

Recent Books for Young Readers [and Selected Titles Too Good to Miss]

DeSaint-Exupery, Antoine. (2006). *The Little Prince: Book of Fun and Adventure*. Trans. Lucinda Karter. CA: Harcourt. Board games, mazes, dots, finger puppets, masks and more provide hours of fun for the whole family. Includes a storing envelope and dry-erase pen.

Engle, Margarita. (2006). *The Poet Slave of Cuba: A Biography of Juan Francisco Manzano*. Art by Sean Guals. NY: Henry Holt. Powerful poems and dramatic illustrations create a portrait of a life with its cruelty and slavery, but also beauty and hope. This is a distinctive biography for middle graders.

Finchley, Judy, and Kevin O'Malley. (2006). *Miss Malarkey Leaves No Child Behind*. New York: Walker Company. The latest in this popular Miss Malarkey series uses all the programs and initiatives developed to help children read, keeping everyone laughing about this important topic.

French, Vivian. (2004). *I Love You, Grandpa*. Ill. Dana Kubick. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick. With a special talent for snuggling, Stanley loves his grandpa the best of all when he stays for a weekend as babysitter. This is a treat for the young listener and beginning reader.

Hamilton, Richard. (2006). *Cal and the Amazing Anti-Gravity Machine*. NY: Boombury. This early chapter book offers a lively romp for boys and reluctant readers who will giggle their way through Cal's anti-gravity adventure.

Hennessy, B.G. (2006). *Corduroy Lost and Found. Based on Characters Created by Don Freeman*. Ill. Jody Wheeler. NY: Viking (Penguin). A delightful new adventure of a famous bear is written in the same whimsical style as the creator of Corduroy. A treat for youngest "reader."

Katz, Karen. (2006). *Can You Say Peace?* New York: Henry Holt. For International Peace Day, September 21, and any day, young listeners and readers meet children from all over the world and learn the many ways to say "peace." The concept of peace is introduced through 22 languages. This is a fine resource for language learners.

Lester, Julius. (2006). *Tales of Uncle Romies: The Adventures of Brer Rabbit*. Ill. Jerry Pinkney. NY: Puffin (Penguin). These classic tales are full of wit, humor and creativity told in 48 timeless stories for primary readers.

Lewis, Kim. (2006). *A Puppy for Annie*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick. The communication between the puppy and her owner is a delight for dog owners or would-be owners. This is a fine read-aloud or early reader.

Madden, John. (2006). *John Madden's Heroes of Football: The Story of America's Game*. NY: Dutton (Penguin). The Super Bowl-winning coach has used his extensive knowledge to detail the prominent players, famous plays, and transformed professional football from a rough game to the country's biggest sport. Photos and illustrations add to the interest. A high-interest "read" for middle graders.

McBratney. (2004). *You're All My Favorites*. Ill. Anita Jeram. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick. Here is a tale that answers a timeless question with the ultimate reassurance and offers the perfect way for parents to remind their own "little cubs" how very much each one is loved.

McDonough, Zona Zeldis. (2006). *Peaceful Protest: The Life of Nelson Mandela*. Ill. Malcah Zeldis. NY: Walker (available pb). This biography brings Mandela's life and the anti-apartheid struggle to young elementary level readers with depth and detail.

McDonough, Zona Zeldis. (2006). *Hammerin' Hank: The Life of Hank Greenberg*. Ill. Malcah Zeldis. New York: Walker. Henry Benjamin Greenberg dominated baseball from 1933 to 1948. "Hank" Greenberg was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. While Jews had been playing baseball since the 1800s, Hammerin' Hank was baseball's first Jewish superstar.

McDonough, Yona Zeldis. (2006). *The Life of Benjamin Franklin: An American Original*. Ill. Malcah Zeldis. NY: Henry Holt. With elegant prose and vibrant pictures, the author and her renowned mother collaborate on this biography of one of our founding fathers – printer, writer, scientist, inventor, and one writer of the Declaration of the Independence. Here is a picture book for young readers and middle grade resource. Excellent for reluctant readers and ESL readers.

Milne, A.A. (2006, 80th Anniversary Edition). *Winnie the Pooh*. Decorations by Ernest H. Shepard. NY: Dutton (Penguin). Since 1926, Winnie the Pooh has delighted generations of readers! This specially designed edition is a treat for new readers and collectors. Also see *Magical Pop-Up World of Winnie the Pooh*.

Morpurgo, Michael. (2006). *I Believe in Unicorns*. Ill. Gary Blythe. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick. Eight-year-old Tomas hated reading, but that changes after a visit to the library where he listened to the enchanting tales read by a librarian as she sat on a wooden unicorn. Tomas' subsequent saving the library from near destruction reminds the reader of the power of storytelling in our lives.

Nathan, Amy. (2006). *Meet the Musicians: From Prodigy (or Not) to Pro*. New York: Henry Holt. Members of the New York Philharmonic share how they became involved in music as kids and how their careers have progressed since then. The helpful advice and friendly approach create an all-access guide to the world of classical music. For middle graders and more.

Rappaport, Doreen. (2006). *Nobody Gonna Turn Me 'Round. Stories and Songs of the Civil Rights Movement*. Ill. Shane W. Evans. This final book in a trilogy about the African-American experience is a tribute to the crusaders for equality and peace in America, a crusade that continues to this day. Middle grade readers will grasp the story-quality of this nonfiction book. Book I: No More! Book II: Free at Last!

Raschka, Chris. (2003). *Talk to Me About the Alphabet*. NY: Henry Holt. This new look at the alphabet in rhythm and style makes all readers look at the alphabet in a new way.

Reynolds, Peter. (2006). *So Few of Me*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick. The over-scheduled Leo wishes he was more than one, and realizes that his over-complicated life can be simplified. The author of *The Dot* and *Ish* presents a message for readers of all ages.

Richards, Jean. (2003). *How the Elephant Got Its Trunk*. Ill. Norman Gardaty. NY: Henry Holt. The retelling of Kipling's Just-So Stories classic is a delight for the youngest readers. A surprise end gatefold adds to the high interest.

Rodriguez, Rachel. (2006). *Through Georgia's Eyes*. Ill. Julie Paschkis. NY: Henry Holt. This is a vivid portrait of an exceptional artist, a woman whose eyes were open to the wonders of the world. She captured on paper what she saw around her; at art school she learned to speak in paint.

Rosen, Michael. (2006). *Totally Wonderful Miss Plumberry*. Ill. Chinlun Lee. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick. A wonderful teacher rescues a young student from a classroom disaster – and gives young readers and listeners a fine image of the teacher and her major role in the classroom.

Rosen, Michael, and Robert Ingpen. (2006). *Shakespeare: His Work and His World*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick. This vibrant and exciting biography is an outstanding "read" for middle graders. It is an ideal introduction to a writer who will share their advancing grade levels.

Steig, William. (2005). *Sylvester and the Magic Pebble*. NY: Simon & Schuster.

The deluxe edition showcases color from the original watercolors – vibrant and glorious as intended – over 30 printings earlier. Steig's Caldecott speech and a photo signing the book are included. "The book is a masterpiece," says Maurice Sendak.

Stevenson, Robert Louis. (2006). *The Moon*.

Pictures: Tracey Campbell-Pearson. NY: Farrar Straus Giroux.

The moon shines on the creatures of the night as a father and son go on a late-night romp and end up home again. The luminous paintings capture especially the love between a father and son.

Stringer, Lauren. (2006). *Winter Is the Warmest Season*. CA: Harcourt.

This is a unique twist on the traditional wintertime picture book. The narrative follows the family through a day of hot breakfast, steaming afternoon cocoa, festive candlelit party before bed. Winter is presented as the coziest time of the year. A fine picture book and discussion starter.

Thomas, Dylan. (2006). *A Child's Christmas in Wales*. Ill. Chris Raschka. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

Fifty years after its first publication, this timeless prose poem is echoed by images of the Caldecott Honor artist.

Williams, Marcia. (2006). *Charles Dickens and Friends: Five Lively Retellings*.

Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

Each classic is distilled into 6-10 page stories with original dialogue and witty marginal notes. The retellings are an excellent introduction to classroom reading assignments (*Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, *A Tale of Two Cities*).

Wojciechowski, Susan. (2004). *The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey*. Ill.

P.J. Lynch. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

This moving, lyrical tale, gloriously illustrated, is recognized as a true Christmas classic. The new edition is narrated on CD by James Earl Jones with full orchestra.

Wood, Nancy. (2004). *Old Coyote*. Ill. Max Grafe. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

The universal tale about saying goodbye – and the continuing circle of life presents a sensitive thought for read-aloud or young readers.

Wellington, Monica. (2006). *Mr. Cookie Baker*. NY: Dutton (Penguin).

Readers from earliest listeners can follow the process of measuring, mixing, baking, decorating and eating with educational tie-ins to early math units on sequencing, sorting, measuring and telling time.

For Young Readers

Bates, Katherine Lee. (2004). *America the Beautiful*. Ill. Chris Gall. NY: Aladdin.

The classic patriotic hymn, first published in 1895, is illustrated in a new edition by the great-great-grand nephew of Ms. Bates. The poet was inspired at Pike's Peak, near Colorado Springs.

Burg, Ann. (2005). *Times Square: A New York State Number Book*. Ill. Maureen Brookfield. Sleeping Bear Press.

This is one of the truly unique publications in the "alphabet" series, which is increasing in timely subjects. Abundant information in numbers, facts and illustrations.

Butts, Ed. (2005). *She Dared*. Ill. Heather Collins. Plattsburgh, NY: Tundra.

Fifteen women who surprised the world – for better or for worse – took up the challenge that society felt could be met only by men. Presented in stories of their intriguing adventures (10-14).

Dee, Catherine. (2003). *The Girls' Book of Success*. Little, Brown & Co.

A collection of wisdom with tales of triumph, celebrity advice and more.

Estes, Eleanor. (2004). *The Hundred Presses*. Ill. Louis Slobodkin. Introduction by Helena Estes. CA: Harcourt.

A restored edition of an Honor Book, in print since 1944, offers a timeless message of compassion and understanding. The author's daughter addresses the reader with the story behind the story.

Ferber, Brenda A. (2006). *Julia's Kitchen*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

The legacy of a family through the association of Julia's kitchen softens a sense of loss through a meaningful experience of reality.

Filipovic, Zlata. (1994). *Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo*. NY: Viking/Penguin.

Zlata's life at 11 years (1991) was like girls her age until war broke out and her childhood was destroyed. Her world changed to one trapped in the realities of war. She wrote, "The 'kids' (Yugoslavian politicians) really are playing around. And it's us they're playing with, drawing maps, coloring with their crayons, but I think they're crossing out human beings." Published in 12 countries, originally by UNICEF. In 1993, Zlata went to Paris.

Grodin, Elissa (retold by). (2006). *The Happy Prince*. Sleeping Bear Press.

Based on the Oscar Wilde fairytale published in 1888, the socially relevant retelling breathes new life and meaning into the classic story of mindfulness and compassion. Set in a contemporary environment, written for young readers (and listeners) who will learn of the gilded statue of a prince and a sparrow who together choose to improve the world around them.

Hopkinson, Deborah. (2004). *A Pocket of Seeds*. Ill. Bethanne Anderson. New York: HarperCollins.

A garden and the seeds help a pioneer family make their new land truly become a home. The moving picture book is a social studies link for young readers.

Jackson, Carolyn. (2006). *If I Had a Dog*. Ill. France Brassard. Plattsburgh, NY: Tundra.

The story of the 6-year-old Mazine who loves dogs is told for young readers to learn "dog language" of veterinarian-approved information. The satisfying ending of her surprise ownership is especially pleasing to readers.

Jocelyn, Martha. (2005). *Hannah and the Seven Dresses*. Plattsburgh, NY: Tundra.

Hannah's problem of deciding upon a dress to wear for her birthday, from a selection of seven for each day of the week, presents a delightful story for read-aloud our reading (3-5).

Kipling, Rudyard. (2006). *Just So Stories*. Ill. Peter Sis, Satoshi Kitamura, others.

Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

This illustrated book of eight classic tales illustrated by eight artists is a visual feast of the rewarding retelling from the master storyteller.

Landman, B. (2006). *I Am Marc Chagall*. Grand Rapids, MI: Erdman.

The artist's life is described as a young man who decides to be an artist-painter. The three-dimensional mixed media illustrations depict the cities where Chagall lived, Vitebsk, Paris and Moscow, while the text describes and re-creates memories that inspired him.

Lasky, Kathryn. (2002). *A Voice of Her Own: The Story of Phillis Wheatley, Slave Poet*. Ill. Paul Lee. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

In 1761, a young African-American girl was sold to the Wheatley family in Boston, who gave her a new name, as their slave. They encouraged her learning despite New England's unwritten rule to keep slaves illiterate. She became the first black woman poet in America. Excellent reading and reference for middle grades and up. Too good to miss.

Lee, Milly. (2006). *Earthquake*. Pictures by Yang Sook Choi. NY: Farrar, Straus & Giroux. The story of the San Francisco Earthquake, April 18, 1906, is told through a Chinese-American family experience with the real story and detailed pictures. Excellent reading and reference for middle graders.

Locker, Thomas. (2002). *Walking With Henry: Based on the Life and Works of Henry David Thoreau*. Denver, CO:

Fulcrum Publishing.

Simple, eloquent text carries a timely message about the healing properties of living in harmony with nature. The tale is found at the conclusion of Walden. Highlights view of children's relationship to nature.