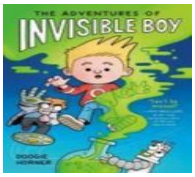
Adventures of Invisible Boy (Trade)

Quantity
1



#2363198 (Vol. 01) Adventures of Invisible Boy (Hardcover (Trade))
written by Doogie Horner
Think your wildest wish can't come true? Just wait! It's his first day at a new school, and Stanley wishes he could disappear. He can hardly believe it when, after a big spill at the science fair, POOF! Stanley is invisible! It's awesome! He can do anything he wants, and no one will know! But Stanley isn't the only one who turned invisible. The inventor of the potion is not happy about the accident and takes his anger out on kids all over town. Stanley wants to use his power for good... which means going up against the one person who can make him visible again.
978-0-593-53264-5 ©2024 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 176 pgs.
Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# 741.5 AR Lvl 2.5 AR Pts 1.0 Lexile GN 230

Reviews by: Booklist Grades 3-7 *Starred Review* Moving to a new school is never easy, and Stanley's first day is particularly rough. Not only does he feel isolated and awkward, he accidentally turns invisible at his school's science fair. Determined to use his powers for good, Invisible Boy squares off against an evil boy genius in an epic showdown for a cure to their shared invisibility before it becomes permanent. While Horner hits all the familiar notes involving superheroes and invisible adventures, his unique humor throughout the text provides genuine laughs and unexpected character reactions. Sight gags, like a giant Eiffel Tower made of Q-tips next to a giant Q-tip made of Eiffel Towers, are sprinkled strategically throughout the book, adding freshness to the crowded juvenile graphic novel field. Horner pulls back for moments of serenity, as the two protagonists struggle with making friends and finding their place, which further adds to the charm and authenticity of a story that could easily have become cliché. His artistic style feels reminiscent of Calvin and Hobbes, giving a simple and timeless feel to the book while simultaneously adding to the ridiculousness of the situations and the superhero action. A surprise hit. COPYRIGHT(2024) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Two dramatically different boys acquire the power of invisibility, with raucous results. Stanley is anxious about starting a new school—it's the middle of the year, and everyone else already knows each other. He's also poorly prepared for the Science Fair, for which he creates a wonky robot cobbled together from recyclable materials. Gene, an aspiring scientist with a collection of crackpot inventions, has a far more ambitious entry: a powerful stain remover. Both Stanley and Gene become drenched in the mixture and are rendered invisible. Stanley, in stealth mode, explores his new town and enjoys relief from social pressures. Meanwhile, Gene, incensed that Stanley's robot has won first prize, takes revenge, secretly wreaking havoc by vandalizing bikes and destroying Stanley's treehouse. Though Stanley's search for justice and an invisibility antidote drives the plot, the book's buzzy energy relies on Gene's zany creations. The conflict between aspiring hero and eager villain reaches its apex in Gene's basement laboratory, where the two battle each other using Gene's collection of contraptions in a broadly comical, captivating denouement. In the wake of this destruction, the boys' final reconciliation opens the door for more creative adventures. Action-packed artwork feels reminiscent of comic strips or animated shows; Stanley recalls a particularly earnest Calvin (of Calvin and Hobbes), while Gene is reminiscent of the titular character on Dexter's Lab. Both Stanley and Gene are white. A fun-filled adventure that celebrates the true superpowers of the middle-grade imagination: chaos and creativity. (Graphic fantasy. 7-10)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Horner (This Might Hurt a Bit) channels vintage Cartoon Network: esque tomfoolery in this hilarious graphic novel romp. The eponymous Invisible Boy, also known as Stanley, is the new kid in town. Stressing over his unpreparedness for the upcoming school science fair and feeling lonely due to his seeming inability to make friends, Stanley yearns to disappear, believing that all his problems would be solved. Fortunately (or unfortunately) for him, classmate Gene (short for "Genius") has concocted a goo that could be the world's best spot cleaner... or perhaps the first-ever disappearing serum. In a madcap chain of events, Stanley is covered in globules of the vanishing stuff and becomes invisible. But with his newfound power comes unexpected responsibility. Horner's straightforward illustrations are inviting, and the plot is replete with clever gags stuffed into every panel; as when the aforementioned stain remover suddenly loses the all-important "I" once Stanley is doused; making for an easy-going, fun-to-read treat that juxtaposes belly laughs with thoughtful explorations of anxiety. Stanley and Gene are rendered with pale skin; the supporting cast is portrayed with varying skin tones. Ages 8: 12. (Jan.)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 3-8--It's the day of the big science fair at school, and new kid Stanley spills Gene the Genius's project, leading to an accident that leaves both boys invisible. While Gene uses his new ability to wreak havoc around town, Stanley becomes Invisible Boy and spends his time helping others however he can. Desperate to find an antidote, Stanley visits Gene's lair and activates several

of his inventions, leading to a bubble bath explosion, a robot Owl, freeze bombs, and more. When the invisible boys begin to work together to prepare the antidote, they discover the power of friendship and collaboration. This graphic novel is a quick read with fast-paced dialogue and inner-thought narration. With vibrant, cartoon-style illustrations of various sizes and panel designs, readers will stay engaged with the exciting adventures of the characters. Despite the light, comic tone of the superhero plotline, Horner skillfully delves into deep themes such as parental expectations, social acceptance, and self-worth in a manner that will resonate with middle graders. The exciting build-up to the epic climax of the story will keep readers wanting more and eager for the promised follow-up.VERDICT Packed with witty humor and thrilling adventure, this graphic novel will draw fans of "Captain Underpants" and belongs on middle grade library shelves.--Angie Jameson Copyright 2024 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Branches: Disaster Squad (Trade)

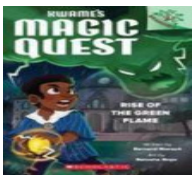
Quantity
1



#2381202 (Vol. 01) Wildfire Rescue (Paperback (Trade))
written by Rekha S. Rajan
In this first adventure, the Jacksons are called to Northern California, where wildfires are raging through the forests. Smoke-filled skies, trapped animals, evacuation mandates... There are people and animals in danger! Will the Disaster Squad be able to keep their cool and lend a helping hand?
978-1-338-82883-2 ©2024 5-1/4 x 7-1/2 96 pgs.
Grades K - 3 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 3.2 AR Pts 1.0 Lexile 610

Branches: Kwame's Magic Quest (Trade)

Quantity
1

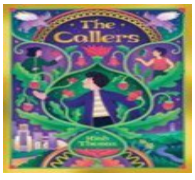


#2365199 (Vol. 01) Rise of the Green Flame (Paperback (Trade))
written by Bernard Mensah
The day has finally come for eight-year-old Kwame to start Nkonyaa School and learn magic! Kwame is excited to begin magical training with his new friends at school, but he can't access his magic powers! He starts to worry... what if he has no magic at all? Then his friend Fifi starts acting strange. Could an evil magical object be to blame? With engaging black-and-white artwork on every page, kids won't be able to put down this magical, action-packed adventure!
978-1-338-84328-6 ©2024 5-1/4 x 7-1/2 96 pgs.
Grades K - 3 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 3.8 AR Pts 1.0 Lexile 600

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 1-4--Eight-year-old Kwame is so excited to start Nkonyaa school where he will learn what type of magic he has and how to use it correctly. He can't wait to get his calabash from the Nkonyaa tree and start casting magic spells like everyone else, but when his calabash doesn't respond like normal, Kwame is left wondering what he has done wrong. His new friend Fifi encourages him, but will Kwame be kicked out of magic school before he learns anything? This fast-paced early chapter book is the first in a new series and takes readers on a fantastical adventure into a magic school that feels somehow both familiar and brand new. This magic is based on traditional Ghanaian culture; back matter includes an author's note explaining the connections and a glossary of terms used throughout. Familiar themes of friendship, standing up to bullies, and feeling different are woven in, adding to the delightfully creative setting where frogs with umbrellas protect students from indoor rain showers. The cliff-hanger ending will have readers anxiously looking for further installments. Bonus material includes a map of Africa, "About" sections for the author and illustrator, and discussion questions. VERDICT Recommended for all collections serving young readers.--Emily Beasley Copyright 2024 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Callers (Chronicle Books / Trade)

Quantity
1



#2275427 (Vol. 01) Callers (Hardcover (Trade))
written by Kiah Thomas
In the world of Elipsom, the ability to Call, or summon objects, is a coveted, crucial skill, revered among its people as both a powerful tool and an essential way to sustain life. But despite an elite family history, a phenom for an older sister, a best friend who is set to join the Council of Callers, and his mother's steely insistence that he learn to Call, Quin doesn't have the gift-an embarrassment made worse when his mother gets his sister to cheat for him on his Calling exam. But everything changes in a moment of frustration when Quin, instead of summoning an object, makes something disappear. And what's more, he quickly discovers that the objects Callers bring into their world aren't conjured at all but are whisked away from another world and a people who for years have had their lives slowly stolen from them. Now Quin must team up with

Allie, a girl who's determined to stop this unfair practice, and decide whether he should remain loyal to his family or betray them-and save the world.
978-1-7972-1078-0 ©2022 6 x 8-1/2 228 pgs.
Grades 6 - 8 Dewey# Fic Lexile 710

Reviews by: Booklist Grades 3-6 On the barren continent of Elipsom, Callers hold the power, sustaining society with the apparent ability to conjure objects from nothing. Quin's intimidating mother heads the Council of Callers, and although their family has led for generations, Quin is unable to Call. When he is suddenly and mysteriously transported across the planet to another continent called Evantra, he learns that Calling, in fact, steals objects from this land. Callers have been oppressing Evantra in secret, exploiting forced labor in order to maintain Elipsom's prosperity, and Quin must decide between loyalty to his family or to the self he is coming to discover. Thomas' debut middle-grade novel is poignant in its simplicity, with tight, effective prose, a slim page count, and a minimal style of world building that allows readers to concentrate on the thought-provoking questions being raised about oppression, consumerism, and our relationship to our planet, as well as Quin's search for identity outside of his family's legacy. A refreshing, affecting work that shows what thoughtful fantasy can do. COPYRIGHT(2022) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

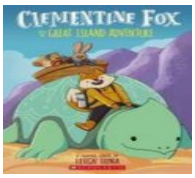
Reviews by: Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books Elipsom is a barren, infertile world, and its people depend on the Callers, who can conjure up food and other material needs from nothing, simply by naming them. Quin, of the dynastic Octavius family, is the first Octavius in history who apparently cannot Call, and he's an utter disappointment to his mother, Elipsom's Chief Councilor. Quin longs to understand his place in the world, and he's determined to figure out what his visions of a green, glowing landscape mean. He is shocked to one day wake up in the dream world, a place called Evantra-the people of Elipsom have always been told Evantra is as dead and barren as their own home. Quin learns that Evantra is the source of all the materials Called to Elipsom, and he soon discovers his destiny is greater than he ever imagined. Despite clever and imaginative world-building (particularly charming are the winged rhinoceroses called ÒrhinodritesÓ), the story lacks much emotional impact. Quin is a likable and accessible protagonist, but his easy acceptance upon learning everything he's ever known is a lie strains credulity. Still, the fast pace keeps the pages turning and the intensity ramps up toward the end, ensuring a sequel. AT COPYRIGHT(2022) Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Horn Book Magazine The Octavius family is notable for producing Callers -- people with the ability to summon objects seemingly out of thin air. Quintus Octavius, however, has never been successful at Calling anything. This does not sit well with his mother, Elipsom's Chief Councilor, and she makes sure he passes his Calling exam by enlisting his sister to Call for him. Cheating doesn't help Quin's already low confidence, but it's at this point that he accidentally transports himself across their world to Evantra, where he will grow to understand the truth about Callers, Elipsom's history, and his mother's complicity in depleting Evantra's resources for Elipsom's gain. Set in an evocatively realized fantasy world with, in Elipsom's case, a futuristic feel, this is a moving and complex story about the discomfort and reward of doing what is right. Thomas's debut middle-grade novel is a clever critique of the consumerism that we might take for granted. She tackles serious topics with wit, charm, and a few flying rhinodrites along the way. Sarah Berman(Copyright 2022 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews A boy uncovers deceptions—and truths—about his life. Quintus Octavius, son of the powerful Chief Councilor of the continent of Elipsom, is set to take his Caller test, one that will prove that he can conjure objects out of nothing. Being a Caller is an honored role, since the inhabitants of Elipsom need the Callers' skills to manifest everyday necessities. But, unlike everyone else in his family, Quin has never been able to Call anything, and he dreads the upcoming test. Meanwhile, his sleep is disturbed nightly by vivid dreams of curling vines and green growth, images that he sketches in a notebook. A few days before the test, Quin blacks out and wakes to find himself in a strange place with Allie, an unfamiliar girl. As Allie shows Quin around the lush, green landscape—so different from the sterile, metallic environment he is familiar with—she explains that he is on the continent of Evantra, on the opposite side of the world from his home. But even as Quin revels in the natural landscape, he notices black lines running through the green, and when he discovers what is causing them, he is horrified. This fantasy keeps the tone nonpreachy, but its themes of environmental crisis, greed, and exploitation are spot-on. The action will keep readers avidly turning pages, though Quin's character and the themes could have been more developed. Characters seem to default to White. Overall, a fresh, original, and timely story. (Fantasy. 8-12)

Clementine Fox (Trade)

Quantity
1



#2324225 (Vol. 01) Clementine Fox and the Great Island Adventure (Paperback (Trade))
written by Leigh Luna
Clementine is supposed to be on her way to school... but why not go out for a day of adventure and exploration instead? She recruits her friends Nubbins Squirrel and Penelope Rabbit and heads to the beach, where Jesse Otter is preparing to take his giant Turtle, Annabella, to a mysterious local island. Clementine's great-aunt Marnie lives there -- far away from math tests and tutors -- so Clementine and her friends hitch a ride to the island as stowaways. What could go wrong?
978-1-338-35624-3 ©2023 6 x 9 208 pgs.
Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# 741.5 AR Lvl 2.4 AR Pts 1.0 Lexile GN 230

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews An escape from math class takes a turn for the magical. Clementine, an anthropomorphic fox, loves adventure and hates math, but tell that to her concerned mom, who wants her to start seeing a tutor. Eager to escape the pressures of school, Clementine hatches a scheme to stow away on a ferry turtle and visit her great-aunt Marnie's island with her friend Nubbins the squirrel. The resulting quest ends up involving Penelope the rabbit, Jesse the otter, fairylike siblings Puck and Flora, and several worried family members. The story nimbly balances all of these characters and their branching subplots without shortchanging any of them. For example, tension between Clementine and Penelope starts with rude comments but gives way to genuine connection, with each of them given time and space to grow. The cuteness and hilarity of the animal cast and richness of the coastal setting make every page a treat for the eyes. Hungry giants, conversations with trees, and a magic kiln all expand the possibilities of this story's world without straining credulity. Clementine finds a style of learning math that works for her in a satisfying character arc that feels natural. Winsome adventures in friendship, magic, and hands-on visual learning. (Graphic fiction. 8-12) COPYRIGHT(2023) Kirkus Reviews, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

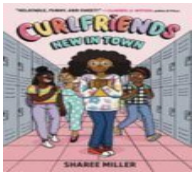
Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Young Clementine Fox seizes the opportunity to leave her problems and schooling behind by stowing away on the back of a traveling turtle in this cozy, sea-faring graphic novel series launch, Luna's debut. Clementine is tired of struggling through math homework; she'd much rather be embarking on a grand adventure. So when she learns that Annabella the turtle is suffering from an unknown ailment; and that Jesse, a beaver ferryman, will be escorting her to Giant Island to seek help from Clementine's magical great-aunt Marnie; Clementine is eager to join them despite Jesse's refusal. Clementine and her friends Nubbins Squirrel and Penelope Rabbit secret themselves among Jesse's supplies before being ousted by capricious merfolk. Jesse's swift heroics save them from the sea dwellers' clutches, but when they reach shore, more challenges; and new friends such as magical mice and sentient boulders; await the group as they travel through dangerous mountain terrain to reach Marnie. Standard plot points struggle to converge into a cohesive story line, but warm colors provide a welcoming feel, animated facial expressions add verve, and themes of communal care, friendship, and overcoming obstacles permeate this gently humorous narrative. Ages 7: 10. (May)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 3–7—Luna grabs readers' attention with the patterns and whimsical thoughts of the titular character as she daydreams during math class. The story is conveyed almost completely through illustrations; the text is an added bonus. The two work together to really bring young readers into the world of Clementine and her friends. When Clementine's math test doesn't go as planned, and her mother—who supports her but wants her to be able to do her best—suggests a tutor, Clementine hatches a plan to run away to her witchy aunt, Marnie, who lives on Giant Island, and the escapade begins. With reluctant friends in tow, the journey is rocked with challenges that not only test their friendship but also themselves. Amid their biggest challenge, the very thing that Clementine despises just might save their lives—math! The characters are relatable, and their growth is an inspiring reminder to readers that they can overcome challenges and find their own unique strengths. VERDICT A perfect addition to any middle grade collection!—Jessica Clark

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Curlfriends (Trade)

Quantity
1



#2350114 (Vol. 01) New in Town (Paperback (Trade))
written by Sharee Miller
Charlie has a foolproof plan for the first day at her new middle school. Even though she's used to starting over as the new kid-thanks to her military family's constant moving-making friends has never been easy for her. But this time, her first impression needs to last, since this is where her family plans to settle for good. *978-0-316-59145-4 ©2023 5-3/4 x 8-1/4 288 pgs. Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# 741.5 AR Lvl 2.7 AR Pts 1.0*

Reviews by: Booklist Grades 3-6 It's officially the first day of middle school--for Charlie, at least. The rest of her class started three weeks ago. Growing up with a dad in the air force, Charlie has had a lot of practice being the new girl. But this time is different: Charlie's dad is home for good, her mom has a full-time job, and the family has moved permanently to her parents' hometown. This time, armed with new clothes, new contacts, and one final chance to reinvent herself, Charlie is determined to finally fit in. Miller's adorable comic perfectly captures the anxiety of experiencing all of the new beginnings and awkwardness that come with being 13. Her warm, playful, and inviting art style offers a cozy background for Charlie to learn how to let her three new friends see her just as she is, quirks and all. Fans of the Baby Sitters' Club comics or Shannon Hale and LeUyen Pham's Real Friends series will appreciate this series opener featuring four Black girls navigating the trials and tribulations of friendship, middle school, and everything in between. COPYRIGHT(2023) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

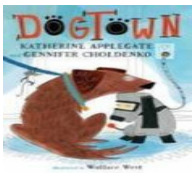
Reviews by: Horn Book Magazine In this endearing and relatable graphic novel, Charlie has moved all around the world with her family. Now that her dad is retired from the Air Force, they are finally settling down in her parents' hometown. While starting from scratch -- again -- Charlie is determined to reinvent herself to ensure she makes friends. From new clothes to contact lenses to a new hairdo, she is ready to make an impression. Though her first day of middle school takes an unfortunate turn, ruining her perfect hair and outfit, a classmate comes to her rescue, and Charlie is able to salvage the day, even making some new "Curlfriends." As she navigates her new home and school life, she also struggles to reconnect with her father, who has often been away due to military duties. The vibrant art is warm and inviting, with engaging details that pop on every page. Charlie's tween angst will feel familiar as she attempts to bury her individuality in order to fit in with her peers, ultimately learning that real friends will accept her for her uniqueness. Charlie's journey to belonging also includes learning how to deal with conflict when her new friends discover things she's been hiding. A welcome graphic novel with Black girl representation for middle-graders and middle-schoolers. Monique Harris(Copyright 2023 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly After moving to the town where her Air Force servicemember father grew up, 12-year-old artist Charlie Harper starts attending Hill Valley Middle School three weeks into the semester. Her first day turns out to be an embarrassing mess, during which she's accidentally doused in water and she loses her contacts. Her day is saved, however, when Nola; a cheerful student with an affinity for styling hair; offers to fix up Charlie's saturated 'do in the bathroom. Soon after, Nola is showing Charlie the fastest ways to get to class, and at lunchtime a nervous Charlie asks to sit at her table. Thrifty and outspoken fashionista Ella and anime enthusiast Cara welcome Charlie into their circle. But believing she must curb her interests to fit into the already established friend group, Charlie pretends to be someone she's not and quickly loses touch with herself. A playful pastel palette adds energetic verve to this bouncy narrative of being and accepting one's true self. With empathy, charm, and a seemingly endless supply of good cheer, Miller (Michelle's Garden) crafts a stirring tale that encourages kindness and honesty in pursuit of friendship. Characters are portrayed with varying skin tones. Ages 8: 12. (Oct.)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Twelve-year-old Charlie Harper has gotten used to constantly moving and starting over thanks to her Air Force father's many deployments. But now that her father has retired, Charlie's family is finally settling down. Convinced that she only gets one chance to make a good first impression, Charlie is determined to make her first day at Hill Valley Middle School a perfect one. She has researched the latest fashions, is trying new hairstyles, and has made the switch from glasses to contacts. After meeting a group of friends following an unfortunate run-in with the janitor's water bucket, Charlie realizes it's not easy trying to uphold her new persona as she goes out of her way to hide all the parts of herself she deems uncool. Text boxes and speech bubbles run long and the flow of dialogue sometimes feels stilted, but the almost overwhelming uncertainty and desire to fit in that Charlie experiences ring painfully true. The pastel rainbow palette, sparse backgrounds, and confidence of Charlie's friend group provide a refreshing counterbalance to her anxiety, modeling a type of genuine self-confidence not often depicted in this age group. Mr. Harper's confession to Charlie about his own struggles as a young person offers additional reassurance that this too shall pass. The main characters are Black and Latinx, background characters appear to be racially and ethnically diverse, and a wheelchair user makes an appearance. A sincere and relatable depiction of trying too hard to fit in and almost losing yourself in the process.

Dogtown Book (Trade)

Quantity
1



#2346777 (Vol. 01) Dogtown (Hardcover (Trade))
written by Katherine Applegate
Dogtown is a shelter for stray dogs, misbehaving dogs, and discarded robot dogs whose owners have outgrown them. Chance, a real dog, has been in Dogtown since his owners unwittingly left him with irresponsible dog-sitters who skipped town. Metal Head is a robot dog who dreams of being back in a real home.
978-1-250-81160-8 ©2023 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 352 pgs.
Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 4.3 AR Pts 4.0 Lexile 630

Reviews by: Booklist Grades 3-6 The unusual Dogtown shelter provides refuge to both wayward dogs and abandoned robot pups, and there is resentment brewing between the groups. Chance knows he's lucky to have a good life at the shelter after being injured and abandoned by unscrupulous pet-sitters, but having three legs, he worries that no one will want him, and he's still hoping to be reunited with his family. Chance can't understand why Metal Head, a recently discarded robot, refuses to ingratiate himself with potential adopters, preferring to plot a way back to his former owner. The two eventually form an uneasy alliance and, with additional assistance from a resident mouse, escape the confines of the shelter for an outdoor adventure. But their path home will be anything but straightforward. The tension and humor are beautifully balanced in this sympathetic story, and the delightfully distinct voices and memorable characters are enormous fun. Brief chapters set a brisk pace, and charming black-and-white illustrations are incredibly appealing. A sweet spotlight on shelter animals that is as heartwarming as it is entertaining. COPYRIGHT(2023) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books Chance, our three-legged canine narrator, concedes that robot dogs are cleaner and more obedient (and definitely poop less) than flesh-and-blood dogs, but she also insists that mechanics can't make up for heart. Like many other residents of the dog shelter Dogtown, Chance is not fond of robot dogs, so when a mechanical canine she dubs Metal Head arrives, she isn't especially sympathetic. She is, however, intrigued, as Metal Head seems to have no desire to make itself more appealing and adoptable to a new family but is instead focused on getting out. Chance's dear friend Mouse convinces Chance to help spring Metal Head, and when the trio successfully make their escape, Chance starts to wonder if she, too, should try to find her previous owners. Clearly kin to the irascible street dog Bob in Applegate's The One and Only Bob (BCCB 5/20), Chance is the perfect balance of snark and vulnerability. Her relationships with and affection for the other dogs-metal and flesh-give her particular depth, as she is the one who often explains and comforts Dogtown's new arrivals: "Just because a human doesn't want you, doesn't mean you aren't lovable." The plot unfolds gently but directly, making this an easy choice for a classroom or family readaloud, though tellers and listeners should have tissues on hand. KQG COPYRIGHT(2023) Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Horn Book Magazine Three-legged Chance is at the top of the pack at Dogtown -- an animal shelter where she has a glowing reputation among dogs and humans alike. She's known for quickly settling the new "boo-hoo" pups as they adjust to life without their beloved owners, and she charms the managers into letting her cozy up under the staff poker table: "She makes everyone feel like her favorite," says a shelter volunteer. Then, Chance finds herself on an unexpected adventure back in the outside world, alongside Metal Head (a quirky dog that is actually a robot) and her friend Mouse (an actual rodent). While the threesome searches for Metal Head's human family, Chance's protective poise begins to waver -- just like every abandoned boo-hoo in Dogtown, Chance still harbors the painful hope that she might find a missing-dog sign with her own picture on it. Accompanied by friendly, cartoonlike halftone drawings, this canine slice-of-life adventure features a confident,

affable narrator with a proclivity for doggy jargon (the cutest dogs at Dogtown get "First Cage" where they can flaunt their "Adopt-me Routine"). Short chapters and Chance's snappy narration keep the pace rolling, but Applegate and Choldenko adeptly make space for gently poignant moments along the way. An accessible, appealing romp that provides a dog's-eye view of the nature of hope, belonging, and found family. Jessica Tackett Macdonald(Copyright 2023 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews A loquacious, lovable dog narrates the challenges of shelter life as he longs for a home. Friendly three-legged Chance is the perfect guide to Dogtown, a shelter that houses both warmblooded and robot dogs. In fact, she's "Management's lucky charm," roaming freely without being confined to a cage and leaving kibble for her mouse friend. Life is pretty good. But she still yearns for reunification with her family and, like many of the living pups, harbors suspicion of her robot counterparts, who are convenient and more easily adoptable but lacking in personality. When Metal Head, an oddly engineered e-dog, bonds with a child during a shelter reading program, Chance's assumptions about heartless robot dogs are upended. As Chance connects with Metal Head, the two make a brief escape into the wider world, and Chance learns a familiar lesson: Everyone longs for a place to belong. Memories of Chance's happy home loom large in her mind: Easy days with the Bessers, a sweet Black family, were disrupted by a neglectful dogsitter, the accident that cost Chance her leg, and Chance's flight in search of safety. Chance's chatty narrative style includes flashbacks, vignettes about fellow shelter pets, and thoughtful observations, for example, about the "boohoos," or sad new arrivals. The story offers many moments of laughter and reflection, all greatly enhanced by West's utterly charming grayscale illustrations of irresistible pooches. Eminently readable and appealing; will tug at dog-loving readers' heartstrings. (Fiction. 8-12)

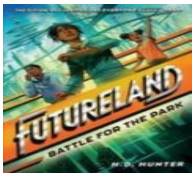
Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Newbery Medalist Applegate and Newbery Honoree Choldenko team up for this uplifting escape novel narrated by Chance, a forthright three-legged border collie/Aussie mix. Self-described as an unadoptable "pity party in a dog suit," Chase is a permanent resident of Dogtown; a shelter for dogs both mammalian and robotic; where she offers amusing and insightful commentary about her fellow rescues, including the animosity between the "flesh-and-bloods" seeking forever homes and the "metal dogs" that many humans consider easier to care for. When an uncharacteristically empathic robot dog, Metal Head, arrives, he makes a bold request of Chance and her friend Mouse: break him out of Dogtown. Unwittingly swept up in Metal Head's flight scheme, Chance and Mouse embark on an adventure that makes Chance wonder about life beyond the shelter. Angular b&w line drawings by West (Mighty Red Riding Hood) highlight the humorously sketched canine cast, while brief chapters that explore species divides promise to captivate anyone who enjoys rooting for a couple of down-on-their-luck dogs getting a second chance. Human characters are portrayed with various skin tones. Ages 8: 12. (Sept.)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 4–6—Welcome to Dogtown, a shelter for regular dogs—and robot dogs (don't ask, just go with it). The shelter's top dog is Chance, a congenial and introspective pooch, who like all the residents, longs to reunite with her family. But as Chance understands, "Hope is a painful business." That anguish, along with her resentment towards robot dogs (they often get adopted before real dogs) fades as Chance spends time with a robot dog she nicknames Metal Head. Animosity gradually evolves into understanding, then friendship as Chance introduces Metal Head to Mouse, a real mouse who lives in the shelter and shares Chance's kibble. The action shifts to adventure when Chance and Mouse escape Dogtown to accompany Metal Head on his quest to rejoin his family. Super short chapters, perhaps suggesting a dog's alleged limited attention span, keep the novel's pace moving briskly toward a climax sure to please animal lovers despite a few sad moments along the way. Chance captivates with insights that are hilarious and wise beyond her age in dog years. She counsels Mouse, "Your heart is a muscle...It grows stronger the more you use it." Thoughtful back matter suggests how children can help shelter dogs. West's grayscale art perfectly captures canine emotion and unbridled energy. VERDICT When Applegate and Choldenko collaborate, readers win.—Marybeth Kozikowski

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Futureland (Trade)

Quantity
1



#2299882 (Vol. 01) Battle for the Park (Hardcover (Trade))
written by H. D. Hunter
Everyone wants a ticket to Futureland, where you can literally live out your wildest dreams. Want to step inside your favorite video game? Go pro in a sports arena? Perform at a real live concert? Grab your ticket and come right in. But things aren't quite right with the Atlanta opening. Park attractions are glitching. Kids go missing. And when his parents are blamed, Cam must find the missing kids and whoever's trying to take down his family... before it's too late.
978-0-593-47942-1 ©2022 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 320 pgs.
Grades 4 - 7 Dewey# Fic Lexile 570

Reviews by: Booklist The year is 2048, and the famous Walker family is building a new theme park above Atlanta, Georgia. Futureland is an imaginative, Wonka-esque place that gives kids their heart's desire, and it's fitted out with the latest technology, including humanlike androids called revs. Seventh-grader Cam Walker is heir to this legacy, but doesn't know if he wants it. He recently started real school on the ground, and all his new friends are envious of his life. No one would believe that all he wants is to be a regular kid. When some kids go missing after the park's opening night and Cam's parents start acting strange, Cam and his new friends must solve the mystery before the Futureland legacy is destroyed. Hunter makes good use of the Atlanta setting, exploring the city's rich history and populating it with mostly Black characters. Some troubling elements of Atlanta's past are highlighted throughout the book and add to the story's texture. A thought-provoking middle-grade sci-fi story with an adventurous pace.

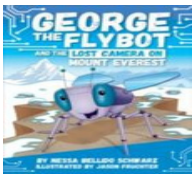
Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Black seventh grader Cameron J. Walker has never been to a normal school before—he's been busy hovering above major world cities in Futureland. It's 2048, and the high-tech theme park is filled with his parents' imaginative inventions, including lifelike androids, or revs. But the plan this school year is to float above Atlanta so Cameron can enroll at Eastside Middle School, spend time with his Grandma Ava, and make some human kid friends. Plans go awry as corporate espionage and shady housing practices intersect before Futureland's Atlanta opening. The Atlanta Disuse and Redevelopment Corporation and its shady White CEO have been spying on them, hoping to sabotage the park and appropriate its technology in its continued efforts to exploit the city for profit. Their plan involves hacking into revs, undermining the park's—and surrounding community's—security and safety measures, as well as abducting children to elicit fear and acquiring the space for themselves. These events evoke the real-life child abductions of 1980s Atlanta and the displacement issues the city faces today. The book is not entirely successful in handling weighty subjects like missing Black children, gentrification, and racial inequities. Aspiring detective Cameron struggles with self-doubt, something that is relatable for readers but also compromises the momentum of such a high-stakes story. Nevertheless, with the help of friends (human and rev alike), Cam saves the day. Final art not seen. An imaginative and ambitious not-so- distant future tale with a lot to say about the present. (Science fiction. 9-13)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly In 2048, Black middle schooler Cameron J. Walker lives in Futureland, a flying futuristic theme park he helps his family run. He's literally on top of the world until his parents decide that Futureland's next destination will be his mother's hometown, Atlanta, where they'll remain for the year while Cameron attends his first "real" school Earth-side, staying with his grandmother on school nights. New friends, portrayed as racially diverse, help Cameron settle in; he gets to assist with Futureland on the weekends; and excitement is high for the park's local launch. But everything changes when the park's robots start to malfunction, exhibiting emotional responses more complex than their coding should allow, and kids begin going missing. Cameron and his new pals start unraveling the occurrences, hoping to link them with his parents' odd behavior and a seedy corporation that's gentrifying Atlanta. Interspersed with comics-style illustrations by Khatib (The Marvellers) and featuring enigmatic interstitials, Hunter's debut foregrounds futuristic tech and themes about the value of charting one's own path, creating an exhilarating mystery. Final art not seen by PW. Ages 8: 12. Author's agent: Suzie Townsend, New Leaf Literary. (Nov.)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 4-8--Welcome to Futureland, the most innovative theme park in the year 2048. Traveling in the air, it offers visitors a one-of-a-kind VR experience where they can live out their biggest dreams. For seventh-grader Cameron Walker, who is Black, it's just his daily life: his parents created Futureland. Now, though, the park has stopped over Atlanta, and things start to go awry at the park. The revs--highly realistic, AI park characters--are taking on troubling traits; Cameron's parents are acting very strange; children are disappearing. In order to save Atlanta and the park, Cameron's going to have to use his best sleuthing skills to solve a mystery much more dangerous than he imagined. Readers will be bursting to visit every "destiny" in this fictional theme park, and the fast-paced plot will keep them reading. More than that, though, it's the characters and messaging that will stick with tweens. Featuring a cast that's made up almost entirely of people of color, the book speaks to social justice issues in middle grade-friendly ways. There are a few moments in the story where readers may stumble over a character's motive, but not enough to slow them down. Dynamic comic spreads by Khatib are sprinkled throughout the story, occasionally in places that feel abrupt, but overall they add to the moving plot. VERDICT An exciting new series that will grab readers with its futuristic setting, diverse characters, and brisk plotting.--Kristin Brynsvold Copyright 2023 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

George the Flybot (Trade)

Quantity
1

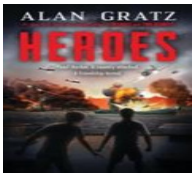


#2439010 (Vol. 01) George the Flybot and the Lost Camera on Mount Everest (Library Binding (Trade))
written by Nessa Bellido Schwarz
Meet GEORGE the flybot, a one-of-a-kind robotic fly on his first official mission! With instructions from Darcy Luna, his boss at Fly on the Wall Inc., GEORGE zips off to the Himalayas to search for a camera that went missing during an ill-fated 1924 Mount Everest summit attempt. GEORGE understands that he might change history by discovering who really conquered Mount Everest. But GEORGE has a mission of his own: to learn more about how humans act and feel, and maybe - just maybe - find a friend. Book 1 in the GEORGE THE FLYBOT series.
979-8-7654-0961-9 ©2025 5-1/2 x 7-3/4 80 pgs.
Grades 1 - 4 Dewey# Fic Lexile 660

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 2-4--Readers are introduced to a small but determined fly robot created by humans to assist on various missions in these series starters. With a limited battery that only lasts for one mission, GEORGE must recharge between adventures. In his first mission, he travels to Mount Everest to recover a camera lost during a 1924 summit attempt, adding a historical twist to his journey. His second adventure takes him to the French countryside on a treasure hunt to locate a valuable owl statue, with the proceeds destined for his favorite charity. As GEORGE embarks on these missions, he learns about human and animal emotions, often facing tough decisions that challenge his mission objectives. Based on real historical events, this series cleverly combines robotics with history. The grayscale illustrations complement the narrative, bringing GEORGE and his adventures to life. VERDICT A great addition to any chapter book collection. Copyright 2024 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Individual Titles: Fiction

Quantity
1



#2366355 Heroes: A Novel of Pearl Harbor (Hardcover (Trade))

written by Alan Gratz

December 6, 1941: Best friends Frank and Stanley have it good. With their dads stationed at the Pearl Harbor naval base in Hawaii, the boys get to soak up the sunshine while writing and drawing their own comic books. World War II might be raging overseas, but so far America has stayed out of the fight. There's nothing to fear, right? December 7th, 1941: Everything implodes. Frank and Stanley are touring a battleship when Japanese planes zoom overhead, dropping bomb after bomb. As explosions roar and sailors scream, Frank and Stanley realize the unthinkable is happening: Japan is attacking America! The war has come to them. Frantically, the boys struggle to find safety. But disaster and danger are everywhere - from torpedoes underwater to bullets on the beach... to the shocking cruelty that their friends and neighbors show Stanley. Because his mom is Japanese-American, Stanley is suddenly seen as the "enemy." And Frank, who is white, cannot begin to understand what his friend is now facing. If the boys make it through this infamous day, can their friendship - and their dreams - survive? Or has everything they know been destroyed?

978-1-338-73607-6 Scholastic Press ©2024 5-1/2 x 8-1/2 272 pgs.

Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 5.0 AR Pts 6.0

Reviews by: Booklist Pearl Harbor, December 6, 1941. It’s another day in paradise for white 13-year-old Frank McCoy and his best friend, Japanese American Stanley Summers, united by their love of the comics they create together. For Frank, though, the perfection is compromised by a closely guarded secret: he’s been afraid of everything since what he calls The Incident (he was mauled by a dog and has the scars to prove it). The next day, December 7, a seaman invites the boys to tour the decommissioned battleship Utah. They eagerly accept and are aboard when paradise becomes hell as a wave of Japanese planes attacks, destroying the entire American fleet in the harbor. In a thrilling, white-knuckle set piece, Gratz (Captain America: The Ghost Army, 2023) recreates the attack and Frank’s and Stanley’s harrowing experience of it. Just surviving tests the boys' mettle, as Frank swallows his fears and rescues a drowning seaman, becoming, at least for a while, a hero. Gratz does his usual splendid job of creating the visceral drama of battle alongside fully realized characters. He handles the theme of heroism well, while not straying into the didactic, and is especially good at depicting the enduring friendship of the two boys as, together, they experience the date that will live in infamy.

Reviews by: Horn Book Guide Thirteen-year-old boys Frank McCoy and Stanley Summers live on Ford Island, a naval base in the middle of Pearl Harbor. They have become fast friends, bonding over a shared interest in comic books. Frank's family recently moved to Hawaii from the mainland, where he is hoping to leave behind not just memories of a traumatic incident but the constant worry and fear that plague him as a result. When Frank doesn't stand up for Stanley during a fight with bullies, it causes a rift in their friendship. Nevertheless, they are both invited to the USS Utah the next day, December 7, 1941, which places them in the thick of things during the attack on Pearl Harbor. While both boys survive the horrific events of that day, they confront a great deal of death as well as mayhem and internal demons. Frank comes to terms with his fear, while Stanley -- whose mother is Japanese -- is already being targeted for harassment. Frank's family is relocated to California shortly afterward and the boys bid a sad farewell, but not before Frank passes a draft of a story for their comic book to Stanley. The novel concludes with the opening scenes of their finished comic book collaboration, published many years in the future. Short chapters and fast pacing with lots of dialogue and action make this an easy recommendation for Gratz fans (Grenade, rev. 11/18; Ground Zero, rev. 3/21; and others). An author's note with additional historical and background information is appended. (Copyright 2024 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

Reviews by: Horn Book Magazine Thirteen-year-old boys Frank McCoy and Stanley Summers live on Ford Island, a naval base in the middle of Pearl Harbor. They have become fast friends, bonding over a shared interest in comic books. Frank's family recently moved to Hawaii from the mainland, where he is hoping to leave behind not just memories of a traumatic incident but the constant worry and fear that plague him as a result. When Frank doesn't stand up for Stanley during a fight with bullies, it causes a rift in their friendship. Nevertheless, they are both invited to the USS Utah the next day, December 7, 1941, which places them in the thick of things during the attack on Pearl Harbor. While both boys survive the horrific events of that day, they confront a great deal of death as well as mayhem and internal demons. Frank comes to terms with his fear, while Stanley -- whose mother is Japanese -- is already being targeted for harassment. Frank's family is relocated to California shortly afterward and the boys bid a sad farewell, but not before Frank passes a draft of a story for their comic book to Stanley. The novel concludes with the opening scenes of their finished comic book collaboration, published many years in the future. Short chapters and fast pacing with lots of dialogue and action make this an easy recommendation for Gratz fans (Grenade, rev. 11/18; Ground Zero, rev. 3/21; and others). An author's note with additional historical and background information is appended. Jonathan Hunt(Copyright 2024 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews A vivid account of the Pearl Harbor attack through the eyes of a tween boy. It's December 1941 in Hawaii. The war overseas feels distant for 13-year-old Frank McCoy, a white Florida transplant and son of a Navy fighter pilot, and his best friend, Stanley Summers, a biracial (Japanese American and white) local boy whose dad works at the Naval Air Station. The boys are preoccupied with the superhero comic they're creating together. But on December 7th, while Frank's sister's sailor boyfriend is giving them a tour of the USS Utah, Japanese planes begin bombing Pearl Harbor. In the fast-paced chapters that follow, the boys witness numerous horrors. They also recognize that Stanley is increasingly perceived with hostility by many white people; this awareness ultimately allows Frank to address an episode that haunts him from his past relating to friendship, loyalty, and mental health. The humanity of the characters and the on-the-ground perspective

evoke sympathy for those who perished in the attack. Foreshadowing Spider-Man's most famous line, the book ties together the friends' love of superheroes ("Getting superpowers is one thing. Choosing how to use your powers is another") with commentary in the author's note on America's responsibility to use its immense powers wisely ("what we continue to do now and in the future, will decide if we are heroes"). The novel closes with Frank and Stanley's 10-page comic, which serves as an epilogue. A propulsive wartime story with an earnest protagonist at its heart. (language note, map) (Historical fiction. 9-13) COPYRIGHT(2024) Kirkus Reviews, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Set during the attack on Pearl Harbor that drew the U.S. into WWII, this tensely wrought, propulsive

historical novel by Gratz (Two Degrees) centers the compelling friendship between 13-year-old aspiring writer Frank McCoy and illustrator Stanley Summers, who are brainstorming their own comic book characters. The pair live in the seemingly idyllic Ford Island Naval Air Station in Pearl Harbor, where their fathers are stationed. Frank harbors secret anxiety surrounding his perceived lack of courage, especially evident when he avoids helping Stanley confront bullies, which prompts Stanley to ask, "How do you think you can write about heroes if you can't be one yourself?" These paralyzing fears come into stark relief when, while the pair are on a battleship tour, Japanese planes begin bombing unsuspecting military targets. After diving from a sinking ship, the friends struggle to reach home amid violence, chaos, and death. Though the novel's tone is sometimes uneven and text can read as didactic, Gratz sensitively handles characters' suspicion of Stanley surrounding his Japanese American heritage, and offers a gripping, well-researched account of courage and friendship in this powerful depiction of American racism and imprisonment. Back matter includes a comic book created by Frank and Stanley and an author's note. Ages 8: 12. (Feb.)

Quantity
1



#2309138 Simon Sort of Says (Hardcover (Trade))
written by Erin Bow
Simon O'Keeffe's biggest claim to fame should be the time his dad accidentally gave a squirrel a holy sacrament. Or maybe the alpaca disaster that went viral on YouTube. But the story the whole world wants to tell about Simon is the one he'd do anything to forget: the story in which he's the only kid in his class who survived a school shooting.
978-1-368-08285-3 Disney-Hyperion ©2023 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 320 pgs.
Grades 4 - 7 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 5.2 AR Pts 11.0

Reviews by: Booklist Author of Stand on the Sky (2019) Bow delivers another middle-grade page turner. Seventh-grader Simon O’Keeffe moves with his parents to the small town of Grin And Bear It, Nebraska. Hoping to help their son forget a traumatic event, his dad, a Catholic deacon (and sackbut player), and mom, an undertaker, help Simon adjust. Though the townspeople are thirsty to find out more about the O’Keeffes, Simon wants to get through the school year by remaining incognito. That plan becomes moot when he befriends a girl named Agate and a boy named Kevin. All seems normal until the reason for the O'Keeffes' move is exposed, causing anxieties to flare in Simon that result in conflicts among the trio. Bow diffuses the story's serious topics, ranging from parental and social issues to mental and emotional health, with humor and a silly scheme. Middle-grade students will resonate with the worries and pressures attached to making friends and meeting one another’s families. A tale of healing that serves as an excellent reminder to never assume we know what plights another friend is going through. —Beronica Garcia

Reviews by: Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books Tweenager Simon's prepared explanation for why his family fled Omaha for Grin

And Bear It, Nebraska, is pretty darn hilarious, involving rogue alpacas bringing chaos to a Catholic Mass. And surprisingly, it is true-it's just not the entire reason Simon is relieved his new neighbors can't look him up online. This tiny town is a designated National Quiet Zone with no internet, radio, or microwaves, which enables local astrophysicists to search for signs of life in the universe. When Simon learns the SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) might lose funding, he joins his new pal Agate in a plan to impersonate alien communication and keep the scientists' dwindling hope alive. Before they can enact the plan, however, the truth about Simon's past comes out: he was the sole survivor of a well-known school shooting. While the violence happens offscreen, Simon's descriptions of his resulting panic attacks and anxiety have a visceral urgency; even more painful, however, are the small adjustments he's made-always staying aware of people's position in a room and noting exits for an escape route. Despite the weighty premise, Bow's storytelling brims with vitality, featuring many hilarious, outlandish scenes, like the antics of a funeral home's peacock, a dog that retrieves cans of beer, and the life and death of a Jesus Squirrel. The scientific plotline is thematically compelling, and the character-driven narratives thrive in its context, including Simon's narration of his post-traumatic healing and the development of winsome secondary characters. An author's note illuminates Bow's motivation to write about this topic and clarifies which story details are real or fictional, but the final backmatter resources for trauma survivors were not seen. KF COPYRIGHT(2022) Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Horn Book Magazine Simon and his family are new to Grin and Bear It, Nebraska, an unusual town located in the National Quiet

Zone, a center for scientific research that restricts radio transmissions. There’s no internet, and even microwave ovens are prohibited. They left their home in Omaha because, as Simon tells it, his family is odd, with a mother who is an embalmer and a father who plays the sackbut (“It’s a kind of trombone”). These initial details are only the beginning of what builds into a gallimaufry of eccentricity. One neighbor has an emu farm; Simon’s new friend, Agate, has siblings named Jade, Jasper, Coral, Onyx, and Mica and a large supply of witty radical T-shirts. There are funeral-home disasters, escaped wildlife, and plans for an elaborate prank choreographed by Simon and Agate. Hidden in all this jokey mayhem are small hints of a dark backstory. Why has the family relocated? Why can’t Simon be in a room with just one exit? When it is revealed to the reader that Simon was the sole survivor of a school shooting in his previous town, the tone of the story shifts abruptly, inviting a reread to view

the tale in a new light given our insight into Simon's past. This novel takes a considerable narrative risk and would be an excellent catalyst for discussion. SARAH ELLIS

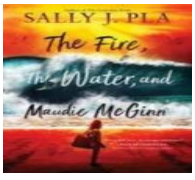
Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Attempting to start over, a traumatized tween and his parents move to a town where electronic devices are banned. In a tale that will put readers through an emotional wringer, Bow crafts an uproarious small-town comedy with a devastating tragedy at its core played out by a cast as memorable for its animals as its people. Having gone through a year of therapy and home schooling after witnessing the deaths of the rest of his fifth grade class in a school shooting that happens before the events of the book, Simon O'Keeffe hopes the move to Grin And Bear It, Nebraska, will let him escape the relentless notoriety and start seventh grade as an ordinary new kid. As no one in town is allowed to have a computer, cellphone, or even unshielded microwave because of the supersensitive radio telescopes nearby, things go well...for a while. He even makes friends with Agate, a classmate who cheerfully announces that she's autistic and challenges him to a gross-out contest. (Which he easily wins, what with his mother's being an undertaker.) Though developments—ranging from a roundup of escaped emus to being tasked with socializing a winsome puppy in service-dog training—provide plenty of warm and comical moments, the secret comes out eventually, spiraling into a crisis exacerbated by chance events and Simon's still uncontrollable reactions to sirens and other triggers. Readers will be relieved and cheered by the way he ultimately finds both the inner stuff and outer support to weather it. The cast largely presents as White. Adroit, sensitive, horrifying, yet hilarious. (resources) (Fiction. 9-13)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Centering 12-year-old Simon O'Keefe's recent move to a completely off-the-grid town and told in his laugh-out-loud first-person perspective, Bow (Stand on the Sky) delivers a compassionate and refreshingly hopeful novel about a tween navigating the aftermath of a school shooting, which takes place before this book's start. Hoping to escape the anxiety-inducing notoriety they've been experiencing after the event, Simon and his family move to Grin and Bear It, Neb., where all electronic devices are banned. The devices, local scientists say, would interfere with their radio telescopes, which are listening for signals of extraterrestrial activity. Since no one can google him, Simon is optimistic that he can fly under the radar and put his past behind him. He makes fast friends with classmates Agate Van der Zwann, who is white and autistic, and half-white, half-Filipino Kevin Matapung; together, they set out to create false messages from aliens, using Kevin's family's contraband microwave to attempt to trick the scientists. Without detracting from Simon's uplifting emotional arc about making peace with his past and looking toward a brighter future with friends, Bow imbues this sincere story with levity by employing madcap plot points, including several animal-centered shenanigans featuring squirrels, dogs, and emus. Ages 8: 12. Agent: Jane Putch, Eyebait Management. (Feb.)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 5 Up--Facing trauma from the past is difficult, but this book handles it masterfully. Main character Simon is the only survivor from a shooting in his school classroom. He and his family have just moved to Grin and Bear It, NE--a National Quiet Zone town without internet, cell phones, or television. He hopes it will be the perfect place to find the "now" version of himself. While on his journey, Simon makes friends with Agate and Kevin. All three kids face different types of pressure and support one another as they seek out coping mechanisms and strategies. Simon's mother works as the town undertaker and his father works for the Catholic Church. It is a very rural environment, and a large part of the story is Simon and his friends experiencing birthing goats, being chased by emus or an attack peacock, training the sweetest service dog ever, and even faking an alien signal to the scientists managing a Large Radio Telescope. In the mix are an incompetent morgue assistant who is constantly losing bodies (or taking the wrong ones!) and a wild squirrel who ate the sacrament. Simon is a funny, lovable character who has lived through an unthinkable event. Simon is white, Kevin is Filipino American, and Agate is white and autistic. Funny and heartfelt in equal measure, this book tackles some tough topics, but the humor keeps readers engaged, and it is easy to care about these characters. VERDICT A solid purchase for all libraries that serve middle grade readers A solid purchase for all libraries that serve middle grade readers. It deftly handles the sensitive topic of being a young trauma survivor; warning for school shooting content.--Claire Covington Copyright 2023 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Reviews by: Shelf Awareness Escaping the memories of a traumatic event may be impossible, but in this poignant and remarkably funny National Book Award finalist and Kids Indie Next List title, Simon and his family hope to at least escape public attention.

Quantity
1



#2388418 Fire, the Water, and Maudie McGinn (Paperback (Trade))
written by Sally J. Pla
Maudie McGinn lives for the summers she spends in California with her dad, but this year, she's shouldering the weight of a big secret, one that her mom warned her never to tell. As much as Maudie wants to confide in her dad, she's scared to. As Maudie navigates unfamiliar waters, she makes new friends, and her autism no longer feels like a big deal. But her secret is still threatening to sink her. *978-0-06-326880-7 Quill Tree Books ©2024 5 x 7-1/2 336 pgs. Grades 6 - 8 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 4.3 AR Pts 8.0*

Reviews by: Booklist Summers in California with her dad are the highlight of 13-year-old Maudie's year. When a wildfire forces Maudie and her dad onto the road, Maudie's mom insists that because Maudie is autistic, she won't be able to handle the disruption of routine and the sensory issues. But Maudie is determined not to go home, so she and her dad spend the summer in an old camper by the beach in the town where Maudie's dad grew up. There she meets the locals, including Etta, a famous surfer who gives Maudie surfing lessons in preparation for a competition where Maudie hopes to win money to replace some of what was lost. Maudie feels more at home and accepted than she does with

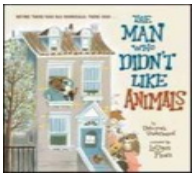
her mom and stepdad. But she's also hiding a dark secret, and as the summer draws to a close, she has to find a way to tell the truth. Any reader who has ever felt different will be able to relate to Maudie's journey to finding her home and her people.

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews An autistic girl weathers a summer of changes. Thirteen-year-old Maudie McGinn is desperately looking forward to leaving Houston and spending the summer with her dad in Molinas, California. Unlike Mom, a YouTube influencer who exploits Maudie's autism, Dad doesn't treat her like she's helpless or berate her for having meltdowns or panic attacks. And unlike Ron, her stepfather, he doesn't erupt in rages or leave bruises on her arms. But when a wildfire forces them to evacuate, Maudie and Dad find themselves scraping by in Conwy, Dad's hometown on the Mexican border. It's overwhelming, especially when Maudie's secret burns inside her alongside Mom's and Ron's demeaning words, like incapable and ridiculous. If she tells Dad about Ron's abuse, though, she could be taken from her family altogether; Mom said so. But as Maudie makes friends, including Paddi, a bubbly girl with ADHD, and Etta, an easygoing woman who teaches her to surf, she wonders: Is keeping secrets good? Is she stronger than she thinks? Through Maudie's earnest, occasionally poetic narration, Pla vividly explores the ways that physical and verbal abuse can distort self-perception. Notably, she illustrates how pressure to comply with neurotypical authority figures can complicate self-advocacy. Though Mom's ableism is less firmly addressed than Ron's abuse, Dad, who's also neurodivergent, provides a compassionate counterpoint by consistently reaffirming Maudie's self-worth. Most characters read White; Dad's mom was from Venezuela, and Paddi is cued South Asian. A perceptive, poignant tale of self-discovery. (Fiction. 9-13) COPYRIGHT(2023) Kirkus Reviews, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Autistic 13-year-old Maudie McGinn loves spending summers with her father in his California cabin. But this year, she carries a terrible secret, one that her mother insists Maudie not tell him. But her existing trauma deepens when a wildfire forces Maudie and her father to evacuate and they retreat to the Southern California beach town where Dad grew up. Even amid the challenging situation and her sensory overload, however, she's happy to be with him instead of her mother and stepfather back in Houston. Maudie soon takes up surfing under the mentorship of an effusive elder and enters an end-of-summer Surf Bash offering a beginner's prize of cash and a raffle ticket entry to win an RV, surprise gifts that Maudie wants for her father. But fearful feelings surrounding her imminent return to Texas threaten her newfound peace. Pla (The Someday Birds) gradually reveals the physical and verbal abuse Maudie endures in Texas in a way that is appropriately harrowing but never gratuitous. Interstitial poems provide further emotional depth to Maudie's intimate first-person narrative, fashioning a vulnerable portrait of one girl seeking to empower and redefine herself outside of her personal traumas. Maudie is of white and Venezuelan descent. Ages 10: up. Agent: Sara Crowe, Pippin Properties. (July)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 4-6--Maudie McGinn has been waiting for summer all year, from the minute she had to leave her father in California last summer and go back to live with her mother and stepfather in Texas. Maudie doesn't feel safe in Texas, but between her autism and fear she hasn't been able to tell anyone why. The summer is her safe place. However, just as Maudie and her dad are getting settled in his forest cabin in Northern California, disaster strikes in the form of a sudden massive wildfire that causes them to flee without any of their possessions. Despite her mother's protestations, Maudie is allowed to stay with her father, and they end up living in a campground in a small coastal town near San Diego thanks to the kindness of her father's childhood friend. In their new summer home, Maudie works through the trauma of having to start fresh with none of her belongings and also keep herself entertained while her father attempts to find work every day. Once she finds the beach and the surfing community, however, she is newly determined to learn how to surf and enter a surfing competition to earn money. Standard prose is interwoven with free verse throughout the book, and the narrative shifts from the present day to widening glimpses of Maudie's life and the dangers she faces in Texas. While the plot races along with ample suspense regarding Maudie's safety and the surfing competition, ultimately the tale wraps up hastily and without the slower pacing the solid ending deserves. VERDICT Themes of autism, child abuse, and the impact of wildfires combine for a unique and memorable story that will appeal to middle grade readers open to a creative format and heavier themes.--Kate Olson Copyright 2023 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Quantity
1



#2397848 Man Who Didn't Like Animals (Hardcover (Trade))

written by Deborah Underwood

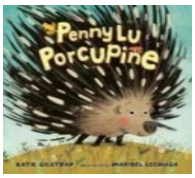
There once was a man who loved his tidy home and who didn't like animals. Then one day, a cat appeared. The man and the cat both liked napping and watching the rain and eating dinner precisely at six. Well, maybe this one animal could stay. Next came a dog...

978-0-358-56713-4 Clarion Books ©2024 9 x 11 40 pgs. Grades P - 1 Dewey# E AR Lvl 1.7 AR Pts .5

Reviews by: Booklist Once there was a man who loved his tidy home, but he did not like animals at all. When a cat moved in with him, the man ordered it to leave, but the cat stayed, and the man discovered that they both enjoyed naps and dinnertime. He still didn’t like cats, but he liked this cat (and its friends, who joined them). When a dog moved in (soon followed by its canine friends), the man readjusted again. The ducks arrived next, followed by chickens, goats, pigs, and cows. The man’s neighbors became cranky. Too softhearted to evict the animals, old Mr. MacDonald (for, of course, that was his name) moved with them to his new farm, where they were wildly, loudly happy, singing, “Ee I Ee I O!” Underwood offers a quietly beguiling tale of a grumpy old fellow who finds happiness where he least expects it. The understated, heartening narrative leaves room for the illustrations to work their magic, amusing kids with large absurdities and small details. Great fun for sharing at story time.

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly In this Old MacDonald origin story from Underwood (Walter Had a Best Friend) and Pham (Bear Came Along), the opening sequence shows a middle-aged man, portrayed with brown skin, happily dusting his apartment: "There was once a man who loved his tidy home and who didn't like animals." Naturally, a sleek cat appears on his doorstep. In digital artwork with a deliciously retro feel, vignettes show him holding his hands over his head to scare it off. But the cat refuses to leave, and the two find much in common: "The man liked to eat dinner at precisely 6 p.m. So did the cat." Willing to make an exception for a single kitty, he muses "Maybe THIS cat isn't so bad." But when additional felines, a dog or two, and a wealth of farm animals arrive, and determine to stay, the neighbors start to complain. The solution leads to a familiar tune about a man whose new residence houses many animals (their names, illustrations hint, begin with E, I, and O). It's a light tale that garners plenty of smiles, as well as an amiable look at one individual's learning to let go of preconceptions. Ages 4: 8. Author's agent: Erin Murphy, Erin Murphy Literary. Illustrator's agent: Holly McGhee, Pippin Properties. (Sept.)

Quantity
1



#2380454 Penny Lu Porcupine (Hardcover (Trade))

written by Katie Gilstrap

Like all porcupines, Penny Lu is nearsighted. So while her incredible sense of smell leads her to all sorts of yummy food, predators can be hard to spot. Thankfully, she has another feature that's quite amazing-her pointy quills! Even when she's scared, they make her look powerful. But sometimes Penny Lu doesn't feel powerful.

978-0-593-32627-5 Nancy Paulsen Books ©2024 8-1/2 x 11 32 pgs.

Grades P - 1 Dewey# E Lexile AD 730

Reviews by: Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books Penny Lu the porcupine knows she has to be very careful when she goes out into the woods, where animals bigger and stronger than she is-cougars, coyotes, and even bears-roam. Unfortunately, her poor vision often means she mistakes harmless objects for predators, causing her to raise her quills as high as she can and yell "I'm big and I'm brave and I'm prickly, too! So leave me alone, or I'll come after YOU!" at tree stumps, rocks, etc. Her nose is more accurate than her eyes, however, and it easily cues her into the presence of a real bear, and when her instincts kick in, she proves herself to be "fearless as fearless can be." Lechuga's lush digital illustrations are dynamic without being busy; hand-textured natural elements make an immersive, sensory experience, from the bear's dripping fur as he retreats across a river, to closeup vignettes of Penny Lu's snout sniffing flowers, to the peacock feather-like glory of the porcupine's quills. A warm daytime palette of golds contrasts nicely with the cool periwinkles in the evening, and the red and orange explosion surrounding Penny Lu's exclamations make clear her fear and bravery. Unfortunately, the jokes about Penny Lu's vision impairment toe the line between warm acceptance of those who don't see well and accidental ableism, and the message about valuing all abilities gets lost in humor. Sighted youngsters will love discovering the myriad of animals and flora hiding in each spread, so this could still serve as part of a storytime on the senses. CBR COPYRIGHT(2024) Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews A porcupine is put to the test. Like all North American porcupines, Penny Lu can’t see much, other than what’s directly in front of her, though her sense of smell is “swell!” At a visual disadvantage, “She must always beware...of cougars, coyotes, and even...THE BEAR!” Luckily, Penny Lu has a built-in defense mechanism: pointy quills that, when activated, “make her look bigger” and “feel braver.” She also has a battle cry—“I’m big and I’m brave and I’m prickly, too! So leave me alone, or I’ll come after YOU!”—all of which makes her a tough customer. When she encounters what she thinks is a bear, Penny Lu is courageous in the face of what turns out to be rocks and a stump, but when she finally meets a real bear, she panics. Things look grim, but those instinctive defenses finally kick in, and with a mighty shout, Penny Lu shows the bear what she’s made of (quills). Gilstrap’s well-constructed rhyming narrative demands to be read aloud. Readers will delight in Lechuga’s velvety illustrations, which include details such as a praying mantis’s intimidating posturing, a startled owl, and watchful predators lurking in the background. In an author’s note, Gilstrap provides information about porcupines and insight into her own childhood panic disorder, both of which enrich the story and invite conversation about bravery in the face of anxiety. Rich illustrations and a snappy rhyming text reinforce the power of inner strength. (Picture book. 2-6)

Quantity
1



#2285496 Trex (Hardcover (Trade))

written by Christyne Morrell

As a child, Trex received an experimental brain implant that saved his life, but it came with an unusual side effect: he shocks everything he touches. His overprotective mother has kept him away from other kids...until now. Finally, she's ready to let him go to a real school. Trex is determined to lead a normal life-but that's pretty hard to do. The electricity sparking from his fingertips is getting more powerful by the day. And when he crosses paths with a reclusive girl known as Mellie the Mouse, things really...electrify.

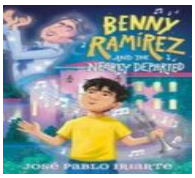
978-0-593-43324-9 Delacorte Press ©2022 5-3/4 x 8-1/2 304 pgs.

Grades 4 - 7 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 4.6 AR Pts 8.0 Lexile 640

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews A 12-year-old fugitive starts middle school with a literally electrifying secret to keep. After eight years of home schooling and sudden flights with his fanatically cautious mother, frustrated Trex jumps at the chance to be a “normal” kid for once—a tall order, as his whole body functions as a capacitor to power the experimental bioware in his brain, and touching anyone else or any metal item creates a dangerous electric spark. Worse yet, unbeknownst to Trex and (initially) his mom, the evil technocrat who financed the experiment has caught up with them at long last and, eager to get him back onto the operating table for further slicing and dicing, has hacked into his mental settings. Morrell really stacks the deck against her protagonist, but along with casting him with a winning mixture of decency and smarts, she deals him Mellie, a sharp young recluse who fancies herself a detective and, despite struggling with a profound anxiety disorder, proves a redoubtable ally through cascading crises that escalate from pranks into kidnappings, brutal attempted murders, last-tick rescues, and shocks both literal and in the form of revelations about Trex’s history, family, and even identity. Trex and the rest of the central cast are White; two siblings in the supporting cast are Black. The author offers reassurance to readers who identify with Mellie in an afterword. Definitely buzzworthy. (Science fiction. 9-13)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 3-7--Twelve-year-old Trex Wilson is used to cross-country moves, having zero friends, and being unable to touch anyone without wearing rubber gloves. It's all par for the course when you're a middle schooler with an experimental brain implant whose side effects include shooting lightning bolts out of your fingertips. Ever since he received the first biotechnology of its kind after a near-fatal car accident, his mother has kept them on the move, fearing that The Company wants Trex as a test subject. When they arrive in Hopewell, Trex convinces his mom that he can keep his powers under wraps while attending school for the first time. What he isn't counting on is a classmate like Mellie Chandler, an aspiring detective who witnesses a zap and begins spying on Trex. After the two bond over their shared social isolation (she suffers from excruciating stomachaches and is the target of bullying), Mellie enlists Trex's help investigating The Prowler, a mysterious stranger that Trex worries could be a Company representative. This novel delivers on its engaging Stranger Things--meets-superheroes hook with a well-plotted mystery that balances action, friendship, and thoughtful discussion of mental health. Although some plot revelations are delivered too conveniently, the book's major twist pays off and fuels an action-packed second half. Both protagonists are presumed white. VERDICT A worthwhile purchase with cross-cutting appeal for readers of mystery, science fiction, or heartfelt friendship narratives; hand to fans of Greg Van Eekhout or Stacy McAnulty.--Elizabeth Giles Copyright 2022 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Quantity
1



#2378372 Benny Ramirez and the Nearly Departed (Hardcover (Trade))
written by Jose Pablo Iriarte
After moving cross-country into his late grandfather's Miami mansion, Benny discovers that the ghost of his famous trumpet-playing abuelo, the great Ignacio Ramirez, is still there... and isn't too thrilled about it. He's been barred from the afterlife, and no one can even see him except his grandson. But Benny's got problems of his own.
978-0-593-70370-0 Knopf Books for Young Readers ©2024 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 272 pgs. Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 4.9 AR Pts 9.0 Lexile 730

Reviews by: Booklist Benny and the rest of his Cuban American family inherit his grandfather's home in Miami soon after his death, so they make the cross-country move from L.A. to start a new life in sunny south Florida. Benny has two siblings who are both talented in the arts and parents who scored positions at a local arts school, but he doesn't have any particular artistic talent. When they start to settle into their new home, Benny discovers he is able to see and speak with Abuelo's ghost and everything changes. This book is at once sweet and funny, and the author does a great job of showing a family dynamic in which everyone is happy for one another and everyone can be a winner or a star. Latine readers may catch some references to Cuban artists in the story, which is richly fleshed out to showcase Miami life and culture. Benny's first- person perspective as a middle-school student provides a lens through which young readers can enjoy a taste of Miami.

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews When Latin music great Ignacio Ramírez dies, his path to a rewarding afterlife is hindered by unfinished business that demands resolution. Not only is Benny Ramírez the grandson of a famous Cuban American musician, but everyone else in his family has a talent, too: Papi is a well-regarded Hollywood producer, Mami has a gift for languages, older sister Cristina is a star dancer, and younger brother Manny is a promising actor. When the family inherits Benny’s estranged grandfather’s Miami home after his death, they leave Los Angeles, and the Ramírez kids enter the South Miami Performing Arts School, where Benny, who feels like he isn’t special, struggles to fit in. Fortunately, his musician abuelo’s spectral presence is tied to his mansion, unable to move on. Ignacio must figure out what his unfinished business is and resolve it by New Year’s. Only Benny can see Abuelo, who insists that helping Benny follow in his footsteps to become a world-famous trumpet player must be his unresolved task. Unfortunately, Ignacio has a history of egocentric behavior and little respect for boundaries, which leads Benny into many scrapes. The plot is reminiscent of other ghostly redemption tales, reinforcing the moral that family and community are more valuable than riches and fame. Iriarte writes with a lighthearted touch and includes ample physical comedy; the humor and Cuban American cultural touchstones make this work a welcome addition to the genre. A humorous and haunting riff on a classic storyline. (Paranormal. 8-12)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 3-7--Benny is not talented--not like his sister, the dancer; or his brother, the actor; or his recently deceased abuelo, the famous musician Ignacio Ramirez. He is forced to reckon with this when he and his family move into his grandpa's Miami mansion and Benny attends arts school. He discovers Abuelo is actually a ghost who has some unfinished business! Ignacio decides to help

Benny become a star, so that the performer can go to the eternal party that is the afterlife. This debut title explores the complexities of family dynamics in a way that shows a love for the characters, including those who are not always the most sympathetic. Arguably the least relatable character, Ignacio, is the funniest to read about, with his wildly colorful outfits and his lack of self-awareness. As such, he may remind readers of their own weird relatives who are beloved. Though some of the humor falls flat, each emotional scene will riff on readers' souls. Children who are going through the pain of barely-there parents or family will relate to Benny and Ignacio's relationship. This pleasant title is best for young fantasy readers who like the paranormal, but do not want the scares. VERDICT Benny's story is a charming, not-scary ghost story with moments of joy, sadness, and wishing-you-were-there in Miami eating a delicious Cubano sandwich.--Wilsinia Ocasio Copyright 2024 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Quantity
1



#2406712 Spotless Giraffe (Hardcover (POB))

written by Peter Millett

In this funny and heartwarming picture book, meet a shy little giraffe named Kipekee. She's a bit different from the other giraffes-she was born with no spots. Inspired by a real-life spotless giraffe from a popular news story, born in 2023, at Brights Zoo in Tennessee, Kipekee is one of the rarest giraffes on the planet. But being one of a kind isn't easy. And as Kipekee looks around her on her first day at school, she feels like she doesn't fit in anywhere. With the help of her new friends, she tries some of the animal classes, scrambling clumsily up the rocks with llamas, and stretching her twiggy legs to high jump with the gazelles. But none of them feel quite right. She even tries to disguise herself, hoping that the others will accept her. Eventually, Kipekee realizes that, although she doesn't look like the others, she fits right in, and that her differences should be celebrated. And she's delighted to find that she's accepted-spots or no spots. *978-0-7112-9634-3 Happy Yak ©2024 9 x 11-1/2 32 pgs. Grades P - 1 Dewey# E*

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Being different can be hard—but wonderful, too. On Kipekee the giraffe's first school day, she's uncertain which class to join. Her coat's brown, so Hana Hippo suggests the camels. Azar Aardvark ties a fake hump on that falls off when Kipekee swims with the class. Azar proposes the llamas, though Kipekee lacks a woolly coat. Pia Panda's sure one will grow; Hana places a woolly rug over Kipekee's back, but it flies off when she climbs rocks. Hana suggests the zebras because most young zebras' coats are brown with stripes. Pia wraps Kipekee with toilet paper strips, which unravel. Kipekee joins the gazelles, though she lacks horns. A headband with springy "horns" fails, falling off when Kipekee jumps hurdles. Finally, she takes stock of her physical attributes. Noticing the "Giraffe Class" sign, she understands where she really belongs and settles in beautifully. The helpers agree and add a picture to the sign: one depicting a giraffe without spots—like Kipekee! When the giraffes throw a party, Kipekee invites her new best buddies. No matter they don't resemble anyone else: Appearances don't count among pals. Children will be charmed by this delightful tale about friendship, uniqueness, inclusion, and acceptance, based on the true story of Kipekee, born in a Tennessee zoo in 2023, the first giraffe without spots born in the United States. The lively color illustrations, featuring an all-animal cast, are full of expressive, comical fun. A whimsical reminder that our differences are what make us special. (author's note) (Picture book. 4-7)

Quantity
1



#2309453 Lost Year (Hardcover (Trade))

written by Katherine Marsh

Thirteen-year-old Matthew is miserable. His journalist dad is stuck overseas, and his mom has moved his great-grandmother in with them to ride out the pandemic, adding to his stress and isolation. But when Matthew finds a photo in his great-grandmother's belongings, he discovers a clue to a hidden chapter of her past, one that will reveal a life-shattering family secret.

978-1-250-31360-7 Roaring Brook Press ©2023 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 368 pgs.
Grades 6 - 8 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 4.8 AR Pts 11.0 Lexile 710

Reviews by: Booklist Matthew is stuck at home during the early days of the coronavirus pandemic, and, like most 13-year-olds, he would rather play video games than hang out with his 100-year-old great-grandmother, Nadiya, or "GG." Matthew's mom has other plans. Forced to unpack GG's storage boxes, Matthew finds a photo that sparks questions and ultimately unspools a long-hidden history about GG's childhood in Stalin-ruled Soviet Ukraine. Alternating perspectives between Matthew and GG's cousins when they were young girls, the story connects 1930s Brooklyn to Communist Ukraine during its devastating, man-made famine, the Holodomor. As the cousins' narratives unfold, the book also links two moments in history deeply impacted by disinformation; it encourages readers to consider carefully their sources and emphasizes

that “we need to tell the whole story” and be mindful of whose stories have not—or cannot—be told. Marsh, Edgar Award–winning author of The Night Tourist (2007), explains in a note that she rooted her research in her own relatives’ experiences during the Holodomor. The fairly lengthy middle-grade book rewards readers with a nimble twist and satisfying ending and has an obvious urgency in light of current geopolitics. A natural selection for fans of Alan Gratz and a stepping stone to the work of Ruta Sepetys, this sobering and important story will be an excellent addition to classroom and library collections.

Reviews by: Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books With school shut down and socialization limited, thirteen-year-old Matthew has been relying on his Nintendo Switch for entertainment during most of the spring in 2020. That's taken away too, though, when his mom decides it's time to go screen-free, suggesting he help his great-grandmother, who has recently moved in with them, sort through her old boxes. When he finds an old photograph of two young girls, he uncovers a tale far more harrowing and dramatic than any video game. Alternate chapters tell the story of three girls in 1932: Mila, the daughter of a higher-up in the Ukrainian Communist Party; Nadia, orphaned when her mother and family died in the Holodomor in Ukraine; and Helen, the daughter of recent Eastern European immigrants to Brooklyn. The shifting perspectives make for a choppy narrative at points, but the story more than compensates for the unevenness with compelling characters and three separate settings brilliantly utilized for both a sense of place and a connection between the major players. Matthew makes an excellent proxy for young readers, especially as a kid at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic: he's feeling relatively safe but has no idea how long the shutdown will be or how dangerous the virus is. He knows he's lucky but he's also aware that things can get really bad really fast-a fact confirmed in his great-grandmother's account of three girls tossed together in one tragedy and not all making it out alive. Marsh has a clear knowledge of the Soviet world and the Holodomor, and she seamlessly interweaves historical events and figures without extensive exposition. This feels especially timely, given the Russian invasion of Ukraine as well as the continuing pandemic, but ultimately, the book asks the reader a larger existential question: what would you do to survive and who would you become in the aftermath? KQG COPYRIGHT(2022) Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Horn Book Magazine Marsh's affecting historical novel, inspired by her own family's story, describes the social and political backdrop of the Holodomor, a famine that killed millions of ÂUkrainians in the 1930s and was covered up by the Soviets (Ukraine was a republic of the USSR at the time). It opens by introducing Matthew, a present-day, screen-obsessed thirteen-year-old living in New Jersey, "basically under house arrest" during the COVID-19 pandemic. He has been asked to help Nadiya, his hundred-year-old great-grandmother, to sort through her belongings; in so doing he starts to piece together the Lomachenko family story. Matthew's chapters alternate with those of Mila, a Young Pioneer living in 1930s Kyiv under the watchful eye of her doting widowed father (and Papa Stalin), and of Nadiya's cousin Helen in Depression-era Brooklyn. The harsh realities of the Stalin regime -- where citizens could be declared "class enemies, " evicted from their homes, and sent to labor colonies for any perceived anti-Party infraction -- come to light. The horrors of state-sanctioned starvation and the desperation of would-be refugees are palpable and disturbing to read, but they are made palatable because the experiences are filtered through the viewpoints and sensibilities of young people caught up in the disaster. The multiple voices come together to bear witness and remind us that history is a collection of stories, "and it matters enormously who gets to tell them." A compelling and timely look at the historically complex and fraught relationship between Ukraine and Russia. Luann Toth(Copyright 2023 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

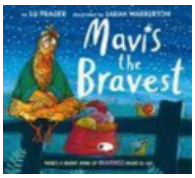
Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews A 13-year-old boy trapped indoors by Covid-19 uncovers a dark family secret leading back to the Holodomor, the early 1930s Ukrainian famine caused by Stalin’s policies. When the pandemic shuts down the world in 2020, Matthew is more isolated than most kids. His journalist father is stuck in Paris, and since his mom has moved GG, his frail, 100-year-old, Ukrainian immigrant great-grandmother, in with them, protecting her means Matthew can’t see his friends. Matthew starts helping GG sort her boxes of keepsakes, gradually piecing together a story that’s also told from the points of view of Mila, the privileged daughter of a Communist Party member, and Helen, the daughter of Ukrainian immigrants living in Brooklyn. When Helen’s cousins write to say they are starving, she secretly mails them her father’s cherished gold cross. Meanwhile, in Kyiv, Mila encounters a starving girl who claims to be her cousin Nadiya. Mila is a strong supporter of Papa Stalin, but her efforts to help Nadiya ultimately open her eyes to the truth about his regime—as well as endangering her own life. Marsh’s intertwining narratives ground the story of the Holodomor—which affected her own family—within a historical framework while leading up to a completely believable and emotionally powerful conclusion. A strong subplot discusses journalistic integrity and how one powerful man managed to keep the truth of the Holodomor hidden for years. A moving presentation of a long-suppressed piece of history. (author’s note) (Historical fiction. 9-14)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly A 13-year-old boy discovers a dark family secret in this stirring volume by Marsh (Nowhere Boy). As the Covid-19 lockdown begins, Matthew is stuck in his Leonia, N.J., home with his divorced magazine editor mother and his 100-year-old Ukrainian-born great-grandmother Nadiya, called GG. Struggling to adjust to the new reality, Matthew finds comfort in playing video games, until his mother takes away his gaming console and orders him to help GG organize her personal belongings. When he finds a photo of two girls, labeled "Nadiya and Helen," GG reluctantly divulges that she and her cousin Helen had once been a trio, and that what happened to the third cousin, Mila, is a "terrible secret," spurring Matthew to learn more about GG's past. Captivating first-person POV chapters; which alternate between Matthew in 2020 N.J. and Helen, Nadiya, and Mila in 1930s Brooklyn and Kyiv; vividly render the suffering caused by Stalin's imposed famine, Holodomor; the event's perception around the world; and the aftereffects that ripple into Matthew's present. Helen and Matthew's growing understanding of the tenets of responsible journalism link their stories as each seeks to uncover the truth and report on their discoveries. An author's note concludes. Ages 10: 14. (Jan.)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 5 Up--Four intertwined narratives explore a family history full of suffering, sacrifice, and secrets. Much of the book explores the events in the early 1930s around the Holomodor (death by starvation) in Ukraine. Mila, Nadia, and Helen are the Lomachenko cousins at the center of the story. Helen is in America; Mila is the daughter of a powerful Communist party member in Kyiv; and Nadia lives with her rural farming family in Ukraine. The story opens in 2020 where Matthew spends a lot of time with his great-grandmother during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in New Jersey, and she shares the untold story of her early life as one of the cousins as they go through her box of memories. Matthew seeks help from his reporter father who is working in Europe. The chapters are titled with the

name of the character they feature and include an image, location, and date, which helps keep everyone straight as there are a lot of shifting perspectives. The narrative structure is a bit clunky at times, but the story is compelling. VERDICT With appealing connections to a family living in the time of the pandemic and insight into the history of Ukraine, this striking work of historical fiction dives into the importance of telling one's story and preserving the history of everyday people.--Erin Wyatt Copyright 2023 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Quantity
1



#2375025 Mavis the Bravest (Hardcover (POB))

written by Lu Fraser

Mavis is not like her adventurous friend Marge. Mavis is a chicken who finds EVERYTHING scary (night-time and daytime and anything hairy!). So when the slumbering peace of their cozy barn is disturbed by someone trying to steal their friend Sandra the sheep, will Mavis be able to find her bright spark of braveness and save Sandra?

978-1-250-34482-3 Godwin Books ©2024 10-1/4 x 10-1/4 32 pgs.
Grades P - 1 Dewey# E

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Knitting and bravery go hand in hand in this poultry-rife ode to locating the courage within. Mavis? She's never claimed to be the bravest chicken in the barn. That honor goes to her friend Marge, who urges Mavis to seek out the wide world beyond their safe little yard. But Mavis, snug with her knitting, is happy to stick with what she already knows. After all, to her, everything seems scary. "Nighttime...and daytime...and anything HAIRY! / LOUD things and FAST things and anything WHIZZY!" But when a thief makes off with Sandra the sheep, Mavis finds a well of courageousness inside of herself that she never knew she had. The theft of Sandra doesn't make a great deal of sense except as a necessary plot point; indeed, it's the weakest element of an otherwise enjoyable paean to inner strength. Really, though, it's Mavis' heroic knitting that's the savior of the day, and Warburton's charming art renders both the crafting and the barnyard denizens with equal aplomb (her chickens sport charming knitted tops and colorful handkerchief headwear). The gentle rhyming text comes close to cloying didacticism but remains steady throughout. Both farmer and thief present as white. Evildoers beware! This little chicken is finding her pluck and inspiring kids everywhere to do the same. (Picture book. 3-6) COPYRIGHT(2024) Kirkus Reviews, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Mavis, a russet-hued barnyard hen, is also portrayed as a bit of a scaredy cat; and as prior collaborators Fraser and Warburton (One Camel Called Doug) note, she's none too happy about it. "?'Some chickens,' she whispered, 'are filled to the top,/ brimming with bravery and courage nonstop./ But if there was courage inside me... it's GONE!/ And I can't find the switch that turns bravery on!'?" But when Mavis, up late knitting, spots a sheep rustler, the prospect of losing her sheep friend Sandra and her source of wool catalyzes the discovery of her own, heretofore unknown, bravery reserves. After sending Marge the chicken for help, Mavis looks deep within herself; then commandeers a tractor, gives chase, and swings herself via hand-knit lariat onto the getaway truck and pecks the thief straight into a stream. This familiar tale of courage unleashed gets bravura visual treatment via moonlit drawings that brim with the comic verve of classic animation. Whether showing Mavis peering down on the crime scene, summoning her courage on a bale of hay, or hurtling through space with a hyper-extended "CLUCCCCKKKKAAA-AAAARRGGGHHH," she's a protagonist rendered with 100% pure pluck. Ages 4: 8. (Apr.)

Reviews by: School Library Journal PreS-K--Mavis the chicken prefers the comforts of her nest and her knitting to the unknowns that are found in the wider world. Despite the fact that her best friend Marge is frequently encouraging Mavis to join her on adventures, she remains in her perch, contentedly clicking her knitting needles. One day, however, a thief comes for Sandra the sheep, and it is up to Mavis to dig deep and summon the bravery necessary to rescue her barnyard companion. This charming title is especially well suited to be read aloud. Written in rhyming couplets with a fairly consistent meter, the pacing of the book is designed to carry readers through the story with ease and enjoyment. Fun vocabulary choices and a variety of font shapes and sizes enhance the appeal of the book, and young children will delight in being able to guess many of the rhymes as they approach. The text couples nicely with the illustrations to provide a dynamic visual layout; clever details are hidden within the images in the form of additional characters that are not referenced by the narrative, and each face is delightfully expressive. Readers of all ages will rally behind Mavis as she discovers her inner well of bravery, and they will be inspired to summon their own courage when circumstances are right. VERDICT This is an excellent story time addition that supports social-emotional development through the lens of a cautious chicken.--Mary R. Lanni Copyright 2024 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Quantity
1



#2330703 Lost Library (Hardcover (Trade))

written by Rebecca Stead

When a mysterious little free library (guarded by a large orange cat) appears overnight, eleven-year-old Evan plucks two books from its shelves, never suspecting that his life is about to change. Evan and his best friend Rafe discover a link between one of the books and a long-ago event. The two boys start asking questions whose answers will transform not only their own futures, but the town itself.

978-1-250-83881-0 Feiwel & Friends ©2023 5-1/4 x 7-1/2 224 pgs.
Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 4.3 AR Pts 5.0 Lexile 640

Reviews by: Book Page There is no library in the small town of Martinville. Twenty years ago, it burned to the ground, and nothing was ever built in its place. But one day in the waning months of spring, a little free library appears overnight in front of the town's History House, guarded by a large, purring, orange sentinel named Mortimer. Fifth grader Evan is one of the first to discover the new library and take some books. He also seems to be the only one to notice that most of the books are from the old Martinville library, where they were all returned on November 5, 1999--the same day the library burned down. Not only that, but the famous mystery writer H.G. Higgins appears to have been the last person to check some of them out. As the little free library grows, so does Evan's list of questions. Why did the old library burn down? Why didn't they build a new one? Did H.G. Higgins live in Martinville? Did he set the fire? With the help of his best friend, Rafe, Evan investigates the expanding number of clues. But Martinville isn't ready to give up such big secrets so quickly. Written by two powerhouses of children's literature, Rebecca Stead and Wendy Mass,

Reviews by: Booklist When a makeshift Little Free Library appears on the town green, almost 20 years after the mysterious fire that burned down the town library, the people of Martinville are drawn together once more to not just solve the mystery of the fire but also to decide what it means for their own fates. Mass and Stead employ a rich cast of characters—including ghost librarians, graduating fifth-graders, mice, and a cat—to dive into the heart of Martinville. As the little library grows, our protagonist, Evan, works to uncover what happened to the original library, and Mortimer (the cat) seeks out his own revelations. Full of heart, sly narration, and Stead’s expected air of mystery, this is well suited for lovers of books and libraries and novels featuring ensemble casts. Though certain gaps in the plot (some quite tantalizing) might leave readers feeling unsatisfied, fans of atmospheric tales with nonhuman narrators will be pleased. Hand to fans of Kate DiCamillo's classic The Tale of Despereaux (2003) or Andrew Clements' The Losers Club (2017).

Reviews by: Horn Book Magazine Stead and Mass (Bob, rev. 7/18) pen an entertaining lightly fantastical and supernatural love letter to books, librarians, and little free libraries. Perspective rotates among a cat named Mortimer, rising sixth grader Evan, and a reclusive librarian known as Al. When Al erects a little free library, filled with former library books, it changes the trajectories of the protagonists' lives and brings to light secrets and mysteries about their small town. Evan takes home a book that he realizes was checked out by his father when he was a teen in 1999 -- and returned on the very day of the catastrophic fire that destroyed the town library. While he investigates, readers are also receiving details from Al's first-person narration, which is somewhat unreliable. Mortimer the cat, who had lived with his sister in the town library as a kitten, now guards the present-day little free library structure and is at first plagued, then assisted, by friendly mice who help solve the story's mysteries. There are enough twists to hold puzzle-loving readers' attention, along with great emotional authenticity throughout. Stead and Moss dedicate their book to "the librarians of the past, present, and future," and many readers will come away feeling inspired. Elissa Gershowitz(Copyright 2023 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews A boy who visits a little free library gets more than he bargained for when he becomes a sleuth caught up in the middle of his town’s most enduring mystery. Ever since a tragic fire destroyed the Martinville Library, the town has been left without a place to borrow books. That is, until a little free library suddenly pops up, guarded by a fluffy orange cat named Mortimer. Fifth grader Evan McClelland selects two books from its shelves. Inside them he finds puzzling clues that lead him to chase down the real story behind the library fire. The book is told from multiple perspectives, including those of Evan, Mortimer, and ghost librarian Al, who perished in the blaze and is responsible for the upkeep of the little free library. Evan’s tenacious and curious character is relatable. His relationship with likable best friend Rafe, a brave, kind boy with overprotective parents, is easily one of the most endearing parts of the story. The puzzle over the library fire, a secret involving Evan’s family, a popular writer’s connection to Martinville, and the supernatural elements are presented in ways that are just right for middle-grade readers. The pacing is strong, and the twists and turns are satisfying even if perceptive readers may catch hints of the ultimate truth along the way. Physical descriptions of the human characters are largely absent. A page-turner with striking characters and a satisfying puzzle at its heart. (Mystery. 8-12)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Library records contain the keys to a town's secrets in this lightly fantastical literary mystery from the creators of Bob. On the last Monday of fifth grade, Evan McClelland takes two books from a little free library that has appeared seemingly overnight. The books' circulation cards signal that they're from the Martinville Library, which burned down years ago; and one card suggests that Evan's father once checked out the book over and over again. With best friend Rafe and a copy of How to Write a Mystery Novel that's linked to a famous author, Evan seeks to unravel his family's possible connection to the town's history while navigating his anxiety about the looming adjustment to middle school. Via distinct, unhurried voices, alternating chapters provide history and context from the perspectives of Evan, large orange feline Mortimer, and ghost Al, an assistant librarian at the Martinville Library who died in the fire. Bustling with well-rounded secondary characters and threaded with metafictional elements, Mass and Stead's collaboration is a humane ode to the courage needed to face life's changes as well as the power of libraries as centers of community. Cover art portrays Evan with pale skin. Ages 8: 12. Agents: (for Stead) Faye Bender, Book Group; (for Mass) Ginger Knowlton, Curtis Brown. (Aug.)

Quantity



#2390615 Quacken (Hardcover (Trade)) **1**

written by Justin Colon

Lurking in the lake at Cucumonga Campground is a fearsome and frightening creature. Legend says that it swallows kids, canoes, and even whales whole. But all Hector sees are cute, cuddly, quacking ducks. Until he breaks the campground's most important rule-Don't Feed the Ducks-and releases.the Quacken.

978-1-6659-2248-7 Simon & Schuster Books For Young Readers ©2024 10 x 10 40 pgs.

Grades P - 1 Dewey# E

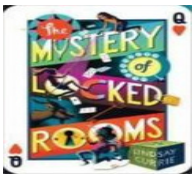
Reviews by: Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books Things tend to go missing at Cucumonga Campground, likely victim to the "fearsome, ferocious, frightening creature" rumored to stalk its ground. Hector doesn't see anything suspicious upon his arrival at the camp, though. Instead, flocks and flocks of adorable ducks abound, and, despite the many warnings to not feed them, he all too happily throws out breadcrumbs to the feathered fowl. That's a big mistake-a huge duck rises from the water, hungrily looking for a meal, and Hector looks pretty tasty. Hector manages to give the gigantic duck chase, but the Quacken is relentless, eventually gulping down the little boy. It turns out, however, kids aren't nearly as yummy as they look, and the Quacken promptly vomits up Hector along with all the other missing items he's scarfed down. The melodramatic narration has a storyteller's flair, and an ending that hints at the Quacken's return makes a clever nod to the final scene of any successful creature feature. The digital art is a bit generic in its Pixar-like figures, but the pages are rife with visuals that add to the humor of the story, with multiple "Do Not Feed the Ducks" signs placed throughout the initial scenes, and, later, the various campers rifling through a pile of duck regurgitation full of missing objects (a giant boat, various pairs of socks). Pair this with Reynold's Creepy Carrots (BCCB 10/12) for a goofy celebration of silly scares. KQG COPYRIGHT(2024) Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Horn Book Guide A legend about a "fearsome, ferocious, frightening creature" in a campsite lake and a warning not to feed the ducks go unheeded in this picture book. A young boy feeds the birds, unleashing the Quacken, a gigantic duck whose "wings were so wide they blocked out the sun." The beast eventually picks up the boy and gives him a big lick, leading to the realization that "children taste terrible." Pino's digital illustrations emphasize absurdity of an enormous menacing duck and include some minor gross-out humor, while Colon's funny text makes for a good summer vacation read aloud. (Copyright 2024 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews The legend of a giant, dangerous duck at Cucumonga Campground looms large. Young Hector and his family are on vacation. Everything seems pleasant except for the many objects that have gone missing and the warnings Hector keeps receiving. Everyone tells him not to interact with the ducks. Don't go near them, don't look at them, and absolutely, positively, do not feed them. To further emphasize the point, "DO NOT FEED THE DUCKS" signs pop up every few feet at the campground. So what does Hector do? He feeds the ducks. They just look so cute and hungry. Amid the many feathers flapping, a large, foreboding shadow suddenly crosses the lake. Colón builds suspense through short, clipped narration. The weather turns ominous, and people flee in terror--it's...THE QUACKEN! The fearsome, colossal wildfowl has appeared! It's always one step ahead of Hector until there is no escape. Hector is popped into the duck's bill like a delicious morsel. But, luckily for Hector, "children taste terrible." Reminiscent of old, cheesy horror films, this tale will make a hilariously over-the-top read-aloud. Pino ramps up the drama in his illustrations, alternating full-page spreads with graphic novel-like panels and vignettes. Hector and his family are brown-skinned, while other campers are racially diverse. Pitch-perfect tension and delightful silliness. (Picture book. 4-7) COPYRIGHT(2024) Kirkus Reviews, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly When young Hector arrives with his family at seemly Cucumonga Campground, where legend has it that a creature lurks in the lake's depths, the other kids quickly give him an earful: "Don't go near the ducks! Don't look at the ducks! Don't even think about the ducks. And whatever you do, DO NOT FEED THE DUCKS!" But the birds in question look so cute and so hungry that "Hector broke the most important rule of all." As soon as he runs out of bread, a cataclysm envelops the campground, and out of the lake emerges a massive duck, "THE QUACKEN," which blocks out the sun, flattens latrines, and swallows canoes. Debut author Colon and Pino (Pumpkin Day at the Zoo) mix broad spoofs of horror tropes (a scene in a seemingly empty house with a mysteriously ringing phone is particularly evocative) with the silly extravagance and tight pacing of an 11-minute cartoon. And when a gag both comical and literal finally saves Hector, the story proves itself to be all in good fun, resulting in a lighthearted vibe that's nothing to quack at. Human characters are portrayed with various skin tones. Ages 4: 8. Author's agent: Jennifer March Soloway, Andrea Brown Literary. Illustrator's agent: Atlanta Japp, Advocate Art. (July)

Quantity



#2378389 Mystery of Locked Rooms (Hardcover (Trade)) **1**

written by Lindsay Currie

Sarah Greene wants nothing more from her seventh-grade year than to beat the hardest escape room left in her town with her best friends, West, and Hannah. Sarah feels helpless until the day Hannah mentions a treasure rumored to be hidden in the walls of an abandoned funhouse.

978-1-7282-5953-6 Sourcebooks, Incorporated ©2024 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 256 pgs.

Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 4.4 AR Pts 7.0 Lexile 620

Reviews by: Booklist Grades 4-6 Twelve-year-old Sarah never really fit in. That is, until she met West and Hannah, the other members of her best-friend group known as the Deltas. Their love of math and escape rooms drew them together, and when Sarah finds out her home is being foreclosed on and she'll have to move away from the only people who've ever understood her, she hopes their shared skills can bail her family out. How? There's a local legend of a treasure hidden in an abandoned funhouse, and Sarah sees that treasure as the answer to all her family's problems. Currie has a light touch with heavy issues, such as coping with a parent who has a chronic illness and financial instability, while also exploring problems such as personal insecurity and the strength needed to be honest and vulnerable with the people you care about. This page-turner with touching character moments makes a fun read for anyone who enjoys puzzle solving, escape rooms, and books centered around the power of friendship. COPYRIGHT(2024) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews “Like three sides of the same triangle, none of us can imagine what life would be like if we weren’t together.”

Sarah, West, and Hannah have been an intrepid trio since they first met. They bring their passion for math and numbers and their perfectly aligned strengths to solving escape rooms. With a foreclosure looming on Sarah’s family home—which would mean moving to live with her grandparents in Michigan—the only solution is to seek out the rumored Triplet Treasure belonging to Hans, Stefan, and Karl Stein. The treasure is supposedly hidden in a long-abandoned fun house they built in the 1950s. To outmaneuver the triplets’ ingenious riddles and tricks, the friends will need to overcome personal obstacles and unlock the doors within themselves. While the stakes are high, it’s reassuring for readers to know that Sarah’s family has a place to go, even if it’s far away from her friends. Early chapters detail the health challenges faced by Sarah’s father; his chronic illness has placed a strain on the family’s finances. Currie sets up a moving metaphor: Sarah’s enthusiasm for escape rooms becomes a means of tackling the unsolvable puzzle that has left her parent confined to his own inescapable room. This topic is treated with a gentle touch, but Sarah’s emotional depths could have been explored more deeply; West’s and Hannah’s emotional arcs are fulfilling, however. Main characters read white. A riddling, sporting adventure and a story of true friendship. (Mystery. 8-12)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Seventh grader Sarah and her two best friends West and Hannah call themselves the Deltas for their love of puzzles. Their unique and perfectly balanced individual skills aid in their team efforts to solve even the hardest of escape room riddles. Because of their friendship, Sarah; who arrived in Park Glen three years ago; finally feels like she belongs. But when her father is diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome and her mother, who is working two jobs, can't make ends meet, Sarah's family faces possible foreclosure on their home, meaning they might have to move if they can't get the money they need, and fast. To help, West and Hannah propose hunting for an alleged treasure left in an abandoned 1950s funhouse built on the outskirts of town by triplets who vacated the lot after one of them died young. In this page-turning thriller, Currie (It Found Us)builds suspense via high-stakes brain teasers in dark rooms and periods of isolation as the Deltas endeavor to solve the biggest, most dangerous series of escape rooms they've ever faced. Sarah reads as white; supporting characters are racially diverse. Ages 8: 12. Agent: Shannon Hassan, Marsal Lyon Literary. (Apr.)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 4–8—Locked rooms filled with secret passages, puzzles, and codes create challenges for friends West, Hannah, and Sarah, or as they call themselves, the Deltas. As the story opens, they have just become the first team of mystery solvers to beat the escape room at Lasers and Lava in record time. While riding high on that victory, they begin discussing a long-since abandoned fun house built by a set of triplets many decades ago. Legend has it that treasure awaits the person who manages to escape from it. Treasure is just what Sarah needs now. Since her dad isn't able to work anymore, and her mom can't work enough, their house is being foreclosed on and they will probably have to move. With that motivation, the Deltas decide that they could take on the challenge of the fun house and find the treasure that will keep them together. Upon arriving at the house, Sarah finds the first clue and their way inside. Once in, they must solve puzzles, decipher codes, and escape from one room after another. But the challenges start, becoming more personal and sinister, leaving the Deltas to wonder who planned these, and how to break free. These twists and turns will keep readers rapidly turning the pages to find out if the trio successfully escapes. VERDICT With highly likable characters, authentic dialogue, and tension-building action, this exciting and engaging story will grab the attention of many readers who will not put it down until the end. Highly recommended for all libraries.—Laura Fields Eason

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Quantity
1



#2349871 How This Book Got Red (Hardcover (Trade))

written by Margaret Chiu Greanias

When Red discovers a new book about pandas, she can't wait to read it! Except it's about only one kind of panda, and red pandas are completely left out. Red never gets to read stories about pandas like herself! So she decides to take matters into her own paws and write her own book.

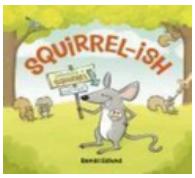
978-1-7282-6565-0 Sourcebooks, Incorporated ©2023 9-1/4 x 9-1/4 40 pgs.
Grades P - 1 Dewey# E Lexile AD 490

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews A red panda notices that media is dominated by giant pandas. One day, Red (an adorable red panda) and her friend Gee (an equally cute black-and-white giant panda) find a book about pandas. Red’s initial excitement turns to disappointment when she sees that the entire book is about giant pandas, with nary a red panda in sight. “Who wrote this anyway!?” she fumes. “Ohhhhhhh!” says Gee as they spot a giant panda’s author photo on the back flap. Red decides to write her own book about red pandas, but as the pair walk through the town, readers will notice all the giant panda merchandise (even red panda children have black-and-white dolls), including the bookstore display. “No one wants to read about red pandas,” Red concludes and tosses her half-finished book away. Later, the friends find a group of pandas crowded around her unfinished book. “That one looks just like me!” one red panda points out. They tell Red that they want and need this book, which inspires her to persevere. Greanias illustrates perfectly, in a way that children will intuitively understand, why it’s so crucial for everyone

to see themselves depicted in media; Iwai's lovable panda characters, rendered in colorful watercolor, pencil, and digital tools, are irresistible. A final joyful spread portrays a future in which both types of pandas are represented everywhere, and crayon-drawn endpapers show pages from Red's book. (This book was reviewed digitally.) Astute and adorable commentary on media representation. (Picture book. 4-8)

Reviews by: School Library Journal PreS-Gr 2--In a wildlife window-and-mirrors moment, the red panda who stars in this picture book resents that everyone's definition of "panda" seems to only make room for the black-and-white panda default. The small, determined creature decides to write a book about red pandas, to amplify their profile; but it's a difficult task, and giving up is the only recourse. In exuberant illustrations that chronicle the ups and downs of the tale, other red pandas come across the rejected project, ecstatic to find themselves in the pages of a story. The red panda is similarly overjoyed and recreates the book, putting it on to as many shelves as she can find with the help of her good friend, the black-and-white panda Gee, who illustrates. There are red panda facts in this story of empowerment, but what it excels at is breaking down the simplicity of wanting to be included into a charming friendship story. Gee, at first, doesn't really see the big deal, but quickly comes to support the heroine. And the delight of other red pandas is genuinely heartwarming. VERDICT A simple quest for inclusion unfolds for the very young, although the pun in the title deflects from the book's true worth.--Kimberly Olson Fakih Copyright 2023 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Quantity
1



#2402123 Squirrel-Ish (Hardcover (Trade))
written by Bambi Edlund
At the park, people give squirrels free peanuts. And nobody screams when a squirrel crosses their path. But for Rat, it's all screams and no nuts . until he comes up with a plan: be more like a squirrel-squirrel-ish! *978-1-77147-517-4 Owlkids Books ©2024 9 x 9 32 pgs. Grades P - 1 Dewey# E Lexile AD 420*

Reviews by: Booklist The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence, isn't it? For this rat, it sure is. He always gets scrammed and shooed when he's out in the world. He never gets treated royally, nor is he given free peanuts the way squirrels are. To address life's injustices, the rat decides to transform into a squirrel. He makes numerous DIY attempts, like sitting on his hind legs and using paper clips to pin his ears back, none of which work. But then he lands on a brilliant solution: a squirrel-ish tail made of broom bristles. Finally, people are being kind to him. But soon he realizes that being a squirrel isn't all free peanuts, especially when there are dogs around. Edlund's cartoonish artwork nicely fits the comical story, and her smart use of page-turn reveals will make this a strong choice for laugh-filled storytime. Amid those laughs, though, is a solid message about the perils of trying to be something you're not, which is a useful takeaway for little ones.

Quantity
1



#2393056 We Are Definitely Human (Hardcover (Trade))
written by X. Fang
When three mysterious visitors from "Europe" crash-land in Mr. Li's field, he does what any good host would: he invites them back to his farmhouse and offers to help fix up their "car". No, there's nothing strange about these guests at all. Just like other humans, they "make business", "play sportsball" and "wear hat". As the townsfolk also come to the aid of the visitors and the gathering turns into a little party, interplanetary relations reach an all-time high. *978-1-77488-202-3 Tundra Books ©2024 8-1/2 x 11 48 pgs. Grades K - 2 Dewey# E AR Lvl 2.9 AR Pts .5 Lexile AD 530*

Reviews by: Book Page When three distinguished visitors crash their "car"--which is definitely not a spaceship--and knock on Mr. Li's door to ask for help, they're disappointed that he doesn't have the parts they need to repair their vehicle. Dejected, they start to walk away, but Mr. Li kindly offers them a place to sleep and to take them shopping for parts the next day. The customers at the general store are also fascinated by Mr. Li's blue-skinned guests, and offer to help them fix their oddly shaped car. Though the travelers don't understand local customs, like parties or music, the help of their new friends might get these "definitely human" visitors back to their home. Which, despite their claims, probably isn't Europe. Jon Klassen fans, rejoice: a new laugh-out-loud book can be added to the read-aloud rotation. X. Fang's

Reviews by: Booklist On a starry night in the American countryside, “something” (clearly a flying saucer) crashes near Mr. and Mrs. Li’s house. Investigating by flashlight, Mr. Li discovers three oddly shaped and hued strangers (clearly aliens), but he is pacified by their quick assurance, “We are DEFINITELY human.” They only want to fix their car (spaceship), so after spending the night with the Lis, they visit the local general store, get what they need, and—with the help of the kind townsfolk—-repair their car (spaceship) and return to . . . outer space. Matthew Forsythe meets Jon Agee in Fang’s wry, strikingly illustrated close-encounter story. Classic humor comes in through the absurdity of the aliens’ charade (“We are from . . . Europe”), made more hilarious by the gullibly wide-eyed farmer and his suspiciously leering dog. The

gag only gets better as the trio struggles to dance, eat food (“Food goes into the mouth”), and hold interesting conversations (“‘Bark! Bark!’ said the dogs. ‘That’s very interesting,’ replied the shorter one”). The story proves more than just a gag, though, through its smoothly executed lesson on being kind to those in need. The textured, richly colored graphite-pencil landscapes and rounded characters are quite beautiful, making the blue-and-pink-shaded alien trio all the more awkward. Laugh-out-loud lovely.

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Three blue, oddly shaped strangers appear in Mr. and Mrs. Li’s backyard one night. A UFO is seen falling from the sky behind a small farmhouse. Mr. Li goes to investigate, and the big-eyed creatures introduce themselves. “Hello,” the tall one says. “We are DEFINITELY human.” They also claim to be having car trouble and explain that they are from...Europe. With impeccable comedic timing and deadpan humor, the actual humans in the story respond with help and kindness. Mr. Li gives them shelter, then takes them to town to get supplies. There, they meet other kind humans who want to lend a hand. Soon, there’s a little car-fixing party in the woods with music, hot dogs, and dancing. No one bats an eye at the visitors’ claim that they “make business” and “play sports ball” or need instruction on how to eat. The importance of kindness shines through this farcical tale, and the creatures know it, too: “Wherever they went next, they would remember the kindness of humans, and do what kind humans do—offer help to anyone who needs it.” Finely detailed and textured illustrations complement the humor. The Lis are cued East Asian; other human characters are racially diverse. DEFINITELY a good book. (Picture book. 4-8)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly When their flying saucer crash-lands near Mr. and Mrs. Li's rural home at midnight, a trio of aliens tries their darndest to convince the couple that "we are DEFINITELY human." The three clearly resemble blue chess pieces with ovoid heads and huge eyes, but instead of challenging their story or sending them elsewhere, Mr. Li "did what kind humans do. He offered to help." The two welcome the aliens as guests; referring to them as "y'all" and going along their stories of being "from Europe." (Asked what they do there, they reply, "I make business... I play sports ball... I wear hat.") After the group visits a local general store for repair equipment, neighbors prove curious but equally hospitable, and a barn-raising-style party ensues (one of the aliens applies a hot dog to its head). Digitally colored graphite tableaus lend a slyly funny vibe, and what starts out as a fish-out-of-water comedy becomes a close encounter of straightforward acceptance. "Wherever they went next," writes Fang (Dim Sum Palace) of the aliens as they fly away, "they would remember the kindness of humans, and do what kind humans do; offer help to anyone who needs it." Human characters are portrayed with various skin tones. Ages 4: 8. Agent: Erica Rand Silverman, Stimola Literary. (Aug.)

Reviews by: Shelf Awareness We Are Definitely Human is a fabulously illustrated, rib-tickling, and affecting picture book in which Mr. Li and his neighbors demonstrate the potential of kindness and cooperative spirit.

Quantity
1



#2381225 Firefly Summer (Paperback (Trade))

written by Morgan Matson

For as long as Ryanna Stuart can remember, her summers have been spent with her father and his new wife. Just the three of them, structured, planned, and quiet. But this summer is different. This summer, she's received a letter from her grandparents--grandparents neither she nor her dad have spoken to since her mom's death--inviting her to stay with them at an old summer camp in the Poconos.

978-1-5344-9336-0 Simon & Schuster Books For Young Readers ©2024 5 x 7-1/2 432 pgs.

Grades 4 - 7 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 5.0 AR Pts 12.0

Reviews by: Booklist Eleven-year-old Ryanna doesn’t remember her mother, who died eight years ago, but she’s curious about her. So, when her mother’s parents invite her to spend the summer at their home on a Pennsylvania lake, she agrees to go. They used to run a children’s camp there. Now their children and grandchildren return every summer, living in cabins and gathering for shared meals, campfires, and adventures. Ryanna quickly warms to her grandparents and the unusual degree of freedom and camaraderie that she and her cousins enjoy. It’s a heady experience for an only child. Learning that a ruthless developer claims to own her grandparents’ property, Ryanna attempts to save their home by following a trail of mysterious clues left by her mother. Matson, whose previous books were written for young adults, makes her middle- grade debut with this endearing book for tweens. The characters, young and old, have their quirks and differences of opinion, but the lakeside camp has a mellowing effect on nearly everyone. Ryanna’s first-person narrative offers a balanced record of events and reflections while bringing the characters to life as people with different needs, moods, and motivations. The mystery and a related treasure hunt bring additional drama, which mounts until the novel reaches its satisfying conclusion.

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly When a tween accepts an invitation to stay with her estranged maternal grandparents in the Poconos, she finds a large and lively extended family, and a treasure map, in this captivating mystery, a middle grade debut from Matson (Take Me Home Tonight). Eager to hear stories about her mom, who died when she was three, only child Ryanna Stuart nervously agrees when the Van Camps invite her to stay for the summer at their inoperative summer property, Camp Van Camp, which is in danger of being razed by a neighbor. As the mystery-loving 11-year-old settles into the summer's rhythms, she grows closer to her newfound family, teaming up with cousins her age to follow marginalia once scribbled by her mother in a mystery book and to locate a treasure map that they hope will save the camp. Matson's vibrant setting, peopled with an easygoing extended family that encourages free play, is irresistibly rendered, while Ryanna's quest to learn more about her mother, as well as her father's falling out with the family, imbues the carefully plotted central mystery with emotional resonance. Ryanna and her dad are white; intersectional diversity is present in the extended family. Ages 8: 12. Agent: Emily van Beek, Folio Jr./Folio Literary. (May)

Quantity
1



#2368238 Luigi, the Spider Who Wanted to Be a Kitten (Hardcover (Trade))
written by Michelle Knudsen
On a street of old houses, a big hairy spider is searching for a home with dark corners to hide in. But when he wakes up, he finds a hand reaching for him and a lady proclaiming that she has always wanted a kitten-and will name him Luigi! At first, a somewhat puzzled Luigi, used to being left alone to creep and dangle and spin webs, resists her kind advances. But soon, tasty breakfasts and getting tucked into bed (no one's ever wished him good night before) have him thinking that kittens surely live magical lives.
978-1-5362-1911-1 Candlewick Press ©2024 10 x 11-1/2 40 pgs.
Grades K - 2 Dewey# E AR Lvl 3.4 AR Pts .5 Lexile 560

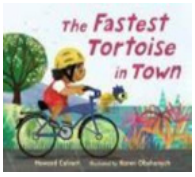
Reviews by: Booklist Grades K-2 After sneaking under a sofa, a spider is startled to be scooped up by a kindly older woman who mistakes him for a kitten, christening him "Luigi."" The understandably confused spider is confident that he is not a kitten but figures there's no harm in pretending. As Luigi settles in, darling scenes see the unusual pair contentedly watching television together or tucking into their respective beds. When the woman invites friends over to show off her new pet, the charade falls flat, and Luigi is terrified that his person won't want him now that he has been identified as a scary spider. Not to worry: she knew who he was all along and adores him just the way he is. The silly, sweet story is packed with humor and marvelous minutiae, and the lovely acrylic-and-pencil illustrations capture adorable arachnid antics while offering a great sense of scale from a tiny point of view. A marvelous message of unconditional acceptance sure to make an arachnid ally out of any young reader. COPYRIGHT(2024) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books Luigi isn't looking to be anyone's pet when he moves into an old home, but that's exactly what happens when the woman who lives there seemingly mistakes him (a hand-sized spider) for a kitten. Being a cat isn't so bad, at first. The food is decent enough, if not as juicy as a fly, and the toys are fun to play with, if a bit too easy to catch. He keeps his web-making a secret, however, not wanting the woman to realize he's a spider, especially as he's enjoying the feline life more and more. When the woman invites some friends over for game night, they soon inform her of her mistake, but she reveals to a heartbroken Luigi that she'd known of his arachnid nature from the beginning and was playing along, thinking it was what he wanted. The hearts of even the most strident arachnophobes will melt at this story of unlikely pals, and the ultimate message of loving oneself and one's friends just as they are remains a worthy one. Gentle shading and subtle hatchmarks along with pastel hues give an overall feeling of coziness, rendering any sort of creepy-crawly creepiness moot. Wide-eyed Luigi cleverly uses his multiple appendages to shape triangle ears and a furry, expressive tail in a disguise that is as imaginative as it is precious. The text is slightly heavy for a storytime, so a cuddly lap might make the perfect venue for this story of friendship in unexpected places. KQG COPYRIGHT(2024) Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews After a spider is mistaken for a kitten, he attempts to keep up the ruse. “A big, hairy spider” moves into an old house sure to contain appropriately dark nooks. He weaves a web under a sofa, but homeowner Betty finds him, decides he’s an adorable kitten, and names him Luigi. As Betty plays with the spider and prepares a special bed for him, he warms to the idea of being Luigi the kitten; kittens seem to lead “magical lives.” He starts fearing that Betty will realize her mistake and banish him, so he does his best to be as felinelike as possible. But when the secret’s revealed, Betty reassures Luigi that she knew he was a spider all along and thought he was only having “fun pretending to be a kitten,” and the pair live companionably ever after. While the sentiment—find someone who will “like you for who you really are”—is timeless, the complicated charade, where each character pretends for the other, is convoluted, and the message is somewhat hidden within the protracted text. Perhaps the most polarizing factor will be Luigi himself. Hawkes has made the spider look really, well, spidery. There’s whimsy when Luigi is mimicking a kitten, but his lightly anthropomorphized form is going to be too creepily arachnid for some. The muted, dusty colors in acrylics and pencil don’t provide much warmth, though they do add spidery ambience. Betty presents white. A good-hearted, if slightly unsettling, tale of unlikely pals. (Picture book. 6-10)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly This quirky be-yourself tale by the team behind Library Lion starts out as broad comedy, as a "big, hairy spider" takes up residence in an old house, where a pale-skinned, silver-haired lady greets him with delight ("It feels like a kitten! I have always wanted a kitten"), names him Luigi, and gives him a cat toy as well as a tiny box to sleep in ("He had never known that kittens led such magical lives"). If his host loves him as a kitten, Luigi resolves to comport himself thusly, and softly shadowed acrylic and pencil art by Hawkes deftly renders furry Luigi as remarkably kitten-like. Then the woman's friends come for a game night; after she introduces Luigi, and he knocks himself out acting like a feline, his real identity is soon revealed by the group. Luigi's anguish lasts until a heart-to-heart clarifies the situation. Though her masquerade's motive doesn't quite persuade ("I already knew you were a spider. I just never said anything because you were having so much fun pretending to be a kitten"), the woman's pledge of unconditional love assuages Luigi's doubts in this emotional roller coaster of a story. Ages 4: 8. Author's agent: Jodi Reamer, Writers House. (Mar.)

Quantity



#2320035 Fastest Tortoise in Town (Hardcover (Trade))

written by Howard Calvert

Barbara Hendricks, a tortoise, has entered a road race, but what was she thinking? With only a week to go before the big day, she worries that she doesn't stand a chance against the other animals competing. Barbara's friend and owner, Lorraine, inspires her to train a little bit more each day and coaxes her out of her shell when the race day arrives. How intimidating to line up next to the slow loris, the snail, the sloth, and the walrus! But Barbara realizes that if she just tries her best, she's already won.

978-1-5362-2835-9 Candlewick Press ©2023 10-1/4 x 8-1/2 32 pgs.

Grades K - 2 Dewey# E

Reviews by: Booklist Preschool-Grade 2 In this fun nod to Aesop's fable, a cute tortoise with an expressive little mouth and extremely long lashes belongs to a gung-ho little girl who has signed him up for a race. The girl puts the tortoise on a training regimen that doesn't seem likely to succeed. For example, on Monday, the tortoise, trying to hurry through the park, is overtaken by a worm; on Tuesday, by a toddler just learning to walk; and on Thursday, by a boy's remote-controlled brachiosaurus. The girl encourages the frustrated tortoise to just run its own race. The race venue is filled with jungle animals, with the tortoise competing in a group of other slow creatures, including a snail and a sloth. Though the tortoise wins, readers may miss the punch of Aesop's having the tortoise pull off an upset victory by sheer plodding pluck, with the hare losing by arrogance, and the bracing moral of "Slow and steady wins the race." But the vibrant mixed-media illustrations enhance the story with comic details. COPYRIGHT(2023) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books Barbara Hendricks, a regular leopard tortoise, has entered a running race. She knows it's not a great idea and she's ready to back out, but her owner Lorraine believes in her and Barbara is willing to give it a go. Lorraine sets up a fitness routine, which basically consists of a daily walk, but Barbara sees no progress, outpaced by a worm, a toddler, an old man, and a racecar dinosaur. The day of the race arrives, and Barbara reluctantly goes, only to be horrified by her competition: a slug, a snail, a slow loris, a sloth, and a walrus-"the best of the best," the fastest animals Barbara has ever seen. Will Barbara be able to keep up and maybe even win the fun run trophy? The race result might not matter for young listeners as they'll likely be rolling with giggles at the sight of the grimly determined racers slowly-slowly-making their way across several pages of panels, each meeting their own challenge until the tortoise takes first place. The richly textured mixed-media art is vibrant, balancing bright pops of color in the foreground with more subtle hues in the setting, and bespectacled, slightly disheveled Lorraine makes a wonderfully expressive counterpoint to dour, clearly anxious Barbara. The try-your-best message is a familiar one, but it has an irreverent freshness here, especially in the closing pages as a triumphant Barbara sets to race a hare, giving viewers a chance to wonder if her newfound confidence will help her take on faster competition. KQG COPYRIGHT(2023) Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Believing in yourself helps when the odds seem stacked against you, as exemplified in this clever tale. Barbara Hendricks, a self-described “regular leopard tortoise,” is seriously perturbed. Her owner and best friend, Lorraine, has done the unthinkable and entered her in a fun run against other animals. Why? Because, as it happens, Lorraine believes in her pet. “I’ve never seen a faster tortoise than you, Barbara Hendricks.” Barbara is skeptical, but that doesn’t stop Lorraine from initiating a training sequence straight out of Rocky. At first the small shelled creature is depressed by her chances (being beaten while out for a practice run by an absent-minded worm doesn’t help). But on the big day, she realizes that if she doesn’t even try, she’ll never know if the training was worth anything. Kids will get a big laugh when they see Barbara’s less-than-speedy competitors (the slow loris is a particularly nice touch), and her eventual triumph is complemented by a surprise ending that will delight Aesop-savvy kids. Mixed-media art brings Barbara’s pathos to brilliant life (who knew a tortoise could emote?), and any child who has faced a seemingly impossible task will relate to Barbara right to the end. Consider pairing alongside Carrie Finison’s Hurry, Little Tortoise, Time for School (2022), which features an equally dedicated protagonist. (This book was reviewed digitally.) Slow and steady? Call this tortoise shell-bent and dedicated. A charmer. (Picture book. 3-6)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Anyone who has optimistically signed up for a fun run will see themselves in friendly faced Barbara Hendricks, the "regular leopard tortoise" who narrates this sweetly rendered variation on Aesop's "The Tortoise and the Hare." Barbara is a bundle of nerves ahead of the big day, but she has a champion, too; "my owner and best friend, Lorraine," a bespectacled child portrayed with brown skin; who believes in her unconditionally. Lorraine leads Barbara through a crash-training regimen (they're overtaken by "an absentminded worm" and a newly walking toddler). And on game day, the child encourages the tortoise to "just run your own race." Though Barbara spies a snail, a slow loris, and a sloth ("the fastest animals I've ever seen!") at the starting line, her strategy of putting one foot in front of the other, again and again, pays off. Calvert (Lots of Frogs) creates a lovable everytortoise via Barbara's entertaining account, nodding to the original fable with the appearance of a new, long-eared challenger at book's end. In moving mixed-media images of expressive figures and bustling townsfolk portrayed with various skin tones, Obuhanych (This Little Kitty) delivers visual laughs and creates a tortoise to root for. Ages 3: 7. (Apr.)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 1–4—Surprised by her own spontaneous act, Barbara Hendricks has signed up for a running race. Barbara is a leopard tortoise and really isn't sure why she signed up to run against other animals. Filled with self-doubt, she is fortunate to have an owner and best friend, Lorraine, who believes in her. Together they spend the week training for the race. Multiple panels filled with colorful and humorous mixed media illustrations capture Barbara's hard efforts to prepare for the race despite the fact that everything is faster than she is. Race day comes and, with the encouragement of her friend, Barbara steps up to the starting line. Her competition, it turns out, is a collection of some of the slowest animals in the world, including a snail, a slow loris, and a sloth. Multiple panels "speed" the race along and the action is gripping as Barbara just tries her hardest. Surprisingly, even to herself, she accomplishes her goal: she finishes the race! Even more shockingly, she wins. This delightful story has a hero who works hard, accepts her limitations, and perseveres despite the odds. Children will root for

Barbara and hopefully capture some of her can-do spirit and hard work ethic along the way. VERDICT With a funny twist that story hour listeners will love—a hare challenges Barbara to a race—this book packs a lot of great lessons into a charming story, and is certainly one to add to the sports shelves, or the good sports shelves. Recommended.—John Scott

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Quantity
1



#2287794 Always, Clementine (Hardcover (Trade))

written by Carlie Sorosiak

Clementine is different from other mice: she can calculate the speed of light and she dreams in Latin. The scientists say she's a genius and put her through test after test. Clementine is proud of being a good lab mouse, but she's lonely. Her only snatches of friendship occur during her late-night visits with a chimpanzee named Rosie. When a compassionate lab technician frees Clementine, the mouse discovers an outside world full of wonders: Brussels sprouts, games of speed chess, television fame, and a chance for a real home. But for Clementine, it's not enough to be free when she knows that Rosie and the other mice are not.

978-1-5362-2884-7 Walker Books US ©2022 304 pgs.
Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 4.1 AR Pts 7.0 Lexile 500

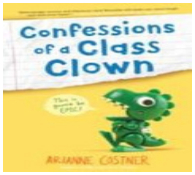
Reviews by: Booklist Grades 3-5 The escape-from-the-lab premise is a favorite within the animal-fantasy genre, but Sorosiak keeps it fresh in her latest endeavor. Mousenapped rather than escaped, Clementine has found herself and another lab mouse snatched from their cage and left in a stranger's mailbox with a note entreating whomever finds them to "please protect these mice." That's how a boy named Gus and his grandfather become their unwitting guardians. Experiments with mouse DNA have resulted in genius-level intelligence in Clementine, making her a bright yet naive narrator for this tale. Relayed through a series of imagined letters to her chimp friend, Rosie, Clementine describes the bonkers scheme devised by Gus and Pop to elicit support for keeping her from being returned to the lab--a televised chess game with Clementine facing a series of human opponents. It's a big-hearted endeavor that pulls in an eccentric cast of side characters who are immensely entertaining. Landing somewhere between Katherine Applegate's The One and Only Ivan (2012) and James Patterson and Chris Grabenstein's Word of Mouse (2016), this sweet-spirited adventure will easily find fans. COPYRIGHT(2022) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Letters from a super-intelligent mouse to the beloved chimpanzee she leaves behind when she escapes a research lab. Poignant, loving, and threaded through with the joy of discovery, the letters that Clementine mentally composes to her gentle simian friend tell a tale that takes suspenseful turns while affirming tolerance and self-expression. Thanks to tweaked DNA, she’s thinking about prime numbers the day she is born, helps other mice navigate mazes, and figures out how to escape her cage at night and sign with the lab’s sad, affectionate chimp, Rosie. When a guilt-ridden research assistant spirits her and another mouse subject out of the lab, leaving them in a nearby mailbox, she begins a series of reports to Rosie about the wonders of the outside world. Eleven-year-old Gus and his grandfather welcome the fugitives rather than turn them in for the large reward offered by the lab when the mousenapping is discovered. They create a storm of public protest against animal experimentation by televising a chess match in which Clementine beats five experienced human players simultaneously. Along with offering an optimistic, aspirational view of human nature as she winds the story to a joyous conclusion, Sorosiak tucks in a subplot around nonverbal Hamlet, the other mouse escapee, who constructs a model of Notre Dame out of wood chips, as food for further thought about different intelligences. The human cast seems to be mostly White. Serious themes lightened by comedic touches; the strong emotional attachments will linger with readers. (Fiction. 8-12)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Genius rodent Clementine finds her purpose with the help of friends and the game of chess in Sorosiak's (I, Cosmo) heartfelt, adventure-filled tale. Due to altered DNA, Clementine shines in the lab, where researchers posit that she "could be the smartest mouse in history." She dreams in Latin, solves mathematical equations, and understands humans' speech. She also makes her first friend, fellow caged lab denizen Rosie, a gentle, curious chimpanzee. Clementine's life is upended when a compassionate junior researcher stealthily liberates her and another mouse, Hamlet, to the nearby mailbox of Pop, the kindly host of local TV program Pop's Hobbies. That's where she's discovered by 11-year-old Gus, Pop's lively and thoughtful grandson, who earnestly promises his protection. Via a series of sensorially written, stirring, and by turns funny and suspenseful imaginary letters to Rosie, Clementine relates her experiences out in the wide world, where Gus, Pop, and a televised game of chess stand to save her from a grim fate back at the lab, which has offered a reward for her return. Maintaining a strong emotional core through Clementine's voice, Sorosiak explores themes; including animal cruelty, duty, empathy, and intelligence; with a deft, light touch. Human characters largely read as white. Ages 8: 12. (Sept.)

Reviews by: School Library Connection “Sorosiak successfully allows the reader to get to know the characters through these letters while still telling a story full of adventures and bravery.” *This is the third starred review for Always, Clementine (PW, Kirkus)*

Quantity



#2424899 Confessions of a Class Clown (Prebound) **1**

written by Arianne Costner

Meet Jack Reynolds. Making people laugh is his life's work. Jack's wacky MyTube channel is really starting to take off. The only problem is, for the truly epic posts, he needs a collaborator. And, well, he doesn't exactly have any friends. So Jack has to swallow his pride and join the new afterschool club, Speed Friendshipping. But who would make the best partner in comedy?

978-1-5364-9210-1 Yearling Books ©2023 5-1/4 x 7-1/2 288 pgs.
Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 4.5 AR Pts 8.0 Lexile 670

Reviews by: Booklist Grades 5-7 A talent for inventive online and classroom tomfoolery gets a Utah seventh grader both into and out of pickles in this funny, perceptive ensemble sitcom. Having a tendency to burn through sidekicks willing to hold the camera for his goofy ""MyTube"" posts, Jack signs up for an after-school "Speed Friendshipping" club in hopes of making new connections. Splitting narrative duties between her glib protagonist and three of his classmates (all with issues and backstories of their own), Costner steers Jack through crises ranging from having his smartphone confiscated until he can pull his math grade up to accusations of cyberbullying for a mean-spirited prank. His instant and real remorse for the latter mark him out as a fundamentally decent sort, though, and along with chortling at his antics both online and in the classroom, readers will applaud his efforts to atone for his misdeeds and to build more lasting relationships with his new friends. Yong's occasional monochrome freeze frames and character cards add to the tale's cinematic quality. COPYRIGHT(2022) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

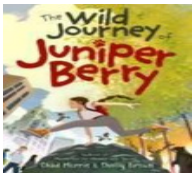
Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews A middle school jester jockeys with real-life friendships and internet fame. Despite seventh grader Jack

Reynolds' confident demeanor, he suffers from a paucity of pals--a crisis belying his reputation as Franklin Middle School's resident comedian and his thousands of MyTube subscribers. When fair-weather friend Zane ditches him for a jock, Jack attends an after-school speed friendshipping session, seeking free doughnuts and fresh acquaintances. He connects with Mario, fun yet phoneless due to an uber-strict mother; Brielle, who's pretty, smart, and motivated; and Tasha, a brainy, reserved fashionista. The first spark fizzles when Mario's mom objects to their joint MyTube appearance. When Jack loses his smartphone privileges, a viral video he made with Brielle catches the eye of a MyTube superstar--but Jack drops the ball, leaving Brielle feeling used. Time with Tasha boosts Jack's math grade, but a Slurpee mishap threatens this relationship, too. When Jack reunites with his phone--and Zane--he makes a final misstep, forcing him to reflect upon and adjust his approaches to humor and other people. Can he find a way to mend his fledgling friendships--or is he destined to become a sad clown? Costner's nondidactic exploration of digital technology and social media sustains a quiet insistence that lasting connections are sweetened by humor but leavened with sincerity. The book features occasional expressive cartoon-style illustrations. Jack reads as White; there is diversity in the supporting cast. A kindhearted, authentic outing. (Humor. 9-13) COPYRIGHT(2021) Kirkus Reviews, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 4–8—An excellent take on the challenges of navigating social media for adolescents. Costner

explores a horrible situation (cyberbullying) through four very different perspectives: Jack Reynolds, the class clown; Tasha, the new kid; Mario, aka Mario-Kart; and Brielle, Ms. Goody Two-Shoes. Jack has been entertaining his classmates since first grade, when he realized it was more comfortable to be laughed at for being silly than for messing up. Tasha has just moved to town and nobody really knows her, including that her brother died and her parents split. Nobody has asked why she shaves her head or even about the colorful hats she wears, which she crochets herself. Mario is a typical tween whose parents are not very cool—his mom won't even let him have a cell phone until he gets his driver's license. Brielle is as perfect as she appears, but she is a complex person who genuinely cares about others. Costner has found a way to highlight the innocence of tweens while never underestimating the unique pressures that children face along with puberty, acne, and popularity. She tackles complex, deeply relevant issues, such as feelings of insecurity and arrogance and the difference between how we present ourselves in a media-centric world and the people we are in private. VERDICT Costner offers some thoughtful ways of encouraging readers to reflect on what kind of a person they want to be, and what they want to be known for. An absolute must-purchase for all middle school libraries.—Christina Paolozzi, Bonaire Elem. Sch., GA

Quantity



#2330658 Wild Journey of Juniper Berry (Hardcover (Trade)) **1**

written by Chad Morris

Eleven-year-old Juniper Berry lives in a cabin with her family deep in the wild woods. Living off the grid is usually exciting, like the time she chased off three growling raccoons with a tree branch and some acorns, or when she thought she glimpsed the legendary Bigfoot. But her happy life in the wild ends abruptly when her younger brother gets sick, and the family moves to the city to be closer to the hospital.

978-1-63993-099-9 Shadow Mountain ©2023 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 256 pgs.
Grades 4 - 7 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 4.5 AR Pts 9.0

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Juniper Berry lives in the California woods with her family, but when her brother gets sick, they have to leave to get help. Eleven-year-old Juniper is perfectly happy in the woods, where she learns from mom Clara and dad Zephyr in “earth school” alongside older sister Skylark and younger brother Hawk. But when Hawk becomes dangerously ill, the family goes with him to the hospital.

While he recovers, they’re stuck in what Clara calls “society,” where the kids encounter cars, refrigerators, the internet, and public school. Sky and Juniper meet their uncle Parker and cousins Kori and Alayna for the first time—and move in with them. Juniper and Alayna clash: Alayna finds Juniper embarrassing, while Juniper wonders, “Why would it be bad if I acted differently from other people?” Juniper aims to make money to help pay for Hawk’s care so they can all go home to the woods, but she only succeeds once friends help. Juniper is a marvelously developed character navigating extremely uncomfortable situations. Alayna, too, is developed with depth and care; she and Clara have their “storms” (panic attacks) in common, for which they eventually get help. The family members are racially ambiguous: Juniper has light skin and light brown hair and takes after her mother; Sky and Hawk have their dad’s light brown skin and curly dark hair. A fascinating, touching story of an off-the-grid family facing changes and the invisible threads that connect people. (Fiction. 9-12)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Eleven-year-old Juniper Berry has lived her entire life happily off the grid with her parents, older sister Sky, and younger brother Hawk, far away from the pressures of society. But when five-year-old Hawk's appendix bursts, his harried hospital visit thrusts Juniper into contemporary civilization, a world she's only imagined and never longed for that's brimming with seemingly magical machines and new foods. Sent with Sky to Redburn, Calif., to live with relatives she didn't know existed while Hawk recovers, Juniper aches to return to their family's remote lifestyle. Enrolled in school for the first time, she must contend with mean girls, an exasperated cousin, and more rules than she could ever hope to understand. For a girl well versed in climbing trees and living off the land, navigating life among the masses may prove to be more challenging than any danger she ever faced in the woods. Juniper's first-person voice and the many memorably developed characters she meets cultivate a feel-good story that reminds readers of both the pitfalls and the benefits of coexisting with others. Juniper is described as looking like her white mother; her father has "dark curly hair and light brown skin." Ages 8: 10. (Aug.)

Quantity
1



#2322965 Control Freaks (Hardcover (Trade))
written by J. E. Thomas
What if Louis Sachar's Wayside School were a little less wacky - but just as funny - and centered on a young Black boy who IS going to be the great inventor of all time, and set in the top STEM middle school in the country, oh and it was written by someone who worked for years in independent schools, and it also tackles what it's like to live in a blended family and to stand up to a parent who's not being so great and to truly work together with your peers?
978-1-64614-305-4 Levine Querido ©2023 5-1/2 x 8 272 pgs.
Grades 4 - 7 Dewey# Fic

Reviews by: Booklist Grades 4-6 *Starred Review* An experimental series of team-building exercises takes many of the hyper-motivated students at a Denver middle school for the gifted out of their comfort zones in this warm and funny debut. As a quintet of misfits, ranging from nine-year-old brainiac Travis Elizabeth "Shark" Cod to Frederick Douglass Zezzmer--destined, in his own mind anyway, to become the world's greatest inventor--make their way past six STEAMS-based challenges (the second S is for sports) that ruthlessly eliminate teams that can't get the hang of working together. Thomas strews the increasingly suspenseful competition with teachable moments and traces learning curves not only for the students but for teachers and parents, too. The cast, premise, and lightly delivered life lessons are reminiscent of E. L. Konigsburg's The View from Saturday, and however reluctant readers may be to accept the author's proposition that winning isn't always the same as coming in first, they'll be swept up by the drama and the brisk dialogue, not to mention a school where hot-lunch choices are based on answering quiz questions and the principal snatches student-made spy drones out of the air and pockets them without breaking stride. COPYRIGHT(2023) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Horn Book Magazine Take a school full of competitive "control freaks," each with ambitious personal goals, put them into an all-middle-school group STEAMS (science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics, sports) competition, and you will rock their universe. Twelve-year-old Frederick Douglass "Doug" Zezzmer, a Black student at Benjamin Banneker College Prep in Denver, is trepidatious. "There's no way to stand out if I'm one of a dozen kids on a team," he says. This will interfere with his "fifty-seven-step strategy to become the World's Greatest Inventor" and Operation DazzleYee, intended to impress his principal, Dr. Yee, enough to nominate him for Rocky Mountain GadgetCon. Furthermore, he's placed on the worst team possible. They're the "Island of Misfit Toys of STEAMS teams." Dr. Yee comes up with wild tests, events, contests, and challenges for the students, related through the author's clever use of alternating voices that offer insights into the minds and lives of characters. As miserable as Doug is at the beginning, he eventually gets into the spirit of the competition and sees his teammates, now friends, in a new light. By the end of the competition, he says, "I'm not sure how Dr. Yee did it, but he got all of us celebrating for each other." Thomas's debut novel is a refreshing take on middle-school life -- smart kids who know they are going places but learn to take care of one another along the way. Dean Schneider(Copyright 2023 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Family, friends, and middle school are tough in ways this book intuitively gets and even celebrates. At elite Benjamin Banneker College Prep in Denver, a new weeklong STEAMS competition—that is, science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics, and sports—requires collaboration among teams of sixth through eighth graders. For Black seventh grader Frederick Douglass Zezzmer, losing is not even an option. His former professional football player dad has recently come back into his life with big sports-centric expectations for Doug. However, Doug intends to become the “World’s Greatest Inventor,” avoid summer sports camp, and legitimize his talents in his dad’s eyes. His nervous but optimistic best friend, Huey, is also part of comically named team TravLiUeyPadgeyZezz, a portmanteau of the students’ names. While Doug’s point of view is foremost, the novel’s narration shifts among many perspectives, giving a

rich, panoramic view of how stressful yet ultimately rewarding these learning experiences are for the overachievers, the socially awkward, the kids with complicated home lives, and all those—young and old—who just need to see each other a little differently. The competition itself impressively brings readers into the week's suspense while highlighting insights that many who have had to balance the demands of academics with the complexities of home life already know—and that Doug and his crew are finding out the hard way. Creative and hilarious. (Fiction. 8- 12)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly A driven Black middle schooler attending Denver's prestigious Benjamin Banneker College Prep must become a team player in Thomas's debut, a witty competition drama. Frederick Douglass Zezzmer has a 57-step plan to become the World's Greatest Inventor, but Doug's birth father; a former Denver Broncos player who recently reentered his life; has a different vision for him: attending the Elite Juniors sports camp. Doug believes that participating in, and winning, a weeklong STEAM and sports tournament will persuade his father into letting Doug pursue his own dreams. But to succeed, Doug must collaborate with classmates from varying disciplines, including art and athletics, something that forces him out of his comfort zone and challenges him in new ways. As Doug navigates budding friendships, dynamic rivalries, and tense familial relationships, he realizes that he doesn't have to do everything on his own, and that not everyone is as they seem. By utilizing multiple POVs, including that of Doug's stepbrother, Thomas lays the groundwork for a telling that prioritizes characters' interiority as well as their impact on each other's lives. While Doug's determined voice is the primary focus, the rotating narratives showcase each of the racially diverse characters' individual stressors, delivering a well-rounded accounting that is better for its multiplicity. Ages 8: 12. (June)

Quantity
1



#2365402 Mid-Air (Hardcover (Trade))
written by Alicia D. Williams
It's the last few months of eighth grade, and Isaiah feels lost. He thought his summer was going to be him and his boys Drew and Darius, hanging out, doing wheelies, watching martial arts movies, and breaking tons of Guinness World Records before high school. But now, more and more, Drew seems to be fading from their friendship, and though he won't admit it, Isaiah knows exactly why. Because Darius isgone. A hit and run killed Darius in the midst of a record-breaking long wheelie when Isaiah should have been keeping watch, ready to warn: "CAR!" Now, Drew can barely look at Isaiah. But Isaiah, already quaking with ache and guilt, can't lose two friends. So, he comes up with a plan to keep Drew and him together-----they can spend the summer breaking records, for Darius. But Drew's not the same Drew since Darius was killed, and Isaiah being Isaiah isn't enough for Drew anymore. Not his taste in clothes, his love for rock music, or his aversion to jumping off rooftops. And one day something unspeakable happens to Isaiah that makes him think Drew's right. If only he could be less sensitive, more tough, less weird, more cool, less him, things would be easier. But how much can Isaiah keep inside until he shatters wide open?
978-1-4814-6583-0 Atheneum ©2024 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 320 pgs.
Grades 4 - 7 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 3.3 AR Pts 4.0

Reviews by: Booklist Isaiah has never been like the other Black boys that he knows. One, he loves rock and roll; two, he enjoys activities like painting his nails; and three, he's not as much of a daredevil as his friends think he is. But even though Isaiah hides parts of his identity from his two close friends, Drew and Darius, he still values their friendships. When Darius is killed in a tragic accident, Isaiah's life is altered in ways he never imagined. As Isaiah unravels under the weight of grief and the changing dynamics of his world, his remaining friend, Drew, pulls away from him. Isaiah's father is away on business more than he's home, leaving Isaiah alone to deal with the aftermath of racial violence in the wake of Darius' death. Williams' sophomore novel expertly explores the complexity of grief. Isaiah is a wonderfully written and nuanced character who challenges traditional gender roles within his community. Williams' book, written in verse and adorned with vivid illustrations, offers readers an accurate depiction of Black boyhood. This compelling novel, full of vulnerability and hope, is a must-read.

Reviews by: Horn Book Guide "Be like water," Isaiah says. "Always," Darius replies. These are the final words the boys say to each other before Darius takes off on his bicycle to break the Guinness world record for a wheelie. Isaiah is in charge of watching for cars, but a chaotic, unexpected confrontation ends with a tragic fatal accident. Isaiah and his other best friend, Drew, each deal with grief and guilt in their own way: Isaiah wants to open up about his pain, while Drew withdraws. Written in verse, this resonant coming-of-age novel flows with accessible language that quickly draws readers into the story; emotionally moving grayscale illustrations are interspersed. After Isaiah is violently attacked, he begins to shut down, and his mother sends him to visit relatives in North Carolina. There, Isaiah begins a journey of self-acceptance and unpacking of the emotional weight he has been carrying. Williams (Genesis Begins Again, rev. 1/19) handles the sensitive topics of death, grief, racism, violence, and racial and gender expression with care, making sure the narrative doesn't become overly dark and heavy. The novel's focus on Isaiah's inner world allows readers to witness the evolution of a thirteen-year-old Black boy dealing with life-altering events, navigating challenging relationships with friends and family, and, finally, feeling comfortable enough to reveal his full self in the process. (Copyright 2024 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

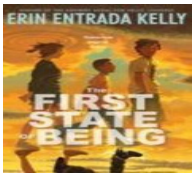
Reviews by: Horn Book Magazine "Be like water," Isaiah says. "Always," Darius replies. These are the final words the boys say to each other before Darius takes off on his bicycle to break the Guinness world record for a wheelie. Isaiah is in charge of watching for cars, but a chaotic, unexpected confrontation ends with a tragic fatal accident. Isaiah and his other best friend, Drew, each deal with grief and guilt in their own way: Isaiah wants to open up about his pain, while Drew withdraws. Written in verse, this resonant coming-of-age novel flows with accessible language that quickly draws readers into the story; emotionally moving grayscale illustrations are interspersed. After Isaiah is violently attacked, he begins to shut down, and his mother sends him to visit relatives in North Carolina. There, Isaiah begins a journey of self- acceptance and unpacking of the emotional weight he has been carrying. Williams (Genesis Begins Again, rev. 1/19) handles the sensitive topics of death, grief, racism, violence, and racial and gender expression with care, making sure the narrative doesn't become overly dark and heavy. The novel's focus on Isaiah's inner world allows readers to witness the evolution of a thirteen-year-old Black boy dealing with life- altering events, navigating challenging relationships with friends and family, and, finally, feeling comfortable enough to reveal his full self in the process. Monique Harris(Copyright 2024 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Tragedy strikes a trio of friends, but as the remaining duo grieve and grow apart, high school looms. Darius and Isaiah first became friends as the only Black kids at robotics camp, but with new student Drew added to the mix, the three skater kids from Michigan use their humor, friendly wagers, and Guinness World Records ambitions to overcome almost anything—from bullies to missing dads. But the sudden death of Darius, who was hit by a car while being harassed by a stranger, isn’t something Drew and Isaiah can easily overcome. Isaiah, a secret plant lover and not-so-secretly sensitive 13-year-old, narrates the feelings of loss and anxiety that overwhelm the last months of middle school and cause a rift between him and Drew, since both boys are grappling with big feelings of guilt, blame, and regret over Darius’ death. Each free-verse poem is presented with the emotive rhythm and pacing of a kid who’s just as afraid of what his peers think as he is of not being seen as man enough in his dad’s eyes. Isaiah is sent to live with his aunt and uncle in North Carolina for the summer for a bit of a fresh start, which proves to be a necessary diversion that yields new friends, new perspectives—and first kisses!—for the boy who hid so much of himself from a world that made him believe he had to. Occasional pen-and-ink–style art complements the text. Black boy joy, hurt, anxiety, and perseverance relayed with charm. (Verse fiction. 10-14)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Black eighth grader Isaiah and his best friends Drew and Darius enjoy skate-boarding and trying to break Guinness world records. His comfortable world is soon torn apart when, during an attempt to break the record for the longest wheelie on a bike, Darius is hit by a car and dies, leaving Drew and Isaiah to contemplate their upcoming summer and subsequent move to high school without him. Wracked with grief and guilt, Isaiah feels a fissure forming between him and Drew, stemming partially from Isaiah hiding parts of himself; such as his love of classic rock and comics, and his exploration of nail polish and emo fashion; for fear of being called a "wannabe-white-boy-rock-star." To reconnect with Drew, Isaiah suggests that they try to break the world record for the longest wheelie to honor Darius. But when his desperate scheme inadvertently leads to more heartbreak, Isaiah is sent to his aunt and uncle's house in the country for respite. Pastoral features such as expressive b&w illustrations by Novgorodoff (Long Way Down) and clear, accessible verse by Williams (Genesis Begins Again) skillfully juxtapose larger, heavier examinations of grief, identity, mental health, and racism, making for a heartfelt novel about an unmoored child seeking strength and self-forgiveness. Ages 10: up. Agent: Brenda Bowen, Book Group. (Apr.)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 5-8--Managing grief is difficult, even more so for a 13-year-old boy processing the death of a best friend. Isaiah, Darius, and Drew skate together, do stunts, and break world records. But then one earth-shattering day, while trying to get the record for longest wheelie, Darius is hit by a car, and everything changes. Isaiah loses his best friend, but also finds that Drew is shutting down and disappearing. Isaiah is on the verge of losing both his boys, and in the midst of that has to face his true self before he loses that, too. In lovely verse, Williams tells a powerful story of a young teenager struggling in the wake of a friend's death. Isaiah's fear is palpable and very relatable to those with a habit of freezing in stressful situations. Observing him overcome his fears, both of risky stunts and of showing people his true self, is incredibly empowering. This novel also skillfully deals with issues of absent fathers, friendship changes, and prejudice. Interspersed are Novgorodoff's beautiful watercolor illustrations that perfectly complement the story. All characters read as Black. VERDICT A quietly stunning novel in verse about grief and learning to accept yourself. Recommended for all middle grade collections.--Mariah Smitala Copyright 2024 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Quantity
1



#2366934 First State of Being (Hardcover (Trade))

written by Erin Entrada Kelly

It's August 1999. For twelve-year-old Michael Rosario, life at Fox Run Apartments in Red Knot, Delaware, is as ordinary as ever-except for the looming Y2K crisis and his overwhelming crush on his fifteen-year-old babysitter, Gibby. But when a disoriented teenage boy named Ridge appears out of nowhere, Michael discovers there is more to life than stockpiling supplies and pining over Gibby. *978-0-06-333731-2 Greenwillow Books ©2024 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 320 pgs. Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 4.4 AR Pts 6.0*

Reviews by: Book Page To say Michael Rosario is anxious about Y2K would be an understatement. It's August, 1999, and the 12-year-old boy is convinced that incalculable issues will arise when all internal program systems reset to the year 00. He's stockpiling stolen canned goods under his bed so that he can provide for his single mom when society crumbles at the start of the new millennium.

Reviews by: Booklist Newbery winner Kelly gives us a time-travel book that stays grounded, despite the subject matter, and draws on the power of human connection through time and space. Ridge is a teenage genius and the world's first time traveler—only, he wasn't supposed to use the device, and now he's stuck in 1999. Michael Rosario is a 12-year-old boy who is also stuck, in a way: his family struggles financially, something he blames himself for; as Y2K approaches, his anxiety leads him to doomsday prepping in a less-than-legal way; and his only friend is his babysitter, whom he has a huge crush on. Ridge may be trapped in time, but Michael is trapped in his own head, and when the two meet, Michael must either betray his new friend's trust or finally push aside his own fears and learn what it means to "do better tomorrow." This quiet book with a solid emotional core will be a treat for readers who love stories about found family and bravery, as well as those who would empathize with Michael's anxieties about the unknown future.

Reviews by: Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books The approach of Y2K has twelve-year-old Michael all out of sorts, and his worries aren't helped by the appearance of a strangely dressed boy who claims to be from the future. Michael is tempted to just write Ridge off, but when Ridge accurately predicts an earthquake halfway around the world, Michael considers, albeit reluctantly, believing him. He's still not happy Ridge is here, especially since he has grabbed the attention of Gibby, Michael's babysitter and crush. However, when Ridge becomes dangerously ill due to his body's inability to fight off a twentieth-century cold, Michael is willing to care for him, at least until Ridge can get his Spatial Teleportation Module, i.e. time machine, working. Alternating with Michael's narration are excerpts from future writings about spatial teleportation as well as transcripts documenting Ridge's scientist mother's efforts to bring him back to their own timeline. While that sets up a clever ending that points toward Michael and Gibby's eventual role in time travel, it strips any tension or intrigue from Ridge's sudden appearance, lowering the emotional stakes. The '90s setting, meanwhile, provides more throwback references for the adult reader familiar with that era than actual context for children of today. Still, while modern readers may not share Michael's concerns over Y2K, they'll likely recognize his anxiety and feelings of helplessness in the face of larger, global problems. Michael serves as an admirable foil to Ridge's privilege, and the book takes care to highlight his empathy as he struggles to figure out how to find and keep joy in a world filled with pain. Indeed, it is Michael-anxious, vulnerable, and ultimately brave-who will carry readers of all ages to the book's close. KQG COPYRIGHT(2024) Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Horn Book Magazine It's the summer of 1999. Twelve-year-old Delawarean Michael has worries, chief among them the approach of Y2K. What if everything falls apart? Family finances are precarious, so he's amassing a stash of groceries acquired through shoplifting. Then he meets an odd new kid. Ridge appears disoriented, as well he might, as he has time-traveled there from two hundred years in the future. In transcripts of conversations and documents from that future, we discover that Ridge went rogue and time-traveled without permission, putting himself and possibly the whole history of civilization at risk. There's a technical blip that might trap the traveler at the end of the twentieth century. A time-travel plot always involves logical conundrums, and Kelly (Those Kids from Fawn Creek, rev. 3/22) neatly grounds the mind-bending what-ifs of cause, effect, and the nature of time with real, present relationships and situations, kids with a secret, and a major problem to solve. It's a well-crafted adventure surrounding a big philosophical idea with a side of middle-grade romance. The non-dystopian (although still fragile) vision of the future is tantalizing: cures for allergies and the common cold, progress on plastic pollution, women taking the lead in science and technology. (But apparently teens and tweens will still drive their parents up the wall.) Sarah Ellis(Copyright 2024 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews In the lead-up to Y2K, a Delaware 12-year-old preparing for disaster meets a time traveler from 2199. It's August 1999. Michael Rosario is stealing canned peaches from Super Saver. It's for a good cause: He's stocking up in case the world collapses when the clock strikes midnight on January 1, 2000. And his mom loves peaches. They live together (his father's long been out of the picture) at the nearby Fox Run Apartments, where Michael narrowly escapes to after getting hassled by the supermarket manager's bullying son. Still hiding his loot, Michael, who's "half Filipino," is chatting with maintenance man Mr. Mosley when a dazed teenager wearing uniformlike clothing introduces himself as Ridge and asks what year it is. After more unusual encounters, Michael and his 15-year-old babysitter, Gibby, discover that Ridge is from the future. How did he travel back in time—and how will he get back? Excerpts of informational text and audio transcripts interspersed throughout the novel follow Ridge's family members as they try to save him at the same time that he's trying to save himself with the help of his new friends. The worldbuilding in this brisk work, largely devoted to elucidating spatial teleportation, is a feat of vocabulary rather than of plot tension. Still, Kelly's memorable character development is on full display as anxious and sensitive Michael learns to embrace the present, while Ridge's charming misuse of slang adds humor to this amusing ride. A warmhearted blend of nostalgia and futurism. (Speculative fiction. 8-12)

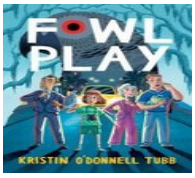
Reviews by: Publishers Weekly When a mysterious teenager named Ridge appears at Michael Rosario's apartment complex on Michael's 12th birthday in 1999, Michael believes there's "something off" about him. Ridge soon reveals he's from 2199 and, after being goaded by his brothers, used the recently developed, controversial Spatial Teleportation Module to travel back to 1999, his "favorite year in history." Shy, awkward, and compassionate Michael, who is half Filipino and assumed half white, and only has two friends; his 15-year-old babysitter and crush Gibby, who cues as white, and "brown weathered" Mr. Mosely, the complex's 62-year-old maintenance man; has been secretly, obsessively stockpiling (and shoplifting) supplies for himself and his loving, hard-working single mother in preparation for the assumed disaster of Y2K. Michael realizes Ridge can tell him if Y2K was indeed a worldwide crisis, but Ridge refuses. As Michael and Gibby indulge Ridge's fascination with shopping malls and 1999 objects, he develops a previously unknown self-confidence that is well rendered and endearing. Interspersed audio transcripts and textbook excerpts from 2199 provide background for Ridge, and an epilogue reveals a delicious, thought-provoking twist on a question posed early on by Kelly (Those Kids from Fawn Creek): would the disruption of time influence past, present, or future events? Ages 8: 12. (Mar.)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 3-5--Kelly returns with another solid middle grade novel exploring themes of time travel and personal responsibility. In 1999, anxiety-ridden 12-year-old Michael, in the throes of prepping for a potential disaster thanks to Y2K, happens upon a teen named Ridge, who is strangely dressed and speaks in unfamiliar phrases. Ridge has traveled back in time from 2199 thanks to his mother's scientific work and a dare from his siblings. Although the opportunity to know any and all future outcomes is irresistible to Michael, he understands he must help Ridge get home. Small bumps in logic and pacing are this story's only issues. The loss of a kindly mentor throws a

wrench into the rhythm, with the urgency of Ridge's return set aside for a stretch that feels longer than the number of pages it takes to read. However, Kelly has deftly assembled a community of empathetically rendered characters, making this an enjoyable, uplifting reading experience. The elements of sci-fi will be enough to sate fans of the genre while remaining approachable for all audiences. VERDICT A lovable cast buoys this time travel drama by one of the most reliable authors in children's literature.--Alexandra Quay Copyright 2024 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Reviews by: Shelf Awareness Newbery Medalist Erin Entrada Kelly (Those Kids from Fawn Creek; Hello, Universe) introduces a tender-hearted tween boy with anxiety who learns to live mindfully from a time traveler in this buoyant and entertaining middle-grade novel.

Quantity
1



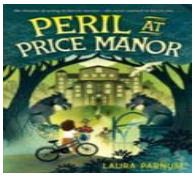
#2389890 Fowl Play (Hardcover (Trade))
written by Kristin O'Donnell Tubb
Chloe Alvarez has never been to the reading of a last will and testament before, but she hopes it is just like the movies. Lies! Intrigue! The reading of her Uncle Will's will is standard, until he announces his gift for Chloe: his African grey parrot, Charlie.
978-0-06-327403-7 Katherine Tegen Books ©2024 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 288 pgs.
Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 4.1 AR Pts 7.0

Reviews by: Booklist Though very much heartbroken over the death of her uncle Will, Chloe Alvarez is cheered by his parting gift to her: an African gray parrot named Charlie. Charlie provides a welcome distraction from her grief, whether by perching on Chloe’s shoulder or commanding Alexa to play music ranging from Stevie Wonder to Kiss. But when Charlie starts saying things like “homicide,” “skull,” and “cyanide,” Chloe begins to think that Uncle Will might not have died from a rare genetic disease like they thought; he just may have been murdered. Chloe launches an investigation, taking tips from her grandmother’s favorite true-crime podcast, and roping in family members to help with stakeouts and evidence collection. Many surprising things are revealed as the Alvarez clan digs for clues, and it’s an utter—and often hilarious—delight to watch them. Tubb does a wonderful job of mixing levity with the grieving process in all its complexity to ensure the narrative never becomes too heavy. While solving the murder is Chloe’s priority, she is also involved in soccer and making art in a way that adds dimension to her character. Amid the investigative antics and hustle of daily life, familial love emerges as the linchpin of the story, echoing Uncle Will’s unwavering belief that “family is wondrous,” in spite of its imperfections.

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews “Grief can make your mind and your heart do weird things.” Since the untimely death of Will Calhoun, her beloved maternal uncle, due to an unspecified genetic condition, Chloe Alvarez’s world has felt muted. In his will, Chloe’s uncle leaves her Charlie, his beloved African Grey parrot who possesses a robust vocabulary and is a skillful mimic. When Charlie starts blurting out words such as homicide and cyanide, Chloe becomes convinced that something—or someone—sinister is behind Uncle Will’s sudden demise. She channels her grief into uncovering the truth of her uncle’s colorful life with help from older brother Jacob, Grammy (who loves true-crime podcasts), and Charlie himself. As Uncle Will said, “Family is wondrous”—and these folks are birds of a feather. Chloe’s lively narrative voice infuses the plucky kid detective trope with emotional range and depth. Charlie’s avian antics provide welcome comic relief, supporting a lovable, laugh-filled harmony that unites a grieving family. The winking references to classic mysteries and Charlie’s eclectic musical tastes (which are satisfied through his Alexa requests) will delight kids and adults alike. The antics of Chloe and her ragtag band of sleuths as they progress through multilayered steps on the path to realization will keep readers enthusiastically engaged. Chloe and Jacob live in Charleston, South Carolina, with their mom, whose family is cued white. A mystery unfolds within a compelling, joyful story of honoring a loved one by living in the moment. (author's note) (Mystery. 9-12)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Contemporary Charleston, S.C., provides the backdrop for this cunning mystery by Tubb (Luna Howls at the Moon), in which a grieving tween's often laugh-aloud misadventures in detective work bring her estranged family closer together. Chloe Alvarez is left reeling by her beloved uncle Will's sudden death from a genetic disease. Inheriting his female African gray parrot, named Charlie, provides welcome distraction and joy, especially as Chloe has been harboring feelings of anger and betrayal toward Uncle Will, who shut her out of his life as his health was failing. But when Charlie begins spouting phrases such as "it was murder," "homicide detective," and "cyanide!" Chloe uses the skills she learned from her Grammy's true crime podcasts to initiate a murder investigation. A growing suspect list soon includes her wealthy uncle Frank, Will's knife-wielding barista ex-girlfriend, and whomever drives the mysterious yellow Prius that keeps following Chloe around town. Throughout, Chloe processes her grief by recording video journals about her memories of Uncle Will and expressing herself via painting. Typical genre tropes are subverted in delightful ways; rather than solve this harrowing mystery alone, Chloe leans on her family (and Charlie), who tirelessly support her sleuthing antics. Characters are intersectionally diverse. Ages 8: 12. Agent: Josh Adams, Adams Literary. (July)

Quantity



#2330051 Peril at Price Manor (Hardcover (Trade)) **1**

written by Laura Parnum

Halle dreams of becoming a scream queen. She practices her loudest scream every day and has learned a lot from studying the horror movies of her favorite director, Maximus Price. Maximus lives just outside town, and when the chance to go to his home arises, Halle grabs it with both hands. She doesn't realize that real-life horrors await her at Price Manor.

978-0-06-324953-0 HarperCollins Publishers ©2023 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 304 pgs.
Grades 4 - 7 Dewey# Fic

Reviews by: Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books Twelve-year-old Halle dreams of being a Scream Queen in a horror movie, and so she immediately seizes the opportunity to deliver flowers from her family's shop to Maximus Price, legendary horror filmmaker. What she doesn't know is that a true horror scenario is currently unfolding at Price Manor as sheltered twins Paisley and Argyle Price fail to realize that their father's yearly birthday prank has gone terribly wrong and that the tentacle creatures leeching off of the faces of their caretakers are more than mere horror props. Used to adults taking care of their every whim despite being a day shy of thirteen, Paisley and Argyle are rather helpless against the creatures (once the siblings figure out what's going on), but after Halle joins them, the trio must use their strengths to repel the tredecapuses, save the world, and find Dad. Parnum's whip-smart narrative pokes fun at its own genre with a classic middle-grade cheekiness, giving each character depth beyond their archetypes. The three main characters have a delightful combination of bizarre talents- Halle's genre-savvy insight allows her to steer the group away from horror movie cliches, while the twins' knowledge of tapestry weaving and sousaphone playing come in handy when calling for help. A playful acknowledgement that overbearing parents stop their kids from fully experiencing the world, this is a fantastic combination of mild locked-room horror and heroes who manifest in unlikely and hilarious ways. NB COPYRIGHT(2023) Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews A trio of preteens find friendship while combating comically grotesque tentacled blob monsters. Halle

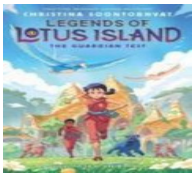
Thompson, a scary movie devotee, is excited to deliver flowers from her mother’s shop to imposing, isolated Price Manor, home of famous fright film director Maximus Price. His children, Paisley and Argyle, are preparing for an ordinary day, flanked by a coterie of servants in their grandiose abode. But the house seems eerily quiet. When the twins finally locate their staff, they discover that all the adults are possessed by squidlike creatures who affix themselves to people’s faces and effectively zombify them. Halle, approaching through a thick mist, finds a similar scene on the mansion’s lawn. The three kids meet and swiftly join forces to combat the mysterious foes in a series of outlandish situations. Halle’s vast knowledge of horror tropes combines with the idiosyncratic skill sets of the long-cloistered Price offspring, and between a roller-skating disco, sousaphone practice, and a horrifying foray into a stinky cheese cellar, they tackle the tickly nemeses and prove themselves resourceful and brave in the process. Playing lightly on the tropes of classic B-movie horror, Parnum’s imaginative and satisfying debut is packed with high-spirited hijinks. Characters are implied White. Playful energy propels a laugh-out-loud scary story that doesn’t tread too far into truly terrifying territory. (Light horror. 8-12)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly In this good-humored romp, horror film mega fan Halle Thompson, 12, leaps at the chance to deliver flowers

to the lavish home of Maximus Price, creator of one of her favorite movies, The Manic Marmoset Invasion. Meanwhile, on the morning before their 13th birthday, Price's twin children Argyle and Paisley abruptly awaken to find their usually orderly estate in shambles. Upon investigation, they discover that the heads of the mansion's adult caretakers have become encased in slimy, squidlike creatures; these appear to be controlling the adults, and they spontaneously replicate when they sense a new host. Initially believing their trickster father was pulling a prank, the twins are ill-prepared to handle the mayhem, until they meet Halle, who teaches them the rules for surviving "Dire Circumstances" ("Number one rule: Avoid Peril at All Costs"). By combining Argyle's vast knowledge of animal behaviors, Paisley's acrobatic prowess, and Halle's expertise on all things horror, the trio works together to defeat the multiplying invaders. Debut author Parnum keeps the scares gentle but gooey via lively prose that conveys a vibrant setting. Quick-moving chapters and alternating perspectives that showcase the characters' dawning agency make for a propulsive creature feature. Characters default to white. Ages 8: 12. Agent: Kaitlyn Johnson, Belcastro Agency. (Aug.)

Legends of Lotus Island (Trade)

Quantity



#2315201 (Vol. 01) Guardian Test (Hardcover (Trade)) **1**

written by Christina Soontornvat

Young Plum is shocked to discover that she's been accepted to the Guardian Academy on Lotus Island, an elite school where kids learn how to transform into Guardians, magical creatures who are sworn to protect the natural world. The Guardian masters teach Plum and her friends how to communicate with animals and how to use meditation to strengthen their minds and bodies. All the kids also learn to fight, so they can protect the defenseless if needed.

978-1-338-75915-0 ©2023 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 160 pgs.
Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 4.6 AR Pts 4.0

Reviews by: Booklist Though orphaned at a young age, Plum has enjoyed her quiet childhood with loving grandparents on a small island. She spends her days tending their lush garden and communing with local animals; but her quiet existence is interrupted by an unexpected invitation to attend the prestigious Guardian Academy on Lotus Island. The school has long existed to train future Guardians, a select set of magically endowed humans capable of transforming into mystical creatures and charged with protecting the natural world. With her affinity for flora and fauna, it seems only natural that Plum would conjure such a power. However, she has only a month to train for her first exam, and there's no magic to be found—she worries she may not have what it takes to become a Guardian after all. The first installment in the new series is effortlessly entertaining and atmospheric, and the new Thai-adjacent world is teeming with magical life and gentle mystery. Additionally, Hong's imaginative manga-style illustrations and the book's shorter length will easily draw in younger readers. An enchanting eco-fable sure to intrigue and delight.

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Does Plum have what it takes to become a shape-shifting Guardian? Raised by her grandparents since her parents died in a boating accident, Plum has spent her childhood learning about plants and animals. She hasn't ventured far from her island home, part of the Santipap Islands, but when she is accepted into the prestigious Guardian Academy, where she will train to become a Guardian along with other children from all walks of life, her grandparents encourage her to go, certain that her future holds more than their little island can provide. At the Academy, Plum's tendency to talk to plants and animals strikes some of the students as strange, though she also begins to make friends. In the Santipap Islands, Guardians have the power to shift into an animal shape to better protect the land, and Plum's first test is to find her own animal shape—but will she succeed, or will she be forced to return home a failure? With a Thailand-inspired setting, magic rooted in nature and the environment, and whimsical illustrations, this is a promising beginning to a series ready to introduce readers to both the fantasy genre and a beautiful and mysterious new world. All characters are somewhat loosely implied to be Thai due to character and place names. Themes of friendship and environmentalism combine in this magical school story. (map) (Fantasy. 7-11)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Soontornvat (The Tryout) deftly combines a Thai-inspired setting, familiar fantasy tropes, and themes of nature conservation to craft a mystical series kickoff. Tween Plum, who's grown up on her grandparents' farm in the Santipap Islands, can hardly believe that she has been chosen to become a Guardian, part of a group of magical animalian shape-shifters who protect and nurture the natural world. She's soon sent to Guardian Academy on Lotus Island to train for her first test: discovering her animal shape. At school, Plum faces bullying based on her rural upbringing, and forges an immediate friendship with knowledgeable, take-charge classmate Cherry. Despite her quickly improving abilities, however, Plum is unsure whether she will be able to unleash her inner power. Plum's struggles with her self-worth are compassionately wrought, and her unique ability to communicate with animals and plants suitably plays into the narrative's focus on environmentalism. Descriptive scene setting and humorous dialogue offer a solid foundation for interpersonal conflicts, while Hong's animated grayscale illustrations elevate Soontornvat's leisurely unfolding, intriguing Guardian mythos. Ages 8: 12. Agent: Stephanie Fretwell-Hill, Red Fox Literary. (Mar.)

Marius Grey (Trade)

Quantity
1



#2327766 (Vol. 01) Brick Dust and Bones (Hardcover (Trade))
written by M. R. Fournet
Marius Grey hunts monsters. He's not supposed to. He's only twelve and his job as a cemetery boy is to look after the ghosts in his family's graveyard. He should be tending these ghosts and--of course--going to school to learn how to live between worlds without getting into trouble. But, Marius has an expensive goal. He wants to bring his mother back from the dead, and that takes a LOT of mystic coins.
978-1-250-87602-7 ©2023 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 256 pgs.
Grades 4 - 7 Dewey# Fic Lexile 660

Reviews by: Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books Twelve-year old Marius Grey is juggling two jobs: his inherited role as a "cemetery boy," tending to the unclaimed ghosts of his family's graveyard, and his recently acquired career of monster hunting the dangerous folkloric creatures of New Orleans. Marius' duties, along with going to school, put him in a state of constant exhaustion, but he must track down monsters to bring in mystic coins-the currency he needs to exchange with hell for his recently deceased mother's soul. Terrifying encounters with his various bounties set up a monster-of-the-week framework, and folkloric elements are deftly woven into the engrossing action. Unfortunately, even for a gothic-inspired tale, Marius' grim demeanor is more exhausting than sympathetic, and his unrelenting turmoil weights down the book's cleverer parts. The narrative consistency falls apart as the book arbitrarily decides which monsters deserve clemency and which do not, notably in Marius' friendship with flesh-eating mermaid-monster Rhiannon, who largely serves to develop Marius' story and is not, despite her diet, fleshed out. The novel also suffers from a few questionable choices in pursuit of its gothic cruelties, relying on a homophobic character for tension and westernizing an Indigenous legend in service to an Americana demon figure. Nonetheless, Fournet has a knack for creating a spooky atmosphere that maximizes tension, and fans of Gaiman's The Graveyard Book who want some New Orleans flair might find something to like in Marius' double-shifts from hell. MC COPYRIGHT(2023) Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

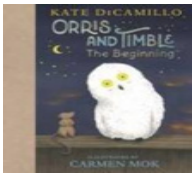
Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews New Orleans may be called the Big Easy, but it certainly hasn't been easy lately for Marius Grey. One would imagine 12-year-old Marius' life as a cemetery boy is quiet and solitary, but that's dead wrong. Although he's lived alone since his father's disappearance and his mother's untimely death, he's far from lonely: There are the ghosts of those interred in Greystone Cemetery, where he is caretaker of the souls before they pass on to the next place and has the disembodied voice of his mother for company. He spends a lot of time at the hybrid school for "fringe kids" like him, frequenting local stores like the Habada-Chérie, which sells magical supplies. Armed with a

magical book of monsters, his father’s enchanted coat, brick dust, salt, his mother’s raven skull necklace, and an effective spell, Marius catches monsters and exchanges them for Mystic currency, hoping to save enough to resurrect his mother. The only one who knows his desperate plan is his mermaid best friend, Rhiannon, whom he befriended instead of capturing. The book offers nods to the rich history of storytelling devoted to ancestors, cemeteries, and the veil between the ordinary and the magical, and it provides readers with a determined protagonist, unlikely allies, and a satisfying conclusion that promises a sequel. Marius has black hair, blue eyes, and a grayish complexion; many supporting characters are coded Black. A strong mix of bone-chilling and full of heart. (Fantasy. 9-12)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly In Fournet's macabre debut, an orphan cemetery caretaker leading a double life as a monster hunter stalks paranormal beasts in the Louisiana bayous. White-presenting 12-year-old Marius Grey is responsible for maintaining Greystone Cemetery, which his family owns, and tending to its spectral inhabitants while attending a hybrid school for children with connections to the real world and the spirit realm. To earn enough Mystic coin to bring his mother; whose spirit accompanies him on his caretaker duties; back from the dead for good, he moonlights as a monster hunter, using an enchanted book to trap boogeymen, boo hags, and other mythological threats and trade them at the monster bounty-hunting market. But with the anniversary of his mother's death approaching, and her spirit becoming increasingly difficult to manifest, time is quickly running out. As Marius's desperation grows, he seeks out stronger creatures with larger bounties, setting his sights on the fearsome and deadly rougarou, a legendary swamp beast worth 20 boogeymen. Via Marius's self-assured voice, Fournet deftly balances Marius and his demonic foes' gruesome and exhilarating battles with meditative ruminations on grief, loss, and moving on. A hint of sweet romance and sensorial depictions of New Orleans landmarks and legends further elevate this lightly gory found-family thriller. Ages 9: 12. Agent: Ben Miller-Callihan, Handspun Literary. (July)

Orris and Timble (Trade)

Quantity
1



#2369021 (Vol. 01) Beginning (Hardcover (Trade))
written by Kate DiCamillo
Orris the rat lives alone in an old barn surrounded by his treasures, until the day his solitude is disrupted by a sudden flutter of wings and a loud screech. A small owl has gotten caught in a trap in the barn. Can Orris "make the good and noble choice" (as the king on his prized sardine can might recommend) and rescue the owl, despite the fact that owls and rats are natural enemies? And if he does, will he be ready for the consequences?
978-1-5362-2279-1 ©2024 6-1/2 x 8-1/4 80 pgs.
Grades K - 3 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 3.0 AR Pts .5 Lexile 540

Reviews by: Booklist Grades K-3 Within a wall of an abandoned barn, Orris the rat has made his home. Among his prized possessions is a sardine can decorated with an image of a sardine king and the words "Make the good and noble choice!" These sage words echo in Orris' mind when a young snowy owl (Timble) flies into the barn, gets his foot caught in a mousetrap, and cries out for help. Though fearful of the owl's talons, Orris cannot ignore the king's command. Recalling Aesop's fable ""The Lion and the Mouse"" as he pries open the mousetrap, Orris frees Timble, who flies off only to quickly return to hear the fable in full. Thus, DiCamillo sets the stage for an unlikely friendship and a new early chapter-book series grounded in kindness and a love of storytelling. Her short chapters are wonderfully illustrated by Mok, whose gouache, colored pencil, and graphite artwork lends endearing details and warmth to the story. Young readers will look forward to seeing what adventures are in store for this darling duo.HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Will this be popular? Duh! Twice a Newbery medalist, DiCamillo knows how to tap into readers' hearts, no matter their age. COPYRIGHT(2024) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Horn Book Guide Orris the rat lives a quiet, reclusive life nestled in the wall of an abandoned barn. He papers his hideaway with stories from discarded books, tends to his treasures (a slipper, a marble, a sardine can emblazoned with a jaunty, crown-wearing fish), and carefully avoids danger. When a young owl finds himself snagged in a mousetrap outside of Orris's door, the rat is faced with a moral dilemma: help the predator, risking that his favor may be repaid with violence, or ignore the owl's clear suffering from the safety of his own nest. This test of character sits at the center of an intimate, fully illustrated early chapter book. As the story is a clear variation on Aesop's "The Lion and the Mouse," the moral option may seem obvious, but DiCamillo's artful use of spare and telling detail along with Mok's attention to visual perspective in her atmospheric art give weight to the rat's decision. Orris's face-off with his admired sardine can's offbeat branding insisting that consumers "make the good and noble choice!!" adds levity. While Orris works to release the trap, a nimbly narrated conversation sets a tentative friendship in motion between Timble, an awkward, good-intentioned lover of stories, and Orris, a grumpy, lonely collector of tales. This is a tender, carefully drawn opening to a promising character-driven series. (Copyright 2024 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

Reviews by: Horn Book Magazine Orris the rat lives a quiet, reclusive life nestled in the wall of an abandoned barn. He papers his hideaway with stories from discarded books, tends to his treasures (a slipper, a marble, a sardine can emblazoned with a jaunty, crown-wearing fish), and carefully avoids danger. When a young owl finds himself snagged in a mousetrap outside of Orris's door, the rat is faced with a moral dilemma: help the predator, risking that his favor may be repaid with violence, or ignore the owl's clear suffering from the safety of his own nest. This test of character sits at the center of an intimate, fully illustrated early chapter book. As the story is a clear variation on Aesop's "The Lion and the Mouse," the moral option may seem obvious, but DiCamillo's artful use of spare and telling detail along with Mok's attention to visual perspective in her atmospheric art give weight to the rat's decision. Orris's face-off with his admired sardine can's offbeat branding insisting that consumers "make the good and noble choice!!" adds levity. While Orris works to release the trap, a nimbly narrated conversation sets a tentative friendship in motion between Timble, an awkward, good-intentioned lover of stories, and Orris, a grumpy, lonely collector of tales.

This is a tender, carefully drawn opening to a promising character-driven series. Jessica Tackett MacDonald(Copyright 2024 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

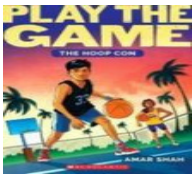
Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews In this opener to a planned trilogy, a mousetrap nailed to a barn floor brings a solitary old rat and a story-loving owl together. Orris the rat seems quite comfortable nested amid his gathered treasures, which include a special marble, a cozy red velvet slipper, and a sardine can with the phrase “Make the good and noble choice!!” That pesky moral imperative proves its worth when, after crawling out to investigate a cry for help, Orris finds himself, against his better judgment, negotiating with a trapped young owl named Timble by telling him part of the story of the Lion and the Mouse and then actually helping to free the owl’s trapped claw. Afterward, to his surprise and pleasure, not only does Orris remain uneaten but Timble reappears with both a butterscotch candy as a thank-you gift and a request for more stories. Though DiCamillo only hints at the feelings of loneliness, terror, relief, and joy concealed beneath Orris’ crotchety exterior, readers will see these emotions clearly enough in the sparely written narrative. Mok does the same with her nocturnal views of the hunched, drably hued little rat lounging in his slipper or tiptoeing gingerly over a shadowy wooden floor strewn with tufts of hay toward a huge, brilliantly white, initially terrifying foe who turns out to be young, scared, and not at all as predatory as his appearance suggests. A simple tale about looking beneath surfaces that’s as sweet as butterscotch candy. (Early chapter book. 7-9)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly The spirits of Frog and Toad are alive and well in this moving and funny first volume in an early reader trilogy by DiCamillo (Ferris), which chronicles the unlikely blossoming friendship between a cynical rat and a curious, naive owl. Orris the rat is perfectly content living safe and alone in his cozy barn nest where a treasured sardine can advertises, "Make the good and noble choice!!" But Orris's peace is shattered when a fluffy white owl with shiny yellow eyes gets caught in a barn-floor mousetrap and screeches for help. Conflicted about aiding his natural predator, Orris grudgingly ("For the love of Pete") heeds the sardine can's motto and embarks on a heart-pounding quest to free the ensnared owl, Timble. Orris is not only a doer of good deeds, he's a gifted storyteller to boot, and both protagonists learn to trust in the easy rhythm and happy feelings brought about by sharing tales with a friend. DiCamillo expertly wraps humor, kindness, the courage that purpose ignites, and a love of story into a concise, welcoming package. Quiet watercolor-and-pencil scenes by Mok (Cone Dog) are rendered in shadowy nighttime grays, blacks, and browns that crisply contrast Timble's bright plumage. Ages 5: 8. (Apr.)

Reviews by: School Library Journal K-Gr 2--From the celebrated DiCamillo comes a deceptively simple tale of an emerging friendship between a rat and an owl. Orris, a streetwise rat, has "lived in the dangerous world for a long time." Now, he lives alone in the peaceful solitude of an abandoned barn with his nest of treasures--until his peace is interrupted by a screeching owl. Young Timble has flown into the barn and landed on a mouse trap. Orris, knowing that owls eat rats, is determined to stay out of it. But his cozy nest loses its sheen as he listens to the owl struggle. Orris's attempt to "make the good and noble choice" and help Timble results in an odd new friendship. Mok's gentle illustrations fill in the story in a lovely way, helping young readers read between the lines of the fairly straightforward text. She makes use of light and shadow to highlight a simultaneous coziness and loneliness of the abandoned barn, zooming in and out at just the right moments. For instance, when Orris creeps out to see the trapped owl, Mok zooms in on the despondent Timble, eyes closed, body slouched. After Timble then begs for help, and Orris debates whether to give it, the text notes, "There was a great silence in the barn." Mok's illustration zooms out to show how small the animals are in the great, empty space. VERDICT A sweet read for young children who may not be quite ready for Charlotte's Web.--Lindsay Loup Copyright 2024 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Play the Game (Trade)

Quantity
1

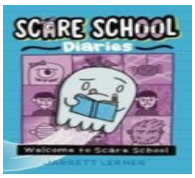


#2365224 (Vol. 01) Hoop Con (Paperback (Trade))
written by Amar Shah
Raam Patel is eager to prove himself ever since he didn't make the middle school's basketball team. So, when Hoop Con comes to town he is determined to be there and take his shot. His big moment proves to be unforgettable. but not in the way he'd hoped. Raam gets schooled by the camp's golden boy right in front of his NBA idol. To make matters even worse, this fail goes viral. Raam is used to being the underdog, but becoming the newest meme might be something even he can't overcome alone. He skips town in an effort to lay low and take a break from basketball. However, he's met with new courts, fresh kicks, and tough new competition, changing his whole outlook on the game. Raam has the skills, but now it's time to unlock the mental game.
978-1-338-84031-5 ©2024 5-1/4 x 7-1/2 288 pgs.
Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 4.3 AR Pts 7.0 Lexile 640

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 4-6--This novel weaves together complex coming-of-age issues facing young people against the backdrop of basketball. Raam Patel, a sixth grade basketball superfan who loves to play, is ready for summer vacation; he and his best friend plan to spend the summer improving their skills in preparation for the summer Y-Ball tournament and in the hope of making the middle school team next year. The best part of training comes when Raam's mother buys him a ticket to Hoop Con, an event where his all-time favorite basketball player will be running clinics. However, everything goes awry when Raam lets his temper get the best of him and becomes a social media phenom, but not in a positive way. Because of his embarrassment, and family issues at home, he ends up spending the majority of the summer with his favorite cousin in California. His cousin helps Raam find the inner strength to play again, and build his self confidence. This enjoyable novel includes specific vocabulary relating to South Asian/Indian culture, basketball, and social media. Without a glossary or in-text definitions, those not familiar with those topics may struggle to fully grasp events of the story.VERDICT Lovers of basketball, especially fellow athletes, will devour this novel.--Jennifer Seebauer Copyright 2024 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Scare School Diaries (Trade)

Quantity
1



#2386020 (Vol. 01) Welcome to Scare School (Paperback (Trade))
written by Jarrett Lerner
Bash, a young ghost who's never been good at "ghost stuff" is heading off to Scare School, the world's leading institution for elementary scare instruction, and he's not happy about it. In fact, he's kind of scared! His older sister Bella, precocious in every way, was a star student there and he knows the classes are hard and the teachers are tough.
978-1-6659-2208-1 ©2024 5 x 7-1/2 128 pgs.
Grades K - 3 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 3.6 AR Pts 1.0

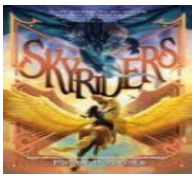
Reviews by: Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books Bash is a young ghost who is scared to attend Scare School, but that is where the most terrifying ghouls and creatures learn how to be scary, and he's in some dire need of practice. After nervously attending orientation and meeting the fun and spooky faculty and students, Bash realizes it is not as bad as he thought. A few weeks into the curriculum, though, the C.A.T., or Creature Aptitude Test, is approaching, and he is still not at all confident about his ghost abilities. If he doesn't successfully make himself invisible, fly, and pass through walls, he will be at risk of getting booted out of the school. Bash's bonds with the faculty and students, along with some unexpected advice from his older sister Bella, ease his worries and make his preparation for the test bearable, especially with the support from his good friend and roommate Itsy the Spider. Journeying toward self-confidence is a familiar theme in kids' books, but this early reader has particular charm with its ghostly hero, and the emphasis on each creature's unique abilities adds some appealing silliness. A composition book format with comics and doodles lets this series opener warmly invite young readers to follow Bash's daily life at school with lighthearted humor as he learns his lessons in a not-so-scary way. DR COPYRIGHT(2024) Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews A young ghost arrives at Scare School. Unlike big sister Bella, late bloomer Bash has never been good at "all the GHOST STUFF." Dad's sure that Scare School is just what Bash needs. Bash isn't so certain; he's intimidated by his classmates and teachers. But he perks up when he meets his roommate, Itsy, a smart, welcoming spider, though he vows to steer clear of mean-spirited Vlad and Vicky. Still, the dreaded Creature Aptitude Test worries Bash. To pass, he must pass through solid objects and turn himself invisible--skills he struggles with. Bash doesn't want to be kicked out of school, so he'll have to buckle down. With Itsy's help and encouragement from his classmates, Bash realizes he's more capable than he thought. Written in first person from endearingly anxious Bash's point of view, the book has a diarylike feel. The text is presented in a handwritten font, while grayscale cartoon illustrations are peppered throughout. The supportive, sincere friendship between Bash and Itsy is the most compelling part of the story. Letters between Bash and Bella shed further light on Bash's personality and their relationship. Though the book's takeaway--believe in yourself, and you can do anything--is a familiar one, it's just what many children need...and who better to deliver the message than an adorably nervous ghost? Approachable and comfortably predictable. (Fiction. 6-8) COPYRIGHT(2024) Kirkus Reviews, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly This frightfully fun book by Lerner (the Nat the Cat series) collects all the paranormal creatures of the night into a boarding school setting. Quivering with dread, Bash, an insecure young ghost, enters Scare School, fearful that he will fail the classes meant to test his ghostly skills, including flying, invisibility, and intangibility. Bash isn't as proficient as his talented older sister Bella, and worries he'll be doomed to haunt small-time locations like closets or dresser drawers as a result. He's surprised to discover he (mostly) enjoys Scare School: the headless headmaster is kind and his roommate, Itsy Spider, is his first real friend. Still, the classes are just as difficult; and the teachers are just as fearsome; as Bash anticipated. Even with amateur hypnotist Itsy as his study buddy, Bash struggles. But while he fumbles his attempt to use his powers to rescue Itsy from bullies, Bash's actions provide a distraction that allows Itsy to scurry to safety. Via Bash's "TOTALLY PRIVATE" journal entries, Lerner utilizes howling humor and occasional b&w comics to depict timid Bash, who; with help from his new friends and an unexpected source; faces his fears and (mostly) succeeds. Ages 5: 8. (July)

Skyriders (Trade)

Quantity
1



#2330181 (Vol. 01) Skyriders (Paperback (Trade))
written by Polly Holyoke
Twelve-year-old Kiesandra's best friend isn't human, but that doesn't stop her from sharing jokes and secrets with her winged horse, N'Rah. Their bond is critical when one day, monsters from long ago reemerge to ravage a nearby village. No one knows how to fight the fearsome chimerae except Kie's uncle... and now Kie. Injured in the battle, Uncle Dug makes her promise to bring his attack plan and weapons to the capital. Kie reluctantly agrees. At the palace, she and N'Rah attempt to gain the trust of the royals and train the army in Dug's lessons. But how can a young girl and her skysteed convince anyone that only they know how to defeat the deadly monsters?
978-0-593-46443-4 ©2024 5 x 7-3/4 320 pgs.

Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# Fic Lexile 930

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews A reluctant hero and her winged horse fight to save the empire when monstrous chimerae return to Prekalt. Three hundred years ago, the chimerae were defeated; most people believe they aren't coming back, but 13-year-old junior sky courier Kiesandra Torsun's uncle is certain they will, and he has trained her and N'Rah, her skysteed, to fight with bow and arrow, triwire, and botan. When chimerae attack their town, Uncle Dugs insists that Kie bring his great-grandfather's manual about fighting chimerae to the emperor's commanders in Pedarth before the Skyforce sets off. Shy Kie, who has trouble expressing herself and feels more comfortable with animals than people, agrees to go, though she wonders, "Who is going to listen to a courier girl from nowhere?" She's certain she's not anyone special. However, Kie's ability to mindspeak with all the skysteeds, not just her own, indicates that she is the Nexara, or connector between species. Eventually, she shares this secret with friends she has come to trust, including Prince Shayn, Princess Halla, courier Topar, and groom Dessie. Ultimately, Kie's ability helps a younger generation of cadets, grooms, and couriers assist the Skyforce in winning their desperate, violent fights against the scourge of chimerae. Readers, especially fans of Tui T. Sutherland's Wings of Fire series, will enjoy this gripping fantasy whose satisfying conclusion leaves the path open for the sequel. In this racially diverse fantasy world, Kie has golden skin and brown hair. A thrilling series opener. (Fantasy. 9-13) COPYRIGHT(2023) Kirkus Reviews, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Kiesandra Torsun; a 13-year-old who's able to communicate telepathically with N'Rah, the winged horse skysteed with which she's magically bonded; serves as a junior sky courier in the mountains of the Empire. While her uncle Dugs has trained her in the lost art of combatting three-headed monsters called chimerae, which terrorized the Empire centuries ago, Kie isn't interested in becoming a fighter, especially not of monsters thought long gone. But when the chimerae unexpectedly return, Kie travels to the capital with her family's manual on chimerae tactics to warn the emperor that the skyfighters' modern techniques won't work against the beasts. Though few will listen to a junior courier from a small village, Kie finds allies in young Prince Shayn and others in the royal family. Moreover, her unique ability to communicate with all skysteeds, not just her own, proves invaluable, and her stubborn but compassionate nature continues garnering support, which might just save the day when further danger rears its head. In this invigorating adventure, Holyoke (The Neptune Promise) offers a warmhearted tale that emphasizes communication and empathy without neglecting tension and danger, while plotlines surrounding the Empire's class- and race-based inequity provide additional fodder for conversation. Ages 8: 12. (Mar.)

Society of Explorers and Adventurers (Trade)

Quantity
1



#2275081 (Vol. 01) Shinji Takahashi and the Mark of the Coatl (Hardcover (Trade))
written by Julie Kagawa
Shinji Takahashi is just an ordinary kid. An ordinary homeschooled smart-alecky orphan kid being raised by his globe-trotting aunt Yui. But when a magical guardian decides to use him as a conduit to awaken its power, Shinji's life takes a turn for the anything-but-ordinary.
978-1-368-06819-2 ©2022 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 320 pgs.
Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 5.5 AR Pts 11.0

Reviews by: Booklist Grades 5-8 Though orphaned Shinji is being raised by his aunt Yui, who is a collector and trader of all sorts of things, he's bored with his life traveling from place to place. He'd rather be playing video games with friends instead of sailing towards Africa in the heat of summer. Shinji finally finds something to take an interest in--a glowing wooden statue of the mythical coatl--but then abruptly crosses paths with a trio of scary, suited men who want his statue and aren't afraid to use violence to get it. What is the statue, and what does it mean? Why does it whisper Shinji's name? Why does he feel like he has to protect it? As he finds answers to his questions, life definitely takes a turn that's more interesting than video games. Comparisons to Rick Riordan's books are inevitable, but in the hands of veteran YA author Kagawa (The Iron Raven, 2021), this memorable middle-grade adventure series starter shines brightly enough to make its own way. COPYRIGHT(2022) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews An old curse and untapped magic lead a boy on a worldwide quest to save his aunt. Ever since 13-year-old Shinji Takahashi’s parents died, he and his Aunt Yui have lived a life that includes months of travels, hunting for unique items for her shop in Miami. While floating down the Zambezi River, Shinji comes upon a mysterious shop with a small figurine of a Coatl, or mythical feathered serpent, that seems to be calling to him. But after he buys it, Shinji is kidnapped and held captive by the Hightower Corporation in New York City. Aunt Yui is nowhere to be seen—and the Coatl figurine has transformed itself into a tattoo on Shinji’s arm. A Hightower villain informs him that it brings with it a deadly curse. Meanwhile, young prodigy Lucy, who has been working for the corporation, appears in Shinji’s room in the middle of the night: After overhearing Hightower’s evil plans for him, she decides to help him break out. Lucy suggests reaching out to the Society of Explorers and Adventurers, Hightower’s archrivals, for help returning the Coatl to its original temple and finding Shinji’s aunt. This intriguing venture builds to a compelling climax. One question that remains unanswered is why Japanese American Shinji, who has no Mesoamerican heritage, is chosen by the Coatl to be its rescuer; perhaps this will be resolved in the next entry in this new series. An action-packed fantasy containing a surprising twist. (Fantasy. 9-12)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly In Kagawa's (the Iron Fey series) fantasy, based on a fictional society created by Walt Disney Imagineering, sardonic Shinji Takahashi, of Japanese descent, lives with his aunt Yui in Miami following his parents' death, and each year accompanies her on "treasure hunts" around the world to source wares for her store. Since the 13-year-old would prefer to be playing a quest-oriented video game,

he's sent on an IRL quest during this year's trip down the Zambezi River, and soon comes across a new-to-him part of a market, and a valuable figurine; the Coatl; that "calls for" him. When a group attempts to steal the statue, Shinji inadvertently absorbs it, becoming its guardian; and gaining a new tattoo and potentially fatal curse. Kidnapped and taken to N.Y.C.'s Hightower Corporation, a company interested in acquiring magical artifacts, he meets fellow 13-year-old Lucy Smith, a white-cued tech prodigy who helps him escape. The two then make their way to the Society of Explorers and Adventurers, whose mission is to "preserve the past and the wonders of ancient cultures" while working to "restore and return" artifacts they previously stole, and then to Mexico City, where Shinji must return the idol before the curse takes its toll. Employing classic heist tropes, this high-speed adventure with well-plotted twists sets up the series while considering exploration's colonial implications. Ages 8: 12. Agent: Laurie McLean, Fuse Literary. (Apr.)

Reviews by: School Library Connection After purchasing an unusual, winged serpent idol, Shinji finds to his surprise that it has grafted itself onto his skin in the form of a tattoo. He soon finds himself caught in the middle of a secret society involved in curses, magic, and mythological creatures beyond his wildest dreams. After being kidnapped by the Hightower Society, he refuses to give up the idol and is kept captive until his new friend Lucy manages to help him escape. They next find themselves involved with the secret Society of Explorers and Adventurers who convince Shinji that the idol tattoo is the key to finding a font of unclaimed magic they can't allow the corrupt Hightower organization to locate. After Shinji and Lucy agree to find the font, they find that the journey is full of dangerous creatures and near-death escapes. This fast-paced fantastical adventure is full of dragons, snakes, dangerous trials, friendships, and mythological obstacles who all try to keep Shinji from finding the magic font. When he finally does, it is revealed to be under control of an ugly spider woman who tries to end his, Lucy's, and his Aunt's life. After Shinji survives the ordeal he has to make the difficult decision to either give up the magic font, which is now his to keep, or use it to make a difference in the world. Shinji decides to keep it and use the magic however he can to make the world a better place. This exciting book will keep fans of adventure-filled fantasy stories turning the pages to see what happens next. Susan Black, Retired School Librarian, Arlee, Montana Recommended

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 3-7--Shinji is no stranger to adventure. He has traveled the world with his Aunt Yui for as long as he can remember. While shopping in a market he finds a figurine of a Coatl, a feathered serpent creature from Mesoamerican lore. After purchasing this figure, he quickly discovers he got more than he bargained for. He is chased and captured by the Hightower Corporation who are trying to take the figurine so they can control its magic. It is then he discovers that this figure comes with a curse: the mark of the Coatl, which has now changed from a figurine to a tattoo on his arm. With the help of some new friends, he must return the idol to its temple home in Mexico in order to remove the curse before it is too late. This first in the series is a thrilling adventure with elements of magic and folklore, in the same vein as Rick Riordan's works. The fast-paced action and short chapters make this a great choice for reluctant readers. A surprising twist will have kids eagerly awaiting the sequels. VERDICT The perfect mixture of Indiana Jones meets Percy Jackson that will keep readers on the edge of their seats.--Kristin Williamson Copyright 2022 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Storm Dragons (Trade)

Quantity
1



#2377883 (Vol. 01) Lightningborn (Hardcover (Trade))
written by Julie Kagawa
REMY spends his days trying to survive the mean streets of Cutthroat Wedge-one of the many islands floating in the gravitational pull of the magical Maelstrom raging below. But his life changes forever when a violent storm brings a baby dragon to his doorstep, and he feels a bond he has never felt with anyone. GEM longs for the day when she call herself a true mage. Remy's and Gem's lives will never be the same when their fates collide, thanks to Storm.
978-1-368-09030-8 ©2024 5-1/2 x 8-1/4 336 pgs.
Grades 4 - 7 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 6.1 AR Pts 12.0

Reviews by: Booklist In this excellent start of the new Storm Dragons series, Kagawa introduces an unlikely pair of heroes. Remy, a "mud rat" from the fringes of their kingdom of floating islands, is an orphan and a dreamer who wants to go to the main island of the kingdom someday. Gem is a mage in training and feels like nobody really sees her for who she is, rather than just the king's privileged daughter. Their destinies collide when Remy finds a wild dragon hatchling and Gem does a little forbidden research on intelligent, ancient dragons which could help save their kingdom from destruction. The third-person narrative alternates between Remy's and Gem's perspectives, delivered in short chapters, and it contains all the major elements of a classic fantasy in a fast-paced adventure package. A solid read for any fans of dragon fantasies, this makes an easy sell for fans of Alex London's Battle Dragons or Anne McCaffrey's Dragonflight. Though there are some resolutions by the end, there's plenty of room for continuing adventures in the next book.— Kristina Pino

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Two young people's lives collide as they try to save one baby dragon—and an entire kingdom. Life on the streets of Cutthroat Wedge, an island in the floating kingdom of Gallecia, is hard for orphaned Remy; he must steal to eat, and his only real company is an old man named Bart, who drinks in the tavern and is full of wild stories of adventure and dragons, a luxury that these days only the ultra-wealthy can afford. Meanwhile, Princess Gem is chafing against her school's restrictions of her storm mage powers. She's determined to save Gallecia, which she's just discovered is rapidly sinking into the Maelstrom, the mysterious magic-giving storm holding the islands aloft. After a strange storm, Remy finds a baby dragon who's being hunted by the ruthless pirate Jhaeros. Turning to Bart for help sets him on a collision course with Gem's search for the missing Sir Bartello Axtell, who knows how to find the Ancients that can save their world. This first series entry evenly balances worldbuilding with action and suspense. The comfortably familiar dragons, pirates, and knights exist in an exciting and physically dangerous airborne environment. Both Gem and Remy are steadfast in their convictions and highly sympathetic despite their

differences in background, education, and personality. The emotional hook is set with this volume: Readers will feel compelled to seek out the next installment. Characters are minimally described and racially ambiguous. Swashbuckling abounds in this fun-filled series opener. (Fantasy. 8-12)

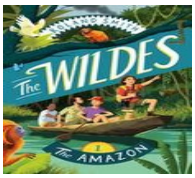
Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Ever since the Shattering many millennia ago, people have survived traveling by dragons and sky ships between myriad islands magically floating above the all-consuming Maelstrom. Twelve-year-old Remy, a "skinny, mop-haired street urchin," lives on the tiny pirate haven of Cutthroat Wedge, dreaming of but never expecting a chance to leave. During a tempest, he discovers an extraordinarily rare dragon hatchling, which he names Storm. But ruthless pirate captain Jhaeros is looking for the hatchling, placing Remy in great danger. Meanwhile, 12-year-old Princess Gem, a storm-mage-in-training, learns that the magic crystals that keep the islands aloft are failing, heralding certain doom for the kingdom. Against the king's wishes, Gem embarks on a mission to seek out the powerful, rumored-extinct Ancient Ones of legend, who might be able to restore the crystals' power. When the tweens' paths cross, they must work together to protect Storm and save the kingdom. In this invigorating trilogy opener, Kagawa (the Iron Fey series) conjures an atmospheric setting populated by eclectic characters and fanciful creatures and employs Remy and Gem's alternating perspectives to skillfully balance personal and epic stakes, coalescing into a captivating dynamic that is enhanced by their respective dragon companions. Ages 8: 12. Agent: Laurie McLean, Fuse Literary. (Apr.)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 3-6–In a land made of floating islands, there is a 12-year-old princess, Gem, who flies on a beautiful white dragon and whose silver streak in her black hair marks her as a storm mage. In this same system of islands, floating over the dangerous, scary, unending Maelstrom, lives Remy, a “mud rat” with “mud-colored hair, mud-colored eyes” who has nothing in the world, not even parents, and who dreams of dragons. In alternating chapters, Gem and Remy’s stories inch closer together as Remy discovers a baby dragon and Gem realizes that the only way to save her father’s kingdom is to embark on a solo quest to find the Ancients. They both need the help of Crusty Bart, former sky knight and the only human alive to have interacted with the True Dragons—sentient dragons who possess infinite magic. Falling in with sky pirates might be a bad move, but Remy must save his dragon and Gem must save the sky knight so they have no choice but to trust Captain Cutlass and her crew as they go after the most dangerous captain and mage in the most dangerous part of their world: the Vortex. This fantasy series debut has everything that readers could want: magic, used for both good and ill; dragons; a quest; a rebellious and brave princess; life-and-death adventure; and a cliffhanger ending. The writing occasionally feels stilted, but is written at an age-appropriate level, and the worldbuilding creates a very clear picture of this land. The plot moves along at an exciting clip and will keep readers turning pages. VERDICT This is a sure hit for fantasy fans, specifically those who love dragons and rollicking adventure. Highly recommended. –Clare A. Dombrowski

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Wildes (Sleeping Bear Press)

Quantity
1



#2317549 (Vol. 01) Amazon (Hardcover (Trade))
written by Roland Smith
Ring and Asia Wilde's life is anything but ordinary. Some of their closest friends are endangered monkeys and rare birds. Instead of attending middle school, they accompany their parents (scientists who work to save endangered species) on adventures around the world. They spend more time climbing trees, tracking animal prints, and taking on three-hundred-pound anacondas than they do filling out worksheets. But a research trip to the Amazon rainforest turns into a dangerous mystery when their mother goes missing. Who kidnapped Dr. Jane Wilde, and why? Ring and Asia have the skills to survive the jungle--but do they have what it takes to rescue their mom? *978-1-5341-1194-3 ©2023 5 x 8 240 pgs. Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# Fic AR Lvl 4.7 AR Pts 6.0 GR Lvl O Lexile 670*

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Prolific wilderness adventure author Smith takes readers on a wild ride in his latest book, featuring an American family pursued by gold-seeking criminals in the Amazon. When their mom, respected conservation biologist Dr. Jane Wilde, goes missing during a research trip in Brazil, sister and brother Asia, 13, and Ring, 11, are plunged headlong into the heart of the rainforest. The kids’ veterinarian dad is kept busy at home in Texas as director of the family’s enormous animal park. The omniscient narrator moves between the characters, focusing mainly on the siblings. Asia, despite her encyclopedic scientific knowledge, is desperate to attend a regular school rather than being home-schooled in the field. Meanwhile, impulsive Ring is happy going along for the ride, something that grates on Asia. Over the next few whirlwind days, the young Wildes learn what it means to survive and fight for someone they love—and for their own lives. Smith moves the story along at a breakneck pace as the siblings, along with Prof. Bob, their tutor, and Raoni, a multilingual Kayapo man they meet by chance, race through the jungle trying to save Dr. Jane—and, indirectly, her beloved, endangered golden lion tamarins. Along the way, readers are introduced to information about the environment and politics of the region, the Brazilian government’s hostile treatment of Indigenous people, and the corrupt, profit-driven gold mining industry. The Wildes are cued White. A fun, fast-paced thrill ride. (Adventure. 9-12)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly When their mother disappears in the Amazon rainforest while researching golden lion tamarins, two siblings leave base camp to seek her in this uneven, environmentally conscious mystery. Resourceful, fact-savvy Asia Wilde, 13, and fearless Ring, 11, are often left to their own devices by their ambitious parents, but Asia's field notebooks betray a yearning for regular school over global homeschooling. Their conservation-biologist mother frequently goes off-grid during field work, and their veterinarian father operates a massive Texas animal park, specializing in conserving rare and endangered animals. Currently staying with their mother south of Altamira near Brazil's

Xingu River, the kids wake to find they've been deserted by their camp crew and their mom is missing from her zipline-connected network of treetop research platforms. The nearest adult is their dithering tutor, until the arrival of an Indigenous Kayapo man, Raoni, who holds an advanced degree in cultural anthropology and conservation biology, and who helps the children after wildlife-cam footage deepens the mystery. Though Raoni's undercover impersonation of "an ignorant Kayapo" strikes a strange note, thrilling, high-stakes escape scenes propel the plot and eco-justice message as Smith (The Switch) reveals the terrible damage inflicted by government and industry on Indigenous lands and wildlife habitats. Ages 9: 10. (Apr.)

Individual Titles: Nonfiction

	Quantity
 **#2393332 Almost Underwear: How a Piece of Cloth Traveled from Kitty Hawk to the Moon and Mars (Hardcover (Trade))**	1

written by Jonathan Roth

One day in 1903 the Wright brothers entered a department store in Ohio to buy a bolt of fabric. The plain muslin cloth was most often used to make underwear. As it happens, the Wright brothers were about to wrap the simple cloth around the ribs of a mechanical 'wing' and dramatically change the world. Sixty-six years later, in 1969, Neil Armstrongtook a big leap onto the moon. With him was a swatch of the exact fabric the bicycle mechanics had purchased in 1903. Fifty-two years after that, in 2021, a remote-controlled car-sized explorer landed on Mars. Attached to the underside of a cable was a tiny piece of very old cloth-cloth that had almost become underwear. Almost Underwear is the story of that incredible piece of fabric, and the historic 'firsts' it stitches together.

978-0-316-52554-1 ©2024 11 x 8-1/2 40 pgs.

Grades P - 1 Dewey# 629.109

Reviews by: Booklist Grades 1-3 *Starred Review* Inserting cartoon figures into photos of actual sites both terrestrial and extraterrestrial and embroidering his tale with melodramatic language, Roth explains how a certain bolt of unbleached muslin has been "woven into the fabric of history." Though usually used for ladies' undergarments, the fabric, "destined for greatness" ("Not," he writes, "that underwear is bad"), was purchased by the Wright brothers in 1903 to cover the wings of their first airplane at Kitty Hawk. Then, in 1969, a piece of that original material accompanied Neil Armstrong to the moon, and in 2020, another flew over the surface of Mars attached to the rover Perseverance's late lamented little helicopter, Ingenuity. Along with noting that other bits have traveled aboard space shuttles and to the International Space Station over the years, he closes with closer looks at some Mars rover instrumentation and a final photo of the Wright Flyer on display (covered in replica cloth) at the Smithsonian. Readers with stars (and planets) in their eyes will be fascinated by this little-known swatch of detail from the story of our space program. COPYRIGHT(2024) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Horn Book Magazine A small scrap of unbleached muslin (typically used for underwear in the early 1900s) traveled to the moon and back with the Apollo 11 astronauts in the summer of 1969. Sixty-six years before the flight, that swatch was part of a fabric wing that made the most consequential flight in aviation history. Though the Wright brothers' Flyer traveled only 120 feet on the sandy beaches of North Carolina, it changed humankind's relationship with gravity forever. Fifty-two years after the moon landing, 118 years after Kitty Hawk, a smaller piece of fabric from that same scrap took another historic flight, aboard NASA's Ingenuity, the autonomous helicopter that made the first controlled flight from the surface of Mars in 2021. Combining historical photographs and NASA concept art with the author's cartoonish illustrations creates an enjoyable informational picture book that connects the past to the present. Roth's clear and compelling narrative follows the swatch's fascinating journey through the history of flight. An extensive author's note fleshes out the fabric's many "adventures." Eric Carpenter(Copyright 2024 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

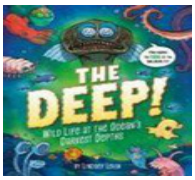
Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews The tale of a well-traveled piece of cloth. Intended to be made into women’s underwear, a bolt of unbleached muslin was purchased by the Wright Brothers in 1903 to cover the wings of the Flyer, which became the first airplane in history to fly. Later, the cloth was cut into swatches and donated to a museum. But this cloth still had journeys to make. One swatch flew to the moon in 1969 in a pouch carried by Neil Armstrong. In 2020, another swatch traveled to Mars with the Rover Perseverance and, in 2021, flew with the helicopter Ingenuity, “the first experimental aircraft sent to another planet.” This charming story is brought to life by Roth’s witty illustrations. He sets photos provided by NASA and the National Air and Space Museum against sepia backgrounds, adding cartoon figures and an appealingly personified flying piece of cloth. Laced with moments of wry humor, the text clearly describes each flight and builds drama and suspense by suggesting that after each adventure, the cloth would finally have a rest—and then promptly upending that assumption. The final spread reminds readers of these three history-making flights and shows an imagined scene of the Wright brothers standing on Mars and waving to Ingenuity. People of color appear in several of the photos. A flight of fancy—and facts—sure to set aspiring scientists’ imaginations soaring. (author’s note, glossary of Perseverance instruments, bibliography, photo credits) (Informational picture book. 5-9)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly The unassuming roll of unbleached muslin for sale in 1903 at a store in Dayton, Ohio, might have been turned into ladies' underwear. "Not that underwear is bad," notes Roth (the Rover and Speck series). "It just isn't destined for greatness." But the Wright brothers saw something more in it: a "light, flexible, and especially strong" fabric ideal for covering the wings of the world's first airplane. After sitting in storage and being displayed in a museum, a swatch of this cloth; anthropomorphized with dot eyes and a small, expressive mouth; again and again soars into history as other aviation pioneers carry it as a kind of talisman. It accompanies Neil Armstrong to the moon in 1969 and is affixed to the Ingenuity Mars helicopter, in 2021 making "the very first flight on another planet." A blend of cartooning and archival photos from NASA and the National Air and Space Museum evokes an informative comic book feel, adding in mechanical detail that's just right for budding aeronautical gearheads. But it's the work's narrative voice, which alternates between droll humor and geeky enthusiasm, that makes this textile yarn a delight from takeoff to landing. An author's note and instrument glossary conclude. Ages 5: 9. Agent: Natalie Lakosil, Irene Goodman Agency. (Aug.)

Reviews by: School Library Journal K-Gr 3--Travel back in time to 1903 and meet a seemingly ordinary piece of fabric, originally destined to be made into women's underwear. Instead, who should purchase the bolt but the Wright brothers, using it as the wing cover for the Flyer, which would soon make history as the first airplane to be successfully airborne. After its first-of-a-kind journey, the fabric was cut into swatches and donated to a museum, seemingly finished with travel. However, its adventures did not end there: one swatch made it to the moon in 1969 with Neil Armstrong, while still another landed on the surface of Mars in 2021. Eye-catching spreads feature photographs with additional ebullient, cartoonlike illustrations, including the charming cloth and historical figures. Roth's text will enthrall readers of all ages, brimming with humor and successfully building suspense as the apparently ordinary cloth embarks on incredible adventures. VERDICT A fascinating and factual examination of a fantastic piece of flight history, and a welcome addition to all collections.--Olivia Gorecke Copyright 2024 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Individual Titles: Nonfiction

Quantity

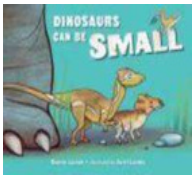


#2326315 Deep!: Wild Life at the Ocean's Darkest Depths (Hardcover (POB)) **1**
written by Lindsey Leigh
Did you know that there are animals that are completely transparent? That some tube worms live for 1,000 years? That the Pigbutt Worm is also known as the "Flying Buttocks"? Or that there is a type of sea cucumber that is nicknamed "the headless chicken monster?" These are just some of the scientific facts, presented comics-style, that kids will pore over again and again.
978-0-593-52168-7 ©2023 8 x 10 96 pgs.
Grades 4 - 7 Dewey# 591.77 Lexile 950

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Meet our aquatic neighbors, from sperm whales and vampire squid (“Velcome!”) to pigbutt worms. “Well, hi there!” burbles a toothy deep-sea hatchetfish, swimming up to invite viewers on an unforgettable dive into ocean depths from the sunny epipelagic zone down to really deep, really dark hadalpelagic regions. Wonders aplenty await, from creatures with transparent heads and stomachs to sea angels, which change from male to female as they grow, carnivorous sponges, and siphonophores longer than blue whales. The author stoutly defends the reputations of the much maligned blobfish (“Blobfish? No, Blob Sculpin!”) and demonstrates a sure sense of theater with, for instance, a “Supersize Squid Showdown,” not to mention nods to the aforementioned pigbutt worm (“It’s not every day you see flying buttocks soaring through the seas!”) and the giant larvacean’s “magnificent snot palace.” In pursuit of a friendly vibe, Leigh puts smiles on the faces of creatures that have them (faces, that is) but otherwise draws her teeming wildlife in accurate detail. She also fills much of the open spaces in her mix of broad seascapes and inset panels with informative commentary and supplements the tour with closer looks at microenvironments such as hydrothermal vents and deadly undersea brine pools (“jacuzzi of despair!”) as well as special topics such as the continual descent of nutritious corpses and poop known as “marine snow.” She ends with further resources and eco-activities for readers who share her patent enthusiasm for denizens of the deep. A broad and buoyant undersea venture. (index) (Graphic nonfiction. 10-13)

Individual Titles: Nonfiction

Quantity



#2402774 Dinosaurs Can Be Small (Hardcover (Trade)) **1**
written by Darrin Lunde
World-class zoologist Darrin Lunde celebrates the power of the small. Small dinosaurs weren't just cute; their size had evolutionary benefits. And when that giant meteor hit, who do you think survived? Sure, you've heard of Triceratops, but do you know Microceratus, one of the smallest horned dinos? Love T. rex? Allow us to introduce Compsognathus, a tiny meat-eater that hunted insects.
978-1-62354-330-3 ©2024 10-1/2 x 8-1/4 32 pgs.
Grades P - 1 Dewey# 567.9 Lexile 530

Individual Titles: Nonfiction

Quantity



#2324839 Food for the Future: Sustainable Farms Around the World (Paperback (Trade)) 1

written by Mia Wenjen

Go on a tour of eco-friendly farms around the globe! From urban gardens to farms under the sea, discover the many different sustainable ways people have been growing food for centuries, and new innovations that are battling the effects of climate change on farming. Rhyming text and inset boxes with definitions for new vocabulary words make the topic accessible to young learners. End matter includes detailed information about each country's farming practice, sustainable farming and more

978-1-64686-840-7 ©2023 10 x 10 40 pgs.

Grades K - 2 Dewey# 338.1 Lexile AD 910

Reviews by: School Library Journal K-Gr 3—This is an ambitious undertaking—showing children how sustainable farming can provide healthy food that is in harmony with nature. The book profiles 12 farms around the world and showcases practices used by Indigenous people as well as cutting-edge projects in farming. A salt farm on Kaui and a fish farm along the Jurena river in western Brazil show the importance of looking back to earlier harvesting practices that focused on the rhythms of the seasons as well as the natural gifts of the Earth. Some of the new farming ideas use native plants (the Food Forest in Kenya) or store rainwater run-off (human-made pits in India) to create farms or practices attuned to the local ecosystem. There are also farms using modern breakthroughs, such as a four-story greenhouse in Singapore or an undersea hydroponic farm in Italy, to expand ideas of farming. Every farm appears in a spread with a rhyming couplet to describe it and one definition bubble. Given the brevity of the rhyming couplet, readers must use the back pages to fully understand the concept of each farm. The illustrations are reminiscent of Christian Robinson's work, depicting diverse people and environments with flat areas of vibrant color and simple lines. VERDICT An exciting overview of traditional and innovative farming techniques that will warrant repeated reading, for casual browsing or classroom use.—Sally A. James

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Individual Titles: Nonfiction

Quantity



#2369000 Girl Who Figured It Out: The Inspiring True Story of Wheelchair Athlete Minda Dentler Becoming an Ironman World Champion (Hardcover (Trade)) 1

written by Minda Dentler

Minda Dentler made history when she became the first female wheelchair athlete to complete the world's toughest triathlon, using only her arms to finish a 2.4 mile swim, 112 mile bike ride, and 26.2 mile marathon. But the journey there wasn't easy. Minda was paralyzed as an infant in India after contracting polio, and was left in the care of an orphanage. After she was adopted by an American family and moved to Washington, she underwent surgeries to enable her to walk with leg braces and crutches.

978-1-7282-7653-3 ©2024 10 x 10 48 pgs.

Grades P - 1 Dewey# 796.420 AR Lvl 3.6 AR Pts .5 Lexile AD 680

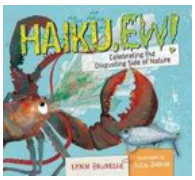
Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews An Indian American polio survivor explains how in 2013 she became the first female wheelchair athlete to complete an Ironman World Championship. Born in a village near Mumbai, Dentler contracted polio before her first birthday; her legs were paralyzed. Unable to afford her care, Dentler’s loving single mother put her up for adoption. Adopted by an American couple, Dentler moved to Spokane, Washington. She endured multiple surgeries, and her adoptive parents encouraged her to achieve seemingly impossible goals, such as learning to walk with crutches and leg braces: “You can do it...Just figure it out.” But classmates sometimes excluded and taunted her because of her mobility aids and dark skin. Undaunted, Dentler grew up to accomplish much, including backpacking solo through Europe and becoming a White House intern. But ultimately, she wanted to be an athlete. After practicing handcycling, she competed in the New York City Marathon and, feeling “unstoppable,” set her sights on triathlons. Dentler tackled difficulties, such as learning to swim and adjusting to a racing wheelchair. She follows disappointments, such as being disqualified at her first Ironman attempt, with refreshingly concrete details of how she trained harder and, above all, believed in herself, punctuated by the refrain: “Just figure it out.” Ultimately, she completed an Ironman in Kona, Hawaii, swimming, biking, and running 140.6 miles. Dehennin depicts Dentler’s endeavors with bright hues and vivid expressions; fluid curves impart a sense of motion. An uplifting ode to persistence. (author’s note, information about polio and wheelchair sports) (Picture-book memoir. 6-8)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Xpress Gr 1-5-Dentler pens a breathtakingly inspiring memoir, told in picture book form. Readers follow the story of the author, whose journey was anything but easy. After Dentler is diagnosed with polio, her birth mother is unable to care for her and leaves her in an orphanage in India, where she is later adopted by a supportive New York family. From there, Dentler faces numerous challenges as she navigates a world that overlooks her because of her disability. Yet, with the encouragement of her family, she realizes that she

can do difficult-seemingly impossible-things. Dehennin's stunning digital art brings this testament to the human spirit to life. The images vividly depict each stage of emotion that Dentler experiences while she, for example, struggles to do chores, learns how to swim, and runs her first race. As she discovers her passion for athletic competitions, she finds a running team that introduces her to hand cycling. This raw true story shows not only her greatest success, but also her very real failures, allowing readers to see her transformation from vulnerable orphan to confident world champion. Her motto, "I was stronger, I was smarter, I was more confident!" becomes a rallying cry for anyone facing obstacles. VERDICT An unforgettable tale of triumph. The message is perfect for readers of all ages, but the book itself works for first through fifth grades, and deserves to be in all collections.-Jessica Clark © Copyright 2024. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Individual Titles: Nonfiction

Quantity



#2375882 Haiku, Ew!: Celebrating the Disgusting Side of Nature (Library Binding) 1

written by Lynn Brunelle

Nature is beautiful! It's magnificent! It's amazing! And it's also super gross!Fourteen hilariously icky haiku present the grosser side of nature. Check out flamingos that keep cool by pooping on their legs. And butterflies that emerge from oozy caterpillar soup. The haiku are accompanied by additional facts that will delight- and disgust-readers of all ages.

978-1-7284-9250-6 ©2024 10-5/8 x 8-7/8 32 pgs.

Grades 2 - 5 Dewey# 811

Reviews by: Booklist Grades 2-5 Brunelle subverts the normally staid 17-syllable Japanese poetic form in this collection celebrating nature at its grossest. ""Fully formed toadlets / Pop out of bumps on Mom's back, / Erupting like zits"" introduces the birthing process of Surinam toads. Other disgusting behaviors involve farting (herring and blue whales), pooping (flamingos and koalas), and consuming detritus (mushrooms and hagfish). While some examples are actually helpful (medical maggots eat bacteria in wounds), others are simply strange (lobsters pee out of their faces). Each poem is presented on an illustrated double-page spread that includes full-color pencil drawings and one or more sidebars that provide context for the claims. The artwork is realistic with suitably goofy touches (captioned arrows point out flamingo poop and fish farts), containing a few diagrams (a cutaway view of bee anatomy), and most sidebars are depicted as part of a scientist's notebook. With additional information on haikus and the highlighted life-forms, this will be popular with fans of Elise Gravel's Disgusting Critters series or Keri Lavelle's Butt or Face? (2023). COPYRIGHT(2024) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews Poetic observations from nature’s more nauseating reaches, with gleefully gut-churning explanatory comments. “Cute koala bear / Baby nuzzles Mama’s butt, / Munches poop. Still cute?” Covering everything from hagfish (“darlings of the slime world”) to Surinam toad hatchlings, which pop “like zits” out of pits in mama toad’s back, these 14 haiku offer examples of nature in rousingly revolting action, along with tasty tidbits of prose commentary. In the latter, while determinedly going for the gross, Brunelle carefully sticks to the facts; she even explains, for example, why honey isn’t really bee barf, “if you want to get technical,” because it’s never in a bee’s stomach. She ends with helpful leads to websites and other books. To the relief of more sensitive human stomachs, Patton tones down the “ew!” factor in her animated illustrations. Yes, the inky cap mushrooms do drip with black slime, and her extreme close-up view of a jawless but far from toothless hagfish mouth is nightmarish (“So, enjoy that,” the author writes), but Patton renders anatomical details with reasonable fidelity, and in general the art is more likely to elicit giggles than gags. Better yet, this STEAM-y mix closes with an invitation for readers to try their hands at “haiku-ew” of their own that they’ll find hard to resist. Offers a crowd-pleasing angle on both nature and poetry. (Informational picture book/poetry. 7-9)

Reviews by: School Library Journal Gr 4-6--While haikus and ickiness may not seem like the most obvious pairing, this book uses revolting facts to provide a surprisingly engaging dose of science. Brunelle cleverly uses the spareness of the haiku form to showcase nature facts that range from the scatological to the morbid to the just plain alien. Each haiku is paired with a longer description written in a conversational style that deftly introduces some pretty sophisticated scientific terms and ideas. Patton's collage-like illustrations also don't shy away from grossness: splashes of bodily fluids and gaseous emissions, carefully labeled, abound. Some of the facts are relatively tame, but others are not for the faint of heart (or stomach). Although the book is fairly short and easy to read, resources at the end extend learning. A brief overview of the history of the haiku form is provided, as well as a light acknowledgment of the seeming incongruity of the "haiku, ew" subject matter versus more classical themes. Prompts and a bibliography are also included to encourage reader engagement and further research. There is no nuance in these pages: readers will either be delighted by the grossness or not. For some budding naturalists, this book may spark a particular kind of fascination with the less splendorous, but equally interesting, parts of the natural world. Others will be too grossed out to enjoy it. It's worth cracking open to figure out which one you are. VERDICT For readers who don't get queasy easily and are interested in how weird nature can get.--Kate Stadt Copyright 2024 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Individual Titles: Nonfiction

Quantity



#2393397 Next Scientist: The Unexpected Beginnings and Unwritten Future of the World's Great Scientists (Hardcover (Trade))
written by Kate Messner
This book of unexpected beginnings powerfully shows that the great scientists of the future could be practically anyone . . . including you. Written by Kate Messner, bestselling author of the acclaimed Over and Under nature book series and more than fifty books for young readers, and beautifully illustrated by Julia Kuo, this is a book to gift to any curious kid interested in STEM topics, fascinated by scientific discoveries, and inspired by biographies of people whose work has had an impact on the world.
978-1-4521-7696-3 ©2024 12 x 9-1/2 60 pgs.
Grades 3 - 6 Dewey# 509.22 Lexile 1020

Reviews by: Booklist Grades 3-6 Where is the next generation of scientists? What are they doing now? In a companion book to The Next President (2020), Messner takes us back in time to look at what great scientists of the past did as children and whether their childhood interests and activities contributed to their scientific accomplishments as adults. As a boy, Isaac Newton built a sundial and flew his own handmade kites. As an adult, he explained the nature of gravity, planetary motion, and the spectrum of colors that makes up white light. Mae Jemison, who enjoyed dancing and exploring nature as a child, later became the first Black woman to travel in space. This intriguing book introduces dozens of figures in the sciences, first as children and, usually on the following double-page spread, as significant achievers in their fields. Kuo's digital illustrations capture the likenesses of a diverse group of leaders in the sciences, and the juxtaposition of childhood interests and professional contributions creates some interesting discussion points along the way. An attractive, original science book. COPYRIGHT(2024) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: Horn Book Magazine This attractive, informative, and ambitious collective biography begins with a challenge: "Quick! Name the world's greatest scientist." Messner (The Next President, rev. 3/20) introduces well-known and lesser-known scientists throughout history and organizes the book by theme (scientists as observers, as artists, as readers, etc.). A typical spread depicts three scientists as children engaged in a similar activity, such as tinkering (James West, Grace Hopper, Ayah Bdeir) or skygazing (Johannes Kepler, Maria Mitchell, Adriana Ocampo). Short captions provide information about each as a child, and the book then reveals their corresponding grown-up versions and achievements. This clever structure allows for a smooth flow and offers connection and comparison among scientists across time, cultures, and locales. "Snapshot" interludes provide brief information about specific shared interests (sewing/knitting; the study of Pluto). Kuo's digital illustrations in clear black line and a rich color palette have a paper doll-like quality while still being dynamically posed and presented on the pages. Thoughtful curation results in representation of a wide range of identities, fields of study, and challenges throughout the history of modern science. Culminating in a hopeful call for future scientists to create "a better world," the book presents supplemental mini-biographies, further reading, selected sources, and a list of some of the scientists' favorite books. Patrick Gall(Copyright 2024 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews A message to the groundbreaking scientists of the future, with connections to those of the past and present. "So," Messner writes, "where are the next great scientists now?" Perhaps they are "building stuff" in their yards or garages--like Isaac Newton, who made kites when he was a boy, or Lonnie Johnson, who as a youngster built a go-kart engine from scrap. Johnson grew up to design spacecraft for NASA (and invent the Super Soaker); as for Newton, he only became one of the greatest scientists ever. Likewise, as a child in Lebanon, Ayah Bdeir enjoyed taking radios apart and later became a maker of electronic educational toys; as a refugee from El Salvador, Carolina Peñalva-Arana came to the U.S. to become a molecular ecologist. The inspirational tenor will assure young people that they, too, can follow suit, while the variety of subjects--many not typically covered in children's nonfiction--sets this one apart from similar fare. In a gallery of over 40 people who are diverse in terms of race and cultural background, Kuo depicts this array of scientific luminaries first as children and then as adults, differing in dress and setting but all looking intently focused on what they're doing or studying. As Messner concludes in a soaring finish, all are also hoping that today's young "makers" will "be up to the job of creating a better world." She leaves it to readers to answer her opening question. A stirring invitation to join the great enterprise. (source list, further reading)(Collective biography. 6-10) COPYRIGHT(2024) Kirkus Reviews, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

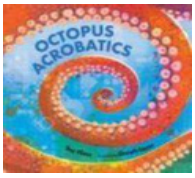
Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Stylish, rotoscope-esque illustrations by Kuo (Luminous) give this inspirational picture book poster-like visual impact as Messner (The Next President) explores the career trajectories of several dozen scientists and researchers of various backgrounds and birth dates. They're pictured first as children, "building stuff," "taking things apart," "sewing and knitting," and more, and then as scientists in adulthood as newspaper-like text draws a direct line between their early interests and their professional arcs. On one page, a young James West takes apart his grandfather's pocket watch, a young Grace Hopper disassembles an alarm clock, and a young Ayah Bdeir explores the inner workings of a portable radio. A page turn shows the trio as adults: microphone innovator West with components of his invention, coding pioneer Hopper in front of a computer, and computer engineer Bdeir with educational toys she developed. Including figures iconic and lesser-known, this pep-talk-like work suggests that STEM careers might have seeds in childhood passions, inviting readers to consider how, if their own interests align, "you might just be the next great astronaut." Ages 8-12. (Aug.) Copyright 2024 Publishers Weekly, LLC Used with permission.

Reviews by: School Library Journal PreS-Gr 4--Fascinating and captivating, Messner's latest nonfiction book encourages elementary readers to keep digging, crafting, deconstructing, building, reading, and moving to find out more about themselves and the world around them. The book opens with a request to name the "world's greatest scientist." Readers then discover that there is not one greatest scientist, but many, many who have contributed to the betterment of the world. Digitally rendered illustrations feature over 35 diverse (in gender and skin color) scientists, depicting them as children doing activities that led to them becoming great in their individual fields as adults, followed by scenes of

them grown up. That offers further information about what the scientists discovered or how they contributed in some way to certain fields of study. Readers will find themselves encouraged to continue exploring with everyday materials in order to learn. Back matter includes extensive sources for further reading. VERDICT An effective and generous book that encourages exploration, maker spaces, and tinkering. Perfect for a unit on biographies, as well as a way to introduce a maker project. The inclusion of names that are not often covered is a breath of fresh air. A first purchase for all libraries.--Tracy Cronce Copyright 2024 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Individual Titles: Fiction

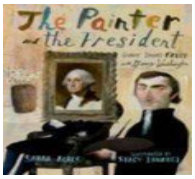
Quantity



#2380362 Octopus Acrobatics (Hardcover (Trade)) **1**
written by Sue Fliess
Though octopuses live in every ocean and along every US coast, you may never catch a glimpse of one in the wild. All 300 species, from the tiny wolfi octopus to the enormous Pacific octopus, can camouflage themselves by changing color, pattern, and texture.
978-0-8075-5818-8 Albert Whitman ©2024 10 x 10 32 pgs.
Grades P - 1 Dewey# 594

Individual Titles: Nonfiction

Quantity



#2393287 Painter and the President: Gilbert Stuart's Brush with George Washington (Hardcover (Trade)) **1**
written by Sarah Albee
George Washington and artist Gilbert Stuart didn't always see eye-to-eye, but both men knew the importance of legacy and the power of art. Though George disliked having his portrait painted-which took days and days to complete-he knew his place in history would require people to know his face. Fortunately, Gilbert Stuart's unique way of painting didn't compel his subjects to sit for hours on end-in fact, he encouraged them to move around and even bring friends to chat with.
978-1-6626-8000-7 ©2024 9 x 11 40 pgs.
Grades 1 - 4 Dewey# 973

Reviews by: Booklist Grades 2-5 *Starred Review* The face that stares out a bit grimly from the one-dollar bill is, of course, that of George Washington, and this rollicking story centers on how, in 1796, the famous portrait painter Gilbert Stuart got around Washington's massively bad mood to produce this iconic painting. As Albee points out, part of the problem was that, thanks to a brand-new, poorly fitting set of false teeth, the first president's teeth and jaw ached throughout the long sittings. Readers get two character portraits here: that of impatient, action-oriented Washington and that of the freewheeling Stuart, who broke from the "sit still" school of portraitists and encouraged his subjects to eat and drink, roam around the room, and socialize with family and friends. The illustrations, done with acrylics and pencils, have a whimsical, cutout quality, with swirling brushstrokes in the background emulating Stuart's signature brushwork and putting the emphasis on the characters, while occasional sidebars convey a wealth of historical information. Readers will gain an appreciation of the arduous art of portrait painting, with the added humor of Stuart's psychological tricks. Extensive back matter includes time lines for both Washington's and Stuart's lives, a chronicle of Washington's tooth troubles, and a bibliography. A captivating exploration of the making of one of history's most famous portraits. COPYRIGHT(2024) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Reviews by: ForeWord Magazine An iconic portrait of George Washington comes to life in this painterly picture book. George Washington is a man of action who loathes making idle conversation and sitting for portraits. Gilbert Stuart is the premier portrait painter of the late 1700s and a lively conversationalist. The two men begin as oil and water, but the end result is the enduring--albeit unfinished--image of America's first president. The illustrations take painting as their inspiration, with visible brushstrokes and dramatic contrasts creating an immersive experience. COPYRIGHT(2024) Foreword Magazine, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

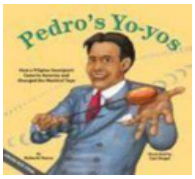
Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews An account of the rocky relationship between the U.S.’s first president and his most famous portrait painter. “They did not,” as Albee puts it in a nutshell, “hit it off.” Dubbed an “infernal chatterbox” by the grumpy elder statesman, Gilbert Stuart was in the habit of reeling off amusing stories and “corny jokes” to relax his subjects as he worked. Still, both painter and sitter well understood “the power of art”—and the two stuck with each other long enough for the former to break through the latter’s reserve, which was exacerbated by the pain of bad dentures, to capture a more animated expression so well that the unfinished image of 1796 has remained by far the best-known portrait of Washington or any president. Stuart went on to paint portraits of five more chief executives, which Innerst incorporates, with the painter’s “selfie” and other works, into droll caricatures of 18th-century dignitaries and the busy artist adroitly wielding his brush with many a vigorous “dab” and “swish.” A timeline at the end daubs in further biographical details about the disparate duo, and the whole not insignificant historical anecdote is capped by closing comments on Washington’s “tooth troubles” and why his picture on the dollar bill has him facing the other way. The result is a humorous yet enlightening work that humanizes seemingly distant or imposing figures. A lighthearted, illuminating, and thought-provoking look at a brief but meaningful historical moment. (bibliography) (Informational picture book. 7-10)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly Albee and Innerst wittily render the backstory of the portrait of George Washington (1732: 1799) that graces the U.S. one-dollar bill. Premier American portraitist Gilbert Stuart (1755: 1828) wields a "dancing brush" that "captures the very soul of the person he is painting," but his initial encounter with the president left much to be desired by both parties. Washington begrudgingly agrees to give Stuart another chance, though the president would "rather sit on a horse than sit in a chair," and considers Stuart an "infernal chatterbox." The two men share an understanding of "the power of art" to capture not just likeness but legacy, and when Stuart sees Washington looking delightedly at a horse, conversation fodder is found and a famous portrait is born. Elegantly economic, always accessible prose gives a sense of the era's decorum, while sculptural acrylic, pencil, and digital artwork captures both the artistic process and the wrangling of two unique historical personalities. Secondary characters are portrayed with pale skin. Ages 7: 10. (Aug.)

Reviews by: School Library Journal K-Gr 4--George Washington did not like to sit still. Fortunately, portrait painter Gilbert Stuart didn't need him to. In fact, Stuart would joke and tell stories and let his subjects walk around the room, and even invite family and friends to join them. Washington's stern expression and pinched mouth (due to his infamous ill-fitting false teeth), for example, went from "glum to glad" when Stuart realized he loved to talk about horses. Stuart painted portraits of many luminaries (lords and ladies, admirals and artists, diplomats and dignitaries), but by far the most famous one was of Washington, which became the basis for the engraving used on the dollar bill. Expressive language and delightful acrylic, pencil, and digital illustrations, which include images from actual portraits, combine to make a lively and interesting biography of a painter and a glimpse into a little-known event in the life of the first president. The book includes a time line, information on Washington's dental woes, an explanation of why the image on the dollar bill is reversed from the original portrait, a bibliography, and source notes. VERDICT Pair this with a traditional biography of Washington for a refreshing look into the legacy of both the president and the painter. Highly recommended.--Sue Morgan Copyright 2024 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Individual Titles: Nonfiction

Quantity



#2189945 Pedro's Yo-yos: How a Filipino Immigrant Came to America and Changed the World of Toys (Hardcover (Trade)) **1**

written by Roberto Penas

Discover the rags-to-riches backstory of one of America's favorite toys, the yo-yo, in this colorful biography of businessman Pedro Flores.

978-1-62014-574-6 ©2024 9-1/2 x 9-1/2 40 pgs.

Grades 1 - 4 Dewey# 688.7 AR Lvl 5.2 AR Pts .5

Reviews by: Booklist Pedro Flores was a Filipino immigrant who brought the yo-yo to America and made it a worldwide phenomenon. In Peas' informative picture book, he describes how Flores overcame the challenges of living under colonial rule, migrating to a new country in 1915, and starting his own business from scratch. Opportunity knocked on his door when an American family took interest in a yo-yo he made for their son. Soon, everyone’s interest was piqued, and Flores spent his time carving yo-yos at night and demonstrating tricks with them during the day. The yo-yo became a sensation, and he expanded his homemade business to several factories. Flores' determination and entrepreneurial spirit ensured that the yo-yo would capture the imagination of children and adults worldwide. The concise text, which nicely encapsulates key moments from Flores' life, is beautifully accompanied by Angel's naturalistic and expressive digital paintings, especially when depicting Flores' impressive yo-yo tricks. Robust back matter elaborates on Flores' life, the colonization of the Philippines, and the further history of the yo-yo.

Reviews by: Horn Book Magazine Born in 1896 under Spanish colonial rule in the Philippines, Pedro Flores immigrated to the United States as a teenager. It wasn't until years later -- after he had worked in Hawaiian pineapple fields, on steamships in the Pacific, and at a hotel in California -- that he produced the first Flores yo-yo. Though Flores did not invent the toy (Penas traces its origins back thousands of years to China), his ingenious reengineering of it led to its rise in popularity (the word yo-yo means "come back" in Tagalog). Penas's straightforward text is well supported by deeply saturated images that illustrate Flores's experience as an immigrant: long hours of physically demanding labor and the dogged pursuit of education. It was with the help of a neighbor that Flores was able to start his business, and he committed to bringing his fellow kabayan into his success, as employees. Readers will delight in learning (or remembering) how to "Rock the Baby," "Loop the Loop," and "Walk the Dog." An author's note provides history about the Philippines, the yo-yo, and Flores's life. Gabi Kim Huesca(Copyright 2024 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

Reviews by: Kirkus Reviews How the toy that taught millions to “walk the dog” and “rock the baby” came to America. In the wake of the American occupation of the Philippines following the Spanish–American War, Pedro Flores (1896-1963) emigrated at 15 to work as a bellhop. He invented a refined version of what was known in his childhood as a yo-yo—a term that means “come back” in Tagalog—and ended up having to open multiple factories to keep pace with the demand. When he later sold the business to Chicago entrepreneur Donald Duncan, he stayed on for years and oversaw promotional demonstrations and competitions that sent the popular toy all over the world and even into space. Though, as the author explains in an afterword, the yo-yo (first called a “bandalore” and originally from China) was known in other countries, it was not all that popular until Flores redesigned it with a slip-string to make it more versatile; he also came up with some of the most spectacular yo-yo tricks himself. One illustration of him dramatically showing them off before an astounded crowd may inspire young yo-yo enthusiasts to make use of the helpful leads to print handbooks and websites found at the tail end. Bright smiles on the faces in Angel’s illustrations add even more warmth to Peñas’ insightful and stirring account. A glowing addition to the stories of immigrants who have made good in this, their new country. (Picture-book biography. 7-9)

Reviews by: Publishers Weekly This contextualizing origin story of one of the most successful toys of all time doubles as the biography of Filipino entrepreneur Pedro Flores (1896: 1964). Born during Spain's rule of the Philippines, Flores immigrated to the United States at 15 after

the country was sold to the U.S. Arriving in Honolulu, he labored in pineapple fields, then took work on steamships, before heading to high school years later. Working as a bellhop in Santa Barbara, he "felt no better off than when he left the Philippines," Penas writes. To entertain the child of a family he stayed with, he carved a wooden yo-yo, a version of a childhood toy he'd played with back home, and taught the boy tricks. Word spread, and Flores soon opened one factory, then more, to manufacture yo-yos. Angel's uneven digital illustrations capture experiences of colonialism and labor alongside the joy of a new toy in this well-researched picture book affirming ingenuity and perseverance. An author's note and more concludes. Ages 4: 7. (Apr.)