

**Association of Children's Librarians
of Northern California**

Distinguished Books



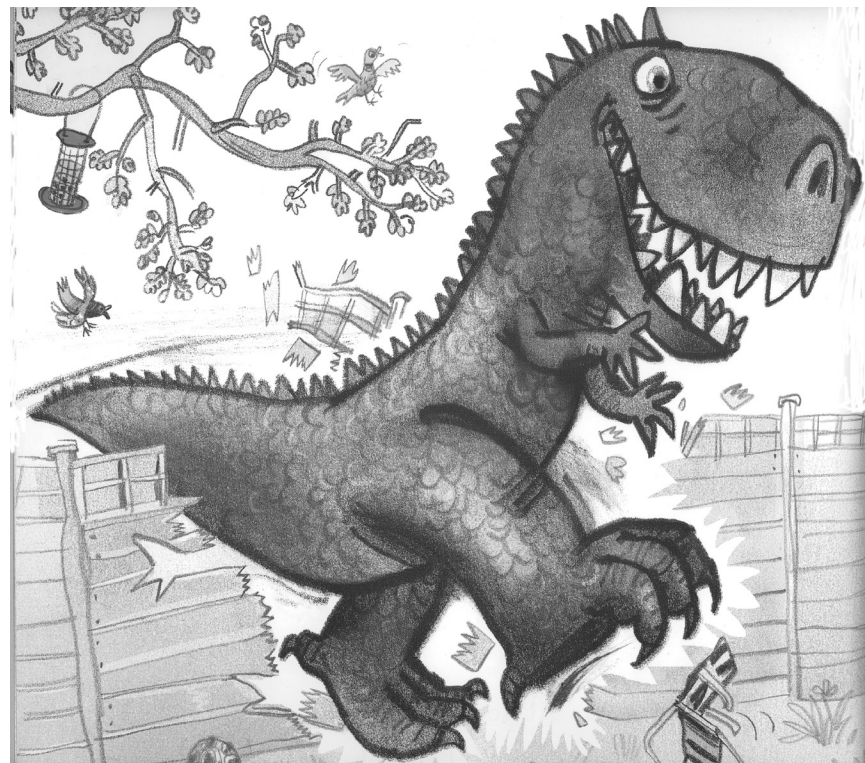
2009

Association of Children's Librarians
of Northern California
P. O. Box 12471
Berkeley, CA 94712

Notes

Association of Children's Librarians of Northern California *Distinguished Books*

2009



*Titles have been selected from those
reviewed in BayViews for
their outstanding literary merit,
high quality of illustration and
design, and contribution to a child's
understanding of the world.*

Contents

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Distinguished Books reviewed by ACL:

Non-fiction

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ACL DISTINGUISHED BOOKS

2009

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**Association of Children's Librarians
of Northern California**
P. O. Box 12471, Berkeley, CA 94712
www.bayviews.org

ACL has been serving librarians, teachers, and booksellers in Northern California since the 1930s. Members meet monthly to review books for young people and discuss related issues. ACL's book review journal, *BayViews*, is published 11 times a year.

Membership in ACL offers:

- subscription to *BayViews*, which prints reviews of more than 1,800 new books each year
- annual annotated *Distinguished Books* list
- opportunity to review and discuss current children's books
- special bibliographies
- notices of job opportunities
- opportunity to discuss current issues in library service to children
- discounted attendance at the annual Performers' Showcase
- discounted attendance at the annual Institute
- professional development and networking opportunities

Meetings are held from 9 a.m. to noon on the second Friday of each month, excluding the month of the annual Institute, at an area library. Check the website for meeting locations. In the Spring, ACL sponsors an Institute about library service to children and topics of interest to librarians and teachers.

I would like to become a member of ACL

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Make check payable to Association of Children's Librarians

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Library _____

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Please mail to: ACL Membership, P. O. Box 12471, Berkeley, CA 94712

Non-fiction



Aldrin, Buzz

Look to the Stars

Illus. by Wendell Minor

Putnam, 2009

\$17.99

Grades 4-8

In smooth, intelligent, and inspiring prose, Aldrin praises those scientists and inventors, from Copernicus to NASA, who have taken man into space. The gouache illustrations are inspired by images from NASA's files.

Barton, Chris

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

Illus. by Tony Persiani

Charlesbridge, 2009

\$18.95

Grades 4-6

Illustrated with retro pen and ink drawings and day-glo colors, this lively biography describes how Bob and Joe Switzer discovered fluorescent colors and paints and how they developed practical applications.

Bishop, Nic

Butterflies and Moths

Scholastic, 2009

\$17.99

Grades 1-4

Each eye-popping, two-page spread includes magnified photos and text about the life cycle of butterflies and moths. Facts are provided in an interesting and conversational manner, making this perfect for simple reports and general interest.

Chaiken, Andrew

Mission Control, This Is Apollo: The Story of the First Voyages to the Moon

Illus. by Alan Bean

Viking, 2009

\$23.99

Grades 4-8

This overview of NASA's Apollo missions conveys the excitement, daring, and near impossibility of the moon landings. Color and b/w photos, sidebars, and other illustrative matter make this album-like book one that will appeal to a wide age range.

Floca, Brian

Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11

Illus. by the author

Atheneum, 2009

\$17.99

Grades K-4

A poetic account of the historic *Apollo 11* mission in succinct and precise detail and a fitting commemoration, for younger readers, of the 40th anniversary of the first moon landing.

Lange, Karen E.

Nevermore: A Photobiography of Edgar Allan Poe

National Geographic, 2009 \$19.95 Grades 5-9

Dramatic blue-tinted photos, period artwork, quotations from Poe, and a striking book design combine with a clear narrative to describe the tragic life of 19th century author Edgar Allan Poe.

Marrin, Albert

Years of Dust: The Story of the Dust Bowl

Dutton, 2009 \$22.99 Grades 5-12

More than a simple history, Marrin provides background ecological, sociological, and historical perspectives accented with personal stories and photographs from Dorothea Lange and others of the era.

National Children's Book and Literacy Alliance

Our White House: Looking In, Looking Out

Illus. National Children's Book and Literacy Alliance
Candlewick, 2008 \$29.99 Grades 3-Adult

Featuring everything from imagined conversations to excerpts from the 9/11 Commission report, this is a dynamic collection of short stories, essays, poems, and artwork from some of the most notable children's authors and illustrators celebrating 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Nelson, Jon

Story of Snow: The Science of Winter's Wonder

Photos by Mark Cassino
Chronicle, 2009 \$16.99 Grades 2-5

Fascinating close-up photography of ice crystals highlights this clear, yet detailed, explanation of how snowflakes develop.



Osborne, Linda Barrett

Traveling the Freedom Road

Abrams, 2009 \$24.95 Grades 5-11

By focusing on young people who were slaves, Osborne writes a fascinating history of slavery in the United States. While featuring photos, maps, and period artwork, the text quotes heavily from primary sources.

Partridge, Elizabeth

Marching for Freedom: Walk Together, Children, and Don't You Grow Weary

Viking, 2009 \$19.99 Grades 5-9

Elizabeth Partridge describes the Selma-Montgomery March through vibrant photographs and the narratives of the children and young adults who traveled the road to bring change beginning in 1963 through 1965.

Acknowledgements

Books are designated as "distinguished" through a process of nomination, discussion, and voting by members of the Association of Children's Librarians.

Grade designations in the annotations are approximate.
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The Distinguished Books Committee for 2009 was chaired by:

Eric Barbus, San Francisco Public Library
Kathryn Shepler, Aurora School

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ACL Distinguished Books, P. O. Box 12471, Berkeley, CA 94712.

Professional

Pennac, Daniel

Rights of the Reader

Illus. by Quentin Blake

Candlewick, 2008

\$16.99

Prof

Originally published in France in 1992, Pennac's essay on reading for pleasure is a tonic for children's librarians and teachers. The text includes several lists as well as humorous anecdotes on the joy of reading.



Reynolds, Jan

Cycle of Rice, Cycle of Life: A Story of Sustainable Farming

Lee & Low, 2009

\$19.95

Grades 4-Adult

Basic concepts of sustainability are introduced through this story of rice farming in Bali. Reynolds shows the interwoven social, spiritual, and ecological aspects of the traditional Balinese farming culture with a combination of clear accessible text and excellent color photographs.

Schwartz, David M. and Yael Schy

Where Else in the Wild? More Camouflaged Creatures Concealed...and Revealed

Photos by Dwight Kuhn

Tricycle, 2009

\$16.99

Grades K-5

Poems present clues to the identity of animals hidden in luscious color photographs. The combination of science, poetry, eye-popping photography, and puzzle-like challenges make this especially welcome in classrooms.

Stone, Tanya Lee

Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream

Candlewick, 2009

\$24.99

Grades 5-12

Tracing the earliest recruitment, testing, and training of female astronauts, this inspiring and compelling history describes attitudes, assumptions, and prejudices that blocked these "almost astronauts" from NASA's early years of space exploration.

Turner, Pamela

The Frog Scientist

Photos by Andy Comins

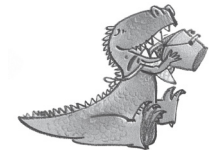
Scientist in the Field Series.

Houghton, 2009

\$18.00

Grades 4-8

Young readers can follow the activities of UC Berkeley researcher Tyrone Hayes and his diverse team of students as they study the effects of pesticides on amphibians both in the field and in the laboratory.



Walker, Sally

Written In Bone: Buried Lives Of Jamestown and Colonial Maryland

Carolrhoda, 2009

\$22.95

Grades 6-10

Walker's riveting account describes the meticulous work of forensic scientists who study skeletal remains to better understand the people who lived in the Chesapeake Bay area in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Weitzman, David
Pharaoh's Boat

Illus. by the author
Houghton, 2009

\$18.00

Grades 4-8

This slim, pictorial history tells two awe-inspiring, intertwined stories—that of the actual reconstruction of an ancient Egyptian boat from 1,224 fragments and that of the remarkable Ahmed Youssef Moustafa, who painstakingly directed the project.

Winter, Jonah

You Never Heard of Sandy Koufax?!

Illus. by Andre Carrilho

Schwartz & Wade, 2009

\$17.99

Grades 2-5

Narrated in the colloquial Brooklynese voice of a fellow Dodger teammate, Winter vividly brings to life both the man and baseball while the movement, excitement, and elegance of the game are captured in stylized graphite illustrations.

Folklore

Kajikawa, Kimiko

Tsunami!

Illus. by Ed Young

Philomel, 2009

\$16.99

Grades 2-4

Ojisan watches the people of his village celebrate the harvest festival and, when he sees a monster wave pulling away from the ocean, sets fire to his rice fields in order to get their attention.

Poetry

Franco, Betsy

A Curious Collection of Cats

Illus. by Michael Wertz

Tricycle, 2009

\$16.99

Grades K-6

Splattered with vibrant color, these 34 visual cat poems are keenly observant of real cats. The text of each poem is part of the illustration with the words pouncing around the pages like cats themselves.



Hansen, Doug

Mother Goose in California

Illus. by the author

Heyday, 2009

\$16.95

Grades Pre-2

Combining Mother Goose nursery rhymes with the alphabet, Hansen melds Old World sensibilities with the landscapes of California. Except for the now extinct grizzly bear, all of the buildings, flora, and fauna depicted are found in California.

Scanlon, Liz Garton

All the World

Illus. by Marla Frazee

Beach Lane, 2009

\$17.99

Grades Pre-2

A child's place in the world is depicted with Marla Frazee's soft colored pencil illustrations and Scanlon's simple but soothing rhyming text. The mission church, coastal scenes, and multicultural families are all things that Northern California families will recognize. (2010 Caldecott Honor.)

Sierra, Judy

The Sleepy Little Alphabet

Illus. by Melissa Sweet

Knopf, 2009

\$16.99

Grades Tod-1

Twenty-six lowercase letters, mostly troublemakers, don't want to go to bed. Sweet's illustrations are full of jumping, tipping, and rocking wild movement in this tale that focuses on actions rather than objects that begin with each letter.

Waddell, Martin

The Super Hungry Dinosaur

Illus. by Leonie Lord

Dial, 2009

\$16.99

Grades Pre-1

A hungry dinosaur threatens to eat Hal and his parents, but Hal verbally defends his family, eventually wrestling the dinosaur into submission. The illustrations resemble a child's crayon drawings increasing the appeal to young viewers.

Readers

Hayes, Geoffrey

Benny and Penny series

Illus. by Geoffrey Hayes

Toon, 2008/2009

\$12.95

Grades K-3

Using colorful, detailed panels paired with simple sentences, the Benny and Penny series about brother and sister mouse siblings grab the very beginning reader and teach reading skills with graphic novel techniques. (2010 Theodor Seuss Geisel Award.)

Smith, Jeff

Little Mouse Gets Ready: A Toon Book

Illus. by the author

RAW Junior, 2009

\$12.95

Grades Pre-1

Starting with his underpants, Little Mouse methodically puts on all of his clothes only to discover he is overdressed. Silly yet charming, this comic book is for "brand new readers." (2010 Theodor Seuss Geisel Honor.)

Lucas, David

The Robot and the Bluebird

Illus. by the author

Farrar, 2008 \$16.95 Grades K-3

A robot with an irreparable broken heart offers shelter in the space where his heart used to be to a bluebird on its way to a warmer locale.

McElligott, Matthew

The Lion's Share: A Tale of Halving Cake and Eating It, Too

Illus. by the author

Walker, 2009 \$16.99 Grades K-3

Ant's first dinner with lion's charismatic—but greedy—animal friends is hilariously and handsomely illustrated in this ambitious fable. This highlights the theme of generosity while clearly depicting simple mathematical concepts through the slicing and baking of cakes.

Pinkney, Jerry

The Lion and the Mouse

Illus. by the author

Little, 2009 \$16.99 Grades Pre-3

Nearly wordless adaptation of Aesop's fable about the King of the Jungle being later rewarded for the kindness shown to one of the smallest creatures. Stunning landscapes bring the Serengeti to life. (2010 Caldecott Award.)

Rex, Michael

The Runaway Mummy: A Petrifying Parody

Illus. by Michael Rex

Putnam, 2009 \$15.99 Grades K-2

A parody of Margaret Wise Brown's *Runaway Bunny* (1942) which features a rotten little mummy boy who threatens to become a series of terrifying creatures while running away from his mother mummy.

Rosenthal, Amy Krouse

Duck! Rabbit!

Illus. by Tom Lichtenheld

Chronicle, 2009 \$16.99 Grades Pre-1

Ink, watercolor, and colored pencil drawings illuminate an argument between two unknown characters about the nature of the animal depicted. Is it a duck or a rabbit? Final determination is up to the reader.

Harley, Avis

African Acrostics: A Word in Edgeways

Photos by Deborah Noyes

Candlewick, 2009 \$17.99 Grades 1-5

Inventive acrostic poems featuring African animals spell out words using the initial letters of each line, but Harley's poems exceed this simple form. Each poem is accompanied by a full-page color photograph that shows the featured animal.

Hughes, Langston

My People

Photos by Charles R. Smith Jr.

Atheneum, 2009 \$17.99 Grades K-3

Luminous b/w photographs of African-Americans reflect the joy and tenderness of Langston Hughes's short poem. The elegant book design and soulful portraits perfectly complement the eloquent, stirring verse.

Hughes, Langston

The Negro Speaks of Rivers

Illus. by E. B. Lewis

Disney/Jump at the Sun, 2009 \$16.99 Grades K-6

E. B. Lewis's lush, expressive watercolor paintings illustrate the Langston Hughes poem line by line. Reverent, powerful, and beautiful images of African-Americans reveal the innocence, pain, travail, and wisdom of their history.

McKissack, Patricia

Stitchin' and Pullin': A Gee's Bend Quilt

Illus. by Cozbi A. Cabrera

Random, 2008 \$17.99 Grades K-8

Twenty-two poems intricately weave together the Gee's Bend, Alabama quilt-making communities' proud history, their struggle for civil rights, and the personal narrative of a child who makes her first quilt.

Nelson, Marilyn

Sweethearts of Rhythm

Illus. by Jerry Pinkney

Dial, 2009 \$21.99 Grades 5-9

Poems tell the true story of an all-girl, all African-American traveling dance and jazz band during WW II. Pinkney's brightly-colored Impressionistic paintings add life, and many poems are told from the point of view of a musical instrument.

Sidman, Joyce

Red Sings From Treetops: A Year In Colors

Illus. by Pamela Zagarenski

Houghton, 2009 \$16.00 Grades K-3

Poetry about colors as they vary with the seasons is illustrated with colorful, eponymous fonts and detailed illustrations that will entice the reader to search pages carefully as the year evolves. (2010 Caldecott Honor.)

Biography

Bernier-Grand, Carmen T.

Diego: Bigger than Life

Illus. by David Diaz

M. Cavendish, 2009 \$18.99 Grades 5-8

The life of Diego Rivera is celebrated through poetry and Diaz's luminous mixed-media illustrations. Source notes, glossary, and a chronology of Rivera's life are included. (2010 Pura Belpre Honor.)

Bogacki, Tomek

The Champion of Children: The Story of Janusz Korczak

Illus. by the author

Farrar/Frances Foster, 2009 \$17.99 Grades 4-7

When the Nazis invaded Poland, Dr. Korczak, his staff, and the children from the "progressive" orphanage he had established traveled from the Warsaw Ghetto to Treblinka. Acrylic illustrations show old Warsaw and make this book understandable, human, and important.

Christensen, Bonnie

Django: World's Greatest Jazz Guitarist

Illus. by the author

Roaring Brook, 2009 \$17.99 Grades 1-4

Christensen's non-fiction picture book tells the little-known story of jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt. Free verse text and rich oil paintings aptly depict Django's successes and setbacks. Extensive notes, a bibliography, and a discography are included.

Fleming, Candace

The Great and Only Barnum: The Tremendous, Stupendous

Life of Showman P. T. Barnum

Illus. by Ray Fenwick

Schwartz & Wade, 2009 \$18.99 Grades 3-8

Fleming brings the public and private Barnum to life, warts and all, and deepens the value of her writing by placing Barnum's actions and beliefs in historical context, contrasting them with modern day mores.

Barnett, Mac

Billy Twitters and His Blue Whale Problem

Illus. by Adam Rex

Hyperion, 2009 \$16.99 Grades K-3

When Billy Twitters disobeys, his mother follows through on the threat to get him a whale with the impossible task that Billy must care for his pet. Rex's full-color illustrations add humor and depict the hilly streets of San Francisco.

Dewdney, Anna

Llama Llama Misses Mama

Illus. by Anna Dewdney

Viking, 2009 \$16.99 Grades Tod-K

Satisfying rhymes and joyful paintings convey the excitement, loneliness, and eventual comfort of Llama Llama's emotional first day at preschool. This addresses the topic of separation anxiety with entertaining rhythm that begs to be read aloud.

Ericsson, Jennifer

Whoo Goes There?

Illus. by Bert Kitchen

Roaring Brook, 2009 \$17.99 Grades Pre-2

A curious owl investigates forest sounds to find supper in this cumulative tale. Kitchen's watercolor illustrations capture night moving into dawn through intricate details while abundant animal sounds make for an excellent storytime selection.

Fleischman, Paul

The Dunderheads

Illus. by David Roberts

Candlewick, 2009 \$16.99 Grades 2-5

A short, thrilling, and ingenious tale of revenge by a class on their Trunchbullian teacher, brilliantly complemented with funky illustrations. A tongue-in-cheek picture book for older readers about the power of imagination and friendship.

Heide, Florence Parry

Princess Hyacinth: The Surprising Tale of a Girl Who Floated

Illus. by Lane Smith

Schwartz & Wade, 2009 \$17.99 Grades Pre-2

A whimsical and enchanting fairy tale in which lighter-than-air Princess Hyacinth would like nothing more than to float up like a balloon. Featuring Lane Smith's expressive illustrations, this is sure to be a storytime favorite.

Taylor, Laini

Lips Touch: Three Times

Illus. by Jim Di Bartolo

Arthur A. Levine, 2009 \$17.99 Grades 8-12

This collection of three short stories explores the consequences of a first kiss and the dark longing that can sometimes result. Taylor's richly layered writing develops vivid imagery and intricate worlds, intertwining elements of folklore, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and fantasy.

Werlin, Nancy

Impossible

Dial, 2008 \$17.99 Grades 8-12

The ballad "Scarborough Fair" becomes the foundation for an engaging story that reads like an original fairy tale. Seventeen-year-old Lucy discovers she is one of a long line of women in her family cursed with madness unless she can perform three impossible tasks.

Westerfeld, Scott

Leviathan

Illus. by Keith Thompson

Simon Pulse, 2009 \$18.99 Grades 5-8

An alternate, steampunk take on the events surrounding WW I with a divide between the Clankers, who rely on man-made machines, and the Darwinists, who have aircraft born of genetically combined and modified beasts.

Wilson, N. D.

Dandelion Fire

Random, 2009 \$16.99 Grades 4-7

Picking up where the first book, *100 Cupboards* (Random, 2007) leaves off, Henry York lays secret plans to go back into other worlds but is suddenly blinded by a vision of a dandelion in a lightning storm.

Picture Books

Baasansuren, Bolormaa

My Little Round House

Illus. by the author

Translated by Helen Mixter

Groundwood, 2009 \$18.95 Grades Pre-8

This thoroughly authentic depiction of life with Mongolian nomads describes a baby boy's first year of life in the family ger, or little round house, that is re-assembled twice yearly to follow the goats' grazing habitat.

Heiligman, Deborah

Charles and Emma: The Darwins' Leap of Faith

H. Holt, 2009 \$18.95 Grades 8-12

A biography of Charles Darwin and his wife Emma that reads like a tightly-plotted romantic novel while shedding new light on one of science's most important figures and his work on evolution.

Hoose, Phillip

Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice

Farrar, 2009 \$19.95 Grades 5-10

A heroic, but largely forgotten, teenage trailblazer's life is vividly told using primary sources and a compelling, well-organized narrative. The story adds new context and deepens our understanding of the Civil Rights movement. (2010 Newbery Honor.)

Judge, Lita

Yellowstone Moran: Painting the American West

Illus. by the author

Viking, 2009 \$16.99 Grades 2-5

Thomas Moran was determined to explore the land called the Yellowstone and capture its beauty in his paintings. Readers will be astounded at the sight of steaming hot springs, massive waterfalls, and the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone.

Moss, Marissa

Sky High: The True Story of Maggie Gee

Illus. by Carl Angel

Tricycle, 2009 \$16.99 Grades 1-5

Maggie Gee, one of only two Chinese-American women who served as an American Women Airforce Service Pilot (WASPS) during WW II, is celebrated with Angel's acrylic paint and colored pencil illustrations and text told from Gee's point of view.

Nelson, Vaunda Micheaux

Bad News for Outlaws: The Remarkable Life of Bass Reeves,

Deputy U.S. Marshal

Illus. by R. Gregory Christie

Carolrhoda, 2009 \$17.95 Grades 3-6

The exhilarating adventures of Reeves, a formidable African-American lawman in the real Wild West, leap to life with expressive illustrations and skillful, folksy storytelling. Extensive back matter further details this extraordinary, nearly forgotten hero's years.

Graphic Novels

Phelan, Matt

Storm in the Barn

Illus. by the author

Candlewick, 2009 \$24.99 Grades 5-8

The tribulations of the U.S. Dust Bowl in the 1930s are evocatively portrayed in this graphic novel that is part historical fiction, part magical realism, and part tall tale.

Tan, Shaun

Tales from Outer Suburbia

Illus. by the author

Arthur A. Levine, 2009 \$19.99 Grades 6-Adult

Exceedingly brief and frequently mysterious short stories that beg the reader to provide an ending are told primarily through detailed mixed-media illustrations. Difficult to define in terms of genre but sure to please a wide audience.

Fiction

Almond, David

The Savage

Illus. by Dave McKean

Candlewick, 2008 \$17.99 Grades 5-8

After the death of his father, Blue starts writing a fictional story about a wild boy, the savage, who lives in some nearby ruins. Reality and fiction intermingle in this ideal choice for reluctant readers.



Anderson, Laurie Halse

Wintergirls

Viking, 2009 \$17.99 Grades 8-12

Following the death of her childhood friend, Lia, a troubled teen suffering from anorexia and self-mutilation, descends deeper and deeper into her disease. An intense and relentless portrayal of a terrifying illness that affects many of today's teens.

Armstrong, Alan

Looking for Marco Polo

Random, 2009 \$16.99 Grades 5-9

Mark's father, following in the footsteps of Marco Polo in the Gobi Desert, goes missing, so Mark and his mother journey to Venice to find him. Many wonderful characters make history come alive in this engaging tale.

Philbrick, Rodman

The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg

Blue Sky / Scholastic, 2009 \$16.99 Grades 4-8

In this episodic tale reminiscent of Twain's *Huck Finn*, Homer P. Figg gets entangled with grifters, helps a Quaker aiding folks on the Underground Railroad, and witnesses a Civil War battle while looking for his older brother. (2010 Newbery Honor.)

Slayton, Fran Cannon

When the Whistle Blows

Philomel, 2009 \$16.99 Grades 5-9

Growing up with her father's stories of life in the railroad town of Rowlesburg, West Virginia, Slayton creates a historical fiction tribute to the days of the steam engine, her family, change, and approaching adulthood.

Smith, Sherri

Flygirl

Putnam, 2009 \$16.99 Grades 7-10

Ida Mae signs up for pilot training during WW II, even though the WASP (Women's Airforce Service Pilots) bars African-Americans. Her light skin allows her to hide her true identity, but the constant fear of discovery takes a toll.

Stead, Rebecca

When You Reach Me

Random, 2009 \$15.99 Grades 4-8

Miranda, a savvy 6th grader, unravels the clues in this intricately constructed puzzler that leaves readers guessing right up until the end. The book crosses genres seamlessly, moving from realistic fiction to something darker and more mysterious. (2010 Newbery Award.)

Stork, Francisco X.

Marcelo in the Real World

Arthur A. Levine / Scholastic, 2009 \$17.99 Grades 8-12

Marcelo Sandoval, a 17-year-old boy on the high-functioning end of the autism spectrum, agrees to spend the summer working as a mailroom assistant for his father's law firm. A fascinating account of how someone with vastly different communication skills forms meaningful relationships in today's complicated world.

Stroud, Jonathan

Heroes of the Valley

Disney / Hyperion, 2009 \$17.99 Grades 5-9

A young man vows to avenge his murdered uncle in an engaging adventure story brimming with action, intrigue, murder, legend, and mystery that borrows heavily from Viking lore.

Ketchum, Liza
Newsgirl

Viking, 2009 \$17.99 Grades 4-8

Set in San Francisco in 1851, this historical adventure focuses on Amelia, who cuts her hair to get a job as a newsboy. Her mother and the mother's female partner earn money by sewing, and the subtle reference to the same sex partnership and Amelia's ethnically diverse friends and acquaintances give this an immediacy without being anachronistic.

Lin, Grace
Where the Mountain Meets the Moon

Little, 2009 \$16.99 Grades 2-5

Living a poor life in the valley of Fruitless Mountain, Minli is enchanted by her father's stories which lead her to waste her money on a goldfish. Thus, an adventure is set in motion which gathers threads of various stories into one amazing strand that eventually leads her home. (2010 Newbery Honor.)

Link, Kelly
Pretty Monsters: Stories

Viking, 2008 \$19.99 Grades 9-12

Ghosts, magic, monsters, blood, and werewolves populate themes of fantasy, horror, and science fiction in Link's first collection of short stories for young adults. Recommended for those who want fantasy and prefer the unusual.

Magoon, Kekla
The Rock and the River

Aladdin, 2009 \$15.99 Grades 7-10

Set in 1968 Chicago, this riveting story is about a young African-American boy's search for identity and brotherhood. Sam is torn between obeying his father, a leader in the non-violent protest movement, and following his older brother who has joined the Black Panthers.

McCormick, Patricia
Purple Heart

Balzar & Bray/HarperCollins, 2009 \$16.99 Grades 8-12

A young U.S. soldier in Iraq suffering from traumatic brain injury feels he doesn't deserve a Purple Heart: he is sure he shot an Iraqi boy during action and is complicit in a cover-up.

Barnhouse, Rebecca
The Book of the Maidservant

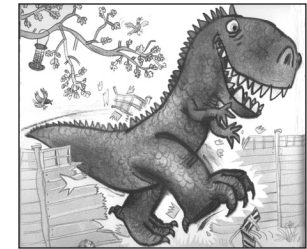
Random, 2009 \$16.99 Grades 5-9

Johanna, a serving girl to a medieval holy woman, is long suffering because her mistress feels only the misery of the Virgin Mary and Christ. On a pilgrimage to Rome the resourceful girl finds a way to be her own person.

Buzbee, Lewis
Steinbeck's Ghost

Feiweil, 2008 \$17.95 Grades 5-8

While his parents work to pay for their new house, Travis visits the Salinas Library and helps fight against budget cuts. As John Steinbeck's characters come to life around town, Travis wonders what Steinbeck's ghost is trying to tell him.



Carlson, Lori Marie
Voices in First Person

Illus. by Flavio Morais

Photos by Manuel Rivera-Ortiz

Atheneum, 2008 \$16.99 Grades 8-12

In this collection of intimate vignettes by several Latino authors, among them Sandra Cisneros, Gary Soto, and Oscar Hijuelos, there are glimpses into feelings about love, life, school, and family. Worth considering for that monologue assignment.

Cashore, Kristin
Graceling

Harcourt, 2008 \$17.00 Grades 8-12

Katsa is graced with a talent for killing and is sent on a rescue mission which is only the beginning of a quest that includes corrupted rulers, a struggle for survival, and surprising revelations about Katsa's grace.

Choldenko, Gennifer
Al Capone Shines My Shoes

Dial, 2009 \$17.99 Grades 4-8

After Al Capone gets Moose's autistic sister into a special school, Moose receives a note in his laundry saying, "Your turn." The focus is on family relations, friendship, and budding young love in this follow-up to Newbery Honor-winning *Al Capone Does My Shirts* (Putnam, 2004).

Cochrane, Mick

The Girl Who Threw Butterflies

Knopf, 2009

\$15.99

Grades 5-9

Having lost her baseball-loving father in a car accident, Molly decides to try out for the boys' baseball team. With realistically drawn relationships and seamless integration of baseball action, this is a moving and believable tale of life after tragedy.

Collins, Suzanne

Catching Fire

Scholastic, 2009

\$17.99

Grades 6-Adult

After surviving the last set of survival games at the conclusion of *The Hunger Games* (Scholastic, 2008), Katniss and Peeta are blamed by the government for political trouble brewing across the districts in their dystopian society. Let the games begin, again.

Corbett, Sue

The Last Newspaper Boy in America

Dutton, 2009

\$16.99

Grades 5-8

On his first day, Wil David learns that the paper is canceling his route. "Wil of Steele," as he is called, in fighting this decision, eventually helps to reverse the economic downward spiral in his town.

Dashner, James

The Maze Runner

Delacorte, 2009

\$16.99

Grades 5-10

Thomas wakes to find himself in the middle of a wide glade surrounded by towering, vine-covered walls without any memory of who he is or where he may have come from. Bewildering events and bizarre and intriguing clues make this a page-turning dazzler.

de la Peña, Matt

Mexican White Boy

Delacorte, 2008

\$15.99

Grades 7-10

Feeling like a misfit because he is "brown," half Mexican and half white, Danny struggles to find his father, makes an unexpected friend, improves his baseball skills, and learns Spanish so he may communicate with a very pretty girl.

Dessen, Sarah

Along for the Ride

Viking, 2009

\$19.99

Grades 8-12

Auden surprises herself when she accepts her father's offer to spend the summer with him, his new wife, and baby. Soon, she finds herself navigating many new relationships while also challenging her assumptions about her parents and herself.

Frost, Helen

Crossing Stones

Farrar, 2009

\$16.99

Grades 6-12

Set during WW I and told via four voices through concrete poems, this quiet but moving novel shows how war affects teenagers in a way that will change them forever.

Griffin, Paul

The Orange Houses

Dial, 2009

\$16.99

Grades 9-12

Three friends (Mik, a hearing-impaired 15-year-old; Jimmi, an 18-year-old suffering post-traumatic stress and struggling with drugs; and Fatima, a 16-year-old illegal immigrant) support each other and fight to survive in a gritty Bronx neighborhood.

Hiaasen, Carl

Scat

Knopf, 2009

\$16.99

Grades 5-10

Nick and Marta investigate the disappearance of their biology teacher in Hiaasen's latest eco-thriller which combines sympathetic protagonists, obnoxious villains, humor, and a thoughtful subplot involving an Iraqi veteran.

Hyde, Catherine Ryan

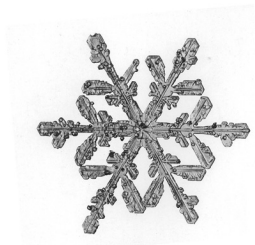
The Day I Killed James

Knopf, 2008

\$16.99

Grades 9-11

Set in California's San Simeon area, this transformative story of heartbreak and grief centers around 17-year-old Theresa as she battles overwhelming guilt at the loss of James whose love for her was unrequited.



Kelly, Jacqueline

The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate

H. Holt, 2009

\$16.99

Grades 4-7

In 1899 Texas, almost-12-year-old Calpurnia Tate is caught between the growing pressure to acquire housewifely skills and her own scientific interests. Kelly captures the excitement of scientific discovery and provides vivid glimpses into the friction and affection of family life. (2010 Newbery Honor.)