descriptive words within the text. The unfamiliar words are included in a glossary and shown with italics within text. The illustrations are captivating. Brian Pinkney uses a scratchboard technique combined with bold colors to create huts that almost jump off the page. This is subject matter that is not very familiar to many students but is worth learning more about.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Marcia Snyder
Librarian, Valley Christian School
Missoula, Montana

Hilda Stahl
The Secret Tunnel Mystery
(Best Friends; 16)
Crossway Books, 1992
Paper \$3.99
Gr. 4 - 6

Take a quartet of sixth-grade girls who are best friends. Add a 150-year-old Michigan country house with a secret passageway. Mix in the sensitive social issue of domestic violence, and you have the plot of *The Secret Tunnel Mystery*, authored by Hilda Stahl. Roxie Shoulders, an unlikely central character, is joined by her school buddies Chelsea McCrea, Kathy Aber, and Hannah Shigwam on an odd job given to their group, "King's Kids." They are to help pack the belongings of the uncle of Roxie's new stepgrandpa, because the old house has been sold. The elements of mystery surface rapidly:

did Roxie see a face in the upper window of the deserted house? Did she hear a noise in the far wall of the closet? The girls set out to find answers.

Stahl limits the time frame of her book to a frenetic weekend. She ties up the ends of the sub-plots in fine fashion, although the occasional detail leaves the adult reader questioning the supervision of the girls and the power exercised by them. It is a quasi-formula book with twists and turns of the plot seemingly in every paragraph. Although writing from the omniscient viewpoint, Stahl has a few surprises up her literary sleeve. The veracity of the book suffers in dealing with the matter of domestic violence. The author portrays the villain as a man with an uncontrollable temper to the point of assaulting the main character. The resolution of the major conflict offers a solution for the antagonist, but leaves his family in limbo. This non-resolution dilutes the good that has been carefully nurtured throughout the writing: the clear definition of friendship and the strength of both independent and corporate prayer.

Children, particularly girls, ages nine-to-eleven would identify with the protagonists. The characters of Roxie, Chelsea, Kathy, and Hannah are well-defined with contrasting personalities and are potential role models for young readers. This series is a good one to interest the "non-reader," a Christian answer to books like *The Baby-Sitter's Club* series.

Other titles in this series:

- Chelsea and the Outrageous Phone Bill; 1
- Big Trouble for Roxie; 2
- Kathy's Baby-sitting Hassle; 3
- Hannah and the Special 4th of July; 4
- Roxie and the Red Rose Mystery; 5
- Kathy's New Brother; 6
- A Made-over Chelsea; 7
- No Friends for Hannah; 8
- Tough Choices for Roxie; 9
- Chelsea's Special Touch; 10
- Mystery at Bellwood Estate; 11
- Hannah and the Daring Escape; 12
- Hannah and the Snowy Hideaway; 13
- Chelsea and the Alien Invasion; 14
- Roxie's Mall Madness; 15

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 3

Su Hagerty
Freelance Writer
Issaquah, Washington

Jerry D. Thomas
Detective Zack and the Secret of
Noah's Flood
(Detective Zack)
Pacific Press, c1992
Paper \$5.95
Gr. 4 - 6

High interest-low ability

Readers in grades four through six who like action will find it along with many scientific facts in *Detective Zack and the Secret of Noah's Flood*. Zack tells the story of a family trip west and the discoveries he and his family make about geology.

During a family discussion which brings out the idea that not all people believe the biblical account of the Flood, Zack's father mentions the family is going on a trip to Utah to gather background information for a class he will be teaching about the Flood. The reader is given information on dinosaurs, geology, and ways of dating geological finds. Correct pronunciations of some words are given in parenthesis. Zack seems too likable at first but his enthusiasm is contagious as is his non-stop style of telling the story. All of us know or have met a "Zack."

The cover art resembles novels of the 30's. The layout intersperses story and pages from Zack's notebook with his thoughts. The line drawings resemble coloring book pictures. This won't detract from the story for the younger reader, and they will learn many things to tie into science classes while having their own beliefs reaffirmed. The illustrations drawn to look like photographs in a scrapbook were more successful.

The five other books in the series answer questions in similar ways.

These could be used in the classroom during science classes to initiate discussion. While the Bible needs no proof, it is reassuring to find scientific and historic evidence of events told in it.

Other titles in this series:

- Detective Zack and the Red Hat Mystery
- Detective Zack and the Mystery at Thunder Mountain
- Detective Zack and the Secrets in the Sand
- Danger at Dinosaur Camp
- Detective Zack and the Missing Manger Mystery

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Leslie Greaves Radloff
 Teacher/ Librarian
 Emanuel Lutheran School (WELS)
 W. St. Paul, Minnesota

Richard Thompson
Who
Illustrated by Martin Springett
Orca, c1993
Trade \$14.95
K - Gr. 2

Who is a myth of three young owls who are named after mighty things in the forest: Night, Moon, and Tomorrow. The owlets are given gifts at birth that reflect their names, but as the owls grow they become very conceited and think themselves much better than they are. Because of this, they are forced to give up their gifts and even their names at the end of the story, and so become just ordinary owls. Although the first page of this book is beautifully and intriguingly written, the phrasing in the rest of the story is a bit beyond the age of the children that would read it. The illustrations, though creatively done, tend to be strange and complicated. Night, Moon and Tomorrow, the beings the baby owls are named after, are presented as forest gods with power and dominion over the forest.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 3

Sharon Westra
 Librarian, Mt. Vernon Christian School
 Mt. Vernon, Washington

Esther Loewen Vogt
Turkey Red
Kindred Press, 1986
Paper \$4.95
Gr. 1 - 8

This series of children's stories describes the life of a family of immigrant Mennonites who came from Russia to Kansas late in the 1800's. Their struggles to adjust are both charming and informative. The author, Esther Loewen Vogt, paints a realistic picture of life in a pioneer community and doesn't gloss over the difficulties the characters face, either with others of their own faith or with outsiders who don't understand their life style.

The first book, *Turkey Red*, centers on the Friesen family's first years in America. Everything goes wrong. Snakes terrorize, Indians attack, tornadoes flatten crops and destroy buildings, and prairie fires spoil their crop of Turkey Red, the wonderful wheat seed they brought from Russia. But neighbors help, God delivers, and they persevere. They are good farmers and succeed in spite of difficulties.

Martha Freisen, the central character, struggles to understand many "whys." Her big brother, Jake, is unhappy with Mennonite strictures and, though needed desperately, leaves home. Martha makes friends with a girl from a nearby

town who is not Mennonite. Why can't she wear pretty lacy dresses like her friend? She meets a friendly Indian who saves her from several dangers. In her adventures, she learns God cares about her and listens to her prayers. She grows to understand God's ways aren't always what she would prefer, but they are best for her and her family.

Children of grade-school age will find this story enjoyable because of the struggles of the family against nature and of Martha's learning the lessons God gives her. They will identify with her as she experiences the inner problems all children face as they grow up.

The other books in the series continue the adventures and growth of Martha and her family. The characters are lifelike, with imperfections that endear them to the reader. The first two books, illustrated by Seymour Fleishman, have pen-and-ink drawings scattered throughout the book. They add greatly to the appeal of the book for children. The third book is illustrated by another artist, and the pictures aren't as well done. If readers are acquainted with the other two books, they will already have a mind's eye rendering of the characters involved.

This series is suitable for Christian school libraries or families looking for wholesome, entertaining books for their children. Without preaching, the books teach children much about God and his provision.

Other titles in this series:

- Harvest Gold
- Purple Prairie

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Harriette Richards
 Teacher, Manchester Christian Academy
 Port Orchard, Washington

John White
The Tower of Geburah
(The Archives of Anthropos; 1)
InterVarsity Press, 1978
Paper \$10.99
Gr. 4 - 8

Reminiscent of C. S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *The Tower of Geburah* by John White takes three modern Canadian children on a journey to Anthropos, another country where a battle rages between good and evil. Lisa, separated from her two brothers, meets the rightful king of Anthropos, Kardia, and saves him from the evil jinn. In the process, she is captured. During her trials, Lisa learns to distrust the evil sorcerer and to trust

Gaal, the Shepherd. Gaal sets her free and makes her clean inside and out.

Meanwhile, her brothers, Wesley and Kurt, are trying to find and rescue Lisa. They join with King Kardia and an army of humans, dwarves, and wolves to fight the evil in Anthropos. They, too, learn of Gaal, the Shepherd. Gaal sends Lisa back to them, but the children's adventures are not yet over. They must go on a journey to retrieve important treasures so the army of good can overcome the army of evil.

Through the hardships of their journey, Lisa demonstrates her trust in Gaal. Wesley comes to believe in him, too. Kurt, though, is deceived by the dwarf sent to accompany them and joins the forces of darkness. Despite Kurt's attempts to foil Wesley's and Lisa's plans, the two succeed in finding the treasures. Kurt eventually realizes he's been wrong and turns to Gaal himself. The children make it back to the battlefield in time for the treasures to be used to save Anthropos. Afterward, the three are returned home to Canada.

The Tower of Geburah, book one in The Archives of Anthropos, is an allegory that contrasts our lives with and without God. This fantasy's main characters provide a mirror to remind us how selfish we humans can be.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Sue Ford
Freelance Writer
Renton, Washington

Eric E. Wiggin
Maggie : Life at The Elms
(Maggie's World; 1)
Harvest House, c1994
Paper \$3.99
Gr. 4 - 6

Middle-grade readers who enjoy Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories will like Maggie Ridlon, a twelve-year old red-head who has come to live with her Grandfather Fuller at the Elms in Maine. Maggie is unhappy with just about everything: the father she never knew was killed at Gettysburg shortly before she was born; her mother has remarried; her step-father has a son who can't stand Maggie's dog. Coping with so many changes in her life has put Maggie at odds with everything.

Living at the logging camp in the Maine of over a hundred years ago and meeting people very different from herself, Maggie begins to realize how to appreciate differences in people and to put her trust in the Lord.

Though somewhat over-written with details, *Maggie : Life at The Elms* is historically

accurate. Wiggin has described setting and place with knowledge and understanding. If more details than the reader might want are included, those areas can be skimmed without missing the story. Maggie is likable, a feisty, inquisitive, perceptive pre-adolescent who realizes that not only can she teach others but learn from them as well. Marie, the young French-Canadian daughter of the lumber camp cook, and Maggie become friends. This friendship is not without its up and downs. Marie is sensitive to the fact that she is part Abenaki and feels prejudice from many of the Anglo loggers and townspeople. Through their friendship Maggie gains a better understanding of herself and others. The two girls converse bi-lingually and here a French dictionary was helpful though not necessary. Younger readers will probably skip over the phrases. Grandpa Fuller's philosophy comes through as the story unfolds: trust the Lord, care for the world as good stewards, love one another.

Subsequent novels follow Maggie as she becomes a teacher in a one room school and falls in love. In each story the discussion of religious beliefs is a natural outgrowth of a conversation and not contrived. Readers who enjoyed Catherine Marshall's *Christy* and books by Norma Johnston should enjoy these as well. The covers leave the reader wondering about Maggie's age and the historical era; once past the covers readers will find an enjoyable story.

Other titles in the series:

Maggie's Homecoming; 2
Maggie's Secret Longing; 3

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Leslie Greaves Radloff
Teacher/ Librarian
Emanuel Lutheran School (WELS)
W .St. Paul, Minnesota

VeraLee Wiggins
Shelby's Big Prayer
(The Shelby Shayne Series; 1)
Pacific Press, c1994
Paper \$8.32
Gr. 4 - 7

Shelby, an eleven-year-old, begins a new life with her aunt, uncle, and an older cousin. The book begins with Shelby experiencing nightmares, as she deals with feelings of guilt in her mother's death and her father's earlier departure. Her aunt and uncle are warm, loving people who love Jesus and consistently envelop Shelby with their love, acceptance, and security. Along with their older daughter, they

form an example of the ideal family unit, something Shelby has never had. As a pre-teen, Shelby experiences the emotional turmoil of overcoming loneliness, starting a new school, meeting new people, and hoping for friends. Shelby has always dreamed of having a dog of her own, but her new family has a new house and a hurt of their own to overcome regarding pets. In this first book, Shelby learns to pray for her problems and needs.

Shelby's Best Friend

This book opens with Shelby's first day of owning a new puppy, a small black Pomeranian named Princess Ebony, quickly nicknamed Bunky. Owning a puppy involves constant care and training. Amidst this, Shelby finds herself answering many questions. As she learns priorities in meeting her pet's needs, friends' needs, and family's needs, Shelby learns by her aunt and uncle's example to rely on God in dealing with each situation.

Shelby's Big Scare

Shelby continues to become more and more secure in her aunt and uncle's household. Still, she faces choices and fears. Should she let her aunt and uncle adopt her, or would that be untrue to the memory of her mother? Should she continue showing her dog in shows, or should she spay her to eliminate unwanted puppies? While Shelby comes close to losing her beloved puppy to a thief and continues to confront other problems, her aunt and uncle help her seek God's help. A short "Mom and Daughter" talk deals with "Love Waits," focusing on marriage, sex, and AIDS, using tasteful, moral, biblical concepts.

Books in The Shelby Shayne Series, although a continuing story, can be read individually. The author understands the emotional ups and downs of the pre-teen while providing an excellent example of good family values. Any of these books would make a positive contribution to a school, class, or home library.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Paula Stewart Marks
Principal, Morning Star Christian School
Bend, Oregon

VeraLee Wiggins
Julius, the Perfectly Pesky Pet
Parrot
Pacific Press, c1994
Paper \$5.95
PS Gr. 5

VeraLee Wiggins, the author of *Julius*, certainly has a first hand knowledge of parrots! Her story of Mitch Sinclair and his perfectly pesky pet parrot is riotously realistic. Mitch appears at his own front door, delighted to receive a

cage and a new pet. But in the middle of the night the bird, Julius, opens his cage. He chews scallops in Mom's beautiful dining table and destroys her favorite lampshade! The story develops hilariously as the pesky pet imitates voices on the phone, steals the strawberry crop from a garden, is lost several times, and makes everyone both love and hate him. What will he ruin next, and how will he get into more trouble?

Skillfully woven into the story are Christian principles that Mitch applies in his everyday walk. Yet he is a real boy, with fun and problems a part of his personality. Any child, even older preschoolers, will love this story with its animal character, his "master," Mitch, and Mitch's mom. Mary Rumford's cartoon like illustrations, both jacket and interior, fit the humorous tone. The sequel, *Julius Again*, tackles a subject children often have to deal with in our culture. Mitch's mom, a widow, is thinking of marrying again, and Mitch isn't sure he would like that. The story is gentle in its handling of the subject, yet just as delightful and entertaining as the first book.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Harriette Richards
Teacher, Manchester Christian Academy
Port Orchard, Washington

Barbara Williams
Titanic Crossing
Dial Books for Young Readers,
1995
Trade \$14.99
Library Ed., \$14.89
Gr. 6 - 8

Thirteen-year-old Albert Trask feels he must take his father's place, since his father's death, and look after his mother and younger sister. Even before boarding the Titanic there is friction between his mother and Uncle Clay, who arrives to escort them home to Washington. Albert's task as a peace-keeper between the adults while trying to keep his sister, Virginia, from acting spoiled is not an easy one. He is torn between having to act and think like an adult while wanting friends of his own age. Being an artist is his secret goal. The story climaxes as the Titanic hits an iceberg and begins to sink. Albert is caught between seeing his sister safe on a lifeboat or hunting for his mother and uncle. Later, Albert learns of his mother's and Uncle Clay's deaths. He becomes willing to give in to his domineering grandmother on some points in order to put his sister's welfare and security first.

Overall, *Titanic Crossing* is well done, using actual facts to create an historical fiction story

that holds the reader's attention. Some slang is used in a couple of places.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Dorcas Walker
Freelance Writer
Jamestown, Tennessee

Mary Woodbury
The Invisible Polly McDoodle
Coteau Books, c1994
Paper \$4.95
Gr. 3 - 6

Twelve year old Polly feels she is invisible to her parents. They are busy with their jobs and her brother's hockey games. Polly is facing a change in schools. As a budding artist, she would like to go to the one across town that has more art programs.

When she leaves her jacket on the bus, her parents feel she isn't responsible enough to go to a school further away from home.

Polly searches for ways to show them she can be responsible. One thing she does is help her neighbor Isabel, a retired art teacher, walk her dog. Isabel is also letting Polly use her studio to paint a picture for her parents' Christmas present.

Isabel shows Polly some valuable gems she owns and lends Polly her heliotrope rabbit necklace. When Polly loses her keys and Isabel's apartment is robbed, Polly wonders if her irresponsibility caused the burglary.

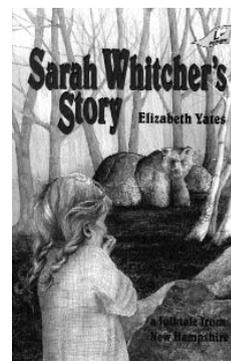
When other robberies occur in their neighborhood, Polly and her friend Kyle decide to try to solve the crimes.

With help from the police and some quick thinking of their own, they are finally able to figure out that some other neighbors had intimidated a Latin American refugee into helping them commit the burglaries. In the end, Polly and her parents come to a better understanding of one another, and the neighbors in the apartment building also develop closer friendships.

Polly's relationship with her parents improves. There is a mention of Kyle's Dungeons and Dragons books and of growing marijuana.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 3

Toni MacAdam
Librarian, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington



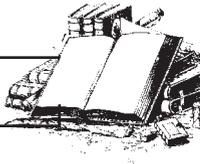
Elizabeth Yates
Sarah Whitcher's Story
Illustrated by Nora Spicer Unwin
Bob Jones University Press, c1994
Paper \$6.49
Gr. 3 - 5

Sarah Whitcher's Story is a gripping tale about little Sarah Whitcher who wanders away from her family's pioneer cabin in New Hampshire and gets lost. At first neighbors gather to help the family look for her, then strangers join the search as it goes into a second day. By the end of the third day despair begins to set in. The only clue they have, a child's footprint alongside that of a bear's, has not aided their search. Meanwhile, Sarah's adventures are told: how she spends her days, what she eats, and most importantly, how she is kept warm each night by a shaggy black bear which she believes to be her dog, Ollie. On the fourth day a stranger appears at the family cabin. He does not know the surrounding country-side, but has dreamed three times of finding the little girl and knows just where to look. He leads a neighbor to the spot where Sarah is sleeping. There is much rejoicing when Sarah is found.

This story is based on a true incident which the author, Elizabeth Yates, has researched. Elizabeth Yates has kept close to facts, but adds wonderful descriptions and realistic conversations so the reader can feel and see everything and empathize with Sarah and the other characters. Elizabeth Yates is a Newbery Medal Winner with her book *Amos Fortune, Free Man* and she has done an excellent job with *Sarah Whitcher's Story* as well. Christian faith, trust and prayer play an integral part of this story and when Sarah is found all the credit is given to God. Sarah's father never loses sight of the fact that God is in control. The reader will love the illustrations--they are finely detailed, yet simple black and white drawings and add to the attractive lay-out of this book.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Sharon Westra
Librarian, Mt. Vernon Christian School
Mt. Vernon, Washington



155.4
Ellen B. Senisi
Secrets
Dutton Children's Books, c1995
Trade \$9.99
PS - Gr. 2

"Typically, [preschool children] believe that a secret is anything that is whispered," writes family studies professor Carolyn Edwards in this book's afterword. Author and photographer Ellen B. Senisi sets out to enhance young children's understanding of what a secret is with a simply written text and color photographs that should serve as a good launching pad for discussion on the topic. Senisi talks about serious and silly secrets, secrets to keep, and other secrets that children may want to share. Some secrets the book portrays include: children planning a surprise party, a young girl watching two friends whisper about her, a boy learning his mom is having a baby, and children shown enjoying their own special thoughts and daydreams.

Secrets is a well-done presentation of a particular concept which should serve as a helpful aid for adults who want to explore this topic with children. Each page presents one particular situation, with minimal, yet effective, text and appealing photos of children enacting each scene. The book recognizes and affirms children's needs for growing autonomy and, at the same time, helps them to sort out when they may want to seek the counsel of a trusted adult. This particular book focuses on secrets of a lighter nature and does not touch upon more serious subjects such as sexual abuse, a frequently featured topic in other books about secrets.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Janet Smith
Freelance Writer
Latrobe, Pennsylvania

209
Deborah Morris
Real Kids, Real Adventures 3
Real Kids, Real Adventures 4
Broadman & Holman Publishers,
c1994
Paper \$5.99
Gr. 3 - 8

What's it like to be a hero? How does it feel to face fear with courage? In these true, short stories, young readers meet real people, just like themselves, and experience incredible adventures. In book three, Alex and his family are invited to help launch a hot air balloon. When all the preparations are complete, to his surprise, Alex is invited along for a ride. However, they attempt to land, the basket bumps the ground, knocking the pilot overboard and Alex is swept away, all alone in the balloon . . .

A runaway station wagon, with three small children, careens down a hillside and plunges into a rain swollen river. Two teens dive into the rushing water, attempting to rescue the children before the car sinks . . .

Twelve year old Brandon bravely enters a fire filled apartment in search of someone crying for help. Finding three young children hiding behind a bed, so frightened they won't move, Brandon struggles to rescue them from flames and smoke...

In book four, Melissa jumps and splashes in waist deep waves at the beach with her family during their vacation. Her fun suddenly turns to fear and panic as an eight foot shark attacks her leg and drags her through the salt water . . .

Shawn, working the night shift at Nordic Valley Ski Resort, daringly slips and slides along an icy, steel cable, forty feet above hard packed snow, trying to rescue a child dangling from her mother's grasp on a chair lift . . .

Eight-year-old Jolene finds herself driving her dad's eight ton truck over miles of snowy, mountain roads to get help when he is injured falling out of a tree . . .

Each collection is filled with suspense and excitement. These are wholesome, true to life stories where ordinary boys and girls become heroes. Young readers will be caught in the feelings of the real life drama of each adventure

and they will be captivated by these inspiring, incredible stories.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Cathie Coffin
Educational Consultant
Kirkland, Washington

220.6
Frances Blankenbaker
What the Bible Is All About for
Young Explorers
Regal Books, 1986
Trade, \$14.99
Paper \$9.99
Gr. 3 - 9

How does everything in the Bible fit together? This excellent resource answers this question wonderfully. It is based on the book *What the Bible is All About* by Dr. Henrietta Mears, and has a forward by Billy and Ruth Graham. The text begins with an overview of the Old and New Testaments, and then goes book by book, discussing major teachings and themes, tying them together into the overall theme of the redemptive plan of God. Material is presented in an exciting way, with a bit of an adventure motif, and cartoon representations of incidents and people.

Bible words and customs are explained. Recent archaeological finds are discussed with their relevance to the Bible text. Charts and diagrams, including time lines and maps, clarify the setting of significant events. Clear photographs of Bible lands today put the reader visually in context. A dictionary of Bible words makes the book a complete study guide in itself.

What the Bible Is All About for Young Explorers is both a book to read about the Bible and a resource for young people studying the Bible.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Belcher
Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

220.9

Mary Batchelor
The Children's Bible : In 365
Stories
Illustrated by John Haysom
Lion Publishing, 1985
Trade \$16.95
Gr. 1 - 6

The Children's Bible is a wonderful approach to Bible stories for children. From Genesis to Revelation, Bible facts are revealed in story form with authenticity. God gives Gideon victory in battle with only trumpets, torches, and jars. A beautiful queen risks her life to save God's people. A little boy's lunch becomes a picnic for thousands. Mary Batchelor has chosen these stories and others from creation in the Old Testament to the new heaven and earth of the New Testament not only because they are among the most exciting stories in the Bible, but also because they tell who God is and what he is like.

John Haysom's beautiful, colorful paintings illustrate each story. Listening young children will comprehend as they see the action in detailed artwork. Each selection's length is just right for one sitting. Children of reading ages will find the text simple, yet concise and complete in learning what God's Word teaches. This is an excellent resource for all home, church, and school libraries.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Cathie Coffin

Educational Consultant
Kirkland, Washington

221.9

Harry Araten
Two by Two
(Favorite Bible Stories)
Kar-Ben Copies, 1991
Paper \$13.95
PS - 4

Enjoy the journey from the animals' viewpoints as Jonathan Allen depicts their experience on Noah's Ark through action-packed pages of imaginative illustrations. The ocean cruise bustles with life as the animals entertain themselves endlessly with activities such as comedy shows, "Ring the Rhinoceros," and the "Giraffe Slide."

Allen presents the animals with human characteristics displaying attitudes of jealousy, comparison, and lack of cooperation. Some animals play the role of peacemaker. Noah sets up a weekly competition between the animals in which they compare their physical characteristics. The animals boast of their superiority over each other. Though humorous, the underlying message lacks the Christian

attitude of acceptance and valuing the uniqueness of each individual.

If read for light entertainment, the book has merit. Children will love the colorful illustrations, capturing over eighty animals in motion and their humorous conversations.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Dian Wesley

Vice Principal, Wesleyan Christian School
Vashon Island, Washington

221.9

Malcolm Day
The Ancient World of the Bible
Viking, 1994
Trade \$19.99
Gr. 3 - Adult

This beautifully illustrated book retells the story of the Israelites' journey to the Promised Land. From Adam and Eve to the exiled Jews returning "home" during Persian rule, Malcolm Day portrays epic accounts with spectacular illustrations, detailed maps, and intriguing historical data. Toys given to children of Egyptian royalty; a comparison of Aramaic, Hebrew, and Roman alphabets; and a diagram depicting the Israelites' farming year are just a few of the fascinating details illustrated. These details make the biblical events come alive because they provide the reader with a realistic understanding of how people lived prior to Christ's time on earth.

Anyone interested in learning more about the events and customs of civilizations during Bible times will enjoy reading *The Ancient World of the Bible*.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Dian Wesley

Vice Principal, Wesleyan Christian School
Vashon Island, Washington

225.9

Eve MacMaster
God's Family
(Story Bible Series; 1)
Herald Press, 1987
Paper \$5.95
Act Bk, \$3.00
Gr. 3 - Adult

True to her word, Eve MacMaster has written a Bible story book that is "complete, without tacked on morals or denominational interpretation."

Each of the ten books in the series retells Bible stories on a child's level, yet does not water down the message of the gospel, does not go into great detail, but covers the important facts.

Readers will laugh, cry, and be blessed by the stories because they are true to the Word.

MacMaster is an expert at weaving historical fact into stories by describing beliefs and practices of the Jews and other nationalities throughout the books. This is done at the story's end or beginning so as not to interrupt the narrative as it unfolds from the Bible. Maps help the reader identify locations mentioned in the stories.

She includes dialogue, making reading this series aloud natural. Book Four includes an historical look at Hebrew poetry in Psalms and how God used it with his people. Five Psalms are included.

Chapters flow smoothly together. The stories make it clear that the men and women who feared and obeyed God were honored by him. She handles delicate situations (Joseph and Potiphar's wife, for example) in a way appropriate for young readers.

Readers will not miss the constant theme of how the Israelites failed time after time and how God forgave them. Identification with our Christian lives is seen in the story of the Jews and their wanderings. In spite of constant ups and downs, God always raised up someone who would keep his plan for the people in their view. Of particular interest may be Book 7 that covers God comforting his people during seventy years of captivity. The exiles preferred to listen to other prophets (not Jeremiah) who encouraged them to believe they would soon be on their way home.

Black ink drawings add interest, and chapters are short. Activity books accompany each title. Books 17 are Old Testament and 810 are New Testament.

Other titles in this series:

God Rescues His People; 2

God Gives the Land; 3

God's Chosen King; 4

God's Wisdom and Power; 5

God's Justice; 6

God Comforts His People; 7

God Sends His Son; 8

God's Suffering Servant; 9

God Builds His Church; 10

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Carolyn Hearing

Teacher

Raytown, Missouri

226.8

Helen Caswell
Parable of the Mustard Seed
 (Growing in Faith Library)
 Abingdon Press, 1992
 Paper \$5.95
 PS - Gr. 2

This parable is illustrated by the story of a small boy who plants a mustard seed, waits for it to grow, takes care of it, and watches it grow into a large plant. The small seed is compared to the importance of our faith in God.

The well done illustrations and simple text are easy for young children to understand and for beginning readers to read themselves. The use of other children in these books makes them appealing for children to read.

Parable of the Leaven

These beautiful illustrations and simple text follow the process of baking bread. All the steps, from the trip to the store to buy flour and yeast, to final enjoyment of warm bread, are included. The last page compares the yeast to the Kingdom of God as Jesus taught. The little girl who does all the baking makes it interesting for children to read and the parable of the leaven is brought to life so it's easier to understand.

Parable of the Lost Sheep

This story of a shepherd boy and his responsibility for a herd of sheep illustrates for children the parable of the lost sheep. When the small lamb, Bluebell, is lost, the young shepherd searches for him until he finds him. Children can compare that to God being our shepherd and His love for us.

The illustrations are good and help bring the story to life. The text is very simple, but would be a good tool to use in teaching the meaning of these parables to older children.

Other titles in this series:

- Parable of the Bridesmaids
- Parable of the Good Samaritan
- Parable of the Lost Coin
- Parable of the Sower
- Parable of the Vineyard

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Janet Hicks
 Librarian, Maple Valley Christian School
 Renton, Washington

226.8

Patricia Mary St. John
Stories That Jesus Told : The
Parables Retold for Children
 Illustrated by Tony Morris
 Morehouse, 1995
 Trade \$16.95
 K - Gr. 6

In *Stories That Jesus Told*, Patricia St. John retells the parables of Jesus in a manner children will enjoy and understand. Each story is short and complete within itself. The author has taken care not to embellish the stories, but to present them with clarity and conciseness. The meaning of each parable becomes clear as the author retells the words of Jesus. The table of contents gives the story title with the lesson to be learned beneath it. The lesson themes which range from "How should I pray?" to "Why doesn't God always answer my prayers at once?" can be used as morning devotions, chapel themes, or Bible class topics. Scripture references for each story are given at the end of the book. Also of interest is information about the author, Patricia St. John, who not only wrote books, but spent many years as a missionary in Morocco. Tony Morris illustrated the parables with beautiful scenes filled with earth tones and splashes of color. In his work you will find well-defined characters and unexpected detail.

Children will delight in reading this book as well as having it read to them.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Anita Utley
 Teacher, Faith Christian School
 Mead, Washington

231

Virginia L. Kroll
I Wanted To Know All About God
 Illustrated by Debra Reid Jenkins
 W.B. Eerdmans, c1994
 Trade \$14.99
 PS

What is God like and how does he care about me? These are questions we all ask. Virginia Kroll's colorful book presents such questions from the viewpoint of a child. Answers are related in terms a child can understand. Children will learn that evidence of God can be found in familiar people and all of creation. Answers are not deeply theological, but rather thought provoking, leading to further discussion and thinking. The only difficulty I found would be for the child who doesn't come from a nurturing, loving environment. Some of the comparisons might not hold. Unfortunately, when God's attributes are compared to those of

people, human beings fall short of the love and goodness of the Lord.

Enhancing the narrative are colorful illustrations done by Debra Reid Jenkins. The warm oil paintings bring the questions and their answers into focus. Children from different cultural backgrounds are portrayed so that each child will have someone to identify with.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Mary Jarvis
 Retired Teacher
 Marysville, Washington

242

Mary Hollingsworth
My Very First Book of Prayers
 Illustrated by Rick Incrocci
 T. Nelson Publishers, c1993
 Trade \$4.99
 PS - Gr. 1

Simple prayers for the very young are presented in *My Very First Book Of Prayers* by Mary Hollingsworth. The prayers cover many aspects of a child's life including family, holidays, fear of thunderstorms, lost pets, death of a loved one, and praises to God. The uncomplicated prayers are worded as a child might speak--sincerely and from the heart. The author has prayer for almost all situations, showing little ones how God is mindful of all our concerns. The prayers are not more than a few lines and could be adapted to a child's particular prayer need. This bright, colorfully illustrated book provides a winsome introduction to prayer. Ethnic variety is blended in without being overdone. The bold, large text is easy on beginning readers' eyes and on older eyes who are reading the book out loud to a child. These small prayers go a long way in expressing the feelings of children, and the book's diminutive size should fit little hands well. Although not crucial, a table of contents would be helpful in finding a specific prayer. While this book provides a charming introduction to prayer, it is also a picture book for special reading times.

Other books in this series:

- My Very First Book of Bible Words
- My Very First Book of Lessons
- My Very First Book of Bible Heroes

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Pam Webb
 Freelance Writer, Volunteer Librarian
 House of the Lord Christian Academy
 Oldtown, Idaho

242

Carol Watson
365 Children's Prayers
 Illustrated by Ann Baum
 Lion Publishing, 1989
 Trade \$13.95
 K - Gr. 6

Classical prayers from ages past, current prayers of children present, scriptural prayers, rhyming prayers, and prayers from many nations; the list goes on. This wonderful collection of prayers not only brings great variety to the prayer life of children, it shows them the depth and value of prayer. Sometimes we want to say, "Thank you God," or, "I'm sorry, God." Other times we want to pray for someone we know or something we're worried about.

The theme oriented organization of these prayers allows children to find prayers that fit their needs. Special feelings and attitudes, special occasions, seasons, activities, and the world around us are a few categories. Children will also feel the concerns and joys in prayers written by children, just like themselves. Carol Watson agrees that natural, personal prayers are often best, but sometimes it's nice to pray a written prayer. Parents and teachers will find the subject index helpful in selecting prayers for special occasions and specific topics. An index of first phrases makes locating specific prayers easier. Colorful illustrations by a number of artists accompany the prayers throughout the book. Children and adults, at home, school, and church, will enrich their prayer lives with this valuable resource in their libraries.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Cathie Coffin
 Educational Consultant
 Kirkland, Washington

242

Prayers for Children
 Compiled by Christopher Herbert
 Forward Movement Publications,
 1994
 Paper \$10.95
 K-Gr. 6

A compilation of prayers for school-age children, *Prayers for Children* is attractively packaged for the adult purchaser. It begins with an introduction by its author in the form of a letter to those who pray with children. The information written encourages those in direct contact with youngsters to take the opportunity to teach them not only to pray, but how to pray in their own words. Christopher Herbert has been Advisor and Director of Education for the Diocese of Hereford (England), then nine years

Vicar of St. Thomason The-Bourne in Surrey, and now Archdeacon of Dorking. He has collected, written, and classified prayers of various kinds, on subjects such as The Lord of Creation, Our Senses, School, Families, Worry, The Disabled, Child Abuse and Bullying, Industry, Shopping, The Seasons, The Christian Year, and Famous Prayers.

The book contains no pictures, and the cover picture, by Augustus John, is a black and white sketch of a thoughtful child's face, not particularly appealing to children, but most thought provoking for adults who pick up the book. The prayers are wide in scope, some whimsical, others very reverent and filled with awe, a good mix. All give the adult user good insights into topics children most frequently desire to explore in communicating with God. The one subject completely missing from the book is that of Forgiveness, which concerns all children, deep within themselves, if not verbally expressed.

This book would be most appropriate for persons involved intimately with children, such as parents and guardians, grandparents, teachers, leaders of Children's Church, etc. The material included is excellent in variety and orthodox doctrinal content.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Harriette Richards
 Teacher, Manchester Christian Academy
 Port Orchard, Washington

264

Helen Haidle
A Pocket Full of Prayers
 Illustrated by Elizabeth Haidle
 Questar, 1994
 Board \$5.99
 PS

In this pocket-sized, snap-shut, sturdy, attractive book is a collection of prayers pertinent to all the prayer times of any little (or big) person. On the inside of the closing flap are the Bible prayer promises this book is based on. Each strong cardboard page expresses a prayer in both words and brightly colored pictures: a handful of animals help say thank you God for a beautiful world; a food slinging, tantrum throwing child makes you remember to ask God for forgiveness; the deep end of a swimming pool reminds you that God can help us in all scary situations. In its simple way, *A Pocket Full of Prayers* adequately illustrates the prayer-learning aid ACTS: adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication. Preschoolers will enjoy carrying the book in pocket or bag, pulling it out, zipping the Velcro snap open, and getting an older child or adult to

read it to them. Both the reader and the listener will have a happy worship experience.

Other titles in this series:

- A Pocket Full of Parables
- A Pocket Full of Proverbs
- A Pocket Full of Praises
- A Pocket Full of Promises
- A Pocket Full of Psalms

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Donna Eggett
 Pioneer Guide, K - 2nd Grade
 Maiden, North Carolina

305.23

Deborah Shaw Lewis and Gregg A. Lewis
When You Were a Baby
 Peachtree, c1995
 Trade \$13.95
 PS- Gr. 3

Babies. . . children love them! They are especially enchanted by stories of their own "babyhood." *When You Were A Baby* lets youngsters see the world as a baby views it and also transports them to a time when they cooed and giggled and cried! Deborah Shaw Lewis and Gregg Lewis, together as husband and wife and parents of five children, have captured the essence of being a baby and portrayed the emotion of this cherished time of life. A child's own family identity will be strengthened. By sharing this book with young children, a new sibling in the family can be better prepared for and accepted.

Photographs by the authors have been hand tinted by Gary Gnidovic, which adds a touch of nostalgia, and accompanied with the simple text, they release a wealth of knowledge and feelings. A special page to parents begins the book and smaller text offers suggestions for further discussions. However, any parent reading this book won't need promptings to remember such special times with their children!

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Cathie Coffin
 Educational Consultant
 Kirkland, Washington

323.1

Betty Steele Everett

Freedom Fighter : The Story of William Wilberforce, the British Parliamentarian Who Fought to Free Slaves
Christian Literature Crusade, 1994
Paper \$4.99
Gr. 4 - 10

Freedom Fighter is a detailed biography of William Wilberforce, recognized as one of the premier champions of the rights of man. A member of the House of Commons in Great Britain from 1780 to 1825, he fought mainly for the abolition of slavery. During Wilberforce's lifetime, a spiritual awakening occurred in England. Wilberforce was a contemporary of John Newton and John Wesley. He was part of a group of Christian politicians known as the "Saints" who endeavored to vote with moral integrity on any law before the government. These men became a driving force in the war on slavery and inhumane treatment of natives in countries where Britain had interests.

The book is written in "textbook" style narrative and has no illustrations. It could be read by a perceptive fourth grader. Sadly, *Freedom Fighter* could hide on a bookshelf, its story undiscovered, because it does not demand attention. The story is worth telling, but starts slowly. The younger reader may lose patience before getting very far. It may, however, be an appropriate book to read aloud and discuss. The facts and times are well documented, so this could be a good research source. Those interested in historical writing would enjoy this work.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Dona Kachele

Teacher, Neighborhood Christian School
 Bellevue, Washington

333.75

Carol Greene

Caring for Our Land
(Caring for Our Earth)
Enslow Publishers, c1991
Trade \$11.65
K - Gr. 4

Land is important to every living thing on earth. Carol Greene does a great job simplifying a complex issue into nuggets that young minds can understand. *Caring for Our Land* is divided into sub-topics, such as "What Is It?" Each section is written in short, doublespaced sentences resulting in a clean, appealing appearance. Of particular help are the "Words to Know" and "Index" sections. However, one of the best aspects of this series is the section entitled, "What Can You Do?" Practical

suggestions like using a lunch box or cloth bag instead of paper bags are provided. Even young children can put their knowledge to use! The black-and-white photographs are good, but color would have had more impact. This book would make a fine addition to any school's science or ecology library.

Caring for Our Forests

Carol Greene does an excellent job defining forests and how they are important in our lives. The format is the same as others in the series: attractive, clean, and easy to read. *Other titles in this series:*

- Caring for Our Air
- Caring for Our Animals
- Caring for Our People
- Caring for Our Water

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Elaine Watts

Independent Educator
 Spokane, Washington



★

362.4

Christy MacKinnon
Silent Observer
Kendall Green Publications, 1993
Trade \$15.95
K - Gr. 3

In *Silent Observer*, author/illustrator Christy MacKinnon tells of her life growing up in Nova Scotia, Canada in the late 1880's. The title comes from losing her hearing at age two because of illness. Despite this and having her mother die when she was three, Christy delighted in her childhood to the fullest. One of the neighbors, Alexander Graham Bell took special interest in Christy and her partially deaf sister Sadie, encouraging their father to pursue education for the girls. At the age of nine Christy realized she was different from those around her and became miserable as she understood others could hear and she could not. She was then sent to the Halifax School for the Deaf in 1900. After overcoming her

homesickness Christy began to blossom at the school her first year ending with meeting Helen Keller. The book concludes with her homecoming and the sweet triumph of amazing family and friends with her ability to speak. In itself this book is a charming memoir; however, the true delight comes from the author's talent to retell her story from a child's perspective.

From the simple, straightforward narration to the joyous watercolor illustrations the wonder of Christy's world comes through--silent though it was. Nonetheless, Christy does not dwell on her circumstances, instead we see how she embraced all that life gave her. It is with regret the story ends shortly after Christy comes home from the deaf school, for the real triumph of her life comes after her graduation. We learn from the preface how after Christy completes her education, marries, and becomes an established artist. *Silent Observer* is appreciated for both its glimpse at life a century ago, and for the finely illustrated story of how Christy overcomes her silence.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Pam Webb

Freelance Writer, Volunteer Librarian
 House of the Lord Christian Academy
 Oldtown, Idaho

362.7

David E. Fessenden

Father to Nobody's Children : The Life of Thomas J. Barnardo
Christian Literature Crusade, 1995
Paper \$3.95
Gr. 4 - 8

Thomas J. Barnardo entered medical school fully intent upon going to China as a medical missionary. His compassion for people and concern for their need to know Jesus led him to preaching in the streets and teaching in a "ragged" school, a school for the poor. One evening, while closing up the school, Thomas encountered a young boy, barely clothed, standing before the fire in the hearth. Although asked to leave, the boy stood his ground. Thomas learned he had no family and home. When asked, "Where did you sleep last night?", the boy challenged Thomas with his response, "In a hay wagon, down at the market. Please, sir, let me stay by the fire all night - I won't do no harm." The thought that raced through Thomas' mind not only startled him, but changed his entire life; "Is it possible that there are other children in the city of London like this boy—cold, hungry, homeless?"

Thomas Barnardo never went to China. Instead, he ministered to thousands of needy children in London. David E. Fessenden has

developed this biography of the life and ministry of Thomas Barnardo in a fairly easy to read and comprehend book. Fessenden wrote his book on the basis of his readings of other authors. His opening is an anecdote from the life of Thomas Barnardo, revealing the turning point and purpose of his ministry. The remainder of the book is a factual, historical presentation, interspersed with some dialogue and incidents in Barnardo's life. The majority of the book emphasizes his ministry to homeless boys in London, with little being mentioned of Barnardo's early and personal life, leaving character and plot development weak. Although we learn who Barnardo was and what he did through a rather impersonal point of view, the story itself is inspiring and may bring with it the motivation needed to read this book.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Cathie Coffin
Educational Consultant
Kirkland, Washington

363.37

Katherine K. Winkleman
Firehouse
Illustrated by John S. Winkleman
Walker, 1994
Trade \$14.95
Reinf., \$15.85
K - Gr. 3

How is a volunteer fire fighter different from a paid fire fighter? Do you know a fire family? Why are Dalmatians the mascot for fire stations? These questions and many more are explored in *Firehouse* by Katherine K. Winkleman. John S. Winkleman illustrated the text with attractive, detailed drawings accompanied by captions that add an abundance of knowledge to the already informative, interesting text. The author explored fire departments in the country as well as the city, the history of fire fighting tools and vehicles, and even some of the traditions associated with being a firefighter. Included are twenty-seven fire prevention tips and six points to remember in escaping a fire. Certainly one of the most comprehensive and readable books on firefighters I have seen, *Firehouse* is sure to be a favorite of the K-3 crowd as well as their teachers and parents. Why ARE firefighters such good recyclers?

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

372.3

Linda Allison and Martha Weston
Pint-Size Science : Finding-Out
Fun for You and Your Preschooler
(A Brown Paper Preschool Book)
Little, Brown, 1994
Paper \$8.95
PS - Gr. 2

The Brown Paper Preschool authors are at it again with a paperback chock full of easy science projects and activities. As in their other popular books, learning notes, skills list, contents, and easy-to-follow index are presented in a format that makes this not only a good resource book but an easy one to take along for the scientist on the go. Subjects covered include solids, liquids, gases, energy and light, plants, and animals. All projects use materials that are easily found at home and encourage children to use their imaginations as well as to follow directions. Interesting scientific notes are included: do you know what "dandelion" means? Science in this book can occur anywhere you choose...the bath tub? Why not?

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

372.5

Linda Allison and Martha Weston
Razzle Dazzle Doodle Art :
Creative Play for You and Your
Young Child
(A Brown Paper Preschool Book)
Little, Brown, c1994
Paper \$8.95
PS - Gr. 1

Billed as an art primer for preschoolers (and their parents, teachers, and friends), *Razzle Dazzle Doodle Art* will dazzle you with a bounty of art ideas to use with young children.

Don't let the preschool label fool you. There are many ideas here that can also be used with kindergartners and first graders! Authors Linda and Martha, well-known for their Brown Paper School books, pack over two dozen art ideas into a convenient-to-use, forty-eight-page, illustrated book with table of contents, learning notes, skills list, and index. Nearly all materials are readily available in your own home with a wide range of activities from painting with ice cubes in the summer to building with toothpicks and garbanzo beans in winter. Need a project for travel in a car? Look no further. You'll find at least three sure to delight and occupy those busy little hands. A great resource for home schoolers, Sunday schools, and schools alike.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

385

Evelyn Clarke Mott
Steam Train Ride
Walker and Company, 1991
Paper \$4.95
PS - Gr. 1

All aboard for a great train adventure! Young Christopher takes us investigating and riding on Engine 89 on the Strasburg Line in Pennsylvania.

He meets the engineer, fireman, and conductor as he learns of the intricacies and operation of a steam locomotive. Railroad signs and their importance are explained. Finally, with ticket in hand, he settles back and is ready for his trip through the countryside. The train starts slowly and then goes faster as they speed by people, cows, horses, and farms. A long WOOOOOO of the whistle and they are back at the station.

Young children will be fascinated with *Steam Train Ride* and the wonderful color photographs of the world of trains as seen through the eyes of a young boy. Opportunity for discussion and learning abounds. Quality of photographs and text is excellent.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Mary Jarvis
Retired Teacher
Marysville, Washington

394.2

Stan Hoig
It's the Fourth of July
Cobblehill Books, c1995
Trade \$15.99
Gr. 4 - 7

This book is more than an account of the Fourth of July and how Americans celebrate their national holiday. Stan Hoig presents his readers with a clear, easy-to-read historical look at what the United State's Declaration of Independence is, who wrote it, and how it came to be. The book tells about America's national monuments and memorials that reflect liberty, early celebrations of Independence Day, the centennial and bicentennial, and a brief look at how minorities deal with the issue of independence.

Black-and-white photographs tie in perfectly with authentic historical prints and a copy of the original Declaration. Also included are quotes from famous people and old newspaper articles. Stan Hoig writes detailed description that makes historical events come alive. The

book concludes with a well-organized bibliography and an index of the main terms, people, and places. *It's the Fourth of July* will be beneficial for research on the historical development of America's independence.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Sharon Westra
Librarian, Mt. Vernon Christian School
Mt. Vernon, Washington

398.2

Rebecca Emberley
Three Cool Kids
Little, Brown, c1995
Trade \$14.95
PS - Gr. 3

When "what's what" becomes "that's that--right then and there," three cool kids discover "that the grass was very sweet on the other side of the street."

Rebecca Emberley's *Three Cool Kids* is a modern rendition of an old folk tale which takes place on a city lot. Changes on the lot as buildings are torn down and grass becomes scarce finally cause Big, Middle, and Little to cross to an inviting vacant lot, despite all the scary tales they have heard about the rat who lives under a grate in the street.

Children will want to hear the story over and over to experience the many sounds and enjoy the textures of the cut-paper illustrations. The story can be used as an example of courage and seeing the need to do the right thing even when it is hard. Hopefully this book can be used beside the old tale, "Three Billy Goats Gruff," to enhance it rather than replace it.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Marie Knaupp
Retired Elementary Librarian
Monmouth, Oregon

398.2

Marilee Heyer
The Girl, the Fish & the Crown
Viking, 1995
Trade \$14.99
PS - Adult

Adapted from a Spanish folktale, an only child becomes truly beautiful as she makes a long journey in search of a queen's crown. Through magic and enchantment the child, the queen and her ladies are changed into fish, but unselfish perseverance makes it all right again for everyone.

A deer for speed, a tiny brown ant for climbing, a monkey for swinging into the castle, and a parrot for speaking to the giant, and finally the

crown is located. Then an eagle retrieves blue stones and a toad searches the pool for stars to accomplish the mission. Each animal is chosen because of his ability, and all are needed on this unselfish quest.

Full page color illustrations tell much of the story and include hidden pictures of the helpers on the journey on the last page of the book.

An ugly giant with magic and sorcery may limit the usage of this book. However, good and evil are accurately portrayed and this is a good example of "pretty is as pretty does." Children will enjoy reading this story, but the best use can be made when the story is read with guidance as to the meaning.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Marie Knaupp
Retired Elementary Librarian
Monmouth, Oregon

398.2

Arthur Ransome
The Fool of the World and the
Flying Ship : A Russian Tale
Illustrated by Uri Shulevitz
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1987,
c1968

Paper \$6.95
Trade, \$16.00
Gr. 2 - 5

Originally published in 1916, this is a Russian tale. The Fool of the World is a simple-minded young man, the youngest of three boys. The Czar of their country has challenged anyone to build a flying ship. The man who builds the ship will get to marry the Czar's daughter, the Princess. The Fool of the World's parents are glad when he decides to leave home to try to build the ship. He is able to build the ship by following the instructions of an ancient man. As he travels to the palace of the Czar, the Fool of the World picks up different characters who have special abilities. These characters help him outwit the Czar and win the Princess.

The Fool of the World's parents do not love him, and this story demonstrates that God loves everyone, even the most simple. Translated from Russian, this book has a lot of paragraph-long run-on sentences. Several mentions of corn brandy are made, again because this is a Russian tale. Indirect use of magic is used. For example, one character the Fool of the World picks up scatters sticks on the ground and they turn into soldiers. A Caldecott Award winner, the artwork is entertaining and helps tell the story for younger children who cannot read.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 3

Elizabeth Coleman
Freelance Writer
Tumwater, Washington

423

Merriam Webster's Elementary
Dictionary
Merriam-Webster Inc., 1986
Prebound \$17.85
Gr. 2 - 5

This is a wonderful dictionary for students in the elementary grades. Attractive and easy-to-follow, it includes 272,000 words and phrases, plus charts for popular abbreviations, signs and symbols, the presidents and vicepresidents, states and their capitols, continents, and nations. It includes 14 small colored pictures on each page that add interest and clarity to some definitions. In the beginning of the book the publishers devote thirteen pages to carefully explaining how to use this dictionary. They discuss things like pronunciation symbols, variant spellings, homographs, synonyms, etc. All in all, this is an excellent reference source.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Sharon Westra
Librarian, Mt. Vernon Christian School
Mt. Vernon, Washington

507.8

Robert W. Wood
When : Experiments for the Young
Scientist
Who : Famous Experiments for the
Young Scientist
Illustrated by Steve Hoelt
TAB Books, 1994
Paper \$10.95
Gr. 3 - 7

If you are interested in a simple, impressive collection of experiments involving flight, astronomy, chemistry, weather, biology, magnets, and lights, these books are for you. Simple materials are listed. Black line illustrations and directions are easy to follow. Results are clarified and ideas for further studies given. These books would be a positive addition for any science curriculum.

When? Experiments for the Young
Scientist

Use experiments to learn when off-shore breezes blow, when fog forms, when air sinks, and how airships work. Learn how to detect your pulse, make a battery, and bend light. Activities are introduced with questions beginning with "When?" When does light bend? When was the first hot air-balloon flight? When did dinosaurs live? (The time line on a dinosaurs' lifetime could be adapted to a more Biblical earth age concept). Each

project is followed with interesting facts and ideas to encourage further exploration. This is a good book to cross science into history.

Who? Famous Experiments for the Young Scientist

Who was the first to fly the Atlantic? Who was the first to draw a map of the sky? Who discovered penicillin? These questions plus many others are answered by easy original experiments, interesting science trivia, and short biographical sketches. This is an excellent resource for any teacher or parent who wants to encourage learning about inventors and further understanding with easy hands-on experiments. Drop a softball and a golf ball to discover the laws of falling bodies. Then read short biographies of Galileo and Einstein. Light a candle and place a jar over it. See what happens to the flame. Then read about Antoine Laurent Lavoisier who first solved the connection between oxygen and fire. This is an excellent means to turn young scientists into interested historians. The index is a good resource for locating persons in the book. This a desirable addition for the school or home library.

◆ Quality - 4/4 ♥ Acceptability - 4/5

Paula Stewart Marks
Principal, Morning Star Christian School
Bend, Oregon

508

Lizann Flatt

My First Nature Treasury

**Illustrated by Allan Cormack and
Deborah Drew-Brook**
Sierra Club Books for Children,
1995

Trade \$12.95

Library Ed, \$12.45

PS - Gr. 6

My First Nature Treasury is just that, a real treasure. The vivid color drawings on the front cover will entice young (and old) readers immediately. Written by Lizann Flatt, this is a Sierra Club Book for Children. The high quality paper and sketches make the journey into the unknown even more pleasurable.

Included is a colorful introduction which describes and discriminates between mammals, mollusks, arachnids, and crustaceans. Several specific animals and their life cycles are described in detail...Swallowtail Butterfly and Blue Crab among them.

Soil never looked so interesting as it is detailed here. Next come plants; how to differentiate between them, how they grow, their life cycle, etc. Then we take a journey into all kinds of forests ranging from a North American mixed

forest to a South American rain forest. Readers will also have the opportunity to study grass, trees, air, and water...up close and intriguing.

Not one to neglect other types of climates, this treasury shows us what a tundra looks like, what kinds of animals thrive on a prairie, and just how beautiful the coral reefs actually are! This book is delightful from beginning to end. Youngsters will find it easy to read and older readers will discover (or rediscover) the fascinating world of nature.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Michele Howe
Freelance Writer and Homeschool Mother
LaSalle, Michigan

508.78

Constance Perenyi

Wild Wild West : Wild Life

Habitats of Western North America

Sasquatch Books, 1993

Paper \$8.95

Gr. 3 - 6

"On planet Earth, there is a special place for every living creature." *In Wild Wild West*, Constance Perenyi concentrates on eleven wildlife habitats found in Western North America and the creatures that live in them. A map shows where the different habitats are located, and a glossary explains terms introduced in this book.

The text is clear and descriptive, but I think the illustrations make this book outstanding. I was thoroughly enchanted by the detailed paper collages by Constance Perenyi. Each part of her pictures was individually cut or torn from papers such as Mexican bark, Japanese tie-dyed origami, or tissue and then glued to the background. The collages are realistic and contain a lot of detail, including snow on the mountain; waves along the coast; and the animals' fur, eyes, eyelashes, and claws. Adults and art students will enjoy and be inspired by the different effects produced by the materials and placements used by the author.

This book will be enjoyed by a wide variety of readers. Younger children will enjoy looking at the pictures of the animals and their homes. It will be a valuable resource for those studying the world around us and environmental concerns. It describes the earth as being home for every living creature, and it ends with a reminder that many habitats are in trouble. The author challenges us with ways in which we may help protect our environment.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Vicki McCuiston
Librarian, Falls Christian Academy
Post Falls, Idaho

567.9

Duane T. Gish

Dinosaurs by Design

Illustrated by Earl and Bonita

Snellenger

Creation-Life Pub, 1992

Trade \$15.95

K - Adult

People of all ages who are interested in dinosaurs and how they fit into the creationist picture will appreciate and enjoy this book. Dr. Gish begins with a discussion of fossils, how they were formed, accurate dating, and early fossil discoveries. He then presents fascinating instruction about some of the best known animals, with scientific detail and credibility. The final section in the book deals with theories about what happened to the dinosaurs: the Flood, the Ice Age, and recent discoveries.

The biblical teaching on these ancient creatures is interspersed in a nonargumentative way.

Excellent illustrations add to the information. The colorful pictures are of dinosaurs in natural stances and in action, without being dramatic. The drawings amplify the text, with specific bones shown clearly or size relationships demonstrated. The charts and maps give good basic information and make this book easy to use as a resource guide.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Belcher
Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

585

Barbara Bash

**Ancient Ones : The World of the
Old-Growth Douglas Fir**

(Tree Tales)

Sierra Club Books for Children,
c1994

Trade \$16.95

Gr. 4 - 6

Barbara Bash not only wrote and illustrated *Ancient Ones*, but every word of her Old Growth story is calligraphy done by her own hand. Written in pleasing prose, this is not a picture story book in the popular sense; rather it is a well-documented scientific study of wild life in tall Northwest forests.

Here and there among the deftly drafted scenes are "close-ups" of insects that inhabit the trees, often fallen and rotting. While the Douglas Fir is prominent in her theme, many other trees are referenced. They all provide backdrops for this drama of life's myriad forms, from fungi and lichen to moss and fern, from mayflies and

dragonflies to salamander and coho salmon. Bash draws and tells of beetles, termites, shrew-moles and flying squirrels, owls, ospreys and woodpeckers, vaux swifts, bats and bluebirds. Then, for a closer look, Bash details enlargements up to 4,800 times to show bacteria, spores, mites, worms and millipedes. The life, death and resurrection of the forest is accurately portrayed in this fine scientific work.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Olivia Wheatley Stachorek
Freelance Writer
Carlsborg, Washington

599.74

Susan Bonners

Hunter in the Snow : The Lynx

Little, Brown, c1994

Trade \$14.95

Gr. 1 - 5

Children love to explore the world of animals, and Susan Banners has captured a year in the life of a Canadian lynx. The reader will follow the lynx as she hunts in winter, mates in the spring, and fights for survival in the summer and fall. In addition, the author follows the first few months in the life of cubs born in the spring.

The author has included a page of vital statistics for quick reference. Soft pastel illustrations depict well the soft fur of the lynx. The detailed and fairly long text, though interestingly written, makes this a book for parent or teacher to share with the child or interesting reading for the older primary or intermediate child. Chosen by the *School Library Journal* as the best book of 1994, *Hunter in the Snow* is a good addition to the science section of the school library.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

613

Anne Townsend

My Body Inside and Out

Lion Publishing, 1994

Trade \$13.95

PS - Adult

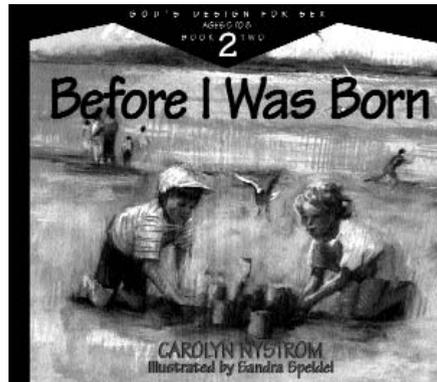
My Body Inside and Out is packed with much needed information for all age groups. With art work that is colorful and eye catching, it is of interest to those who can or cannot read. The moral values included are a wonderful backup for the value teaching we try to do in our homes. The facts presented here range from cell descriptions to what happens after death.

This book will be most helpful to parents of growing children. It covers many aspects of life. I have had many parents stop by the library asking for just such a book when they want to explain sex education, importance of body cleanliness, death, etc., to their children.

This is an outstanding book.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Rosalie M. Dahlvang
Librarian, St. Anthony School
Renton, Washington



★

613.907

Stan and Brenna Jones

The Story of Me

(God's Design for Sex)

NavPress, 1994

Paper \$9.00

PS - K

If you want to start laying a solid foundation for your three-five year old regarding God's design for sexuality, *The Story of Me* may be just the building block you need.

Written as a dialogue between a four year-old-boy and his parents, it briefly explores gender differences, fertilization, life in the womb, labor, and delivery. It also touches on Cesarean birth, breastfeeding, and good and bad touching.

The success of this book harbors in the fact that it tells just enough. It opens discussion, but discloses information in a manner that is age appropriate and sensitive. It warmly affirms the attributes of both genders, and consistently portrays loving, monogamous sex as basic to God's design.

Beautifully illustrated by Joel Spector, the artwork captures the intimacy of family life, commitment, and love.

The Story of Me is a wonderful foundation block for building godly attitudes and beliefs about sexuality in your child.

K - Gr. 3

Before I was Born:

**Designed for Parents to Read to
Their Child at Ages 5 Through 8**

by Carolyn Nystrom

Before I was Born is the kind of book my mom wished she had when I was eight years old. The second in the God's Design for Sex series, *Before I was Born* weaves together biological fact and biblical truth to present a clear Christian view of sexuality.

Designed to be read to 5 to 8 year olds, *Before I was Born* "emphasizes the creational goodness of our bodies, our essence as men and women, and our sexual organs." It discusses the growth and change of the adolescent body and the basic function of sexual intercourse.

Illustrations by Sandra Spidel include vague nudity that may raise some parents' eyebrows, but are appropriate to the topic and serve the text well.

Monogamy and fidelity, God's way of making families strong, is this book's underlying theme. Reading it together is a good start in weaving that principle into your children's lives.

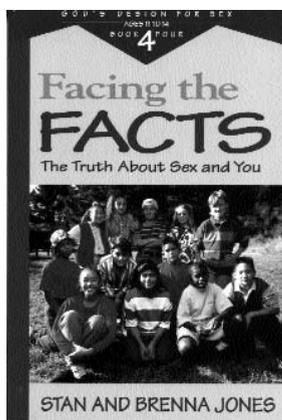
Gr. 3 - 6

**What's the Big Deal? Why God
Cares about Sex**

by Stan and Brenna Jones

Like the two previous books in the God's Design for Sex series, *What's the Big Deal?* consistently confirms sex's place in marriage. Written for 8-11 year olds, it moves from the basic biological and spiritual foundation laid in books one and two to begin the process of "Inoculating your child against the negative moral messages of the world." Issues include dealing with sexual drive, peer pressure, pornography, sex outside of marriage, AIDS, and homosexuality. Each is viewed from a firm Christian perspective, unwavering yet compassionate.

Designed as a springboard for discussion, *What's the Big Deal* uses dialogue to break the issues down into readable chunks. For the parent who wants to build a foundation for their children's view of sexuality that is at once logical, moral and biblical, this book is a must.



Gr. 6 - 8

Facing the Facts : The Truth About Sex and You
by Stan and Brenna Jones

Perhaps a better name for *Facing the Facts* would be "Everything You Wanted Your Kids to Know about...But Were Afraid to Tell Them." *Facing the Facts* delves deeper into God's design for sex, offering more detailed information for the 11 to 14 year old. It continues to build on biblical principles laid in books one through three of the God's Design for Sex series. The basic facts of maturation and reproduction are discussed in greater detail and include some fairly graphic illustrations of the male and female anatomy.

This book also handles head-on issues that today's adolescents must deal with like pornography, peer pressure, and condom distribution in public schools. Chapter eight, "Tough Answers to Tough Questions," discusses homosexuality, living together, broken families, and sexual abuse.

Facing the Facts offers virtually no information about birth control, except condoms.

Authors Stan and Brenna Jones were courageous enough to discuss "gray" issues not directly dealt with in scripture, like masturbation. You may not agree with everything they espouse, but reading the book before your child does may open doors to lively discussion.

Facing the Facts does just that: offers the hard facts about sexuality and responsibility. Be sure your child is ready for this much information. But if your kids are asking tough questions and you need a sound, God-centered resource to respond, *Facing the Facts* may be it.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Tammy Perron
Freelance Writer
Snohomish, Washington

616

Angela Royston
Healthy Me : A Lift-the-Flap Body Book
Illustrated by Edwina Riddell
Barron's, 1995
Trade \$13.95
K - Gr. 3

Sarah, Ben, and friends have an uncommon number of childhood injuries and illnesses to show how the body rallies in time of need. Happily, they survive them all and even still want to play doctor! Edwina Riddell's large colorful pictures will attract readers while the unfolding flaps hold their interest and attention. Revealed underneath these flaps are the inner workings of the body as it heals itself from maladies ranging from fevers to broken bones. The running nose, drippy sneeze, and vomiting scenes are balanced with the more passive bruise, chickenpox, and earache passages. Since Angela Royston chooses familiar experiences, children can easily identify with them.

Healthy Me has educational information woven throughout the text that supplies answers to some frequently asked questions: extra cells made to fight cold germs are what makes mucus, all of their medicine needs to be taken to prevent the return of infections, and even though bleeding and washing help clean cuts, something to kill germs may also need to be applied. Some preventive information is also supplied during a dental visit and a medical check up. Included are read-aloud information boxes about germs.

A very basic informative book that would be useful to introduce a unit about the body or to supplement health studies, or a good book to include in the waiting rooms of clinics and doctors' offices.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Betty Venables
Principal/Teacher
Haines Christian School
Haines, Alaska

629.133

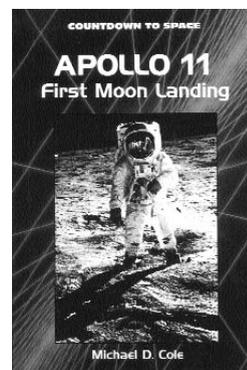
Gail Gibbons
Catch the Wind : All About Kites
Little, Brown, 1995, c1989
Paper \$4.95
K - Gr. 2

Katie and Sam visit Ike's Kite Shop to buy a kite with the money they have saved. In the process, they learn all about the history of kites and how to build and fly their own flat kite. The kite building instructions are basic 1, 2, 3 and are easy to follow.

Included on each colorful page of *Catch the Wind* is information on kites: basic design, history, materials, and lessons on how and why they fly, as well as the correct way to launch and land. Safety tips are also included.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Diane L. Geiger
Freelance Writer
South Bend, Washington



629.45

Michael D. Cole
Apollo 11 : First Moon Landing
(Count Down to Space)
Enslow Publishers, c1995
Trade \$15.95
Gr. 4 - 10

Apollo 11, The First Space Landing, is the first volume of Michael D. Cole's outstanding six-book space series. In *Apollo 11*, Cole captures the highlights of this mission and presents them to his young readers in an appealing, easy-to-read style. He offers factual, highly technical information in a manner that will compel even non-science-minded readers to keep turning pages.

The second book, *Apollo 13, Space Emergency*, is an account of the nearly disastrous lunar flight of astronauts Fred Haise, James Lovell, and John Swigert. The infamous words, "Houston, we've had a problem," begin this captivating account of a famous space flight.

Book three, *Challenger, America's Space Tragedy*, explains to young readers, using schematic drawings and actual photographs, what happened to the Challenger space craft on that fateful day as all of America watched. Full-color photos and short biographies of the astronauts enhance this already dramatic story.

In *Columbia, First Flight of the Space Shuttle*, Cole shares in engrossing detail how John Young and Robert Crippen manned the first reusable spacecraft, uniquely designed to take off like a rocket and then land like an airplane. Context clues skillfully woven into the text

make this complicated event easy to understand.

Astronaut John Glen is the focal point of the book, *Friendship 7, First American in Orbit*. The danger and the excitement of this mission are captured through Glen's quotations and great photos.

The last book in Cole's series focuses on April 12, 1961, the day the Russian cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin, was launched into space aboard the Vostok 1, Russia's spacecraft. Gagarin's historical flight as the first human in space is chronicled in *Vostok 1, First Human in Space*. Gagarin traveled faster than any human being had ever traveled before and instantly became a Soviet national hero.

In his series, Cole successfully recreates markers in the history of the global space program with a story-book approach to factual events. These books are bound to interest even the most reluctant readers and interest them in space history. The text is fascinating, the photos riveting, and Cole manages to give the whole series a positive and highly patriotic slant. Without question, this series is an addition to any school library!

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Karen Orfitelli
Freelance Writer and Teacher
Cornerstone Christian School
Manchester, Connecticut

641.1
Laurene Krasny Brown
The Vegetable Show
Little, Brown, c1995
Trade \$14.95
PS - Gr. 3

How can vegetables be dressed up as a thrilling taste treat for a sluggish eater? Just visit the Garden Street Theater in its unique performance. Here a juggler, magician, singer, weight lifter, balancing act, and acrobat transform the bean, potato, beet, zucchini, hot pepper, and tomato into something special which Laura Krasny Brown hopes will still be special when the reader meets them on the dinner plate.

The Vegetable Show also gives a description of twelve of the performing vegetables and special "did you know" tips in the glossary.

Bright, full page scenes of the stage and characters present more of the story than the short conversations of the audience and the printed text. This book will be especially enjoyed by preschool children and the adults

who are concerned about the quality of their child's diet.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Marie Knaupp
Retired Elementary Librarian
Monmouth, Oregon

736
Yoshihide Momotani
Origami Dinosaurs
Kodansha, 1993
Paper \$12.00
Gr. 4 - Adult

Looking for a change of pace from the usual origami cranes and fish? *Origami Dinosaurs*, with directions for making fourteen different species, should do the trick. Each paper-folded creation is an original design by Yoshihide Momotani, an internationally recognized master of origami. The author, also a biology teacher, took pains to make sure his designs were anatomically accurate. He also added a pinch of fantasy with his design for creating a paper Godzilla.

Directions for folding are presented in a clear, step-by-step fashion, with different line and arrow symbols to indicate fold types and direction. Younger readers will likely need an adult to assist them at first with understanding and following the directions. Each dinosaur creation is also rated for difficulty to assist teachers, parents, and children in choosing the appropriate project. A clear picture of the finished project is featured with each dinosaur. One caution: Each dinosaur project begins with a brief description written from an evolutionary point of view.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 3

Janet Smith
Freelance Writer
Latrobe, Pennsylvania

743
Ed Emberley
Drawing Book of Animals
Little, Brown, 1994, c1970
Paper \$5.95
K - Gr. 3

Illustrator Ed Emberley directs the young illustrator through a series of exercises using simple "shapes, letters, numbers, and things" to produce over forty-eight different animals. Not only will you draw an animal, but your animal will, with added variations, seem to come to life as you make it croak, sleep, sit, beg, even look the other way. Want to dress your pig in trousers? Ed will show you how. *Drawing Book of Animals* is great training for the primary age child in following directions and

observation, as well as stimulating to make a drawing that is active and fanciful. While this may be a little difficult for some kindergartners, most primary ages will find it entrancing.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

793.7
Richard M. Sharp and Seymour
Metzner
The Sneaky Square & 113 Other
Math Activities for Kids
TAB Books, c1990
Paper \$10.95
Gr. 2 - 7

Looking for some challenging logic puzzles for a bright young student? Or is someone you know struggling to understand how math applies to everyday life? Then *The Sneaky Square and 113 Other Math Activities for Kids* might be the resource for which you're searching. Written by two professors of education, Dr. Richard Sharp and Dr. Seymour Metzner, the book provides 114 different math-related problems that vary in difficulty from very easy to very hard. For the most part, the activities require no extraordinary math ability or out-of-the-way resources. Each problem is clearly labeled as to difficulty level, resources required and the point of doing the problem.

Sneaky Square will appeal to students who enjoy logic jokes such as the old chestnut "As I Was Going to St. Ives"--which, by the way, is included in the traps and conundrums section. Most of the problems aren't hard--once you know the answer! But they stretch the student's logic abilities, modes of approaching a problem, and ways of thinking and listening.

Although billed on the back cover as a book which will "spark the mathematical curiosity of students who try to avoid the 'third R,'" this book might not appeal to kids struggling with math. If the teacher or parent judiciously chose certain problems out of the text and worked individually with the struggling child, he or she might feel challenged instead of overwhelmed by the twists and turns each problem takes. Unless the child is high-ability in math, don't give them the book to figure out on their own!

Unfortunately, several of the problems use occult practices, including ESP and fortune telling, as a premise from which a problem is presented. Otherwise, the book is well-written, easy to understand and follow, and fun for the eager math student.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 3

Georgia Beaverson

Freelance Writer

Former Staff Writer, *InterVarsity Christian Fellowship*
Madison, Wisconsin

811

Jean Ray Laury
14,287 Pieces of Fabric and Other Poems
C & T Pub, c1994
Trade \$17.95
All Ages

14,287 Pieces of Fabric is a patchwork of humorous poetry with the common thread of quilting. The title piece is about a quilter named Kate who cannot possibly spare one of the 14,287 pieces of fabric she has hoarded. Quilter or not, we can all identify with Kate on some level. We also find a little of ourselves in Cathy and Liz, Diana and Lilly.

The author, a well known quilter and teacher, creates the illustrations from scraps of fabric, perhaps some of the 14,287 pieces! Anyone who quilts, has quilted, or some day plans to quilt, will chuckle as they read this book while snuggled up in a handmade quilt.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Jannet Hoeffner

Parent Volunteer, *Prairie Baptist Church School*
Prairie City, Oregon

812

Madeleine L'Engle
The Journey with Jonah
Illustrated by Leonard Everett Fisher
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1967
Paper \$5.95
Gr. 5 - 12

This delightful Bible story of Jonah and the whale is presented as a one-act play. Intended primarily for children, it can be appropriate for teens and adults, too. Audiences and participants alike will enjoy this familiar story presented with great insight and truth.

The author does not mince words, using "loquacious tidbits" that even the young can understand by context and proper performance. Presented in an often humorous format, this short drama, written with style and cleverness, is suitable for all age groups and can be a wonderful teaching tool in the classroom.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Mary McKinney

Freelance Writer and Teacher
Port Orchard, Washington

813

Ellen Erlanger
Isaac Asimov--Scientist and Storyteller
(The Achievers)
Lerner Publications Co, c1986
Trade \$13.50
Gr. 3 - 7

Isaac Asimov--Scientist and Storyteller takes us through the highlights of Asimov's life and career starting with his move from Russia in 1923. It describes Asimov's drive to read and write. He taught himself to read at the age of five. Getting in trouble for spending too much time reading was a problem for the boy. When of school age he entertained other students by telling stories.

Young Asimov completed his first story in 1938 at age 18. Magazine stories and books, both fiction and nonfiction, are credited to this prolific writer. Some of his works have been written under a pen name; several have earned him awards.

Asimov writes about world problems before the rest of us see them as problems (population and energy crisis). He often shares his views of the world with the public. With over 400 published books, he is still going.

Photographs show Asimov, his family, his friends, and some of the awards that he has received. This is an easily read book, packed with much information about a man sometimes called the human writing machine. We are shown what can be done by one man who uses his God-given talents to enrich the world.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Rosalie M. Dahlvang

Librarian, *St. Anthony School*
Renton, Washington

813

Jean Fritz
Surprising Myself
(Meet the Author)
Richard C. Owen Publishers, Inc.,
c1992
Trade \$13.95
Gr. 3 - Adult

The series *Meet the Author* is like a breath of fresh air that ends an often futile search for relevant information about children's authors.

Each book, written between 1992 and 1995, is 32 pages in length and is filled with photographs taken by the photographer listed on the title page. Pictures of the author's early life begin each story. The text written by the author is in first person, printed in short easy to

read lines which are scattered between the numerous photos.

Surprising Myself is by Jean Fritz who grew up in China and always loved to explore. She traveled to the places where her characters lived as she wrote about historical people.

Firetalking is by Patricia Polacco who lived in both Michigan and Oakland, California, splitting her time with parents who were divorced. The author loves people and her books are about her friends, neighbors, and her family. She also loves talking to children, teachers, and librarians. For her, best of all is ending the day with friends and family in front of the fireplace telling stories which she calls "firetalking."

Best Wishes is by Cynthia Rylant who did a lot of wishing growing up in West Virginia where she read comics, wandered, and listened, not knowing this would someday be the basis for writing books. She now lives in Ohio. Some of the author's stories are made up but others come from real life including stories of dogs and her family.

Playing With Words is by James Howe who learned early to keep up with three older brothers by using words to make them laugh. He lives in the small town of Hastings-on-Hudson near New York City, where he writes every day. The author creates his own characters. His *Bunnacula* books are very popular and he enjoys writing as Harold, the shaggy-dog narrator.

Hau Kola Hello Friend is by Paul Goble who grew up in England and experienced World War II there. He spent much time at the lake at the end of the garden thinking and observing. His greatest interest was Indian people. The author now lives in Lincoln, Nebraska, where he writes stories about Indians after extensive travel and research while visiting the people and places he writes about.

A Letter From Phoenix Farm is by Jane Yolen who lives on Phoenix Farm in Western Massachusetts. She not only writes books, but she writes music, talks to students in schools, and leads workshops for people who want to learn to write for children. The author has written 120 books and says she gets her ideas for writing "from everywhere."

The Writing Bug is by Lee Bennett Hopkins who grew up in a single-parent household in Newark, New Jersey. He writes and collects poems. The author began his career as a sixth-grade teacher who began writing articles for teachers. Today he does many kinds of writing. Now he lives in Kemey Cove, but enjoys trips to New York City, one hour away. At the end of

the day he always returns to his garden, his dog Duke, and his writing.

Once Upon a Time is by Eve Bunting who was born in Ireland and went to boarding school in Belfast. After she married she and her husband moved to California. She began writing when their three children were all in school. The author carries a notebook with her everywhere she goes to write down ideas. Most of her ideas come from interesting things she's read or seen. She hopes some of her books will make children think and some of her books will make them laugh.

Other titles in this series:

A Bookworm Who Hatched by Verna Aardema

Thoughts, Pictures, and Words by Karla Kusin

My Mysterious World by Margaret Mahy

A Storyteller's Story by Rafe Martin

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Marie Knaupp
Retired Elementary Librarian
Monmouth, Oregon

818

Bob Phillips

More Awesome Good Clean Jokes

for Kids

Harvest House, c1994

Paper \$3.99

Gr. 3 - 9

It has been said every person needs a repertoire of a few good jokes to tell if the need arises. *More Awesome Good Clean Jokes for Kids* is a source of humorous anecdotes, interspersed with puns. Most of the jokes are brief, question and answer format, with one party asking a question and the other answering using a pun or giving an answer to a riddle. Also included are "knockknock" jokes.

The slapstick humor and corniness of the puns do not have much depth. Roles, as could be expected, are stereotypical.

The collection is clean, and material would be acceptable to any audience. The listener, even an intermediate student, generally groans at the answer to a bated question, and then repeats the joke to someone else.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Belcher
Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

947

Stephen Chicoine and Brent K.

Ashabraner

Lithuania : The Nation That Would Be Free

Photographs by Stephen Chicoine

Cobblehill Books, c1995

Trade \$16.99

Gr. 5 - 9

This poignant look at the forgotten Baltic nation of Lithuania gives children a history lesson into the nation that labored for many years under Soviet rule. From its thirteenth-century pagan roots to its triumphant declaration of independence from Russia on March 11, 1990, Lithuania has been a land in conflict.

Lithuania features colorful photos by Stephen Chicoine that offer a rich, evocative look at Lithuanian life and culture. Several interviews of Lithuanian citizens, including past Lithuanian president, Vytautas Landsbergis, and Sarunas Marciulionis, a member of Golden State Warriors who led the Lithuanian basketball team to a bronze-medal win in the Summer Olympic games at Barcelona in 1992, add to the Lithuanian slice of life. A handy facts glossary, a bibliography, and an index give added information.

Children will learn how Christianity was brought to Lithuania in the thirteenth century and how much Catholicism is a part of life in Lithuania. Lithuania used to be united with Poland, the Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth, but eventually fell under Soviet domination. In 1920 the Soviet Union renounced all claim to Lithuanian territory, but took it back during World War II. During the war, the once populous Jewish community was nearly annihilated.

The authors tour Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, and other urban areas. The link between Lithuania and America is also explored through interviews with Lithuanian American citizens.

Because of the lack of phonetic spellings, readers might have trouble with some of the names and terms difficult to pronounce. Yet children should enjoy this fascinating look at a plucky country.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Linda Washington
Freelance Writer and Textbook Editor/Writer
Carol Stream, Illinois

973.2

Dennis B. Fradin

King Philip : Indian Leader
Illustrated by Tom Dunnington
(Colonial Profiles)

Enslow Publishers, c1990

Trade \$14.95

Gr. 3 - 6

King Philip by Dennis Brindell Fradin is part of the Colonial Profiles Series. Metacomet, or King Philip, was one of the first North American Indians to wage war against the colonists. Portrayed as a "monster" and a "wild beast" throughout history, the author presents King Philip as a leader who tried to protect his people. Metacomet was the son of Massasoit, the "Great Chief" of the Wampanoags. Although Massasoit kept his word there would be peace between his tribe and the colonists, Metacomet saw his tribe's way of life changed by the influence of colonists. He felt the changes detrimental enough to wage war when he became leader. The author tries to objectively summarize how war between the colonists and the Indians came to be. However, because this is a profile on King Philip, the Indian point of view is emphasized which gives the appearance of making the colonists appear harsh in their treatment of the Indians. The question of how to remain neutral in writing an historical account comes into focus. The author poses thought-provoking questions which could be vehicles for classroom discussion. The book provides rudimentary historical information on the Indians and the colonists, and additionally provides crucial background of the Indians' and the colonists' relationship to one another. The variety of the black and white illustrations is appealing. There is an outline of important dates, a glossary, and an index, making this book useful for note-taking and reports.

Other titles in this series:

Anne Hutchinson : Fighter for Religious Freedom

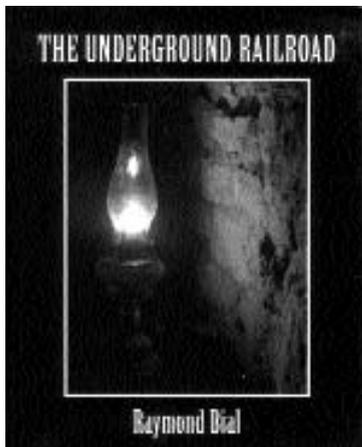
John Hancock : First Signer of the Declaration of Independence

Patrick Henry : "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death!"

Abigail Adams : Advisor to a President

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Pam Webb
Freelance Writer, Volunteer Librarian
House of the Lord Christian Academy
Oldtown, Idaho



973.7

Raymond Bial
The Underground Railroad
 Houghton Mifflin, 1995
 Trade \$14.95
 Gr. 4 - Adult

In a beautifully photographed book, author and photographer Raymond Bial has captured the story of *The Underground Railroad*. The photographs, taken at historic underground railroad sites from Illinois to Mississippi, could stand alone as works of art. Bial has combined his photography with reproductions of abolitionist advertisements and newspaper drawings intertwined with interesting stories of the people who conducted and "rode" the underground railroad.

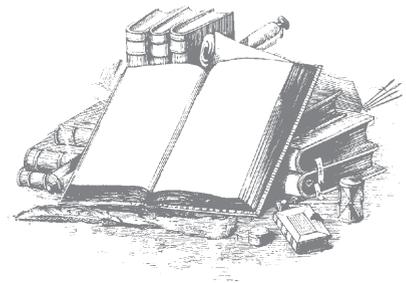
Only forty-four pages long, this well-researched book is a great beginning point for bringing to life this important time in our country's history. Included are a chronology of important events in the antislavery movement and an extensive bibliography of books for further reading. This book will be an asset for students studying slavery in America and will be equally enjoyed by adults interested in our country's history.

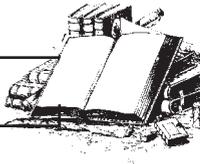
◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
 Teacher, Christ the King Academy
 Poulsbo, Washington

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Kathleen Aldrich
Out of the Dark

Bob Jones University Press, c1994
Paper \$6.49
Grades 5-8

Out of the Dark is the story of Christie, who wakes up in the hospital after being in a coma for some time. She slowly realizes that she cannot speak or move her arms and legs. Her parents died in the accident, and her younger brother is staying across the country with relatives. Through the love and support of her grandparents, a special doctor, therapists, and a friend who has experienced a similar trauma, she comes to terms with her situation. She learns that God loves her and can give her strength to heal.

The reader experiences Christie's initial confusion and dawning awareness. Aldrich has done a commendable job of helping the reader understand Christie without being melodramatic or maudlin. The characterization of Christie's grandparents and their gentle reminders of God's love are honest and realistic without being sentimentalized. However, I found it hard to believe that almost all the characters in the story were Christians and all were so consistently supportive. Christie's grandmother is the only one who seems to resist any of the changes occurring in their lives. Keith Neeley's black-and-white drawings illustrate the important milestones in Christie's recovery.

Out of the Dark will appeal to adolescent girls who are outgrowing children's fiction. They will empathize with Christie and will safely explore a sensitively portrayed look at spiritual struggles.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Trudi Kolk
Elementary Media Specialist, Watson Groen
Christian School
Seattle, Washington

S. W. Brouwer
Morning Star
(The Ghost Rider Series; 1)
Victor Books, 1994
Trade \$9.99
Gr. 6 - 12

Samuel Keaton rides into Laramie, Wyoming, looking for a drink and female companionship. What he finds is a gunfight and a mysterious "Injun." The gunfight lands him in jail. The Injun helps Keaton escape and gives him a note offering employment with Rebecca Montcalm. To Keaton's frustration, the job is to ride where the Injun points and await further instructions. Sounds simple, but Keaton's progress is hindered by desperadoes demanding information about gold. Rebecca Montcalm, his boss, might clear up that mystery--if Keaton could find her.

Keaton carries more than a bedroll on the journey into the Black Hills. He carries painful memories of his parents' murder by Indians and his brother's death in a gunfight Samuel should have prevented. Guilt and his own close brush with death start him wondering if his life, or anyone's, has a purpose.

Eventually he discovers his Indian guide is, in fact, Rebecca. She was raised in a Catholic orphanage in England. She hopes the Pawnee will tell her more about her mother, Morning Star, who died when Rebecca was an infant, and tell her who her father was. The sisters taught her reading, writing, deportment, and the Christian faith. She turns readily to prayer when they are in danger. When she finally meets her grandfather, conscience compels her to remain with the tribe for a time to help them fight for more equitable treatment from Washington.

Her faith and beauty touch Keaton. He resolves to eventually marry her and to learn more about the God she trusts. They meet again in the sequel, *Moon Basket*.

Brouwer offers plenty of action and Western lore. For example, "It's much faster to fire by fanning the hammer with the heel or fingers of your opposite hand than it is to pull the trigger, so much so that a person can almost fire twelve bullets faster one gun after another, than with both at the same time." Keaton's journey toward religious faith is equally credible. With

adventure and romance, the book should appeal to both sexes.

Other titles in the series:

Sun Dance; 3
Thunder Voice; 4

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Kathleen T. Choi
Retired Teacher
Hilo, Hawaii
Reprinted from Hawaii Catholic Herald, published with permission of the author.

T. Davis Bunn
Light & Shadow
Chariot Books, 1995
Paper \$5.99
Gr. 7 - 12

Martin's life is in shadow--he's dealing with grief from his father's death and the struggle of finding somewhere to "fit in." Martin joins the school photography club. Instead of becoming friends with the other two members, Martin is assigned the job of "dark room slave." Despite being given the worst equipment and no help, Martin shows talent. His growing ability and willingness to do what needs to be done gain him a position of respect.

The other photography club members become jealous and ban him from the dark room. Mr. Carruthers, a retired teacher, befriends Martin. Not only does the old man help him with his photographic skills and problems at school, he also guides Martin to God.

Martin meets other Christians who share their faith. Cindy, a girl his age, offers the gift of friendship. It's through seeing her family's faith in action that Martin is convicted of the need to have the right focus.

Fast moving and exciting, *Light and Shadow* by T. Davis Bunn is difficult to put down. Readers may also learn a few photography tips along the way. They will be able to identify with Martin and his struggles and applaud his successes.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Sue Ford
Freelance Writer
Renton, Washington

Robin Jones Gunn
Summer Promise
(The Christy Miller Series; 1)
Focus on the Family, 1988
Paper \$4.99
Gr. 7 - 10

It's a summer dream come true for almost-fifteen-year-old Christy Miller. Leaving rural Wisconsin behind her, she has the once-in-a-lifetime chance to live with her well-off aunt and uncle next to a California beach for the summer. The new friends she makes challenge her innocence, her promise to her parents, her ideas about herself and ultimately her ideas about God.

Summer Promise is reminiscent of the boy-meets-girl-stories by authors like Beverly Cleary. Christy's point of view is young, innocent, confused, and full of anxiety about how she appears to others. She longs for a relationship with a boy, yet her expectations are unrealistically high and her understanding low. To Christy, all the boys are incredibly good looking, and the other girls make her feel insecure and gauche. Her mind is filled with wild thoughts and ideas, but she hasn't got the experience to wade through them in a practical way. In other words, she's a typical adolescent girl.

Unfortunately, she's an adolescent girl of an earlier era. I live in Wisconsin, and girls here know plenty about all the things of which Christy is ignorant. Pregnancy, sex, drugs, drinking, and money are all topics which get addressed in grade, middle, and high schools in Wisconsin--even in rural areas!

Although *Summer Promise* is well-written, it doesn't seem very realistic for a modern reader. I found myself getting impatient with both Christy's "hissy fits" and her incredible naiveté. But this is from the adult perspective. From an adolescent's perspective, especially a young girl who is questioning everything about herself, there might be much to identify with. The subjects the author touches on--casual sex, sudden death, social awkwardness, money failing to bring happiness--are definitely ones that many girls unpack and examine for the first time in their early teen years. These subjects are certainly handled from a sensitive, evangelical perspective. *Summer Promise* may be just the novel a sheltered young teen is looking for.

Other titles in the series:

- A Whisper and a Wish; 2
- Yours Forever; 3
- Surprise Endings; 4
- Island Dreamer; 5

- A Heart Full of Hope; 6
- True Friends; 7
- Starry Night; 8
- Seventeen Wishes; 9
- A Time to Cherish; 10
- Sweet Dreams; 11
- Christy Miller; 12

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Georgia Beaverson
Freelance Writer
Former Staff Writer, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship
Madison, Wisconsin

Alan Haig-Brown
The Suzie A
Illustrated by Richard Tetrault
Pacific Educational Press, c1991
Paper \$9.95
Gr. 3 - Adult

The Suzie A gives an insider's look into the history of one of British Columbia's fishery boats. We are introduced to the Suzie A, a boat named after its Japanese owner's daughter, by a young boy named Richie, whose captivation with ship building and salmon fishing opens up the world of fishermen to us.

As the "Suzie A" is built to specification in the 1920's, Richie observes and learns much about boats and the waters they sail on. He is intrigued by life at sea which his uncle describes to him as he skippers the Suzie A. Far too soon, this vessel is taken from its original owners, sold, and renamed as the Japanese are seen as enemies in their native Canada. After the war, the Suzie A sees many new skippers, new adventures, and internal changes.

Throughout his life, Richie is able to keep track of his first love, the Suzie A. His excitement is shared with good friends, family, and his wife. As Richie grows older, the boat is transformed time and again, to be re-discovered by Richie's son, James. As James grows into manhood, he takes on the love of the Suzie A just as his father did and the adventures continue.

One of the most interesting features is the intricate drawings of the Suzie A and her structural changes. We are given an underwater look at how fishing nets are cast and drawn in. The descriptive illustrations make the reading much clearer and even a novice fisherman would find it understandable.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Michele Howe
Freelance Writer and Homeschool Mother
LaSalle, Michigan

Dan Hamilton
The Beggar King
InterVarsity Press, c1993
Paper \$7.99
Gr. 7 - 12

In the first book of Dan Hamilton's Tales of the Forgotten God trilogy, *The Beggar King*, readers are introduced to the beggar who has come to the land in the dead of the night. During the beggar's visit, it is immediately clear that whoever meets him will be changed forever.

Hamilton's skillfully woven allegory is packed with biblical allusions readers won't be able to miss. The characters he creates, Covenant, Lionheart, Trueteller, and a host of others, live out their names demonstrating the scriptural principles behind them. Even Trueteller's donkey has his name changed by the king to Kingsburro for he will be the one who someday carries the King of Glory on his back.

A young reader who may not understand all the allusions would completely enjoy this novel on a literary level. Older readers will certainly be captivated by Hamilton's ability to share deep spiritual truths in an enchanting fashion.

The last two volumes of this trilogy, *The Chameleon Lady* and *The Everlasting Child*, are continuations of the tales. Even though a recap of the previous books is given at the beginning of each book, the books are sequels and should be read sequentially to fully enjoy the series.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Karen Orfitelli
Freelance Writer and Teacher
Cornerstone Christian School
Manchester, Connecticut

Robin Hardy
Stone of Help
(Annals of Lystra; 2)
NavPress, 1994
Paper \$10.00
Gr. 10 - Adult

Stone of Help explores the growth of Deirdre's faith in God, how it is severely tested, and how, enabled by faith and obedience to God, she is able to triumph over her enemies. In Chataine's Guardian, Deirdre, the *Chataine of Lystra*, falls in love and eventually marries her guardian Roman. She is drawn to him because of his deep faith, his kind and gentle ways, and his willingness to protect her at all costs; even his life. In *Stone of Help*, Roman and Deirdre are joyfully reunited at Westford and are anticipating the birth of their first child. Deirdre, headstrong as ever, chooses to disregard Roman's protective orders. As a

result, she is kidnapped and gives birth in a tiny cave. She finds herself the property of an evil slave trader who sells her as a kitchen slave to the evil Surchataine of George. Deirdre can no longer rely on Roman's faith. She must develop her own personal relationship with her heavenly Father. With the help of an old slave named Josef and an orphaned baby, Deirdre begins to trust God that her captivity can be used for his glory.

Her prayers are answered in such a compelling and heartrending way that you are truly moved. Robin Hardy has a gift for bringing her characters to life. The conclusion affirms the Scripture that "all things work together for good," although Deirdre had to endure many difficult circumstances before she was able to acknowledge this as being true. This faith-affirming book is storytelling at its best!

Liberation of Lystra

Roman and Deirdre, having been reunited after her enslavement to the Surchataine of George, are happily ruling Lystra and reveling in raising their son, Ariel. A messenger informs them that enemy troops are assembling in the city of Corona. Deciding he needs to learn the objective of the amassing army, Roman takes a few trusted soldiers and travels to Corona. Against his better judgment, Roman allows Deirdre to join him in his undercover operation.

Corona is controlled by an evil wizard who is systematically murdering all believers. He controls the townspeople with his dark powers. This reminds you of Frank Peretti's *This Present Darkness*, only in a medieval setting. Roman determines, with God's help, to overthrow the wizard. Roman is captured and tortured by the wizard's minions but is miraculously saved only to encounter a myriad of other dangerous situations. Roman and Deirdre's relationship is strengthened as they trust God together for their victories. This is a fast-moving, intense book as the reader is faced with the reality of evil. Those with sensitivities in this area may want to exercise caution in reading this book.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Robin Vandenberg
Secondary Librarian, Snohomish County
Christian School
Mountlake Terrace, Washington

Marian Hostetler
We Knew Jesus
Herald Press, c1994
Paper \$5.95
Gr. 5 - 9

How would we have responded to the Gospel if we were alive when the Lord Jesus walked by

the shore of Galilee? If you have ever pondered this question you will enjoy *We Knew Jesus* as you read the Bible-based accounts from fourteen young people who encounter the Lord. This book should spark the imagination of your students as familiar Bible stories are fleshed out.

You immediately identify with Deborah of Capernaum who experiences the compassion of Jesus and remembers "His eyes were kind." You agonize with Joanna as her father is crucified on the cross next to the Lord and you rejoice with Emma of Emmaus when she finally recognizes the risen Christ. This is a readable book that transports you back in time and helps you to feel and visualize the land and times of Christ's earthly ministry. An index helps students locate the stories they have read in the Bible.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Robin Vandenberg
Secondary Librarian, Snohomish County
Christian School
Mountlake Terrace, Washington

Margaret E. Kelchner
A Shadow From the Heat
Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City,
c1994
Paper \$12.95
Gr. 10 - Adult

Wes Scott, an experienced rider in the old west is on a mission to find and rescue his runaway sister, Testa. On his journey through the desert he discovers and rescues a minister, Hiram Webster, and his daughter, Angela, from outlaws. He undertakes the task of escorting the man and his daughter to the nearest fort for their safety.

As Wes searches for his lost sister and discovers his love for Angela he also renews his faith in God. In his efforts to protect the two women that he loves, he must rely on God who is both protector and provider, "A shadow from the heat" (from the book of Isaiah).

The character growth of each member of the story is only satisfactory. At times the story is predictable. Despite gun fights and rescue scenes it doesn't quite grab the reader's attention and hold it. But it is still well written and appealing. One of author Margaret Kelchner's strong points are the descriptive passages, especially of the desert scenes.

A strong point in the story is the spiritual growth Wes experiences as he moves from a superficial faith to trusting God. He asks God to watch over Angela and Testa, depending on his power to help them all.

The cover art is attractive and professional. This is primarily a love story.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Donna E. Brown
Librarian
Portland, Oregon

Margaret E. Kelchner
Nightsong
Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City,
1995
Paper \$12.95
Gr. 4 - Adult

"Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night?" Job 35:10. Sixteen year old, Rosa Jarden asks herself this question as she encounters the horrors of new America's separation from England. Set in the 1700's, Rosa, daughter of a famous sea captain is forced to remain at home in Castine, Maine. She is grieving. Her mother has just died while on the return voyage from England and her father has had to escape into the night to avoid prison for acts of treason against England. Alone and afraid, Rosa is determined to survive.

Her only trustworthy companions are two black slaves saved from a sinking ship. As Rosa learns to lean upon God for wisdom and strength, she must also set an example of courage for her servants. Rosa bravely accepts her commission as head of her household and challenges the authority of a haughty British soldier who terrorizes Rosa's fellow villagers. Only her good friend, John, knows the danger Rosa is in, but will he be able to escape the Indians and the British lieutenant's schemes?

Rosa's personal growth into a young woman coincides with her deepening faith in God. Her insightful perspective toward life gives renewed hope to those whose lives she touches. Throughout *Nightsong* the verse cited above is the spiritual constant Rosa clings to. Author Margaret Kelchner brings alive early American life and makes the reader feel as though he was just stepping off a ship from England.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Michele Howe
Freelance Writer and Homeschool Mother
LaSalle, Michigan

Madeleine L'Engle
An Acceptable Time
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1989
Trade \$18.00
Gr. 6 - 10

Can time and space overlap allowing a "crossover" into other times? Polly O'Keefe,

sixteen, is excited about all that the New England landscape offers as she enjoys being homeschooled by her grandparents. However, amid the tranquil beauty of the countryside, strange things begin to happen. An acquaintance from her last summer in Greece, Zachary, shows up, pleasantly surprising her. But even more unusual is the appearance of mysterious strangers, seemingly from another era. This intrusion of a "tesseract"--the opening of a time circle to 3,000 years before--seems an impossibility. Yet, soon Polly is able to be transported back in time and then home again. She picks up the basics of the ancient tribe's language and learns, to her horror, that she is to be offered as a blood sacrifice to appease the "gods" and bring much needed rain.

Polly realizes that only Christ has offered the ultimate blood sacrifice, and it is sufficient for all time. But how can she convince two ancient warring tribes that her blood won't bring rain? Zachary is no help as he ignores Polly's warnings and seeks his own healing from the tribal medicine man, putting her in even more danger.

Full of action and interesting ideas, this fantasy reveals the author's belief in the timelessness of proper values and, most importantly, the power of love.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

*Mary McKinney
Freelance Writer and Teacher
Port Orchard, Washington*

**Madeleine L'Engle
The Arm of the Starfish
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1995
Trade \$18.00
Gr. 6 - 10**

Adam Eddington, sixteen and already entering the university to study marine biology, is offered the summer job of a lifetime--to be an assistant to Dr. O'Keefe in top secret marine life studies. This intriguing tale of suspense is placed in the exotic world of a small island off Portugal. But before Adam even leaves the New York airport, he meets beautiful Carolyn (Kali) Cutter, international debutante. Her greeting is more than friendly however, it's a warning to beware of the very man with whom he'll be working.

Adam faces a confusing decision: he must choose sides, but which side is which?

Amid kidnappings, threats, and bribery, the enemy finally begins to be made known and Adam joins Dr. O'Keefe full-heartedly as he nears a medical marvel. He has found success in linking the natural regrowth of lost limbs on

the starfish to the possible regeneration of limbs in humans. Now Adam willingly faces a complicated and dangerous hand-off of the secret papers that contain information on the highly secretive experiments.

The story is exciting and sure to catch the interest of young teens. The main thrust of the research project is based on the theory of evolution, which is only mentioned on two different pages. Basic moral standards and belief in God are presented throughout the book.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

*Mary McKinney
Freelance Writer and Teacher
Port Orchard, Washington*

**Madeleine L'Engle
Troubling a Star
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1994
Trade \$16.00
Gr. 6 - 10**

Real live princes, an exciting voyage to Antarctica, and foul play seem far removed to Vicky Austin as she tries to settle into the routine of school in her old home town in Connecticut. Her last year in New York had been so much more exciting, and her close friendship with Adam Eddington really seemed to be blossoming. But now she faces the dreariness of the familiar and boring everyday routines. This is soon to change as Adam introduces Vicky to his great Aunt Serena.

Aunt Serena takes a liking to Vicky and even buys her a ticket for a coveted trip to Antarctica where her own son used to do scientific research, and where Adam just happens to be going for his studies. Vicky is thrilled until strange and dangerous things begin to occur. The admiration and interest of two young men, a prince of a small country who is also a fellow passenger, and a young foreign soldier, become suspect, as does everyone until Vicky can find the trouble. Unfortunately, it finds her and she must face a life-threatening situation, being stranded on a floating iceberg in the middle of the frigid ocean.

This adventure is sure to peak the interest of the mystery lover. An added plus is the interesting information presented about the little known Antarctic landscape and wildlife, making this an educational as well as entertaining book. The theory of evolution is mentioned in passing but should not detract from the sound storyline.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

*Mary McKinney
Freelance Writer and Teacher
Port Orchard, Washington*

**Katharine E. Matchette
Libby's Choice
DeKa Press, 1995
Paper \$8.75
Gr. 7 - 12**

Libby's Choice by Katharine Matchette is an historical novel for young adults. The book begins with Libby's arrival in Boston as an indentured servant. She and her father are Puritans who have left the poverty of London for a new life among fellow Puritans.

One of Libby's first experiences in the new world is the sight of a man held captive in a pillory (stocks). As she passes, Libby realizes that this is the man who saved her father's life aboard their ship. He is a kind and gentle man but her new employer tells her that he is "a godless Quaker" and that Puritans "cannot tolerate such evil."

Libby experiences many good things in her new home but struggles with her personal beliefs when the actions of those around her seem to contradict what she has read in the Bible.

Libby is taken captive by Indians, then released near the Quaker community of Providence, Rhode Island. She is drawn to their faith and way of life but is honor bound to return to her employer and fulfill her contract.

When she returns, she finds that the Puritans will not allow her to hold a sympathetic view toward the Quakers. She must renounce them or be punished in the stocks. Libby is forced to choose between Puritan beliefs and those of the Quakers she has come to admire.

The Quakers are presented as gentle and kind, the Puritans as narrowminded and selfrighteous, persecuting those who disagree with them. Other historical accounts give a more complete picture of the Puritans and their devotion to God and each other. In an historical note, the author explains that many common people among the Puritans opposed the abuse the Quakers received. But this was not included in the story.

The book is well written, fast paced, and interesting. Similar in style to many historical novels for teens, it might appeal to either a secular or Christian audience.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

*Donna E. Brown
Librarian
Portland, Oregon*

Rich Miller
To My Dear Slimeball
Harvest House, c1995
Paper \$7.99
Gr. 7 - Adult

Slimeball, a master-demon, is cast as one of Satan's prime messengers in the world. His assignment is to teach Spitwad, an apprentice demon, how to convince a fifteen-year-old high school student, David, that it is in his best interest to leave Christ out of his life. Though the battle for David's soul is intense, Slimeball and Spitwad ultimately fail in their mission. David chooses Christ's way.

The book is a masterful and realistic portrayal of Satan's schemes and his attempt through society and individuals to destroy the youth of today. The reader gains insight into Satan's deceptive ways and learns how to defeat him. David's secret thoughts and weaknesses are exposed and Satan's messengers capitalize on this by manipulating and confusing David. The banter between Slimeball and Spitwad is cleverly written and quite revealing, as it takes the reader on an insightful journey into the destructive workings of Satan.

The last chapter entitled "Steps to Freedom in Christ" provides a simple seven-step process by which an individual can choose to be released from Satan's bondage and empowered instead by the freedom Christ offers. Though written primarily for youth, the book's message is an "eye opener" for adults as well.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Dian Wesley
Teacher, Wesleyan Christian School
Vashon Island, Washington

Ruth Nulton Moore
Mystery of the Missing Stallions
(Sara and Sam Series ; 6)
Herald Press, 1987
Paper \$5.95
Gr. 5 - 9

The Sara and Sam Series tells the adventures of the teenage Harmon twins. It pursues one mystery after another in much the same manner as the Nancy Drew or Hardy Boy series. The main difference is that Sara and Sam have faith in God and use that faith to help others. Each book is complete in itself; it is not necessary to read them in sequence.

Book One, *Mystery of the Missing Stallions*, begins when the Harmon family moves to a farm just outside the small town of Maplewood, Pennsylvania. Strange things begin to happen as soon as the family arrives. When the twins start investigating, Sam is frightened away

from an abandoned cabin by a weird cry and Sara is deliberately locked in the cabin cellar.

The solution to the mystery of the cabin helps solve the disappearance of three thoroughbred stallions from a neighbor's stable.

Sara and Sam help two Vietnamese brothers learn about God. However, the twins have a tendency to deliberately keep secrets from their parents when they know that knowledge might keep them from doing what they want. For example:

"Sara hoped Sam wouldn't say anything about finding her in the cellar hole of the cabin. If Mom and Dad knew...they might not let them go back to the cabin."

"Let's keep this to ourselves...my dad might not like the idea of our nosing around Spirit Lake again."

"Neither Sara nor Sam mentioned the shadow in the...they didn't want to worry their father so that he wouldn't think it safe for them to return to Silver Canyon."

On the whole, the series is entertaining and each book teaches some lesson in interpersonal relationships.

Other titles in the series:

- Ghost Town Mystery
- Mystery at the Spanish Castle
- Mystery of the Lost Heirloom
- Mystery of the Secret Code
- Mystery at Camp Ichthus

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Myrtlema Pittman Crane
Freelance Writer, Editor, Speaker
Alderwood Manor, Washington

Gilbert Morris
Sound the Trumpet
(The Liberty Bell; 1)
Bethany House, 1995
Paper \$8.99
Gr. 7 - 12

When their mother dies in 1743, young Daniel and Lyna Bradford are sent to a London workhouse. When Sir Edmund Rochester offers them both positions in his household, it seems like an answer to prayer. However, his wastrel son Leo continually attacks Lyna's virtue and Daniel's protection. Eventually, Daniel enlists in the British army, promising to return for Lyna when he's earned enough money.

A visit turns disastrous when Leo assaults Lyna and Daniel leaps to her defense. The men struggle for Leo's gun, and Leo is wounded. Daniel is sentenced to the infamous Dartmoor prison for attempted manslaughter.

Lyna flees, disguised as a man, and works as a servant for Leslie Gordon, a British officer. They eventually marry and are posted to India. Leo cruelly tells her Daniel has died; he does the same to Daniel. He offers Daniel a position on his Virginia plantation as an indentured servant. When Daniel's indenture is over, he opens a smithy and eventually owns a foundry.

Daniel and Lyna are reunited when Leslie Gordon is posted to America. His son is a member of the Sons of Liberty, of which George Washington was an early patron. The novel ends somewhat abruptly with the battles at Lexington and Concord.

Morris has written sixty novels, and his professionalism shines through. However, conditions in England are much more clearly explained than the reason for the conflicts in the New World. Also, readers expecting a strong Christian message will be disappointed. God is seldom mentioned in decision making until the end when Daniel forgoes an affair with a married woman. Historical novels usually make good classroom supplements. This book, however, is halfway over before the educational details begin. Finally, Morris uses overworked plot devices. Because there is a sequel, no conflicts are resolved. A better choice for studying the Revolution through fiction is Esther Forbes' *Johnny Tremain*.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Kathleen T. Choi
Retired Teacher
Hilo, Hawaii

Janette Oke
Love Comes Softly
(Love Comes Softly; 1)
Bethany House, 1979
Paper \$7.99
Gr. 7 - Adult

Young and vulnerable, Marty is overwhelmed at having to face the harsh realities life has brought her way: the loss of her husband, expecting a first child, and being stranded in the harsh frontier alone. Expediency dictates she remarry immediately--a young widower with a small child--while the minister is in the area. Although agreeing to the marriage, Marty's fierce independence surfaces, and she determines to prove she can survive in this formidable land.

Through frustrating and often humorous situations, Marty matures as the Lord works in

her life. Marty, a representation of every woman at some point in their life, discovers the gentle, yet solid love that reflects her newfound faith. Truly, love comes softly.

The Love Comes Softly series is tender and inspiring as each story focuses on the struggles and triumphs of early pioneers. As the series unfolds, the reader grows with the family and shares in both the godly nurturing offered and the hardships and joys that are faced. Janette Oke skillfully and sensitively portrays each character with depth and realism. Although the problems are often unique to the era, the human needs, hurts, and victories span time and space. Her insight into humankind allows the reader to relate to frailties and frustrations as well as the quiet strength the Lord supplies. The dignity and honesty portrayed by the characters prove that a successful life cannot be measured by accomplishments alone, but by one's heart attitude toward others.

Each book can be read alone, yet the stories build on each other as the author develops relationships and family ties.

Other titles in this series:

- Love's Enduring Promise ; 2
- Love's Long Journey ; 3
- Love's Abiding Joy ; 4
- Love's Unending Legacy ; 5
- Love's Unfolding Dream ; 6
- Love Takes Wing ; 7
- Love Finds a Home ; 8

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Mary McKinney
Freelance Writer and Teacher
Port Orchard, Washington

Janette Oke
A Bride for Donnigan
(Women of the West)
Bethany House, c1993
Paper \$7.99
Gr. 7 - 12

Prolific author Janette Oke captivates readers with this Cinderella story, *A Bride For Donnigan*. The novel, one of her Women of the West Series, opens in London when young Kathleen O'Malley reads a posted advertisement for mail-order brides in America. Kathleen is initially appalled that anyone would consider becoming a bride or receiving one, sight unseen.

Within days, however, Kathleen's life circumstances make it impossible for her to

stay with her uncaring stepmother any longer. The advertisement she was once troubled by becomes an opportunity she cannot resist. Kathleen boards the ship and her quest for a new life and a husband in the American West begins.

Throughout the book Oke skillfully parallels Kathleen's thoughts and actions during her voyage with Donnigan's in America. The reader is privy to Donnigan's expectations for their life together and Kathleen's notion of what a "proper" bride should be according to the rather ill advised instructions of her stepmother. Throughout the book, the reader anticipates complications and is not disappointed when they occur. But the fun in the novel is in watching Kathleen and Donnigan work through their misunderstandings.

Oke spins a fine yarn and transports her readers into the lives of Kathleen, Donnigan, their children and friends. The novel is absorbing, compelling and entertaining. The only difficulty with the book is that it ended too quickly!

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Karen Orfitelli
English Teacher
Cornerstone Christian School
Manchester, Connecticut

Janette Oke
A Woman Named Damaris
(Women of the West)
Bethany House, c1991
Paper \$7.99
Gr. 9 - Adult

After giving Damaris the family heirlooms, her mother tells her that since she is almost fifteen, she is old enough to make choices that can change her life to escape the abuses of her alcoholic father. Damaris makes her escape the next time her father goes to town on another drinking binge.

In an effort to put many miles between herself and her father she is able to hitch a ride with a family traveling west in a wagon train in exchange for taking care of the children. She is kept busy from dawn to dusk with no time for herself. Upon arrival at the family's destination, Damaris leaves them to secure three part time jobs in town to earn her room, board, and a little extra money for herself.

Through the help of Miss Dover, the seamstress that she works for, Damaris learns the special meaning of her name, where it is found in the Bible, and how to release the fear and bitterness from the past into the care of a loving Heavenly Father.

Her life makes a dramatic change when she feels God calling her to take care of three small children from the same kind of abusive background as her own. With the help of Gil, Miss Dover's adopted son, Damaris is able to clean the house up enough to take care of the children in their own home. Not long after, she realizes that through the years of becoming acquainted with Gil, here is a man who can be trusted, respected and yes, she has fallen in love. Together they will be able to make a complete and happy family.

In this captivating story the author portrays the effects of alcoholism on a family and that in spite of a harsh up-bringing our destiny can be steered by the choices each one of us make.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Debbie Lindsay
Homeschool Parent
Eatonville, Washington

Janette Oke
Heart of the Wilderness
(Women of the West)
Bethany House, c1993
Paper \$7.99
Gr. 7 - 12

In the latest book in her Women of the West Series, *Heart of the Wilderness*, Oke sets the main portion of her story in the backwoods of the northern wilderness. Kendra Marty, who is only three years old when the story opens, is orphaned by a river accident. Kendra has been brought to a local orphanage to await the arrival of her grandfather, George McMannus.

George, a trapper who lives alone in the isolated back woods, spends a number of days traveling to the orphanage. As Kendra's only living relative, he knows the job falls to him to find a good home for her. Surely, his rustic, isolated cabin is no life for a child. Besides, George rationalizes, his own wife has been dead for many years and an old trapper like himself could never bring up a small child.

Moments after they meet, George knows that no one on earth will separate him from his beautiful granddaughter. It is not long before Kendra and George make the long trek back to the wilderness. George is certain that Nonie, a trusted Indian woman, will care for Kendra during the long hours when he is trapping.

Oke brings us through Kendra's growing years up until it is time for her to leave her wilderness existence and make her way back into a world she's never known. Will Kendra be able to adjust to college life in the city with customs she's never heard of?

Once again, Oke catapults her readers from the beginning to the end of this fine novel by unpredictable twists and turns in the plot.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Karen Orfitelli
English Teacher
Cornerstone Christian School
Manchester, Connecticut

Janette Oke
Julia's Last Hope
(Women of the West)
Bethany House, 1990
Paper \$7.99
Gr. 7 - 12

Julia's Last Hope, another winner from Janette Oke's Women of the West series, is set in Calder Springs, a remote lumber town tucked in the heart of the Canadian Rocky Mountains. In Calder Springs, we are introduced to John and Julia Harrigan and their two daughters, Felicity and Jennifer.

The opening sentence signals readers that disaster is about to occur. We quickly find that the local timber supply has been depleted and the lumber mill, which employed almost every man in Calder Springs, is closing. Without the mill to supply their salaries, the residents soon abandon their homes, relocate, and begin life somewhere else.

During the crisis of Calder Springs becoming a ghost town, Julia Harrigan decides that she must do all she can to save the beautiful home her husband built for her and their girls. After all, she is certain it would crush him if they had to leave. Julia plans to make their town into an attractive resort area by banding together with the few families who are left. Julia and her friends fix up deserted buildings, plant flowers around the town, and stock a local store with handicrafts in hopes of attracting people for a quiet, restful vacation.

As Julia attempts to make this business work for the sake of her husband and her town, we meet the people who stay in the Harrigan's home for their vacations. It is not long into the business that Julia finds out exactly how difficult it can be to open her home to strangers.

In the end, Julia discovers not only a great deal about herself, but also uncovers a secret about her husband's true feelings.

Oke's novel is quick, engrossing reading and is refreshingly unpredictable. One of the unmarried girls who stays with the Harrigan's is pregnant. Oke handles this with good taste while demonstrating that the young lady needs love, not condemnation.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Karen Orfitelli
English Teacher
Cornerstone Christian School
Manchester, Connecticut

Janette Oke
Roses for Mama
(Women of the West)
Bethany House, c1991
Paper \$7.99
Gr. 7 - 12

At the age of seventeen, Angela is left to be mother to her three younger siblings after losing both parents within a year. Her biggest fear is that she will not be able to instill the values in them that were a part of her training. When her younger sister Louise begins to question her authority, Angela has to turn to the Lord for wisdom.

Angela's life suddenly changes with the arrival of their dying neighbor's wealthy son from the city. Her short engagement to Carter Stratton ends suddenly when Angela discovers that Carter expects to hire a housekeeper to look after her brother and sisters, while she expects to continue to care for them.

Although it hurts Angela to have her friend marry Carter within a very short time, she realizes that God has saved her from an unhappy marriage. When Thane, Thomas's best friend, whose friendship she has taken for granted, asks to call on her, she comes to realize how important he is to her.

On the morning of her wedding to Thane, her family plays the memory game together, an activity they began to help the younger siblings remember their parents and the godly values they wished for their children to have. Angela's memory explains the title of the book.

This story, filled with home grown advice, has a clear salvation message and many words of simple wisdom and encouragement for the hardships in life.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Esther Knaupp
Librarian and High School English Teacher
Santiam Christian School
Corvallis, Oregon

Janette Oke
The Calling of Emily Evans
(Women of the West)
Bethany House, c1990
Paper \$7.99
Gr. 9 - Adult

Getting herself through two years of Bible School was a struggle for Emily Evans. But it is well worth it in her estimation when she receives a call to raise up a church in a small town a two day journey away from her family. Because of her fragile constitution and the fact she is only a young woman, her father is hesitant to allow her to go, but she insists she must answer the call to do this work for the Lord.

Beginning with the second day of her trip she encounters many trials that test her faith with the people she tries to contact, nurturing church growth and just making ends meet. Through these painful and disappointing experiences she is determined to trust the Lord to provide the answers.

Emily becomes acquainted with a young man named Shad who has turned his back on his call from the Lord. He expresses his desire to come calling, but Emily realizes that even though she is strongly attracted to him, she has to be true to the Lord and the counsel to not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

After several years and due to her firm example Shad returns to let her know how her commitment to principle helped change the direction of his life.

The story focuses on seeking God's will in the search for a life companion; to wait for someone who shares that commitment and does not seek to rob it. The author addresses how a "no" answer from God works out for the best and how those who seem hopelessly lost can be the closest to the kingdom of God.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Debbie Lindsay
Homeschool Parent
Eatonville, Washington

Janette Oke
The Measure of a Heart
(Women of the West)
Bethany House, c1992
Paper \$7.99
Gr. 9 - Adult

Shy little Anna is pleased to present to her mother her eighth grade certificate of graduation with first class honors. She loves school and wishes to learn more, but she has reached the end of her last year and knows she will be needed to help at home. While making

one of her regular milk deliveries, she meets Austin, a young seminary student who offers to loan his books for her to read. All through the summer, Anna reads and borrows more books. Austin is slowly able to get her to discuss what she has read. They keep up this exchange of books and ideas through the mail during Austin's two years of schooling.

Austin invites Anna to his graduation ceremony and is surprised to see, not the girl he has come to know as a little sister, but a beautiful woman. Love and marriage soon follow. They are sent to minister and build a church in a small town. Agonizing through trials, hardships, feelings of guilt and inadequacy, they eventually realize that God accepts the little we have as long we release all we are to him to work for his glory. The results are then in the hands of God.

True to her form, the author addresses another part of our humanity, weaving it into this story. Those who are shy, who feel backwards and inadequate, and think they have nothing to offer to God learn that what pleases God is the faithful dispatching of daily duties, the "gentle and quiet spirit which is of great worth in God's sight." (1 Peter 3:4)

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

*Debbie Lindsay
Homeschool Parent
Eatonville, Washington*

**Janette Oke
They Called Her Mrs. Doc
(Women of the West)
Bethany House, c1992
Paper \$7.99
Gr. 9 - Adult**

As the daughter of a prestigious physician and educator, Cassandra is brought up with all the class and refinement Montreal has to offer. Dr. Winston usually chooses several young interns as proteges to help them up the ladder of success. This brings about many occasions for them to have dinner and spend evenings in lengthy discussions with the esteemed doctor.

At seventeen, Cassandra is old enough to enter into the discussions around the dinner table, which affords her an opportunity to eye the young interns. One evening, she is surprised to have the most studious of the interns express his desire to come calling.

Samuel Smith and Cassandra Winston marry and move to the western frontier of Canada; he to fulfill his dream of setting up a practice in his home town; she to follow her love but with the hope of changing his mind and returning to a practice in the East. Bored and unhappy with her husband's demanding schedule, she

becomes homesick for Montreal. She realizes, when expecting her first child, that she has to postpone plans to visit home. Through a friendship with a woman close to her age, Cassandra realizes that she does not really know Christ and that only with his help will she be able to change her attitude, make the best of her circumstances, and be a good support for her husband.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

*Debbie Lindsay
Homeschool Parent
Eatonville, Washington*

**Janette Oke
Too Long a Stranger
(Women of the West)
Bethany House, c1994
Paper \$7.99
Gr. 7 - 12**

When her husband dies suddenly in a tragic accident, Sarah Perry has to decide how she will provide for her one-year-old daughter, Rebecca. Despite doubts and opposition of many in her Western town, Sarah continues the delivery service that her husband Michael started.

With Michael gone, Rebecca became Sarah's reason for living. With the help of Mrs. Galavan, a neighbor who watches over little Rebecca during the day, Sarah is able to make just enough to care for herself and her daughter. After grueling days of work, evenings with Rebecca are all too short. When Rebecca begins to prefer staying with the Galavans to returning home with her mother, Sarah is terribly hurt.

Fearing that Rebecca will grow up lacking culture, Sarah sends her off to a boarding school in the East. She works herself to exhaustion to provide for her daughter's every need while she survives on almost nothing.

Several years later, upon graduation, Rebecca returns home to a mother who is a stranger. She is embarrassed by her mother's rough, unfeminine appearance.

Having given up everything for her daughter, Sarah realizes that they have nothing in common and don't even share the same values. Exchanging harsh words with her mother, Rebecca asks for a train ticket to the East. Before she can leave, circumstances take place that change her heart and mind.

This poignant story cuts through to the real values in life and shows the need for dependence on God in the circumstances that come into our lives.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

*Esther Knaupp
Librarian and High School English Teacher
Santiam Christian School
Corvallis, Oregon*

**Susan Olasky
Annie Henry and the Secret
Mission
(Adventures of the American
Revolution; 1)
Crossway Books, c1995
Paper \$4.99
Gr. 6 - 12**

Annie Henry is the daughter of American patriot Patrick Henry. The year is 1774, and Patrick is away much of the time. Annie is bored and lonely. Her high spirits lead to a series of adventures that alternately frighten and delight her famous father.

On the minus side, she disappears without telling anyone where she is going, eavesdrops on adult conversations, and breaks her arm. On the plus side, she warns farmers of an approaching fire. She also keeps a Tory spy from reporting the text of Patrick Henry's famous speech, "As for me, give me liberty or give me death." Annie also knows heartbreak as her lovely mother descends into madness and dies.

In the Author's Note, Olasky says there really was an Annie Henry and that she's incorporated Patrick Henry's actual words and actions into the plot. She has also researched life in colonial times. This history teacher found no inaccuracies. Olasky has also done a good job of explaining the causes of the Revolution. Her series, of which this is the first volume, will reveal Patrick Henry's Christian principles, a topic not often found in textbooks. She's not afraid to show our forefathers' faults either, notably when Annie criticizes Patrick for keeping slaves.

The book cover puts the reading level at grades 8 through 12. The style is simple enough, though, that many younger students should have no difficulty following and enjoying this delightful story.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

*Kathleen T. Choi
Retired Teacher
Hilo, Hawaii*

Michael R. Phillips and Judith Pella
My Father's World
(The Journals of Corrie Belle Hollister; 1)
Bethany House, c1990
Paper \$8.99
Gr. 8 - Adult

Fifteen-year-old Corrie Belle Hollister is thrust into the responsibility of getting her younger brothers and sisters the rest of the way to California when their mother dies of the fever during their trek west with a wagon train. Somewhere in the rough gold mining town of Miracle Springs her mother's brother, Uncle Nick, has a small ranch. Finding that their uncle is out of town hiding from the law, they are reluctantly taken in by Nick's partner. This partner is none other than their own father who had deserted the family seven years earlier because of some entanglement with the law while trying to rescue Nick. The ranch turns out to be a small, dirty cabin on a gold mining claim. Corrie rises to the occasion to make it as much of a home as possible for her siblings.

This is a poignant story of acceptance and forgiveness between a father and his children as the father realizes his mistakes in leaving his family and his desires to make up for his past by being the best "Pa" he can be.

This begins a delightful series of historical fiction set in the early years of the state of California and written in first person narrative in the style of a journal. Each book takes up the story from the last one and leads the reader through the life and decisions of an adolescent girl to mature womanhood. Corrie's faith in God blossoms. Her dreams of becoming a writer for a prestigious newspaper take her on journeys she never even dreamed of. She is swept off her feet in an exciting fairy tale romance with an ambitious young man whose goals are not spiritual until Corrie realizes that to remain single is far better than marriage to the wrong person. Her quest for God's complete will in life ends by meeting a man who has the same goals and commitments and the desire to share it with others as man and wife. There are a few episodes of mild violence when the forces of evil seek to gain the upper hand but each situation is appropriately handled. Occasionally the story gets somewhat bogged down during times of character introspection and especially in the last book with the inclusion of quite a few letters between Corrie and her fiancée as they share their thoughts.

Other titles in this series:

Daughter of Grace ; 2

On the Trail of the Truth ; 3
A Place in the Sun ; 4
Sea to Shining Sea ; 5
Into the Long Dark Night ; 6
Land of the Brave and the Free ; 7
A Home for the Heart ; 8

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Debbie Lindsay
Home School Parent
Eatonville, Washington

Sara Tatham
Because of Thomas
Bob Jones University Press, c1995
Paper \$6.49
Gr. 7 - 12

The only non-Christian in her family, fifteen-year-old Liz is determined about two things: not becoming a Christian and not returning to Christian school. As family and friends talk to her about giving her life to God, Liz tells them she just wants to be her own person, but they don't seem to understand. Even her older brother Thomas, whom Liz has always been close to, doesn't understand. The story is complicated by Thomas' failing health—he has muscular dystrophy and has lived longer than most victims of the disease.

Because of Thomas begins slowly, but readers can get involved in Liz's problems, especially once Thomas is taken to the hospital in a coma. Some romantic interest is added via Steve, a friend of Thomas', who always seems to be there when Liz needs help. Steve is a Christian as well and spends time explaining how God has helped him.

It isn't until after Thomas dies that Liz realizes she, too, needs the peace of God and is willing to give up her independence. Unfortunately, the motivation for her decision isn't completely clear. Is it mostly based on Liz's desire to be reunited with Thomas? Or is it based on her conviction that she is a sinner and needs to accept God herself?

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Sue Ford
Freelance Writer
Renton, Washington

Theodore Taylor
Stranger From the Sea : Teetoncey
(The Outer Banks Trilogy; 1)
Avon Books, 1973
Paper \$3.99
Gr. 6 - 8

The Outer Banks trilogy tells the story of thirteen-year-old Ben O'Neal and a British girl nicknamed Teetoncey. Ben lives with his widowed mother on an island off the North Carolina coast. Most of the men on the island work as the lighthouse and rescuing boats and people in trouble during bad storms. Following one such storm, Ben is out on the beach with the surfmen when he finds a British girl washed up on the sand. They learn who she is, find sunken treasure she knew to be on the ship, and, after many adventures, get her back to her home in London. The characters are strong and realistic. These books are not only entertaining, but educational as well.

Theodore Taylor introduces his readers to people and places with such good description and flair that the beaches, ships, and docks become so real that the reader can nearly see and smell them. However, this trilogy might best be used as a class study or read aloud to students. Nautical terms are used which might need to be defined, and the beginning of the first book is a bit hard to follow because of big words and difficult phrasing. The teacher or parent may want to discuss some parts of the story with the student from a Christian viewpoint. For example: the people that live on these outer banks of Carolina are extremely superstitious and put much stock in luck and fate. Some believe in ghosts and some swear. Aside from these matters, the books are an excellent choice for the middle school student and should not be overlooked. The books in this series tie together and should be read in order.

Other titles in this series:

Box of Treasures: Teetoncey and Ben O'Neal

Into the Wind: The Odyssey of Ben O'Neal

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Sharon Westra
Librarian, Mt. Vernon Christian School
Mt. Vernon, Washington

Teresa Whitten
With the Eyes of the Heart
St. Paul Books & Media, c1993
Paper \$4.95
Gr. 6 12

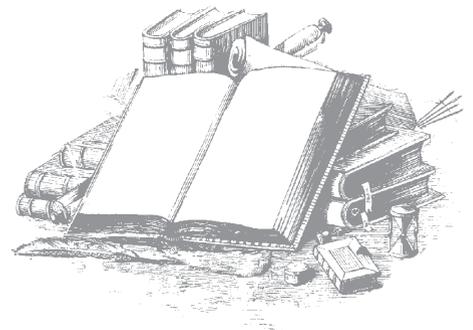
It took the friendship of a blind neighbor to draw Jeanne out of self-pity, self-indulgence, and low self-image. Step by step, author Teresa Whitten outlines Jeanne's growth into a wise and caring young lady whose values undergo a dramatic positive upheaval. Whitten courageously addresses several of life's perplexities. Her finest portrayals show Jeanne thinking of ways to help her blind friend and a dying child. She overcomes her own anger over her mother's death and other root causes of her overweight. Jeanne discovers her "need to feel needed," and blooms into a radiant young woman. While some may not agree with the author's ideas regarding life beyond the grave or the efficacy of prayer to departed loved ones, healthy tolerance toward the beliefs of others is a valuable asset, and reading this book could engender that quality.

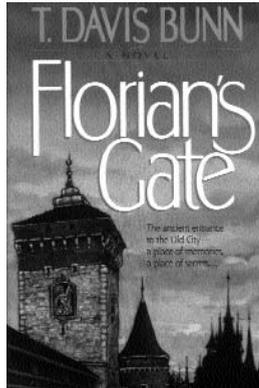
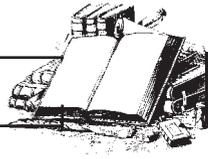
◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Olivia Wheatley Stachorek
Freelance Writer
Carlsborg, Washington

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T. Davis Bunn
Florian's Gate
 (The Priceless Collection; 1)
 Bethany House, 1992
 Paper \$8.99
 Gr. 9 - Adult

Jeffrey Sinclair is a young man living in London, learning his uncle's antique business from the ground up. Alexander Kantor, the uncle, spends much of his time abroad purchasing priceless antiques for his London shop. But his sources of contact and travel destinations are a mystery to all. Katya Nichols is a young woman with whom Jeffrey finds himself falling in love though she too has secrets which tend to keep Jeffrey at arm's length.

Florian's Gate is a moving account of Jeffrey's coming of age in the antique world while taking another look at the faith he left by the wayside years before. The business takes Jeffrey and Katya into both Germany and Poland and the reader is given moving descriptions of present day Eastern Europe and a people who have little left in life that brings them joy or even hope. Bunn emphasizes the integrity of a few in a profession that can be less than ethical, as well as the hope and faith of a simple monk.

The book is well researched and gives vivid descriptions of priceless antiques and a heartfelt glimpse into poverty stricken present day Eastern Europe. *Florian's Gate* is well written and causes the reader to look at both the quality and depth of his own faith, especially in light of the freedom and quality of life we tend to take for granted.

Bunn has written two sequels to *Florian's Gate*: *The Amber Room* and *Winter Palace*. They are better read as a series than separately.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Sherri Taplett
Mom and Book Lover
East Wenatchee, Washington

T. Davis Bunn
The Presence
 Bethany House, 1990
 Paper \$9.99
 Gr. 10 - Adult

T. J. Case is a state legislator who lost his last election when he supported a candidate from the other party. He brings that same independence to his new position as a White House staffer specializing in education issues. An African-American, Case believes we need to fund programs for gifted children as much, or more, than we support remedial education.

Also a committed Christian, Case seeks out coworkers with whom to pray and study the Bible. His prayer group grows rapidly until even the President and First Lady attend. Case loses his boss' support, however, when he publicly calls for a national school voucher program.

Meanwhile Case's wife and their millionaire friend Jeremy Hughes have become involved with the Community of Hope, a ministry to homeless and impoverished residents of Washington, D.C. They discover some of the business and political interests behind the ministry to be substandard. Those interests, in turn, consider Case and his followers a growing irritant. Living the Christian faith in the nation's capital becomes both spiritually and physically dangerous for Case.

Bunn is a polished writer with a series of historical novels to his credit. Former White House staffer Chuck Colson assisted Bunn in writing this novel. Its sequel, *Promises to Keep*, continues Bunn's exploration of political issues with a plot concerning runaways and child pornography.

Promises to Keep

T.J. Case and his wife are dead in a mysterious explosion, and Jeremy Hughes is helping the Community of Hope build low-cost housing for

our capital's poorest residents. He's working at headquarters when Duncan Wyeth drops off some used clothes. Wyeth is a private investigator specializing in runaways. He's seeking two girls: Arlene Sambini and Jessica Biggs.

Jessica is the daughter of a prominent Washington lobbyist. The girls were last seen with a country club lifeguard whom police sources tell Wyeth is a known procurer for pornography and prostitution. Hughes learns that the lifeguard is headed for the West Coast and offers to join Wyeth's pursuit--if he can share his faith as well as the driving.

The Holy Spirit is also working in the heart of Senator Richard Atterly. The senator faithfully attended T. J. Case's prayer sessions. Now he feels led to introduce an obscenity statute with sufficient enforcement powers to seriously curtail the production and sale of child pornography. Paralleling Atterly's growth as a Christian legislator is the decline of his colleague John Silverwood, who is being sucked into the sexual and financial corruption that tempts so many politicians.

Atterly asks Christians to support his legislation and is astonished by the number of volunteers. Eventually he calls for a national Solemn Assembly in which the country will repent of its corruption and recommit itself to the Gospel virtues upon which it was founded.

The conclusion of both the search for the lost girls and the national gathering are believably described, as are the problems that still face Christian lawmakers. Bunn also appends a small primer on the legislative process and the issue of pornography that parents and teachers will find important and informative.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Kathleen T. Choi
Retired Teacher
Hilo, Hawaii

T. Davis Bunn
Riders of the Pale Horse
 Bethany House, c1994
 Paper \$9.99
 Gr. 10 - Adult

Tom Clancy and Frederick Forsythe are two of the big name authors who have tackled the

dangers of nuclear terrorism. Bunn blends that suspenseful plot device with two likable lead characters (Wade D. Waters, medical missionary, and foreign service officer, Allison Taylor) and a setting that stretches thousands of miles from the bare steppes of the Caucasus Mountains to the crowded souks of Jordan.

As always, Bunn grounds his story solidly in factual detail. He knows and explains the tribal and ethnic animosities once held in check by Soviet power, now spreading like a forest fire across Eastern Europe and western Asia. He carefully distinguishes between those Muslims who consider Christians and Jews their cousins in faith and the Islamic fundamentalists who have vowed to convert or kill the world's population, beginning with the continent of Africa.

Bunn is at the top of his storytelling powers here. Waters considers himself a coward until a rogue mercenary signs on to help him transport medical supplies to the farthest reaches of the former Soviet Union. Continually pushed to do more than he believes himself capable, he grows more confident of both his own skills and God's support.

Allison is eager to make a success of her first effort as a foreign agent, but she's also increasingly drawn to the work of Ben Shannon's medical clinic in remote Jordan and to the courageous, courteous, and devout peasants who are his patients. Their trust in Allah (and Saddam Hussein) forces her to examine her religious assumptions more closely.

Few real devils are in this novel. Bunn shows compassion even toward the mountain brigands who steal to keep their families alive, the communists who honestly believed they were creating a fairer world, and the Muslims who hate the West's obsession with sex and money. He has faithfully obeyed the command to hate the sin and love the sinner.

Teenagers will enjoy the topical plot, fast pace, likable characters (even the mercenary has his softer moments). They will also benefit from Bunn's demonstration that religion cannot be divorced from economics or politics, that God is the Lord of all our life.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Kathleen T. Choi
Retired Teacher
Hilo, Hawaii

T. Davis Bunn
The Gift
Bethany House, c1994
Trade \$10.99
Gr. 9 - Adult

In beautifully understated, expressive language, T. Davis Bunn gently examines not only the Gift of the Crucifixion, but also its affirmative gifts--life, comfort, hope and peace--portrayed in the lives of two women who share a hospital room for a week of physical healing and spiritual renewal. Grace Mendez, a sixty-eight-year-old Hispanic of great faith, comes to the hospital for hip surgery with the help of her son, John, widower and father of little Carmelita. Working at a construction site shortly thereafter, John rescues young, independent, career-minded Leslie Denton when her high heel catches in an outdoor escalator and she falls, cracking her ankle. Proud Leslie meets Grace in the only space available--Grace's private room.

Bunn uses charming Carmelita's innocent, probing questions and natural child-like exuberance to facilitate and enhance the sharing of spiritual gifts between the two women. The Lord draws Grace near to him as she practices listening in prayer, revealing the atonement to her and the reader in radiant detail. When Leslie, angry and frustrated, looks honestly within herself, expressing her feelings verbally, Grace ministers to her with the gifts of comfort and peace. Hearing Grace humbly disclose hidden, shameful hurts from childhood, Leslie ministers in return with a gentle gift of caring. While Leslie learns not to judge others by outward appearances, Grace acknowledges change as part of her future.

The Gift is truly a treasure to give the teenager or the senior citizen. Bunn's delicate message is that God gives rich gifts to open, listening hearts. Eternal life, God's greatest gift, shines through Bunn's simple prose. The gift of peace gives all other gifts unity. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you... Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14: 27 NIV) God's message to all, as it is to Grace, is COME.

The Quilt

Mary approaches the end of her sweet and winsome years, a lifetime offering to others of listening and love. But the Lord whispers a last request of her gnarled, twisted fingers--one more exquisite quilt. Facing squarely the concerned objections of her younger son, Everett, the big-bellied businessman, and the alarm of townsfolk, who believe the project beyond her strength, Mary determines to obey the Lord. When her two daughters-in-law, Jody and Lou Ann, and several of their friends insist on helping her, Mary graciously accepts with

one stipulation: each woman must offer a prayer of thanksgiving with every stitch sewn into this special quilt. The reader's heartbeat quickens with surprise to learn what fabrics Mary plans to use. Over the frame built by the rough hands of Mary's elder son, Jonas, the women who have long taken advice and comfort from Mary work in quiet reverence, changing and growing in their personal relationships to God and to their families through continually giving thanks to him in their task.

The theme skillfully embedded by Bunn, "Glorify God and give thanks to him," comes clearly through Mary to the reader, who will identify with her as a special grandmother. With a small size and only 125 pages, *The Quilt* makes an ideal gift or read-aloud book.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Rhonda Marie Lackey
Writer, Former Teacher/Librarian
Seattle, Washington

T. Davis Bunn
The Maestro
Bethany House, c1991
Paper \$8.95
Gr. 7 - Adult

Giovanni di Alta, nicknamed Gianni or "maestro," is a superb classical and pop guitarist with a large Italian following. His fame has brought him material comfort, a steady stream of female companions, and the twin highs of performing and cocaine. Unfortunately, the moment he stops running after pleasure, he feels the pain and loneliness he's known ever since his mother died and his father rejected him as a reminder of that loss.

The Maestro traces Gianni's life from half orphan to international star. The earliest years are happy ones, when he lives with his grandparents in a small village beside Italy's Lake Como. His grandparents love him and encourage his musical gifts on the accordion and guitar.

When Gianni's grandfather dies, the boy and his grandmother move to Germany to be closer to Gianni's father. Proximity, however, does nothing to heal the breach between them, nor does Gianni's growing reputation as a musician. As long as his grandmother is alive, Gianni tries to stay on the straight and narrow. When she goes and his father ignores the funeral, the young man begins his descent into the rockdrug scene.

His salvation comes through an old friend who is now a Christian and the sound man for a Christian rock group that needs a lead guitarist. Gianni likes their sound and musicianship but

finds their theology naive. Bunn is especially effective in showing the approach-retreat dance of the nervous convert.

Bunn is also informative about the Christian music scene in general and funky rock in particular. Students will enjoy the behind-the-scenes glimpses Bunn's sources have given him. Unfortunately, they may be turned off by the slow build up to Gianni's conversion and the lengthy sermons Bunn assigns his Christian characters. These sermons kill the pacing, making this Bunn's least suspenseful plot. Teachers may find the book is more effective when used in combination with Reed Arvin's *Wind in the Wheat* (Nelson).

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Kathleen T. Choi
Retired Teacher
Hilo, Hawaii

Ferdinando Camon
Memorial
Marlboro, 1983
Paper \$8.95
Gr. 8 Adult

Memorial takes place in a small Italian village. The funeral of the narrator's mother triggers many memories. Those memories reveal the stark poverty of rural Italians. For example, coins were precious and rare. Farmers bartered to get whatever necessities they didn't produce.

Photographs were even rarer. The whole family is crammed into the few pictures they have. Their mother, though, is always hidden, having pushed her husband and children to the forefront, just as she did in life. They retell stories of Mama to keep her memory alive: how hard she worked, her religious devotion, her horror of killing. She regarded even the murder of the dictator Mussolini as sacrilege.

Perhaps that's why she rescued the stranger. That's one story the family didn't know until the man walked miles from his home to pay his respects. She hid him from Nazi soldiers in a nearby pile of stones. The next morning the children find their father moving those stones. He will use them to build a memorial to their mother, a small enclosed altar.

It won't be easy. The father is as worn as his late wife. One leg is useless. During the War, he injected filthy water into his knee. The resulting infection released him from killing for Mussolini to caring for his family. Now that family and the other villagers help him roof the little building. They sacrifice their cooking pots so he can use the copper for altar fittings. It is, in a sense, their memorial as well.

Politicians and warriors get statues; peasants die forgotten, except this time.

European critics praise Camon, but he's hardly known in this country. Only *Memorial* has been translated into English. Like Hemingway, his prose is simple enough for a child to follow but deep enough to satisfy adult readers. His gift is to show how ordinary people achieve holiness. This is a classic in the making.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Kathleen T. Choi
Retired Teacher
Hilo, Hawaii

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L. L. Chaikin
Silk
(Heart of India ; 1)
Bethany House, c1993
Paper \$9.99
Gr. 9 - Adult

Silk, the first in the Heart of India series, is a heart-catching story filled with adventure, aristocratic life-styles, and soul-searching truths. The author, Linda Chaikin, expertly weaves this fascinating story of 1790's London with the harsh yet exotic life of India. The Kendall's silk plantation is the backdrop for this historical tale of intrigue, romance and warring powers.

Coral Kendall, the young heiress, is determined to stand strong in her adoption of a baby Indian boy from the untouchable class, despite disapproval from those opposed to Christianity and the resultant life-threatening attacks. When the young boy is kidnapped and thought to be murdered, Coral holds onto a small thread of hope that ultimately leads her to the very man who had warned her not to proceed with the politically dangerous adoption. Could Coral's heart dare trust the handsome rogue, Jace Buckley? So much has already taxed her delicate health and determination to stand for the Lord. Yet Jace seems to be the only link to discovering the truth, and their lives become entwined in a bitter-sweet conflict between love and expediency.

The setting and time frame is exciting and challenging. Within this historically accurate period novel, the reader experiences the heart-stopping dangers of cobras, man-eating tigers, scheming relatives, and vengeful Brahmin (India's holy men). But amid these perils is the ever-present excitement of the move of God that challenges the old church ways and brings to the forefront such great preachers as Wesley, Newton, and Brainerd. Their "radical" views

of worship break with tradition of the religious standards of the day and offer fresh insight into Christianity. This inevitably challenges the reader to consider his/her own walk with God as well.

It is this very presence of the Almighty that ultimately supplies the heroine with the impetus and insight to trust beyond man's understanding and determine to hope beyond man's ability. Her tenacity and burgeoning faith are an inspiration. The conclusion is a jumping off place for the second book and, gratefully for the reader, the adventure continues.

Other titles in the series:

Under Eastern Stars ; 2

Kingscote ; 3

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Mary McKinney
Freelance Writer/Teacher
Port Orchard, Washington

Tom Eidson
St. Agnes' Stand
Putnam, 1994
Trade \$19.95
Gr. 10 - Adult

Nat Swanson is running from a gang that won't believe he killed their buddy in self-defense. He's running toward his dream ranch in California. In the New Mexico desert, he stumbles upon Sister St. Agnes, three other nuns, and seven children. They are returning from Mexico where the sisters bought the children out of captivity. Now they're trapped in a cave by Apaches and slowly starving to death.

Sister St. Agnes considers Swanson an answer to prayer, a concept he finds bewildering and upsetting. Almost as bewildering as a nun who likes a little nip of whiskey now and again, plays a mean hand of poker, and refuses to kill her attackers. The growing friendship of two unlike but likable travelers would, of itself, make this book a joy.

Eidson, however, delivers more. He keeps the reader in suspense with steady reminders that time is against the good guys. While Swanson is the crack shot and honorable fighter Western fans expect, his attempts to help the group escape rely on brains, not brawn.

The Apaches recognize a spiritual battle is going on. They fear the power of "the black robes" (nuns' habits) and eventually settle for an armed truce. Sister St. Agnes is delighted to escape with a minimum of bloodshed, but their

trials aren't over. The men pursuing Swanson arrive. Now she rescues him by leveling her rifle on the band. Swanson continues on to the California ranch with the orphan Matt, who clearly adores the cowboy. Sister sees them off with the prophecy that God isn't through yet with Swanson.

St. Agnes' Stand has been purchased by Universal Pictures and will be released as "The Standoff." Eidson's second novel, *The Last Ride*, deals with the conflict between Christianity and Native American religious practices.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Kathleen T. Choi
Retired Teacher
Hilo, Hawaii

Harry Farra
The Little Monk
Paulist Press, c1994
Paper \$7.95
Adult

The Little Monk is a series of stories designed to help us think about our spiritual life. The hero is first a little boy trying to find a suitable occupation. Then he's a monk enjoying God's creation, especially the company of children. His life changes dramatically when the Bishop declares the monk is to devote himself to prayer. Once he's learned to pray, he can teach others. He sends the monk to the Land of Maloo, a "thin" place where earth is very close to heaven. He must first search for the land and then learn to live with the other monks there. At each stage of his journey, he learns another lesson of Christian life.

Each chapter is an extended parable about prayer. The monk learns about prayer journals, the Jesus Prayer, "our daily bread," praise, silent prayer, etc. Some of Farra's parables are not easily decoded, but the puzzling out of his meaning can be a useful spiritual discipline. Though *The Little Monk* is written in the style of a children's book, its intended audience is clearly adults who wish to deepen their prayer life. Like John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, it would make an excellent text for a retreat or a prayer circle.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Kathleen T. Choi
Retired Teacher
Hilo, Hawaii

Robin Hardy
Streiker's Bride
NavPress, c1993
Paper \$9.00
Gr. 9 - Adult

Streiker's Bride, says the author, is "intended to present an analogy of Christ and the church." Heroine Adair Weiss is a bank teller who would rather be a ballerina. While her superior frets over Adair's tardiness, the bank's owner has different feelings. Fletcher Streiker, a reclusive billionaire, has asked his assistant to propose to Adair for him. Adair is astonished that a man she's never met would want her for his wife. Streiker's long-distance wooing (letters, phone calls, newspaper clippings, a disguised motorcyclist), however, breaks down Adair's resistance. To her amazement, she finds herself marrying her mystery man by proxy.

Beauty finally meets the Beast on her wedding night. He's gorgeous and romantic. And the next day he's gone on a important trip he can't tell her about. Her penthouse apartment, unlimited budget, and new fame as Mrs. Streiker are fun at first. However, what's a marriage without a husband? Does Streiker expect her to manage his vast business empire alone? Besides, the press is already suggesting she's been abandoned by her groom. Streiker money means the finest ballet teacher. Adair's dream of dancing professionally may finally come true. There are nightmares, too, though, in the form of Darren Loggia, a man determined to kill Fletcher Streiker (and possibly his new wife) and Adair's friend Courtney, who resents Adair's new life. How can a man who loves her leave her alone with these problems?

I admired Ms. Hardy's effort to tell a romantic tale and illustrate how the believer experiences God. The Lord does behave in mysterious ways, and it is hard to keep trusting Him. Adair is an appealing heroine, and the creation of Fletcher Streiker is a fascinating way to portray God's "personality." High school girls will, I believe, enjoy the romance too, as well as its sequels.

Other titles in the series:

- Streiker's Killdeer ; 2
- Streiker's Morning Son ; 3

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Kathleen T. Choi
Retired Teacher
Hilo, Hawaii

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★
Catherine Hutter
The Outnumbered
Pinnacle, 1981
Paper \$2.75
Adult

The Outnumbered takes place in Pritnitz, Austria, beginning in 1924. The heroine is Fehge no-last-name, the daughter of an itinerant Jewish laborer. Fehge's father drops dead near an exclusive tuberculosis sanitarium. When her mother dies shortly thereafter, the head nurse unofficially adopts Fehge. Nurse Andrea is a Methodist deaconess. It is the Catholic Church, however, that draws Fehge, and she eventually seeks baptism. Dennis, a wealthy Englishman, comes to stay at the sanitarium. He loves Fehge's compassion, energy, and peasant wisdom. As she grows into a young woman, his love grows too, and Pritnitz becomes his home away from home.

Meanwhile, Nazism is on the rise. Austrian reformers are too busy fighting over programs to truly help the poor. Wealthy citizens tolerate injustice if it prevents civil disorder. Intellectuals dismiss Nazi propaganda as too stupid to worry about. Jews find false assurance in Austria's independence. Liberals separate morality from religion and weaken the only institution capable of uniting the people. That institution, the Church, assumes her authority is indestructible.

Consequently, as the German army marches toward Vienna, Austrians have no group capable of leading the country. As Fehge has observed, people are better at hating than loving, especially if love demands sacrifice. She, of course, is in great danger. No matter what her religious convictions, to the Nazis, Fehge is a Jew. Her faith does matter, however. It is so strong that when the local brown shirts come to seize her, her body displays the stigmata and frightens them away. News of the miracle spreads, and Austrians fleeing the Germans head for Pritnitz. Dennis engineers Fehge's escape before she can become an icon or martyr.

The Outnumbered is an engrossing description of why Christians succumbed to the Nazis. It's also a beautiful testimony to the eternal relevance of the Cross. Many authors have shown how Hitler's promises of prosperity, world conquest, and the Aryan ideal attracted German-speaking people. Few have as effectively shown how "good people" helped Hitler succeed.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Kathleen T. Choi
Retired Teacher
Hilo, Hawaii

Harry Lee Kraus
Stainless Steal Hearts
Crossway Books, 1994
Paper \$10.99
Adult

Harry Kraus is an obstetrician who describes the medical world, its procedures and politics, with authority. His plot is right from the newspaper's front page--the harvesting of fetal tissue.

Dr. Michael Simons is a pediatric heart surgeon. His colleague, Dr. Adam Richards, performs hundreds of abortions. The more fully developed fetuses could provide the transplants Simons needs and "salvage an untapped resource."

Richards is easily persuaded. He already takes later term cases than most abortionists. Instead of killing the fetuses in the womb, he'll deliver them alive.

"This gives my business some real validity! Perhaps one day we can include patients who are having the abortions with the knowledge of these experiments, so they will realize that their abortion was actually a...beneficial contribution to science and eventually to the wellbeing of others," he enthuses.

Matt Stone and his girlfriend Linda Baldwin stumble onto the secret research. Senator Layton Redman, the pro-choice candidate for governor, insisted his girlfriend abort their baby. She was killed in an auto accident before she could go through with the surgery. Matt, a resident in the emergency room, worked heroically to save the life of her baby.

Linda is a pro-life advocate at her college who counseled the girlfriend. The two have trouble believing their suspicions of medical misconduct, much less finding proof for the authorities. Also, Matt's job is jeopardized as he searches for possible witnesses.

That search, the abortionists' scheme, and the battle of two young believers against a powerful physician and a politician keep the suspense high. The graphic description of abortion procedures is unforgettable. *Stainless Steal Hearts* has only two minor flaws: Matt and Linda's romance never comes emotionally alive, and Kraus gives Richards a more tender conscience than is likely. These weaknesses, however, are more than outweighed by the power of his story.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Kathleen T. Choi
Retired Teacher
Hilo, Hawaii

George MacDonald
The Curate's Awakening
Bethany House, c1985
Paper \$5.99
Gr. 10 - Adult

Retold and edited by Michael Phillips, this intricate story of a young curate whose search for meaning within the walls of his church and his profession cause both him and the reader to pause and reflect. As Thomas Wingfold leaves his pulpit one Sunday, he is accosted by an atheist who demands to know whether he really believes the words he has just preached. So begins the spiritual journey of the inexperienced curate. No sooner does he begin his quest for the knowledge of the existence of God than another parishioner challenges his honesty.

Quick to defend himself, Wingfold meets with the unknown challenger and is surprised to find a willing and wise instructor in the ways of God. How will his parish accept this greatly altered pastor?

The Lady's Confession, the second volume by George MacDonald, is companion to *The Curate's Awakening* and begins where the former leaves off. Thomas Wingfold is now married and his circle of influence grows as does his new-found faith. In the opening chapters, we meet a new character, the dashing and talented young doctor who believes man is complete in and of himself. Dr. Faber lives and works out his life in consistent kindness and self-sacrifice which appears inconsistent with his beliefs.

The author weaves an intriguing series of events around this doctor and one of his newest patients, a young woman named Juliet. Here we see that all men (even the honorable Dr. Faber) require a personal relationship with Christ to truly love and to sincerely forgive others. Once again, MacDonald's mastery with conversation prompts the reader to self-examination and introspection.

The Baron's Apprenticeship is the third and final story which weaves the curate, Thomas Wingfold through its pages. Wingfold has left his first church and has settled outside of London in a new pastorate.

The curate has opportunity to befriend and challenge the thinking of a wealthy lady whose home life has been anything but serene and a poor, young bookbinder whose past is slowly revealed. As always, MacDonald's storyline is fascinating with many subplots. Our young bookbinder, Richard, slowly awakens to his heavenly Father's voice as does his knowledge of his titled birth. How he chooses to accept

this new-found knowledge and the way in which he wields its power is an example for all believers to watch closely.

The Baron's Apprenticeship is a fine completion to this series of Wingfold books. Readers will find food for thought on each page.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Michele Howe
Freelance Writer and Homeschool Mother
LaSalle, Michigan

Roy Maynard
38 Caliber : An Emerson Dunn
Mystery
(An Emerson Dunn Mystery)
Crossway Books, c1992
Paper \$7.99
Gr. 8 - Adult

The Emerson Dunn Mystery series by Roy Maynard introduces a cast of whimsical characters. Emerson Dunn, reporter and investigator teams up with David Ben Zadok: photographer, former Israeli tank commander, and body guard, to uncover political shenanigans, police cover-ups, robberies, murders, and blackmail. Written from a small town in Texas, Emerson approaches each adventure with self-effacing banter. His cohorts, David Ben Zadok and acerbic A. C. Remington (girl reporter and growing romantic interest), add varying viewpoints. Along with humor, each of the characters have a progressive and questioning relationship with the Lord. Emerson's witness, though not pushy, has definite results upon his friends and enemies. Roy Maynard, an experienced journalist, capably uses his background to add validity to his plots. Written in first person, readers will enjoy the continuing story of the characters as they learn to follow God's leading, communicate their feelings, overcome diverse personal backgrounds, and solve crimes. Books can stand alone, but will be enjoyed more if read in order.

Other titles in this series:

22 Automatic : An Emerson Dunn Mystery

A Quick 30 Seconds : An Emerson Dunn Mystery

The Old Man : An Emerson Dunn Mystery

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Paula Stewart Marks
Principal, Morning Star Christian School
Bend, Oregon.

Susan McCracken
For the Love of a Friend
Friends United Press, 1994
Paper \$9.95
Gr. 6 - Adult

Author Susan McCracken has painted a vivid picture of early Quaker life. Fourteen-year-old Rebecca Wilson is stunned with the news of her father's decision to transport their family of six from the bustling city of Richmond to the wilds of Iowa. Believing that God would have them assist in church planting out west, a shocked Rebecca considers all this move will mean to her personally.

Thankfully, the weeks prior to leaving keep Rebecca so busy she hardly has time to dwell on her feelings and misgivings about moving. Once on the way, Rebecca and her siblings have to walk beside the overflowing wagon as their parents carefully guide the horses along the trail to Iowa. To make matters worse, a troublesome boy named Joshua and his family are also making the journey.

Rebecca's attitude gets progressively darker as Joshua needles her and tries to get her attention the only way he knows how...calling her "Becky." Once the group arrives in Iowa, however, relentless work awaits them as they prepare for the coming winter and there is little time for socializing.

After having finally built and settled into their new home, Rebecca happily befriends another girl at the monthly Friends meeting, has the opportunity to meet a young man of a different faith, and is placed as an assistant teacher in the new school. As she grows, Rebecca discovers the hidden blessings of her new home and she surprises herself by unexpectedly falling in love.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Michele Howe
Freelance Writer and Homeschool Mother
LaSalle, Michigan

Lynn and Gilbert Morris
The Stars for a Light
(Cheney Duvall, M.D.; 1)
Bethany House, 1995
Paper \$8.99
Gr. 9 - Adult

Father and daughter team, Lynn and Gilbert Morris, write *The Stars for a Light*, their first book in the Cheney Duvall, M.D. series. The only daughter of wealthy parents, Cheney Duvall trains to become a doctor only to discover that no one is interested in a woman doctor. She is elated when she is accepted as the ship's doctor for a load of ladies going to Seattle to find husbands. Cheney's life

becomes even more complicated when her nurse turns out to be an enigmatic young man, Shilo Irons, whose past included an orphanage, fighting as a prize fighter, and serving as a confederate soldier in the Civil War.

Determined to follow her calling as a doctor, Cheney turns down a proposal of marriage from her childhood friend Dev Buchanan the day before her departure. Things are further complicated by her feelings for Shilo. Tending to the seasick ladies and trying to deal with the many personality conflicts are enough to keep Cheney and Shilo's full attention. Added to this is the mysterious cargo that is loaded at the last minute and the sinister plot by two of the ship's crew and one of the ladies.

The historical threads woven through the story include references to the Pinkerton undercover agency, the railroad trip across Panama, the occurrence of yellow fever and the references to the dangerous new discovery of nitroglycerin.

The authors are going far beyond an entertaining story. This is a soul searching volume of the individual decision that each of us must come to in our relationship with God. Although Cheney was raised in a Godly family and had made a personal decision as a child to follow Jesus, she had not learned to translate that into her daily life.

As she faces the deaths of her patients and knows she is totally inadequate to do anything about it, she finally comes to the place that she prays, "I just can't make it all come out neatly, so I'm just going to have to stop trying. But I'm not going to run away...I want to know that I've done my best and the rest is up to you." This story goes beyond an exciting plot to become a personal challenge to the readers of commitment and trust in a wise and loving God.

A City Not Forsaken

Lynn and Gilbert Morris, continue this third book in the Cheney Duvall, M.D. series. Cheney returns home to New York with her nurse Shilo Irons after a time in Arkansas just as the ship Virginia arrives from England with Devlin Buchanan. The ship is quarantined because of cholera.

Tired of the impoverished conditions she had to face in Arkansas, Cheney is determined to set up her medical practice for the wealthy. Even as cholera begins to spread through the city, she refuses to go near the hospitals where both Shilo and Dev are working.

Although she continues to fight the prejudice against woman doctors, she forms an unlikely friendship with the wealthy young widow

Victoria de Lancie. As their relationship moves beyond a professional one, Cheney is finally able to share her personal relationship with Jesus.

An additional plot in the story includes Shilo's fistic (boxing) competitions to get money for the orphanage where he had been raised. He spends most of his time between the cholera patients and the orphanage. He faces many emotions as Miss Behring, the director of the orphanage, tells him about a box and some articles that had been left with him at the orphanage years before. He is able to forgive Miss Behring for not telling him what could have been a clue to his heritage; two hours later she dies of cholera.

The greatest value of this story is one of accepting others without judging them, and learning to tell the truth regardless of the consequences.

Other title in this series:

Shadow on the Mountains ; 2

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Esther Knaupp
Librarian
Santiam Christian School
Corvallis, Oregon

Janette Oke
A Gown of Spanish Lace
Bethany House Publishers, 1995
Paper \$8.99
Gr. 9 - Adult

Ariana Benson is happy living with Godly parents and teaching in her small one-room school. Her life is suddenly turned upside down when she is kidnapped out of her school room one snowy winter afternoon.

Laramie Russell, "the kid," has known nothing but his life in the outlaw camp and he was feeling something strange was going to happen when his father, "the boss," and Sam, another outlaw, left without explanation just before a snow storm.

When the outlaws return, the kid is informed that he is to guard the prisoner that had been brought back to camp. He is stunned when he discovers Ariana in the cabin. In her fear, Ariana draws even closer to God and Laramie begins to long for the peace he sees in her life.

Realizing the danger Ariana is in the longer she remains in the camp, Laramie makes escape plans with his Indian friend White Eagle. While making their dangerous escape, both Laramie and Ariana recognize the love each

feels for the other. Ariana realizes the hopelessness of this since Laramie is not a Christian, and Laramie leaves her with her aunt and uncle in Montana knowing that he must face his past.

Ironically, Ariana's wedding dress, an imported gown of Spanish lace, her only possession from her birth mother who died in an Indian massacre, becomes the thing that nearly destroys her happiness. Through a series of events, the mystery behind the identities of both Ariana and Laramie comes to light as Laramie reads an old diary that had been hidden for years.

This exciting and suspenseful Western contains the simple truths of faith in a God who knows and love us and shows how even the smallest details of our lives are in His hands.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Esther Knaupp
Librarian
Santiam Christian School
Corvallis, Oregon

Frank Peretti
The Oath
Word Pub, 1995
Trade \$23.99
Gr. 10 - Adult

Frank Peretti challenges his readers in his latest novel *The Oath*. From the cover of the book to the final page, the reader is captivated by the message it contains. Suspense builds as portions from diaries and letters dating back as far as 1879 are inserted at the beginning of each chapter. The sense of darkness and evil continue to build almost past the breaking point.

The plot surrounds the death of a photographer in the hills near the town of Hyde River. As Steve Benson, the brother of the dead man, investigates the death, he uncovers information that is almost too fantastic to even consider. He puts together details learned from Levi Cobb, the town's religious nut, with his own findings, and realizes his brother was killed by a dragon.

When his sister-in-law Evelyn, who had been at the scene of death, begins to remember the details of the night her husband died, someone from the town tries to murder her. With the help of the deputy sheriff Tracy Ellis, Steve tracks the dragon and is nearly killed. Steve reads the diaries that were saved by Levi and finds out about the town with no conscience. He reads a copy of "The Oath" which concludes with the lines, "There is no God but Reason...If This Be Sin, Let Sin Be Served."

Steve is almost destroyed along with the whole town, until he recalls Levi's words, "When the dragon sees Jesus in you, he'll back up." In a wild chase scene, Steve prays "Jesus...please be in me" and follows Levi's dying instructions which bring about the destruction of the dragon.

The tone of this book is dark and hopeless almost to the end. The main character of the story ends up in bed with a married woman, and it looks like both of them will be destroyed. However, the story is redeemed as Steve sees his need for Jesus and is delivered, literally, from the mouth of the dragon. This is a gripping story which shows the power of evil and its final consequences. The graphic intensity of evil and immoral choices of some characters may concern some readers.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Esther Knaupp
Librarian
Santiam Christian School
Corvallis, Oregon



★
Francine Rivers
As Sure as the Dawn
(Mark of the Lion; 3)
Tyndale House Publishers, 1995

Paper \$11.99
Gr. 10 - Adult

Francine Rivers' final book in the Mark of the Lion trilogy is gripping, inspirational, and challenging. The story begins in Ephesus when Atretes, the ex-gadiator, claims the baby son he thought had been left by his mother on the rocks to die. He is forced to take the baby's nurse as he returns to his homeland of Germania.

After killing two men, Atretes flees with Rizpah and baby Caleb. Ironically, their guide back to Germania is Theophilus, a retired Roman centurion who wishes to settle there as a missionary. Atretes doesn't hide his hatred for the cursed Roman and vows to kill Theophilus once they have reached Germania.

His bitterness toward all women causes him to treat Rizpah, the Jewish woman who had taken his son as her own child, with contempt and cruelty. At the same time Atretes and Rizpah are undeniably attracted to each other. Through miraculous circumstances, Atretes yields his will and accepts Jesus.

When he discovers his family, he tries to share the gospel message. Their superstition blinds them to the gospel, and his frustration at not being able to make them accept Jesus only pushes them further from the truth. Under the influence of Anomia, the priestess of Tiwaz (the Germanians' evil god), someone murders Theophilus. Rizpah refuses to tell Atretes who the murderer is, and he casts her out.

In a dramatic conclusion, Atretes gives up his bitterness and stubborn will and submits to God. God's strength is seen and the evil power of Tiwaz is defeated by the love and forgiveness of those committed to the all-powerful God.

This book about hurting, broken, bitter individuals is also filled with the message of a God who is able to overcome every situation. Its message is one of hope and encouragement. Because of the depth and variety of characters, the reader will find at least one with whom he can identify and come away with answers and encouragement.

Other titles in this series:

A Voice in the Wind ; 1

An Echo in the Darkness ; 2

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Esther Knaupp, Librarian
Santiam Christian School
Corvallis, Oregon

Suzanne Strempek Shea
Selling the Lite of Heaven
Pocket Books, c1994
Paper \$10.00
Adult

Suzanne Shea's heroine doesn't have a name, which fits her self-effacing personality. Even her fiancée knows her so little, he can't imagine how devastated she will be when he breaks their engagement. (He's becoming a priest.) A Polish girl, she lives at home with her immigrant parents. She works as a photo developer, spending her days watching the highlights of other people's lives pop out of the processor.

Trained to be practical, she tries to sell her engagement ring through a classified ad.

Someone at the "Penny Saver" revises her words to a more eye-catching headline: "The Lite of Heaven isn't as brite as this... ring." It certainly attracts customers, and the girl who hid from life finds it streaming through her front door. She makes tea, chats, haggles, and finds she doesn't really want to give up her last memento of Eddie Balicki; the selling process itself is too fascinating.

Catholics will grin at little images like one of Eddie at prayer: "His hands were folded in a way you only see in First Communion photos or in portraits of the Pope--fingers meeting exactly and pointing toward heaven, thumbs crossed and locked...." Protestants will find a far more faithful depiction of traditional Catholic family life than most novels or films offer.

Several coming-of-age stories appear each season, and most have the heroine (or hero) outgrowing their family, hometown, or church. Shea undertakes a more difficult task--demonstrating that the most important changes occur in the mind and heart. Even rarer, she gives her heroine a religious faith that enables her to handle her disappointment with humor and honesty. Near the end, the heroine sits in church on Good Friday, staring at the crucifix, wondering why Jesus had to die. She hears the words, "To give you a new life." It's a common phrase from Scripture and a hundred sermons, but this time it's addressed specifically to her. New life is possible, without Eddie--or any other beau--as long as she has Jesus.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Kathleen T. Choi
Retired Teacher
Hilo, Hawaii

Bodie Thoene
The Gates of Zion
(The Zion Chronicles; 1)
Bethany House, 1986
Paper \$9.99
Gr. 10 - Adult

The historical events surrounding Israel's statehood are about more than politics; they are about people, individuals.

First in a five-part series, *The Gates of Zion* is the story of the days leading up to and following the vote of Partition by the United Nations. Reactions of the different political factions affect people from various backgrounds. Ellie, a photojournalist visiting in Israel, unknowingly photographs one of the Dead Sea Scrolls. It's a dangerous situation for Ellie and the Jews she befriends as they struggle to return to their homeland.

A human-interest element directly related to historical events enables the work to succeed. Bodie Thoene's characters are the strength of the book, real people the reader can care about. Detailed descriptions are at times beneficial, placing the reader in the scene. In other instances, such detail slows the action.

The map in the prologue is a good reference point for locations in Jerusalem. There is no explanatory chart of various political groups. The first third of *The Gates of Zion* is slow reading due to multiple characters and subplots related to politics. Beginning with the second book in the series, the reader is familiar with the situations and people involved.

As the series develops, the emphasis on people continues. *The Zion Chronicles* tells the story of the Jews' struggle to regain their homeland. It begins with the vote of Partition in November 1947 and continues month by month to the dawn of Israel's statehood in May 1948.

Due to the historical continuity, the series may be best read as a whole. *The Gates of Zion*, first in the series, is a strong story by itself. The second, *A Daughter of Zion*, may also stand alone based on character development. Beyond that, the final three novels may not hold as much interest for the reader not acquainted with the series, its events, and characters.

These novels are written on an adult level; teens may also enjoy them. The series could be read as part of a class history assignment as well. Extensive research gives credibility to the story and a purpose and direction to the work.

Other titles in the series:

A Daughter of Zion ; 2
The Return to Zion ; 3
A Light in Zion ; 4
The Key to Zion ; 5

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Tracie Mabry
Freelance Writer
Vancouver, Washington

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Rudy Ruettiger and Mike Celizic
Rudy's Rules
WRS Pub, 1995
Trade \$19.95
Gr. 9 - Adult

With a high school GPA of 1.77, Rudy wasn't a likely candidate for college. At 190 pounds and five-foot-six inches, Rudy wouldn't get a second look from any college football recruiter either. But Rudy had a dream: to attend the University of Notre Dame and play football for the Fighting Irish. The moving story of how Rudy achieved his dream is chronicled both in this book and in the movie, *Rudy*.

Now a popular motivational and inspirational speaker, Rudy has compiled his ten rules for turning dreams into reality. They serve as the framework for the anecdotes and pep talks that make up the bulk of *Rudy's Rules*. His rules are neither new nor profound ("everyone can be anyone they want to be," "it is better to do something and fail than to do nothing and succeed," "when you achieve one dream, dream another"), but Rudy's highly contagious enthusiasm, inspirational stories, and conversational writing style will hold the interest of all but the most jaded reader.

Rudy's Rules contains some strong slang, several mild profanities, and one or two inappropriate uses of the Lord's name. Most readers will still be inspired by his stories and well-served by his simple rules for achieving dreams in a very complicated world.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Randl Ockey
 Librarian/Freelance Writer
 Camano Island, Washington

209

Tim LaHaye
Faith of Our Founding Fathers
Master Books, 1994
Paper \$10.95
Adult

In *Faith of Our Founding Fathers*, Tim LaHaye seeks to prove that, contrary to what is now taught in schools and upheld by the media and the government, the framers of the Constitution

believed in Christian principles and incorporated these beliefs in the Constitution.

Those who attended [the Constitutional Convention] were selected for their deep commitment to Puritan and Calvinistic doctrines, as well as for other political considerations. Their goal was not to establish a democracy in which "every man does that which is right in his own eyes." Instead, they formulated a representative form of government based on divinely inspired law. The Constitution they wrote and the government they founded on it verified that they never intended to establish a secular nation. Instead, it was and still is "one nation under God" (p. 22).

To support his thesis, LaHaye explains the historical events that led up to the writing of the Constitution and lists the historical documents that influenced the authors. He also describes the Christian cultural consensus that existed in the colonies and how it shaped the beliefs of the Founding Fathers. In the second half of the book, LaHaye takes a closer look at the individual beliefs of the delegates who attended the Convention, with one in-depth chapter dedicated to George Washington and Benjamin Franklin.

Throughout the book, the author stresses how most of the Founding Fathers adhered to Christian principles. Contrary to what liberals claim today, many of the framers of the Constitution viewed secular humanism as a threat to a self-governing society of free people.

The book closes with a call for Christians to act now to return the nation to a Christian consensus and, in doing so, secure our constitutional freedoms.

The book is generally well written; however, LaHaye borrows heavily from modern scholars and not so much from original documents. Sometimes he tells what a person believed, but doesn't let that person "speak" in his own words by quoting primary sources. This book would also be more useful if it had an index.

Anyone interested in defending the Constitution as a biblically based document would find this book helpful. It could also

serve as a supplementary text for a high school American history class.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Lorinda K. F. Newton
 Freelance Writer
 Kirkland, Washington

231

R. C. Sproul
The Character of God :
Discovering the God Who Is
Servant Publications, 1995
Paper \$8.99
Adult

Some Christians may believe that a discussion on the attributes of God is best left to theologians and seminarians. Not so, says R. C. Sproul. In his book, *The Character of God*, he hopes to encourage lay people to discover whom God is without having to wade through theological jargon.

Sproul dedicates one attribute per chapter in this book, describing God as creator, omnipresent, spirit, omniscient, infallible, immutable, righteous and just, omnipotent, truth, love, and one. To better explain these abstract concepts, Sproul draws from personal experiences, history, and the Bible for illustrations. The book also addresses and refutes through apologetic arguments the beliefs that some scholars have about God's characteristics. Sproul also makes a commentary on today's culture as he addresses these misconceptions about God.

Sproul's use of illustrations and everyday English makes this seemingly heady topic easy to grasp. His chapters, though, do not always stick to one characteristic, as the chapter titles may suggest. Some chapters cover a few related attributes. The last chapter title is misleading, "The Name Above All Names." Instead of discussing the various names of God, it focuses more on God's oneness. The book also lacks an index. Overall, the book is well written.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Lorinda K. F. Newton
 Freelance Writer and Editor
 Kirkland, Washington

231.7
Ken Ham
The Lie : Evolution
Master Books, c1987
Paper \$8.95
Gr. 9 - Adult

The conflict between the moral absolutes of Christianity and the moral relativism of secular humanism is rooted in the question of origins--creation or evolution--according to author Kenneth Ham, a director and founder of the Creation Science Foundation Ministry in Australia. With that basic premise, the author leads the reader through a discussion of how many of modern society's most alarming problems (lawlessness, homosexuality, pornography, abortion) are a direct result of man's rejection of the Genesis account of creation and of God as Creator and Lawgiver. Ham concludes with a fervent plea for those who shepherd the flock of God to see the importance of the creation/evolution issue and embrace creation evangelism.

With his professional background as a biology teacher and over ten years experience in creation evangelism, Ham approaches his topic with considerable knowledge and conviction, and his arguments are compelling. Unfortunately, weaknesses in presentation detract from an otherwise powerful message. The tone of the book is often strident, the illustrations seem more appropriate as overhead projections in a lecture setting than as illustrations in a book, and the frequent personal accounts of the author confounding skeptics quickly become tiresome. *The Lie: Evolution* is, nevertheless, a good addition to Christian high school and church libraries.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Randl Ockey
Librarian/Freelance Writer
Camano Island, Washington

239
Henry M. Morris
The God Who Is Real : A
Creationist Approach to
Evangelism and Missions
Baker Book House, c1988
Paper \$5.99
Adult

In the introduction to his book, *The God Who Is Real*, Henry Morris states that the purpose of this book is "...to help people understand why they should consider and then believe the saving gospel of Jesus Christ." (p.9) As an associate at the Institute for Creation Research in San Diego, California, Dr. Morris has long been a strong defender of creationism vs. evolutionism. It is within this context that he endeavors to convince the reader that Jesus

Christ, the God of the Bible, is the supreme creator of the world and mankind, and thus the only real God, as opposed to the many gods worshipped by non-Christian religions and philosophies. In the first two chapters of the book, Dr. Morris outlines the evidence against evolution, and then in the third chapter gives the scientific argument for creationism. In Chapter 4, he moves logically to the conclusion that since the Bible is the only book that tells the story of the creation in its entirety, then the God of the Bible, Jesus Christ, must be the only true (or real) God. In Chapter 5 he witnesses of the divine plan, set forth in the Bible, of creation, redemption, and consummation, and man's central position in this plan.

Dr. Morris' book is very interesting, and may be of great use to teachers and parents trying to thwart the influence of worldly philosophies, especially evolution, prevalent today. He gives a very convincing scientific argument for creationism, and includes the importance of faith in any conversion. This is a scholarly work that does not attempt to delve into differing interpretations of Bible doctrine, but to explain the basic doctrine of the creation accepted by most Christians.

◆ Quality - 4 Acceptability - 5

Catherine W. Ockey
Freelance Writer
Camano Island, Washington

★
242
Lorraine Peterson
If God Loves Me, Why Can't I Get
My Locker Open
(Devotionals for Teens)
Bethany House, 1980
Paper \$7.99
Gr. 8 - Adult

Any teenager will love the personal and caring approach Lorraine Peterson brings to her one dozen devotional books, published between 1980 and 1995 for young people. A former secondary teacher, youth Bible study leader, and Christian club advisor, Peterson knows youth well, has an acute grasp of their problems, and communicates in a direct, honest tone that teens will understand and respond to. Her first six books contain thirteen weeks of daily devotions with Scripture, non-preachy narrative, and questions. In the fifth book begins the high-interest fiction, which she continues to the last volume. As the series progresses, the personal application sections (e.g., memorization, Steps To Take) become longer and fill-in blanks for private responses more prevalent. The seventh, eighth, and ninth books contain 43-47 short chapters, and the

tenth, eleventh, and twelfth 12-14 longer chapters. The books' formats fit a quarterly system of study. Sunday School Teachers, youth workers, or disciplers of individuals can choose a single book with a wide range of topics, or those which focus on a narrower theme (e.g., book 4, characters; books 5 and 6, who I am in Christ; books 8 and 9, wisdom from Proverbs; books 11 and 12, studies in prayer). Peterson suggests take-home assignments for teens to prepare for group discussion. The readability level and humorous black-and-white illustrations make the series appropriate for junior high through beginning college levels.

Peterson has produced a plethora of excellent books with a breadth of subject matter, depth of insight, spiritual maturity and biblical teaching. We look forward to more.

If God Loves Me, Why Can't I Get
My Locker Open?

First in a series of teen devotionals by Peterson, this book offers thought-provoking readings on such topics as decision-making, commitment, sin, repentance and forgiveness, self-image, dating and love, and controlling the tongue.

Falling Off Cloud Nine and Other
High Places

To help youth establish a regular quiet time with God is the author's purpose in these daily devotions about knowing God's Word, obedience and faith, parents, work, rebellion, witnessing, and overcoming evil.

Why Isn't God Giving Cash
Prizes?

In presenting the truth of the Gospel, Peterson answers many theological and doctrinal questions often asked by non-Christians, such as: "Did God actually write the Bible?" "Why are there so many religions?" "Why do you celebrate the pagan festival of Christmas?"

Real Characters in the Making

Young people will find answers for real-life problems from the study of the struggles, heartaches, failures, and successes of thirteen role models in the Old Testament: Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Ruth, Saul, David, Elijah, Jonah, Jeremiah, Esther, and Nehemiah.

Dying of Embarrassment and
Living To Tell About It

Young people will learn who they are in Jesus Christ: a new creation, blessed with His kindness, righteous, redeemed and accepted, free, and one with others in Him.

**Anybody Can Be Cool--But
Awesome Takes Practice**

A companion volume to *Dying of Embarrassment* and *Living To Tell About It*, this book presents teens with more facts about who they are in Christ, helping them to recognize and eliminate Satan's untruths they have accepted about themselves, and encouraging Scripture meditation and memorization.

**If The Devil "Made" You Do It,
You Blew It!**

Here teens will find help for overcoming temptations like premarital sex, stealing, or self-degrading thoughts, and for living victoriously with the power of the Holy Spirit and God's Word.

**Radical Advice From the Ultimate
Wiseguy**

Scriptural principles and wisdom for godly living from the book of Proverbs help youth deal with time and money, forgiveness, friendships, and foolish behavior.

**If You Really Trust Me, Why Can't
I Stay Out Later?**

In this second volume of wisdom from the book of Proverbs, young people will learn to apply truth to their lives from lessons about honesty, work, personal relationships, controlling the tongue, and handling feelings of resentment, anger, jealousy, and revenge.

**Trying to Get Toothpaste Back Into
the Tube**

Peterson encourages teens to make choices for their lives according to God's moral laws, seeking his will through the power of the Holy Spirit. Some topics discussed include work ethics, bitterness and forgiveness, the biblical handling of money, premarital sex, suicide, abortion, and dangerous New Age philosophies.

**Lord, I Haven't Talked to You
Since the Last Crisis, But...**

Lessons in developing a deep love relationship with the Lord through daily devotions make this book indispensable for a teen's spiritual growth. Topics examined include praise, thanksgiving, petition, listening, and combining Bible study with prayer.

**Please Give Me Another Chance,
Lord**

Teens will go to higher spiritual ground as they practice the power of prayer, becoming "prayer warriors" who go beyond simple requests to the heavier responsibilities of intercession.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

*Rhonda Marie Lackey
Writer, Former Teacher/Librarian
Seattle, Washington.*

252

**Donna McKee Rhodes
Little Stories for Little Children :
A Worship Resource
Herald Press, c1995
Paper \$7.95**

Adult

An excellent collection of fifty-two story times for sharing with children during worship. Using materials such as calendars, marshmallows, and a flashlight grabs the attention of children and is the basis for the concise one topic children's "sermons". A scriptural basis, a theme and objects necessary are listed at the beginning of the section as well as in the table of contents, to ease selection and preparation. Stories are provided to coincide with holidays, sermon topics and other settings.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

*Joanne M. Hotchkiss
Co-Director, Liberty Lake Christian School and
Child Care
Liberty Lake, Washington*

266

**Aileen and Darryl Ludington
Salvation in the Killing Fields
Pacific Press Pub. Assn., c1991
Paper \$9.95**

Gr. 10 - Adult

When the Khmer Rouge invaded Phnom Penh, the Dok Savang family was forced from their home and driven like cattle to work in poverty and unbelievable conditions. The strong ties of the family made it especially difficult when they were segregated into different work groups and moved into separate camps. Although Chanla, a son in the Dok Savang family, had only recently accepted Jesus into his life, his faith in God in the most difficult of times was an inspiration to all who knew him. Even in the face of death, God provided a way for Chanla to survive and help those around him.

Because Chanla had the ability to speak in several languages and was a hard worker, he was selected to be a part of the secret service for the Vietnamese. For the first time in three years he had well made clothes to wear and enough to eat. Chanla grew strong and even fell in love with a young Cambodian woman. Although this job meant many privileges Chanla knew it would lead to doing things against his countrymen. He found a way to escape.

Junior or senior high students will enjoy the suspense and excitement of this book. A few parts are gruesomely graphic which should be

considered when choosing this book, especially for less mature readers. However, the overall message of trusting in the Lord to direct our paths is evident.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

*Anita Utley
Teacher, Faith Christian School
Mead, Washington*

266

**E. R. Pitman
Ann H. Judson of Burma
Christian Literature Crusade, 1988
Paper \$3.95**

Gr. 9 - Adult

This is the exciting true adventure of the first lady missionary in Burma. There is romance, intrigue, danger, tragedy, and victory. E. R. Pitman chronicles Mrs. Judson's life from birth, as well as her husband's (who is regarded as the "Apostle to Burma"). It tells of their call to the mission field, the birth and death of their children there, and the incredible difficulties encountered getting to, and staying in, Burma. Illness, arrest, indifference, and fear combat their work, but the tenacious Judsons see people who had never heard of Christ come to know and serve him. The cost was great; Mrs. Judson paid in her own health, and the lives of her children. Her infant daughter survived her by four months.

The language of the story is archaic and difficult to follow. There are no maps or illustrations to give a sense of time, people, or place. The volume is valuable, if studied for literary form, or used as a reference for a high school or college research. A talented storyteller might be able to paraphrase its pages to a younger set.

◆ Quality - 2 ♥ Acceptability - 5

*Dona Kachele
Teacher, Neighborhood Christian School
Bellevue, Washington*

266

**James W. and Janice Walton
Sent to the River God Forgot
Tyndale House Publishers, 1995
Paper \$9.99**

Gr. 10 - Adult

This book is a true account of Jim and Janice Walton's eighteen years of service in the heart of the jungle at La Sabana with their family. While there, they learned the customs, language, and thinking of the Muinanes tribe in order to translate the Bible into the tribe's language. This is a moving story of the joys and disappointments the Waltons faced each day. You will feel firsthand their frustration and

setbacks, also the joy of hard-won battles. One learns exactly what a missionary goes through as he lives in another culture and how he must learn to adapt. The Waltons honestly share their own fears as they faced demon activity and native superstitions. What reward did Jim and Janice have after spending eighteen years of hard work to give the Muinanes tribe a Bible in their own language? Read and be encouraged. Wisely we are told that the final chapter has yet to be written. This book is a must for any young person interested in serving on the mission field.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

*Dorcas Walker
Freelance Writer
Jamestown, Tennessee*

268

Ed Dunlop

**Teaching with Bible Games :
Twenty "Kid-Tested" Contests to
Make Christian Education Fun**

Meriwether Pub, c1993

Paper \$10.95

Adult

If you are a minister, Christian school teacher, Sunday School or Vacation Bible School Teacher, this book will be an invaluable resource for teaching and reviewing God's Word. Students will look forward to your class if these simple-to-make games are part of your teaching program. Bible games can give teachers an opportunity to find out what the students are learning. They can also give you a verbal feedback to evaluate your teaching or re-emphasize important points of the lesson.

This book gives a variety of pointers for using Bible games effectively. Each game is played on an easy-to-make flannel board with simple parts and themes. Clear directions and patterns for game pieces are given. Variations in playing the games are suggested. Black and white photographs aid in constructing games and seeing them used with real children.

It would be helpful if age levels were indicated with each game, although with most of the games this is obvious. This is a great book for the educational program of churches and schools. Make learning exciting--play a game!

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

*Mary Jarvis
Retired Teacher
Marysville, Washington*

268

Denny Rydberg

**Dennis Benson's Creative Bible
Studies for Young Adults**

Group Publishing, 1990

Paper \$12.99

Gr. 7 - 12

Dennis Benson's Creative Bible Studies contains over 400 lessons, while covering Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts. Each lesson is outlined for the teacher: "focus" and "insight" summarizes the theme of the passage; "preparation" covers needed materials for the lesson; "Bible study" guides the teacher as to procedure, followed by an "action" segment for closure. Benson's approach is kinesthetic and experiential. He attempts to help the teacher and student feel what those in the passage may have felt, then bring the passage to life through a well-planned activity. Benson also works to incorporate the students' findings into the larger church body by suggesting ways to share lessons learned. Additionally, several lessons draw upon the wisdom of older church members to help learners find insight.

While there are many creative ideas presented, I believe the book is geared more for larger churches and youth groups. For example, one study calls for a cassette recorder, cassettes, and microphone for each student; next, grease pencils, splicing material, and reel-to-reel recorders are required to splice student tapes. Further, some of the lessons require two-hour time periods to complete the lesson, which might be impractical for Sunday School activity. Benson's studies also seem to rely heavily on symbolism and tend to spiritualize historical events more than I prefer. In the lesson about the Gadarene Demoniac, students are to pass around a toy pig to describe "...types of evil that tend to grasp him or her from time to time." Then, they are to draw symbols (on pigs cut from construction paper) of "...bad things which seem to possess them." After discussion, students are to "throw the construction paper pigs into the water..." presumably representative of the demon-filled pigs in the passage. In summary, Benson's work offers much in the way of creative ideas for Bible lessons. If one desires an experiential Bible study, this may be the book for you. But don't count on finding exposition into the meanings of individual passages. That's not the intent of the book.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

*Randy Fisk, Counselor
Greenleaf Friends Academy
Greenleaf, Idaho*

296.4

Ceil and Moishe Rosen

**Christ in the Passover : Why Is
This Night Different**

Moody Press, c1978

Paper \$5.95

Adult

The Jewish Passover, explain Ceil and Moishe Rosen, is God's object lesson to teach, first the Jews and then the whole world, his plan for salvation. Because people will remember an object lesson, God gave the ancient Israelites the Passover feast as a concrete reminder of their redemption from Egypt. The Passover is also an object lesson for Christians.

In *Christ in the Passover* the Rosens give Christians an historical and spiritual understanding of the Passover and demonstrate that Christ is the Passover Lamb. The book begins by recounting the first Passover when God called his people out of Egypt. The following chapters describe how Israel celebrated the Passover feast throughout the ages.

In one chapter, the authors compare the first century seder meal to the Last Supper. Jesus changed the feast. Traditionally, nothing was to be eaten after the Passover Lamb. Jesus introduced the new covenant by breaking bread after the meal and by declaring that this feast would now be in remembrance of him.

Throughout the book, the Rosens show how each of the Passover symbols not only represented Israel's redemption from slavery, but also looked forward to the future Messiah. In the last chapter, the authors give a gospel message and call the reader to join the marriage feast of the Lamb.

Although the authors draw information from several experts on the Passover and cite several scriptural references, they made this seemingly dry topic enjoyable to read by describing historical events and celebration styles with dramatic scenarios.

This book would be a valuable resource to any Christian who wished to better understand his spiritual roots in Judaism but doesn't want to wade through scholarly writings. Those who are reaching out to Jewish friends will also find this book useful.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 5

*Lorinda K. F. Newton
Freelance Writer
Kirkland, Washington*

342.73

Mathew D. Staver
Faith and Freedom : A Complete Handbook for Defending Your Religious Rights
Crossway Books, c1995
Paper \$14.99

Adult

Contrary to popular opinion, public school students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate."

In his book, *Faith and Freedom*, pastor-turned-lawyer Matthew Staver seeks to derail this and other myths of separation of church and state by educating Christians in the areas of free speech and religious rights.

Before 1940, the First Amendment was interpreted to restrain the federal government from meddling with religious issues within the states. Then in 1940, the Supreme Court applied the First Amendment Free Exercise Clause to the states. Now, instead of protecting the states from federal intrusion, the Supreme Court interprets the First Amendment as allowing the federal government to interfere with state matters regarding religion.

This interpretation has led to numerous conflicts in the area of religious liberty. Many court cases have arisen because people in authority have misunderstood what rights religious people do have.

In this book, Staver explains that, despite this change in the interpretation of the First Amendment, Americans still have the right to religious expression in many areas. He begins by clarifying the rights that students and teachers have in public schools. Then he proceeds to explain what rights people have to express religious ideas in public places. This discussion covers the use of public property and facilities, public prayers, demonstrations, door-to-door witnessing, and the posting of religious signs. Religious discrimination in the workplace and permitted political activities of nonprofit organizations are also discussed.

Staver cites numerous court cases to demonstrate what freedoms we do have and to point out areas where Americans have also lost some of their religious freedoms. Although these excerpts from court decisions may be difficult to read, the author clearly explains the rulings and frequently closes some of the chapters with concise summaries. The book also has eight helpful appendices and a short index.

By following *Faith and Freedom's* practical guidelines, Americans can learn how they can express religious ideas without violating the so-

called wall of separation and what to do when their rights are violated. It is a must-read for students, teachers, parents, public officials, and anyone else who is concerned about religious liberty issues.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Lorinda K. F. Newton
Freelance Writer
Kirkland, Washington

362.7

From Darkness to Light : Teens Write About How They Triumphed over Trouble
Illustrated by Ryan Kelly
Edited by Julie Landsman
Deaconess Press, c1994
Paper \$8.95
Gr. 7 - 12

Hundreds of U.S. teenagers were asked to write an essay about some difficult situation they had faced and how they triumphed over it. Five hundred responded, many with great thought, courage and honesty. The sixty winning essays are arranged by topic including family problems, moving, the immigrant experience, alcohol, drugs, peer pressure, and abuse. Each topic is introduced with a synopsis of the essays covered and some general comments. The young writers are praised for their strength, courage, flexibility, or intelligence. Adult readers are encouraged to make a better world for their young people.

Many of the essays have real value. They give great insight into the problems our young people encounter today. Some, like Andrea Anderson, have strong value systems and relate how they have succeeded in avoiding trouble. Others take us through the bleak reality of living on the streets, deep depression, and drug abuse. The offerings are open, colorful (day to day life in an Amish community), sometimes depressing and painfully honest. The styles, maturity, and command of the language are as diverse as the authors and their experiences.

As interesting as these essays are, a young reader could easily receive mixed messages from them. Most of the writers who have solved their problems seem to have done so without much help from adults and even less from God. Those who are still in process look to themselves for solutions. What is right or wrong is not always clear, absolutes are missing. There is some swearing in the book. Many of the authors are obviously still deciding on their value systems. This book might be best used for classroom discussion.

◆ Quality - 4 Acceptability - 4

Kathy Lowell
Secondary Librarian, Snohomish County Christian School
Mountlake Terrace, Washington

370.15

Gail Murphy Sonbuchner
Help Yourself : How to Take Advantage of Your Learning Styles
New Readers Press, c1991
Paper \$8.25
Gr. 9 - Adult

Gale Murphy Sonbuchner's book on learning styles not only covers the different styles of learning but also helps the reader to identify his/her specific style of learning. In addition, the author provides specific, as well as general examples of learning styles in various educational situations. This book also covers such basics as reading, notetaking, spelling, etc.

Sonbuchner's information is presented in a reader-friendly style, utilizing identifying icons, cartoons, short chapters, and much "white space."

This is a condensed book of study tips and learning styles that, if put into action, can enhance any student's academic endeavors.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Linda Olson
Library Assistant, Redmond Branch Library
Redmond, Oregon

371

Mary Lee Blansett
Put a Book in Their Hands : Whole Language Projects for Beginning Readers
Illustrated by Paul Chmara
Incentive Publications, 1992
Paper \$10.95
PS - K (Prof)

Did you know that a fish has ears inside its body where the water can't get in? You'll pick up some interesting conversation starters along with acquiring handy theme units in *Put a Book in Their Hands*. Teacher Mary E. Blansett has set in book form her kindergarten whole language program for introducing consonants to children. The book is comprised of seventeen teaching units, each introducing one consonant (two units introduce two consonants each). Each easy to follow unit plan gives practice in the skills of creative oral communication, auditory experience, sequencing and outcome prediction. In addition are integrated art activities, integrated game activities, and creative written communication projects, combined with literature recommendations. A partial

copyright gives teachers permission to reproduce game and craft pages. The author has included a general description of how she sets up her year's study. While many of the ideas in this book will be 'old hat' for experienced kindergarten teachers, new teachers, homeschool parents, and pre-school teachers are sure to find some useful and helpful ideas. Be aware that the W unit features witches, therefore some schools and parents may want to substitute their own ideas.

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 3

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

371.3
Ronald W. Fry
How to Study
Career Press, c1994
Paper \$9.95
Gr. 9 - Adult

Ron Fry's How to Study series provides instructions for good, basic study habits. He touches on speed reading, outlining, research techniques, and other skills that need to be mastered at the high school and college level. The biggest problem is that students who need this information the most will probably be the least willing to follow the program, as it requires selfdiscipline to read and follow the instructions. The material lacks in creativity of presentation and is not likely to hold student's interest.

This series would be best utilized as a resource/supplement for a high school teacher desiring to relay study habits to his or her students. Without a teacher for guidance, most struggling students will likely be overwhelmed and not follow through with the program.

This series does not present a simple set of rules to follow, but supplies the principles of learning, such as the importance of setting and accomplishing study goals. For example, one suggestion given was to observe the teacher's style, in order to understand what the teacher expects, then to study the specific information that the teacher is looking for. This may improve grades, but does not promote learning.

Many of Fry's suggestions involve planning, organizing, and using common sense. The author makes many valuable points. There are seven books to read, but the reading is laborious. These books will help students who are motivated enough to put into practice the methods given.

Titles in the series:

How to Study
Manage Your Time
Take Notes
Write Papers
Improve Your Memory
Improve Your Reading
"Ace" Any Test

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Linda Olson
Library Assistant, Redmond Branch Library
Redmond, Oregon

371.3
Kathryn W. Kizer and Ethel
McIndoo
200+ Ideas for Teaching
Preschoolers
New Hope, 1986
Paper \$4.95
PS (Prof)

This manual is a compilation of ideas used by preschool teachers across the nation. Ms. Kizer and Ms. McIndoo bring a combined total of seventy years experience to this work. The broad spectrum of activities that could be integrated into any preschool program include art, home living, nature, puzzles, and games. Other books in the series focus on one particular area such as games or things to make. The table of contents is laid out in a simple format stating the activities in each section and the inclusive pages. Each activity is titled in bold print for easy identification. Simple black-and-white diagrams give a visual aid to parent or teacher. Each manual is notebook size and three-hole punched for placing in a binder. These manuals are a treasure to anyone who works with preschoolers and must plan activities for little people!

200+ Games and Fun Activities for
Teaching Preschoolers

As the title suggests, over two hundred games, poems, and fingerplays fill this notebook-size manual. The contents are divided into relaxation games, learning games, musical games, games for parties, etc. Each game is entitled in bold print with instructions and/or diagrams beneath. This is a great resource for any teacher or parent of preschoolers.

200+ Things to Make for Teacher
of Preschoolers

Ms. Kizer and Ms. McIndoo understand the limits of a budget! They have put together a manual showing how to create things for activities such as music, puzzles, or home living using items most people consider

disposable. They expand the idea to include making things to enrich the room or playground. Similar to their other manuals, it would be a wonderful resource for anyone who deals with preschoolers.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Elaine Watts
Independent Educator
Spokane, Washington

371.91
Nancy Lelewer
Something's Not Right : One
Family's Struggle With Learning
Disabilities, An Autobiography
VanderWyk & Burnham, c1994
Paper \$14.95
Adult

Something's Not Right, by Nancy Lelewer, is a must-read for any parent, teacher or friend of a child who is learning disabled. Ms. Lelewer's candor in discussing not only her children's learning disabilities, but also her own and her parents', is a refreshing change from scholarly books on this subject. Her determination to understand how to educate her children and her overwhelming love are the elements that attract readers to this fascinating narrative.

Even though three out of four of Ms. Lelewer's children had learning disabilities, this book focuses on Brian, her only son and most severely disabled. Brian's struggles began before he was born when his gestation months were characterized by a constant shaking felt only by his mother. Nancy couldn't understand the trembling she felt and her doctors essentially shrugged it off--until Brian was born shaking.

Brian's preschool years were characterized by fits of rage, language that was little more than gibberish, and many other bizarre behaviors. This story takes place during the 1960s when doctors knew little about learning disabilities and perceptual handicaps that often accompany them. Medical and educational experts were stymied by behavior that left Brian's mother emotionally and physically exhausted. To further complicate matters, Ms. Lelewer's husband came home from work one day and announced, "I can't take it anymore." He left Nancy with four children and a bushel of problems to sort through.

Nancy's raw determination to break through Brian's invisible barriers to learning and socialization is a picture of exactly how one woman's tenacity can make the difference between success and failure to a child. Parents' Choice Foundation of Newton, Massachusetts, has given this important volume its stamp of

endorsement. There is no doubt that they have chosen well.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Karen Orfitelli
Freelance Writer and Teacher
Cornerstone Christian School
Manchester, Connecticut

372

Gloria Frender
Learning to Learn : Strengthening
Study Skills and Brain Power
(A Kids' Stuff Book)

Incentive Publications, 1990

Paper \$14.95

Gr. 7 - 12

There is finally a solution for that student with poor study habits, or the one who does poorly on tests. *Learning to Learn* by Gloria Frender will appease the teacher who has been complaining about students who can't or won't study. Frender has compiled the literary version of a one-stop shopping center. Her book is a potpourri of study skills. Its most valuable asset is that it is totally reproducible. No copyright police will be knocking down your door.

Learning to Learn is student driven. Students begin by analyzing their own learning styles through a 50 question test. One statement on this left-brain vs. right-brain questionnaire is, "I can easily remember melodies and tunes." Students next take a study habits inventory with questions such as, "Do you know what distracts you?" Teachers could use these exams to learn how to meet their students' needs.

Freder communicates to pupils through the written word and graphs. She advises students on methods of studying, note taking, listening skills, organizing information, reading comprehension, improving memory, and test taking. The format and clever graphics will capture the reader's attention.

This book is ideal for a reading or study skills class or for that student who is slightly behind. Research has shown that students who have good study habits and self-discipline do better in school than those who do not.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Sandra Hosking
Teacher, Falls Christian Academy
Post Falls, Idaho

372

John Holt
Learning All the Time
Addison Wesley, 1989

Paper \$11.00

Adult

Published posthumously by George Dennison for John Holt from a manuscript in progress, *Learning All the Time* explores "how small children begin to read, write, count, and investigate the world, without being taught." For those familiar with Holt's philosophy of education in *How Children Fail*, *How Children Learn*, *The Underachieving School*, among others, *Learning All the Time* with its emphasis on letting children take the lead in learning rather than being directed by educators, will come as no surprise. However, even for the educator who does not appreciate Holt's looking askance at traditional education, *Learning All the Time* does have some interesting ideas for learning such traditional skills as multiplication tables and fractions. Subjects covered include reading and writing, numbers, science, music, how parents can help, and the nature of learning.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

372.6

Marjorie Frank
If You're Trying to Teach Kids
How to Write, You've Gotta Have
This Book

Illustrated by Judy Howard

(A Kids' Stuff Book)

Incentive Publications, c1979

Paper \$12.95

K - Adult

Everything you've always wanted to know about teaching writing but didn't know who to ask. Marjorie Frank has not only assembled a detailed and informative guide to teaching writing, but she has also presented it in a format which makes it easy for the busy teacher to find just the right activity or answer for his/her problem. Activities are presented with improvisations for various levels of learners including oral and group activities for the young child who is not writing on his own. Chapters include: THE ROOTS: "Where do I begin?," THE FOUNDATION: "My kids say they can't think of anything to write," THE ROMANCE: "They groan when it's time for writing," THE PROCESS: "But teaching writing is such hard work!," THE TOOLS: "Should spelling and grammar count? How much?," PRESENTING: "What do we do with the writing when it's finished?," THE

WRINKLES: "I have this kid who just won't!," JUST IDEAS: "I always run out of ideas by October!," THE RESOURCES: "Help!," "INDEPENDENCE: "How can I get them to write on their own?" While not every activity (i.e., Halloween) may be suitable for the Christian school or family, all activities can be adapted to fit your particular situation. Every school library should have this valuable resource on their teachers' shelf.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

378.1

Victor L. Cahn
A Thinking Student's Guide to
College

Christopher Pub. House, c1988

Paper \$6.95

Gr. 9 - 12

Victor Cahn's guide to college life is insightful, accurate, and a pleasure to read. Cahn offers prospective college students an insider's point of view on undergraduate life in either a small college or a large university. His advice can be easily understood and quickly absorbed. In addition, his wry sense of humor comes through in each chapter.

Cahn's counsel focuses on the academic, social and personal freedom that a new college student must deal with. While he offers somewhat general advice, his specific advice for any problem a student may encounter is right on: "Find someone to talk to." Cahn directs students not to try to solve an insurmountable problem by themselves, but to seek out a professor, health professional, or anyone on the college faculty or staff who will help them. Whether it's a problem with a roommate or feelings of depression, Cahn urges students not to isolate themselves.

Cahn describes college life accurately and offers strategies to students who do not wish to participate in typical party life often found on college campuses. He makes a fine case for attending college and focusing on academics, not merely having a good time. After all, he reasons throughout the book, a college degree is to "prepare a person for life."

This small volume could easily fit into a guidance class for college-bound seniors. Each of the sections and subsections would make a great springboard for spirited discussions.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Karen Orfitelli
Teacher, Cornerstone Christian School
Manchester, Connecticut

398.2
Tana Reiff
Legends
(Timeless Tales)
New Readers Press, c1991
Paper \$4.25
Cassette Tape, \$9.95
Gr. 7 - Adult
New Readers and New English
Speakers

The goal of this collection of timeless, enchanting legends is to give the mature new reader an interesting way to hone his reading skills. Among its nine legends from around the world you will find Anansi the Spider's quest for wisdom, Don Coyote's search for fire, King Arthur and his round table, the Leprechaun's cunning care for his pot of gold. *Legends* is both a book and an audio tape. The tape begins with an explanation of the word 'legend,' then the speaker reads the nine legends slowly, distinctly and interestingly. The tape's even, slow pace makes it easy for the new reader to follow along in the book. To encourage the new reader the book has intriguing illustrations and large print.

There are several ways the mature new reader can use this set: while listening to the tape the reader can either follow the words quietly in the book or read aloud; don't even open the book, just listen to and enjoy the tape; having used the tape to learn how to read the legends, read them from the book to an interested audience. Each legend has been rewritten in simple, understandable language, retaining the essence of the story. Those difficult words that are important to the story are retained. By listening to the legends several times the reader ties the correct pronunciation of each word to the printed word. Learning the art of reading a story aloud is an added bonus. The sentence structure is varied but remains easy to understand. The book and tape make a compact set that can be used either at home or in a classroom setting.

In some of the titles magic in the traditional story-telling sense is used.

Other titles in this series are

- Myths
- Folktales
- Fables
- Adventures
- Love Stories
- Tales of Wonder
- Tall Tales.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Donna Eggett
Volunteer Counselor
Catawba Valley Pregnancy Care Center
Hickory, North Carolina

423
Thorndike-Barnhart Student
Dictionary
Edited by E. L. Thorndike and
Clarence L. Barnhart
HarperCollins, 1991
Prebound \$16.95
Gr. 9 - 12

This student dictionary is specifically designed for high school and mature junior high students. There are more than 100,000 word entries and 1,500 illustrations, charts or maps that are current and factual. The dictionary includes a pronunciation key and a section on "How to Use and Understand Pronunciations". There is also a very helpful section on "Using this Dictionary." Within this section you will find examples and crossword puzzles that the student can work through like a tutorial. The word entries are boldfaced and easy to read with all the standard information included. The back of the dictionary includes a section with Rules for Writers. Basic capitalization, punctuation, spelling and word division rules are included. This student dictionary is a convenient, more compact size, than many dictionaries. It is organized nicely and is very easy to use. The binding is by Permabound and one of its greatest strengths is the fact that it lies flat when open. This is an important quality for greater ease of use. Students will find it a useful aid in all areas of study.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Marcia Snyder
Librarian, Valley Christian School
Missoula, Montana

546.
David L. Heiserman
Exploring Chemical Elements and
Their Compounds
TAB Books, 1991
Paper \$18.95
Trade, \$29.95
Gr. 6 - 12

Exploring Chemical Elements and Their Compounds by David L. Heiserman is an interesting and informative reference book for students seeking basic information about chemical elements and their compounds. It gives pertinent information on the elements of the periodic table from hydrogen (number 1) to the superheavy elements (numbers 108 and higher). Each element is described in one-to-four pages, covering its place on the periodic

table, its history, properties, production, compounds, and isotopes.

For a student looking up basic information in a hurry, an information box for each element usefully reveals its symbol, atomic weight and number, melting and boiling points, specific gravity, oxidation states, and electron configuration. While not particularly stirring in its presentation, the text makes some attempt to incorporate interesting language, providing valuable information in a clear, easy-to-understand and use format. In fact, I tested it on a bright ten-year-old. It kept his interest and made informative bedtime reading. The text contains little graphic relief beyond a clear diagram of each element's most common crystal structure. The index seems more than adequate for locating needed information. It would be a useful adjunct reference book for a high school chemistry student.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Georgia Beaverson
Freelance Writer
Former Staff Writer, InterVarsity Christian
Fellowship
Madison, Wisconsin

574
Pat Wishart and Dianne Hayley
Knee High Nature : Fall : A Guide
to Nature, Activities and Fun
Illustrated by Jo-El Berg
Lone Pine Publishing, c1994
Paper \$14.95
PS - Gr. 7 - (Prof)

The Knee High Nature Series by Pat Wishart and Dianne Hayley introduces animals and nature of the Northwest. Because each season of the Northwest is different, animals and plants need to adapt to different temperatures, food and shelter availability, and day length. Written in Alberta, this series is pertinent for all areas of the Northwest from Alaska south to Oregon and east to Wyoming. Designed with an adult helper in mind, the factual animal studies combined with a potpourri of poems, legends, and activities will be enjoyed by young children as well as older children. Home-school parents helping multi-age children will especially benefit. Teachers will find the books helpful in designing units that bring science together with literature, crafts, and music.

Most of the stories are humorous accounts of how animals were made utilizing Indian "Great Spirit" legends and Rudyard Kipling type stories. Winter includes one short Santa Claus story. Most of the poems and songs are designed for younger children, but the animal studies are detailed enough for upper

elementary. Line drawings by Jo-El Berg illustrate each animal and activity. Excellent suggestions are included for group activities and for creative nature walks.

Knee High Nature : Fall introduces fall as a season of change: shorter days, cooler nights, bright colors, and preparation for winter. A careful look is given to fall animals such as owls, bats, spiders, bears, and small rodents. Each section gives a thorough description of the animal plus listing location, food source, predators, and interesting season-by-season habits. Short songs, poems, legends, and craft activities continue each unit.

Knee High Nature : Winter presents winter as a time of limited food sources. Many animals migrate or hibernate. All animals and plants adapt to the colder conditions. Some store food; some change color. This book details the adaptations of winter birds, rodents, deer, wolves, coyotes, and foxes. Clear winter night skies are also explored. Poems, songs, stories and follow-up activities conclude each section.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 3

Paula Stewart Marks
Principal, Morning Star Christian School
Bend, Oregon

646.4

Shirley Dearing
Elegantly Frugal Costumes : The
Poor Man's Do-It-Yourself
Costume Maker's Guide
Illustrated by Beth Tallakson
Meriwether Pub, c1992
Paper \$9.95
Gr. 9 - Adult

The art of costuming, whether a kindergarten angel or an entire opera chorus, with minimal money and maximum results is the focus of *Elegantly Frugal Costumes*. First to be discussed are resources and deciding how involved a project should become. Several books are suggested for help with design and authenticity. Many suggestions throughout the book make the most of limited resources. A section on period costumes covers two millennia with many clear drawings and diagrams to illustrate the text. The author provides tricks of the trade such as turning a Goodwill formal into an 1830's tea gown and some amusing tales.

Most secondary students would find this book interesting as well as helpful. Without sewing experience, the directions could be a bit vague and wanting for detail. However anyone with costumes in their future would find this a great addition to their library.

◆ Quality - 5 Acceptability - 5

Kathy Lowell
Secondary Librarian
Snohomish County Christian School
Mountlake Terrace, Washington

649

Stephen Arterburn and Jim Burns
Drugproof Your Kids
Regal Books, c1995
Paper \$10.99
Adult

Drugproof Your Kids is a volume written by two leading experts in the field of youth ministry and counseling, Stephen Arterburn, co-founder of the Minirth-Meier New Life Clinics, and Jim Burns, president of the National Institute of Youth Ministry. These men have created a book which conveys techniques for parents on how to keep their children drug-free.

The book opens with disturbing statistics about children and their use and abuse of drugs and alcohol in America. The authors have not only delved into the secular world for their information, but make a direct hit with equally troubling anecdotes and statistics about kids from Christian homes.

These facts lay a strong foundation for the rest of the no-nonsense approach to identifying and/or preventing substance abuse in teens. This Scripturally based guide to understanding teens' mindsets and actions in relation to drugs and alcohol contain chapters that approach this problem from every angle. "Education the Right Way," "Obtaining Treatment," and "Parents' Guide to Handling Relapse," are a few of the titles that will keep people who live and work with teens reading this book.

"Facts About Illicit Drugs" is a chapter that identifies common drugs, their slang names, and why kids use them. Like the rest of this book, this chapter is easily understood and extremely informative.

This practical publication will give adults a step-by-step guide to helping teens through adolescence and the temptation of substance abuse.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Karen Orfitelli
Freelance Writer and Teacher
Cornerstone Christian School
Manchester, Connecticut

736

Chiyo Araki
Origami for Christmas
Kodansha, 1983
Paper \$18.00
Gr. 7 - Adult

Filled with "how to" directions, makes this book of handmade Christmas decorations is a good resource. The book is divided into two sections with seventeen colored pages illustrating thirty-four origami projects. A centimeter ruler, printed on the general information page, gives easy reference for measuring paper. Adult direction and encouragement is needed, even though the introduction hints that kids could pick up this book and make the projects.

Part One (about 100 pages) of this resource covers detailed step-by-step instructions for each origami project with a code for understanding folds and scissors cuts. Each project is bright and colorful.

The largest project is a nativity scene, but also included is a wreath of cranes, greeting cards, flowers, Santa Claus, reindeer, and a church scene. Some of the individual projects are a crane, chicken and other birds, tree, various flowers, Santa, manger components (angel, wise men) camel, church, a basket, and a box .

Part Two is the actual Christmas arrangements section, how to make arrangements from projects in Part One. For example: an origami Christmas tree on which to hang origami ornaments, and Mary, infant Jesus, and animals together in a manger scene. The combination of Santa and reindeer are put together in a mobile. Wreathes, cards and origami are combined with gift wrapping.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Carolyn Hearing
Teacher
Raytown, Missouri

745

Jacqueline Herald
World Crafts : A Celebration of
Designs and Skills
Lark Books, 1993
Trade \$35.00
Gr. 10 - Adult

Did you know that pottery has been produced by all societies past and present, that there are 850 different types of bamboo, that masks can represent mythological creatures or a person's rank in society, and that kites may have begun as military weapons for carrying darts or measuring distances between targets? These are just a few of the many intriguing facts found in Jacqueline Herald's *World Crafts*. Herald

spent years traveling throughout Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean talking to crafters about their work. The artistry of Native Americans and Western countries are conspicuously absent. Herald feels that the works of non-Western countries are often overlooked. *World Crafts* intends to draw attention to developing countries and give their artists the recognition they deserve.

World Crafts explores the history and cultural significance of pottery, basketmaking, carving, theatre and music crafts, painted and paper products, spinning and weaving, dyeing and printing, embroidery and appliqué, floor coverings, and recycling. Herald points out that most of crafting is done for economic reasons rather than entertainment. From the potter in India to the weaver in Guatemala, these artists depend on their creations for their livelihood.

Students may use this book as a resource for a report or to satisfy their curiosity. Though the text is most appropriate for ages twelve to adult, the colorful and detailed photographs will bridge the gap for younger children. My personal favorite is the boy in the hammock on page 47.

World Crafts is a thorough and valuable resource, although Hindu and other non-Christian beliefs are discussed.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Sandra Hosking
Teacher, Falls Christian Academy
Post Falls, Idaho

792

Marsh Cassidy
The Theatre and You : A Beginning
Meriwether Pub, c1992
Paper \$14.95
Gr. 9 - 12

The Theatre and You by Marsh Cassidy contains a potpourri of dramatic information. Teachers will no longer need their scattered notes and chicken-scratch drawings of the stage. Cassidy clearly and concisely touches on every aspect of the theater. He provides enough information and exercises to keep students active for an entire year.

The basic nature of *The Theatre and You* makes it an ideal text for a beginning drama class. It addresses such subjects as acting, writing scripts, scenery construction, and lighting. Students will also study the different people involved in producing a play, including the costume designer, make-up artist, stagehand, and director.

The Theatre and You is not meant to be just read; it contains challenging sketches by well known authors such as Isben, Wilde, and Shakespeare. Perhaps this book's greatest strength is the quality and quantity of drawings. Students will learn the components of the stage as well as different types of stages: arena stage or the classical Greek setup. Cassidy also explains how to place furniture and properties to facilitate the actors.

The Theatre and You is, in itself, a complete curriculum.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Sandra Hosking
Teacher, Falls Christian Academy
Post Falls, Idaho

792

Carlton Colyer
The Art of Acting : From Basic
Exercises to Multidimensional
Performances
Meriwether Pub, 1989
Paper \$14.95
Adult

The Art of Acting by Carlton Colyer is a good source of technical information for drama instructors or advanced acting students. Because this book reads like a college textbook and contains specialized and abstract concepts, I recommend it for those students who desire to become serious actors.

Colyer emphasizes warm-up exercises, relaxation techniques, concentration, and drawing on emotions to create a character. *The Art of Acting's* main strength is its dissertation on how to create a role in different genres from tragedy to comedy to absurd. Colyer defines and gives a brief history of each type; for example, he explains Aristotle believed that classical tragedy had to have unhappy characters with an unhappy ending. The book is not without its humorous moments. He also claims most television shows are badly written.

Though the book is almost devoid of artwork, except for a few photographs of Colyer and his students, and the reading is heavy, *The Art of Acting* is worth exploring. Colyer's vast experience on Broadway and in Hollywood working with great actors like Helen Hayes and Jack Lemmon makes him a more than adequate teacher.

◆ Quality - 2 ♥ Acceptability - 3

Sandra Hosking
Teacher, Falls Christian Academy
Post Falls, Idaho

796

Dave Johnson
Aim High
Zondervan Pub. House, 1994
Paper \$19.99
Gr. 9 - 12

Dave Johnson, decathlete competitor at the 1992 Olympics, had anything but a good start in life. From his elementary days, he started with petty thievery which led to serious run-ins with the law. The turning point came when his father had to relocate to Oregon right before Dave's senior year of high school. Looking back Dave sees the hand of God.

His senior year of high school Dave got involved in sports and found he had lots of natural talent. After consistent involvement in drinking and smoking marijuana, Dave wanted to change things in his life. Through the influence of a Christian friend, he began seeking God. His first prayer was, "Dear Lord, please don't ever give up on me." A few weeks later Dave turned his life over to Jesus and found he had new goals for his life.

Dave ended up at Azusa Pacific College and went on to qualify for the Olympic decathlon. He became a household word by advertising for Reebok with Dan O'Brien in "Who's the world's greatest athlete?" contest. Dave competed in the Olympics on a broken foot and won the bronze medal.

Each of the ten events in the decathlon are explained and compared with life. Dave's story shows what can happen when there is a commitment to never giving up. His life was one of many ups and downs spiritually and in every other way, but it showed the faithfulness of God even after repeated failures.

Aim High has an inspiring, challenging message for young and old. It is an encouragement to read about the successes that were largely due to sheer determination and grit. Dave's story can be used to inspire young people who are struggling over past failures with the knowledge that "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

◆ Quality - 3 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Esther Knaupp
Librarian
Santiam Christian School
Corvallis, Oregon

796.357
A. C. Green
Victory
Creation House, 1994
Trade \$14.99
Paper, \$11.00
Gr. 8 - 12

In *Victory*, A.C. Green shares the principles of championship living with readers young and old. Using illustrations from his childhood to his years as a professional basketball player, A.C. challenges his readers with fifty-two principles illustrated with examples and stories from his own life experiences.

A.C. exudes sincerity and transparency as he discusses issues that face young people. While many of his illustrations are related to playing basketball, the principles apply to everyone. For example, his principle number seven says, "Learn to live unselfishly. Realize that you can't do it all by yourself. You need the team." This is great advice for individuals of any age.

The final pages of the book repeat the fifty-two principles of championship living along with questions for thought. These could be used by a coach and his team or as a devotional guide for an organized Bible study or for individual use.

Because of his celebrity status, A.C. Green has a platform from which to speak, and his example on and off the basketball court have made him a positive role model for young people, especially in the area of sexual abstinence and moral integrity.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Esther Knaupp, Librarian
Santiam Christian School
Corvallis, Oregon

796.9
Gene Prater
Snow-Shoeing
The Mountaineers, 1988
Paper \$10.95
Gr. 9 - Adult

For snowshoe aficionados, Gene Prater's in-depth guide to the design and use of snowshoes is ideal. The guide is written in an easy-to-read, humorous style, and tells a reader everything he or she might have wondered about snowshoeing but didn't know who to ask.

Snowshoes are designed with various animal tracks in mind: the snowshoe rabbit, bear, bobcat, and lynx. One of the more popular snowshoe models is the Western snowshoe. Prater describes the different types of snowshoes and gives tips on which kinds track better in the snow, complete with diagrams. He

also gives tips on choosing snowshoes for various climates and areas for better flotation.

The book, now in its third edition, has an equipment list, bibliography, and an index of terms. Although most of the figures and photos taken by the author show men, the language is nonsexist and straight-forward. The author does warn away from the sport of snowshoeing small women, young teenagers, middle-aged adults with a sedentary lifestyle, and anyone else lacking stamina.

Section 1 deals with the equipment necessary to snowshoe. Techniques for choosing the right lacings and traction devices, repairing snowshoes, walking on snowshoes, finding and breaking trails, and general winter safety are also given. Prater, obviously an expert, leaves no stone unturned as he explains snowshoe buzzwords, including snowshoe-walking techniques such as eastern and western step-kicking.

Since the guide is comprehensive, it is not a quick read. For beginners, the chapters on bindings (Chapter 2) and traction devices (Chapter 3) are particularly insightful. The author gives the merits of wool versus polypropylene clothing, equipment, tents, backpacks, and stoves. Section 2 of the book gets more into how to use the equipment to a hiker's best advantage.

Prater deglamorizes the notion of snowshoeing with his admission that few people snowshoe just to do it. Using snowshoes is a means to enjoying the winter terrain. Also, the need for being in top physical condition is a warning that should be taken seriously.

The book encourages readers to get out and see God's creation through the medium of snowshoeing. The book is ideal for adventurous types who love to hike in the snow.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Linda Washington
Freelance Writer and Textbook Editor/Writer
Carol Stream, Illinois

808.5
Brent C. Oberg
Speechcraft : An Introduction to
Public Speaking
Meriwether Pub, c1994
Paper \$12.95
Gr. 9 - 12

When I ask my students what they are afraid of, speaking in front of a group of their peers tops their list. Fear is one of the topics that *Speechcraft: An Introduction to Public Speaking* by Brent C. Oberg deals with. Oberg

suggests a speaker should use fear to his or her advantage by dangling one's arms before speaking, taking deep breaths, and being prepared. This book is full of useful tips for the inexperienced presenter. In addition to nervousness, *Speechcraft* deals with methods of delivery, listening skills, research, and types of speeches, such as impromptu, informational, and persuasive.

Speechcraft is thorough yet simple in its presentation. Its organization is perfect for those of us who are members of the television generation with short attention spans. Teachers may use it as a textbook. It contains enough information and exercises to educate students for a semester course. The sample speech evaluation forms and list of impromptu topics are valuable. My personal favorite is the Listening Skills Test, which allows students to analyze their current listening habits. For example, when listening to a speaker, do you tend to pay more attention to the content of the speech or the presenter's style of delivery and appearance? Good listeners focus on the message rather than make judgments based on superficial things.

Speechcraft could be a viable supplement to the standard curriculum.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Sandra Hosking
Teacher, Falls Christian Academy
Post Falls, Idaho

812.008
Christmas on Stage : An Anthology
of Royalty-Free Christmas Plays
for All Ages
Edited by Theodore O. Zapel
Meriwether Pub, c1990
Paper \$14.95
Adult

Whether you are a novice play director or someone with years of experience, this could be a helpful book in celebrating the Christmas season. This book contains twenty-eight one act plays and readings to use for Christmas programs. The material lends itself well to the small school or church and classroom.

There is a variety of material including contemporary or classic plays, pageants, choral readings, mime, and even a "rap" play. All the plays have been selected for easy staging with excellent directions and adaptable suggestions, many productions requiring few props or costumes.

The book is divided into age groupings and types of performances offering additional ease of selection. Notes for directing and producing

are excellent and illustrated with diagrams for clarity.

Most of the plays and readings deal with the Biblical Christmas story, although there are some dramatizing the origins of Christmas Carols or such classics as "The Little Match Girl" and Clement Moore's "A Visit From St. Nicholas." There are some readings and plays about Santa Claus.

If you are searching for help in finding Christmas productions that are not too complicated this book might just be the ticket!

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 4

Mary Jarvis
Retired Teacher
Marysville, Washington

814
Martha Bolton
On the Loose : The Cafeteria Lady
Focus on the Family, c1994
Paper \$6.99
Gr. 7 - 12

This aptly titled book from Brio Magazine's wacky Cafeteria Lady is full of fun and laughs galore! The Cafeteria Lady shares her own hilarious high school adventures from camp, driver's ed, slumber parties, cheerleading, and many other facets of adolescent life. Martha Bolton has a true gift of finding humor in even the most mundane things in life but never at the expense of anyone other than herself. This is truly becoming a lost art form in today's culture as so much of humor is twisted, dark, or demeaning to others. *On the Loose* is affirming humor that causes you to laugh out loud remembering similar instances in your own life. It is invaluable for teenagers as it helps them to see that potentially embarrassing situations do not have to be devastating, but can be dealt with in a positive and humorous manner. Bolton never hits you over the head with this; rather her great storytelling and one liners allow the reader to come to this conclusion on their own.

Parents will also appreciate this book especially her chapter on "You know it's time to clean your room when...flies, cruising within 10 feet of your dirty-clothes hamper, drop to the ground." Or "That cupcake that rolled under your bed two months ago now has enough hair to French braid." Perhaps you could share this with your teenage son or daughter when encouraging them to clean their room! Parents and teachers should read this book together with teenagers have a laugh and share some of their own life experiences.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Robin Vandenbark

Secondary Librarian, Snohomish County
Christian School
Mountlake Terrace, Washington

970.004
John M. Dunn
Relocation of the North American
Indian
World History Series
Lucent Books, 1995
Trade \$14.95
Gr. 7 - 12

Lucent's World History Series, each with a different author, explores an important historical period, place, or event in detail. Each book begins with a helpful timeline and ends with a well done index. Black-and-white prints of people, places, artifacts, and maps stir interest. These well researched books abound in quotations and documentation. Readers may find some of the texts somewhat dry, similar to reading an encyclopedia, but adequate for research papers. History is not presented from a Christian perspective ("If Abraham was indeed a real person who came out of Ur..." quoted from *Ancient Near East*.) Different religions are highly detailed and presented as part of the cultural background.

The Relocation of the North American Indian, by John M. Dunn, follows the Indian struggle from 1622 until the present time. Shows land theft, wars, massacres, and forced relocation. A strong Indian "rights" book.

The French and Indian War, by Benton and Louise Minks, begins with John Cabot's exploration in 1497 and progresses to the Proclamation Act of 1763. One of the best of the series, this book contains positive Christian quotes and is more reader friendly.

Hitler's Reich, by Gail B. Stewart, begins at the end of World War I and traces Hitler and his popular rise. This is a sad commentary of brutality and anti-Semitism.

The Ancient Near East, by Clarice Swisher, starts at 10,000 B.C. and progresses to 331 B.C. Text shows peoples of many religions and developing abilities.

Architecture, by Paula Bryant Pratt, begins with the great pyramids and concludes with modern skyscrapers. This book reads more like an encyclopedia.

Traditional Japan, by Don Nardo, begins with the myth of the Sun Goddess in 720 A.D. and traces the feudal society to the 1868 return of Imperial Rule. Shows Japan's developing traditions and culture and includes a small section on missionary input and Christian martyrdom.

Aztec Civilization, by Lois Warburton, follows the Aztecs in the Valley of Mexico as they build a wealthy, powerful empire abounding with technology, culture, and superstition.

The Roman Empire, by Don Nardo, traces the Roman Empire from 27 B.C. until it falls to the Turks in 1453. This is an intriguing look at Rome and shows Christianity moving from an unpopular persecuted sect to acceptance with Constantine's deathbed conversion.

The Travels of Marco Polo, by Mary Hull, explores the fascinating journeys of the Polo merchants in Asia in the late 1200's. This is an excellent resource on the culture, people, and geography of the Mongol Empire. Marco's compiled descriptions of life and geography of Asia influenced further exploration of the world. A good book for all budding historians.

The Cuban Revolution, by Earle Rice Jr., traces Cuba's changing government and leaders. Most of the book is a biography of Fidel as the ultimate revolutionary, detailing his background and rise to power.

Other titles in this series:

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Egypt of the Pharaohs

The Cuban Revolution

The American Frontier

◆ Quality - 4 Acceptability - 5

Paula Stewart Marks

Principal, Morning Star Christian School

Bend, Oregon.

973.5

**Marlene Smith-Baranzini and
Howard Egger-Bovet**

**USKids History : Book of the New
American Nation**

**Illustrated by T. Taylor Bruce
(A Brown Paper Preschool Book)**

Little, Brown, c1995

Trade \$21.95

Gr. 4 - Adult

Life in the thirteen colonies after independence from the British is portrayed with the flavor of motion picture drama. Colonists from diverse backgrounds, occupations, and sections of the country are depicted in authentic settings. Actual experiences are related through vivid firsthand accounts, letters, diaries, songs, and illustrations.

Some of the topics covered are the conflict between the Indians and the settlers; the formation of the new American government; establishment of a permanent capital; the Louisiana Purchase; the Erie Canal project; and President Jackson's fight against government, corruption, relocation of the Cherokee, child labor, and slave trade in America. If you want a "behind the scenes" view of these events, this book will satisfy your curiosity.

The text provides excellent classroom material for students studying the colonial period in the United States. Application activities such as crafts (build a model flatboat), games, and skill instruction (illustrative lesson on how to spin a rope like an American cowboy) are included. Black-and-white sketches enhance the stories. Rich historical data makes this book an appropriate resource for grades 4 - 12.

◆ Quality - 4 ♥ Acceptability - 5

Dian Wesley

Wesleyan Christian School

Vashon Island, Washington

973.7

**Norm Bolotin and Angela M. Herb
For Home and Country : A Civil
War Scrapbook**

**(Young Readers' History of the
Civil War)**

Lodestar Books, 1995

Trade \$16.99

Gr. 6 - 8

For Home and Country by Norm Bolotin and Angela M. Herb, is an objective recounting of American history from the end of 1860 to 1865. The book is peopled with real men and women, quoted from their letters, shown in photographs. The personal dimension of the outrage of brother fighting against brother is given life. In presenting the factual, often graphic depiction of the horrors of war, some details are gruesome. But, put in the context of the War Between the States, they are a valid part of history.

It is the layout of this publication that intrigues. The photographs in black and white are authentic, the photo captions informative, the use of negative and positive space arresting. Roughly a quarter of the space is dedicated to actual text. This is in keeping with the theme of the subtitle, a *Civil War Scrapbook*.

For Home and Country may be used as a reference book. The material given in the index, glossary, selected bibliography and picture credits are an extension of information that the actual text contains. The writing is so well done, high interest with a somewhat limited vocabulary, that it also may be used for leisure reading.

◆ Quality - 5 ♥ Acceptability - 5

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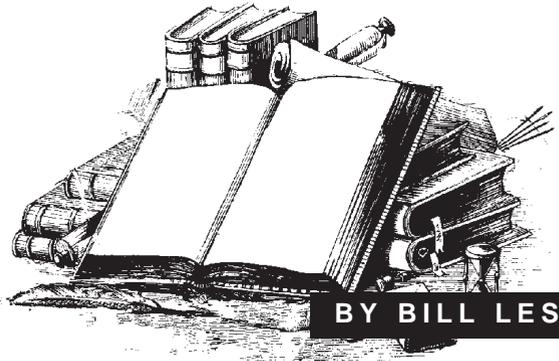
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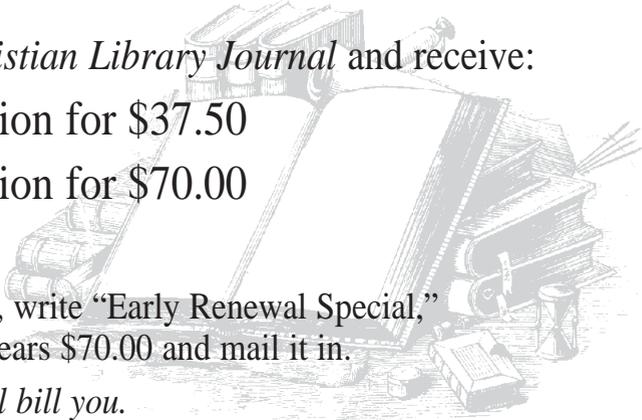
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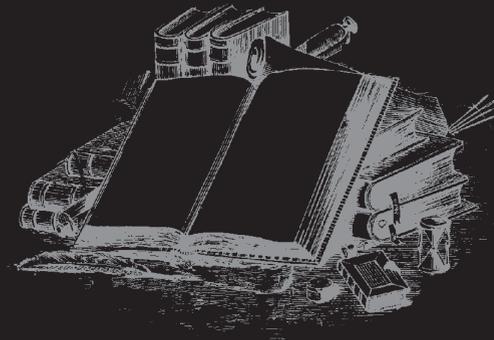
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