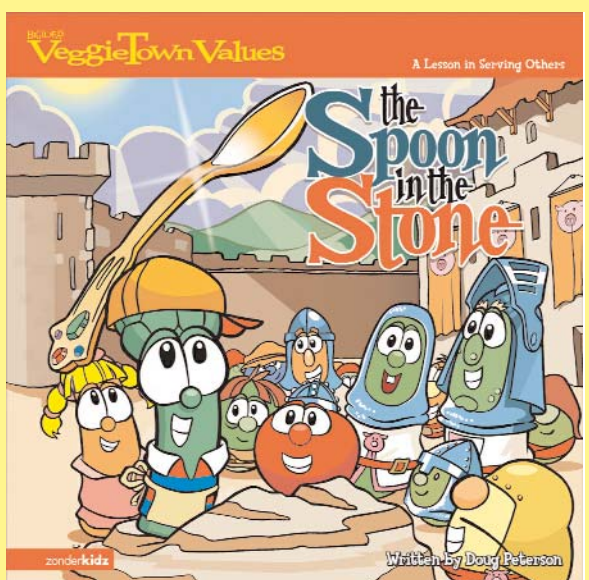
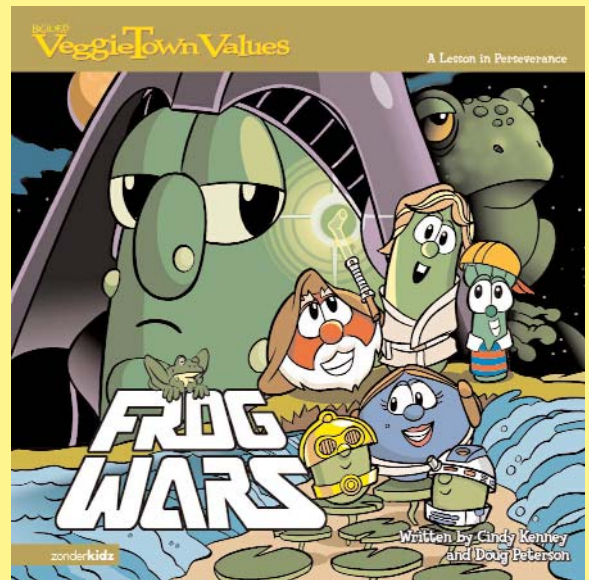
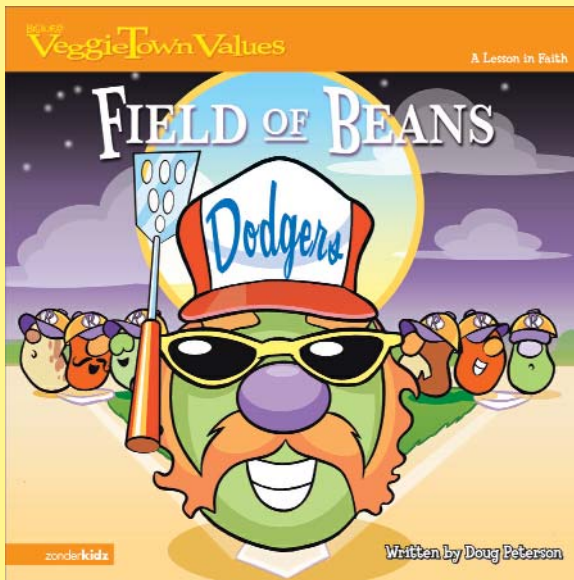
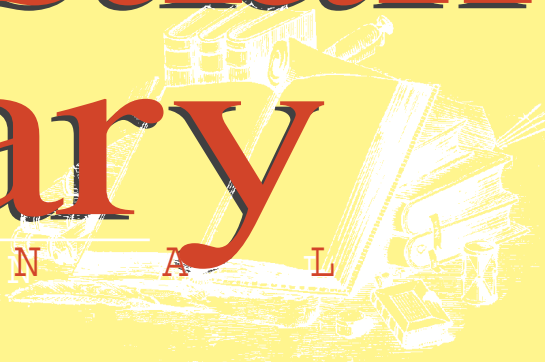


# Christian Library

J O U R N A L





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The purpose of the *Christian Library Journal* is to provide readers with reviews from a Christian point of view of both Christian and secular library materials for the young reader. Materials reviewed may reflect a broad range of Christian doctrinal positions and do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the *Christian Library Journal*.

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# More Book Lists, Part 2

by Donna W. Bowling

In Part 1, I discussed major “book selection tools designed for the general market” that sought to provide comprehensive listings of worthy titles in their area. Their brief annotations varied in length from a few words to paragraph size. My focus in Part 2 is on more selective aids with longer, more informative, annotations and commentary.

## **The Essential guide to children’s books and their creators / Anita Silvey, editor. LCCN 2002032288. Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 2002.**

PAP, 0618190821, list cost: \$17.00.

B or 921 or 810.9/9282/03. Children’s literature--Dictionaries; Children’s literature--Bibliography--Dictionaries; Children’s literature, American--Dictionaries; Children--Books and reading--United States--Dictionaries; Children’s literature, American--Bibliography--Dictionaries. xv, 542 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.

Adult. Rating : 5.

*The Essential Guide to Children’s Books and Their Creators*, edited by Anita Silvey, is much more than a book list, although it begins with a listing of over 300 titles and series in “Getting Started: a Basic Reading List.” In her earlier 1995 title, *Children’s Books and Their Creators*, Silvey included over 800 articles by more than 200 contributors. A heavy hardbound volume (and accordingly more expensive), it remains an excellent resource [*CLJ* 1(4):59 (Mar.,1996)]. In her *Essential Guide*, Silvey offers a lighter-weight updated paperback edition more appropriate in scope for her courses in children’s literature. Around eighty of the nearly 500 articles in this edition are completely new. Many of the articles retained from the earlier edition have been updated, but none have been diminished.

The general organization remains the same. Following the Getting Started list, the bulk of the work consists of articles about significant authors and illustrators of children’s books, arranged alphabetically in a double-column format. These articles include biographical information and commentary on their works and vary in length from nearly one page to two pages or more. Around thirty “Voices of the Creators,” lengthy quotations in their own words, accompany their articles. Interspersed alphabetically are more than thirty longer articles that discuss relevant topics such as various genres, national contributions, and history of children’s literature. Several black-and-white illustrations from significant works appear adjacent to the related text. The index, which includes authors and illustrators, titles, and topics, follows notes on the more than 100 contributors.

*The Essential Guide to Children’s Books and Their Creators* provides a valuable up-to-date resource for librarians, parents, teachers, and students writing reports on children’s books. Those

who have Silvey’s earlier edition should retain it as well for its additional information. Highly recommended.

## **100 best books for children / Anita Silvey. LCCN 2003056899. Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 2004.**

HBB, 0618278893, list cost: \$20.00.

011.62. Children’s literature--Stories, plots, etc.; Children--Books and reading--United States; Best books; Children’s literature--Bibliography. xv, 192 p. ; 22 cm..

Adult. Rating : 4.

Author Anita Silvey spent part of her career as a reviewer and editor of the *Horn Book Magazine*, the premier periodical on children’s literature. She has worked in the publishing industry examining manuscripts, and she has taught as well as written about children’s books. After reading and re-reading around 125,000 children’s books, she is well qualified as an expert in the field. In selecting *100 Best Books for Children* over the last century, she looked for literary and artistic quality, popularity over time, and balance in “ages, interests, genres, reading skills, and ethnic backgrounds.” She also contemplated titles listed in *Children’s Classics*, by Mary Burns (see below), and in the article, “One Hundred Books That Shaped the Century,” by Karen Breen and others, that appeared in *School Library Journal* in January 2000.

Selecting only one title per author, Silvey mentions other significant titles by that author in her accompanying essay. Chapters are divided according to suggested ages of children through age twelve: Board books, Picture books, Books for beginning readers, Books for young readers, Books for middle readers, and Books for older readers. A small black-and-white illustration from one of the included titles introduces each chapter, in which titles are arranged alphabetically by author. Each entry starts with the title of a significant children’s book. It is followed by the name and dates of the author and illustrator, then the publisher and date of the original publication, Caldecott or Newbery recognition (if granted), pagination, and suggested child’s age range. In the accompanying one or two page essay, Silvey “discusses each book, summarizing its story or plot, and then provide[s] the ‘story behind the story.’” Her extensive personal knowledge and research opportunities give these unique insights a very special quality. In a “Beyond the 100 Best” section, Silvey includes with her “100 best” (in bold print) another 250 or so additional titles and series that “maintain a high degree of excellence.” This list varies only slightly from the “Getting Started” list in her *Essential Guide* above and concludes with several suggested “Books to Help Locate Other Titles.” Her bibliography of sources contains personal interviews and correspondence. The index includes authors and titles from the “100 Best” books, but not those listed in “Beyond the 100 Best.”

This thoroughly enjoyable book by an undisputed expert is highly recommended for librarians, teachers, and parents especially interested in the field of children's literature. Some with access to this title through other libraries might choose to borrow rather than purchase. Individuals vary in their personal selection criteria, so a few titles chosen by Silvey might not be appropriate for Christian school libraries.

\*

**Children's classics : a booklist for parents / compiled by Mary M. Burns. Boston : Horn Book, 2002.**

pdf file at [www.hbook.com/pdf/childrensclassics.pdf](http://www.hbook.com/pdf/childrensclassics.pdf). Children's literature--Stories, plots, etc. Best books; Children's literature--Bibliography. 13 p.

Adult. Rating : \*5.

The first Horn Book list of *Children's Classics* was compiled by the esteemed Alice M. Jordan and appeared as a 12-page article in the January 1947 issue of the *Horn Book Magazine*. To her essay discussing major children's classics she appended a listing of recommended editions of sixty titles. In 1952, this essay was published as a 19-page pamphlet by Horn Book, with an updated list of editions by Helen Adams Masten. At least five editions were issued of the pamphlet that incorporated both the Jordan essay and an updated listing of editions of children's classics recommended by Masten or later by Paul Heins. In 1982, Horn Book produced a reorganized pamphlet, *Children's Classics, a List for Parents*, without the Jordan essay. Jane Manthorne compiled an annotated list of recommended editions of around sixty titles, including some more recent twentieth century children's books. Her list was arranged alphabetically by title, to be more useful to parents. In the 1985 edition, the staff of Horn Book again rearranged the annotated bibliography, this time by suggested ages of children and genre.

The current edition of *Children's Classics: a Booklist for Parents*, compiled by Mary M. Burns, is available online at the Horn Book website. In addition to many years as a reviewer for Horn Book, Mary Burns has served as a teacher and as a children's librarian. This edition has entries arranged alphabetically by title within the various sections: For the very young; Picture books; For beginning readers; Stories; Echoes of times past, part one (before 1800) and part two (1800-1920); Myths, legends, and folklore; Nonfiction. Each entry includes title, author and illustrator, publisher, date of original publication, and suggested age range when necessary. Each paragraph-length annotation includes descriptive and critical elements and notes additional related titles or alternate editions as appropriate. With few exceptions, this 2002 edition includes titles published some time before 1985. Burns defines the term "classic" loosely. "The real test of a classic is the individual child's delight in reading, sharing, and rereading a book again, again, and again." She includes eight nonfiction titles among the 108 titles listed. Interested readers may also wish to look at the recommendations by more than 25 noted writers for titles considered "Future Classics" in the November/December 2000 issue of *Horn Book Magazine*. Some readers' responses to that feature appear on the Horn Book web site.

Many of the titles noted in the 1947 edition are not included in the 2002 edition. Some readers might question the omission of a few favorite classics, but few would question the significance of the titles Burns included. No index is necessary for this searchable pdf file. This free resource is highly recommended for parents, teachers, and librarians.

**For the love of reading : books to build lifelong readers / David Bouchard ; with Sally Bender, Anne Letain and Lucie Poulin-Mackey. LCCN 2004100188. Victoria, B.C. : Orca Book Publishers, 2004.**

PAP, 1551432811, list cost: \$21.95.

011.62. Children's literature, French-Canadian--Bibliography; Children's literature, Canadian--Bibliography; Best books; Children--Books and reading--Canada; Children--Books and reading; Children's literature--Bibliography. 206 p. : ill. ; 23 cm.

Adult. Rating : 3.

For this *For the Love of Reading* (there are other books with this title), former principal David Bouchard enlisted other Canadians: teacher-librarians Sally Bender and Anne Letain, and teacher-literacy specialist Lucie Poulin-Mackey. Every chapter of this annotated bibliography includes sections by each of the four contributors. Chapter titles are: Pre-conception to two; Three- to five-year-olds; Six- to eight-year-olds; Nine- to eleven-year-olds; Twelve- to fourteen-year-olds; Fifteen and up; Seasonal books; Resources for administrators, teachers and parents; Do's and don'ts. Within each chapter section, individual contributors take a paragraph or so giving the thinking behind their selections, followed by the entries that are arranged alphabetically by author. Each of the more than four hundred entries includes author, title, and an annotation of a paragraph or more in length. Many entries end with quotations from the book featured. A maple leaf icon appears beside the title of each Canadian book selected.

Each of the Canadian contributors has a different perspective. Although many books from the United States are selected, books from Australia and the United Kingdom also receive special mention. French Canadians are represented by Poulin-Mackey, who selects and provides English annotations for books published in French (a few of which are works translated from English). Many of the contributors' insights ring true. Selection criteria vary; a number of the recommended titles would likely be considered inappropriate for Christian schools. Annotations generally indicate if the book's language or content (e.g. AIDS, teen pregnancy, humorous "first-time sex scene," etc.) may be problematic. Cautions among the Don'ts warn of the counter-productivity of over-analyzing books during or after reading aloud. Also "Don't be offended by 'gross' in kids' books" (p. 192). The Resources chapter includes a number of web sites. Author and title indexes are provided. For those with a special interest in Canadian works or French titles, this book list is especially useful.

**Books that build character : a guide to teaching your child moral values through stories / William Kilpatrick and Gregory and Suzanne M. Wolfe ; foreword by Robert Coles. LCCN 94036308. New York : Touchstone, 1994.**

PAP, 0671884239, list cost: \$14.00.

808.8/038. Character; Children--Conduct of life; Conduct of life--Literary collections; Literature--Collections; Children's literature--Bibliography. 332 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

*Books That Build Character: a Guide to Teaching Your Child Moral Values Through Stories* is the result of the combined effort of William Kilpatrick and Gregory and Suzanne Wolfe. In the first five chapters, Kilpatrick discusses various ways in which stories can work to foster the development of moral values in a child and suggests guidelines for selecting and sharing books with children. In an annotated book list, prepared primarily by the Wolfes, the authors take more than 200 pages to discuss more than 300 titles. Selected books are divided into categories, and then subdivided by age range: 4 to 8 years, 8 to 12 years, and 12 years and up. Within these subdivisions, titles are arranged alphabetically. The categories include some non-fiction: picture books; fables and fairy tales; myths legends, and folktales; sacred texts; books for holidays and holy days; historical fiction; contemporary fiction; fantasy and science fiction; and biography. Each of the category sections is introduced by a short quotation from a children's book author. Individual entries include title, author and illustrator, publisher and date of publication, and pagination, followed by a discussion that includes a summary of the plot, with an emphasis on certain character traits demonstrated in the story.

Professor Kilpatrick's concern for training in moral values was already evident in his earlier book, *Why Johnny Can't Tell Right From Wrong*. Gregory and Suzanne Wolfe are active in writing and publishing. Both classics and more contemporary books are included in this guide. Newbery Medal books make up the majority of the almost fifty Newbery and Caldecott Medal and Honor books specifically marked. An appendix listing Twenty Great Children's Videos, with annotations, is prefaced by suggestions for parents viewing them with their children. The index includes authors and illustrators, titles, and subjects. Even though more than ten years old, this guide, with its essay chapters, is recommended for librarians, teachers, and parents because of its special emphasis.

**Building character through literature : a guide for middle school readers / Rosann Jweid, Margaret Rizzo. LCCN 00046401. Lanham, Md. : Scarecrow Press, 2001.**

HBB, 0810839512, list cost: \$34.50.

809/.89283. Best books--United States; Middle school libraries--Book lists; Children's literature--Moral and ethical aspects. Children's literature--Bibliography. vii, 232 p. ; 24 cm.

Adult. Rating : 3.

**Building character through multicultural literature : a guide for middle school readers / Rosann Jweid, Margaret Rizzo. LCCN 2004006581. Lanham, Md. : Scarecrow Press, 2004.**

PAP, 0810850427, list cost: \$35.00.

809/.89283. Multicultural education--Activity programs; Minorities in literature--Bibliography; Ethnic groups in literature--Bibliography; Pluralism (Social sciences) in literature--Bibliography; Middle school students--Books and reading; Children's literature--Bibliography. vii, 239 p. ; 23 cm.

Adult. Rating : 3.

Two recent titles, *Building Character Through Literature* (2001) and *Building Character Through Multicultural Literature* (2004), by school library media specialists Rosann Jweid and Margaret Rizzo, are much more than annotated book lists. Although each is subtitled *A Guide for Middle School Readers*, they might more appropriately be called guides for middle school teachers to adapt for use with their students. The formats are similar. Each book discusses fifty significant novels considered appropriate for middle school readers, arranged alphabetically by title. The three or four page section for each novel begins with a heading that gives the title, author, and publication date. Short lists of honors received and major characters, and a brief setting are followed by a page or so summarizing the plot of the story. A "questions for discussion" section includes ten to twenty open-ended multi-part questions that deal with character traits displayed in the story and student responses to specific situations in the novel. Among several suggested student "projects" are research ideas leading to presentations utilizing various media, from charts to PowerPoint or video productions. A "vocabulary" section provides up to twenty sentence fragments quoted from the novel with the special vocabulary words of interest in bold print. A brief paragraph "about the author" is often followed by a short comment "from the author" related to the novel.

Of the fifty novels featured in the general 2001 book, *Building Character Through Literature*, forty of the novels were published in the 1990s (almost thirty) or 1980s (more than ten). A couple were originally published in the nineteenth century, and three more before 1950. A dozen Newbery Award books and another dozen Newbery Honor books are featured. At the end of this 2001 book are listings of titles of novels under "Titles Arranged by Genre and Theme" and "Character Traits in the Novels."

Of the fifty novels featured in the more specialized 2004 book, *Building Character Through Multicultural Literature*, all of the novels were published since 1970. Almost twenty were published in this 2000 decade. In addition to a couple of Newbery Medal books and several more Newbery Honor books, three titles each received the Coretta Scott King Award for African-American authors, the Mildred L. Batchelder Award for foreign language titles translated into English, and the newly established Michael L. Printz Award for excellence in literature for young adults. Other special honors included the British Carnegie Medal, as well as Canadian, Australian, and Jewish awards. In this guide, the section for each novel includes a listing of relevant character traits between the list of major characters and the setting. At the end of this book, novels are listed by title under "Cultures and Religions Represented in the Novels," which are: African, African-American, Asian, Asian-American, Australian, Buddhism, Canadian, Christianity, European, European Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Islam, Judaism, Latin American, Middle Eastern, Native American, and Southeast Asian. Each of the two guides concludes with "Interesting and Useful Websites;" bibliographical entries for novels included and sources; and a combined index with names of fictional characters, awards listed, authors, specific character traits, and other relevant subject headings

for the novels.

These two guides contain a wealth of information and example for middle school teachers and librarians. Few minor errors are evident. [E.g. substituting “Charles Hamilton Murry” for the character “Charles Wallace Murry,” p. 205ff (2001); misspelling the first name of author Kahlil Gibran, p. 94 (2004). Gibran’s name has many variants, but none is “Kahil.”] Some of the lifestyle “realism” noted in the discussions of the individual novels might be problematic in Christian school settings, so several of the titles included should be considered with caution. Because of this issue, these otherwise valuable guides to significant titles are recommended for judicious use.

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Each of these book selection aids makes its own unique contribution. Nevertheless, I repeat myself, “In all cases, discernment is necessary when selecting for Christian young people from among titles recommended by professionals with varying worldviews.”

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#### References:

“One hundred books that shaped the century,” by Karen Breen [et al.] *School Library Journal*, 46 (1):50-58 (Jan. 2000).

“Future classics,” by Natalie Babbitt [et al.] *Horn Book Magazine*, 76 (6):648ff (Nov./Dec. 2000).

*Donna W. Bowling, Library/Educational Consultant, Dallas, Texas*

# Learning Native American Culture Through Children's Literature : Legends, Part Two

by Jane Mouttet

Much can be learned about Native cultures through legends.

**Baby rattlesnake / told by Te Ata ; adapted by Lynn Moroney ; illustrated by Veg Reisberg. LCCN 98009892. San Francisco : Children's Book Press, 1989.**

HBB, 0892390492, list cost: \$14.95.

398.24/52796/089973. Rattlesnakes--Folklore; Indians of North America--Southern States--Folklore; Chickasaw Indians--Folklore. 30 p. : col. ill. ; 21 x 24 cm.

Grades PS-K. Rating : 4.

Told by Te Ata, Lynn Moroney has adapted this Chickasaw legend into a book for children. *Baby Rattlesnake* is the story of a baby rattlesnake who wants a rattle like all the older rattlesnakes. Baby makes so much noise the elders decide to give him a rattle even though he is too young to use it properly. When it is misused against a chief's daughter, she steps on it crushing it. Veg Reisberg has illustrated the story with cut paper and gouache paint pictures. Her colors are bright and vivid. *Baby Rattlesnake* teaches a valuable lesson on what happens when you get something before you are ready for the responsibility that comes with it.

**Blossom tales : flower stories of many folk / by Patricia Hruby Powell ; illustrated by Sarah Dillard. LCCN 2001044833. North Kingstown, R.I. : Moon Mountain Publishing, 2002.**

HBB, 0967792983, list cost: \$15.95.

398.24/2. Flowers--Folklore; Folklore; Tales. 32 p. : col. ill. ; 29 cm.

Grades K-2. Rating : 4.

*Blossom Tales* is a compilation of fourteen legends from around the world. Each story is a pour quoi story of how a certain flower began. The legend of the Morning Glory comes from Hawaii, the legend of the Dandelion from the Ojibwa, the legend of the Aster and Goldenrod from the Cherokee, and the legend of the Lily of the Valley comes from the Iroquois which is why I included the book in this column. Sarah Dillard did the realistic illustrations in gouache on watercolor paper. Most stories in the book are only one page with a full page accompanying illustration.

**Coyote : a trickster tale from the American Southwest / told and illustrated by Gerald McDermott. LCCN 92032979. San Diego : Harcourt Brace, 1994.**

HBB, 0152207244, list cost: \$16.00.

398.24/52974442. Indians of North America--Southwest, New--Folklore; Coyote (Legendary character)--Legends. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 24 x 29 cm.

Grades PS-3. Rating : 5.

Inspired by the coyote trickster tales of the Zuni Indians, Gerald McDermott has re-told Coyote, a pour quoi story which explains the coyote's gray color. The story also contains Coyote's dealings with several creatures native to the Southwest. The brightly colored illustrations have a southwestern feel to them.

**Coyote stories for children : tales from Native America / adapted by Susan Strauss ; illustrations by Gary Lund. LCCN 91057954. Hillsboro, Ore. : Beyond Words Publishing, 1991.**

HBB, 0941831612, list cost: \$11.95.

398.24/52974442. Coyote (Legendary character)--Legends; Indians of North America--Southwest, New--Folklore. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 20 cm.

Grades 2-6. Rating : 3.

The introduction in *Coyote Stories for Children* contains some helpful information about Native Americans and their belief that children learn from stories. The four coyote stories in this book come from little-known tribes. One of the stories contains references to body parts that some may find objectionable and another to bodily functions which may offend some. The stories are just a small sampling of the coyote stories told among Native Americans.

**The first strawberries : a Cherokee story / retold by Joseph Bruchac ; pictures by Anna Vojtech. LCCN 91031058. New York : Puffin Books, 1993.**

PAP, 0140564098, list cost: \$6.99.

398.2/089975. Strawberries--Folklore; Indians of North America--Folklore; Cherokee Indians--Folklore. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 30 cm.

Grades PS-2. Rating : 5.

The first man and the first woman are living happily until one day the woman doesn't have a meal ready when the man comes home. Angry words are exchanged and the woman leaves. This Cherokee legend, *The First Strawberries*, is the pour quoi story of the first strawberries. Joseph Bruchac's re-telling is one children will want to hear again and again. Anna Vojtech's water color and colored pencil illustrations extend the story line as well as illustrate the text.

**The legend of the lady's slipper / by Kathy-jo Wargin ; illustrated by Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen. LCCN 2001020718. Chelsea, Mich. : Sleeping Bear Press, 2001.**



HBB, 1886947740, list cost: \$17.95.

398.2/089/973. Folklore--Great Lakes Region (North America); Indians of North America--Great Lakes Region (North America)--Folklore; Ojibwa Indians--Folklore; Legends--Michigan. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 29 cm.

Grades PS-3. Rating : 5.

The Ojibwa tale, *The Legend of the Lady's Slipper*, is about a maiden who died trying to save her people from an illness. The women of the tribe put beautiful moccasins on her feet in an effort to warm her and keep her from dying. When she died these moccasins became the most beautiful flowers—lady's slippers. Kathy-jo Wargin's retelling is enjoyable. Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen's paintings are true to the native people they portray.

**The legend of Mackinac Island / by Kathy-jo Wargin ; illustrated by Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen. LCCN 98056194. Chelsea, Mich. : Sleeping Bear Press, 1999.**

HBB, 1886947120, list cost: \$17.95.

398.2/09774/923. Folklore--Michigan; Indians of North America--Michigan--Folklore; Legends--Michigan; Mackinac Island (Mich. : Island)--Folklore. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 29 cm.

Grades PS-3. Rating : 5.

Several native American tribes have a creation story of the world being built on the back of a turtle. This version, *The Legend of Mackinac Island*, retold by Kathy-jo Wargin, has Mackinac Island in Michigan being built on the turtle's back. Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen's paintings are at times realistic and others impressionistic.

**The legend of sleeping bear / by Kathy-jo Wargin ; illustrated by Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen. LCCN 98014246. Chelsea, Mich. : Sleeping Bear Press, 1998.**

HBB, 188694735X, list cost: \$16.95.

398.24/52978/089970774. Folklore--Great Lakes Region (North America); Indians of North America--Great Lakes Region (North America)--Folklore; Ojibwa Indians--Folklore; Legends--Michigan. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 29 cm.

Grades PS-3. Rating : 5.

An Ojibwe legend, *The Legend of Sleeping Bear*, tells the story of a mother bear and her two cubs who must swim across Lake Michigan when fire destroys their home in what is now Wisconsin. The cubs don't make it and their mother becomes Sleeping Bear Dunes in northern Michigan while waiting. The cubs become the Manitou Islands off the northwest coast of Michigan. Kathy-jo Wargin's retelling of the tale is delightful. The paintings of Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen are beautiful and support the text.

**Spider spins a story : fourteen legends from Native America / edited by Jill Max ; illustrations by Robert Annesley . [et al.]. LCCN 97018970. Flagstaff, Ariz. : Rising Moon, 1997.**

HBB, 0873586115, list cost: \$16.95.

398.2/08997. Spiders--Folklore; Folklore--North America; Indians of North America--Folklore; Legends--North America; Spiders--North America--Folklore. v. 63 p. : col. ill. ; 29 cm.

Grades 3-5. Rating : 4.

*Spider Spins a Story* is a compilation of stories from fourteen different native peoples. Stories include creation stories, pour quoi

stories, and traditional stories which have the spider as their central character. Jill Max is a pseudonym for the writing team of Ronia Davidson and Kelly Bennett. Some of the storytellers are identified; others chose to remain anonymous believing that the stories belong to all of the tribe. Some tribes have a belief that certain stories should be told only at certain times of the year, in these cases the editors chose a previously published version to include. The work of six different illustrators is included. Each of the illustrators is of native descent. All of the illustrations have a native feel to them.

**Soft child : how rattlesnake got its fangs : a Native American folktale / retold by Joe Hayes ; illustrated by Kay Sather. LCCN 93001641. Lanham, Md. : Roberts Rinehart, 1993.**

PAP, 0943173892, list cost: \$8.95.

398.2/0899. Rattlesnakes--Folklore; Indians of North America--Folklore; Tohono O'odham Indians--Folklore; Rattlesnakes--Sonoran Desert--Folklore. 32 p. : col. ill. ; 26 cm.

Grades PS-3. Rating : 4.

Sky God promises each animal a way to protect itself. The snake, Soft Child, asks for a way to let others know he is there so that he does not get stepped on; he is given a rattle at the end of his tail. The other animals soon discovered that Soft Child was still harmless and began to tease him. Sky God came back and gave Soft Child two poison fangs to bite with. Joe Hayes has done an excellent job of adapting this Tohono O'odham folktale into the story of *Soft Child: How Rattlesnake Got Its Fangs*. The pencil drawings of Kay Sather accurately portray the Southwest desert and its animals.

**Yonder mountain : a Cherokee legend / retold by Kay Bannon ; illustrated by Kristina Rodanas ; foreword by Joseph Bruchac. LCCN 2001032319. New York : Marshall Cavendish, 2002.**

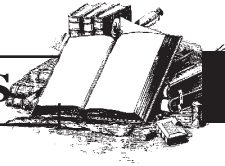
HBB, 0761451137, list cost: \$16.95.

398.2/089/9755. Folklore--Southern States; Indians of North America--Southern States--Folklore; Cherokee Indians--Folklore; Legends--Southern States. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 25 cm.

Grades K-3. Rating : 5.

Chief Sky is getting old and knows he must find a replacement. He gives three braves an assignment to complete—to go to the top of yonder mountain and bring back what they find there. The three braves head off on the quest. The first two return fairly soon, not having reached the top but having found something to help their people. The third is gone seven days and returns empty-handed but with a story of having seen smoke signals calling for help. The third is chosen as the chief. Kay Bannon has retold the story of Cherokee elder Rev. Robert Bushyhead. The beautiful, realistic illustrations of Kristina Rodanas are done in colored pencil and watercolor.

*Jane Mouttet worked for twenty years as a school librarian on the Navajo Reservation. She would enjoy hearing from you on how these columns have helped you and on how you use children's literature to teach Native American Culture. Jane can be reached at jane@nativeamericanchildrenslit.com.*



**Am I praying? / by Jeannie St. John Taylor. LCCN 2003009064. Grand Rapids : Kregel Kidzone, 2003.**

HBB, 0825437237, list cost: \$10.99.  
 E. Prayer--Fiction; School field trips--Fiction; Lost children--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. : 26 cm.  
 Grades PS-3. Rating : 5.

*Am I Praying?* is a delightful story about a boy, Erik, who talks to God as he goes about his day. He wonders if thinking his prayers or even shouting them is still considered praying. He wonders if his eyes have to be closed or if he's praying when his eyes are open, too. Erik starts his day excited about his upcoming field trip to the zoo, but he loses his t-shirt, leaves his lunch in the car, and it only goes downhill from there.

Children will learn, along with Erik, to call on God when they need help. God hears our prayers and directs our steps, even when we're afraid. They will learn that praying is simply talking to God in a variety of ways and situations and that God is there for them even when they have doubts.

Jeannie St. John Taylor is both the author and illustrator of this wonderful book perfect for reading aloud to younger children or for independent reading by older elementary readers. Children will love the bright, cheerful illustrations where the cartoon-like people and animals have big, round eyes and faces. The pictures convey a strong sense of action and emotion complementing the beautiful storyline and its underlining message. The last page of the

book has some great ideas for discussions, praying together, and activities to enhance story time. This book would make a terrific addition to any public or personal library.

*Audra Silva, Freelance Writer, Pendleton, Oregon.*

**Amelia Bedelia, bookworm / Herman Parish ; pictures by Lynn Sweat. LCCN 2002035329. New York : Harper/Greenwillow, 2003.**

HBB, 0060518901, list cost: \$15.99.  
 E. Libraries--Fiction; Humorous stories. 64 p : col. ill. : 24 cm.  
 Grades PS-2. Rating : 5.

Peggy Parish, the creator of the Amelia Bedelia character, died in 1988, but Amelia Bedelia herself lives on, through the work of Parish's

**R A T I N G   S Y S T E M**

\* Outstanding quality

5 Excellent quality

4 Very good quality

3 Good quality

Recommended with caution - note reservations within the review

Not recommended - note problems stated within the review

**Commonly Used Abbreviations in CLJ Reviews**

LCCN Library of Congress

Cataloging Number

C Canadian Library Cataloging  
 Number

ISBN International Standard Book  
 Number

HBB Hardbound book

PAP Paperbound book

LIB Library edition

LGP Large print book

PBB Paper board book

CAS Audiocassette

CDR CD-ROM

DVD Videodisc

VID Videocassette

LLB Loose-leaf binding

nephew, Herman. In *Amelia Bedelia, Bookworm*, Amelia takes her quirky literal-mindedness to the library, where she makes book jackets and bookmarks, helps a patron replace a ruined book; assists a boy doing a report on dinosaurs, and a girl looking for a thesaurus; borrows the bookmobile; and takes on story hour, all with predictably chaotic results. Sweat's illustrations add to the fun. This book is not only a nice addition to the series, it can be used as an amusing lead-in to various topics such as proper care of library books and how to use a thesaurus.

Betty Winslow. Librarian, Bowling Green Christian Academy, Bowling Green, Ohio.

**At the Hotel Larry / Daniel Pinkwater ; illustrated by Jill Pinkwater. LCCN 96041671. New York : Marshall Cavendish, 1997.**

PAP, 0761451781, list cost: \$5.95.

E. Polar bear--Fiction; Bears--Fiction; Humorous stories. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. : 23 cm.

Grades PS-K. Rating : 3, with caution.

Larry the polar bear made an earlier appearance in a book titled *Young Larry* and after saving a man's life in that story, as a reward he is given the opportunity to become a lifeguard at an old hotel. Thus the Hotel Larry came into being. On his days off from lifeguard duty, Larry is dressed up in human disguise and tours New Jersey with the hotel owner's daughter, Mildred. One day they decide to visit the zoo, and happen upon three polar bears there. One just happens to be Larry's brother, Roy, whom, along with the other two bears, Larry invites to dinner at the Hotel Larry.

Vividly colored marker drawings decorate the pages of this quirky story for young children. While being able to be read alone, it would be a bit more enjoyable if you read the first story to understand the background of Larry and how he ended up living in a hotel. Somewhat funny in places, and a fairly entertaining read. Be aware of the use of the word 'blubberhead' or the reference to two of the bears smoking cigars with the father after the meal. The names of two of the bears, Bear Number One and Bear Number Three, led me (and my daughter also) to ask the question, 'What happened to Bear Number Two?'

Sherrí Myers. Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.

**Baby radar / by Naomi Shihab Nye ; pictures by Nancy Carpenter. LCCN 2002023165. New York : Greenwillow, 2003.**

HBB, 0688159486, list cost: \$15.99.

E. Neighborhood--Fiction; Toddlers--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. : 26 cm.

Grade PS. Rating : 5.

The celebrated poet and children's writer Naomi Shihab Nye adds another title to her list of award

winning children's books. In *Baby Radar*, she gives a toddler's-eye view of the world. A stroller ride takes the child on an adventure as she rolls past shops, trucks and cars, and feathered friends in the park. Neighbors stop and talk and 'sometimes they lean over say Cute!' Nye's lyrical verses provide snapshots of images and bursts of sounds, exactly as one might imagine from the perspective of a young child. 'Whoosh! Fast!...Ba-dump Ba-dump...' This toddler point of view turns something as common as footwear into something extraordinary with lyrics such as, 'Tennis shoes daddy shoes sleepy slippers fat shoes...' As the story continues with stroller wheels, bike wheels, and skateboard wheels rolling by, the young adventurer eventually falls into a happy sleep as she rolls...Home.

Nancy Carpenter's delightful black ink and watercolor illustrations wonderfully complement Nye's lyrics. The reader looks up into the faces of dotting adults and larger-than-life dogs, enjoys the tawny shades of autumn leaves, and the rich colors bring the story alive. Just as in the more than ten other books she has illustrated, Carpenter successfully draws readers into a toddler's world. This book is extremely pleasing to the auditory and visual senses and will be a great addition to a child's library collection.

Florence G. Craig. Freelance Writer, Telford, Pennsylvania.

**Bach's Goldberg Variations / Anna Harwell Celenza ; illustrated by JoAnn E. Kitchel. LCCN 2004003301. Watertown, Mass. : Charlesbridge, 2005.**

HBB + CD, 1570915105, list cost: \$19.95.

E. Bach, Johann Sebastian, 1685-1750 --Juvenile fiction; Goldberg, Johann Gottlieb, 1727-1756 -- Juvenile fiction; Bach, Johann Sebastian, 1685-1750 -- Fiction; Goldberg, Johann Gottlieb, 1727-1756 -- Fiction; Music--History and criticism--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. : 27 cm. + 1 sound disc (digital ; 4 3/4 in.).

Grades K-5. Rating : 5.

At ten-years-old, Johann Gottlieb Goldberg displays surprising talent as an organist, but he is an orphan and will not be able to receive training to properly develop his abilities. Fortunately, the famous Johann Sebastian Bach knows about young Goldberg and introduces the boy to Count Keyserlingk in hopes that the wealthy man would help out. In the story that follows, we discover how Bach came to write the music we now know as the *Goldberg Variations*.

This book (inspired by historical facts) works well as a read aloud and is a great way to get kids interested in classical music. My girls (8, 5, and 4 years old) have always resisted my attempts to get them to listen to such music. After I read this story, they were very interested in hearing the 'real' music that the little boy played for Count Keyserlingk. A CD recording, performed by pianist John Kamitsuka, comes with the book. My girls even asked to listen to

the CD weeks later. The CD is of good quality. The illustrations are pleasing and fit well with the text. This 10 inch x 10 inch picture book has a sewn binding, pictorial boards, and a pictorial dust jacket.

David Rainey, Senior Bibliographer, State Library of Louisiana, Baton Rouge.

**Bedtime in the Southwest / by Mona Hodgson ; illustrated by Renée Graef. LCCN 2004004881. Flagstaff, Ariz. : Rising Moon, 2005.**

HBB, 0873588711, list cost: \$14.95.

E. Bedtime--Fiction; Desert animals--Fiction; Stories in rhyme. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. : 27 cm.

Grades PS-2. Rating : 4.

Truly a picture book, *Bedtime in the Southwest* delights the eye with its beautiful reality-based pictures. The engaging, simple, rhyming words relate the naughty things southwest animals might do when their parents ask them to go to bed. Each section ends with the obedient way to go to bed at night. Children and parents will identify with both the naughty and good actions, and have a lot of fun with them.

For more than sixteen years a poet and author of both adult and children's books, Mona Hodgson distills her expertise and enjoyment of the animals she sees near her Arizona home into this enjoyable book. Prolific children's book illustrator Renée Graef paints with a child's eye, a cartoonist's wit, and a love for nature. Her soft, color filled acrylic graphics immediately attract the eye. The whimsical detail will lead to interesting discussions. Families will enjoy reading *Bedtime in the Southwest* together. Preschoolers will want to touch it. First and second graders will enjoy reading it for themselves.

Donna J. Eggett. Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia.

**Bitsy's harvest party / Melody Carlson ; illustrations by Susan Reagan. Nashville : Broadman & Holman, 2004.**

HBB, 0805426841, list cost: \$12.99.

E. Parties--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction. 32 p. : col. ill. : 24 cm.

Grades PS-K. Rating : 5.

Bitsy Spider has moved into a brand new home and wants to celebrate. She decides to host a harvest party and invites her friends. When Bitsy realizes she doesn't know how to plan a party, she consults her Martha Spider book on entertaining. When it proves to only confuse her further, Bitsy decides to ask her friends for advice. Of course, each one has a different opinion of what makes a party fun. One suggests food, one says decorations, another thinks music, and yet another recommends games. The only problem is Bitsy isn't good at any of those things. Discouraged, Bitsy decides to cancel her harvest party. Will Bitsy's friends come to the rescue and save the party?

Melody Carlson's *Bitsy's Harvest Party* is a delightful children's book for children ages 4-8. Full color illustrations by Susan Reagan are especially adorable. The characters are all spiders with the exception of a Daddy Long Legs and each has a special talent. Working together combining their talents enables them to have a fun, successful party. The moral of the story is clear and simply stated at the end of the story., which is 'When each of us uses our God-given talents to help people, we show God's love and grace to others.' I highly recommend this fun storybook for parents of youngsters who love having a moral to go along with storytime.

Sherrri Myers. Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.

**Corduroy goes to the doctor / illustrated by Lisa McCue. New York : Viking, 2005.**

PBB, 0670060313, list cost: \$5.99.  
E. Bears--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 18 cm.  
Grades PS-K. Rating : 5.

**Corduroy goes to the library / illustrated by Lisa McCue. New York : Viking, 2005.**

HBB, 0670059919, list cost: \$11.99.  
E. Bears--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 18 cm.  
Grades PS-K. Rating : 5.

Don Freeman created the lovable bear, Corduroy. In *Corduroy Goes to the Doctor*, and *Corduroy Goes to the Library*, Lisa McCue makes Corduroy an instant best friend. He is happy, concerned, and friendly. Bright colors and realistic details highlight each story.

Corduroy visits the doctor for a checkup. The first two pages read: 'Corduroy likes to go to the doctor. The waiting room has toys and books.' The friendly bear doctor looks into Corduroy's ears, nose, and throat. The little bear receives a shot and leaves with a balloon and good-behavior button. Children scheduled for a regular checkup will quickly identify with Corduroy. Seriously sick boys and girls might find Corduroy's trip to the doctor was slightly simplistic.

*Corduroy Goes to the Library* is a lift-the-flap book. Each flap answers a question or adds a cute detail to the story. Children lift flaps and look for lost library books, see the inside of a book drop, and peek in a sewing basket. At the library, Corduroy attends the Story Hour. The librarian reads a book about farms. 'After the stories, everyone makes animal masks. Corduroy pretends to be a cow, 'Moo, moo!''

The author states, 'A bear's share of the royalties...goes to the Don and Lydia Freeman Research Fund to support psychological care and research concerning children with life-threatening illnesses...(or) children afflicted with cancer.'

Robertta Lou Jones, MDiv. Volunteer, Church Children's Library, Dexter, Kentucky.

**Dog-of-the-Sea-Waves / illustrations and story in English & Hawaiian by James Rumford. LCCN 2003016129. Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 2004.**

HBB, 0618356118, list cost: \$16.00.  
E. Human-animal relationships--Fiction; Monk seals--Fiction; Seals--Fiction; Brothers--Fiction; Hawaiian language materials--Bilingual; Hawaii--History--To 1893--Fiction. 40 p. : col. ill. ; 23 x 28 cm.  
Grades PS-3. Rating : 3.

James Rumford's story, *Dog-of-the-Sea-Waves*, is a sequel to *The Island-below-the-Star* (Houghton Mifflin, 1998), and tells a legend of the discovery of the Hawaiian Islands. Five brothers sail to a previously unknown island and discover new insects, trees and an animal they've never seen before—a dog with flippers. Manu shows compassion to the wounded animal by nursing him back to health, and then they become playmates, which causes the others to think Manu is lazy. But when an earthquake turns the sea into a raging monster, Manu nearly drowns. His new friend rescues him, earning the praise of the elder brothers who chant a song of thanks to Dog-of-the-Sea-Waves for saving their little brother.

Rumford gives life to the story through his illustrations. The colorful water paintings draw the reader into the lovely islands rich with tropical fish, birds, sea and beach scenes. Some pages show creatures like the Belted Wrasse and Granulated Cowry with detailed descriptions at the back of the book. This story is pleasant to read and informational.

However, at the end of the book Rumford includes detailed explanation of the unique wildlife and foliage found in the islands, along with an explanation of how he believes life on the islands developed through evolution.

Florence G. Craig. Freelance Writer, Telford, Pennsylvania.

**The firekeeper's son / by Linda Sue Park ; illustrated by Julie Downing. LCCN 200213917. New York : Clarion Books, 2003.**

HBB, 0618133372, list cost: \$16.00.  
E. Signals and signaling--Fiction; Fire--Fiction; Korea--History--19th century--Fiction. 37 p. : col. ill. ; 24 x 26 cm.  
Grades PS-4. Rating : 5.

*The Firekeeper's Son* is a tender story set in the early 1800s, in a Korean village by the sea, where the firekeeper's family has lived in peace for three generations. Sang-hee, the son, does not wish for war, but 'Oh! How he would like to see a soldier!' One evening, his father injures himself and cannot finish his work to light the signal fire. Without the fires that spring from mountaintop to mountaintop all the way to the palace, the King will think there is an enemy at their shore—that the peace is broken—and he will send his soldiers. Sang-hee must run with the bucket of coals through the thinning trees until he stands trembling in front of the pile of

brush. His nervous hands drop the first coal. It breaks apart and is lost. The second glows in the tongs like a soldier's sword and slowly dies out while he imagines how splendid it would be if the soldiers marched into his village.

The one coal left seems to speak in his father's voice: light the fire! A time of peace! And he truly becomes the firekeeper's son as he lights the fire, and watches as the chain of fires across the mountains are lit in response. Who hasn't trembled on the verge of using sudden power for one's own purposes? The strength of community, tradition, and wise counsel all keep the temptation at bay for Sang-hee. In a poignant moment, his father shares with him how much he, too, wished to see the soldiers when he was young and how proud he is that there is another trustworthy firekeeper in the family.

A lovely and satisfying tale, Linda Sue Park's story of temptation and commitment is beautifully companioned by Julie Downing's poignant illustrations. A soft wash of color brightens to painful clarity on Sang-hee's face at his moments of decision. The village, the tilled land, the hummocky mountains, are all rounded and just a bit blurred in greens and browns. Sang-hee's glorious visions of golden soldiers are in contrast to the stability of the village and the familiarity of the path to the mountaintop. The pictures and the text create a wonderful story for young ones who are just learning what it is like to be trusted by the adults in their lives.

Diane Sekeres, Tuscaloosa, Alabama

**Gingerbread mouse / written and illustrated by Katy Bratun. LCCN 2002151602. New York : HarperCollins, 2003.**

HBB, 0060090804, list cost: \$12.99.  
E. Mice--Fiction; Dwellings--Fiction; Santa Claus--Fiction; Christmas--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 26 cm.  
Grades PS-3. Rating : 5.

Christmases aren't always perfect, and Katy Bratun's story, *Gingerbread Mouse*, shows how Mouse overcomes a huge hardship and must be resourceful in finding a new home. Mouse is contented in her cozy, little house under the tree until an accident one Christmas Eve forces her to look for a new home. With determination, she pushes her way through a snowstorm toward the twinkling lights of a house. Through a window, she sees a wonderful gingerbread house and finds a way to get inside. There she makes herself comfortable. Christmas night holds big surprises for Mouse when she meets two very special people that she might never have met otherwise. There is an unexpected visit from a man in a red suit who gives Mouse a lovely dollhouse she can call home for a long time. Later on, when Mouse hears a gentle knock on her door, she finds that a little girl leaves a special gift outside her door.

Bratun has illustrated over twenty children's books and *Gingerbread Mouse* surely adds to her acclaim. The captivating scenes and characters she has created perfectly complement the prose in this read-aloud book. It will enchant early readers, preschoolers, and adults.

Florence G. Craig, Freelance Writer, Telford, Pennsylvania.

**Hooway for Wodney Wat / Helen Lester ; illustrated by Lynn Munsinger. LCCN 98046149. Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 1999.**

HBB, 0395923921, list cost: \$16.00.

E. Speech disorders--Fiction; Schools--Fiction; Bullies--Fiction; Rodents--Fiction. 32 p. : col. ill. ; 25 cm.

Grades PS-3. Rating : 3.

*Hooway for Wodney Wat*, by Helen Lester, is a story about Rodney, a student in a school for rodents. Rodney is the object of ridicule by his classmates and is extremely shy because of a speech impediment. When Camilla Capybara joins Rodney's class, she bullies the others and tramples them so she can be first at everything. That all changes when Miss Fuzzleworth, the teacher, chooses Rodney as the leader for 'Simon Says.' Since his speech impediment prevents him from pronouncing his R's, Camilla misunderstands the instructions of the game and looks foolish. The climax comes when Rodney says, 'Wodney says go west!' and all the other rodents lay down to rest, but Camilla stomps off in a westerly direction and is gone forever, making Rodney a hero.

This entertaining, read-aloud book will appeal to children, as they sympathize with poor Rodney, hiding inside his jacket when he is teased; then cheer for him when he becomes a hero by saving the class from the bully. Readers may want to add this book to their collection of other animal stories written by Helen Lester. (Lester and Munsinger paired up in 1988 introducing *Tacky the Penguin* (Houghton-Mifflin), and companion books followed.) The bright watercolor paintings by Lynn Munsinger are engaging, high-quality cartoons and accurately capture the moods and actions of the furry characters just as they have done in her numerous other books.

Florence G. Craig, Freelance Writer, Telford, Pennsylvania.

**Ivy's icicle / written by Gary Bower ; illustrated by Jan Bower. LCCN 2002008941. Traverse City, Mich. : Storybook Meadow, 2002.**

HBB, 0970462123, list cost: \$16.95.

E. Grandmothers--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Forgiveness--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 28 cm.

Grades K-3. Rating : 4.

**Cody's castle / written by Gary Bower ; illustrated by Jan Bower. Traverse City, Mich. : Storybook Meadow, 2004.**

HBB, 0970462131, list cost: \$16.95.

E. Encouragement--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 28 cm.

Grades K-3. Rating : 4.

In *Ivy's Icicle*, Ivy's grandmother visits the family for Christmas and brings gifts for Ivy, her little sister, Emily, and her brother, Dustin. Ivy's favorite gift is a beautiful porcelain doll. While Ivy and Emily pretend to share tea with their dolls, Dustin tries out his new basketball. Suddenly, Dustin loses control of the ball and it smashes down, breaking Ivy's new doll. Now Ivy must find some way to forgive Dustin before her anger ruins the special visit with Grandma.

In *Cody's Castle*, Cody's mom takes him, his sisters, and their friends to the beach. Cody makes fun of his sister's friend, Emily, for being afraid of the water. Mom wisely points out that we are all afraid of something. Cody then helps Emily overcome her fear of the water and admits he has fears of his own.

*Ivy's Icicle* and *Cody's Castle* are the third and fourth episodes in the Thinking of Others series written by Gary Bower and illustrated by Jan Bower. The series highlights positive attitude choices made by children in real life situations. Full page oil portrait illustrations add a realistic, yet, festive quality to stories taken from life experiences shared between the Bowers and their children. The question section found at the end of each story opens the door to opportunities for parent or teacher and child to interact with each other, within the framework of the story. Scripture is used to illustrate biblical principles introduced in the story. Both books are recommended.

Kim Harris, Children's Librarian, Lyell Branch of the Rochester Public Library, Rochester, New York.

**Officer Buckle and Gloria / Peggy Rathmann. LCCN 93043887. New York : G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1995.**

HBB, 0399226168, list cost: \$16.99.

E. Safety--Fiction; Police--Fiction; Police dogs--Fiction; Dogs--Fiction; Schools--Fiction; Caldecott Medal. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 28 cm.

Grades PS-2. Rating : 4.

'Officer Buckle knew more safety tips than anyone else in Napville' is the first line of the 1996 Caldecott award winner, *Officer Buckle and Gloria* by Peggy Rathmann. Officer Buckle spoke to the auditorium of students at the Napville School, but the students didn't pay attention. Then, Officer Buckle got a police dog named Gloria and took her along to the next safety program. Gloria stole the show by imitating Officer Buckle behind his back. The children laughed at Gloria's antics and began to pay attention to the safety tips and even avoided some accidents. Soon Officer Buckle received invitations to speak at more and more schools, always taking Gloria along. The story takes a twist when Officer Buckle discovers what Gloria has been up to on stage. In the end he

learns safety tip number 101 'Always stick with your buddy.'

The colorful, humorous and detailed illustrations make *Officer Buckle and Gloria* a favorite book amongst young children PreK-2. Throughout the book, safety tips are scattered everywhere, as notes on a bulletin board, on the end papers, and even on students' t-shirts. What an unforgettable and endearing way to teach and reinforce safety rules! In the fall, a teacher of PreK-2 could read aloud the book and use it as a springboard for a discussion on safety rules at school. This book is sure to evoke laughs from readers of all ages and will be a requested read aloud for years to come.

Jean M. Wensink, MS, Elementary Teacher & Freelance Writer, Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin.

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**Painting the wind / by Patricia MacLachlan & Emily MacLachlan ; illustrated by Katy Schneider. LCCN 2001047549. New York : Joanna Cotler Books, 2003.**

HBB, 0060297980, list cost: \$15.99.

E. Artists--Fiction; Painting--Fiction; Islands--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 24 x 29 cm.

Grades PS-3. Rating : \*5.

A budding artist paints all winter long as he waits for the time when 'the harbor seals leave for cool waters.' In Patricia and Emily MacLachlan's tender story, *Painting the Wind*, a boy paints many scenes of his beloved island, but is unable to paint the wind. As the summer progresses, he observes the world through the work of several artists who arrive on the island. The boy continues painting and perseveres until he finally achieves his goal as he paints 'the trees, all bent over.'

The delicate prose reflects the slow pace of the island inhabitants and the beauty of nature—like the painter of landscapes who 'forgets who he is' when he paints the moon. The man who paints the flowers wakes at dawn, loves the names of flowers, and the names of the colors of his oil paints like 'Alizarin Crimson' and 'Scarlet Lake.' Others paint faces, still life, or dogs. Dogs named Owen, Meatball, and Tess are 'caught forever in one single moment,' on canvas, and add a friendly, familiar aspect to this tender story.

Illustrator Katy Schneider's oil paintings are so warm and inviting that the reader can almost smell the salt air and hear the seagulls squawking overhead. The vibrant blue of the sea and the tan beaches in these wonderful illustrations will make island lovers out of readers of all ages.

Florence G. Craig, Freelance Writer, Telford, Pennsylvania.

**Pascual and the kitchen angels / written and illustrated by Tomie dePaola. LCCN 2003008521. New York : G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2004.**

HBB, 0399242147, list cost: \$16.99.  
E. Angels--Fiction; Cookery--Fiction; Monasteries--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 25 x 26 cm.  
Grades PS-3. Rating : 4.

When Pascual was born, his parents knew he was a special little boy sent straight from heaven. The angels sang for him and the animals loved him too. As Pascual grows up, his father thinks he will be a shepherd, but Pascual says he'd like to be a friar and help feed people who are hungry. Pascual moves into a Franciscan monastery where he is assigned the task of cooking for the friars. Since Pascual doesn't know how to cook, he decides to pray instead and ask for help. The angels come to his rescue, and the food is so good he is named the cook forever. Will Pascual ever fulfill his dream of feeding the hungry?

Tomie DePaola has written and illustrated this story about the patron saint of the kitchen, Pascual. Children will love to read about how angels come to help Pascual, and mothers will wish for a kitchen angel all their own. The whimsical illustrations are very well done and go along quite nicely with the storyline. A short author's note at the end of the story is a nice addition, as it describes who Pascual was in real life. *Pascual and the Kitchen Angels* is a sweet story that will bring smiles to the faces of the children who read it, and I recommend it for parents and libraries alike.

Sherry Myers. *Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.*

**Pearl and Wagner : two good friends / by Kate McMullan ; pictures by R.W. Alley. (Dial easy-to-read.) LCCN 2002000339. New York : Dial Books for Young Readers, 2003.**

HBB, 0803725736, list cost: \$13.99.  
E. Science projects--Fiction; Mice--Fiction; Rabbits--Fiction; Animals--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction; Schools--Fiction. 48 p. : col. ill. ; 24 cm.  
Grades K-3. Rating : 4.

Pearl and Wagner are best friends who love to do lots of things together. For the science fair, they build a cardboard robot that eats trash. When it doesn't work quite as well as expected, Wagner attempts to fix it, with less than good results. Even though they don't win a prize, Pearl and Wagner had fun making the robot together. Later, when Pearl gets new boots (big clumpy green ones) Wagner admits he doesn't like them, hurting Pearl's feelings. When Pearl ignores Wagner and spends time with the other children, Wagner comes up with a clever idea using the robot they built together to get her to forgive him.

Broken down into three short chapters, Kate McMullan's *Pearl and Wagner: Two Good Friends* is a delightful book for beginning

readers. Being friends can be hard work, and friendship sometimes means having to forgive even your best friend when he hurts your feelings. Through the use of simple, common words, this story tells a tale of friendship, fun, and working together, and is one that children will identify with. The illustrations by R.W. Alley are adorable and go quite well with what is written on each page. I highly recommend this book for early readers.

Sherry Myers. *Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.*

**Pippin the Christmas pig / by Jean Little ; illustrated by Werner Zimmermann. LCCN 2003022486. New York : Scholastic, 2004.**

HBB, 0439650623, list cost: \$16.95.  
E. Pigs--Fiction; Christmas--Fiction; Gifts--Fiction; Animals--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 22 x 26 cm.  
Grades PS-1. Rating : 4.

On Christmas Eve in a stable, a donkey, cow, pigeon, and sheep discuss the contributions each one's ancestors made to the baby Jesus on the first Christmas. Pippin, the pig, doesn't know anything about Christmas and instead of explaining what Christmas is, the other animals continue bragging about their ancestors' gifts. When Pippin finally gets their attention, she is told pigs weren't worthy of being in the holy stable. Sad and dejected, Pippin leaves the barn for a place 'where pigs matter but Christmas doesn't.' Finding herself in the middle of a blinding snowstorm, Pippin is shocked to find a mother and baby lost in the blowing snow. Pippin then leads them back safely to the warmth of the stable, and convinces the animals to help them.

*Pippin the Christmas Pig* is a story for young children that will hold their attention throughout its reading. The full-page watercolor paintings done by Werner Zimmermann are realistic and go rather well with what is being read on each page. I especially enjoyed the different expressions of Pippin. Jean Little has given us a touching Christmas story that shows us everyone is special, no matter how small or seemingly inconsequential they may be. What really matters is kindness and a caring heart that shows love to others.

Sherry Myers. *Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.*

**Play fair, Little Bear / Kathleen Allan-Meyer ; illustrated by Elaine Garvin. (The Little Bear adventure series : 7.) LCCN 2004555103. Greenville, S.C. : Journey Books, 2003.**

PAP, 157924887X, list cost: \$6.49.  
E. Bear cubs--Juvenile fiction; Running races--Juvenile fiction; Fairness--Juvenile fiction. 28 p. : col. ill. ; 23 cm.  
Grades PS-1. Rating : 3.

Kathleen Allan-Meyer's *Play Fair, Little Bear* is the seventh book of The Little Bear Adventure Series. It provides a lesson in integrity when Little Bear disregards the rules and goes off on his own trail in order to gain an advantage in a foot race. His shortcut backfires and causes unhappy consequences when Little Bear ruins his new running shoes and his chances of earning a trophy. The story leaves out an important element, though. Little Bear expresses no remorse for breaking the rules, only disappointment over the consequences. But Mother Bear does admonish him to 'Play fair.'

Elaine Garvin's brightly-colored illustrations will capture the attention of any preschooler or early reader. The engaging cartoon characters draw the reader into the fun of a day in the woods, and the potential danger when disregarding warnings.

Florence G. Craig. *Freelance Writer, Telford, Pennsylvania.*

**Skippyjon Jones in the doghouse / by Judith Byron Schachner. LCCN 2004017443. New York : Dutton Children's Books, 2005.**

HBB + CD, 0525471340, list cost: \$15.99.  
E. Siamese cat--Fiction; Cats--Fiction; Chihuahua (Dog breed)--Fiction; Dogs--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 24 cm.  
Grades 1-3. Rating : 4.

*Skippyjon Jones in the Doghouse* is a cute tale about a naughty Siamese kitten who covered the walls of his house with pictures of Chihuahuas. His mother sends him to his room for a time out and to 'think Siamese.' While he is there, his day dreaming goes into overdrive and he becomes: El Skippito, a Spanish Chihuahua, who wears a mask and a cape while fighting the bad Bobble-ito.

Judy Schachner uses whimsical rhyming text, endearing nicknames, and colorful illustrations in acrylics and pen and ink to weave an imaginative story sure to delight young readers and spark their own creative adventures. Adults and children alike will enjoy reading this book aloud and giving the words their own Spanish flare.

A fun alternative to reading this book aloud can be found in the accompanying CD as the author reads *Skippyjon Jones in the Doghouse* using delightful voices with a Spanish accent. The original story, "Skippyjon Jones," is included on the CD.

Audra Silva. *Freelance Writer, Pendleton, Oregon.*

**The umbrella / Jan Brett. LCCN 2003027853. New York : G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2004.**

HBB, 0399242155, list cost: \$16.99.  
E. Rain forest animals--Fiction; Umbrellas--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 22 x 27 cm.

Grades K-5. Rating : 5.

Endearing creatures from a tropical rainforest populate Jan Brett's lush picture book, *The Umbrella*. Carlos, an elementary age Latin boy, heads to the rainforest with his leaf umbrella to look for interesting wildlife. While he climbs a giant fig tree, the animals—a tree frog, toucan, tapir, kinkajou, and others—scramble into his upended umbrella. All wriggle and squeeze to fit as the crowd grows one by one, until a purple hummingbird causes the umbrella to turn over and the critters fall out, all but one who hangs on as Carlos trods home.

Jan Brett's customary artistic details make a cute story exquisite. The deep jungle tones of greens, browns, and grays come extravagantly alive in her cheerful animals. Leaf-framed vignettes on both sides of each spread hint at what's happening out of eye's view, and what may come next. The story is charming, the rainforest imagery strong, and the wording colorful. This is an ideal read-along, and older children will enjoy independently reading and examining the illustrations. Teachers might want to use this book alongside Jan Brett's *The Mitten* (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1989), which has a similar plot. Younger and older students alike would benefit from comparing and contrasting the two stories.

Karen Schmidt, BA. Freelance Writer/Editor, Marysville, Washington.

**Wild about books / by Judy Sierra ; pictures by Marc Brown. LCCN 2003008135. New York : Alfred P. Knopf, 2004.**

HBB, 037582538X, list cost: \$16.95.

E. Zoo animals--Fiction; Books and reading--Fiction; Bookmobiles--Fiction; Libraries--Fiction; Stories in rhyme. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 32 cm.

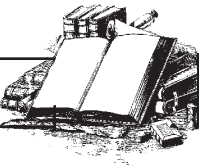
Grades K-3. Rating : 5.

In *Wild About Books* librarian Molly McGrew accidentally backs her bookmobile into the side of the zoo. The animals peek out from their hiding places, as Molly unashamedly reads from her books to whoever will listen. As each animal's curiosity is piqued, it reveals itself to be not only a reader, but a creator of tales, as well. Molly provides well-known titles in a plethora of reading styles. The animals, encouraged by the effervescent McGrew, even decide to form their own library and are taught how to properly care for their books. Rhyme scheme is reminiscent of Dr. Seuss, to whom the book is dedicated.

Judy Sierra is known for her successful instruction books geared to librarians, teachers, and those who work with younger children, as well as her highly engaging picture books. A master storyteller, she often uses poetry and folktales to present flannel board, puppet, and play acting renditions of tales-to-tell. Her repertoire includes the classic folktale, *Wiley and the Hairy Man* (Lodestar, 1996), a volume of Cinderella stories from around the world

(*Cinderella*, Oryx, 1992), and *Multicultural Folktales for the Feltboard and Readers' Theater* (Oryx, 1996). Award winning author and illustrator of the Arthur series for children, (picture book through early chapter books) Marc Brown pulls out all the stops in his delightful watercolor and crayon illustrations of zoo inhabitants. I highly recommended this book for children's collections in every library. Great on its own, *Wild About Books* is also a fun story time resource in teaching proper care of library books.

Kim Harris. Children's Librarian, Lyell Branch of the Rochester Public Library, Rochester, New York.



**Abigail's secret journal / Bonnie Bruno. (Secret journals of Bible time kids ; 1) LCCN 2003024546. Colorado Springs : Cook/FaithKidz, 2004.**

PAP, 0781440114, list cost: \$6.99.

Fic. Moses (Biblical leader)--Fiction; Jews--History--To 1200 B.C.--Fiction; Bible--History of Biblical events--Fiction; Exodus, The--Fiction; Family life--Fiction; Diaries--Fiction. 144 p. ; 23 cm.

Grades 3-5. Rating : 4.

*Abigail's Secret Journal* is a story about a young girl named Abigail who relates the events surrounding the Jews' exodus out of Egypt to the Promised Land in her secret journal. Abigail describes the plagues imposed by God on the Egyptians and the feelings associated with leaving behind the only home she has ever known, to head off into the unknown with her family.

Secret Journals of Bible-Time Kids is a new series for young children that is written in the journal form as seen through the eyes of the children who lived during particular time periods in the Bible.

Abigail tells of her life in a funny, yet descriptive way which serves to pull young readers into her story. Children will come to care for Abigail as she tells them her feelings regarding the plagues, and about leaving some of her belongings behind, as they flee Egypt and follow Moses into the wilderness.

*Sherri Myers. Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.*

**An American spring / by Kathryn Lasky. (My America : Sofia's immigrant diary ; 3) LCCN 2003054460. New York : Scholastic, 2004.**

HBB, 0439370450, list cost: \$12.95.

Fic. Immigrants--Fiction; Italian Americans--Fiction; Irish Americans--Fiction; Diaries--Fiction; Boston (Mass)--History--1865--Fiction. 107 p. : ill. ; 19 cm.

Grades 4-6. Rating : 4.

Sophia Monari is a ten-year-old girl who emigrated from Italy and is now living in 1903 Boston's North End. Her friend, Maureen, whom she met while in quarantine at Staten Island, has moved in with Sophia's family after her mother's death and the rest of her family's return to Ireland. Sophia is an upbeat young lady who must deal with a handicapped leg she has had since suffering from infantile paralysis.

In *An American Spring*, the third book in Sophia's Immigrant Diary series, Sophia tells of her adventures in fifth grade with her friend Maureen, and of learning new customs celebrated in America. She also is excited about

her parents' grocery store and helping her older sister, Gabriella, in her dress-making business.

*An American Spring* is a delightfully written, light-hearted story for young readers. Sophia is a fun, exciting character little girls especially will love reading about. While Kathryn Lasky's book can be read by itself, readers will only fully understand what is happening in the story if they have also read the two preceding titles in the Sophia storyline (*Hope in My Heart* and *Home at Last*, Scholastic, 2003). Each book also has an author page and a historical page at the end for additional information. The My America series of books for young readers is highly recommend to parents who would like their children to learn history while also reading a good story.

*Sherri Myers. Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.*

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**Maggie's dare : the Great Awakening / Norma Jean Lutz. (Sisters in time) Ulrichsville, Ohio : Barbour Publishing, 2005.**

PAP, 1593106602, list cost: \$7.95.

Fic. Great Awakening--Fiction. 140 p. ; 22 cm.

**Emma's secret : the Cincinnati epidemic / Veda Boyd Jones . (Sisters in time) Ulrichsville, Ohio : Barbour Publishing, 2005.**

PAP, 1593106580, list cost: \$7.95.

Fic. Cincinnati (Ohio)--Fiction; Cholera--Fiction. 141 p. ; 22 cm.

**Elise the actress : climax of the Civil War / Norma Jean Lutz. (Sisters in time) Ulrichsville, Ohio : Barbour Publishing, 2005.**

PAP, 1593106572, list cost: \$7.95.

Fic. United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1863--Fiction. 141 p. ; 22 cm.

**Maureen the detective : the age of immigration / Veda Boyd Jones . (Sisters in time) Ulrichsville, Ohio : Barbour Publishing, 2005.**

PAP, 1593106610, list cost: \$7.95.

Fic. Immigration--Fiction; Adoption--Fiction. 142 p. ; 22 cm.

**Carrie's courage : battling the powers of bigotry / Norma Jean Lutz. (Sisters in time) Ulrichsville, Ohio : Barbour Publishing, 2005.**

PAP, 1593106564, list cost: \$7.95.

Fic. Racial discrimination--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction. 141 p. ; 22 cm.

**Jennie's war : the home front in World War 2 / Bonnie Hinman. (Sisters in time) Ulrichsville, Ohio : Barbour Publishing, 2005.**

PAP, 1593106599, list cost: \$7.95.

Fic. United States--History--World War, 1939-1945--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction. 138 p. ; 22 cm.

Grades 5-7. Rating : \*5.

*Maggie's Dare*, by Norma Jean Lutz, is the story of twelve-year-old Maggie Baldwin, who is distraught when her friend, Adelaide, gets her very own slave for a Christmas present. Tender-hearted Maggie dares to speak up when Adelaide mistreats the young slave girl, risking their friendship. The Great Awakening arrives in Boston in 1744, causing Maggie to rethink her views on religion and serving God.

*Emma's Secret* is set in 1832, a time when young girls were told they had to be wives and mothers when they grew up. Emma Farley had other plans for her future, however, and wished to become an animal doctor. Emma's dreams are threatened when the Ohio River rises over its banks during a severe rainstorm, causing a cholera outbreak. Twelve-year-old Emma wonders if her family, and her dreams, will survive the Cincinnati Epidemic in this book by Veda Boyd Jones.

In *Elise the Actress*, also written by author Lutz, Elise Brannon is a ten-year-old girl who loves to perform for her family and friends. In 1865, the entertainment she provides is a welcome relief from the horrors of the War Between the States, better known as the Civil War. Prejudice and food rationing are major problems. When Elise learns of the town's prejudice against Milt Finney, an old man whose son is fighting for the South, she makes the bold decision to show him kindness.

Set in 1903, *Maureen the Detective*, by Veda Boyd Jones, is about an Irish girl who emigrated to America with her parents. Maureen Stevenson is adopted into an American family after her immigrant parents both die, and plans on becoming an American citizen. The eleven-year-old is hired to catalog the various foreign items in a large collection owned by Mrs. Hoag. When some pieces turn up missing, it's up to Maureen to help solve the mystery.

*Carrie's Courage*, by Lutz, is the story of Carrie Rühle, a ten-year-old girl who befriends a Jewish immigrant girl who just moved into Carrie's neighborhood. With the Ku Klux Klan actively causing trouble for Jews, blacks, and other immigrants in 1923, Carrie must decide whether she will still stand with her friend. Can



she be true to Dvora even when she loses all of her other friends?

Set in 1944, during the time of the World War II, *Jennie's War*, by Bonnie Hinman, introduces readers to ten-year-old Jennie Fleming, who is doing her part in the war effort. She and her friends collect newspapers, scrap metal, and rubber to use for bullets and tires and airplane wings. Everything between Jennie and her younger brother is a competition, including growing vegetables in the "Victory Garden" that the neighborhood plants together. But Jennie suspects that one of her neighbors is a spy; should she tell anyone of her suspicions?

The newest six releases in the Sisters in Time Series from Barbour Publishing are absolutely fantastic! Young children will read captivating stories about boys and girls their own age at various time periods, and how they dealt with the problems and challenges of their day. As they are reading, they will receive a history lesson without even realizing it. Kids will learn about war, immigration, bigotry, slavery, prejudice, and other problems of society and howthey can be dealt with. Qualities such as honesty, kindness, courage, and respect are clearly present in each of the books. Fans of Dear America and American Girl stories will enjoy these wonderful stories. While these books are geared mainly towards girls, young boys can also benefit from reading them.

Sherrri Myers. *Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.*

**Charlotte's web / by E. B. White ; pictures by Garth Williams. LCCN 52009760. New York : HarperCollins, 1980, 1952.**

HBB, 0060263857, list cost: \$16.99.

Fic. Pigs--Fiction; Spiders--Fiction; Animals--Fiction; Farms--Fiction; Fantasy. 192 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

Grades 2-5. Rating : 5.

*Charlotte's Web* ends with a simple truism: "It is not often that someone comes along who is a true friend and a good writer" (184). The runty but radiant pig Wilbur has both in Charlotte, his barn's resident spider. When Wilbur, a terrific but humble pig, finds out that he is to be killed and eaten once the summer is over, he despairs—until his friend Charlotte promises to save him.

Meanwhile, though Wilbur can't see it very well, the ever-popular process of growing up is taking away Fern, his eight-year-old human friend.

Charlotte spins an ingenious plot which saves Wilbur, provides a lifetime supply of food for the rat, Templeton, and enthalls every child who reads about it. E. B. White, long a writer for the *New Yorker* and a famous man of letters, manages to entertain and inspire those children and the adults who read to them, perhaps the mark of a truly great children's story.

Mark L. Ward, Jr. *PhD candidate. Research Assistant/National Newsletter Editor, Bob Jones University's J. S. Mack Library, Greenville, South Carolina.*

**Happy little family / by Rebecca Caudill ; pictures by Decie Merwin. (A Fairchild family story ; 1) LCCN 2003110232. Bathgate, N.D. : Bethlehem Books, 2004.**

PAP, 1883937728, list cost: \$10.95.

Fic. Families--Fiction. 107 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

Grades 3-5. Rating : 4.

**Schoolhouse in the woods / by Rebecca Caudill ; pictures by Decie Merwin. (A Fairchild family story ; 2) LCCN 2004108346. Bathgate, N.D. : Bethlehem Books, 2004, 1949.**

PAP, 1883937809, list cost: \$10.95.

Fic. Schools--Fiction; Family life--Kentucky--Fiction; Kentucky--History--20th century--Fiction. 129 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

Grades 3-5. Rating : 4.

**Up and down the river / by Rebecca Caudill ; pictures by Decie Merwin. (A Fairchild family story ; 3) LCCN 2004113375. Bathgate, N.D. : Bethlehem Books, 2005, 1951.**

PAP, 1883937817, list cost: \$11.95.

Fic. Schools--Fiction; Family life--Kentucky--Fiction; Kentucky--History--20th century--Fiction. 143 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

Grades 3-6. Rating : 4.

Bethlehem Books has recently reprinted Rebecca Caudill's Fairchild Family Stories. These sweet, beautifully-written tales, first published in the late 1940s, recount the adventures of Bonnie Fairchild, the youngest of five children growing up in the Kentucky hills in the early 1900s.

The books are similar to Laura Ingalls Wilder's Little House books, and to Maud Hart Lovelace's Betsy-Tacy books—quietly written stories set in long ago days, gently focusing on the ordinary pleasures of childhood and on children's fascination with the simple things surrounding them.

The Fairchilds clearly care for each other, and the parents respect the independence and pluck of each of their children.

Bonnie ages book by book, with each book written at a slightly higher level, providing readers with a chance to "grow" with the characters. Bonnie is four in *Happy Little Family* and distressed that, as the "baby," she isn't allowed to take part in the games and adventures Debbie, Emmy, Chris, and Althy experience. In *Schoolhouse in the Woods*, Bonnie is attending school and better able to mix in with her siblings and neighbors in the nearby one-room schoolhouse. By the time of *Up and Down the River*, she's six and spends an exciting summer with sister Debbie, selling art prints and bluing to their neighbors... and acquiring a goat, ten ducklings, three cats, a rooster, and a hen with the money they earn.

Lovely pencil drawings by Decie Merwin deftly capture the charm of Caudill's writing; the prose itself is simple enough for young readers, yet lyrical, filled with vivid imagery. The first two books might seem slow-moving to today's readers, since not too much happens besides Bonnie wanting a hat like her sisters' hats, or Bonnie and her classmates tending to the animals they keep in their classroom. But this simplicity can also be appealing to young children, who often have similarly simple interests.

Rosemarie DiCristo. *Children's Author, Bronx, New York.*

**The harmonica / Tony Johnston ; illustrated by Ron Mazellan. LCCN 2003003730. Watertown, Mass. : Charlesbridge., 2004.**

HBB, 1570915474, list cost: \$15.95.

Fic. Harmonica--Fiction; Jews--Fiction; Concentration camps--Fiction; World War, 1939-1945--Fiction; Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 29 cm.

Grades 1-5. Rating : 5.

*The Harmonica*, by Tony Johnston, is based on the true story of the life of Henry Rosmarin from Poland. Music heard through a window creates a love for Schubert in a Jewish boy and his parents during World War II. Unable to afford a piano, the father gets his son a harmonica, and the parents dance when the boy learns to play Schubert.

The family is torn apart when the Nazis find them and send them to concentration camps. To fight his loneliness, the boy plays the harmonica and remembers his happy past. When the commandant hears the music, he forces the boy to play for him nightly. Even though the boy hates playing for such an evil man, he realizes that his fellow prisoners, "without hope...might hear the notes and be lifted, like flights of birds."

The lyrical prose is complemented beautifully by the mixed media illustrations by Ron Mazellan. They accurately portray the darkness of the prisoners' environment as well as the heart-warming, "poor as pigeons" family whose love was "warm and enfolding as a song." The holocaust theme may be disconcerting for very young children, but provides a very personal look into the life of a survivor who, because of the power of music, never gave up hope during one of the darkest periods of recent history.

Florence G. Craig. *Freelance Writer, Telford, Pennsylvania.*

**Hidden in plain sight / by Chris Auer. (Mysteries of Eckert House ; 1) LCCN 2003027958. Grand Rapids : Zonderkidz, 2005.**

PAP, 0310708702, list cost: \$4.99.

Fic. Skeleton--Fiction; Museums--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 121 p. : ill. ; 18 cm.

**A stranger, a thief & a pack of lies / by Chris Auer. (Mysteries of Eckert House ; 2) LCCN 2004012527. Grand Rapids : Zonderkidz, 2005.**

PAP, 0310708710, list cost: \$4.99.

Fic. Museums--Fiction; Robbers and outlaws--Fiction; Impersonation--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 125 p. : ill. ; 18 cm.

**The Chinese puzzle box / by Chris Auer. (Mysteries of Eckert House ; 3) LCCN 2004022444. Grand Rapids : Zonderkidz, 2005.**

PAP, 0310708729, list cost: \$4.99.

Fic. Puzzles--Fiction; Robbers and outlaws--Fiction; Museums--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 121 p. : ill. ; 18 cm.

**The forgotten room / by Chris Auer. (Mysteries of Eckert House ; 4) LCCN 2004024585. Grand Rapids : Zonderkidz, 2005.**

PAP, 0310708737, list cost: \$4.99.

Fic. Lost and found possessions--Fiction; Gold--Fiction; Museums--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 117 p. : ill. ; 18 cm.

Grades 4-6. Rating : 5.

The new Eckert House Series from Zonderkidz is based on Luke 2:52 which states ". . . and Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man." It features a twelve-year-old boy named Dan Pruitt whose Navy jet pilot dad is deployed. Dan's dad has tasked Dan with figuring out what Luke 2:52 means in his own life. With that premise, Chris Auer launches 5th and 6th grade readers into adventure and mystery. The plots are well-written and the resolutions embrace positive moral values. Dan's relationship with his family is very healthy. The Christianity in these books is a natural part of their lives, not at all forced or artificial. The volumes stand alone, but the story is better if read in sequence.

*Hidden In Plain Sight* introduces the main characters and the first mystery. Having almost run down Miss Alma, the director of Eckert House Museum on his skateboard, Dan is forced to give community service hours to her as his consequence. At first resentful, Dan braces himself for a miserable time. Instead, he discovers a skeleton, secret passages, and a hidden life. Returning to the verse his father gave him, Dan finds himself growing in wisdom.

In *A Stranger, a Thief, and a Pack of Lies*, the reader gets to know Shelby and Pete, Dan's friends, better. When his Uncle Jeff is accused of dereliction of his security duties for Eckert House Museum, Dan is determined to stand up against the apparent evidence. While helping in the investigation, his friends help Dan unmask an imposter and solve the theft of a tapestry. Growing in stature seems to be where Dan is headed.

The third book in the series, *The Chinese Puzzle Box*, concerns a series of clues encased in puzzle

boxes that belonged to children who lived in Eckert House long ago. The story's tension builds until in the midst of a huge storm Dan, Pete, Shelby, and Miss Alma are trapped inside Eckert House with someone trying to kill them. Uncle Jeff has been poisoned, and the downed electrical wires across the gate prevent anyone from going for help. Even more mysteriously, Miss Alma's cell phone has disappeared. In this one Dan appears to be growing in favor with God as he confronts tough choices.

The final book in the series, *The Forgotten Room*, climaxes the series with Dan being stalked by a red haired man. A mysterious prince Leopold also shows up in town, looking for nothing while busily trying to find something. Staying one step ahead of him keeps Dan hopping. A nice family theme serves as a backdrop to the mystery in that Dan's interaction with Grandpa Mike gives both of them hope for Dan's father's safe return. Growing in favor with God and man, and Miss Alma, Dan finally begins to understand what his father's charge to him means.

Kelley Westenhoff. Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia.

**Jessica's first prayer : & Jessica's mother / by Hesba Stretton. (Golden inheritance series ; 1) LCCN 95032016. Neerlandia, Alta. : Inheritance Publications, 1995.**

PAP, 0921100639, list cost: \$7.90.

Fic. Poverty--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; London (England)--History--19th century--Fiction; England--Fiction. 123 p. : ill. ; 21 cm.

Grades 4-8. Rating : 3.

**Probable sons / Amy Le Feuvre. (Golden inheritance series ; 2) LCCN 96046432. Neerlandia, Alta. : Inheritance Publications, 1996.**

PAP, 0921100817, list cost: \$7.90.

Fic. Uncles--Fiction; Interpersonal relations--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; London (England)--Fiction. 94 p. : ill. ; 21 cm.

Grades 2-8. Rating : 5.

**Legend led / by Amy Le Feuvre. (Golden inheritance series ; 4) LCCN 98042052. Neerlandia, Alta. : Inheritance Publications, 1998, 1899.**

PAP, 0921100825, list cost: \$7.90.

Fic. Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Orphans--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; England--Fiction. 138 p. : ill. ; 21 cm.

Grades 2-8. Rating : 5.

**Little Meg's children / by Hesba Stretton. (Golden inheritance series ; 5) LCCN 00059778. Neerlandia, Alta. : Inheritance Publications, 2001, 1869.**

PAP, 0921100922, list cost: \$7.90.

Fic. Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Poverty--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; London (England)--Fiction; England--Fiction. 88 p. : ill. ; 21 cm.

Grades 6-8. Rating : 3.

**Teddy's button / by Amy Le Feuvre. (Golden inheritance series ; 6) LCCN 2001008572. Neerlandia, Alta. : Inheritance Publications, 2002.**

PAP, 0921100833, list cost: \$7.90.

Fic. Soldiers--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; England--Fiction. 93 p. : ill. ; 20 cm.

Grades 2-8. Rating : 3.

**Lost Gip / by Hesba Stretton ; [illustrations, Bertha Newcombe and H.J.A. Miles]. (Golden inheritance series ; 7) LCCN 2002156697. Neerlandia, Alta. : Inheritance Publications, 2003, 1890.**

PAP, 0921100930, list cost: \$7.90.

Fic. Missing children--Fiction; Poverty--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; London (England)--History--19th century--Fiction; Great Britain--History--19th century--Fiction. 121 p. : some ill. ; 21 cm.

Grades 4-8. Rating : 3.

**Harebell's friend / by Amy Le Feuvre. (Golden inheritance series ; 8) LCCN 2004002137. Neerlandia, Alta. : Inheritance Publications, 2004.**

PAP, 0921100841, list cost: \$7.90.

Fic. Orphans--Fiction; Aunts--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Great Britain--History--19th century--Fiction. 140 p. : ill. ; 21 cm.

Grades 2-8. Rating : 4.

In the Golden Inheritance series, half of the books were written by Amy Le Feuvre and half by Hesba Stretton. Amy LeFeuvre, also known as Mary Thurston Dodge, was a prolific British writer for the Religious Tract Society. She died in 1929. Hesba Stretton (1832-1911) is the pen name for the British writer named Sarah Smith who also wrote for the Tract Society and was the cofounder of the London Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

In *Jessica's First Prayer*, a poor street girl named Jessica meets Daniel, who runs a coffee stall; he gives Jessica a bit of food and kind attention. Jessica learns that Daniel's main job is to be a caretaker for a church. Jessica wants to learn about God and meet the minister, but Daniel prevents her until his heart is changed. The sequel, entitled *Jessica's Mother*, is included in this volume. Here the reader learns what happens to the minister of Jessica's church, Jessica's mother, and Daniel.

In *Probable Sons*, Sir Edward Wentworth, a confirmed bachelor, must take care of his niece, Milly, when her mother dies. Milly wiggles her way into Sir Edward's heart and becomes a motivating force to draw Sir Edward back to his heavenly father.

In *Legend Led*, three orphan siblings and their governess go to live with their older half-brother in his large country house. The boys' rebellious ways and their sister's quest to find the "Holy Thing" both lead to trouble, but eventually the war ends peacefully and the young girl finds the true meaning of the "Holy Thing".

*Little Meg's Children* is a rather miserable story. Meg Fleming, a poor London child, watches her mother die and tries to take care of her two young brothers until her father comes home from the sea.

In *Teddy's Button* we learn about Teddy Platt, an energetic but troublesome boy whose most prized possession is a button that belonged to his father, a brave soldier who died in battle. Mr. Upton, the town minister, helps Teddy channel all that youthful energy by enlisting Teddy to be a soldier for Christ.

In *Lost Gip*, Sandy Carroll is a little boy who lives in a bad part of London in the 1800's. His mother is a drunkard who loses her own daughter, Gipsy or "Gip." Sandy loves his sister and relies upon the Shafto family and God to help find lost Gip.

In *Harebell's Friend*, a young girl goes to live with her aunt Diana because her parents have died. Diana takes the girl (Harebell) in but is not loving towards her. Harebell meets Miss Triggs, a seamstress, and, in her independent way, gets involved with the affairs of Miss Triggs' prodigal brother Tom.

Both writers include characters who hear or quote scripture and believe in a loving God. However, these writers have drastically different writing styles. In general, I favor Le Feuvre's books because they have interesting stories, amusing child characters, and positive spiritual lessons. There are several racial slurs typical of the time, found in *Teddy's Button* and in *Harebell's Friend*.

Hesba Stretton's books, on the other hand, have so much despair and misery that I find them unsuitable for many young children. This is especially true of *Little Meg's Children* and *Jessica's Mother*. Nothing will be lost if one buys some books in this series and avoids others.

David Rainey, Senior Bibliographer, State Library of Louisiana, Baton Rouge.

**Just so stories / by Rudyard Kipling ; illustrated by Barry Moser. (Books of wonder) LCCN 95013714. New York : Morrow, 1996.**

HBB, 0688139574, list cost: \$24.99.

Fic. Children's stories, English; Animals--Fiction; Short stories. 148 p. : ill. (some col) : 24 cm.

Grades 5-7. Rating : 5.

Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories* is considered to be a classic by many people. This particular version includes the stories as they were originally written. Mr. Kipling adapted the tales first told to him by his nursemaids in India and retold them to his children, which is why many have the flavor of India and Africa in them. Much can be learned about the culture of these people by reading Mr. Kipling's work.

The stories are much better understood and appreciated when read aloud, and the rhyming cadence found in some of the stories reminds me of Dr. Seuss. Some words are silly, made-up words, while others are much older, seldom used words, which is understandable considering this book was written originally in 1902. This work won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1907, however, and is still widely available today.

A few of the stories contain references to fairies and magicians; some are funny and quite enjoyable. Many of the stories show quite a bit of imagination, which young children will appreciate; they will enjoy finding out how the leopard got his spots and the elephant his long trunk. Most of the stories are short and are perfect for reading at bedtime.

Sherri Myers. Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.

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**The lost prince of Samavia / by Frances Hodgson Burnett ; [edited by Reverie Collins]. Abridged ed. LCCN 2004002660. Greenville, S.C. : JourneyForth, 2004.**

PAP, 1591662516, list cost: \$10.95.

Fic. Princes--Fiction; Refugees--Fiction; People with disabilities--Fiction; Fathers and sons--Fiction. 342 p. ; 22 cm.

Grades 4-7. Rating : \*5.

Frances Burnett's *The Lost Prince* was first published in 1915. Since then it has grown to classic status, a novel beloved and remembered by generations of enthralled readers. Twelve-year-old Marco Loristan—guided by his gracious father and loyal servant, and abetted by his good friend, the Rat, a hunchbacked street urchin—loyally faces great adventure and danger as he carries the message of freedom to the secret friends of Samavia living throughout Europe. A long denied king, a lost prince, and a long-suffering country, as well as friendship, dedication, obedience, and hard decisions bravely faced, feature prominently throughout this story.

*The Lost Prince* is another of the books written by Burnett, noted for *The Secret Garden*, *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, and *The Little Princess*. The author bases her work on a firm Christian ethic; placing her protagonists into interesting, sometimes breathtaking, life changing adventures while promoting high standards for living.

Reverie Collins' abridgement adheres to the spirit and wording of the original. In a world beset by war and danger, this old plot becomes once again new and vital. Capable and imaginative readers will enjoy this book. Adults will welcome the chance to read it or to renew their acquaintance. Children not used to this style of writing may need a little guidance in order to gain the most from *The Little Prince*. Recommended for both secular and religious

libraries and schools, as well as individual readers, and for family and other group reading. The attractive, antiques cover makes this a good gift choice.

Donna J. Eggett. Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia.

**Mandie and the missing schoolmarm / Lois Gladys Leppard. (A Mandie book ; 39) LCCN 2004719316. Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2004.**

PAP, 0764226428, list cost: \$4.99.

Fic. Shaw, Mandie (Fictitious character)--Fiction; Detective and mystery stories; Mystery fiction; Historical fiction. 159 p. ; 18 cm.

**Mandie and the graduation mystery / Lois Gladys Leppard. (A Mandie book ; 40) LCCN 2005574728. Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2004.**

PAP, 0764226436, list cost: \$4.99.

Fic. Shaw, Mandie (Fictitious character)--Fiction; Detective and mystery stories; Mystery fiction; Historical fiction. 156 p. ; 18 cm.

Grades 4-6. Rating : 3.

*Mandie and the Missing Schoolmarm* is book 39 of the Mandie series by Lois Gladys Leppard. In this story, Mandie's beloved school teacher, Miss Hope, is missing and no one knows where she could possibly be. Mandie and her friends attempt to solve the case because Mandie doesn't want another teacher taking Miss Hope's place. Will Mandie and the others ever discover what has happened to Miss Hope?

*Mandie and the Graduation Mystery* is the last book in the Mandie series. In this particular tale, Mandie is about to graduate from the Misses Heathwood's School for Girls and is excited about her new graduation dress. When it goes missing, Mandie has a mystery on her hands. What will happen if it doesn't turn up in time for graduation? Who keeps searching through Mandie's room when she's not there? And will Mandie and Celia have to attend different colleges when Celia's application is turned down?

Fans of the Mandie series may wish to purchase these for their collection, but other readers may be rather disappointed with these two books. The plots are rather weak, and as a young woman soon on her way to college, Mandie often seems much younger in the way she is characterized in these two books. Some things are referenced repeatedly, and the number of characters and the explanations of who each is can be confusing.

The extremely popular Mandie series is now concluded, but more adventures await Mandie as she gets ready to head off to college.

Sherri Myers. Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.

**My guardian angel / Sylvie Weil ; translated by Gillian Rosner. LCCN 2003020479. New York : Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine, 2004.**

HBB, 0439576814, list cost: \$16.95.

Fic. Rashi, 1040-1105--Fiction; Jews--France--History--11th century--Fiction; Crusades--First, 1096-1099--Fiction; Sex role--Fiction; Identity--Fiction; Troyes (France)--History--11th century--Fiction; France--History--11th century--Fiction. 202 p. ; 22 cm.

Grades 4-7. Rating : 3.

The year is 1096; the place is Troyes, France. Crusaders are gathering nearby, making the local Jewish population nervous and fearful of attack. Elvina, a young Jewish girl, narrates the story as she talks to her guardian angel, or Mazal. She struggles with her conscience as she helps a Crusader in need, runs her home in her mother's absence, and still finds time for learning. Through Elvina, the reader is witness to many Jewish customs, such as the Sabbath, and Purim, which celebrates the story of Esther. As they suffer many mishaps, the community and Elvina await the time when the Crusaders will leave and normal life can return.

This translation of an award-winning French novel, based on a real family, brings the reader into the world of a devout and scholarly Jewish family. Superstitions and prejudice were a part of life for an 11th century Jew and this is reflected heavily in *My Guardian Angel*. Demons are also frequently mentioned in connection with fevers, babies, and childbirth. The presence of the Crusaders increases anti-Semitism in the town, as Jews are accused of everything from witchcraft to causing an eclipse, although the error of this assumption is clearly shown.

The pacing of the plot by author Sylvie Weil is a little slow but the reader still becomes invested in the lives of these people. The entire story is told from Elvina's point-of-view; however, as chapters change the narration switches between first and third person, which is slightly distracting. Reading *My Guardian Angel* provides insight into the culture and history of the Jewish people, making it a worthwhile read.

Christine J. Horn. Church Librarian, Holland, Michigan.

**My life as a prickly porcupine from Pluto / Bill Myers. (The incredible worlds of Wally McDoogle ; 23) LCCN 2004003155. Nashville : Tommy Nelson, 2004.**

PAP, 0849959942, list cost: \$5.99.

Fic. Cheating--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Humorous stories. 110 p. ; 19 cm.

Grades 4-6. Rating : 3.

Wally McDoogle is back in yet another accident-prone adventure. This time the plot revolves around him being mistaken as an alien, hence the title, *My Life as a Prickly Porcupine from the Planet Pluto*. As with the other McDoogle books, Wally's escapades start with a premise, and a bit of moral didacticism, and

snowball into a giant misunderstanding of global magnitude. This time Wally struggles with the temptation to cheat on his science test, and finds out even a little bit of cheating can get a person into a huge amount of trouble.

As with most, if not all, of the McDoogle books, this one is silly. For the targeted age group, this makes for supreme fun in the reading. The random dialog, implausible plot turns, and goofy characters definitely have kid-appeal.

It seems amazing that Wally is still going strong after so many astounding adventures; but here he is once again, this time espousing—in a merry way—the reasons why a person shouldn't cheat, while exploring a subplot about the effects of too much TV. And here is the point to ponder: has the McDoogle method of introducing morals to young readers worn thin or is it still viable? Bill Myers has a formula that works, yet maybe more emphasis on the moral and less on the cartoonish romp would pull in an older audience.

Pam Webb, BA. Freelance Writer, Sandpoint, Idaho.

**The poison arrow tree / Shel Aresen. (The Rugendo rhinos series ; 1) LCCN 2003001635. Grand Rapids : Kregel, 2003.**

PAP, 0825420415, list cost: \$5.99.

Fic. Clubs--Fiction; Kenya--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 122 p. ; 21 cm.

**The carjackers / Shel Aresen. (The Rugendo rhinos series ; 2) LCCN 2003001636. Grand Rapids : Kregel, 2003.**

PAP, 0825420423, list cost: \$5.99.

Fic. Robbers and outlaws--Fiction; Clubs--Fiction; Kenya--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 125 p. ; 21 cm.

**Poachers beware / Shel Aresen. (The Rugendo rhinos series ; 3) LCCN 2003014277. Grand Rapids : Kregel, 2003.**

PAP, 0825420393, list cost: \$5.99.

Fic. Poaching--Fiction; Clubs--Fiction; Kenya--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 115 p. ; 21 cm.

**The secret oath / Shel Aresen. (The Rugendo rhinos series ; 4) LCCN 2003014276. Grand Rapids : Kregel, 2003.**

PAP, 0825420407, list cost: \$5.99.

Fic. Kidnapping--Fiction; Clubs--Fiction; Kenya--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 110 p. ; 21 cm.

Grades 4-6. Rating : 3.

Through the Rugendo Rhinos Series, author Shel Aresen, a missionary to Kenya, acquaints young readers with the culture, superstitions, and religious beliefs of Africa. Daily life can be vividly experienced through the mysterious and often scary adventures of the Rugendo Rhino Club, made up of Matt, Dean, Dave, and Jon.

In the Poison Arrow Tree, the Rhinos find two young African boys lying in the bush. One boy, Ngugi, is dead, and the other boy, Kamua, is barely alive. The village people feel that since there is no other reasonable explanation, witchcraft has brought on these tragedies. When Ngugi's father appears ranting about witch doctors, curses, and revenge, the Rhinos encounter first-hand the reason their missionary parents have come to Africa. Young readers will see how the Rhinos and their families share the Gospel with those in spiritual darkness.

In *The Carjackers*, the Rhinos join forces with a girls' group, the Cheetahs, to solve the mystery of the disappearing Land Rover. But when the church holds a harambee—Swahili for 'pulling together'—to raise money for a new church roof, the money is stolen, and the mystery thickens. As the two groups look for clues, they find that God does answer prayer in all things.

In *Poachers Beware*, a movie company comes to Africa to look for talent to assist in a film about the adoption of a cheetah. The Rhinos and Cheetahs are working diligently at getting an active role, when a cheetah disappears. Poachers, dishonest park guards, venomous puff adders, gunshots in the darkened African night, and an adorable little dik-dik make for a page-turner.

When the Rhinos and Kamau are out hunting pigeons, they happen across a secret ceremony, in *The Secret Oath*. Kamau knows that they are not supposed to watch this, but more troubling is the fact that Matt recognizes one of the participants as a Christian pastor. Again, the Rhinos come face to face with the Africans' struggle between past pagan beliefs and Christianity.

These stories are easily read, and provide a clear view of the value of prayer, and the necessity of faith. Problems that the characters face are met with reminders that God can take care of each situation when you trust in him. In presenting the concepts of witchcraft, curses, and spells, Shel Aresen is informative but not graphic. These books encourage young readers to trust in God and to believe in God's power over Satan. Aresen demonstrates throughout his stories how God's protective hand covers our children.

Young readers will enjoy the use of Swahili words and phrases. The Swahili dialogue is well placed, creates interest, and keeps the story flowing.

Vivian Dippold, MS. Educator/Teacher, Hatfield, Pennsylvania.

**The quiltmaker's journey / by Jeff Brumbeau ; illustrated Gail de Marcken. LCCN 2002044989. New York : Orchard Books, 2004.**

HBB, 0439512190, list cost: \$17.95.

Fic. Quiltmakers--Fiction; Generosity--Fiction; Conduct of life--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 27 cm.

Grades 1-3. Rating : 5.

An extremely rich young girl whose parents have both died lives in a mansion in a town full of rich people. A great stone wall surrounds the town, but the wall isn't intended to keep the people in, but rather to keep others out. The town elders tell of terrible dangers lurking just outside the walls, but the young girl wonders what lies out there anyway. One day, when she has run out of things to buy, she decides to venture outside to take a quick peek. She discovers a harsh world where poverty runs rampant, and goes back home to convince the town elders to help. What she finds instead is that she must make a choice to remain behind the walls, or to be banished forever from her home. She chooses to help the needy, and thus, the quiltmaker's journey begins.

*The Quiltmaker's Journey*, by Jeff Brumbeau, is one of those books that quickly finds a special place on the bookshelf. Parents will find themselves reading this book over and over to their children, and enjoying it themselves in the process. The illustrations by Gail de Marcken are absolutely beautiful, with so much detail the reader will discover new things with each reading. Bright, attention-getting pictures greatly enhance the narrative, and quilt designs are sprinkled throughout the pages. *The Quiltmaker's Journey* is the prequel to *The Quiltmaker's Gift* (Scholastic, 2001), which is also a delightful and timeless story. The moral of this tale is that people don't need riches in order to be happy—happiness can come from simply helping others.

Sherri Myers. Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.

**Rufus M. / Eleanor Estes ; illustrated by Louis Slobodkin. (The Moffats) LCCN 00038904. San Diego : Harcourt, 2001, 1943.**

HBB, 0152025715, list cost: \$17.00.

Fic. Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Family life--Connecticut--Fiction; Connecticut--Fiction; Newbery Honor. 233 p. : ill. ; 20 cm.

Grades 2-5. Rating : 5.

Rufus Moffat is on a mission. A resident of New Haven, Connecticut, he intends to fully explore his world, to the best of his seven-year-old abilities. Whether it's learning how to write his name, Rufus M., or discovering an invisible piano player in his neighbor's home, or playing catcher's back-up on an all-girls softball team, Rufus is a one-kid whirlwind of activity. He learns how to plant a garden with his "Rufus beans," and they actually grow! He also applies for a library card and learns how to properly care for books from the librarian. Rufus finds out what the mysterious green-eyed creature is that hides in the drainage pipes near his house, and he visits the amusement park with his cardboard buddy on his tricycle. He even gives being a

ventriloquist a try, but learns that doing it in school isn't such a great idea.

Originally published in 1943, *Rufus M.* is the third story about the Moffats from Eleanor Estes, and this one is a fun adventure as it centers on seven-year-old Rufus, the youngest of the Moffat clan. Young children will delight in his adventures and misadventures about town, usually while on his own, without any supervision, somewhat common at the time. Rufus's father is deceased, and his mother has her hands full providing for the needs of her children.

The original illustrations, which are nicely done in black and white, have been kept for the re-release of this book, with the exception of the front cover. *Rufus M.* also provides a history lesson in that it tells of ways of heating, lighting, and providing medical care in the early 1900s. *Rufus M.* is a Newbery Honor book and is one every child should read at least once in his or her childhood.

Sherri Myers. Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.

**The secret of the desert stone / Frank E. Peretti. (Cooper kids adventure series ; 5) LCCN 96001919. Nashville : Tommy Nelson, 1996.**

PAP, 1400305748, list cost: \$5.99.

Fic. Supernatural--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Adventure and adventurers--Fiction. 156 p. ; 20 cm.

**The deadly curse of Toco-Rey / Frank E. Peretti. (Cooper kids adventure series ; 6) LCCN 96015641. Nashville : Tommy Nelson, 1996.**

PAP, 1400305756, list cost: \$5.99.

Fic. Supernatural--Fiction; Jungles--Fiction; Adventure and adventurers--Fiction. 150 p. ; 20 cm.

**The legend of Annie Murphy / Frank E. Peretti. (Cooper kids adventure series ; 7) LCCN 96041694. Nashville : Tommy Nelson, 1996.**

PAP, 1400305764, list cost: \$5.99.

Fic. Space and time--Fiction; Ghosts--Fiction; West (U.S)--Fiction. 151 p. ; 20 cm.

**Mayday at two thousand five hundred / Frank E. Peretti. (Cooper kids adventure series ; 8) LCCN 2004024405. Nashville : Tommy Nelson, 2004.**

PAP, 1400305772, list cost: \$5.99.

Fic. Aircraft accidents--Fiction; Survival--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction. 132 p. ; 20 cm.

Grades 4-6. Rating : 5.

Master storyteller Frank Perelli knows how to keep his readers' attention and how to make their hearts race.

In The Cooper Kids Adventure Series, Book Five, we meet up with father, Dr. Jacob Cooper, and his son and daughter, Jay and Lila, as they venture to Togwana. A huge stone has mysteriously and suddenly appeared in the middle of the desert. Dictator Idi Nikromo

wants it moved, and he expects the Cooper team to find a way to do so. Rumor has it there are cannibals living on the other side, but is the rumor really true? Can the Coopers solve *The Secret of the Desert Stone*?

Book Six sends the Coopers on an adventure to the lush jungles of Central America. Some treasure hunters have been found murdered, and the Coopers are asked to help find the treasure they had been searching for. First they must first survive the slimy carvies with poison on their bodies, hostile natives who shoot poison darts, and the crazy people who wander around at night. Can they survive *The Deadly Curse of Toco-Rey* and find the treasure?

Bodine, Arizona, is the scene for the seventh Cooper kids adventure, as they try to figure out what's behind the strange ghostly sightings of Annie Murphy. She was accused of killing her husband in 1885, but what is she doing still around over a hundred years later? Can the Cooper kids travel back in time to solve the case of *The Legend of Annie Murphy*?

The eighth book in the series focuses mainly on fourteen-year-old Jay Cooper, who must pilot a plane to safety while blind. His uncle is knocked unconscious when their small plane gets caught in the turbulence of a 747 flying too low, and Jay suffers a head injury, causing him to lose his sight. Family, friends, and others aid in the high-flying rescue when Jay calls *Mayday at Two Thousand Five Hundred*.

Adventure lovers will find themselves unable to put these books down! Christian faith and values are evident throughout each story, and prayer is a common occurrence as the Coopers find themselves in dangerous situations from which only God can save them. Highly recommended for parents of pre-teens and teens, but don't be surprised if you find the parents reading and loving them too.

Sherri Myers. Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.

**Sophie and the scoundrels / Nancy Rue. (Faithgirlz ; 3) LCCN 2004022918. Grand Rapids : Zonderkidz, 2005.**

PAP, 0310707587, list cost: \$5.99.

Fic. Space stations--Fiction; Science projects--Fiction; Family problems--Fiction; Best friends--Fiction; Friendship; Imagination--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction. 121 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

**Sophie's Irish showdown / Nancy Rue. (Faithgirlz ; 4) LCCN 2004023726. Grand Rapids : Zonderkidz, 2005.**

PAP, 0310707595, list cost: \$5.99.

Fic. Talent shows--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction; Irish Americans--Fiction; Orphans--Fiction; Schools--Fiction; Imagination--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Virginia--Fiction. 119 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

**Sophie's first dance? / Nancy Rue. (Faithgirlz ; 5) LCCN 2004029451. Grand Rapids : Zonderkidz, 2005.**

PAP, 0310707609, list cost: \$5.99.

Fic. Friendship--Fiction; Interpersonal relations--Fiction; Imagination--Fiction; Schools--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Virginia--Fiction. 121 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

**Sophie's stormy summer / Nancy Rue. (Faithgirlz ; 6) LCCN 2004030899. Grand Rapids : Zonderkidz, 2005.**

PAP, 0310707617, list cost: \$5.99.

Fic. Cancer--Fiction; Diseases--Fiction; Sick--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Imagination--Fiction. 116 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

Grades 4-5. Rating : 5.

Sophie and the other Corn Flakes make movies of Sophie's daydreams. This helps to defuse the real-world situations that threaten to overwhelm these still very young girls. Each book in the FaithGirlz series provokes more maturity in the girls as they confront cultural and worldly issues. Sophie's counselor, Dr. Peter, is a wise Christian who always knows the right question to start Sophie down the road to finding the answer for herself.

In *Sophie and the Scoundrels*, there is tension in Sophie's household because her parents aren't getting along well. Convinced that it is up to her to save her family, Sophie takes on the burdens of the whole family, almost crushing her own spirit in the process.

*Sophie's Irish Showdown* features Darbie, who recently moved from Northern Ireland after losing her mother in a car accident. For a school assignment the girls decide to dramatize Darbie's story. Fiona feels threatened by Sophie and Darbie's burgeoning friendship and the whole project almost blows apart.

In *Sophie's First Dance*, the pressure on the girls to keep their "no-boys" pact in the face of only some of them being invited spills over into the Corn Flakes' harmony. The merciless teasing Maggie suffers from the Corn Pops causes the girls and parents to recognize the undue pressure.

*Sophie's Stormy Summer* raises the biggest issue the girls have ever faced. Kitty is diagnosed with leukemia. The fact that they are forbidden to talk about it together by well-meaning but misguided parents intensifies the girls' fears for Kitty and for themselves. Sophie's sacrifice of love will leave readers choked up.

These books are easy to read, and full of faith challenges for girls to think through.

Kelley Westenhoff. Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia.

**A sparrow alone / by Alicia Petersen. LCCN 2003026624. Greenville, S.C. : Journey Books, 2004.**

PAP, 1591662044, list cost: \$7.49.

Fic. Jesus Christ--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Orphans--Fiction; Jews--History--168 B.C.-135 A.D.--Fiction. 154 p. ; 22 cm.

Grades 3-5. Rating : 4.

Mala is a young seamstress in a small village outside Jerusalem. Orphaned by the Romans, Mala and her brother, Abdon, are barely able to feed themselves. Still, Mala always leaves food for the Nameless One, the local beggar. As Abdon matures he chafes at the yoke poverty has placed upon them and enters into a life of crime in order to provide for them more fully. Mala's heart is heavy for her brother as he turns his back on his faith in Jehovah God and risks his life, for it would be forfeit if he was caught by the Roman occupiers. As Jesus enters the final week of his life on earth, so does Abdon. Abdon and Mala's lives are changed forever by events beyond human control.

Looking back 2000 years, Christians see the final week of Jesus' life as frozen in time. *A Sparrow Alone* helps remind us that ordinary people were having ordinary problems in their ordinary lives that week as well. Author Alicia Petersen gracefully explores how these lives might have intersected with Jesus and his ministry in this well-written story. Rather than belaboring the religious points, as many books directed towards this audience do, this book introduces us to a protagonist who expresses her devotion to Jehovah in a completely natural way, as she attempts to reclaim her brother from his life of crime. Fans of historical fiction will enjoy this quick read.

Kelley Westenhoff. Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia.

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**The spoon in the stone / by Doug Peterson ; [illustrations by Big Idea Productions]. (VeggieTown values ; 1) LCCN 2004000462. Grand Rapids : Zonderkidz, 2005.**

PAP, 0310706262, list cost: \$3.99.

Fic. Waiters and waitresses--Fiction; Knights and knighthood--Fiction; Conduct of life--Fiction; Vegetables--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : ill. ; 21 cm.

**Frog wars / by Cindy Kenney and Doug Peterson. (VeggieTown values ; 2) LCCN 2004000463. Grand Rapids : Zonderkidz, 2005.**

PAP, 0310706270, list cost: \$3.99.

Fic. Perseverance (Ethics)--Fiction; Hope--Fiction; Musical instruments--Fiction; Conduct of life--Fiction; Vegetables--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : ill. ; 21 cm.

**Field of beans / by Doug Peterson ; [illustrations by Big Idea Productions]. (VeggieTown values ; 3) LCCN 2004000232. Grand Rapids : Zonderkidz, 2005.**

PAP, 0310706289, list cost: \$3.99.

Fic. Elijah (Biblical prophet)--Fiction; Luck--Fiction; Charms--Fiction; Faith--Fiction; Conduct of life--Fiction; Vegetables--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : ill. ; 21 cm.

**Lost in place / by Doug Peterson ; [illustrations by Big Idea Productions]. (VeggieTown values ; 4) LCCN 2004000233. Grand Rapids : Zonderkidz, 2005.**

PAP, 0310706297, list cost: \$3.99.

Fic. Fear--Fiction; Space flight--Fiction; Trust in God--Fiction; Conduct of life--Fiction; Vegetables--Fiction. 1 v. (unpaged) : ill. ; 21 cm.

Grades K-2. Rating : \*5.

The wacky veggies are back with excellent moral lessons made delicious by being wrapped in humor. VeggieTown Values series books are each a take-off on a popular story or movie which will engage the children as well as the adults who will be reading these over and over and over. The full color illustrations by Michael Moore are vivid and engaging. At this price, buy several copies of each because they will get loved on.

*The Spoon in the Stone*, by Doug Peterson, is a lesson in serving others. *Field of Beans*, also by Peterson, is a lesson in faith, loosely based on the story of Elijah. *Lost in Place* is about overcoming fears and will make parents who remember the TV show *Lost in Space* chuckle. The most recent one, *Frog Wars*, a joint effort between Peterson and Cindy Kennedy, will make kids clamor for more. Who wouldn't love a character named Cuke Sandwalker and a bad guy named Dark Visor? This lesson in perseverance roughly follows the Exodus from Egypt and is hilarious.

Kelley Westenhoff. Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia.

**Victory on the walls / Frieda Clark Hyman. LCCN 2004117611. Bathgate, N.D. : Bethlehem Books, 2005.**

PAP, 1883937965, list cost: \$12.95.

Fic. Nehemiah (Biblical figure)--Fiction; Jerusalem--History--Fiction. 182 p. ; 22 cm.

Grades 4-6. Rating : 3.

Bani, the nephew of Nehemiah, was born in Jerusalem but raised in Susa, so he considers himself a Susian. That explains why Bani is appalled when Nehemiah gets permission from Artaxerxes to return to Jerusalem, taking Bani with him.

*Victory on the Walls* is Frieda Clark Hyman's version of Nehemiah's story, told from Bani's viewpoint. Bani is a completely fictional character, a fact Hyman makes clear; details on other aspects she's fictionalized, as well as information on the historical account of Nehemiah, are included in the book's preface.

The book is an interesting and well-written tale, with a vivid sense of time and place. Bani is a likeable, believable character, and his disgust with his pending return to Jerusalem and his desire to become a soldier in Susa are well-developed, as are his fear of the stern, arrogant Nehemiah and his desire to be loved by him.

The story (first written in 1960) is a bit slow moving, and its writing style and vocabulary make it best for an older elementary school audience or advanced readers. Reluctant readers may be frustrated by the lack of action scenes; most events are described through Bani's thoughts or happen 'off stage' and are recounted through dialog. Another possible concern: readers unfamiliar with the Old Testament books of Nehemiah and Ezra might find the story hard to follow. Foreknowledge of the events is assumed and the abundance of unfamiliar biblical names—thrown in quickly with little explanation of who these men are—may confuse readers.

Rosemarie DiCristo. *Children's Author, Bronx, New York.*

**When freedom comes : Hope's Revolutionary Way diary / by Kristiana Gregory. (My America : Hope's diary ; 3) LCCN 2003054465. New York : Scholastic, 2004.**

HBB, 0439370531, list cost: \$12.95.

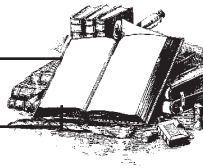
Fic. Diaries--Fiction; Philadelphia (Pa)--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Fiction; United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Fiction. 107 p. : ill. ; 19 cm.

Grades 4-6. Rating : 4.

In this third diary begun on Christmas Day, 1777, Hope Potter is ten years old and living in Pennsylvania during the American Revolution. While her older brother Ethan has returned home, her father is still in Valley Forge, fighting with the Patriots. Hope's house is occupied by British Redcoats, and her friend Polly is no longer welcome to visit because her parents are Loyalists. Hope deeply misses Polly and wishes for an end to the war so they can be friends again and so that her father can return home to his family. Her only option is to wait out the war and hope for a quick resolution to the conflict.

*When Freedom Comes* can be read by itself, but is better understood when read in conjunction with the first two books in this series. This book, by Kristiana Gregory, is an excellent introduction for young children to the Revolutionary War as seen through the eyes of a ten-year-old who lived at that time. This book, as well as others in the series, includes author and historical notes at the end, which adds to the interest of the story.

Sherri Myers. *Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.*



**Creation / Gerald McDermott. 1st ed. LCCN 2004272056. New York : Dutton Children's Books, 2003.**

HBB, 0525469052, list cost: \$16.99.

231.7/65. Creation--Juvenile literature; Creation. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 30 cm.

Grades PS-2. Rating : 4.

Based on Genesis 1:1 through 2:3 of the Hebrew Bible, *Creation* presents the story in God's voice, "I was before time." With full page, dramatic gesso and fabric illustrations dominating, each page contains a few words describing that step in creation. The varicolored words become one with the illustration.

Illustrator, author, film animator, and Caldecott Medalist Gerald McDermott is well known for his simply worded, generously illustrated presentations of world myths. Research for this book included the Babylonian epic Enuma Elish, ancient illuminated Christian and Jewish scriptures, and art forms from Chile and Japan.

McDermott envisions *Creation* as a book to interest all ages. Art classes will relish the illustrations. Readers, of what ever age, will be drawn by the active, color drenched pictures. Strongly bound, with resilient pages, *Creation* will stand up to a lot of use.

Donna J. Eggett. Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia.

**We are Americans : voices of the immigrant experience / by Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler. LCCN 2001049612. New York : Scholastic, 2003.**

HBB, 0439162972, list cost: \$21.95.

304.8/73. United States--Emigration and immigration. 194 p. : ill. ; 28 cm.

Grades 4-7. Rating : 4.

From the prehistoric residents of 14,000 years ago to today's American Dream of the modern immigrant, the Hooblers make an ambitious effort to cover the diversity of this continent's heritage in a readable fashion. The text of *We Are Americans* does a thorough job in tracking the detailed information of the broad history of peoples of this country. Exploration of religious practices, working trends, and schooling help to show how newcomers struggled along this transitional journey to become an American. Chronological events and changing patterns added to personal perspectives all work together to provide a fairly comprehensive account of the American "melting pot." Every page has admirable archival photos and reproductions that complement the spacious design of this book. Side bars and breakout boxes with titles like "Saved from the Sea" and "Prejudice in

Colonial America" highlight diaries, letters, and oral sketches of ancestral pertinence. Some weaknesses include lack of notes and little reference to the Arabic or Muslim experience; that experience is summarized in about four sentences at the end of the book. Index. Further reading list. Excellent resource for students.

Rebecca Cress-Ingebo, MSN, MLS. Academic Librarian, Beavercreek, Ohio.

**A dream of freedom : the civil rights movement from 1954 to 1968 / Diane McWhorter ; foreword by Fred Shuttlesworth. New York : Scholastic, 2004.**

HBB, 0439576784, list cost: \$19.95.

323.1196/073. African Americans--Civil rights--History; Civil rights movements--United States--History; United States--Race relations. 160 p. : ill. ; 25 x 28 cm.

Grades 4-7. Rating : 5.

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Diane McWhorter covers the modern civil rights movement in *A Dream of Freedom*. In an exceptional pictorial and literary account of a pivotal period in America's past, McWhorter reminds young readers that history is all around and "You can either make it or it can make you." With an advocate's voice, she chronicles monumental events, personalities, challenges, and breakthroughs in the civil rights movement. This powerful first book for young readers provides an account of racial bigotry in southern states like Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Georgia. Moving beyond her usual reportage, this is grand storytelling with intimate portraits of the sacrifices and triumphs from African Americans in pursuit of the democratic soul of America. Actions through organizations like Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), landmark legislation like Brown v. the Board of Education, and historical rights rallies form the framework for this investigation of social and political inequality. Bibliography. Further reading list. Index. Highly recommended.

Rebecca Cress-Ingebo, MSN, MLS. Academic Librarian, Beavercreek, Ohio.

**Off to Plymouth Rock! / by Dandi Daley Mackall ; illustrations by Gene Barretta. LCCN 2003004646. Nashville : Tommy Nelson, 2003.**

HBB, 1400301947, list cost: \$9.99.

394.2649. Pilgrims (New Plymouth Colony); Thanksgiving Day--History; Massachusetts--History--New Plymouth, 1620-1691; Holidays. 1 v. (unpaged) : ill. ; 24 cm.

Grade PS. Rating : 2.

In *Off to Plymouth Rock!*, Dandi Mackall and Gene Barretta have collaborated on a poem/song for very young children about the Pilgrims, their voyage, the work to build a colony in America, the help of Massasoit and Squanto, and the celebration held to celebrate their first harvest. Barretta's detailed illustrations are comic/cartoon style in watercolor. Each picture is completed with a watercolor frame with different pattern details on every page. A CD is included which features Ms. Mackall's voice reading the poem. The poem is repeated on the CD four times with chanting, singing, or clapping variations of the refrain.

The entire package, the poem and CD, are slight in quantity and quality. Even the refrain, which young children might repeat, varies too much from verse to verse to easily encourage repetition. It is the illustrations, however, which are not accurate and would create misconceptions for the young child that are most objectionable. The buildings do not represent Pilgrim construction; one home features a picture window. The feast is depicted serving all at one time including children at huge tables. Cartoon caricatures detract from the mood. For example, a diner is poking his finger at either a live eel or worm at the feast table. In Mr. Barretta's favor, his selection of most foods for the feast and the use of wooden trenchers for eating are historically accurate. However, the number of spoons and knives would not be accurate nor would the presentation of the foods. On another page, seeds in Squanto's hand look like miniatures of the plant, not a seed. The CD offers nothing that a good live reader couldn't do, for there is no special enhancement of the reading. Do not waste your money.

Marion M. Mueller, MS. Library Media Specialist, New Hope Christian School, Neenah, Wisconsin.

**Animals hibernating / written by Pamela Hickman ; illustrated by Pat Stephens. Toronto : Kids Can, 2005.**

HBB, 1553376625, list cost: \$12.95.

591.56/5. Hibernatione. 40 p. : col. ill. ; 29 cm.

**Animals migrating / written by Etta Kaner ; illustrated by Pat Stephens. Toronto : Kids Can, 2005.**

HBB, 1553375475, list cost: \$12.95.

591.56/8. Animal migration. 40 p. : col. ill. ; 29 cm.

Grades 2-5. Rating : 5.



Two new books in the Animal Behavior series from Kids Can Press will be nice additions to your library. In language the targeted age group can understand, Pamela Hickman helps readers learn the difference between deep sleepers and true hibernators in *Animals Hibernating*. Similarly, in *Animals Migrating*, Etta Kaner uses clear language to describe the miracle that migration really is. The vivid lifelike illustrations by Pat Stephens in both books prompt the reader to linger on many pages. A glossary at the end of each book helps the student review the new science words she may have learned. Each has a good index as well. "A nice feature in each book is the "If you were a..." pages on which the reader is invited to think of himself as the animal described. This helps the reader understand why certain patterns of migration or hibernation are appropriate for that animal.

The most exciting feature in both books is that each one contains several experiments that can be done in a classroom setting. The low-tech, easily performed experiments help students understand the science behind the animal behavior. Both books are refreshingly free of evolution-based claims or assumptions. Thus, the creative teacher can easily use these books to teach about God's wonderful design for our world.

Kelley Westenhoff. Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia.

**Hemp jewelry / Judy Ann Sadler ; illustrated by June Bradford. (Kids can do it) Toronto : Kids Can, 2005.**

HBB, 155337745, list cost: \$12.95.

746.42. Macrame; Bead work; Jewelry making. 40 p. : col. ill. ; 26 cm.

**Chock full of chocolate / written by Elizabeth MacLeod ; illustrated by June Bradford. (Kids can do it) Toronto : Kids Can, 2005.**

HBB, 1553377621, list cost: \$12.95.

641.3/374. Cookery (Chocolate); Chocolate. 40 p. : col. ill. ; 26 cm.

Grades 3-6. Rating : 5.

Adding two more books to its Kids Can Do It series, this Canadian publisher has once again brings out books that meet young girls where they live. *Chock Full of Chocolate* by Elizabeth MacLeod contains 33 recipes guaranteed to satisfy even the most serious chocoholic cravings. Her introduction to the book helps demystify the kitchen for youngsters who may not have spent much creative time there. Simple instructions and fun suggestions in the recipes make ordinary desserts taste and look like designer treats.

In *Hemp Jewelry*, Judy Ann Sadler answers the inner call some of us have to be creative even if we don't have very coordinated fingers. Her step by step directions for bracelets, anklets, necklaces, earrings, and even rings are very

clear and easy to follow when combined with the detailed line drawings by June Bradford. The photographs of finished products are a great aid in verifying progress as one weaves the jewelry.

In both books, the excellent drawings by June Bradford make the processes almost foolproof. A nice side benefit of the books coming from a Canadian publisher is that all measurements are given in metric and American standard. The reader gets a painless dose of math instruction! The publisher recommends the books for 8 and up, but the youngest readers will need adult supervision to execute the projects in both books. Even so, both books are worth having on your shelves and promoting to tween readers.

Kelley Westenhoff. Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia.

**Froggy went a-courtin' / by Gillian Tyler. LCCN 2004045170. Cambridge, Mass. : Candlewick Press, 2005.**

HBB, 0763623067, list cost: \$15.99.

782.42162/21/00268. Folk songs, English--Texts; Folk songs. 1 v. (unpaged) : ill. ; 18 x 28 cm.

Grades PS-2. Rating : 5.

There are some ballads that audiences never grow tired of hearing, and *Froggy Went A-Courtin'*, a story over four-hundred-years old, continues to be loved and sung. Artist Gillian Tyler's new edition exquisitely recreates the romantic story of a handsome frog and Miss Mousie through their courtship, Froggy's tender proposal, and Uncle Rat's questioning and consent. When the wedding day arrives, the reader watches as the array of guests appear: a little white moth, a Juney bug, a turtledove, a cake-eating garter snake, and a banjo-playing bumblebee. A nimble flea and the fancy ants dance in celebration until the merrymaking comes to an end when an "old tomcat came tumbling in." In spite of that, the frog and the mouse go on their honeymoon to France.

Readers are encouraged to add their own verses to this enchanting tale and there's no doubt that many will as the melody of the couplets and the "um hum, um hum" refrain sticks in their minds and hearts.

Tyler's watercolor and ink fairy-like illustrations are a fitting tribute to this ballad. Other picture books Tyler has illustrated are *Snail House* (Candlewick, 2001) and *Treasure Hunt* (Candlewick, 2002), both well received by young readers.

Florence G. Craig. Freelance Writer, Telford, Pennsylvania.

**Once upon a poem : favorite poems that tell stories / foreword by Kevin Crossley-Holland ; illustrated by Peter Bailey [and others]. New York : The Chicken House, 2004.**

HBB, 0439651085, list cost: \$18.95.

811. Children's poetry. 124 p. : ill. ; 29 cm.

Grades 4-7. Rating : 5.

*Once Upon a Poem* is an anthology of fifteen enchanting and exciting story poems that range from Roald Dahl's subversively witty retelling of "Goldilocks" to familiar favorites like "The Owl and the Pussycat" by Edward Lear. With a foreword by award winning author Kevin Crossley-Holland and Roger McGough's introductory "A Good Poem," these serve as an inscription for the collection with a wide appeal that is to follow. Standards like "Jabberwocky" by Lewis Carroll and Longfellow's "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere" provide excellent selections for read-alouds.

Watercolor, acrylic, and pen and ink illustrations from several talented artists are exquisitely matched to each diverse poem. Sometimes obscure but quality poems teamed with bold illustrations create a new king of classic from the United Kingdom. About the "Artists and Authors" section at the back of the book provides biographies of all contributors. Highly recommended for elementary school readers.

Rebecca Cress-Ingebo, MSN, MLS. Academic Librarian, Beavercreek, Ohio.

**Squeal and squawk : barnyard talk / by Susan Pearson ; illustrated by David Slonim. LCCN 2003009111. New York : Marshall Cavendish, 2004.**

HBB, 0761451609, list cost: \$16.95.

811'.54. Animals--Poetry; Domestic animals--Juvenile poetry; Children's poetry, American. 31 p. : col. ill. ; 29 cm.

Grades PS-3. Rating : 4.

David Slonim's cartoon characters steal the show in this book of funny poems. The ink and acrylic drawings are full of movement and color. You might find yourself skipping the poems and just looking at the pictures! Imagine a rooster who has cheerfully crowed at all opportunities through the night. His glazed stare as he's caught in the light of the opening barn door give weight to the lines, "The farmer came at six o'clock/ and put an end to that old cock." Slonim's happy crowd of barnyard animals includes lovesick roosters, flying pigs, placid cows, and one small person. Each full-page spread captures in hilarious detail the imaginary events in Susan Pearson's poems.

The poems themselves are irreverent ditties that parody barnyard life, as in the last lines of "Cow Daze": "chewing cud/ swatting flies/ watching bees/ dropping pies." Or, there's the guard-goose, Mad Magog, from whom even the cows flee in terror. A tad more pensive is "Winter Miracle," in which the narrator sees sheep who fly at night, and whose shorn fleece falls to the ground as snow.

*Squeal and Squawk* is an entertaining book of poems, with some clever turns of phrase and rhythmic verses. But it's the illustrations that

will draw one back to read and reread. Children through early elementary years will enjoy the romping cows, pigs, horses, and especially, the chickens, "Redcap, Rosecomb, Sultan, Dorking, Frizzle, Plymouth Rock, Ancona..."

Diane Sekeres, Tuscaloosa, Alabama

**O, say can you see? : America's symbols, landmarks, and inspiring words / by Sheila Keenan ; illustrated by Ann Boyajian. LCCN 2003067332. New York : Scholastic, 2004.**

HBB, 043942450X, list cost: \$16.95.

973. National monuments; Historic sites ; Emblems, National; Signs and symbols; United States--History. 64 p. : ill. ; 29 cm.

Grades 2-5. Rating : 4.

Sheila Keenan's *O, Say Can You See?* is a colorful compendium of national symbols of our country. Sites—Pilgrim Rock, the Supreme Court Building, Statue of Liberty, and others—are profiled, along with emblems such as Uncle Sam and the Great Seal of the U.S., and documents including the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. National holidays (from Martin Luther King Jr. Day through Thanksgiving) are listed by month, giving the year first celebrated and brief descriptions. A two-page glossary covers terms from the book such as "symbol," "monument," and "immigrant."

Besides providing interesting, well written information about American symbols unique to our country, *O, Say Can You See?* encourages children to appreciate our history, and the efforts of the nation's pioneers and leaders. Each description provides historical background and each symbol's significance. Ann Boyajian's playful pencil drawings offer detail and design. Fun facts and trivia (a picture bought for \$4 at a flea market in 1989 contained a hidden copy of the Declaration of Independence which sold for \$2.42 million) add information older kids will relish. Younger children will learn important history and cultural distinctives of our land. As a library resource or history class supplement, this is a fun and educational book for all elementary age children. Regarding the Pledge of Allegiance, Keenan takes a neutral approach ("Some people think the words "under God" go against the Constitution...to others [it's] patriotic and part of our history").

Karen Schmidt, BA. Freelance Writer/Editor, Marysville, Washington.

**Praying with the presidents : our nation's legacy of prayer / Ron DiCianni. LCCN 2004101620. Lake Mary, Fla. : CharismaKids, 2004.**

HBB, 1591854083, list cost: \$15.99.

973.931. Prayer; Presidents. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 24 x 39 cm.

Grades 4-6. Rating : 5.

(See combined review under 973/.09/9. *Faith of the Presidents*, adult nonfiction section.)

**Johann Gutenberg and the amazing printing press / Bruce Koscielniak. LCCN 2002151176. Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 2003.**

HBB, 0618263519, list cost: \$16.00.

B or 921 or 686.2/09. Gutenberg, Johann, 1397?-1468; Printing--History; Books--History. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 24 x 29 cm.

Grades K-5. Rating : 5.

Bruce Koscielniak wrote and illustrated *Johann Gutenberg and the Amazing Printing Press*. Read this selection to learn about early writing and printing inventions in China and Korea, then consider Johann Gutenberg. In 1435, the German man began "to work secretly on his new tools for printing letters of the alphabet." Copy work was usually "performed in monasteries, where scribes lived and worked long days, tediously copying pages of text." Common people wanted to own and read books. Many people compare the advent of the Internet to the invention of the printing press. Certainly, both inventions drastically changed the world.

Each page includes interesting watercolor illustrations. These range from large drawings to a simple frame around the text. Other pages note the steps in printing. Some artwork shows feelings. Gutenberg lost his print shop because he could not pay a loan. Children will see a sad Gutenberg, as other men dismantle the print shop.

Boys and girls interested in crafts may try writing in calligraphy. The book shows Gothic-style letters and instructs, "A willow or other stick cut with a flat tip can be used with ink to produce Gothic-style writing. Try it!"

I recommend *Johann Gutenberg and the Amazing Press* for homeschoolers and for children's libraries. This enjoyable book is well designed and has a high interest level.

Roberta Lou Jones, MDiv. Volunteer, Church Children's Library, Dexter, Kentucky.

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**When Marian sang : the true recital of Marian Anderson : the voice of a century / libretto [i.e. text] by Pam Munoz Ryan ; staging [i.e. illustrations] by Brian Selznick. LCCN 2001049508. New York : Scholastic, 2002.**

HBB, 0439269679, list cost: \$16.95.

B or 921 or 782.1/092. Anderson, Marian, 1897-1993; Singers; African Americans--Biography; Women--Biography. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 26 x 32 cm.

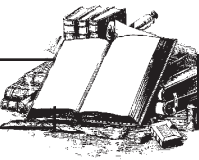
Grades 3-7. Rating : .5

A Robert F. Sibert Honor Book, *When Marion Sang* presents a brief, important biography of Marion Anderson in apropos words and engaging pictures. Even as a child, Marion had a distinct, strong, velvety voice beloved by all

who heard her. She grew up knowing she must sing. Even when racial prejudice sought to bury this Negro genius, Marion sang. This biography ends with Marion's greatest triumph, singing with the Metropolitan Opera. Pertinent closing information includes further information about Anderson, a photo of Anderson and her close friend Eleanor Roosevelt, and a list of suggested recordings for sampling Anderson's repertoire.

Pam Ryan's obvious admiration of Marion Anderson, her lilting choice of words, inclusion of Bible-based spirituals, and thorough research make *When Marion Sang* a thrilling read. Caldecott Honor Medalist Bryan Selszick's full page, well researched, sepia toned, acrylic paintings breathe rhythmic life into the narrative. There are several engaging portraits of Marion Anderson. Listed for older elementary readers, *When Marion Sang* will appeal to all ages. Art classes, Christian schools, libraries, and churches will find this book valuable, as will everybody else. The detailed illustrations will be magnetic to small listeners fingers.

Donna J. Eggett. Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia.



**A bride for Anna's papa / Isabel R. Marvin ; illustrations by Kay Sather. LCCN 93041175. Minneapolis : Milkweed Editions, 1994.**

PAP, 091594393X, list cost: \$6.95.

Fic. Finnish Americans--Fiction; Minnesota--Fiction. 136 p. : ill. ; 20 cm.

Grades 4-10. Rating : 5.

*A Bride for Anna's Papa*, by Isabel R. Marvin, takes place one hundred years ago among the ethnic diversity of the Minnesota iron-mining range. Thirteen-year-old Anna and her little brother love their deceased mother; still they want a new mother. Anna desperately hopes to return to school, rather than face housework each day.

First, Anna and Matti consider a mail-order bride for their father. Then, Papa and the schoolteacher ice skate together. Anna notices, "...the two skaters were well matched....Each took turns skating backwards...." After the schoolteacher and Papa marry, Anna realizes, "She would always mourn her mother, but Mae was...someone she had come to accept and even to love."

Nineteen chapters include scattered black and white drawings, by Kay Sather. I especially enjoyed the pukki, a straw goat that watched children. Because the pukki saw everything, only good boys and good girls received Christmas presents. Naughty children found rutabagas on Christmas morn.

The plot of this evenly-paced story unfolds with steady action and suspense. Preteens and teens will identify with the fears, the hopes, and the dreams of each character. *A Bride for Anna's Papa* teaches history and geography as well as helping children acknowledge feelings. Anna was tired of worrying about what to cook for supper and when to milk the cow. Yet, Anna faithfully served her family. Her role model can help boys and girls today.

Roberta Lou Jones, MDiv. Volunteer, Church Children's Library, Dexter, Kentucky.

**Atticus of Rome, 30 B.C. / by Barry Denenberg. (Life and times) LCCN 2003026091. New York : Scholastic, 2004.**

HBB, 0439524539, list cost: \$10.95.

Fic. Slavery--Fiction; Spies--Fiction; Rome--History--Nero, 54-68--Fiction. 166 p. ; 20 cm.

Grades 5-8. Rating : 4, with caution.

In *The Life and Times* series, historical fiction takes the form of an individual youth experiencing the culture and situations of a specific time period. In *Atticus of Rome*, Barry

Denenberg constructs a picture of Rome in 30 B.C. through the eyes and thoughts of a 12-year-old slave. Atticus, in service to a wealthy former politician, is asked by his master to spy on other leaders. Meanwhile, he experiences the glittering and gritty facets of Roman life, including gruesome gladiator matches and a friendship with an astrologer.

Detail upon detail of ancient Roman life and times is interwoven into this quick moving, easy to read tale. Students will enjoy the plot, be empathetic to Atticus, and gain insight into Roman values, science, education, food, living habits, and government. Denenberg includes aspects of the Romans' ungodly society. Violent gladiator bouts, including one in detail, are described. An astrologer plays a prominent role and encourages Atticus to construct a horoscope. Lucius Opimius, Atticus' master and a judicious man, is maliciously poisoned. The *Life and Times* Series helpfully begins each book with a cast of characters describing the main characters and a historical note putting the book in context. Students—with a strong stomach and well-grounded faith—will appreciate the inside look at Roman life.

Karen Schmidt, BA. Freelance Writer/Editor, Marysville, Washington.

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**Call me Maria / Judith Ortiz Cofer. LCCN 2004002674. New York : Orchard Books, 2004.**

HBB, 0439385776, list cost: \$16.95.

Fic. Puerto Ricans--New York (State)--New York--Fiction; Identity--Fiction; New York (N.Y.)--Fiction. 127 p. ; 21 cm.

Grades 7 and up. Rating : \*5.

Maria spends her childhood years on the sunny, sandy island of Puerto Rico. When her father becomes homesick for his native New York barrio, Maria decides to go back with him, leaving her mother on the island. Although she knows she will miss her mother terribly, her father needs her to care for him and she hopes to one day get a college education. Through poetry and prose, Maria depicts her life as a blossoming young woman in the barrio. She describes her friends, school, and challenges with the language. Maria states she is trilingual, speaking Spanish, English, and Spangles, the language of the barrio that is a mix of both Spanish and English.

*Call Me Maria* by Judith Ortiz Cofer is a poignant story revealing a young girl's heart that is as warm as the sands of her native Puerto Rico

and as musical as her beloved salsa. Writing is in English, with a generous sprinkling of Spanish words that add an authentic flavor. The poetry is fresh and tight. The letters and journal-style entries are open and honest, allowing the reader to see through Maria's eyes. Characters are exquisitely sketched. Movement of story is smooth and inviting. Setting holds visual appeal. Ortiz, Pura Belpre Award-winner for her book, *An Island Like You : Stories of the Barrio* (Orchard, 1995), has created a classic character in Maria. Highly recommended for all Latin American studies, home schooling, school and public libraries.

Kim Harris. Children's Librarian, Lyell Branch of the Rochester Public Library, Rochester, New York.

**Flip Flop / Wendy Lawton. (Real TV--real transformations series ; take 2) LCCN 2004008083. Chicago : Moody Press, 2004.**

PAP, 0802454143, list cost: \$10.99.

Fic. Alcoholism--Fiction; Television programs--Fiction; Interior decoration--Fiction; Family life--California--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; California--Fiction. 200 p. ; 21 cm.

Grades 8-10. Rating : 5.

Briana Harris and Channing "Chickie" Wells are the best of friends. They share everything together, at least that's what Chickie would say. It's true, Briana spends most evenings at the Wells home and hangs out with Chickie at school. It's true, they even share a favorite TV show, Flip Flop, a reality based show about teens and designers who switch and remake each others' bedrooms. Unfortunately, Briana will never feel free to open up to Chickie or her family about her father's alcoholism and her mother's driving need to present the perfect family. When the girls win a spot on Flip Flop, Briana fears that even her trust in God cannot keep their friendship together.

*Flip Flop* by Wendy Lawton, is the second installment in her Real TV series. She injects that "real" quality into the characters who literally seem to come to life. Lawton, author of the *Daughters of the Faith* series (Moody Publishers, 2002+), an historical fiction series based on her award-winning dolls, successfully combines Christian principles with popular teen culture. Writing style is clear, concise and easy to follow. Mood and place are appropriate to the drama of teen life. Dialogue is realistic and moves the story along smoothly. Highly recommended for all Christian young adult fiction collections.

Kim Harris. *Children's Librarian, Lyell Branch of the Rochester Public Library, Rochester, New York.*

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**The flame tree / by Richard Lewis. LCCN 2003009672. New York : Simon & Schuster, 2004.**

HBB, 0689863330, list cost: \$16.95.  
 Fic. Islamic fundamentalism--Fiction; Americans--Java--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; September 11 Terrorist Attacks, 2001--Fiction; Java (Indonesia)--Fiction. 276 p. ; 22 cm.  
 Grades 8-12. Rating : \*5.

Isaac, the adolescent son of Christian missionary parents, lives with his family in a compound in Indonesia. The school and hospital are respected in the community, but are the unwelcome focus of Islamic extremists who want the Christians out of their city. Isaac is caught up in the struggle because his best friend, Ismail, takes up with the extremist group and abandons Isaac for his new friends. The mysterious Imam who leads the group holds a fascination for Isaac, and the Imam is eventually the key to the resolution of Isaac's personal struggle to define his relationship with God for himself.

However, the crucible that shapes Isaac's new understandings is one of violence. When the extremists come to destroy the compound, he is kidnapped. He is forcibly circumcised, witnesses violent death, and is in fear for his own life. Isaac realizes that the fear he holds for these men can only be released through his forgiving them, and that it is God who enables him to do so. The subtexts of Islamic-Christian relations and the question of who God really is are clearly woven into the fast-paced and compelling story. Not an easy story, but one that illustrates how our choosing to follow God impacts our life choices and our society.

Diane Sekeres, *Tuscaloosa, Alabama*

**Freshman frenzy / Beverly Lewis. Rev., updated ed. (Holly's heart ; 11) LCCN 2003001426. Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2003.**

PAP, 0764226185, list cost: \$5.99.  
 Fic. High schools--Fiction; Schools--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction. 155 p. ; 18 cm.  
 Grades 6-8. Rating : 4.

Holly is starting the ninth grade as a first-year high school student, rather than as a last year junior high school student. As if being the bottom of the food chain, rather than the expected top dog, isn't bad enough, the senior class decides to make high school initiation for freshmen especially tough this year. Andy, Holly's life-long best friend, runs for freshman class president. Although she asks Holly to be her campaign manager, Andy is having meetings with other students and making campaign decisions that don't include Holly. Added to

these pressures, Holly resolves to change her hairstyle and ends up with an overly puffy perm that seems to have a life of its own. Just when things seem like they can't get any worse, Holly befriends a blind student at school and begins to see life through new eyes.

*Freshman Frenzy* by Beverly Lewis is the eleventh installment in the Holly Heart series about a young girl and her experiences at home and school. Lewis utilizes Holly's adjustments to a divorce between her parents, new friends and family relationships, and school experiences to teach, encourage, and inspire young readers. Lewis, who has written numerous Christian books for children, draws upon her own experiences with loneliness and relationship adjustments throughout her teen years. Characters are lightly, yet expertly sketched. Dialogue smoothly moves story along. Lewis is careful not to talk down to her audience. Quick and easy read. Recommended for teen Christian series collections.

Kim Harris. *Children's Librarian, Lyell Branch of the Rochester Public Library, Rochester, New York.*

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**Homecoming / by Cynthia Voigt. (The Tillerman cycle ; 1) LCCN 80036723. New York : Atheneum, 1981.**

HBB, 0689308337, list cost: \$18.00.  
 Fic. Survival--Fiction; Family life--Fiction. 312 p. ; 24 cm.

**Dacey's song / by Cynthia Voigt. (The Tillerman cycle ; 2) LCCN 82003882. New York : Atheneum, 1982.**

HBB, 0689309449, list cost: \$17.95.  
 Fic. Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Family life--Fiction; Grandmothers--Fiction; Maryland--Fiction; Newbery Medal. 196 p. : ill. ; 25 cm.

**A solitary blue / by Cynthia Voigt. (The Tillerman cycle ; 3) LCCN 83006007. New York : Atheneum, 1983.**

HBB, 0689310080, list cost: \$18.00.  
 Fic. Divorce--Fiction; Fathers and sons--Fiction; Mothers and sons--Fiction; Newbery Honor. 189 p. ; 25 cm.

**The runner / by Cynthia Voigt. (The Tillerman cycle ; 4) LCCN 84021663. New York : Atheneum, 1985.**

HBB, 0689310692, list cost: \$15.95.  
 Fic. Runners (Sports)--Fiction; Interpersonal relations--Fiction. 181 p. ; 24 cm.

**Come a stranger / by Cynthia Voigt. (The Tillerman cycle ; 5) LCCN 86003610. New York : Atheneum, 1986.**

HBB, 068931289X, list cost: \$15.95.  
 Fic. Clergy--Fiction; African Americans--Fiction. 190 p. ; 25 cm.

**Sons from afar / by Cynthia Voigt. (The Tillerman cycle ; 6) LCCN 87001857. New York : Atheneum, 1987.**

HBB, 0689313497, list cost: \$15.95.  
 Fic. Fathers--Fiction; Brothers--Fiction. 214 p. ; 25 cm.

**Seventeen against the dealer / by Cynthia Voigt. (The Tillerman cycle ; 7) LCCN 88027488. New York : Atheneum, 1989.**

HBB, 0689314973, list cost: \$18.  
 Fic. Family problems--Fiction. 181 p. ; 25 cm.  
 Grades 7-10. Rating : \*5.

This series of books about the Tillerman family earned Cynthia Voigt the Newbery Medal (for *Dacey's Song*) and Newbery Honor (for *A Solitary Blue*) and proved once more that important contemporary literature can be written for children as well as for adults. Each book demonstrates Voigt's ability to keep readers' attention until the last page, while she tackles such serious topics such as family relationships, illegitimacy (with the use of the term "bastard" in several places), premarital relations, fear, racism, faith in God, and death. All done tastefully and without being heavy handed.

*Homecoming* introduces the family as twelve-year-old Dacey manages to get herself and her three younger siblings to their maternal grandmother's house in Maryland after their mentally-troubled mother abandons them in a Connecticut mall on the way there and ends up in an asylum.

In *Dacey's Song*, the Tillerman children learn how to live with their eccentric grandmother and function again as a family, while Dacey discovers how hard it is to relinquish responsibility for her siblings, get along with her peers, and deal with the grief of losing her mother.

*A Solitary Blue* takes readers outside the Tillerman family to become acquainted with Jeff Greene, a young high school student who meets and falls in love with Dacey. As his life story unfolds, Voigt demonstrates how two people (Dacey and Jeff, as well as Jeff's mom and dad) can look at the same events through very different eyes and with very different motives and conclusions. Along the way, Dacey and Jeff both learn a lot about themselves and each other.

*The Runner* introduces readers to an earlier generation of the Tillerman family as she tells the story of Samuel Tillerman (Dacey's uncle Bullet), whose emotionally abusive father is destroying their family. All Bullet has is cross country, but his refusal to be a team player eventually pits him against everyone in his life until a crabber named Patrice and a fellow runner named Tamer Shipp force him to recognize his own racism. The words "nigger" and "whitey" are used often and there is a lot of conversation about the Vietnam War, which could be used to spark some current events conversations.

Tamer returns as a grown-up minister with a wife and kids in *Come a Stranger*. Mina Smiths, a young black ballet dancer, struggles with racism, her attempt to become friends with Dacey, and her unrequited love for Tamer. The situation between them is handled very well,

with no sinful behavior and a satisfactory ending. The term "French kissing" is used in a couple of places in passing and one of Mina's classmates gets pregnant out of wedlock, although none of this is explicit.

In *Sons from Afar*, Sammy and James Tilleran decide to hunt for the father who abandoned them before Sammy was born. Along the way, they discover some important things about their father and even more important things about themselves. This book includes their visit to a bar while looking for their dad, and a violent fight.

Finally, Dicey learns her limitations in *Seventeen Against the Dealer*, when her boat-building business threatens her view of herself and nearly causes her to lose everything she loves. This book includes passing references to living together and bad language, as well as the touting of some questionable ethics.

Overall, despite the fact that Voigt does not write from an overtly Christian point of view, this lyrically-written series will make readers think and offers many good places to start conversations about character-building and Christian beliefs.

Betty Winslow, Librarian, Bowling Green Christian Academy, Bowling Green, Ohio.

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**Johnny Tremain / Esther Forbes ; illustrated by Michael McCurdy. LCCN 98228478. Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 1998.**

HBB, 0395900115, list cost: \$21.00.

Fic. United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Fiction; Boston (Mass)--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Fiction. 293 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.

Grades 7-10. Rating : \*5.

It is 1773 in Boston, and Johnny Tremain is a talented, but cocky, silversmith apprentice—until an "accident" burns his right hand, leaving it useless for that work. As Johnny adjusts to his disability, he finds work as a courier for the Sons of Liberty while tensions with the British are mounting in New England. Esther Forbes (author of the Pulitzer Prize winner *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In* (Houghton Mifflin, 1942)) weaves in many historical details as Johnny becomes involved with major and minor players and events leading up to the Battle of Lexington and Concord which touches off the American Revolutionary War. The picture Forbes creates of Revolutionary Boston reveals ambiguities in the pre-war environment. She portrays both strengths and weaknesses in her characters, including some British and Tories as well as Whigs. Johnny develops into a memorable, well-rounded character who matures with authenticity into a courageous and considerate young patriot.

The original edition of Johnny Tremain has full-page black-and-white illustrations by Lynd Ward facing the start of each chapter, as well as stamp-size drawings below chapter titles. (Ward is also the illustrator of the Caldecott Medal winner, *The Biggest Bear* (Houghton Mifflin, 1952).) Although the first edition of *Johnny Tremain* remains in print, the publisher has issued a newer 1998 edition with black-and-white woodcut illustrations by Michael McCurdy. Each chapter has its full-page illustration placed adjacent to the corresponding text. Although the McCurdy illustrations often show more facial expression, they are darker and seem more ponderous. The Yearling paperback edition has the original Ward illustrations. The newer edition with McCurdy illustrations is now recommended in standard book selection tools. While I personally prefer the original illustrations, either edition is highly recommended for Christian school and home libraries. Newbery Medal, 1944.

Donna W. Bowling, PhD, Library/Educational Consultant; Cataloger, Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics, Dallas, Texas.

**Kazunomiya : prisoner of heaven / by Kathryn Lasky. (The royal diaries) LCCN 2003025474. New York : Scholastic, 2004.**

HBB, 0439164850, list cost: \$10.95.

Fic. Seikan'in no Miya, 1846-1877 --Fiction; Kazunomiya, Princess of Japan, 1846-1877 --Fiction; Princesses--Fiction; Diaries--Fiction; Japan--History--Tokugawa period, 1600-1868--Fiction; Japan--History--Tokugawa period, 1600-1868--Fiction. 156 p. : ill. ; 20 cm.

Grades 5-7. Rating : 4.

Princess Kazunomiya is a twelve-year-old Japanese girl living in Kyoto, Japan, in 1858. Kazunomiya says her given name is much too long of a name for such a short girl, so everyone calls her by her nickname, Chikako. She has been engaged since the age of four to Prince Arisugawa, a young noble she has fallen in love with. But times are changing for Japan with the arrival of the Americans, and a treaty between America and Japan is signed. In order to keep peace between the royals and the political leaders of Japan, Kazunomiya is forced to break her engagement to Prince Arisugawa and marry the young shogun, Tokugawa Yoshitomi, or Yoshi as she calls him. Kazunomiya doesn't like the shogun, but has no choice in the matter, and preparations are made for their marriage. Both sixteen years old, Kazunomiya travels from Kyoto to Edo in 1861 to wed Yoshi.

In the mid-1800s, Japan's nobility was attempting to keep the borders secured, while members of the shogun were signing treaties with the Americans. After the shogunate was overthrown, the government quickly realized that trade was necessary for Japan's survival. Kazunomiya lived during this time and this diary is her story of the struggle between the powers and the attempt to join them together by her marriage to Yoshi.

Kathryn Lasky has written several books for children, and she does extensive research to make her books as historically accurate as possible. Girls ages nine to fourteen will enjoy reading *Kazunomiya : Prisoner of Heaven* and learn about a culture much different from the one they live in. A Japanese glossary is found at the end of the book, along with pictures and a historical note that tells more about Kazunomiya's life. Young history fans may wish to check out the many other stories in this series also.

Sherri Myers, Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.

**Lady of Palenque : flower of Bacal / by Anna Kirwan. (The royal diaries) LCCN 2003067330. New York : Scholastic, 2004.**

HBB, 0439409713, list cost: \$10.95.

Fic. Mayas--Fiction; Princesses--Fiction; Diaries--Fiction; Central America--History--8th century--Fiction. 204 p. : ill. ; 19 cm.

Grades 6-7. Rating : 2.

*Lady of Palenque : Flower of Bacal* is set in the time period of 749 A.D. in Mesoamerica, in the city of Lakamha, modern-day Palenque. ShahnaK'in Yaxchel Pacal, "Princess Green Jay on the Wall," is thirteen years old and engaged to be married to K'ak Yipyaj Chan K'awil, "King Fire Keeper," much older than she, from a neighboring village. He lives in Xukpi, modern-day Copan, and the Lady must travel with her entourage on a long journey through dangerous conditions to get there. Most of this novel details the various conditions and problems they face as they journey to Xukpi. *Lady of Palenque* is one of the many books in the series *The Royal Diaries*, which is a wonderful series covering vast time periods and areas.

I found this novel to be somewhat difficult reading with the transliteration of difficult to pronounce names and no pronunciation guide. The characters are not fleshed out enough to keep the reader involved. Kirwan's plot is somewhat slow in places, with the rare action scene thrown in to keep the story moving along. The style of writing is hard to follow, especially for the targeted readers' age group.

However, this novel does have some redeeming qualities, namely the unique cultural customs of the Mayans that the reader can learn about, like the piercing practices and the strange custom of the shrunken heads. Much of this novel is pure fiction, because of the lack of accurate information from this time period. A glossary and historical note section is included at the end of the book.

Sherri Myers, Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.

**Island girl / by Sandra Byrd. (Friends for a season ; 1) LCCN 2004020635. Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2005.**

PAP, 0764200208, list cost: \$9.99.

Fic. Grandparents--Fiction; Islands--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction. 234 p. ; 22 cm.

Grades 5-8. Rating : 5.

Thirteen-year-old Meg always looks forward to spending each summer on her grandparents' farm on Sauvie Island, Oregon. Meg's parents are divorced, and her mom is remarried and about to have a new baby. At the end of the summer, Meg must decide where she will live, in Oregon with her father and grandparents, or in Seattle, Washington, with her mom and stepdad. When Meg arrives at the berry farm, she finds an overseer has been hired to run the farm, while her father decides whether or not to retire from the Army and take over the farm. The Mexican family has a daughter named Tia who is the same age as Meg, and they become friends. Meg struggles with the choice of where to live and is torn between the people she loves the most in her life. What will she decide to do?

*Island Girl* is the first book in a new series of novels for teenage girls by Sandra Byrd. Friends for a Season is a series that deals with life issues that young teens of today will face, such as divorce, cancer, budding romantic feelings, and competition between their peers. *Island Girl* is a story of family, faith, and friendship, and how each one plays a part in a young girl's life. Meg does her best to figure out her place in her family and in the Kingdom of God, and tries to be the best person she can be. The fruit references paralleling the storyline and the message Meg grasps from the Bible are quite noticeable and well-done. I highly recommend this gentle, wholesome novel to young teen girls and their parents. More information on this series can be found at <http://www.friendsforaseason.com>.

Sherrri Myers. Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.

**Lizabeth's story : a Cape Light novel / by Erika Tamar. (The girls of Lighthouse Lane ; 3) LCCN 2004005048. New York : HarperCollins, 2004.**

HBB, 0060543477, list cost: \$17.99.

Fic. Sisters--Fiction; Scarlatina--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction; Family life--New England--Fiction; New England--History--20th century--Fiction. 167 p. : map ; 22 cm.

Grades 5-7-8. Rating : 4.

**Amanda's story / by Erika Tamar. (The girls of Lighthouse Lane ; 4) LCCN 2004012292. New York : HarperCollins, 2005.**

HBB, 0060543507, list cost: \$17.99.

Fic. Fathers and daughters--Fiction; Courtship--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction; Family life--New England--Fiction; New England--History--20th century--Fiction. 196 p. : map ; 22 cm.

Grades 5-8. Rating : 4.

In Lizabeth's Story, the daughter of the town banker, thirteen-year-old Lizabeth, is used to servants doing everything for her and her family. She is excited about the annual Strawberry Festival and possibly being named the

Strawberry Queen. When her little sister, four-year-old Tracy, keeps pestering her, Lizabeth wishes she would go away. Scarlet fever comes to Cape Light, and soon Tracy is stricken with the deadly disease. Lizabeth is sent to her friend Kat's house when a quarantine is imposed. Will Lizabeth be able to stay away from her little sister's bedside?

*Amanda's Story* is the story of Amanda Morgan, whose father is Cape Light's minister. Her mother passed away in childbirth and Amanda is left trying to raise her younger sister with little help from her workaholic father. When she meets handsome Jed Langford at a dance, Amanda is smitten with him and wants to begin seeing him regularly. Her father forbids this so Amanda decides to correspond with him by hiding notes in a cave near the lighthouse. Will Amanda's father find out her deception?

The books in the Girls of Lighthouse Lane series are sweet historical romances for young girls nearing the teen years. Well-written and true to the time period of the early 1900s, the stories are interesting and will hold the reader's attention. All of the books tie together well, with morals such as appreciating your family and honesty. I feel this series will have pre-teens asking for the whole series, which might teach them a valuable lesson or two, in addition to providing a good reading experience.

Sherrri Myers. Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.

**More than friends / by N.J. Lindquist. (Circle of friends ; 4) Markham, Ont. : That's Life! Communications, 2004.**

PAP, 0968549551, list cost: \$9.95.

Fic. High schools--Fiction; Schools--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction. 223 p. : 21 cm.

Grades 9-12. Rating : 5.

*More Than Friends*, the fourth and last book in N.J. Lindquist's Circle of Friends series, is a well-written and fitting conclusion to the series. It ties up loose ends, completes the emotional and spiritual growth of several characters, and provides happy and surprising endings for protagonist Glen Sauten and some of his friends.

The series follows high school senior Glen through a turbulent time in his life. Glen's a quiet young man, so quiet he's considered weak by his friends—and himself. But his newly found faith changes him enough to help him grow as a person and deal with a rich, arrogant bully, a nearly-as-arrogant best friend, and his first serious relationship with a girl.

In Book #3 Phil, the arrogant best friend, is paralyzed. *More Than Friends* deals with the fallout of this, the deteriorating emotional state of the rich bully Charlie, and Glen's further romantic entanglements, including a few love triangles between friends. It's a beautifully written book filled with real, vulnerable characters. Glen, despite his quiet nature, is

never wimpy and makes a fine, heroic role model for the book's readers. Phil and Charlie are also wonderfully drawn characters and the behaviors that result from their pain are understandable, if not always forgivable. Even flaky Marta, who latches onto Glen's friendship, much to Glen's disgust, is terrific and likeable.

Readers familiar with the series will enjoy this volume and the closure it brings, but even teens reading *More Than Friends* as a stand-alone book will be drawn into its plot and characters. Ms. Lindquist is able to craft stunningly vivid guy-characters, a plus in attracting young male readers, yet she never neglects her female characters. Highly recommended for all teens.

Rosemarie DiCristo. Children's Author, Bronx, New York.

**Napoleon & Josephine : the sword & the hummingbird / by Gerald & Loretta Hausman. LCCN 2003020257. New York : Orchard Books, 2004.**

HBB, 0439568900, list cost: \$16.95.

Fic. Josephine, Empress, consort of Napoleon I, Emperor of the French, 1763-1814 --Fiction; Napoleon I, Emperor of the French, 1769-1821 --Fiction; Kings, queens, rulers, etc.--Fiction; France--History--Consulate and empire, 1799-1815--Fiction. 281 p. ; 22 cm.

Grades 8-12. Rating : 4.

On the island of Martinique, an old sorceress tells young Rose, "You will be more than a queen." That seems doubtful to Rose after her stormy first marriage begins and ends in France, just before the horrors of the French Revolution. By the time the French Revolution ends, Rose has almost forgotten her hopes of greatness. But then she meets a man who shares her aspirations: a stubby general named Napoleon Bonaparte.

Faded historical figures take on something of their true (and very human) natures in this biographical novel. Rose, who was later called Josephine, is the reader's eyes and ears into the monumental events she witnessed. The style and pace complement each other. Old-style flowery dialogue, balanced by vivid details, keeps the reader aware of the historical nature of the book without jarring the reader out of the story. The authors seem to have done a tremendous amount of research and stick as closely to the facts as possible. Although the portrait of Josephine is sympathetic, the book does not attempt to gloss over the insane ambition of Napoleon. Neither does it delve very deeply into the character of a woman who would marry Napoleon. The book was written as a biography but is as engaging as many novels, making a very satisfying mix for students studying the period or someone simply looking for a good read.

Kathryn Stillman. Christian Writers' Guild Apprentice, Horn Lake, Mississippi.

**Pandora of Athens, 399 B.C. / by Barry Denenberg. (Life and times) LCCN 2004002500. New York : Scholastic, 2004.**

HBB, 043964982X, list cost: \$10.95.

Fic. Socrates--Fiction; Conduct of life--Fiction; Sex role--Fiction; Philosophers--Fiction; Athens (Greece)--Fiction; Greece--History--Spartan and Theban Supremacies, 404-362 B.C.--Fiction. 125 p. ; 20 cm.

Grades 5-8. Rating : 4, with caution.

A young teenage girl tries to escape her role as a future wife and mother after she hears Socrates expound on philosophy in the public square in *Pandora of Athens*. Barry Denenberg colorfully brings out many facets of daily life and Greek culture—foods, home life, roles of men and women, aesthetic and philosophic values—through the eyes and curiosity of Pandora.

Denenberg provides an appealing inside look at a young women's life in ancient Greece as well as provocative glimpses of Socrates. His portrayal of Pandora, a sheltered young woman close to matrimonial age, includes deception and implied disrespect of her parents, musings of fertility and pregnancy when a friend's mother gives birth, and Pandora's first wine-drinking experience after which she is brought home, inebriated, by a young man, though she can't recall the details. Story details such as these call for caution in buying or recommending this title to preteen and young teen girls.

Karen Schmidt, BA. *Freelance Writer/Editor, Marysville, Washington.*

**Public enemy number two / Anthony Horowitz. (A Diamond brothers mystery ; 1) LCCN 2004010418. New York : Philomel Books, 2004.**

HBB, 039924154X, list cost: \$16.99.

Fic. Brothers--Fiction; Humorous stories; Mystery and detective stories; London (England)--Fiction; England--Fiction. 190 p. ; 21 cm.

Grades 5-8. Rating : 5.

Thirteen-year-old Nick Diamond is having a rough year. His parents have moved to Australia, leaving him to live with his older brother, a private investigator who is barely making ends meet and isn't awfully bright. Nick is having trouble at school, and, as if that isn't enough, Scotland Yard's Chief Inspector Snape and his first mate, Boyle, have targeted him to catch a dangerous criminal. Soon after Nick refuses, he is framed for robbery and finds himself doing time in juvy jail. His roommate, Johnny Powers, is the very criminal Snape and Boyle requested that he shadow for information. Coincidence goes too far when Johnny escapes, taking Nick with him and Snape and Boyle, Nick's only alibis, are killed.

*Public Enemy Number Two: a Diamond Brothers Mystery* by Anthony Horowitz is the newest installment in a fast-paced series set in London, England. Horowitz brings the streets and countryside alive in this quick-witted adventure that will keep readers on the edge of

their seats. Writing style and slapstick humor are similar to Wendelin Van Draanen's Sammy Keyes mystery series (Yearling). Horowitz has written over thirty books and is most renowned for his Alex Rider Adventures series. Protagonist is easy to bond with and characters are believable. Dialogue holds comic book appeal and breezes story along. Font is reader-friendly, contributing to a quick read. Excerpt from *The Falcon's Malteser: a Diamond Brothers Mystery* also included. Highly recommended for both school and public libraries.

Kim Harris. *Children's Librarian, Lyell Branch of the Rochester Public Library, Rochester, New York.*

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**Rakkety Tam / Brian Jacques ; illustrated by David Elliot. (A tale from Redwall) LCCN 2003066449. New York : Philomel, 2004.**

HBB, 0399237259, list cost: \$23.99.

Fic. Squirrels--Fiction; Wolverines--Fiction; Animals--Fiction; Fantasy. 372 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.

Grades 5-8. Rating : \*5.

Brian Jacques is back with another rollicking Redwall tale. This time the threat to the peace and lives of the gentle creatures comes from the Far North. A wolverine named Gulo, the Savage and his band of cannibalistic flesh eaters are searching for Gulo's brother who stole the Walking Stone. Their search brings them to the peaceful countryside of Mossflower which has few defenses against such foes. Fortunately for Mossflower and Redwall Abbey, Rakkety Tam McBurl and his mate, Wild Doogie Plumm are abroad in the woods in a quest to regain their self-worth and Tam's sword. Mercenaries from the borderlands, the plaid wearing, claymore carrying rogues have a strong sense of honor. Their quest intersects with Redwall's battle for survival so they join the side of right and good.

*Rakkety Tam* has all of the hallmarks of a Brian Jacques story. He has penned a suspenseful story full of mouth-watering feasts, riotously colorful characters, and knee slapping Dibbun behavior. His style is rich with advanced vocabulary words, and he embraces the old-fashioned concept of right triumphing over might. Always willing to share their land and bounty with peaceful creatures, the Redwall beasts learn once again that sometimes one has to fight to defend one's values. One character, Yoofus Lightpaw, is a thief on the good guys' side, but his character never reforms. Very advanced readers in lower grades will enjoy these as well. Many of the Redwall books are available on audiotope narrated by Brian Jacques and his crew and are worth every penny you will spend on them as well.

Kelley Westenhoff. *Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia.*

**Roller skates / written by Ruth Sawyer ; and illustrated by Valenti Angelo. LCCN 95135772. New York : Viking, 1995.**

HBB, 0670603104, list cost: \$16.99.

Fic. Roller skating--Fiction; City and town life--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction; Neighborliness--Fiction; New York (N.Y.)--Fiction. 186 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.

Grades 5-7. Rating : 4.

When ten-year-old Lucinda Wyman's mother falls ill, her parents set sail for Italy in an effort to improve her health. Lucinda is left behind in the care of the unmarried Peters sisters in New York City for one year. As Lucinda explores New York City in the late 1890s on roller skates, she meets a whole cast of friends and city workers. The reader is taken along on many adventures with the perky little orphan girl.

*Roller Skates* was written in 1937. A murder and a child's death are included in the story. A Newbery Medal winner, somewhat outdated.

Sherri Myers. *Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.*

**Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze / by Elizabeth Lewis ; illustrated by Ed Young ; introduction by Pearl S. Buck. LCCN 72091654. New York : Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1973.**

HBB, 0805005498, list cost: \$18.95.

Fic. City and town life--China--Fiction; China--Fiction. xii, 267 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

Grades 7-10. Rating : 5.

Chungking in the 1920s is a major city in inland China, and changes are taking place all around. After the death of her husband, Fu Be Be and her thirteen-year-old son Fu Yuin-fah regretfully leave the family farm that has been ransacked by marauding soldiers. Tang, a master coppersmith in Chungking, agrees to take Young Fu for a three-year apprenticeship. In the next five years Young Fu completes his apprenticeship and develops into a valuable journeyman. During this time he faces many dangers as he encounters fire and flood, bandits, soldiers, beggars, and other assorted enemies. Young Fu learns from his mistakes the truth of several traditional Chinese proverbs. His creativity, resourcefulness, and integrity earn the respect and affection of his master.

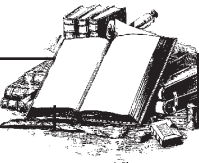
Author Elizabeth Foreman Lewis had spent several years as a missionary in China and knows first-hand that time of political unrest and the impact of automobiles and other machine technology. The many details of life in that period are seamlessly woven into the narrative. Among these are the fading commitment to traditional religion and the attitude of many toward foreigners. In her dialogue, Lewis uses occasional unfamiliar sentence structure and much ironic humor to convey the flavor of the era.

The original edition, with black-and-white illustrations by Kurt Wiese, is now out of print. (Wiese also illustrated Flack's *The Story About*

*Ping* and Bishop's *The Five Chinese Brothers*.) In 1973, the publishers released a new edition, with updated notes and new illustrations by Ed Young. Young's black-and-white illustrations have more shadow and less caricature than Wiese's. (Young illustrated the Caldecott Honor Book, *The Emperor and the Kite*, and others.) Both illustrators had lived in China. Both editions include a glossary of Chinese words and endnotes about the culture and events of the time. Highly recommended for school and home libraries. Newbery Medal, 1933.

*Donna W. Bowling, PhD. Library/Educational Consultant;  
Cataloger, Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics, Dallas, Texas.*





**Something from nothing : understanding what you believe about creation and why / Kurt P. Wise and Sheila A. Richardson. (TruthQuest) LCCN 2004267127. Nashville : Broadman & Holman, 2004.**

PAP, 0805427791, list cost: \$10.99.

222/.1106. Creationism; Bible and science: Christian education of teenagers. v, 212 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.

Grades 9 and up. Rating : 3.

The theme of *Something From Nothing* is that young Christians entering secular colleges risk believing in evolution and losing their faith.

The book is geared to Christian readers rather than non-Christians, but even so, it's not a one-size-fits-all book. As might be expected, authors Kurt P. Wise and Sheila A. Richardson (a Bryan College professor and an educator/curriculum writer respectively) take the view that since all Scripture is true, the creation account is true. But they also state that any evolutionary theories contradicting Creation must be discarded and only facts fitting Genesis can be studied, making it possible that a reader looking for objective arguments disproving evolution will read no further. They list the major points of the evolutionary theory, giving faith-based explanations for most, but they also caution readers that any questioning of creation would be questioning God, again possibly frustrating readers.

Research-wise, the book often lacks substantiation. The majority of footnotes are to creationist sources. Readers seeking more information are referred to other books. The authors make blanket statements they don't back up: that Earth 'probably' had features making the Genesis account likely, with no reasons for the 'probably'. They also voice opinions: Christian kids "are capable of forming deep relationships that unsaved students can never attain," or conjecture: that kids believing in evolution will succumb to "drug abuse, sexual sin, alcoholism, and other behaviors" that could be considered offensive or simplistic. However, cogent points are made such as asking why, if all other words in Genesis are translated literally, is only 'day' allegedly symbolic. Some chapters are exceptionally strong in their content. The chapter on living things uses the incredible complexities of life to show the inconceivability of evolution; the chapter on the post-Flood world presents fascinating inconsistencies in evolutionary theory.

Rosemarie DiCristo. *Children's Author, Bronx, New York.*

**The rules : ten to live by / Mark Nicholas. LCCN 2003002433. Nashville : Transit, 2003.**

PAP, 0849944171, list cost: \$10.99.

241.5/2. Ten commandments; Christian teenagers--Religious life. xi, 144 p. ; 22 cm.

Grades 9-12. Rating : 2.

Teens hear about the Ten Commandments in the news and may be aware of the struggle to keep or remove them from a courthouse. They may not be as aware of the content or relevance of these commands. Mark Nicholas seeks to remedy this in his brief, chatty book, *The Rules*.

He devotes a chapter to each rule (the word "commandment" is studiously avoided). Each commandment is tagged with a hip phrase: "American Idols" for the second commandment, "Hookin' Up" for the seventh, "Liar, Liar" for the ninth. The book continues to explain the commands with similar teen-age talk.

Nicholas uses the introduction to place the Decalogue in its redemptive historical context, but otherwise he does not deal with the original context. The Sabbath, for instance, is equated with Sunday. Nicholas rarely mentions and never discusses various interpretations of the commandments. He does tackle possible misunderstandings. For instance he covers war and self-defense along with the sixth commandment. Practical illustrations of how the Ten Commandments relate to teen life are plentiful. For instance, the discussion of the third commandment cautions against saying, "God told me to" as a reason for breaking up from a girlfriend or boyfriend. The chapter on the eighth commandment discusses internet file-sharing. Nicholas never argues for his conclusions; the reader must simply accept or reject them. Question boxes with blank lines encourage the reader to personally apply what he is reading.

Most teens who attend church will already be familiar with almost all that Nicholas says. Unchurched teens could benefit from the book, though the gospel is not explicitly presented. In short, the book gives basic practical applications of the Decalogue.

Brian C. Collins, *Greenville, South Carolina.*

**What's up with boys? : everything you need to know about guys / Crystal Kirgiss. LCCN 2004008754. Grand Rapids : Zondervan/Youth Specialities, 2004.**

PAP, 0310254892, list cost: \$9.99.

248.8/33. Girls--Religious life; Man-woman relationships--Religious aspects--Christianity. 173 p. : ill. ; 20 cm.

Grades 9-12. Rating : 4.

"What's the problem with boys anyway? They are so annoying." For any girl who's asked this question, Crystal Kirgiss has written *What's Up with Boys: Everything You Need to Know About Guys*.

This is not a dating guide or a guide for girls wanting to get boys to like them. *What's Up* aims to help girls understand the conflicting communication styles, attitudes, and flat-out differences between the sexes.

Kirgiss, a longtime youth worker and a mother of three sons, humorously looks at these differences, quoting liberally from actual questions girls have about boys, but she never allows her book to descend into a boy bashing book; rather she pleads for girls to realize boys "are caught between the silliness of boyhood and the seriousness of manhood," are struggling with their emotions, just as girls are, and equally as confused about girls as girls are about them.

The chatty, friendly tone is a plus, and is genuinely fun to read, although at times the quotes include a few minced oaths, and there's some gently earthy language (mostly regarding body functions). Each chapter ends with a Bible verse, questions "To Think About," and a list (for example, Girl Talk About Guys; or Guys List the Hardest Things About Being a Guy). The bottom of each page contains a quote from a real little boy or girl on the perceived differences between each.

While some of the lists/quotes get repetitive, the book is a valuable look at a helpful topic. It is light and humorous rather than serious and substantial, but Kirgiss makes important points and gets into the heads of both girls and boys, ably explaining why boys can seem so immature... and how girls should react.

Rosemarie DiCristo. *Children's Author, Bronx, New York.*

**Island of hope : the story of Ellis Island and the journey to America / Martin W. Sandler. LCCN 2003054448. New York : Scholastic, 2004.**

HBB, 0439530822, list cost: \$18.95.

304.8/73. Ellis Island Immigration Station (N.Y. and N.J.)--History; United States--Emigration and immigration--History; Immigrants--History. 144 p. : ill. ; 26 cm.

Grades 4-8. Rating : 4.

With its simply-written, easy-to-read text and many black and white photos, *Island of Hope* by Martin W. Sandler provides an informative look at the experiences of the twelve million or so immigrants who entered the United States through Ellis Island. (Sandler also briefly mentions Angel Island, the west coast's immigrant processing center). Covered are the reasons immigrants came to America, the conditions they faced during the voyage over, and how they lived their lives once they settled in their new country. Several immigrants who became famous are mentioned in the text or profiled in sidebars; these include Golda Meir and Isaac Bashevis Singer. Fiorello LaGuardia, an interpreter at Ellis Island, is also profiled.

Sandler includes first person quotes and reminiscences in his text, which adds to the readability. (Note, though, that some quotes include minor swear words or the taking of God's name in vain). Enough of the immigrant experience is shown to give readers a clear, full feel of what immigrants encountered, making the book useful for school reports or for anyone wanting a better understanding of that period in American history. While Sandler does not dwell on negative experiences, he does clearly recount the hardships immigrants faced. He also recounts some of the lies they told to stay in America, and the fact that some immigrants thought of, or actually did, commit suicide when their experiences soured.

The book has a two-page bibliography and a two-page list of sources. In an appendix, Sandler touchingly recounts his grandfather's experiences immigrating to America. A nice "what happened to them?" section sums up the fates of many of the "ordinary" immigrants Sandler features.

Rosemarie DiCristo. *Children's Author, Bronx, New York.*

**Weather science fair projects : using sunlight, rainbows, ice cubes, and more / Robert Gardner. (Earth science! best science projects) LCCN 2004015722. Berkeley Heights, N.J. : Enslow Publishers, 2005.**

HBB, 0766023613, list cost: \$19.95.  
551.6/078. Weather--Experiments; Science projects.  
128 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.  
Grades 4-9. Rating : 5.

Enslow Publishers offer a series, Earth Science! Best Science Projects, by Robert Gardner. One selection is *Weather Science Fair Projects*. Black and white drawings and charts enhance each project. An appendix lists science supply companies. Additional help can be found in suggestions for further reading, Internet addresses and an index.

Many experiments use simple objects—a ruler, a clock, a mirror, or a flashlight. Other projects might need an aneroid barometer, a bicycle tire pump, or powdered nondairy creamer. Gardner

links each experiment to possible science projects. The author stresses safety. You may read, "Ask an adult to..." Or, in the list of needed materials, "an adult" is required! Focusing on adult and child relationships provides wonderful opportunities to bond with your favorite boy or girl.

I appreciated the diversity of situations required for the experiments. Readers will learn about working in light and in darkness...inside and outside...quickly and slowly...with heat and with cold. The average household includes many of the materials and situations to begin experimenting immediately. Buy the book, and enjoy educational fun! Jump start ideas for the next science fair!

Roberta Lou Jones, MDiv. *Volunteer, Church Children's Library, Dexter, Kentucky.*

**Writing stories : fantastic fiction from start to finish / David L. Harrison. (Scholastic guides) LCCN 2003061297. New York : Scholastic Reference, 2004.**

HBB, 0439519144, list cost: \$16.95.  
808.3. Fiction--Authorship. 126 p. : ill. ; 23 cm.  
Grades 4-7. Rating : 5.

David L. Harrison is the author of seven books of poetry, twenty books of nonfiction, and thirty-four books of fiction, and wanted to share with young people from his experience as a writer. Harrison provides a concise look at creative writing with how-to advice for junior high students. Learning to write interesting stories is detailed in terms of elements: idea development, vocabulary building, verb selection, character building, problem resolution, dialog, and action. Side bars throughout the text entitled "Tools," "Techniques," "Helpful Hints," "Secrets," and "Try This" give additional guidelines that help the reader improve specific issues of composition. Topics provide instruction about how one writes an interesting opening, develops plot, or defines voice and setting. These tools to build "Fantastic Fiction" are covered with enthusiastic substance from the author's personal experience as a writer. An excellent resource, *Writing Stories* offers everything from pragmatic tips about punctuation, to the inspirational ideas for various genres. Index. The author obviously feels comfortable writing for young people. Highly recommended for middle school English student writers.

Rebecca Cress-Ingebo, MSN, MLS. *Academic Librarian, Beaver Creek, Ohio.*

**The Lady of Shalott / Alfred, Lord Tennyson ; with illustrations by Geneviève Côté. (Visions in poetry) Toronto : Kids Can, 2005.**

HBB, 1553378741, list cost: \$16.95.  
821/.8. Children's poetry, English. 48 p. : col. ill. ; 26 cm.  
Grades 5-12. Rating : 3.

Many artists have interpreted Tennyson's famous poem, "The Lady of Shalott." This recent publication by Kids Can Press features Genevieve Cote's interpretation. Using mixed media, the artist pays tribute to Picasso, Chagall, Monet and Degas in her line drawings. Modern images such as Lancelot wearing a greatcoat adorned with medals and what appears to be a tank driver's helmet with goggles bring the poem into the modern age. It is an interesting interpretation, but if you just want a readable copy of the poem for your students, the price is a bit steep.

Kelley Westenhoff. *Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia.*

**Antarctica : journeys to the South Pole / by Walter Dean Myers. LCCN 2004002501. New York : Scholastic, 2004.**

HBB, 0439220017, list cost: \$18.95.  
919.8/904. Antarctica--Juvenile literature. 104 p. : ill., maps ; 26 cm.  
Grades 5-9. Rating : 4.

In chronological order, Walter Dean Myers narrates the exploration of the south polar regions beginning with James Cook's voyage, which was the first to cross the Antarctic Circle, through the signing, in 1959, of the Antarctic Treaty in Washington, D.C. Such notable Antarctic explorers as Cook, James Clark Ross, Robert Falcon Scott, Ernest Shackleton, Roald Amundsen, Douglas Mawson, and Richard E. Byrd each garner at least a chapter of recognition. Myers concludes with a chapter about Antarctica today that is summarized in an appended chart "Facts about Antarctica." The reader will also find appended a timeline and extensive bibliography, including first person accounts. A comprehensive index makes the text serviceable for research. Black and white period photographs or photos of charts, logs, and diagrams are extensively interspersed among the text.

Author Myers has been interested in the Antarctic since a stint in the military as a young man, where he first saw the Antarctic region, and has been fascinated since. His narrative is smooth, and at times, exciting, especially when he tells about the race, between Scott and Amundsen, to get to the South Pole first. The hardships of early polar expeditions are vividly described, including hardships for the dogs and horses frequently used to pull gear across the ice and snow. Blue and white photos would have created an icier feeling than the black and white. The photos chosen do not just enhance the text, but make the explorers become real for the reader. A small discrepancy appears in the final chapter and the facts chart; the chapter proclaims that Antarctic ice melt "would raise the oceans well over one hundred feet," but the facts chart states "seas around the world would rise by over 200 feet." Overall a fine title to add to a collection to study the polar regions or biomes of the world.

Marion M. Mueller, MS. *Library Media Specialist, New Hope Christian School, Neenah, Wisconsin.*

**Amos Fortune, free man / Elizabeth Yates ; illustrated by Nora S. Unwin. LCCN 50007154. New York : Dutton Children's Books, 1967, c1950.**

HBB, 0525255702, list cost: \$15.99.

B or 921 or 362.92. Fortune, Amos, 1709 or 10-1801; African Americans--Biography; Slaves; Newbery Medal. 192 p. : illus. ; 21 cm.

Grades 4-9. Rating : 5.

Date 1725. Fifteen-year-old Prince At-mun is dancing in celebration with his African villagers when ruthless traders suddenly attack and capture him and many of his people to be taken to America and sold as slaves. Given the name Amos, he serves fifteen years until the death of a kindly Quaker weaver in Boston. Then he serves another nearly thirty years with a tanner in nearby Woburn and begins to purchase his freedom. In 1769 his master's widow confirms Amos's freedom and encourages him to continue working there as a tanner using the same tools. During the next ten years he buys and marries, first Lily, and then after her death, Lydia. After Lydia's death in 1779, he marries Violet, freeing both her and her daughter Celyndia. In the spring of 1781, they move to Jaffrey, N.H., where he sets up his equipment and gains recognition for his quality workmanship as a tanner and his solid Christian character. Upon his death at age 91, this respected citizen's bequest of special funds for both the church and the local school reflects the value he placed on faith and education.

In her biography *Amos Fortune, Free Man*, Elizabeth Yates expands on the documentation she has located to portray a man who is patient and dignified in trying circumstances. She brings to life the families he served and the wife and neighbors of his later years. This considerate man who bought freedom for himself and others is a model of self-sacrifice for readers in any century. Nora Unwin's black-and-white sketches at the beginning of each chapter capture the flavor of significant events. This unique perspective on New England during that time period is highly recommended for Christian school and home libraries. Newbery Medal, 1951.

Donna W. Bowling, PhD. *Library/Educational Consultant; Cataloger, Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics, Dallas, Texas.*

**Isaac Newton : inventor, scientist, and teacher / John Hudson Tiner ; illustrated by Jonathan & David Inc. (The Sowers) LCCN 75032562. Milford, Mich. : Mott Media, 1975.**

PAP, 0915134950, list cost: \$7.99.

B or 921 or 509/.2/4. Newton, Isaac, Sir, 1642-1727; Scientists. 144 p. : ill. ; 23 cm.

Grades 5-9. Rating : 3.

**Stonewall Jackson : loved in the South, admired in the North / by Charles Ludwig. (The Sowers) Milford, Mich. : Mott Media, 1989.**

PAP, 0880621575, list cost: \$7.99.

B or 921 or 973.7'3'0924. Confederate States of America. Army--Biography; United States. Army--Biography; Jackson, Stonewall, 1824-1863; Generals; United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865. 184 p. : ill. ; 21 cm.

Grades 5-9. Rating : 3.

The Isaac Newton and Stonewall Jackson titles represent two of the subjects in Mott Media's The Sowers series. Each title is a fictionalized account of the full life of Newton or Jackson. Both are laudatory, not critical examinations of their lives. Mr. Tiner is more successful integrating history into Newton's life than is Mr. Ludwig. In fact, two chapters about the Civil War are added to the Jackson book after Jackson's death. Mr. Tiner makes Newton come alive while Ludwig's Jackson is stilted as well as stoic. The influence of other Christians on Newton and Jackson's lives is evident. A summary timeline, bibliography, and index may be found in the back.

The Christians featured in the series represent Americans and non-Americans from a range of four hundred years and include politicians, presidents' wives, scientists, explorers, musicians, soldiers, nurses, and clergy such as Abigail Adams, William Jennings Bryan, George Frideric Handel, Mahalia Jackson and Susanna Wesley. Each account emphasizes how a strong faith guided the individuals throughout life. If the two titles reviewed here reflect the quality of writing in the series, the reader will find much unevenness, for numerous authors have done the writing and research. Additionally, the care given to editing the text from simple grammatical and printing errors to contradictions within the text is inconsistent. In the Jackson book, for example, dates differ in the text and timeline (when Jackson began a Sunday School for blacks), characters change from illiterate to more sophisticated with no reason, and lights are turned off. Bibliographies are included, but titles are secondary sources. Nonetheless, the titles provide a Christian perspective on the lives of about thirty people who helped make history.

Marion M. Mueller, MS. *Library Media Specialist, New Hope Christian School, Neenah, Wisconsin.*

**Shadow life : a portrait of Anne Frank and her family / Barry Denenberg. LCCN 2004014486. New York : Scholastic, 2004.**

HBB, 0439416787, list cost: \$16.95.

B or 921 or 940.53/18/0922492. Frank, Anne, 1929-1945 --Family; Frank, Margot--Diaries; Frank family; Jews--Netherlands--Amsterdam--Biography; Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Netherlands--Amsterdam--Biography; Amsterdam (Netherlands)--Biography. 224 p. ; 22 cm.

Grades 7-9. Rating : 4.

*Shadow Life: A Portrait of Anne Frank and Her Family* is the retelling of the famous Anne Frank story. The author, Barry Denenberg, offers new

insight into this fascinating life in four parts. Part One: Living is presented as history. The story begins in 1933 Germany as Hitler is appointed chancellor. The Franks, though divided about religion, are dismayed at the growing animosity toward Jews and move to Holland. There they enjoy relative security until the Nazi invasion of 1940. Refusing to allow his family be separated, Otto Frank hides his wife and girls in a secret apartment along with a few other Jews.

Part Two: Hiding is told in the form of fictional diary entries by Margot Frank who no doubt kept a diary along with her sister Anne. Entries describe the growing tensions between those in hiding.

Part Three: Dying takes the reader with the Franks as they journey by rail deep into Hitler's Germany—destination: Auschwitz. Denenberg includes written testimonies from survivors of the Nazi terror which mention the Franks. The inhumanity they and other Jews endured is outlined with the suffering and death of Anne's mother, sister, and eventually Anne.

Part Four: Surviving brings this story to a close with the efforts of the family's only survivor, Otto Frank, to discover news of his loved ones after the Allied victory.

Denenberg takes draws on Anne's diary by open discussion of the Frank sisters' blossoming sexuality and accompanying teenage frustrations. Of note to Christian parents and teachers is a cynicism toward religion which pervades. Though the aid of some Christians in hiding Jews is presented, pluralism and tolerance are the real heroes with religion subtly set forth as a cause for unwanted excess, best left alone. Also of note is the graphic presentation of deaths, some by suicide. Quality of writing is engaging because of shifts in how the story is presented, narrative, journal entries, and narrative with eyewitness accounts. A valuable read for a junior higher if accompanied by intelligent discussion with parents and teachers.

John Christian MacInnis, MMus. *Research Assistant, BJU Press, Greenville, South Carolina.*

**Sir Walter Raleigh and the quest for El Dorado / Marc Aronson. LCCN 99043096. New York : Clarion Books, 2000.**

HBB, 039584827X, list cost: \$20.00.

B or 921 or 942.05/5/092. Raleigh, Walter, Sir, 1552?-1618; Explorers; Great Britain--Court and courtiers--Biography--Juvenile literature; Guiana--Discovery and exploration--Juvenile literature. xviii, 222 p. : ill., maps ; 24 cm.

Grades 6-12. Rating : 5.

Pirate or hero? This new biography of Sir Walter Raleigh never quite answers the question. A fascinating man, Raleigh was a bridge between the Old World and the New World, rooted in class distinction and tradition, yet bold enough

in his position as Queen's favorite to propose new ideas and challenges. Raleigh's quest for El Dorado fueled Elizabethan exploration which in turn fueled innovation that benefited mankind. Never a perfect man, his flawed humanity caused people to love him or hate him. He wrote love poems and history books while he walked the tightrope of being the Queen's favorite for many years. El Dorado, the legendary "city of gold" in the New World, fueled his ambition and speculation, yet he nearly bankrupted himself trying to find his prize. Ultimately choosing love that could be consummated, Raleigh fell from favor when he married. Yet, whenever Elizabeth or England needed him, he could be found on the front lines defending the honor of both.

*Sir Walter Raleigh and the Search for El Dorado* provides a fascinating framework for Elizabethan times. The search for El Dorado, and just what the idea meant to all of Europe, permeated the landscape of the day. The search for it fueled the pen of Shakespeare, the sailing of the Spanish Armada, and the establishment of colonies by the Virgin Queen. In all of these Raleigh had a hand. The conflict of the Reformation continued throughout Raleigh's times as well, which author Marc Aronson respectfully discusses as it arises in the story. Extremely well written, this book is liberally sprinkled with maps, photos, endnotes and an excellent index, offering the advanced reader an intriguing look at Sir Walter Raleigh and his times, and the older researcher a valuable resource.

Kelley Westenhoff. Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia.

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**Shipwrecked! : the true adventures of a Japanese boy / Rhoda Blumberg. LCCN 99086664. New York : HarperCollins, 2001.**

HBB, 0688174841, list cost: \$16.95.

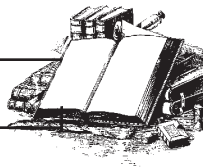
B or 921 or 952/.025/092. Nakahama, Manjiro, 1827-1898; Japan--History--19th century; Japan--Relations--United States; United States--Relations--Japan. 80 p. : ill., maps ; 29 cm.

Grades 4-8. Rating : \*5.

An engrossing biography, *Shipwrecked!* relates the adventures of Manjiro Nakahama. In 1836 Manjiro's father, a Japanese peasant fisherman, died leaving nine year old Manjiro as head of his poverty stricken family. Traditional law forces him to be a fisherman. When he is shipwrecked, this law condemns him to execution for leaving Japan. Good hearted New England whalers rescue Manjiro, rename him John, and his adventures begin: adopted by loving New Englanders; an American education; scope to find his genius; a successful return to Japan; becoming a Samurai; advising his government on coping with Admiral Perry.

Newbery Honor author Rhoda Blumberg bountifully illustrates *Shipwreck!* with pictures drawn by Manjiro and others, relevant contemporary photos, and maps. She enhances the narrative with tidbits about Japanese and American society of that era. While infusing her enthusiasm into this inherently interesting biography, Blumberg lets the story tell itself. Fairhaven, Massachusetts, where Manjiro learned to love and be loved by Americans, still considers him one of their own. Blumberg suggests all readers contact Fairhaven Museum's website: [www.ultranet.com/~clongwar](http://www.ultranet.com/~clongwar). Intimate history that catches the modern imagination, *Shipwrecked!* will be appreciated by all libraries, schools, home-schoolers, and families.

Donna J. Eggett. Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia.



**Always Jan / Roxanne Henke. (Coming home to Brewster ; 4) LCCN 2004015418. Eugene, Ore. : Harvest House, 2005.**

PAP, 0736911502, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. North Dakota--Fiction; Christian fiction. 349 p. ; 21 cm.

Adult (Grades 11-12). Rating : 4.

Finding real purpose in life is the underlying message in *Always Jan*, Roxanne Henke's fourth contemporary novel in the Coming Home to Brewster series. Jan is consumed with keeping her forty plus year old appearance youthful, to the exclusion of every other concern. Her determination to improve her looks via cosmetic surgery is interwoven with the lives of Ida, a frail German widow in declining health, and Kenny, Brewster's gas station owner who's wrestling with family obligations. These three interact with each other and characters from previous Brewster books as they realize their weaknesses and acknowledge deeper values, and grow in faith and character.

Henke is keenly tuned into her three diverse personalities, contrasting the selfish with the selfless. Readers might easily identify with any of the main characters who are realistic and interesting. Glimpses of characters from previous Brewster books adds continuity and depth to the story. While happy endings are satisfying, the swift and tidy way Henke wraps up each person's conflicts are too rapid and pristine to be real. However the conclusion does shine a glimmer of hope of change to readers who see themselves in the characters.

Karen Schmidt, BA. *Freelance Writer/Editor, Marysville, Washington.*

**An angel's story : the first Christmas from heaven's view / Max Lucado. LCCN 2004015717. Nashville : WestBow Press, 2004.**

HBB, 1595540040, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Jesus Christ--Nativity--Fiction; Bible, N.T.--History of Biblical events--Fiction; Christian fiction; Christmas stories. xi, 83 p. ; 19 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 4.

Max Lucado speculates on what may have happened in heaven and on earth as God sends Gabriel to earth several times before and after Jesus' birth. *An Angel's Story* pulls back the curtain and allows us a peek into what was quite possibly occurring as Mary prepared to accept God's calling on her life, and later as she prepares to give birth to the baby Jesus. Good and evil battle as earth hangs in the balance, totally unaware of the struggle being fought for control. When we think of Christmas morning,

we think of peace and love, but Max Lucado shines a new light on the battle that was possibly waging behind the scenes. This is a refreshing look at a story we love from a new perspective. While much of it is biblical, the reader should remember it is a work of fiction and the author takes liberties with names of angels and some events. Overall, this is a thought-provoking book.

Sherri Myers. *Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.*

**The bitter road to Dachau / Robert L. Wise. Nashville : Broadman & Holman, 2005.**

PAP, 0805430733, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Escapes--Fiction; World War, 1939-1945--Causes--Fiction; Holocaust, 1933-1945--Fiction; Dachau (Concentration camp)--Fiction. 304 p. ; 23 cm.

Adult (Grades 11-12). Rating : 4.

Christian and Mina Reger live comfortably in Germany during the late 1930's. The couple soon realizes Hitler's evil intent, and they join the underground Confessing Church. *The Bitter Road to Dachau*, by Robert L. Wise, tells of Christian's years in the terrible, terrible Dachau Concentration Camp. He endures near-starvation, cruel labor, lice, typhoid, and betrayal. Eventually, Christian and Mina are reunited. He tells Mina, "I suspect that God has some interesting plans ahead for us."

Historical fiction, *The Bitter Road to Dachau* mentions real people. For instance, a railroad conductor describes Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "...he taught me how to believe and survive in a cruel world."

Thoughtful quotes are a strong point of this selection. I read, "...even our zeal can become twisted...All of us can be victimized when our pride is disguised as light." Another thoughtful reminder was, "In the humiliation of this death camp, the humility of Christ has lifted believers out of the ashes and held them high so the light of heaven could shine on them." Readers can easily assess their own spiritual strengths and weaknesses, as they read about the bitter road.

Roberta Lou Jones, MDiv. *Volunteer, Church Children's Library, Dexter, Kentucky.*

**Breach of promise / James Scott Bell. LCCN 2003022154. Grand Rapids : Zondervan, 2004.**

PAP, 0310243874, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Fathers and daughters--Fiction; Custody of children--Fiction; Divorce--Fiction; Actors--Fiction; Christian fiction. 345 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 5.

Mark Gillen was living a wonderful life with a beautiful wife and adorable five-year-old daughter in Los Angeles, California. He and his wife were both struggling actors when the dream of stardom came true for Paula. Offered a starring role by a famous movie director, Paula heads off to Europe to film the movie while Mark stays behind to take care of their daughter, Maddie. Paula has an affair with the director and upon her return from filming several months later, announces she wants a divorce and custody of Maddie. A custody battle in the court system ensues, one which will test the strength and tenacity of Mark's character.

Having read and reviewed many of James Scott Bell's novels, I consider *Breach of Promise* to be his best yet. Thoroughly engaging and dramatic, this book takes the reader on an emotional roller coaster ride alongside Mark Gillen. A loving husband and father doing the best he can to care for his family, Mark finds the court system is less than supportive of men taking custody of their children. Mark must fight not only against the court system's prejudices, but also against Paula's stardom and resultant money, and the high-class lawyers that are representing her. After being accused of abuse, Mark sinks into a depression only God can bring him out of. *Breach of Promise* will give its reader a large dose of reality and a new respect for what fathers must endure in order to gain custody of the children they love. I highly recommend this novel as one that will keep the readers' attention and strengthen their faith in God.

Sherri Myers. *Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.*

**Brevig Mission plague / Frank Simon. Ulrichsville, Ohio : Barbour Publishing, 2005.**

PAP, 1586607758, list cost: \$12.95.

Fic. Terrorism--Fiction; Brevig Mission (Alaska)--Fiction. 379 p. ; 21 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 4.

CIA agents discover the Alaskan village, Brevig Mission. The site of an eighty year old deadly flu outbreak, one which nearly wiped out the entire village, is found frozen, virtually intact. U.S. government researchers are immediately assigned to develop a vaccine that will neutralize the effects of this dreaded disease. Despite acute military security measures, a Saudi extremist group is thought to be responsible for discovered attempts to infiltrate and sabotage the operation. Gary and John, co-owners of SecurityCheck, a company that audits

security systems for big companies, and their elite crew of experts, are hired to catch the culprits and clean up the debris.

*The Brevig Mission Plague* by Frank Simon is a timely, inspirational action thriller focusing on the very real threat of post 9/11 bioterrorism. This is the second installment in Simon's Heist Company series that started with *The Jewel in the Crown* (Barbour, 2003). Writing style is easy to follow. Sense of time and place is ever-present. Storyline is equally plot and character driven. Main characters are well developed. Dialog moves story steadily along. Mood and atmosphere are appropriately reflected. Frank Simon is author of seven books, including *The Raptor Virus* (Broadman & Holman, 2001) and *The Y2K Bug* (Broadman & Holman, 1999). Recommended for larger public libraries.

Kim Harris. *Children's Librarian, Lyell Branch of the Rochester Public Library, Rochester, New York.*

**A bride most begrudging / Deeanne Gist. LCCN 2005004894. Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2005.**

PAP, 0764200720, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Plantation owners' spouses--Fiction; Arranged marriage--Fiction; Plantation life--Fiction; Virginia--History--Colonial period, ca. 1600-1775--Fiction; Historical fiction. 347 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 11-12). Rating : 4.

Kidnapped by an unscrupulous English ship captain, Lady Constance Morrow finds herself bound for the American colonies, where she is sold as a "tobacco bride" to the farmer willing to pay 200 pounds of tobacco leaves. Rather than marry Constance, Drew O'Connor simply wants a woman to cook and clean for him; this suits Constance just fine since she is determined to return to England as soon as her father can come rescue her. Being a lady of high society, however, Constance has no experience with menial household tasks—a problem that is compounded when she and Drew are forced to marry because of issues of propriety. They secretly agree to marry in name only, and plan to annul the marriage once Constance returns to England. The inevitable happens, however; Drew and Constance fall in love, and, despite many trials, decide that they will remain committed to their marriage vows.

*A Bride Most Begrudging* is Deeanne Gist's debut novel. Although the storyline is predictable, (as we expect with stories of this genre), the novel captivates the reader with humor, unexpected events, and characters somewhat reminiscent of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. Entertaining and engaging as the book is, however, the pervasive attention to physical/sexual attraction throughout the story is a disturbing element. What drives the plot for a majority of the book is anticipating when Drew and Constance will finally consummate their "marriage in name only."

Heavy attention is given to Constance's hourglass figure, and while it provides a good deal of humor, it seems almost inappropriately titillating at times—especially in how Drew responds to her. The farmers ogle her; Constance's bodice laces burst her first night under Drew's care; later, he thinks about the fact that she is wearing no underwear under her dress; he spies on her changing clothes, and later on while she is bathing. He strips her and bathes her during a severe illness, all the while trying not to lust after her. These are just a few examples. Although technically Drew and Constance are married, since it is a marriage in name only, and these events take place without her knowledge, these scenes feel wrong.

While one doesn't mind that a couple would be physically attracted to each other, too many scenes seem to dwell on this as the sole basis for their relationship when they finally do share a "wedding night." The characters do turn to the Lord for strength after a devastating Indian attack at the end of the story, but this is more of a Christian "tag-on" than a pervasive message throughout the novel. Nothing is graphically described, however, so readers not disturbed by these issues will find this a fun novel to read, with a delightfully relatable main character.

Sherri Beeler, M.A. *Teacher, Cascade Christian High School, Medford, Oregon.*

**A certain truth / James Scott Bell. (The trials of Kit Shannon ; 3) LCCN 2004001024. Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2004.**

PAP, 0764226479, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Shannon, Kit (Fictitious character)--Fiction; Women lawyers--Fiction; Los Angeles (Calif)--Fiction; Historical fiction; Christian fiction; Legal stories. 300 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 5.

Newlyweds Kit and Ted are finally on their Hawaiian cruise honeymoon. Their time of sun and sand together is idyllic. Shortly before they reach home dock, the newlywed wife of a gambler arrives at Kit and Ted's door with a tearful story about finding her husband dead in their cabin. When the woman becomes suspect of the murder, Kit is soon retained as her lawyer. Unfortunately, Ted becomes an afterthought, as Kit dives headfirst into the task of proving her client's innocence. Her reputation for pulling out all the stops at trial precedes her and causes trouble in the small harbor town, where both the District Attorney and the Judge share the same last name.

*A Certain Truth* by James Scott Bell is an installment in *The Trials of Kit Shannon* historical suspense fiction series. Plot is easy to identify and follow. Writing style is smooth and professional. Mood and atmosphere are appropriate to era. The protagonist is a familiar character whose personality builds with each successive book, but is also quite

distinguishable to new readers. Dialog is believable and efficient, gracefully moving story forward. Former trial lawyer James Scott Bell is known for his quality Christian legal thrillers, his historical fiction partnership with Tracie Peterson, as well as his gift for presenting readers with thoughtful entertainment that portrays today's issues in a non-threatening venue. Recommended for public libraries and fans of both historical and trial fiction.

Kim Harris. *Children's Librarian, Lyell Branch of the Rochester Public Library, Rochester, New York.*

**Club sandwich / Lisa Samson. LCCN 2004030852. Colorado Springs, Colo. : WaterBrook, 2005.**

PAP, 1578568854, list cost: \$13.99.

Fic. Parent and adult child--Fiction; Mothers and daughters--Fiction; Female friendship--Fiction; Single mothers--Fiction. 344 p. ; 21 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

Ivy Schneider is sandwiched between her many roles. While her husband travels with a gospel quartet, Ivy struggles to help her family thrive. Sports for her son, Persy, private high school for her daughter, Lyra, potty-training for her other daughter, Trixie, doctor's appointments for her mom, column writing, and helping at the family restaurant all tax Ivy's reserves. Then Mitch, Ivy's childhood friend, steps in to help, and adds a whole new tension to her life. Throughout the book, God packages vital support in the form of flawed humans, and in her trials, Ivy develops the faith that "grows feet that carry us through the briars of this earthly journey." p. 298

*Club Sandwich* vibrates with witty dialog. Ivy's feelings and actions, as well as the actions of others are unfortunately realistic. Perfect people did not sneak into this book. The Baltimore setting is barely mentioned because Ivy's life stages this story, and cultural quirks provide a sense of time. Plot develops steadily, although sometimes it feels a little lost in the everydayness of life—kind of like Ivy. Lisa Samson clearly presents truths through the lives of her characters, such as, "Jesus, though completely God, inhabited the stuff of this earth," p. 297 and "He felt what we feel," p.298 as well as, "my soul can rest in His arms." p. 298. "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in aaaaalllll the earth." (Psalm 8:1 and p. 355)

Kristina A. Wolcott, BS. *Piano Teacher, Freelance Writer, Oroville, California.*

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**Crystal lies / by Melody Carlson. LCCN 2004011320. Colorado Springs : WaterBrook, 2004.**

PAP, 1578568404, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Married women--Fiction; Mothers and sons--Fiction; Ice (Drug)--Fiction; Drug abuse--Fiction; Adultery--Fiction; Psychological fiction; Christian fiction. 320 p. ; 21 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : \*5.

Geoffrey, husband, has a high-profile job that is the perfect culmination of a career that had driven him from childhood; his home is the reflection of his drive and the expectations of his family. Glennis is the perfect wife who is the reflection of her husband's demanding career; her home reflects nothing of her tastes.

Seemingly without notice, their world starts to fall apart. Their son, Jacob, becomes involved in drugs—and not just any drug but crystal meth, “one of the most addictive substances known to man.” Glennis' only solution is to leave the marriage to fight for her son's survival. Over the months she realizes that healing is meant not just for Jacob but for herself, also.

Children—Sarah and Jacob—are exactly what Geoffrey wants and won't tolerate anything less. Sarah fortunately grows into a successful young woman. But Jacob has had drug problems from high school on.

The characters are well developed, especially the relationship between Glennis and Jacob. The reader recognizes that the conflict between Jacob and his father is a source of pain between them, while Glennis is desperate to save Jacob. Dialog between all flows naturally and timely; the story and dialog take place in the current time.

This is inspirational realistic fiction written with sensitivity. As Glennis grows through the story, the reader realizes that “but by grace” is a possibility. The author, Melody Carlson, has done an excellent job bringing the story through sensitivity and humor. An excellent read.

Debby Willett, Teacher, Home School Parent, Canyon, Texas

**Distant echoes / Colleen Coble. (Aloha Reef series ; 1) LCCN 200402254. Nashville : WestBow Press, 2005.**

PAP, 0785260420, list cost: \$13.99.

Fic. Missiles--Fiction; Hawaii--Fiction; Dolphins--Fiction; Christian fiction. 306 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 9-12). Rating : 4.

Kaia Ohana is close to a breakthrough in facilitating communication between dolphins and humans. While Kaia is conducting research just offshore of Kauai, Hawaii, she witnesses a wildly off-course missile hit a tourist boat. Kaia and her closest companion, Nani, a wild dolphin, assist with rescue efforts. Later, Kaia learns that the facility where she conducts research has been sold, and the new owner gives her two months to show results with her dolphins or the facility will be turned into a sea park with the wild dolphins taken into captivity.

Commander Jesse Matthews, head of security at the local Naval base, cannot imagine what went wrong with the missile test. Calling in some favors, he enlists Kaia's grudging help with allowing Nani to patrol the waters until the next test in order to prevent sabotage. Strange incidents begin to occur, and Jesse and Kaia

grow closer as the danger surrounding them increases. Can they figure out who is behind the attacks before it's too late?

Colleen Coble once again captivates mystery lovers with an action-packed tale. The lushly depicted Hawaiian scenery places the reader in the center of the story. Unique plotting provides a new adventure with fascinating details about dolphins and their training. Kaia is a multi-faceted character who has many issues to overcome, the most pressing being her anger at God about her mother's desertion of the family. Jesse is not as well developed, but he and his niece Heidi add depth. The other secondary characters, including Kaia's extended family, enhance the story.

There are two central mysteries running throughout *Distant Echoes*. Both are fairly simple to figure out, but surprisingly, this doesn't detract from the enjoyment of the story. The plot and characters are stronger than the mystery alone. The plot will charm high school readers and adults alike, especially dolphin lovers. *Distant Echoes* will entrance those who savor suspenseful thrillers.

Melissa Parcel, BS, Book Reviewer, Kelso, Washington.

**Double vision / Randall Ingermanson. LCCN 2004012912. Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2004.**

PAP, 0764227335, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Scientists--Crimes against--Fiction; Quantum computers--Fiction; Sabotage--Fiction; Romantic suspense fiction; Christian fiction. 384 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

Keryn, mystery writer and part-time chief financial officer for CypherQuanta, has staked her claim on Dillon. Unfortunately, Dillon, a computer engineer with high functioning autism, is paired with Rachel, a young, attractive genius who has developed a formula to increase computer speed capabilities, to create a program that will pull the company from ruin to glory. Grant, high-strung head of CypherQuanta, is driven to keep his company from impending bankruptcy. Clifton, a middle-aged hippie, quantum encrypter, is torn between gambling on the dying company and cutting his losses for a real job, elsewhere. With Rachel and Dillon working under lock and key, together all Keryn, Grant, and Clifton have to do is keep the world from discovering their secret. This task would be a lot easier without well-meaning friends and family, the impending disruption by the government or criminals, and fewer personal problems.

*Double Vision* by Randall Ingermanson is a suspense/intrigue novel about the future of information security. Characters are life-like and credible. Plot premise is well-researched and believable. At times, dialog seems laden down with technical terms, but still manages to move story along. Ingermanson, a theoretical

physicist by trade, has obviously done his homework and is well-versed in subject matter. He consistently produces quality novels that combine science fiction, intrigue, God's grace, and deep, sometimes encoded, truths. Ingermanson won the Christy Award for *Transgression* (Harvest House, 2000), a time travel, adventure novel. Recommended for public libraries and Christian suspense fiction collections.

Kim Harris, Children's Librarian, Lyell Branch of the Rochester Public Library, Rochester, New York.

**Firebird : a trilogy / Kathy Tyers. LCCN 2004012907. Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2004.**

PAP, 0764229273, list cost: \$14.99.

Fic. Women--Fiction.; Love stories.; Fantasy fiction; Christian fiction. 255, 270, 270 p. ; 23 cm.

Adult (Grades 9-12). Rating : 5.

*Firebird* by Kathy Tyers combines a complete science fiction series of three books in one volume. The first book, *Firebird*, highlights Major Lady Firebird Angelo's struggle to find a merciful God. Due to her birth order, Firebird is considered a “wastling,” expendable. She is militarily well-trained, expected to die a hero's death in battle. When she is chosen to head an air attack on Federate forces, Firebird proudly leads her band of wastlings on a suicide mission to protect Netaia, their home world. Rather than a glorious death, Firebird is surprised by her enemy's offer of life and love.

In the second book, *Fusion Fire*, Lady Firebird is married to Field General Brennen Caldwell, a telepathic master in the Federacy. When a night intruder attempts to kill them, they find Brennen's brother and his family slaughtered, and a peaceful community is obliterated without warning. Brennen and Firebird go undercover to unearth a plot to dominate the universe. As they boldly go forth to battle evil, their faith in God's sovereignty is put to the ultimate test.

In the third book, *Crown of Fire*, Firebird and Brennen return to Netaia to endeavor to stop an outworld attack, as well as an inworld civil war. Firebird is repeatedly warned against pride, as she faces nobles who, only months before, would gladly have had her killed. Telepathic enemies have genetically produced Brennen's offspring in an attempt to lure him into final destruction.

Although some adjustment must be made for unfamiliar vocabulary, Tyers does an excellent job of inviting readers into the circle of lives that form this trilogy. Themes and plots are clear, without being didactic. Dialog nicely contributes to story movement. Characters are believable and easy to identify with. Background is visually sound. Action draws reader deeper into story. Highly recommended for public libraries and Christian science fiction collections.

Kim Harris. *Children's Librarian, Lyell Branch of the Rochester Public Library, Rochester, New York.*

**Glimpses of paradise : a novel / James Scott Bell. LCCN 2004027881. Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2005.**

PAP, 0764226487, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. World War, 1914-1918--France--Fiction; Hollywood (Los Angeles, Calif)--Fiction; Nebraska--Fiction. 411 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 11-12). Rating : 4.

Dream chasing proves to be a dangerous business for Zee Miller. Instead of accepting Doyle Lawrence's proposal to marry following high school, Zee decides to pursue her dream. Doyle leaves their small Nebraska town for college at Princeton. Zee pursues acting in Omaha. Doyle ends up in the trenches of WWI, while Zee ends up in Los Angeles. Both journeys are fraught with danger and personal tragedy. When Doyle's journey takes him to Los Angeles, their worlds collide. Danger lurks in the shadows, but glimpses of paradise shine brighter in the midst of the darkness.

James Scott Bell masterfully creates realistic characters with genuine personalities and the flaws that accompany them. A smattering of phrases commonly associated with the years 1916-1925, quotes from newspapers, and lyrics from songs of the time give an authentic feel to the setting. Quotes from R.A. Torrey, who was pastor of the Church of the Open Door and the dean of BIOLA, lend spiritual direction to the book without holding back the story line. The plot quickly fluctuates between Doyle's life and Zee's life. Major conflicts in both Doyle and Zee's lives seem almost parallel, and create a sense of cosmic design. The theme unites the story, "a man could know God's mercy for himself, and touch a fraction of infinite love, just as he could experience waves crashing against rocks on a coastline in California and know a power that simultaneously buffeted a million unseen points around the world." p.402

Kristina A. Wolcott, BS. *Piano Teacher, Freelance Writer, Oroville, California.*

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**Gods & kings : a novel / Lynn Austin. (Chronicles of the king ; 1) LCCN 2004019907. Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2005.**

PAP, 0764229893, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Hezekiah, King of Judah--Fiction; Bible. O.T.--History of Biblical events--Fiction; Israel--Kings and rulers--Fiction. 316 p. ; 22 cm.

**Song of redemption : a novel / Lynn Austin. (Chronicles of the Kings ; 2) LCCN 2005004596. Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2005.**

PAP, 0764229907, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Hezekiah, King of Judah--Fiction; Bible. O.T.--History of Biblical events--Fiction; Israel--Kings and rulers--Fiction; Biographical fiction; Religious fiction. 348 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : \*5.

Books One and Two of the Chronicles of the Kings series by Lynn Austin look at the reigns of King Ahaz and that of his son King Hezekiah. *God & Kings* starts with King Ahaz sacrificing his firstborn to the idol Molech in hopes of winning against his enemies. His second son, Hezekiah, witnesses this sacrifice. He is called for a second sacrifice, but the high priest mercifully points to a younger brother as the next in line as a favor to Hezekiah's mother. The book continues through the terrifying years of slavery to the Assyrian nation and the continued idol worship. Hezekiah develops a relationship with his grandfather, a Levite, without his father's knowledge. Zechariah teaches Hezekiah much about the God of Abraham. Isaiah comes on the scene speaking out against King Ahaz. Ahaz lashes out at the teachings of God, and Hezekiah is separated from all godly teachings. The book ends soon after Hezekiah becomes king, reunites with his grandfather, and vows to return the nation to the Lord.

*Songs of Redemption* continues with the reign of King Hezekiah and the challenges he faces in returning the nation to the Lord. Opposition comes from many of his advisors, his own brother, and subtly from his wife. The fate of the Northern Tribes of Israel is told through the tale of Jerusha, an Israelite woman taken captive by the Assyrians. The book closes with Hezekiah's decision to wait on the Lord for further action when their enemies are sure to attack them next. The Lord sends the Assyrians away from Judah, proving once again that he can be trusted.

Lynn Austin bases her books on biblical accounts. In her letter to readers, Austin includes a list of Bible passages used. While many details of the story are not part of the biblical record, her account is believable and appears to be well-researched. The books are enjoyable to read and may give the reader a deeper understanding of the kingdoms and times of King Ahaz and King Hezekiah.

Jane Mouttet, BA. *Missionary School Librarian, Mesilla Park, New Mexico.*

**He who lifts the skies / Kacy Barnett-Gramckow. (Genesis trilogy ; 2) LCCN 2004005169. Chicago : Moody Press, 2004.**

PAP, 0802413684, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Noah (Biblical figure)--Fiction; Bible. O.T. Genesis--History of Biblical events--Fiction; Noah's ark--Fiction; Deluge--Fiction. 396 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 8-12). Rating : 4.

The Great Flood is past, and Noah's (Noah's) family has expanded several generations. Unfortunately, man has not learned from past judgment, and once again the earth groans under godless mankind bent on riotous living, killing, and domination over others. Shem and Annah, his wife, are grieved to see that even some of

their own kin, grandchildren and cousins, are forsaking their godly heritage and turning to the lure of sin and lust.

To add to their woes, Kerren and Sarah, sisters that are very opposite in their ideals, are taken by the Great Hunter, Nimr-Rada, to serve him and his promise of freedom from God's judgment. As Nimr-Rada begins his coveted building of the Tower of Babel, Kerren is determined to defy his leadership as all-powerful King. Despite the death-threats, Kerren stands strong against the ever-growing evil and tyranny.

Kacy Barnett Gramckow has written an interesting account of the lives and families that live under the threat of a godless dictatorship that threatens to destroy the memory of the Almighty from mankind. *He Who Lifts The Skies*, part of the Genesis trilogy, takes the reader on an ancient journey through the complicated genealogies since Noah's survival from the flood. The author does an exemplary job of research to bring out the many family names and characters. There is a glossary in the back that gives the meanings of the names, and also a "family tree" that shows the genealogies.

The names used are close to the familiar spellings we know, but with slight changes. The reader may find it confusing at times to keep everyone straight, but the storyline stays true to its intent—to present the importance of staying true to the Lord despite living in a world of corruption. Too many others readily forsake their godly heritage to revere and follow after a mere man. The next book in the series will deal with the actual issue of the demise of the Tower itself.

Though not earth shattering in its presentation, *He Who Lifts The Skies* does offer an interesting read, and readily lends itself to enticing the reader to get the next book in the series.

Mary McKimney, Editor, Author/Speaker/Educator/Editor, Laguna Woods, California.

**The innocent libertine / T. Davis Bunn & Isabella Bunn. (Heirs of Acadia ; 2) LCCN 2004012185. Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2004.**

PAP, 0764228587, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Acadians--Fiction; Scandals--Fiction; Americans--England--Fiction; London (England)--Fiction; Historical fiction; Christian fiction; Love stories. 318 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 9-12). Rating : 4.

Restless amid nineteenth century confines, Abigail Aldridge ventures into a dangerous area of London and is arrested. The resulting scandal and Abigail's own thirst for adventure cause her parents to send her to America. A widowed countess, Lady Lillian Houghton, finds herself blackmailed by a banker who knows her mysterious past and holds a deep grudge against the Aldridges. Lillian becomes Abigail's



companion for the voyage in order to gain needed information, but more awaits the two of them in America than they dreamed possible.

Various plot threads begin slowly, then intertwine and hurry forward until most come to a climax about two-thirds of the way through the book. The latter third of the book becomes mostly denouement as the characters conquer the remaining flimsy obstacles, giving a sweet but unsatisfying conclusion. The intriguing, well-drawn characters also lose a little of their sparkle near the end. A myriad of details creates an impeccable sense of place and time, transporting the reader instantly to the 1820s London and America. The Bunns shine once again with their excellent dialog, keeping true to their characters and the time period while expertly revealing nuances of emotion. A book well worth reading, despite the slow ending.

Katie Hart. *Writer, Midland, Pennsylvania.*

**King's ransom / Jan Bezely and Thom Lemmons. LCCN 2004011474. Colorado Springs : WaterBrook, 2004.**

PAP, 1578567785, list cost: \$13.99.

Fic. Boris, Czar of Bulgaria, 1894-1943--Fiction; Jews--Bulgaria--Fiction; World War, 1939-1945--Bulgaria--Fiction; Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1944)--Fiction; War stories; Jewish fiction; Historical fiction. 371 p. ; 21 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

*King's Ransom* delves into the life of Tsar Boris III of Bulgaria during WWII. While trying to pacify Hitler's demands for troops and Jewish deportation, Tsar Boris struggles with his conscience and the Catholic leaders who are desperate to save the Bulgarian Jews. Meanwhile, other Bulgarians sift through the ethical mire imposed upon them by the anti-Semitic fervor of Hitler and his armies. However, in the midst of the nightmare of the day, a new love blooms, a family is cherished, friends help friends, and courage supplants fear in the hearts of Bulgarians.

Well-written and thoroughly researched, *King's Ransom* introduces readers to the complexity of decisions faced by leaders thrust into balancing personal convictions with the implications of their decisions. Though not fast-paced, the little-known story of Tsar Boris begs to be read. Told with great sensitivity to ethical dilemmas of the tsar, *King's Ransom* prompts the question, what would I really do in the face of such monstrous evil? Narrative sandwiches dialog, infusing the words of the characters with their hopes and psyche. Evil lingers almost tangibly around some of the characters, but others react to evil by attempting to overcome evil with good. "That is the way of the good who must live in evil times; they take the path of service, though lined with dangers on either side." p.75

Kristina A. Wolcott, BS. *Piano Teacher, Freelance Writer, Oroville, California.*

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**Legend of the Emerald Rose / Linda Wichman. LCCN 2004027839. Grand Rapids : Kregel Publications, 2005.**

PAP, 0 825441099, list cost: \$14.99.

Fic. Arthurian romances--Adaptations; Christian fiction; Fantasy fiction. 456 p. : map ; 23 cm.

Adult (Grades 9-12). Rating : \*5

King Arthur is dead, Guenevere has been murdered, and Merlin has disappeared. For Shadoe, the estranged son of Merlin, Camelot is gone forever. Shadoe wanders the world, following his queen's last request by guarding the Emerald Rose talisman. Then his father appears with a final request—to crown Arthur's rightful heir. Raised by Lancelot and trained by Merlin, the new ruler is skilled, spirited, and female. Ignorant of her parentage, Rayn longs to free the Isle of Might from pagan usurpers. Her faith collides with Shadoe's doubt as they must work together to restore Camelot.

This epic tale combines the bardic imagery of Stephen Lawhead and the at-odds romance of Lori Copeland, with a dash of Peretti-like spiritual warfare. The novel begins slowly with interesting back story, but the main part of the tale begins some seventeen years and six chapters later, only becoming riveting a quarter of the way through the book. Detailed characterization adds immediacy to the tale, especially with the two main characters. Old-fashioned yet humorous dialog keeps true to the period while remaining a delight to read. The mystic setting makes the novel read like classic legend, though the spiritual aspect seems a bit modernized. A must-read for those interested in ancient Britain and Camelot.

Katie Hart. *Writer, Midland, Pennsylvania.*

**Mercy me / Margaret A. Graham. (Esmeralda ; 1) LCCN 2002154758. Grand Rapids : Revell, 2003.**

PAP, 800758730, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Women--Fiction; Church membership--Fiction; City and town life--Fiction; Christian fiction; Humorous fiction. 214 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 4.

**Good heavens / Margaret A. Graham. (Esmeralda ; 2) LCCN 2003024362. Grand Rapids : Revell, 2004.**

PAP, 0800759389, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Housemothers--Fiction; Young women--Fiction; Christian fiction; Humorous fiction. 315 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 4.

**Land sakes / Margaret A. Graham. (Esmeralda ; 3) LCCN 2004026491. Grand Rapids : Revell, 2005.**

PAP, 0800759737, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Widows--Fiction; Cruise ships--Fiction; Rich people--Fiction; Christian fiction; Humorous fiction. 298 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 4.

Esmeralda McAbee is an elderly, childless widow living in Live Oaks, South Carolina, and

is known for her spunky attitude about life. Esmeralda is a Christian and isn't afraid of telling anyone about it. She doles out advice to anyone willing to listen, and even sometimes to people who don't care to hear it. Esmeralda belongs to the Willing Workers Sunday School class, whose members are ready and willing at the drop of a hat to come to anyone's rescue. Esmeralda uses her wisdom from a life lived in God's will to spread his love throughout her community, many times through the use of "Splurgeon" quotes and Southern humor.

In *Mercy Me*, Esmeralda gives advice on health and dating to her friend Beatrice, who has suffered from breast cancer. Esmeralda also prays for a friend's donkey, and upon its passing, defends its right to a burial. She also supports the music director at the Apostolic Church she attends when the other ladies in her Sunday School group threaten to oust him. When a prostitute with three small children is found to be dying from last-stage AIDS, Esmeralda enlists the help of the Willing Workers to care for her until her passing and to find a home for the children. Esmeralda doesn't shirk away from the tough situations, instead exclaiming, "Mercy me," and then using her deep faith in God and a willing spirit, she delves right in, dispersing advice and aid to anyone needing a hand.

In *Good Heavens*, Esmeralda is asked to leave Live Oaks and move to North Carolina to be housemother at a halfway house for female drug addicts. Putting her trust in God, Esmeralda accepts the position of housemother, only upon her arrival finding Priscilla House needs much more than a housemother. Past due bills, no food in the pantry, and a young overwhelmed director are challenges Esmeralda must help them overcome. With her usual wisdom and spunk, Esmeralda sets about getting Priscilla House back in order and financially stable. Will it be more of a task than she thought it would be?

In *Land Sakes*, the third and final book of the Esmeralda series, Esmeralda has been replaced as housemother by a younger woman and is seeking God's will for her life once again. One of the residents has a wealthy elderly mother who is looking for a traveling companion to go with her on a cruise to Alaska. Deciding to take the offer, Esmeralda is soon touring the gravesites of famous Americans with Mrs. Winchster, her two Afghans Lucy and Desi, and her chauffeur, Percival Pettigrew. Esmeralda's faith and patience are tested time after time during her travels with them. Can she demonstrate God's love even in the toughest of situations?

All three of these novels were written by Margaret A. Graham, and each can stand well on its own. However, once you read one of them, you will probably want to read all three. Esmeralda is one-of-a-kind, and loves to quote

Bible verses and "Splurgeon." The reader will be uplifted by the subtle lessons learned and the humorous antics and sayings of Esmeralda. She stands up for what she believes, and makes no excuses for her faith in God. What a world we'd live in if we had more Esmeraldas around! I highly recommend this fun, entertaining, and enlightening series to adult inspirational readers.

Sherri Myers. *Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.*

**Monster / Frank Peretti. LCCN 2004030836. Nashville : WestBow Press, 2005.**

HBB, 084991180X, list cost: \$26.99.

Fic. Wilderness areas--Fiction; Supernatural--Fiction; Monsters--Fiction; Hiking--Fiction; Northwest, Pacific--Fiction; Horror fiction. 451 p. : maps ; 25 cm.

Adult (Grades 9-12). Rating : 4.

Frank Peretti has covered many subjects in his writings, from spiritual warfare to abortion to bullying and on to the anti-christ. With each book he combines his dynamic, fluid writing style with contemporary subjects. His newest offering is no different as it tackles the controversial subjects of genetic experimentation and evolution. Using the Idaho wilderness as a backdrop, the story centers on Reed and Beck, a young married couple whose camping trip turns into an ordeal of survival. While Reed escapes the ferocious attack upon them, Beck is not so fortunate, and the story centers on Reed's search for the monster that took his wife.

It is difficult to not compare *Monster* to *The Oath*, in that they are both set in remote wilderness, and man is pitted against a beast that is larger than life. However, *Monster* takes on much more of a modern science moral tone, while *The Oath* dealt more with the consequences of sin, making it more moralistic in its tone. Peretti takes on the sin of science going where no man has gone before, and *Monster* shows a possible result of such action. As in all his books Peretti excels at creating main characters who must overcome conflict within and against him or her. He has developed a heroine readers totally root for in Beck. The title *Monster* is somewhat ambiguous as there are many monsters that abound in life, and not all of them go bump, or in this case, howl in the night.

Pam Webb, BA. *Freelance Writer, Sandpoint, Idaho.*

**Once upon a Gulf Coast summer : a novel / Susan Oliver. LCCN 2004266112. Nashville : Broadman & Holman, 2004.**

PAP, 0805427775, list cost: \$14.99.

Fic. Mothers and daughters--Fiction; Gulf Coast (Ala)--Fiction; Alabama--Fiction; Christian fiction. 361 p. ; 23 cm.

Adult. Rating : 5.

Susan Oliver has written a powerful book about the relationship between mother and daughter in

her first novel, *Once Upon a Gulf Coast Summer*. Written alternately in the voices of Jo (mother) and Katy (her grown daughter), the war between them continues even after Jo has been diagnosed with cancer. As in many mother-daughter relationships, various childhood issues from both parties cloud their thinking and cause many of their struggles. As flood waters threaten their homes and even their lives one Gulf Coast summer, Jo and Katy look through the portal of God's grace and forgiveness.

This is a contemporary story and readers will see themselves in many of the complexities of Jo's and Katy's relationship, one which eventually culminates with the realization of their love for each other and God's love for them both. This book will be eagerly read by Christians but would also be a great offering to a searching or non-Christian friend.

Ceil Carey, LTA. *Young Adult Public Librarian, Plano, Illinois.*

**Paper moon / Linda Windsor. (Moonstruck series ; 1) LCCN 2004015831. Nashville : WestBow, 2005.**

PAP, 0785260625, list cost: \$13.99.

Fic. Christian fiction; Love stories. 224 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 9-12). Rating : 4.

Caroline Spencer is easily prepared for chaperoning her daughter's Christian school class trip to Mexico. What she's not up to is Blaine Madison, widowed father of Annie's best friend and fellow chaperone. The instant mutual attraction between the full-of-life single mom and the handsome workaholic grows as the two explore ruins and street markets together. Hilarious mishaps are tempered with soul searching on the part of Blaine and his daughter Karen. Then Annie and Karen meet a young man involved with a smuggling ring, and their vacation takes a dangerous turn.

The lighthearted plot offers few surprises with the multiple viewpoints presented, but the love story is sweet despite its lack in thrill. The diverse characters are well-drawn albeit slightly stereotypical. The unobtrusive setting presents a few details to give readers a taste of Mexico, but the book focuses on the characters, particularly Blaine and Caroline with their growing attraction and the young smuggler and his insecurity. Many spiritual issues, from forgiveness to influence, are discussed straightforwardly. The novel is advertised to be humorous, but its wit falls more along the lines of half-smiles than belly laughs. This charming story is recommended for women, especially romance buffs.

Katie Hart. *Writer, Midland, Pennsylvania.*

**Sins of the fathers / James Scott Bell. LCCN 2005004287. Grand Rapids : Zondervan, 2005.**

PAP, 0310253306, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Juvenile justice, Administration of--Fiction; Attorney and client--Fiction; Juvenile homicide--Fiction; Women lawyers--Fiction; Teenage boys--Fiction; Legal stories. 315 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 5.

When a thirteen-year-old boy is arrested for murdering five children and an adult at a youth baseball game, it appears to be a slam-dunk case for the prosecution. How could anyone possibly say the boy was innocent or defend his actions? That's where Lindy Field comes in, the defense attorney appointed to represent Darren DiCinni. When Darren refuses to speak to her, or offer any help in his defense, Lindy appears to have her work cut out for her. But this young, ambitious defense attorney isn't about to give up easily, and as she digs deeper into Darren's world, what she finds may have her ending up dead herself.

James Scott Bell is definitely a master at his craft. Weaving suspense and Christian faith into a best-selling novel is no easy feat, but Mr. Bell makes it appear so with each novel he releases. The characters come to life in *Sins of the Fathers* and the reader finds himself caring about the outcome of the novel, almost to the point of being unable to stop reading the book. As Lindy fights for Darren's life, the reader will become engrossed in the mystery surrounding the whole case and in the events of Lindy's own troubled past. Fans of courtroom dramas will enjoy *Sins of the Fathers*, a real page-turner.

Sherri Myers. *Freelance Writer, Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania.*

**Submerged / Alton Gansky. (Perry Sachs ; 3) Ulrichsville, Ohio : Barbour Publishing, 2005.**

PAP, 1586606751, list cost: \$12.95.

Fic. Suspense fiction; Christian fiction. 344 p. ; 21 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 4.

In *Submerged*, Perry Sachs, a Seattle based engineer, finds another challenge related to his work. The newest Alton Gansky book centers on a big "what if"—who or what established an incredible underground facility that defies present knowledge and intelligence? Sachs becomes involved in this mystery when his beloved father is dying of a swift acting illness possibly linked to this clandestine installation. Sachs must travel to Tonopah, Nevada, to unravel the truth behind his father's illness and his father's involvement in this secret beneath the lake. Sachs' faith and intelligence are pressed as he grapples against real and intangible adversaries.

It is obvious why Gansky is an award winning author, as readers delve into this latest entry of his ongoing trademark Christian suspense fiction. As with other writings, such as *Vanished* (Zondervan, 2000) and *Beneath the Ice* (Barbour, 2004), Gansky combines subtle evangelism and the seemingly possible

supernatural to create page-turner suspense novels. One of Gansky's greatest writing strengths is his ability to weave sensory language into his passages without weighing down the plot with unneeded prose. Another aspect of his writing talent is his presentation of likable characters. However, in *Submerged* the large cast of characters sacrificed the ability for full characterization to develop; also it was difficult to keep track of all the personalities and who was saying what, and they all had a penchant for witty retorts at one time or another. Readers who enjoy Michael Crichton's prosaic scientific theories and Frank Peretti's creative wordsmithing will want to dive in and read *Submerged*.

*Pam Webb, BA. Freelance Writer, Sandpoint, Idaho.*

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**Tahn : a novel / L.A. Kelly. LCCN 2004018096. Grand Rapids : Baker/Fleming H. Revell, 2005.**

PAP, 0800759990, list cost: \$12.99.

Fic. Good and evil--Fiction; Middle Ages--Fiction; Historical fiction; Christian fiction. 330 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 9-12). Rating : \*5.

Kidnapped in the dead of night, Lady Netta's fear of her captor only grows when she realizes he's her husband's murderer. But Tahn only seems to be concerned with her safety and the well-being of a group of children he brings to their cave hiding place. From the children Netta learns of a dreaded place called Valhal and its evil master Samis. The dark-clothed assassin is more than he appears, but Netta will need all her faith in the coming days.

The first sentence in *Tahn* instantly throws the novel into rapid pace, and the suspense doesn't ebb until the final chapter. Three-dimensional main characters pull off the thrilling plot with ease and deep perception, with minor characters playing adequate to superb roles. The medieval-like setting is neither historical nor fantasy, and few details are given as the focus remains on characters and events. The dialog fits the setting while remaining insightful, but humor is sparse in this brooding tale. A powerful message of forgiveness runs deeply through the novel without sermonizing, and difficult issues such as abuse and drug use are dealt with biblically. An unforgettable read for both men and women.

*Katie Hart. Writer, Midland, Pennsylvania.*

**Watchers on the hill / Stephanie Grace Whitson. (Pine Ridge portraits ; 2) LCCN 2004006539. Minneapolis : Bethany House, 2004.**

PAP, 0764227866, list cost: \$12.99.

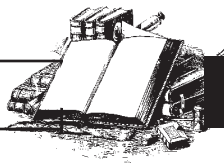
Fic. Single women--Fiction; Women pioneers--Fiction; Triangles (Interpersonal relations)--Fiction; Nebraska--Fiction; Fort Robinson (Neb)--Fiction; Christian fiction; Historical fiction. 286 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 11-12). Rating : 5.

After her abusive husband's death, Charlotte Bishop takes her ten-year-old son and returns home to Fort Robinson. Old friendships are rekindled as Charlotte struggles to find her place, something that came easily when she was the spoiled belle of the fort. Her mischief-prone son, Will, brings both purpose and mishap as he adjusts to life in the West and befriends Caleb and Laina, Jackson's daughter CJ. Though it may come subtly, change is in the prairie wind.

The plot builds slowly, focusing on the characters and their growth rather than the events in their lives. The story feels like merely a segment of the characters' lives that is filled with much change. Each of the characters springs realistically from the pages, and the more than a decade of maturing between this and the first book of the series is clearly seen. The rhythms of ranch and fort life blend seamlessly into the writing. Frequent dialog adds richness to the characters without distracting from the story. The prose is perceptive and sensitive, though it only has rare touches of humor. Women of all ages should enjoy this gentle, heartfelt story.

*Katie Hart. Writer, Midland, Pennsylvania.*



**Serving homeschooled teens and their parents / by Maureen T. Lerch and Janet Welch. (Libraries Unlimited professional guides for young adult librarians) LCCN 2004046518. Westport, Conn. : Libraries Unlimited, 2004.**

PAP, 0313320527, list cost: \$39.00.

027.6. Libraries and families--United States; Libraries and teenagers--United States; Home schooling--United States; Public libraries--Services to teenagers--United States; Libraries and education--United States. xvi, 242 p. ; 24 cm.

Adult. Rating : 5.

For those of us working with homeschooled teens and their families, *Serving Homeschooled Teens and their Parents* offers a wealth of information. It is a professional guide for young adult librarians and as such, the ideas contained in the book not only apply to homeschooled teens but in many ways to teens across the board.

Approximately the first one hundred fifty pages cover such subjects as "who are these kids and why are they in my library?" to "what makes them tick," "success depends on how you bait your hook," and other subjects relating to this special library audience. Included in each chapter are samples of any ideas or program planning sheets, press releases, etc. Many resources for more materials are listed, a core collection for libraries serving homeschoolers is included with a list of additional books on homeschooling, articles, web sources, and statewide organizations. These additional resources cover an entire 75 pages.

This is a title that young adult librarians in public libraries should purchase and keep on their desk for easy reference.

Ceil Carey, LIA. *Young Adult Public Librarian, Plano, Illinois.*

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**Holman illustrated Bible dictionary / general editors: Chad Brand, Charles Draper, Archie England. Nashville : Broadman & Holman, 2003.**

HBB, 0805428364, list cost: \$34.99.

220.3. Bible--Dictionaries. xxii, 1717 p. : ill., maps ; 24 cm.

Adult (Grades 9-12). Rating : \*5.

Chad Brand, Charles Draper, and Archie England served as general editors for the new *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*. Approximately 350 other scholars wrote articles, and helped produce a highly useful study tool. In true dictionary form, the book cover subjects from A to Z. Among the subjects

are the traditional ones: books of the Bible, names, places, and theological terms, as well as others. Entries in the dictionary vary in length.

Twelve charts deal with subjects as diverse as the agricultural year, miracles of Jesus, Jewish parties in the New Testament, and a table of weights and measures. Over two dozen scale reconstructions, by Bill Latta, include Athens, Nehemiah's Jerusalem, and a Babylonian ziggurat. Numerous maps and over 700 full-color photographs add visual details. Helpful, too, are comparisons of major Bible translations

The editorial foreword notes the editors are committed to "total trustworthiness, truthfulness, sufficiency, inerrancy, and infallibility of the Bible." This large, heavy book is a remarkable value for \$29.97. If you're familiar with the previous edition, rest assured the new version is as advertised, "completely revised, updated, and expanded."

Roberta Lou Jones, MDiv. *Volunteer, Church Children's Library, Dexter, Kentucky.*

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**Holman quicksource Bible dictionary. Nashville : Broadman & Holman, 2005.**

PAP, 0805494464, list cost: \$14.97.

220.3. Bible--Dictionaries. 394 p. : ill., maps ; 24 cm.

Adult (Grades 5-12). Rating : \*5.

The *Holman QuickSource Bible Dictionary* is advertised as "the quickest source to people, places, things, and events in the Bible." Those words aptly describe this nifty Bible dictionary. It is a quick source of basic biblical information on a wide range of topics.

Maps, photographs, charts, and drawings are plentiful and arranged in a handy fashion. My tiny dose of skepticism evaporated!

A bright green cover, colorful pictures, and handy size make this edition "user-friendly." The art layout is superb. Sunday School classes, home libraries, and church libraries will find this Bible dictionary helpful. This fine Bible study tool is worthy by itself, but is also a stepping stone to more serious study.

Roberta Lou Jones, MDiv. *Volunteer, Church Children's Library, Dexter, Kentucky.*

**A user's guide to Bible translations / David Dewey. LCCN 2004025514. Downers Grove, Ill. : InterVarsity Press, 2004.**

PAP, 0830832734, list cost: \$13.00.

220.5/2. Bible. English--Versions--History. 239 p. : ill. ; 21 cm.

Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 5.

Why so many Bible translations? Which is best? David Dewey's *A User's Guide to Bible Translations* promises to answer the first of those questions, and offers the best help available for answering the second.

Dewey takes a helpful approach to his topic by first handling the principles involved in Bible translation and then sketching out the history of how the Bible made it from first-century Palestine to 21st-century readers. Along the way, he discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the most popular English Bible translations available.

Dewey's explanation of the problems and questions of translation is excellent. He takes an evenhanded approach to the sometimes acrimonious debate over form- and meaning-driven translation philosophy, simply explaining the benefits and detriments of each. In his chapter on the gender-inclusive language debate, Dewey is more clearly in favor of one perspective (the more recent), but is still fair.

The second half of *A User's Guide* handles each major English Bible translation in turn, telling both how it came into being and what its major characteristics are. Dewey is essentially evangelical and conservative, so his recommendations will mean most to those who interpret the Bible straightforwardly.

Appendices explain the history of the transmission of the Hebrew Bible and of the New Testament, as well as briefly and helpfully outlining the science of textual criticism. An annotated bibliography of other notable translations of the Bible or the New Testament rounds out the book.

David Dewey has provided an excellent, accessible overview of an all-important topic. The novice could use this book as an entrance into many other fields of study, and the specialist can skim quickly.

Mark L. Ward, Jr. *PhD candidate. Research Assistant/National Newsletter Editor, Bob Jones University's J. S. Mack Library, Greenville, South Carolina.*

**Holman quicksource Bible atlas : with charts and biblical reconstructions / introduction and geography of the Bible lands by Paul H. Wright. Nashville : Broadman & Holman, 2005.**

PAP, 805494456, list cost: \$14.97.

220.9/1/0223. Bible--Geography--Maps; Bible--History of biblical events--Maps. 398 p. : ill., maps ; 24 cm.

Adult (Grades 5-12). Rating : 5.

This reference handbook is packed with almost 400 pages of full color maps, timelines, charts, reconstructions, and photographs. Even the table of contents is in color! The book begins with an eight page timeline of biblical and world history. The book is then divided into two sections. Section one is entitled Geography of Bible Lands (pages 21-90) and covers, region by region, things like climate, topography, etc. Section two is called Maps of Bible Lands (pages 91-398) and starts with Noah in Genesis and goes through the Book of Revelation and on to events of the early church until the third century.

This is a very helpful and high quality book. There are over 100 clearly presented, detailed maps. Photos are well-placed and relevant. The charts are wonderful; there are at least fifty of them sprinkled throughout the book. Here are some of the titles: Ancient Numbering Systems, Jewish Feasts and Festivals, Jewish Calendar, Priests in the Old Testament, Queens of the Old Testament, Family of Abraham, Family of David, The Divided Monarchy, The Prophets in History. There are also about 20 well done reconstructions which allow the reader to look inside, for example, an eighth-century BC Hebrew home or a typical synagogue of the first century AD. There are also reconstructions of a first century winepress, Herod's Temple and a Roman siege tower. Overall, this is a great bargain for libraries, teachers, or anyone who wants to study the Bible.

David Rainey, Senior Bibliographer, State Library of Louisiana, Baton Rouge.

**Changing the world through kindness / Steve Sjogren. LCCN 2004028635. Ventura, Calif. : Regal Books, 2005.**

HBB, 0830736727, list cost: \$16.99.

235/.4. Service (Theology); Spiritual warfare; Kindness--Religious aspects--Christianity; Christian life--Pentecostal authors. 185 p. : ill. ; 23 cm.

Adult. Rating : 5.

Steve Sjogren, founding pastor of Vineyard Community Church in Cincinnati, believes "many overlook the power of a small thing." Consequently, his newest book acts as a guide to "servant warfare," aiming to help Christians recognize the effectiveness of using kindness as a weapon of spiritual warfare. Sjogren has led teams of believers in a variety of service projects designed to penetrate the hearts of the lost in his community and show them the love of God in a tangible way. The stories of their success are the proof for his theories and the highlight of this book.

Sjogren's book is groundbreaking in both its simplicity and practicality. Avoiding the supernatural focus of other texts on spiritual warfare, Sjogren methodically breaks down the

stereotypes keeping many believers from engaging in spiritual battles and gives suggestions designed to empower and equip. Sjogren's sensible and matter of fact style perfectly match the user-friendliness of his ideas. His appropriate combination of Scripture and personal illustration give the reader both the motivation and encouragement necessary to apply the ideas contained within.

Appendices at the close of the book include a practical guide to starting projects with several examples listed and ranked on factors like time, cost, and complication. This section allows the text to be useful in practice as well as theory. *Changing the World Through Kindness* would be of great benefit both to the average Christian striving to make gains in personal dealings with spiritual warfare or to the church leader seeking to give his congregation a fresh outlook on outreach and evangelism.

Aarik Danielsen, BS/BM. Free-lance journalist and worship leader, Knoxville.

**Human dignity in the biotech century : a Christian vision for public policy / Charles W. Colson and Nigel M. de S. Cameron, editors. LCCN 2004006654. Downers Grove, Ill. : InterVarsity Press, 2004.**

PAP, 0830827838, list cost: \$15.00.

241/.64957. Genetic engineering--Religious aspects--Christianity. 252 p. : ill. ; 23 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

*Human Dignity in the Biotech Century* is an academic book, written by experts in the field and well organized, with an introduction to each essay by one of the editors. These essays alert the reader to the ethical and legal challenges facing the 21st century involving the new genetics. This includes such subjects as embryo research, stem cell research, cloning, genetic engineering, gene therapy, pharmacogenomics, cybernetics, nanotechnology, and abortion!

The authors intend to prepare Christians for the role they should play in this public forum and their book is written for that purpose. *Human Dignity...* is not for the casual reader although there is information to be gleaned by the casual reader if he has the patience to wade through the material. Much of the information is not accessible to the average person because of the huge amount of information, couched in very difficult language. However, upper level science teachers as well as home schooling parents might find this book just what they are looking for to inform themselves and in turn their students, on current subjects and the Christian viewpoint. And for those wishing to delve deep into these subjects and perhaps become—spokespersons for the ethics of biotechnology, this would be a perfect choice.

Ceil Carey, LTA. Young Adult Public Librarian, Plano, Illinois.

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**He has made me glad : enjoying God's goodness with reckless abandon / Ben Patterson. LCCN 2004025503. Downers Grove, Ill. : InterVarsity Press, 2005.**

PAP, 0830817433, list cost: \$13.00.

248.4. Joy--Religious aspects--Christianity; Grace (Theology); God--Goodness; Christian life. 176 p. ; 21 cm.

Adult. Rating : \*5.

*He Has Made Me Glad* is an appropriate title for a most encouraging, biblically sound look at why we need to be grateful. Ben Patterson, chaplain of Westmont College and author of this joy-filled book, brings truth to light as he states that having ingratitude "is the ultimate dismissal of God – and of all that is good, for all that is good is of God."

This statement is the underlying foundation of Patterson's premise that we should be thankful. He points out that this is definitely a God idea, in fact a command. "Give thanks in all circumstances for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." I Thessalonians 5:18

Having abundant joy in all things is often an aspect of Christianity that many of us don't understand, and rarely experience. Yet, joy is exactly what God intends for his children. The reader will undoubtedly reap rich nuggets of truth about the importance of rejoicing in God and his great goodness toward us. This may be a little explored area for some, but reading this text will undeniably birth a fresh outlook on one's own life; how to better deal with difficult circumstances, and how to serve and enjoy a God who is filled with love and joy.

I highly recommend this book to anyone who is looking for a closer and more intimate walk with the Lord. It not only lifts one to higher realms of possibility, but it unveils a most critical truth about the Kingdom of God. Patterson declares that "no matter what (happens), to give thanks is to triumph nevertheless." This is a fact because when we thank and praise God we immediately are brought into His presence, and in His presence is fullness of joy! Psalm 16:11

Mary McKinney, Editor, Author/Speaker/Educator/Editor, Laguna Woods, California.

**The pursuit of God in the company of friends / Richard Lamb. LCCN 2003010914. Downers Grove, Ill. : InterVarsity Press, 2003.**

PAP, 0830832300, list cost: \$13.00.

248.4. Friendship--Religious aspects--Christianity; Christian life. 240 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : 3.

The Church is the body of Christ, and the Scripture says much about the relations that Christians have with one another. Recently many writers have focused on the Christian community. Richard Lamb's *The Pursuit of*

*God in the Company of Friends* is a practical work to help Christians help each other seek God.

Lamb notes that too many Christian relationships are superficial. Even within churches that emphasize small groups, the tough probing questions may never be asked. The friendship stays at the level of small talk over pop and crackers. It may move to the discussion of Scripture texts. But serious probing discussion about personal application is rare.

Lamb gives advice to Christians who desire to build substantive relationships with one another, yet who need guidance as to the how. For instance, he shares how he went to his wife, his supervisor at InterVarsity, and other friends after he succumbed to viewing pornography online. This openness, even when it hurt, prevented him from persisting in that sin. Most of the practical tips of this nature are hidden in the many personal stories that sprinkle the book.

In addition to practical advice, Lamb seeks to find scriptural examples of pursuing God in the company of friends. At one point he indicates that John 1 teaches the incarnation as "God in pursuit of friends." At another place he follows a story about guys who believed you couldn't have a party without booze with the comment that Mary the mother of Jesus felt the same way (referring to Christ's first miracle at Cana). A couple times he noted that Jesus was all about parties.

In short Lamb's book on a topic of current interest is filled with personal stories, how-to tips, and his personal insights into how the Scripture connects with his topic.

Brian C. Collins, Greenville, South Carolina.

**Girl talk: mother-daughter conversations on biblical womanhood / Carolyn Mahaney and Nicole Mahaney Whitacre. LCCN 2004029336. Wheaton, Ill. : Crossway Books, 2005.**

PAP, 1581345100, list cost: \$12.99.

248.8/43. Women--Religious aspects--Christianity; Christian women--Religious life; Mothers and daughters. 222 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 9-12). Rating : 3.

*Girl Talk* is written to help mothers and daughters discover what it means to be godly women. Real-life mother and daughter Carolyn Mahaney and Nicole Mahaney Whitacre offer advice on how to live lives of purity, submission, and homemaking in the modern world. They also discuss what it takes to initiate "constant biblical communication," touch on the "disappearance" of loving mothers from movie and television families, and detail God's purpose for the mother-daughter relationship.

The authors clearly make their points and have a wealth of personal experience to write from. However, despite the universal mother-daughter

theme, *Girl Talk* is for select audiences. It presumes its readers are middle class, "good" families with at least one committed Christian in the relationship. Also, for mothers or daughters in intolerable, even abusive relationships, the book never quite addresses how the believing party should handle things. The authors use the story of Joseph to advise trusting God's purpose for the relationship but even though it's biblical advice, it could sound simplistic to someone truly hurting—or to a non-Christian. (The authors do advise seeking protection by the authorities, if necessary).

*Girl Talk* uses advanced vocabulary and dense, text-heavy prose. Although the chapters are short, teen readers might have problems grasping the authors' points. Bullets, section headers, and sidebars would have helped. Also, most chapters are from the mother's point of view. While they'd surely be eagerly read by moms hoping to improve their relationships with their child, teen readers might skim these parts.

Five appendices include questions and activities to spur mother-daughter discussions. There are also recommended reading lists and a seven-page "Word to Fathers."

*Girl Talk* is a lovely book for strong Christian families trying to further strengthen their relationship in Christ, but other audiences might not find it as helpful.

Rosemarie DiCristo. Children's Author, Bronx, New York.

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**The power of a godly grandparent : leaving a spiritual legacy / Stephen & Janet Bly. LCCN 2002014687. Kansas City, Mo. : Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2003.**

PAP, 0834120372, list cost: \$14.99.

248.8/45. Grandparents--Religious life; Grandparenting--Religious aspects--Christianity. 166 p. ; 21 cm.

Adult. Rating : \*5.

Authors Stephen and Janet Bly have been writing full-time since 1988 and have produced (between the two of them) more than one hundred books. Along the way, Stephen has pastored churches in both California and Idaho and they've gained three sons and two grandchildren. Throughout it, they've had lots of opportunity to find out how to be godly grandparents, and now, in the pages of *The Power of a Godly Grandparent*, they're sharing what they've learned with their fellow grandparents.

They start out by stating clearly in their very first chapter (The Power of Seeking God First) that godly grandparenting must come out of living by Matt. 6:33: Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Grandchildren

may be wonderful, but they are "added." Devotion to God must come first.

Having established this important principle (one that every Christian needs to establish, grandparent or not), they then go on to explain how to become grandparents that grandchildren can count on. Along the way, they touch down on such topics as loving grandchildren long distance, spending top-quality time with grandkids, and setting up and maintaining a grandchild prayer journal.

Some grandparents live down the block from their grandkids and get to see them often. Others live half a world apart from theirs and rarely if ever get to see them. And still others have no place in the lives of their grandchildren at all, for one reason or another. No matter where grandparents find themselves in that list, reading this book will remind them that prayer can go where they cannot and God can accomplish even things that seem to be impossible. And it will encourage every reader, grandparent or not, to begin to pray for loved ones.

Betty Winslow. Librarian, Bowling Green Christian Academy, Bowling Green, Ohio.

**Ambassadors of hope : how Christians can respond to the world's toughest problems / Robert A. Seiple. LCCN 2004009779. Downers Grove, Ill. : InterVarsity Press, 2004.**

HBB, 0830832238, list cost: \$18.00.

261.8/7. Christianity and international affairs; Church charities; Non-governmental organizations. 220 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult. Rating : 4.

From his days during the Vietnam War to the tragedies witnessed in the past decade, Robert Seiple, founder and Chairman of the Institute for Global Engagement, is sharing his testimonies and hope for global religious freedom. Through his experience and knowledge, he explains how Christians and faith-based nongovernmental organizations can help bring reconciliation and hope to countries that have been divided and torn apart by intolerance and hatred.

Robert Seiple provides an abundance of information which could fill a book longer than 222 pages if his ideas were more thoroughly explained. He often uses real-life events as examples to convey his message, which may not always reach the reader's understanding. This does not mean the ideas and examples do not have relevance to this book. Seiple's eyewitness accounts and experiences open the reader's eyes to global suffering and religious intolerance. He provides relevant information on how Christians can bridge the gap to reconcile difference among other countries where there has been a history of animosity.

Included in this book are two appendices. Appendix I is the Institute for Global Engagement Principles of Engagement.

Appendix II is a list of Faith Based/International NGOs (non-governmental organizations) with contact information. Sources as quoted in this book are also provided.

Stacie Coomer, Bellbrook, Ohio

**Holidays & holy days : origins, customs, and insights on celebrations through the year / Susan E. Richardson. LCCN 2001033157. Ann Arbor, Mich. : Gospel Light/Vine Books, 2001.**

PAP, 1569553068, list cost: \$9.99.  
263/.9. Fasts and feasts--History; Holidays; Church year. 164 p. ; 21 cm.  
Adult. Rating : 4.

*Holidays & Holy Days* covers the historical background of both major and minor American holidays in an easy to read format. Included in this book is information on Jewish feasts, church history, the calendar, birthstones, and Sunday as a day of worship and rest. The holidays are organized under the month/months they occur, making it easy to see which holidays are coming up and to plan accordingly.

This book contains enough information for Christians to make educated decisions on whether or not to celebrate certain holidays and offers ideas on how to handle children and holidays. A list of resources is included in the back of the book for those readers wishing to dig a little deeper into individual holidays.

Susan Richardson saw a need for this type of resource while working at a Christian bookstore. Readers will appreciate having this reference in their home library to refer to throughout the year.

Audra Silva, Freelance Writer, Pendleton, Oregon.

**Same-sex marriage : putting every household at risk / Mathew D. Staver. Nashville : Broadman & Holman, 2004.**

PAP, 0805431969, list cost: \$9.99.  
306.84. Same-sex marriage--Law and legislation--United States; Marriage law--United States; Same-sex marriage--Moral and ethical aspects. v., 154 p. ; 22 cm.  
Adult. Rating : 5.

When it comes to cultural engagement, Mathew Staver speaks from experience in *Same-Sex Marriage : Putting Every Household at Risk*. Staver serves as President of Liberty Counsel, dedicated to advancing religious freedom, the sanctity of human life, and the traditional family. He moves the reader to action, to become more compassionate for those trapped in homosexual behavior, and to become more concerned for the defense of monogamous heterosexual marriage.

*Same-Sex Marriage* is a short 124 pages, but includes nearly 600 endnotes of documentation. Staver builds strong arguments on the foundation of medical research, historical legal precedent, psychological and sociological

studies, and even testimony gleaned from the homosexual community itself. In fact, some of the most distressing data presented came not from Christian observation of the gay and lesbian community, but from their own writers who spoke candidly about their lifestyle.

Christian optimism and hope pervades this book. Putting aside both apathy and a complaining spirit, Staver motivates the reader to action by focusing on what God may be pleased to accomplish through loving Christian action and courage. We are here for such a time as this, and we must embrace God's calling for us even in the midst of the struggle to biblically define marriage.

Walter Lamb, BA. Teacher and Writer, Saint Louis, Missouri.

**A high price for abundant living : the story of capitalism / Henry Rempel. LCCN 20039037150. Waterloo, Ont. : Herald Press, 2003.**

PAP, 0836192494, list cost: \$14.99.  
337. Globalization; Capitalism--Environmental aspects; Consumption (Economics); Capitalism. 397 p. ; 21 cm.  
Adult (Grades 10-12). Rating : 4.

A hard look at our nation's economic system, *A High Price for Abundant Living* calls Christians to a careful critique of the ethical roots of their own financial way of life. Rempel starts with an in-depth look at the birth of capitalism and its unique growth and change in North America, including its spiritual, economic, and social basis, and listing the pros and many cons of this system. He then looks at how capitalism could benefit the world if inculcated with Christ's teachings and calls for a renewal in the business world. In doing this, Rempel considers many subjects, ecology, the world's destitute and displaced, cooperation rather than conquering within the business world, conglomerates, government vs. the free market, etc.

Professor and Senior Scholar of economic development, leader of government and religious overseas economic missions, businessman, Mennonite Henry Rempel draws on a large arena of expertise for writing *A High Price for Abundant Living*. Rempel has a penchant for explaining difficult concepts in simple terms and for the pithy, apt example. His anecdotal style, fully annotated data, Bible-based ideas, and senses of humor and proportion keep the reader interested and learning. The narrative encourages questions, debates, and enlargement of ideas. *A High Price for Abundant Living* will be useful as a text in Christian secondary and tertiary schools. Recommended for all schools and libraries, and for group and individual reading.

Donna J. Eggett. Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia.

**Why pro-life? / Randy Alcorn. LCCN 2004015517. Sisters, Ore. : Multnomah, 2004.**

HBB, 1590523695, list cost: \$10.99.  
363.46. Abortion--Moral and ethical aspects; Abortion--Religious aspects--Christianity; Right to life. 136 p. ; 19 cm.  
Adult (Grades 9-12). Rating : 5.

*Why Pro-Life?* is arranged in five sections. The first section reviews the basics of the abortion issue; why the issue is important, and what exactly is pro-life. Section two presents the abortion issue from the prospective of the unborn child. It addresses in detail the pro-choice idea that life or value does not begin at conception. Section three is written from the prospective of the mother and covers the issues of choice and the physical and emotional consequences of abortion. Section four discusses other issues related to abortion such as adoption and child abuse. Section five gives the spiritual perspective and also lists ways the reader can help the unborn babies and their mothers.

Randy Alcorn's book provides a rational and logical response to pro-choice arguments. He has avoided the emotionalism that often surrounds the abortion issue. Even though Alcorn is a Christian, he has chosen to present in this book only evidence backed by medical science, and psychological studies that will be recognized and understood by all readers.

The book is concise, well organized, and easily read. Even though there is no index, the table of contents directs the reader easily to the different aspects of the abortion issue. Alcorn's research is well documented and can lead the reader to other useful sources. Adults and young adults will find the book useful in presenting a non-judgmental, scientifically supported pro-life point of view.

Mary J. McCoy, Orange, Texas

**Easy homeschooling techniques / by Lorraine Curry. Boelus, Neb. : God's Gardener, 2004.**

PAP, 0970996527, list cost: \$18.95.  
371.04/2. Home schooling--United States. 264 p. ; ill. ; 23 cm.  
Adult. Rating : 5.

**Easy homeschooling companion / by Lorraine Curry. Boelus, Neb. : God's Gardener, 2004.**

PAP, 0970996519, list cost: \$18.95.  
371.04/2. Home schooling--United States. 264 p. ; ill. ; 23 cm.  
Adult. Rating : 5.

*Easy Homeschooling Techniques* is an information packed book covering everything from getting started to organizing your home and planning your schooling. Lorraine Curry shows you how to teach different subjects, choose literature, and handle high school. Most

importantly, she shows you how to keep God at the center of your child's education.

*Easy Homeschooling Companion* is a wonderful addition to the first book and includes new topics such as parenting, raising the standard of education, and relevant book reviews. The author offers encouragement and easy ideas to add to your homeschooling day and even shares excerpts from her diary to glean from.

Both books hold a wealth of information on many topics of interest for homeschooling families. Lorraine Curry's engaging writing style makes these books easy to understand and a pleasure to read. Add in the course of study, sample scope and sequence, resource list, and all the tips and techniques and these books become valuable resources with a smorgasbord of ideas to incorporate into your homeschool.

Symbols all through the text and the key located in the front of both books help you distinguish between teaching tips, general tips, notebook activities, etc. Throughout the books you'll find charming black and white illustrations the author based on photos of her own family.

Audra Silva, Freelance Writer, Pendleton, Oregon.

**Homeschooling the challenging child : a practical guide / Christine M. Field. LCCN 2005295652. Nashville : Broadman & Holman, 2005.**

PAP, 0805430784, list cost: \$14.99.  
371.04/2. Home schooling. xi, 244 p. ; 22 cm.  
Adult. Rating : 5.

In *Homeschooling the Challenging Child*, homeschool veteran Christine Field gives plentiful encouragement and suggestions for parents home educating children with a vast range of struggles. Field defines learning and personality styles, then surveys the types of disabilities and issues that can make homeschooling grueling. Discipline is covered in depth as is teaching the attention deficit learner. One chapter is devoted to personality clashes, another to various avenues of planning a homeschool program. Field touches on dealing with stress, siblings, a parent's personal needs, and disappointment and grief that accompany parenting difficult kids.

Though not a comprehensive work on home education of kids with problems, Field does cover a wide expanse of issues. Information on temperament and personality traits is old ground already covered by many authors; likewise the personality clashes chapter is repetitive. Most useful are the chapters on discipline and planning a program for the challenging learner; both offer useful specific suggestions. The resources section includes publishers, assessment sources, and support group contacts. Overall Field gives floundering families practical ideas and encouraging vignettes of homeschoolers who have persevered and been

successful in their home education journeys. *Homeschooling the Challenging Child* will provide the beginning stepping stones for families schooling kids with problems and point them in a direction with hope and spiritual encouragement.

Karen Schmidt, BA. Freelance Writer/Editor, Marysville, Washington.

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**Ninth book of junior authors and illustrators / edited by Connie C. Rockman. LCCN 2004061627. New York : H. W. Wilson, 2004.**

HBB, 0824210433, list cost: \$105.00.  
809/.89282/03. Children's literature--Bio-bibliography--Dictionaries; Children's literature--Illustrations--Bio-bibliography--Dictionaries; Children--Books and reading--Dictionaries. xiii, 583 p. : ill., ports. ; 26 cm.  
Adult. Rating : \*5.

This is the most recent edition in a series of reference books first published in 1934. There are 173 authors and/or illustrators of books for children and young adults in this volume. Each profile includes a one or two page autobiographical account. An additional editorial biography includes information about the author and/or illustrator's life and work not already mentioned in the autobiographical account. Each entry begins with a black and white photograph of the author (with autograph underneath) and ends with a list of selected works by the author and a list of suggested reading about the author. Each entry includes cover art from one of the author's books. 17 entries are updated profiles from earlier volumes.

The 17 updated profiles include well known authors such as Barbara Cooney, Arnold Lobel, Sid Fleischman, Madeleine L'Engle, Ursula K. Le Guin, Robert McCloskey, William Steig, and more. The new profiles include people like Meg Cabot, Doreen Cronin, Kate DiCamillo, Tim Egan, Ian Falconer, Jules Feiffer, Gerald Morris, Jim LaMarche, and many more. Most of the photographs are of good quality. The price may seem high, but this book has superb content, a pleasing layout, and a sewn binding. Overall, this is a fabulous reference work. I highly recommended it for all libraries.

David Rainey, Senior Bibliographer, State Library of Louisiana, Baton Rouge..

**The faith of the presidents : our national leaders at prayer / Ron DiCianni. LCCN 2004008665. Lake Mary, Fla. : Strang/Charisma House, 2004.**

HBB, 1591854679, list cost: \$15.99.  
973/.09/9. Presidents--United States--Biography; Presidents--United States--Religion; Christianity and politics--United States--Case studies; United States--Politics and government--Case studies. 190 p. : ill. (some col) ; 24 cm.  
Adult (Grades 5-12). Rating : 5.

**Praying with the presidents : our nation's legacy of prayer / Ron DiCianni. LCCN 2004101620. Lake Mary, Fla. : CharismaKids, 2004.**

HBB, 1591854083, list cost: \$15.99.  
973.931. Prayer; Presidents. 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 24 x 39 cm.  
Grades 4-6. Rating : 5.

This patriotic and inspirational duet, *The Faith of the Presidents* (for older students and adults) and *Praying with the Presidents* (for elementary school age) presents a provocative look at all of America's presidents from George Washington to George W. Bush. The author does not condone the wrongs done or sins committed; he simply presents, in the presidents' words, an account of "our nation's dependency upon God Almighty."

*The Faith of the Presidents* tells about each man using this format: a miniature portrait; a brief introduction; his life; his legacy; his faith; and an apropos prayer. Sprinkled throughout are quotes from and about the presidents. Succinct and engaging, this volume challenges and stimulates thought.

*Praying with the Presidents* presents each President in this format: a quote about prayer from this man; thought points from the quote; praying like he did; a relevant Bible verse; pertinent history. Of picture book size and embellished with thumbnails of each president, this volume catches the interest of elementary school age readers.

Author and award winning artist Ron Dicianni carefully researched each volume. With precise, appealing language his two books complement each other. Each enhances the information found in the other. They are also useful separately. *Praying with the Presidents* and *The Faith of the Presidents* will be welcome in the family reading circle, Christian schools, and church groups. They will also be acceptable in many secular groups.

Donna J. Eggett. Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia.

**Beyond the shadowlands : C.S. Lewis on heaven & hell / Wayne Martindale. LCCN 2004022218. Wheaton, Ill. : Crossway Books, 2005.**

PAP, 1581345135, list cost: \$15.99.  
B or 921 or 236/24/092. Lewis, C. S. (Clive Staples), 1898-1963 --Religion; Lewis, C. S. (Clive Staples), 1898-1963 --Criticism and interpretation; Heaven; Hell; Theology, Doctrinal; Heaven in literature ; Hell in literature. 240 p. ; 22 cm.  
Adult. Rating : 5.

Utilizing passages from some of Lewis's most highly acclaimed works, including *Out of the Silent Planet* trilogy; *The Great Divorce* (Macmillan, 1946); *The Screwtape Letters* (Simon & Schuster, 1996); and his well-known children's series, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Martindale discusses and exposes commonly held perceptions and misperceptions concerning



heaven, earth, hell, and purgatory. Using the premise of myth as both needing to be exposed and utilized as communication with the human imagination, Martindale leads the reader beyond the finite to the infinite reality of the living God. The reader is presented with the opportunity to break free of the finite and see heaven unbounded and hell exposed.

*Beyond the Shadowlands: C. S. Lewis on Heaven & Hell* by Dr. Wayne Martindale discusses Lewis' writings through the eyes of scholars, pupils, and those closest to Lewis during his lifetime, as well as comparing insights from renowned authors and poets throughout the ages. Martindale is an English Professor at Wheaton College in Illinois. He has written extensively on the subject of C. S. Lewis and his views on Christianity. Writing style is academic, yet approachable. Theories presented are well documented and backed up by scripture. Neither didactic, nor doctrine heavy. Included are comprehensive notes, bibliography of works cited, index, and scriptural references. Recommended for large academic libraries, as well as all academic literary studies on C. S. Lewis. Also recommended as a Bible study resource.

Kim Harris. *Children's Librarian, Lyell Branch of the Rochester Public Library, Rochester, New York.*

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**The collected letters of C.S. Lewis / edited by Walter Hooper. LCCN 2005272515. San Francisco : HarperSanFrancisco, 2005.**

HBB, 0060727632 (v. 1) ; 0060727640 (v. 2), list cost: \$34.95 each.

B or 921 or 823/.912. Lewis, C. S. (Clive Staples), 1898-1963 --Correspondence; Authors, English--20th century--Correspondence; Literary historians--Great Britain--Correspondence; Christian converts--Great Britain--Correspondence; Scholars--Great Britain--Correspondence. v. <1-2> ; 23 cm.

Adult. Rating : \*5.

In 1964 Warner Lewis published *Letters of C.S. Lewis* as a memorial to his brother, Jack. Giving a fascinating glimpse of this prolific writer, the 1964 book nonetheless only used parts of Jack's original letters, leaving researchers and readers hungry for more. In this three volume work of *The Collected Letters of C.S. Lewis*, Editor Walter Hooper has gone back to the originals, sorted and dated them, and included 95% of them in this exhaustive effort. Each volume is meticulously researched, extensively footnoted, and contains biographical information as well as unbelievable indices to aid the researcher. The two volumes already published should keep the reader well satisfied while awaiting the promised Vol. 3, which will cover the Narnia years.

Vol. 1 begins with the schoolboy letters from young Jack to his father or his brother. Following him through to his conversion to faith in Jesus Christ, Volume 1 sets the stage for his

later published writing. These early years introduce the reader to family, friends, Lewis's writing style, and delightful wit. An excellent biographical appendix identifies those with whom Lewis corresponded as well as those people mentioned in his correspondence. A superb index (32 pages) allows one to zero in on exactly what subject might interest the reader.

Volume II takes up with a newly converted Lewis and an intellectual energy that is contagious. The volume bursts with lively discussions with many writers, including J.R.R. Tolkien. The beauty of the letters is as much in the clarity of Lewis's turn of phrase as in giving the Lewis researcher or reader a frame of reference for the author's published works. Making a reading list based on these letters will give even serious readers enough material to occupy the rest of their lives. The biographical appendix (41 pages) and subject index (45 pages) are again precise and thorough.

More advanced high school students who are interested in Lewis will find these volumes interesting in small doses. As a research tool and inspiration, no upper school library is complete without them.

Kelley Westenhoff. *Parent-Librarian, Dominion Christian School, Oakton, Virginia.*

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**Lost boy no more : a true story of survival and salvation / Abraham Nhial and DiAnn Mills. Nashville : Broadman & Holman, 2004.**

PAP, 0805431861, list cost: \$12.99.

B or 921 or 962.4. Survival; Christian life; Sudan--History--Civil War, 1983-. 184 p. ; 22 cm.

Adult (Grades 9-12). Rating : \*5.

An inspirational biography filled with important information, *Lost Boy No More* relates the story of Sudan's Lost Boys as told to DiAnn Mills by a Lost Boy, Abraham Nhial, with additions from other Lost Boys. In 1987 four year old Nhial, living in southern Sudan, fled northern Muslim troops as these troops butchered their way through his village. This biography tells of his and thousands of other Lost Boys' despairing trek. Chapters are given over to pertinent subjects, including Sudanese life and culture, Sudan's history and its rich Christian background, Islam versus Christianity, slavery, refugee camp life, the Lost Boys in the United States. The last chapter discusses a format for volunteer work. Among the closing supplements is an exhaustive bibliography which will capably guide further reading.

Abraham Nhial accepted Christ as his savior during his desperate trek. As a young teen he became a Christian leader. Here in the U.S.A. he is the spiritual leader of the Lost Boys. Award winning fiction and non-fiction author, DiAnn Mills researched and collated this tremendous narrative. Her simple, truth filled

re-telling immediately grabs the reader's emotions and intellect. Horrors are spoken of as the need arises, but not dramatically elaborated. Mills' information about Muslim thought, religion, and atrocities will be of interest in today's threatened America. Her description of the growth of Christian faith in these young men will challenge all readers.

Emphatically, *Lost Boy No More* is a must-read for all Christians. Thought provoking, emotionally powerful, confrontational, this volume will be valued by discussion groups, Bible classes, individuals, Christian schools and libraries, and those considering volunteer and mission work among the dispossessed.

Donna J. Eggett. *Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia.*

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