



Children's

Choices  
2010



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## What Is the Children's Choices Project?

Each year 12,500 school children from different regions of the United States read newly published children's and young adults' trade books and vote for the ones they like best. These Children's Choices, selected from more than 500 titles, can be counted on as books children really enjoy reading. This list, a project of a joint committee supported by IRA and The Children's Book Council (CBC), is designed for use not only by teachers, librarians, administrators, and booksellers but also by parents, grandparents, caregivers, and everyone who wishes to encourage young people to read for pleasure.

# Beginning Readers (Grades K–2)

## ***Being a Pig Is Nice: A Child's-Eye View of Manners***

Sally Lloyd-Jones. Ill. Dan Krall. New York: Schwartz & Wade.

Children are enticed by a little girl's imagination as she wonders how having the manners of a pig (or other animals) is less troubling than the expected manners for a child. Whimsical illustrations portray the naughty versus nice format. (Team 1)

## ***The Birthday Pet***

Ellen Javernick. Ill. Kevin O'Malley. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish.

Danny wanted a turtle for his birthday, but his family had other ideas. They got a dog, a cat, a rat, and a bird before finally getting him a turtle. Like Danny, readers know what they want and will be happy when he gets his turtle. (Team 5)

## ***Boo to You!***

Lois Ehlert. New York: Beach Lane Books, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's.

The use of rhyming text and photos of colorful collage art using fall objects give readers a reason to view each page carefully. The mice cleverly scared the black cat away from their harvest meal. (Team 2)

## ***Cool Dog, School Dog***

Deborah Heiligman. Ill. Tim Bowers. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish.

Tinka is the star of this adventure in rhyme. She sneaks into school, where she breaks all of the rules! Soon Tinka becomes a "please come every day" dog, because she loves to sit and listen to the children read. (Team 3)

## ***Dogs Don't Brush Their Teeth!***

Diane deGroat and Shelley Rotner. New York: Orchard.

This interactive fold-out book motivates children to turn the pages. Photographs of dogs showing what dogs do and don't do make this a book that children will find enjoyable to read. (Team 2)

## ***Don't Be Afraid, Little Pip***

Karma Wilson. Ill. Jane Chapman. New York: Margaret K. McElderry, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's.

The theme of being afraid to try new things is developed through the story of a penguin that is

afraid to swim. When Pip falls into the water his friend Merry helps him learn to "fly" in the water instead of the sky. (Team 2)

## ***Firefighter Ted***

Andrea Beaty. Ill. Pascal Lemaitre. Margaret K. McElderry, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's.

With a spark of good humor, this book is a perfect match for fire safety lessons. Ted's innocent childhood antics and imagination put him in the hero role and will leave his audience totally speechless. (Team 4)

## ***The Gingerbread Pirates***

Kristin Kladstrup. Ill. Matt Tavares. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

This swashbuckling tale combines a pirate encounter with Santa and the magic of the night before Christmas. The combination of cookies and pirates makes your mouth water, your imagination soar, and provides another fun pirate party idea. (Team 4)

## ***The Hair of Zoe Fleeffenbacher Goes to School***

Laurie Halse Anderson. Ill. Ard Hoyt. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

Zoe was born with a head of wild hair. Her hair had always been an asset until she went to first grade. Protecting a child's self-esteem by emphasizing her strengths is a lesson that teachers and students can learn from this book. (Team 4)

## ***How Many Baby Pandas?***

Sandra Markle. New York: Walker Books for Young Readers.

This counting book uses actual photographs of baby pandas, and includes much information that can be used by a teacher to show how a baby giant panda lives and grows. (Team 5)

## ***I Don't Want to Go to School!***

Stephanie Blake. New York: Random House Books for Young Readers.

Almost everyone remembers being scared to go to school for the first time. Simon says "No Way" every time someone mentions anything to do with going to school. In the end, he can't believe he has to go home. (Team 1)

### *If I Were a Jungle Animal*

Tom and Amanda Ellery. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

Bored in the outfield, Morton daydreams about life as a jungle animal. The bright, busy, and exciting illustrations are a hit with children as they predict what animal Morton will dream about next. (Team 3)

### *Let's Do Nothing!*

Tony Fucile. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

Young Frankie and Sal feel like they have done everything there is to do in life. In their sincere and hilarious effort, Frankie and Sal discover that it is impossible to do nothing. Boredom is a feeling kids will connect with. (Team 4)

### *Lulu the Big Little Chick*

Paulette Bogan. New York: Bloomsbury.

Lulu doesn't want to be little anymore and decides to go far away. She meets the pigs, sheep, cows, and horses—who all say she should stay—but she keeps going. The close-up illustrations and Lulu's startled reactions will grab readers' attention. (Team 5)

### *Mouse Was Mad*

Linda Urban. Ill. Henry Cole. New York: Harcourt.

This book lends itself to some kinesthetic action. Children will have fun imitating the many ways Mouse demonstrates being mad. As a result of his expressive actions, Mouse discovers he is not mad after all. (Team 4)

### *The Odd Egg*

Emily Gravett. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

Everyone has an egg except for Duck, but one day he finds a very large speckled egg. As all the eggs hatch, except for Duck's, the pages change sizes preparing the reader for the big surprise when Duck's egg hatches. (Team 5)

### *Opposnakes: A Lift-the-Flap Book About Opposites*

Salina Yoon. New York: Little Simon, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's.

Young children loved being able to manipulate the pages to discover the concepts shown in this double-flap book. The colorful art directs children across each page to help them understand each concept. (Team 2)

### *Silly Tilly*

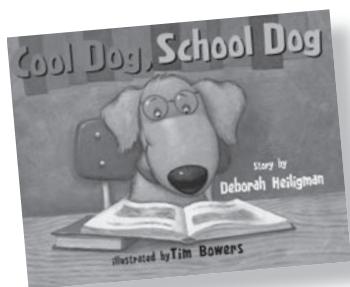
Eileen Spinelli. Ill. David Slonim. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish.

The silly barnyard pranks of Tilly the goose are sure to be enjoyed. Bold illustrations guide children to think about why Tilly is so loved by her animal friends. (Team 1)

### *The Sleepy Little Alphabet: A Bedtime Story From Alphabet Town*

Judy Sierra. Ill. Melissa Sweet. New York: Knopf.

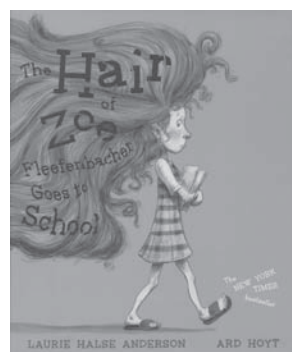
Children will relate to the comical antics of alphabet children who are avoiding bedtime. The story is written in rhyme, capturing the listener's attention. Each page colorfully depicts humorous actions. (Team 1)



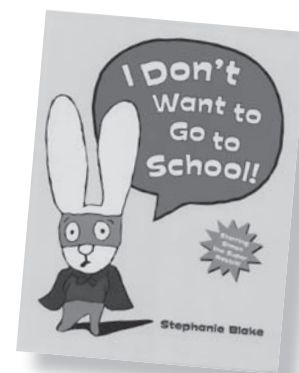
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From *The Hair of Zoe Fleefenbacher Goes to School* by Laurie Halse Anderson. Ill. Ard Hoyt. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.



From *I Don't Want to Go to School!* by Stephanie Blake. New York: Random House Books for Young Readers.

### *Sneezy Louise*

Irene Breznak. Ill. Janet Pedersen. New York: Random House.

Louise battles a terrible case of the sneezes on a troublesome day. This lovable character learns some valuable lessons—tomorrow can be a better day, and cover that sneeze! (Team 3)

### *Stick Man*

Julia Donaldson. Ill. Axel Scheffler. New York: Arthur A. Levine.

Young students enjoyed going on this gamboling, almost scary, adventure with the Stick Man. The rhymes kept their attention and having Santa Claus save the day made it a great holiday choice for the younger crowd. (Team 3)

### *There Was an Old Monster!*

Rebecca Emberley. Ill. Ed Emberley. Music Adrian Emberley. New York: Orchard.

Predictable text, rhyme, and colorful illustrations cause young children to want this book read to them repeatedly. Their favorite part is the ending. What do you think happens to the monster? (Team 2)

### *Trouble Gum*

Matthew Cordell. New York: Feiwel and Friends, an imprint of Macmillan Children's.

Ruben and Julius are stuck in their house on a rainy day. When their grandmother arrives with bubble gum, the two young pigs quickly break their mother's rules about gum in the house. Children will love the young pigs' adventures and the black-and-white drawings punctuated by bright pink bubbles of gum. (Team 3)

### *Turkey Trouble*

Wendi Silvano. Ill. Lee Harper. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish.

Thanksgiving is approaching and Turkey is desperately trying to find a disguise so that he can

hide from the farmer. After several failed attempts, Turkey is successful. The outcome of this humorous book made the young readers laugh out loud! (Team 2)

### *What Really Happened to Humpty? From the Files of a Hard-Boiled Detective*

Jeanie Franz Ransom. Ill. Stephen Axelsen. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge.

Joe Dumpty meets many Mother Goose characters as he tries to prove that his brother Humpty's fall wasn't an accident. The clever parodies add to the fun. (Team 5)

### *Which Puppy?*

Kate Feiffer. Ill. Jules Feiffer. New York: Paula Wiseman, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's.

President Obama promised his girls, Sasha and Malia, a pet in the White House. Many animals, including puppies, want to be that pet. Children can identify with the animal theme and with wanting to be chosen. (Team 1)

### *Wink: The Ninja Who Wanted to Be Noticed*

J.C. Phillips. New York: Viking.

Children can relate to the difficulty Wink has in listening and sitting still in this story. Channeling your desire to please is a lesson well learned. In the end Wink finds a way to combine ninja discipline and positive attention. (Team 4)

### *The Yellow Tutu*

Kirsten Bramsen. Ill. Carin Bramsen. New York: Random House.

Margo wears her new yellow tutu on her head to school. She feels as bright as the sun. The other children laugh at her, except for one child who sees other possibilities and invites her home for a tea party. (Team 5)

Thank you to the 2009–2010 IRA–CBC Joint Committee and Review Teams. The committee members were Stan F. Steiner (chair), Terrell A. Young, Lois A. Buckman, Pamela J. Farris, Susannah Richards, and Deborah K. Setliff. The following review teams were responsible for the annotations:

**Team 1:** Illinois—Pamela J. Farris (team leader), Mary Gardner, Kim McKenna, Betsy Hoelting, Barb Swick, Linda Tyrrell, Sarah Kennay, Mary Anderson, and Liz Strack

**Team 2:** Tennessee—Deborah Setliff (team leader), Stacey Fisher

**Team 3:** Connecticut—Susannah Richards (team leader), Amanda Cappon, Jane Cook, Carol Faustman, Kelly Gellineau, Luann Hardacker, Kathleen Malone, and Jill Zangerl

**Team 4:** Idaho—Stan F. Steiner (team leader)

**Team 5:** Texas—Lois A. Buckman (team leader)

For more information on the CBC and IRA, or on how to become involved in the Children's Choices project, visit [www.cbcbbooks.org/readinglists/childrenschoices](http://www.cbcbbooks.org/readinglists/childrenschoices) or [www.reading.org/Resources/Booklists/ChildrensChoices.aspx](http://www.reading.org/Resources/Booklists/ChildrensChoices.aspx).

# Young Readers (Grades 3–4)

## ***Adventures in Cartooning: How to Turn Your Doodles Into Comics***

James Sturm, Andrew Arnold, and Alexis Frederick-Frost. New York: Roaring Brook/First Second.

Children connect to the comic format of this fast-paced adventure in which a knight pursues the dragon who stole the princess. Magical Elf gives clear information about comics and cartooning that inspires children to create their own comics. (Team 1)

## ***America Ferrera: Latina Superstar***

Sheila Anderson. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow.

Young females enjoyed reading this book about the Latina actress America Ferrera. Readers were fascinated with information gleaned from quotes and personal stories. Ferrera's strong aspiration to be a role model for girls is evident throughout the book. (Team 2)

## ***Aye-Aye: An Evil Omen***

Miriam Aronin. New York: Bearport.

The cover photo depicting the unusual Aye-Aye drew in readers with its combination of cuteness and strangeness. The book's layout and photographs were very appealing, and readers found the fact page very accessible. (Team 3)

## ***Babymouse # 11: Dragonslayer***

Jennifer L. Holm and Matthew Holm. New York: Random House Books for Young Readers.

Babymouse, who would rather daydream about fighting dragons, finds herself on the Mathlete Team preparing to win back the famed Golden Slide Rule. As always, Babymouse will conquer her self-doubt and be victorious in this graphic novel. (Team 5)

## ***Backpack Stories***

Kevin O'Malley. Park Ridge, IL: Albert Whitman.

A comic book format attracts children to these four adventure stories about backpacks. A variety of graphic art styles give the history of backpacks and tell of a science fair, a superhero, and a backpack that comes to life. (Team 1)

## ***Ben Roethlisberger***

Michael Sandler. New York: Bearport.

Roethlisberger of professional football's Pittsburgh Steelers became the youngest quarterback ever to win a Super Bowl. Readers learn he has been an

inspirational speaker at many schools and that his nonprofit foundation benefited its community police station with a trained dog and equipment donation. (Team 4)

## ***Blueberry Girl***

Neil Gaiman. Ill. Charles Vess. New York: HarperCollins Children's.

The poetic phrases flow through a prayer wishing only good things for the blueberry girl. The illustrations as well as the rhyming words pull the reader in with wishes for things like no nightmares at 3 and no bad husbands at 30. (Team 5)

## ***The Book That Eats People***

John Perry. Ill. Mark Fearing. New York: Tricycle.

Warnings begin on page 1 and continue to the last page to never turn your back on this book. In between are the gory details of what happened to those who failed to heed these warnings! (Team 1)

## ***Bug-a-licious***

Meish Goldish. New York: Bearport.

From dragonflies on a stick to grasshopper tacos, children go buggy over the different tasty ways insects are eaten around the world. Detailed photographs of the unique treats spark readers' interest as they learn about food eaten in other cultures. (Team 3)

## ***Chihuahua: Señor Tiny***

Natalie Lunis. New York: Bearport.

This well-written informational text covers details about Chihuahuas from their history connecting them with the ancient Aztecs to contemporary stories about being a dog hero. Endearing photographs and interesting facts motivate children to continue reading this book. (Team 2)

## ***Coretta Scott***

Ntozake Shange. Ill. Kadir Nelson. New York: HarperCollins Children's.

The life story of Coretta Scott King is featured in this beautifully written and illustrated picture book. Children enjoyed reading Shange's poetry about how an interest in civil rights brought two people together and changed the world. (Team 2)

### ***Crow Call***

Lois Lowry. Ill. Bagram Ibatoulline. New York: Scholastic.

*Crow Call* is Lowry's debut picture book. Children and adults alike are engaged by the sepia-tinted, photograph-like illustrations and the universal message—appreciate the value and simple beauty of spending time together. (Team 3)

### ***The Day-Glo Brothers: The True Story of Bob and Joe Switzer's Bright Ideas and Brand-New Colors***

Chris Barton. Ill. Tony Persiani. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge.

The true story of the Switzer brothers' invention of daylight fluorescent colors describes their journey toward brightening our lives with color. Children are drawn toward the eye-popping colors as they witness the brothers' experimentation with color. (Team 3)

### ***The Dunderheads***

Paul Fleischman. Ill. David Roberts. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

Time-squandering, mind-wandering, doodling, never-on-task students face their teacher, Miss Breakbone, in a clash of wills in this humor-filled book. (Team 1)

### ***Face to Face With Gorillas***

Michael Nichols (with Elizabeth Carney). Washington, DC: National Geographic Children's Books.

The plight of gorillas in the wild is shared along with facts about them. There are terrific accompanying photographs for children to pore over. (Team 1)

### ***Face to Face With Sharks***

David Doubilet and Jennifer Hayes. Washington, DC: National Geographic Children's Books.

This informational text contains a plethora of colorful close-up photographs of sharks. Children are initially drawn to the photos and then begin reading the fascinating and up-to-date facts revealed by the National Geographic researcher and photographer. (Team 2)

### ***Gonzalo Grabs the Good Life***

Janice Levy. Ill. Bill Slavin. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers.

Gonzalo wins the lottery and seeks the good life away from the farm but he gains weight lying around, the hot tub burns, and singing in the choir is problematic; maybe his old life would be better. This story, sprinkled with Spanish, is laugh-out-loud funny. (Team 5)

### ***The King Who Barked: Real Animals Who Ruled***

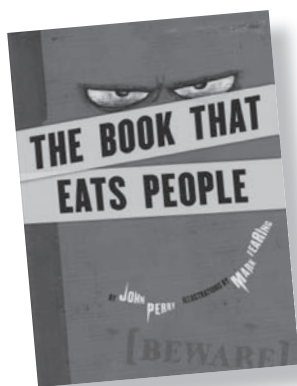
Charlotte Foltz Jones. Ill. Yayo. New York: Holiday House.

This book tells the stories of animals that really held public office. The whimsical illustrations paired with the short descriptions of animals from different continents make for amusing and humorous stories that grab young readers' attention. (Team 3)

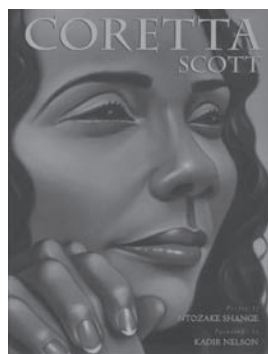
### ***Lunch Lady and the Cyborg Substitute***

Jarrett J. Krosoczka. New York: Knopf.

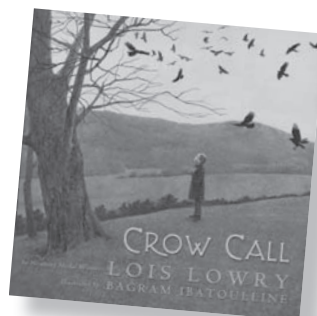
The mysterious lunch lady uses her Spatu-copter and Chicken Nugget Bombs to outsmart the evil Cyborg Substitute. Children extend their imagination through this humorous graphic novel. (Team 2)



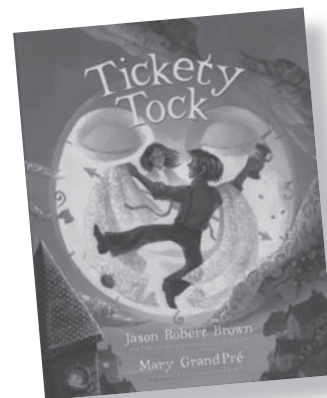
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From *Crow Call* by Lois Lowry. Ill. Bagram Ibatoulline. New York: Scholastic.



From *Tickety Tock* by Jason Robert Brown. Ill. Mary GrandPré. New York: HarperCollins Children's.

### ***Max Goes to Jupiter: A Science Adventure With Max the Dog***

Jeffrey Bennett, Nick Schneider, and Erica Ellingson. Ill. Michael Carroll. Boulder, CO: Big Kid Science.

While reading the story about Max, the first dog to go to Jupiter, the reader also learns many facts about Jupiter, space, and things that might be possible in the future. (Team 5)

### ***Michael Phelps: Anything Is Possible***

Meish Goldish. New York: Bearport.

Michael Phelps has become a household name, but few know about his childhood. At age 12 he was diagnosed with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder. This biography serves as an inspiration to the thousands of kids who also have been diagnosed with ADHD. (Team 4)

### ***My Name Is Sangoel***

Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed. Ill. Catherine Stock. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers.

When Sangoel's father was killed in the war in Sudan, his family moved to America. In school, children couldn't pronounce his name and some laughed. Sangoel was afraid he would lose his name until he came up with an idea. (Team 5)

### ***Oceanology: The True Account of the Voyage of the Nautilus***

Zoticus de Lesseps. Ed. Emily Hawkins. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

This interactive, fictional water-stained notebook brings children through an undersea journey. Students learn about the *Nautilus*, creatures of the sea, underwater volcanoes, and more! Textured illustrations, informational flaps, and small diaries keep all students entertained while reading. (Team 3)

### ***The Plot Chickens***

Mary Jane and Herm Auch. New York: Holiday House.

Henrietta's aspirations result in a charming parody meant for would-be writers of all ages. Readers learn about the elements of a good story through Henrietta's clever tale. This is a great book to use in a classroom when teaching about writing stories. (Team 4)

### ***A Picture Book of Harry Houdini***

David A. Adler and Michael S. Adler. Ill. Matt Collins. New York: Holiday House.

Often said to be the greatest magician of all time, Harry Houdini has surely been an inspiration to many contemporary magicians. This fascinating biography provides some interesting insights into his knowledge of, and motivation for, illusion. (Team 4)

### ***Pug: What a Mug!***

Lori Haskins Houran. New York: Bearport.

Pugs can be traced back to China, more than 2,000 years ago. Today pugs have become favorites for

people from a variety of backgrounds. Kids can learn a lot about the care and history of pugs through this book. (Team 4)

### ***Sticky Burr #2: The Prickly Peril***

John Lechner. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

This story, set in a forest of sticky burrs, is based on the classic plot of good triumphing over evil. Jealous Burweena seeks revenge on Sticky Burr and the village members. The graphic-novel format has high appeal for reluctant readers. (Team 4)

### ***Stone Rabbit #1: BC Mambo***

Erik Craddock. New York: Random House.

This graphic novel appeals to intermediate readers. The journey of the rabbit hero into a time portal in his bathroom floor leads him to adventures with dinosaurs, Neanderthal rabbits, and a little man with a big ego! (Team 2)

### ***Take It to the Queen: A Tale of Hope***

Josephine Nobisso. Ill. Katalin Szegedi.

Westhampton Beach, NY: Gingerbread House.

This is a fable about the Virgin Mary. Village people with a great need seek her assistance after their homes are devastated. (Team 1)

### ***Tickety Tock***

Jason Robert Brown. Ill. Mary Grandpré. New York: HarperCollins Children's Books.

A tailor labors on and on making a dress until 41 years have passed. Then he finds a clock that takes him back to his youth. (Team 1)

### ***The Trouble With Sisters and Robots***

Steve Gritton. Park Ridge, IL: Albert Whitman.

Lizzy follows her big brother Kyle wherever he goes. When Kyle creates a robot that goes on a rampage, turning everything into metal, Lizzy becomes the hero. Little sisters are not so bad after all! (Team 2)

### ***What's So Special About Planet Earth?***

Robert E. Wells. Park Ridge, IL: Albert Whitman.

Children enjoyed pretending they were in the story searching for a new place to live. The larger print appealed to struggling readers and all readers enjoyed the sometimes amusing illustrations used to get the author's point across. (Team 3)

### ***You Never Heard of Sandy Koufax?!***

Jonah Winter. Ill. Andre Carrilho. New York: Schwartz & Wade.

Being the only Jewish player at the time made baseball a hard career choice for Sandy Koufax. He didn't start off as a great pitcher, but became the best in both leagues for six years running. The narrator's voice makes Koufax come alive. (Team 5)

# Advanced Readers (Grades 5–6)

## ***10 Inventors Who Changed the World***

Clive Gifford. New York: Kingfisher.

The graphic novel illustrations and stories of 10 influential inventors create an interesting read in this book. Little-known but relevant facts about each of the men and women shared in this nonfiction source motivate young readers to wanting to know more. (Team 2)

## ***The Adventures of Benny***

Steve Shreve. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish.

The chapter titles are sure to hook reluctant readers (e.g., “The Mummy, or Another Great Use for Toilet Paper”). The wacky humor and whimsical ink drawings take readers on a series of five highly imaginative adventures. (Team 4)

## ***Animals***

Miranda Smith. New York: Kingfisher.

The reader is given a view of the world of animals, through topics such as attack and defense, finding food, storage and digestion, avoiding predators, life cycles, and much more. An informative glossary is included. (Team 5)

## ***Ask Me Anything: Every Fact You Ever Wanted to Know***

Carole Stott, Dougal Dixon, Claire Watts, John Pipe, Richard Walker, and Susan Kennedy. New York: DK.

Wacky and hysterical (as well as factual) information is shared in this attractive volume. Students raved about this book and its Q-and-A format. (Team 1)

## ***Astronomy: Out of This World***

Simon Basher and Dan Green. New York: Kingfisher.

This book pairs nonfiction text with anime-style characters, providing students with an up-close, personal look at the universe. The characters help students make connections to astronomy—from the basics of the moon and sun to the wonders of distant galaxies. (Team 3)

## ***Autism and Me: Sibling Stories***

Ouisie Shapiro. Photographs by Steven Vote. Park Ridge, IL: Albert Whitman.

This beautifully written book is based on interviews of children whose siblings are autistic. The photos of

the siblings and their stories of the challenges as well as candid moments of living with an autistic brother or sister interested the readers. (Team 2)

## ***The Dog Days of Charlotte Hayes***

Marlane Kennedy. New York: Greenwillow.

Charlotte is not a dog person, however, she cannot help feeling sorry for her family’s dog. Chained in the backyard, he is rarely cared for. Charlotte cares for him and hatches a plan to rescue him. (Team 1)

## ***Dork Diaries: Tales***

### ***From a Not-So-Fabulous Life***

Rachel Renée Russell. New York: Aladdin, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children’s.

Girls who have moved to a new middle school and desperately tried to fit into the existing cliques will definitely relate to Nikki in this book. Russell masterfully balances the petty behavior of tween female characters and humor. (Team 4)

## ***Dragonbreath***

Ursula Vernon. New York: Dial.

Danny the Dragon gets picked on by the local bully and gets into trouble with his teacher for not completing his homework. An underwater journey with his best friend Wendell helps Danny learn about life in the deepest part of the ocean. (Team 3)

## ***Extra Credit***

Andrew Clements. Ill. Mark Elliott. New York: Atheneum, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children’s.

Reluctant pen pals, Abby from Illinois and Sadeed from Afghanistan discover as they write that beneath their differences they are very much alike. Readers learn that with communication comes understanding. (Team 5)

## ***Football Champ***

Tim Green. New York: HarperCollins Children’s.

Imagine the ability to predict football plays before they happen and you will understand Troy’s gift. But he has another gift that is more important: loyalty. When a player is accused of taking steroids Troy does everything possible to prove his innocence. (Team 5)

### ***Gifted: Out of Sight, Out of Mind***

Marilyn Kaye. New York: Kingfisher.

Nine teenagers with nine different talents develop their gifts to change the world in an ordinary middle school that offers a not-so-ordinary gifted class.

Amanda, Ms. Popularity, discovers that she is gifted and must decide where she fits in. (Team 2)

### ***Hero.com: Rise of the Heroes***

Andy Briggs. New York: Walker Books for Young Readers.

An innocent web search for movie trailers leads to outrageous adventures as regular kids download powers and become superheroes. At first their powers allow exciting adventures but later lead them into a frightening fight to save the world. (Team 3)

### ***Knights of the Lunch Table #2: The Dragon Players***

Frank Cammuso. New York: Graphix.

The knights are excited about Dragon Day at school. But when a bowling ball goes awry and smashes the principal's windshield, the knights have to win the jousting tournament to pay for the damages. (Team 1)

### ***Max Disaster #1: Alien Eraser to the Rescue***

Marissa Moss. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

Although the title and enticing comic strip format lead one to believe that Max's journal only contains silly inventions and experiments, it comes in handy for Max as his parents separate and he has to deal with his emotions. (Team 3)

### ***Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11***

Brian Floca. New York: Atheneum/Richard Jackson, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's.

This book intertwines nonfiction information about the *Apollo 11* mission with bright illustrations and repetitious narration that draw the reader into the story. The varied formats of each page depict the stages of the mission from preparation to splashdown. (Team 3)

### ***Mudshark***

Gary Paulsen. New York: Wendy Lamb, an imprint of Random House Children's.

Lyle Williams, aka Mudshark, has a keen mind that remembers anything and everything. His loves are reading and sports—both of which come in handy in this humorous mystery set at a wild and frantic school. (Team 1)

### ***Outlaw: The Legend of Robin Hood***

Tony Lee. Ills. Sam Hart and Artur Fujita. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

This graphic novel presents a different perspective on the story of Robin Hood. It's chock full of lively language and comic book violence (nothing too graphic) and will delight and engage readers with its theme of good versus evil. (Team 3)

### ***Persephone***

Sally Pomme Clayton. Ill. Virginia Lee. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers.

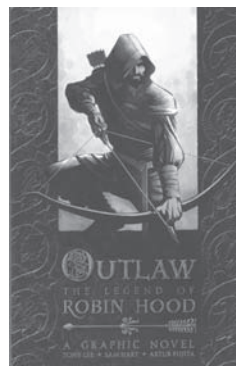
Mythology is found in school curricula across the country. This beautiful story of Persephone's kidnapping by Hades, god of the Underworld, and her



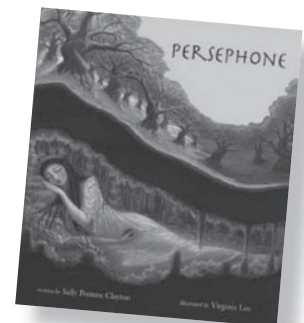
From *Extra Credit* by Andrew Clements. Ill. Mark Elliott. Atheneum, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's.



From *Mudshark* by Gary Paulsen. New York: Wendy Lamb, an imprint of Random House Children's.



From *Outlaw: The Legend of Robin Hood* by Tony Lee. Ills. Sam Hart and Artur Fujita. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.



From *Persephone* by Sally Pomme Clayton. Ill. Virginia Lee. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers.

annual return to her mother Demeter, the goddess of Earth, explains the seasonal changes we experience each year. (Team 4)

### ***Runaway Twin***

**Peg Kehret. New York: Dutton.**

Sunny, determined to find her twin sister, runs away from her foster home. Her adventures include an abandoned dog, bullies and bus drivers, and surviving a tornado. In the process of finding her sister she discovers what family is really about. (Team 2)

### ***Scat***

**Carl Hiaasen. New York: Knopf.**

What would you do if the most feared biology teacher in your school was missing? Nick and Marta decide to investigate. They discover endangered Florida panthers and an oil company trying to destroy the environment. (Team 2)

### ***The Seven Keys of Balabad***

**Paul Haven. Ill. Mark Zug. New York: Random House.**

Oliver moves to Afghanistan when his foreign correspondent father is assigned there. He helps to solve a mystery when a 500-year-old object is stolen and his friend is kidnapped. (Team 1)

### ***Show Off: How to Do Absolutely Everything. One Step at a Time.***

**Sarah Hines Stephens. Ill. Bethany Mann. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.**

Have you ever watched someone do something and then wondered how to do the same thing? This nonfiction book is bursting with easy-to-follow directions for hundreds of activities. There is something for everyone to try. (Team 4)

### ***Skeleton Creek #1***

**Patrick Carman. New York: Scholastic.**

Ryan keeps a journal of what led up to his broken leg and with his friend Sarah he investigates his and other accidents via technology. This book is interactive, with a website where the reader can watch videos for additional clues. (Team 5)

### ***Skeleton Creek #2: Ghost in the Machine***

**Patrick Carman. New York: Scholastic.**

Ryan and Sarah reveal their experiences in a journal format as they work to solve the mystery at Skeleton Creek. Ghost stories, alchemy, mystery, and a machine come together to create a book that is hard to put down. (Team 2)

### ***Slob***

**Ellen Potter. New York: Philomel.**

Owen is extremely intelligent and also (statistically speaking) fatter than most. He tries to avoid the school bully, but in the end the bully helps him solve a family mystery—that of who killed his parents. (Team 1)

### ***Tales From the Crypt #8: Diary of a Stinky Dead Kid***

**Stefan Petrucha, Maia Kinney-Petrucha, John L. Lansdale, and Jim Salicrup. Ill. Rick Parker, Miran Kim, James Romberger, and Marguerite Van Cook. New York: Papercutz.**

In a parody of the Tales From the Crypt series, Glugg comes back from the dead as a zombie who enjoys eating brains. In between his escapades is a parody of the book *Twilight*, delightfully called “DieLight.” (Team 5)

### ***Umbrella Summer***

**Lisa Graff. New York: HarperCollins Children’s.**

Annie Richards became overly paranoid about disease and accidents after her brother died. With the help of an unexpected friend she begins the healing process with her family. This is a good book to help students understand loss. (Team 4)

### ***Wild Girl***

**Patricia Reilly Giff. New York: Wendy Lamb, an imprint of Random House Children’s.**

Lidie’s mother died five years ago, and finally she is summoned to New York from her native Brazil to live with her father and brother, who train race horses for a wealthy man. Lidie develops an affinity for the filly named Wild Girl, a spirited horse. (Team 1)

### ***Zoobreak***

**Gordon Korman. New York: Scholastic.**

Korman’s knack for characterizing nerdy kid stereotypes in a school and then turning them into heroes is always entertaining. When Savannah’s missing monkey is found on a traveling boat zoo, the misfits take action that mixes humor and heroics. (Team 4)

# Tips for Parents, Primary Caregivers, and Educators

## Initial Book Activities

One of the easiest ways to begin telling the story of a book is through the use of illustrations. Most books for young children are illustrated in great detail, and noting important details related to the characters, plot, and setting will provide a wholesome first literacy activity.

- Set aside a regular time and place for books so that reading books becomes as natural as eating and sleeping.
- Browse through books to help the child become familiar with books and how they are handled.
- Read the story while the child points to the pictures. Adult and child can repeat interesting sounds, repetitive word patterns, and distinctive word features to the delight of both.
- Have the child tell the story using the illustrations while the adult reinforces the telling. The two can predict outcomes, discuss how the characters feel, and relate the events to their own experiences.
- Read the book to the child and enjoy it together. Retell the story together and talk about the characters, setting, plot, and life experiences.
- Compare the similarities and differences of children's books available as video productions.
- Have children make responses to the books read through art reproductions such as drawings or by using clay, papier-mâché, dioramas, or fingerpaints.
- Make regular trips to the library and attend storytelling sessions. Visit bookstores together to begin a personal library for a child.

## Beginning Reading-Level Activities

Children at this level should be encouraged to browse through books and pretend to read the story—an initial step toward becoming an independent reader. Children may tell the story to themselves or attempt to read frequently highlighted words.

- Read the story as the child points to the pictures on each page.
- Let the child pretend to read the story as the adult points to the pictures.
- Read alternate pages, ask each other questions, and discuss the story. The adult models what he or she thinks of when reading the page so the child gets a variety of perspectives on the ways words have different meanings.
- Use computer programs to expand a child's interest in specific topics and to provide valuable information for later curriculum study.
- Compare and contrast video adaptations of children's books for this and more advanced literacy levels.

## Primary-Grade Book Activities

- Continue to spend time reading with the child; set aside a specific time and place.
- Be familiar with Children's Choices books and other high-quality children's literature.
- Become aware of the interests of your children and books that extend life experiences so they know what happens in the world around them.
- Encourage children to share books read in school with parents and caregivers at home. Parents and caregivers should encourage children to share books they've read at home with their teachers and schoolmates.
- Continue to extend the information and knowledge bases through computer programs and other technology that capitalize on topics initiated through reading.

*(continued)*

# Tips for Parents, Primary Caregivers, and Educators (cont'd.)

## Independent Reader Activities

- Challenge readers to compare and contrast books.
- Encourage children to develop an interest in a variety of genres such as biography, historical fiction, and poetry.
- Encourage children to read books related to beginning career and vocational choices.
- Seek a balance between school book activities; home and school literature activities; and familiarity with newspapers, magazines, and other text media that address contemporary social, cultural, and civic issues.

## Develop the Desire to Be a Lifelong Reader

- Have students bring what is read to bear on what is viewed on film, television, and computer and other media technologies.
- View technology in the reflection of the literature.
- Keep in mind that the most memorable conversations are often filled with anecdotes from literature.
- Relate what has been read to the solution of problems. By internalizing what has been read, we use knowledge and wisdom to solve personal problems, to make significant decisions related to career choices, to find solutions to community and social problems, and to develop healthy attitudes toward a positive world environment.