Growing Patterns
Fibonacci Numbers in Nature

Sarah C. Campbell

Photographs by
Sarah C. Campbell and Richard P. Campbell
The purpose of the Christian Library Journal is to provide reviews, from a Christian point of view, of both Christian and secular titles for the Christian reader. Materials reviewed may reflect a broad range of Christian doctrinal positions and do not necessarily reflect the views of Christian Library Journal.
Review Rating System

*5 Outstanding—a beautifully written book which impacts someone’s life or thinking

5 Excellent—well written, among the very best

4 Good—definitely worth reading

3 Fair—to be read for relaxation or to meet a need for information

2 Poor—poor writing or editing; read only if very interested

1 —What can we say? Not much going for this title.

Recommended with caution (may be used with any of the above ratings)–Note reservations within the review.

Not recommended (may be used with any of the above ratings)–Note problems within the review.

With fiction, the rating includes the quality of plot development/pacing, characterization, sense of time and place, mood and atmosphere, dialogue, depth of perception, sensitivity of writing, use of humor. Be aware that some books are character driven, so character development is extremely important. Others are plot driven, so character development isn’t as critical; plot is.

Commonly used abbreviations in CLJ reviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LCCN</td>
<td>Library of Congress Cataloging Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Canadian Library Cataloging Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISBN</td>
<td>International Standard Book Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HBB</td>
<td>Hardbound book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGP</td>
<td>Large print book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIB</td>
<td>Library edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLB</td>
<td>Loose-leaf binding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAP</td>
<td>Paperbound book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBB</td>
<td>Paper board book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPR</td>
<td>Spiral bound book</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HBB: 9781590785287, $16.95
E 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 29 cm.
P (K) Rating: 4

Friends are forever, right? Sometimes it doesn't seem that way. Suzanne Bloom's What About Bear? tenderly presents the story of Bear and Goose's close friendship challenged by a newcomer called Fox. Fox enjoys playing with Goose more than Bear, soon Bear walks away. What will Goose do? Will she choose to keep her friendship with Bear or choose to play with Fox instead?

Susanne Bloom illustrates her own text with heartfelt pastel drawings. Layers of claylike chalk carefully blended on canvas bring to life worn, treasured stuffed animals resembling well-loved toys. Young readers will quickly identify with the plight of these characters.

Recommended especially for young readers struggling with friendships.

Mary Vee


HBB: 9780736924351, $15.99
E 32 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.
PRI (PS, K) Rating: 4


HBB: 978078734928953, $15.99
E 32 p. : col. ill. ; 24 cm.
PRI (PS, K) Rating: 5

Princesses and knights are often the characters of choice when it comes to children and their role-playing. Kelly Chapman builds on this concept with her Royal Purpose Ministries. The two books which headline the series are Princess with a Purpose and A Warrior Prince for God. Each book weaves a story in with steps of salvation for young children, integrating how we become kingdom children when we choose to follow Jesus. Each of the books provide an appealing storyline with the protagonist learning how special she or he is through the help of an adult mentor.

At the end of the book is a commitment prayer and a proclamation children can follow and fill in. The accompanying illustrations are bright and cheerful, adding further appeal to the story.

In Princess with a Purpose, eight-year-old Caroline and her younger sister Kendall live with their grandmother. Caroline loves princessy things and dreams about attending princess school. She is crestfallen to discover from Prissy Crissy that she can't be a real princess unless her mother and father are royalty. Yet, Princess Lily, their guide, explains that a true princess has a heart of love which comes from God.

Luke, a baseball player for the Warriors, strikes out during a game. In A Warrior Prince for God, part of his problem is facing up to his fears. He wants to be brave but how? Later that night Luke dreams how he and his friends meet Sir Britmore who takes them to the Warrior Prince Academy and shows them how to overcome their fears by becoming a warrior for God.

Pam Webb

HBB: 9780061363047, $17.99
LIB: 9780061363054, $18.89
E 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 30 cm.
PS (K) Rating: 5

Birds are everywhere. They are all different sizes and colors. This succinctly sums up Kevin Henkes’s new picture book Birds. Even though there are scads of picture books about birds available on the market, Henkes’s entry is a standout. The illustrations by Laura Dronzek blend with the text yet stand out on their own. The soft, full-color acrylics outlined in black brightly fill the page and aid in exclaiming the wonders of birds. Henkes and Dronzek explore the unique qualities of birds and mix in some imaginative wonderings, which establishes a fresh creative approach to an almost overdone topic.

Kevin Henkes is well-known for his colorful characters found in such books as Chrysanthemum and Lily’s Plastic Purse. He takes this same clever, exuberant approach and applies it in this early science concept book. He explores the subject with a playfulness that begins in profound simplicity, then slowly builds in sophistication to an ending of excellent epiphany. It is hoped there will be more to come from the husband-and-wife team.


HBB: 9781590786567, $16.95
E 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 27 cm.
PS (K) Rating: *5

The cat loves his house, hiding places, and windows with birds. The cat has a sunny spot and most importantly, it has the boy. Then one day the cat finds itself in a new place and it is very different. Karen Ritz captures well the emotions a new move can evoke in Windows with Birds. The sparse text and soft, full watercolor illustrations express the dismay of the cat, and follows its adjustment to the new place. A perfect book to help children with the trauma of moving.

Told through the cat’s point-of-view, the story shows how moving from one beloved place filled with comforts and routine, to new place filled with jarring differences, can be disconcerting. The book articulates with amazing clarity the deep emotions of change. In most books the illustrations complement the text, yet Ritz’s realistic watercolors showcase the story. The story works on two levels: it can be used to help show how pets do eventually adjust to new locations; and it also is a means to help children to identify their own feelings about moving. The ending brings full circle the idea of acceptance. Considering how mobile our culture has become, this book is helpful in allaying the negative aspects of moving.

Pam Webb
Pam Webb

Let’s have a Daddy Day / by Karen Kingsbury ; illustrations by Dan Andreasen. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zonderkidz. 2009. LCCN 2007023109.

HBB: 9780310712152, $15.99
E 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 29 x 23 cm.
PRI (INT) Rating: 4

Let’s have a Daddy Day! Why? So that when you’re all grown up and you look back, you’ll know how much Daddy loved you because he took time to play.

Each page a short poem, author Kingsbury suggests ways that children can have fun with their dads. The rhymes are simple, as are the illustrations, and all give kids the idea that time passes quickly and they grow up way too fast, so let’s enjoy our time together now.

This is a great read-aloud, especially for dads. Although Karen Kingsbury is known for her Christian fiction, this book is simply a fun story about things that dads do with their children.

Ceil Carey

Pearl and Wagner : one funny day / Kate McMullan ; pictures by R.W. Alley. (Dial easy-to-read. Level 2) New York: Dial Books for Young Readers. 2009. LCCN 2008007699.

HBB: 9780803730854, $14.99
E 40 p. : col. ill. ; 24 cm.
PRI (INT) Rating: 4

Pearl and Wagner: One Funny Day is an easy-to-read story about two best friends and three adventures they have at school on April Fool’s Day. Pearl, a female bunny, and Wagner, a male mouse, are unlikely best friends who are in the same class at school. Wagner oversleeps, making him late for school, which is the beginning of his bad day. Then everyone is acting strangely at school and he gets tricked several times before he realizes it’s April Fool’s Day. Later, Wagner needs a partner for a dance contest but he isn’t a very good dancer. Will anyone agree to be his partner? Wagner finally gets the last laugh at the end of the school day when he tricks everyone in a big way.

Author Kate McMullan brings readers a third easy-to-read story about Pearl and Wagner with the release of Pearl and Wagner: One Funny Day. Illustrator R. W. Alley adds interest and excitement to the story with his colorful, realistic watercolor drawings that help bring Pearl and Wagner’s adventures to life. Young children will laugh at the silly antics depicted in the expressive, lively pictures drawn by Alley. This hardcover story is a Dial Easy-to-Read book, level 2 (back cover) and is a Theodor Seuss Geisel Honor Book.

Parents will find this book to be a funny addition to their child’s reading library and will be able to discuss with them Wagner’s feelings and reactions as he finds himself having a very bad day. Wagner is tricked by both friends and teachers but he doesn’t get upset; he finally realizes the best way to handle it is to join in the fun. When Wagner is rejected as a dance partner by Pearl, he gets angry but searches for a new partner to dance with. Children and parents alike will empathize with Wagner having so many problems while everyone else seems to be having so much fun. Things finally look up for Wagner when he plays his own practical joke, bringing the story to a fun, fitting ending that will bring a smile
to young readers' faces.

Sherri Myers

Church summer cramp / written by Mike Thaler ; illustrated by Jared Lee. (Tales from the back pew) Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zonderkidz. 2009. LCCN 2008007594.

PAP: 9780310715924, $4.99
E 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 21 cm.
PRI (INT) Rating: 4

Mission trip impossible / written by Mike Thaler ; illustrated by Jared Lee. (Tales from the back pew) Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zonderkidz. 2009. LCCN 2008007599.

PAP: 9780310715900, $4.99
E 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 21 cm.
PRI (INT) Rating: 4

Preacher creature strikes on Sunday / written by Mike Thaler ; illustrated by Jared Lee. (Tales from the back pew) Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zonderkidz. 2009. LCCN 2008007600.

PAP: 9780310715894, $4.99
E 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 21 cm.
PRI (INT) Rating: 4

Walking the plank to the baptism tank / written by Mike Thaler ; illustrated by Jared Lee. (Tales from the back pew) Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zonderkidz. 2009. LCCN 2008049735.

PAP: 9780310715948, $4.99
E 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 21 cm.
PRI (INT) Rating: 4

Mike Thaler has written a fun series for kids based on common church experiences, i.e. church summer camp, baptism, a missions trip, Easter, and the pastor's message on Sunday. Thaler, the author of The Black Lagoon Series, is entertaining, clever, and appealing yet not disrespectful of Christianity in any way. His cartoons are cute and the asides are exactly what children might say or think. Early elementary children will love this series; they will see themselves in the stories and enjoy its humor. Yet the author gives the truth to readers and always includes Scripture verses. A bit “off the beaten path” perhaps for some church libraries but highly recommended by this reviewer.

Ceil Carey

The mystery of Magillicuddy’s gold / by Sheila Walsh ; illustrated by Meredith Johnson. (Will, God’s mighty warrior ; 2) Nashville: Tommy Nelson. 2006. LCCN 2005037686.

HBB: 9781400308057, $14.99


HBB: 9781400311255, $14.99

Shelia Walsh has created a series of stories centered on Will’s experiences entitled God’s Mighty Warrior. Will is a young boy whose days are filled with adventure. As Will discovers the wonder and mystery of his daily life, his parents and grandparents take his play-time discoveries and use them as opportunities
to teach spiritual truths. The first book gives the series its title, *Will: God’s Mighty Warrior*. Will learns that there are battles waged in the heart as well as in the physical world. He also learns about the armor God has designed especially for these daily battles. The series continues in *The Mystery of Magillicuddy’s Gold* and *The Creepy Caves Mystery* with Will’s continual spiritual growth becoming more evident as he is able to recognize his own wrong choices, such as disobedience, and asking forgiveness from God in prayer.

Will’s character displays the curiosity, venturing spirit, and longing for independence within the heart of every boy. His character is placed in the context of loving family members who are careful to guide this zest for life toward God and the truth found in His Word. Using brief, straightforward sentences, Walsh tells each story with a clarity that will make the spiritual truths within the story easy for children to grasp.

Merideth Johnson has illustrated this series with whimsical pictures that accurately capture Will’s spirit. Each character’s facial expressions add depth and emotion to the story in a way young children can easily relate to. This series will be a sound teaching tool for parents to use in the home or in a children’s church setting.

Kim Ford


HBB: 9780375852183, $17.99

E 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 26 x 30 cm.

PRI (INT) Rating: 5

Where do you put 3,000 tons of garbage that no one wants? On the Garbage Barge! When the town of Islip, New York, runs out of room for their trash, they hire Cap’m Duffy St. Pierre and his barge to haul away the trash and dump it in a new town. But no one welcomes the Cap’m or his cargo when he pulls into each new harbor. He and his smelly load must wander the waves for months, waiting for a place to dump the garbage.

*Here Comes the Garbage Barge!* by Jonah Winter retells the story of the 1987 debacle faced by the city of Islip and the “stink” caused by their excess garbage. A lesson in recycling and waste reduction, this book will open children’s eyes to the landfill problems faced by our nation and can introduce discussions about conservation and resource management.

Children will also enjoy the Cap’m’s salty, seadog diction and the accents of various town leaders. Readers can look forward to snippets of other languages, “Váyase!” (“Get going!”) and to sidebar-like descriptions of the cities the Barge visits.

Red Nose Studios developed the illustrations for this book using hand-built, three-dimensional objects made from wire, fabric, and, appropriately, junk. The technique is reminiscent of claymation. The hazy images, muted background colors, and oversize, plasticky characters fit perfectly with the unpleasantness of garbage, yet still manage to “pop” from the page. They make this an unusual, but intriguing book.

Winter provides an author’s note at the beginning of the book that explains the story’s
roots and its now-fictionalized nature.

Jaclyn S. Miller
200s—Religion


HBB + CDs: 9780310718789, $24.99
HBB: 9780310708254, $16.99
220.9/505 349 p. : col. ill. ; 20 cm. + 3 CD-ROMS
PRI (INT) Rating: 5

The Jesus Storybook Bible: Every Story Whispers His Name / by Sally Lloyd-Jones, illustrated by

Sally Lloyd-Jones wrote The Jesus Storybook Bible—illustrated creatively and vividly by "Jago"—after the preaching of prominent New York City evangelical pastor Tim Keller opened her eyes to the overall storyline of Scripture. Every Story Whispers His Name is the subtitle to this children's storybook, and Lloyd-Jones continually points this out: she connects Old Testament stories to the coming Prophet, Priest, and King: Jesus.

Jesus is the hero of this book, just as He is the hero of the Bible. Jesus is the hero of the story of Joseph, for example, because one day many years after Joseph "God would send another Prince, a young Prince whose heart would break" like Joseph's did at his brother's return. Like Joseph, that Prince "would leave his home and his Father. His brothers would hate him and want him dead. He would be sold for pieces of silver. He would be punished even though he had done nothing wrong."

Lloyd-Jones is careful with her scriptural tie-ins between the Old Testament and Jesus, though she takes a small amount of freedom with the details of individual stories. She traces her biblical themes through 21 major Old Testament stories and 23 major New Testament ones.

The Jesus Storybook Bible provides an engaging way for children to put the overall story of Scripture together, and many parents and Christian educators will benefit as well. The book's other major theme besides Jesus is "God's Love—God's Never Stopping, Never Giving Up, Unbreaking, Always and Forever Love." She traces her biblical themes through 21 major Old Testament stories and 23 major New Testament ones.

Mark L. Ward

500s—Science


HBB: 9780439877572, $17.99
595.78/9 48 p. : col. ill. ; 29 cm.
PRI Rating: 5

Butterflies and Moths, written and photographed by Nic Bishop, is a fascinating, colorful book for elementary children. The book covers the differences between butterflies and moths, their habitats, diets, life cycles, defenses, types, mating, and other interesting facts.

Each two page spread has one
page of text and one page a vivid photograph. Each photo includes a caption with the type of butterfly, moth, or caterpillar and facts about it. The photos are incredibly detailed and vivid and complement the text. The center of the book has a fold out photo of a butterfly in flight.

The book does a good job of using age-appropriate language while also introducing more scientific and unfamiliar terms. There is an index and a small six term glossary at the end. There is also a two page explanation of the author/photographer’s experiences taking the photos in the book, written at the same reading level. It gives a wonderful inside look into what is required to take such beautiful photos.

As an adult, I found this book interesting and informational. My children enjoyed it as well. It would be easy to use the book to point children toward the amazing design of God’s creation.

I think that children in grades 2-4 will most enjoy and benefit from this book. Younger children will enjoy the photos but I don’t believe they would have the attention span to listen to the entire book in one sitting.

This book is an excellent resource for teaching on this topic.

Amy Simon

800s—Literature


HBB: 9780547171845, $17.00
811/.4 or B 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 29 cm.
PRI (INT) Rating: 4

Linda Glaser presents an informative picture book on Emma Lazarus’ often-quoted poem which is inscribed on the base of the Statue of Liberty. Using watercolors and gouache illustrations, Claire Nivola enhances the text. Together they tell a story that should never be forgotten.

Emma’s Poem includes a facsimile of the handwritten poem by Emma that captured the voices of schoolchildren and the heart of the nation. Her sonnet, “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free” is well known, but not many know about its author.

Emma was one of the fortunate few. She dressed nicely, had plenty of food, and plenty of loving care. As she grew, she began to notice that others around her were not so fortunate. Saddened by the poor, sick, and tired immigrants she saw, Emma began to work with them. One day she heard about people raising money for a giant statue and she wrote her poem. It was the only one read at its dedication.

Emma’s photograph is at the back of the book, as well as a brief biography and the poem in its entirety. The front cover shows a group of immigrants gazing at the statue in the distance. A few scenes within the book show its construction. On the back cover, an immigrant family walks past as Emma is writing.

Glaser does an excellent job in making the facts into a well-researched but readable story. She includes photos of both her grandparents and Nivola’s grandparents who immigrated to America during this time period.

Recommended for elementary
school libraries and children’s collections in public libraries.

Carol R. Gehringer

One big rain: poems for rainy days / compiled by Rita Gray; illustrated by Ryan O’Rourke. Watertown, Mass.: Charlesbridge. 2010. LCCN 2009026748.

HBB: 9781570917165, $9.95 811.008/036 30 or E p. : col. ill. ; 23 cm.
PRI (INT) Rating: 4

In the gentle yet vibrant One Big Rain, rain is brought to the forefront, as a subject to revel and appreciate. This thoughtful compilation of poems reflects the many moods rain brings. Blending haikus with contemporary poetry, the author and illustrator demonstrate rain is more than wet stuff that falls from the sky. Taking the reader through the various seasons, the poems begin with autumn moving quietly into winter, then celebrating spring and frolicking into summer. Diverse and fun, this little book of rain poems suits any time of year. Look for well-known poets such as Robert Frost, Eve Merriam, and Carl Sandburg—among translated haiku gems and other poems.

Gray makes no apologies for rain and instead glowingly writes of its attributes in her introduction. Using words like shower, drizzle, sprinkle, and mist, the author extols how rain helps the seasons to flourish. Gray celebrates rain throughout her collection of traditional and contemporary poetry forms. The juxtaposition of haiku and translated poetry amongst the more familiar poetry styles will introduce young readers to the variety of poetic expression found throughout the world. Of note are the richly subdued illustrations of Ryan O’Rourke. The playful quality definitely adds to the poetry, making this a fun collaborative effort.

Pam Webb


HBB: 9780060872458, $17.99 811.6 or 600 27 p. : col. ill. ; 29 cm.
PRI (INT) Rating: 4

Inventions surround us and affect daily life. From straws to blue jeans, each comes from an idea. Through a variety of poetic styles, Incredible Inventions reminds us to look at the world around us with fresh eyes. Sixteen poems highlight things like the joy of dribbling a basketball, the pleasures of a Popsicle, or the simple magic in a box of crayons.

The inventions relate well to a child’s world, with the items being familiar to most kids (excepting the somewhat odd inclusion of kitty litter).

An end section tells the story behind each invention and the approximate year of its creation. An illustrated timeline runs across the bottom of these pages.

Softly focused acrylic illustrations complement and reflect each poem. Blueprints and sketches on the book’s exterior and in the front inform the reader of the invention theme and imply that invention is an ongoing process.

behind each invention and the approximate year of its creation. An illustrated timeline runs across the bottom of these pages.

Softly focused acrylic illustrations complement and reflect each poem. Blueprints
and sketches on the book’s exterior and in the front inform the reader of the invention theme and imply that invention is an ongoing process.

Great for young inventors, the mechanically minded, the historically curious and poets at heart.

Jaclyn S. Miller

900s—History, Geography, & Travel


HBB: 9780823420094, $17.95
973.5/1092 or B 1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 21 x 26 cm.
PRI (INT) Rating: 4

The newest in the Adler picture book biography collection, A Picture Book of Dolley and James Madison presents the lives of this important founding couple in an engaging, yet factual manner. Their story begins with a scene from the fire which destroyed the first Executive Mansion. With President Madison away with his soldiers in Maryland, Dolley has the presence of mind to save many priceless paintings, including a portrait of George Washington. The book then goes back in time to tell the stories of James and Dolley’s young lives, education, and political involvement. James Madison was a brilliant politician, drafting the Virginia Plan, the Great Compromise and Bill of Rights, as well as negotiating the Louisiana Purchase. Dolley was the consummate hostess; welcoming politicians and other guests and making them feel right at home.

As James Madison came to be known as the “Father of the Constitution,” this biography is a perfect introduction to the study of the founding of the United States. So many critical events of history are mentioned in this book, it is a perfect launching point for individual research and group sharing. The third person narrative is straightforward and concise, covering major historical events and keying in on personalities as well as politics. Ronald Himler’s watercolor illustrations portray the scenes of action: capturing the urgency of the fire, the emotions of war, and the quiet times spent as a couple. A timeline, author’s note, source notes, selected bibliography, and recommended websites complete the book.

Kristine Wildner
HBB: 9780061755637, $16.99
LIB: 9780061755644, $17.89
Fic 89 p.: ill.; 24 cm.
INT Rating: 4
A thief sneaks through the night, pilfering dreams from the young. He is supposed to take only nightmares, but has grown tired of the terrible dreams. The Dream Stealer begins to take pleasant dreams as well, but then he encounters Susana, a young lady who has recently lost her best friend. When the Dream Stealer attempts to take Susana’s dream about her best friend, Susana demands it back. Thus the Dream Stealer takes her on a fantastic adventure to his castle. There, Susana must combat horrible dream monsters and try to reclaim her lost dream.

With lively wordplay and flashes of humor, Sid Fleischman tells a fantastic story which originated in Mexican folklore. Larger print and simple language in the linear story make it an

HBB: 9780545030359, $16.99
Fic 1 v. (unpaged): col. ill.; 27 cm.
INT Rating: *5
Crow Call, written by Lois Lowry and illustrated by Bagram Ibatoulline, is a unique story set in post WWII Pennsylvania, about a young girl who goes on a hunting trip with her long estranged father. When Daddy left to fight in the war, Liz was very young. Now Dad is home, but he's a stranger. When he invites her to go crow hunting, Liz accepts, more out of curiosity than from anything else. She feels unsure of him, and of hunting for the first time. Daddy buys her a plaid hunting shirt that she has admired in Kronenberg’s store window. It is way too big, but Liz knows that she will have this shirt forever; a reminder that her daddy is home to stay. They enjoy an early breakfast at the local diner; then drive off together, bumping down pasture roads stay. They enjoy an early breakfast at the local diner; then drive off together, bumping down pasture roads as the sun rises above autumn woods. Liz is scared of death. She's scared of killing the crows, which might have babies somewhere—and she's scared of the killing and dying Daddy must have seen in the war.

Crow Call, drawn from Lois Lowry’s own personal experience, is beautifully written in poetic prose. Lowry, a seasoned writer of children’s books, is best known for her Anastasia Krupnik series, The Giver trilogy, and her 1990 Newbery Medal Winner, Number the Stars. Ibatoulline’s realistic illustrations, rendered in softened hues of watercolor and acryl-gouache on paper, appropriately project an archival quality. Most illustrations are full-page, with text blended in a way that invites the reader into the scene and encourages curiosity about the time period.

Kimberley Harris
appropriate book for independent intermediate readers or as a read-aloud chapter book for younger readers.

Gentle touches transport the reader to Mexico; a lofty, floating feel maintains the dreamlike quality of Susana’s experience and adds to the warmth of the setting—a locale as warm and delicious as green chiles.

Children who enjoy the stories of Roald Dahl will find this one similarly fantastical. Like Dahl, Fleischman tells his tale in such a way that the monsters appear comical and ridiculous rather than frightening.

*Jaclyn S. Miller*

**Boomtown / written and illustrated by Nowen N. Particular. Nashville: Thomas Nelson. 2009. LCCN 2009051529.**

PAP: 9781400355316, $9.99  
Fic xiv, 305 p.: ill., map; 22 cm.  
INT (MS) Rating: 3

Take a look at life in Boomtown where “everyone’s favorite thing to do is to blow stuff up.” Boomtown is home to rocket reindeer, hen grenades, the “Fighting Slugs” football team, and Chang’s Famous Fireworks factory.

A pastor and his family move to Boomtown. They get acquainted with their neighbors—who are very different from one another, yet they seem to get along. On their first day in Boomtown, the pastor’s children accidentally set off an explosion in the fireworks factory, much to the delight of the townspeople.

This mystery/adventure story is written and illustrated by Nouwen N. Particular, a pseudonym for Marty Longé. Originally published in 2008 with 18 chapters and 320 pages, the 2009 version has 305 pages with 35 chapters. About 100 maps and illustrations are included to enhance the story. While the basic story is the same, the point of view and the ending have been changed in the newer version.

Reviewers of the earlier version commented on several weaknesses which have been addressed in the revision. For example, the original version begins, “I almost died today,” while the revised version begins, “I almost killed my dad today.” Earlier reviews commented negatively to telling the story from the father’s point of view; so the revised version tells it from the son’s point of view, making it more appealing to children. A great read for anyone who appreciates a good, clean story.

Recommended for children’s collections, as well as for school libraries, especially for children in grades 4-6.

*Carol R. Gehringer*


HBB: 9780547119670, $15.00  
Fic 105 p.: ill.; 21 cm.  
INT (PRI) Rating: 4

Gooney Bird is an interesting second grader. Her classmates have accepted and sometimes even copy her unique ways. In *Gooney Bird Is So Absurd*, Lowry includes an issue many young students deal with—having a substitute teacher who doesn’t
understand how their class operates. She also deals with a difficult issue many don't face, the death of someone close to them. Throughout the story, Gooney and her fellow classmates learn about writing poetry.

Lowry has effectively captured the voice of a precocious second grader who isn't afraid to be different. Gooney Bird Greene is an endearing character, one that young readers can relate to. Black and white drawings by Middy Thomas illustrate the book, giving students just starting in chapter books an occasional picture to look at. While the reading level and format of the book may indicate a story for older elementary students, the fact that the main character is in second grade makes the book more appealing to younger children. In addition to being a book for the first or second grader with advanced reading skills, it makes a good read-aloud.

Jane Mouttet


INT (and up) Rating: *5

“Once there were four children whose names were Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy.” And so begins one of juvenile literature’s most beloved stories. A fairy tale complete with magic, enchantments, talking animals, and lessons to be learned—it’s all there and more in C.S. Lewis’s classic The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. When the four Pevensie children are sent off to live in the country to escape wartime bombings, they have no idea they will enter into another world by means of an ordinary looking wardrobe. They encounter a world so very unlike their own and learn that they are sons of Adam and daughters of Eve and their arrival means an ancient prophecy will be fulfilled. This news is rather unexpected and the children have to set aside their own desires for the greater cause, which is to save Narnia from the evil spell of the White Witch. They are guided in this task by their mentor, companion, and leader, Aslan.

This nostalgic edition provides the reader with a sense of returning to the era of publishing yesteryear, when reading was premier. Of note is that this edition is dedicated to Pauline Baynes, the illustrator of the Narnia books, who passed away in 2008 at the age of 85. Another noteworthy mention is the original dedication Lewis makes to his goddaughter Lucy Barfield, whom he feared would be too old for fairy tales once the book was finally published. He goes on to say he hopes she will someday return to fairy tales and read this one. This then is what makes TLTWTW a true classic, in that it is timeless and ageless. One will either be discovering or rediscovering the fairy tale that either stands alone as a marvelous imaginative adventure or a story that is realized as a stirring Christian allegory. However it is read, it is best read in its original form and this edition does just that.

Pam Webb


INT (and up) Rating: */5

HBB: 9780061715051, $20.00

Fic 172 p.: ill.; 21 cm.

HBB: 9780375863370, $9.99  
Fic 338 p.; 19 cm.  
INT (MS)  Rating: 3

In Twilight Land, a motley group of storytellers gathers to share their most interesting and imaginative lore. Each story is full of sorcery, demons, foolish men, princesses, and a fortune to be won—and sometimes to be lost. In the story The Stool of Fortune, a soldier uses black magic to amass a great fortune and marry a beautiful princess. It’s the wisdom of the princess that frees her soldier from the sorcerer and the demon.

Some of the stories are parables, of a sort. In Good Gifts and a Fool’s Folly, a father works hard all his life, then dies and leaves everything to his son, who soon loses it all. Spendthrift as he is, a magician steps in to help him on four different occasions. The son still winds up broke. The message of this story is, “A gray goose does not become white, nor a foolish man a wise one.” In another story, The Good of a Few Words, a father dies and leaves his fortune to his foolish son. This son does manage to lose his father’s money, but through good fortune he marries a princess with great wisdom. A proverb for this story is, “Great things come from small beginnings, a big tree from a little seed.”

Finally, there is a story of a wise King who believed, “All Things Are as Fate Wills.” When he died his son was not so sure that life could be so easily summed up to fate. The son had the signs changed to, “All Things Are as Man Does.” To prove his point, he chose a beggar from the streets, had him cleaned up, wined and dined him, and then gave him a magical purse of never-ending 100 gold pieces.

Foolishness can be found in many men, even by today’s standards. Wisdom, whether it is found by a woman or a man, is still wisdom, and that is found on many pages of this book. The illustrations are black ink, and represent at least some primary part of the story. Redemption is not necessarily a factor in all of the stories.

Debby Willett


HBB: 9780385737425, $15.99  
Fic 199 p.; 22 cm.  
INT (MS)  Rating: 4

It’s as hard to describe When You Reach Me without giving away the plot (take my advice and don’t read the blurbs on the back), as it is to put the book down once you pick it up. The plot moves along quickly in short chapters and thrives on a few mysteries and a few interesting characters you only just get to meet.

The book follows a trend which, at least in this reviewer’s experience, started with Rocky and Bullwinkle. It’s something kids will enjoy, but it pulls a few rabbits out of its hat that only adults will see. It also includes just a few objectionable elements that some adults may not want their kids to see: a first kiss in sixth grade, a number of mentions of a girl’s constant need to pee, and a reference to (not a use of) the S-word.

Sometimes an adult’s eye sneaks into the self-aware observations of the first-person, 12-year-old protagonist. But mostly the story runs along as a real kid
might tell it, and an interesting story it is. A crazy street person, some strange sightings, two sixth-grade science nuts, insightful and believable depictions of adolescent friendship—all of these are set richly in the New York City of the 1970s.

Mark L. Ward, Jr.


HBB: 9780763637231, $16.99
Fic 96 p.: col. ill. ; 21 cm.
INT (PRI) Rating: 5
Children are fascinated with reading about other children, especially famous children. Lincoln and His Boys tells the story of Lincoln through the Civil War through the eyes of Willie and Tad. The book is divided into three sections, based on the narrator of the section: Willie, Willie and Tad, and Tad. Wells describes Lincoln's candidacy through the eyes of Willie, the early years in the White House and the start of the Civil War are described by both Willie and Tad, and the effect of Willie's death on the family and the end of the War are described by Tad.

The illustrations by P. J. Lynch are beautiful oil paintings depicting various scenes in the story. Lincoln and His Boys is well-researched and historically accurate. It is written in an engaging and interesting manner. Older elementary children will appreciate reading about President Lincoln from the perspective of his children. Wells has made her characters come alive. Readers will have a good idea of what Lincoln's life was like after reading the text. Lincoln and His Boys could be used as a read-aloud with younger elementary children.

Jane Mouttet
HBB: 9781590787526, $17.95
512.7/2 32 p. : col. ill. ; 20 x 31 cm.
INT (PRI) Rating: *5

Having recently been introduced to the Fibonacci sequence in a demonstration relating to God's mathematical creativity in nature, I was especially excited to read Growing Patterns: Fibonacci Numbers in Nature. I had been trying to find a simple, yet profound way to teach this concept to young children to see if their initial reaction would be one of awe, as was mine.

Sarah C. Campbell superbly relates this unique number sequence not only through her simple explanations, but also as a co-illustrator with her husband, Richard P. Campbell. Although the Fibonacci number sequence is a pattern studied by mathematicians and math students, Campbell presents it on a level that can easily captivate and possibly be mathematically understood by primary students. This short picture book has from one to five sentences per page (in large print) with one or more gorgeous colorful photos on each page. Campbell begins by telling her readers that seeds grow into plants, and then follows with different examples of flowers and their specific patterns of growth. These patterns come from two things: growing instructions and growing conditions. Each example is simply identified both in writing and in photographs. The author wants the reader to see the growing pattern of each flower and to be able to count the petals that reflect the Fibonacci sequence: 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13. According to Campbell, "Each number in the sequence is the sum of the two numbers that come before it." She effectively explains and demonstrates this mystery in nature in her illustrations, showing mathematics to be the key! The book concludes with extra information about Fibonacci numbers and a glossary of terms. I would recommend this book to any age level of student interested in the Fibonacci number sequence and its impact in nature. It reinforces the beauty and uniqueness of God's creation.

Diana Hayes

The circulatory story / Mary K. Corcoran; illustrated by Jef Czekaj. Watertown, Mass.: Charlesbridge. 2010. LCCN 2008025332.
HBB: 9781580892087, $17.95
PAP: 9781580892094, $7.95
591.1/1 41 p. : col. ill. ; 29 cm.
INT (PRI) Rating: 4

An excellent supplement to an elementary science textbook, The Circulatory Story approaches its topic from both a cartoon-like visual standpoint and a fun narrative that speaks directly to the reader in second person. The information is presented by a little green guy who talks to a cartoon-like girl with pigtails and glasses. Introducing the topic in a speech bubble, the little green guy enters the girl's circulatory system riding on a red blood cell. Covering all parts of the system, the narrator explains blood flow, the heart, types of blood cells, veins, arteries, capillaries, exchange of gasses, etc.—all...
the key information about the circulatory system.

The little green guy represents the action point—animating each function—giving a gift of oxygen and receiving carbon dioxide in exchange, watching the white blood cells attack bacteria, getting shocked by the sinoartrial node in the heart, etc. His function is not only to provide comic relief, but to show children what is happening within the circulatory system that they cannot see happening otherwise. The little girl is the host for all the activity as we see the circulatory system in her body, albeit magnified and exaggerated.

Throughout the book, Corcoran connects her subject directly with things which children can identify with—making comparisons with everyday objects and activities—e.g. comparing clogged arteries with plugged kitchen pipes, white blood cells to an army, etc. Although at first glance the book may appear elementary, it covers the circulation system in depth, not simplifying vocabulary, but rather using the correct terminology in a friendly, conversational manner. There is a small amount of bathroom humor in the discussion of gasses, but otherwise, the humor is clean.

---

800s—Literature

* 


HBB: 9781590785652, $17.95
811/.6 31 p. : col. ill. ; 27 cm.
INT (All ages) Rating:*5

Zany illustrations paired with tongue rolling poetry about the sillier sides of school life makes *Reading, Rhyming, and 'Rithmetic* a delight to read. Here’s a sample:

I’m avoiding the pork, while sticking my fork
In the side of a slippery beet
That swims in a river of leathery liver
And gravy that’s unfit to eat (p. 11).

Vanessa’s weird taste for paste; the day Ollie the snake escaped in the classroom; unexpected adventures with a substitute teacher; the proverbial dog who ate the homework, after he turned it into succotash; these poems are a whole cartload of fun.

Sporting an Emmy for his stories in rhyme, poet, humorist, and reporter Dave Crawley is well known for his wonderful assonance. He loves to visit schools, getting students to help him make up wacky rhymes. Noted children’s illustrator of madcap graphics, Liz Callen brings personality, giggles, and winsomeness to her pictures. Most appropriately, the publisher is WordSong. The rhythm and rhyme in this book can be aptly described as word song. In the midst of all this hilarity, it must be noted that these poems are good examples of the craft of poetry. They are neatly metered, provide good rhymes, and do a captivating job of telling a story in verse. People of all ages will enjoy *Reading, Rhyming, and 'Rithmetic*.

Donna Eggett
and fun. A glossary at the end redefines any words the reader may have found difficult in the text.

Kristine Wildner
MURDER AT MIDNIGHT / AVI. NEW YORK: SCHOLASTIC PRESS. 2009. LCCN 2009003214.

HBB: 9780545080903, $17.99
Fic 254 p.; 22 cm.
MS (HS) Rating: 4

Fabrizio, the new servant boy of Magnus the Magician, is very anxious about his position. The magician’s wife favors Fabrizio but not so the magician himself. He is waiting for the young man to prove himself—and now with the wife away, Fabrizio is in a tentative position. But little does he know that there is a plot afoot to overthrow King Claudio, and Magnus has been chosen as the perfect scapegoat to be labeled a traitor! Fabrizio only has until the stroke of midnight to solve the mystery and prove his master’s innocence.

Fabrizio is a likable character, transparent and honest, humble yet cleverly saving his master’s fate. Set in 1490 in Pergamontio, Italy, Avi has given us a snapshot view of the times as well as a page turner filled with intrigue and suspense.

CEIL CAREY

THEY NEVER CAME BACK / CAROLINE B. COONEY. NEW YORK: DELACORTE PRESS. 2010. LCCN 2009001368.

HBB: 9780385738088, $16.99
PAP: 9780385738095, $7.99
Fic 200 p.; 22 cm.
MS (HS) Rating: 3

Veteran suspense storyteller Caroline Cooney provides readers with a timely plot in her newest offering, They Never Came Back. Five years ago Rory and Cade Lyman fled the country after embezzling millions from their investors, but they had to leave their ten-year-old daughter, Murielle, behind. She ends up shuffled into the foster care system. Cathy Ferris, attending summer school, finds herself amidst unwanted controversy when another student insists she is his lost cousin—Murielle Lyman. Cathy’s resemblance to Murielle attracts the attention of other students and the FBI, who never closed their interest on the Lymans. The story flashes back and forth between Murielle and Cathy’s story until the two stories merge and intersect, creating an intriguing read which explores issues of truth, family ties, and honor.

Cooney knows how to write an intriguing plotline. Similar to her popular The Face on the Milk Carton, the story centers on mistaken identity. Adeptly weaving in Murielle’s story with that of Cathy’s until the two collide, Cooney provides readers an intriguing climb to the story’s climax. Although there are some distractions, such as extra character point-of-view and lack of plot depth, readers will still appreciate the twists and turns. Even though the initial suspense is fair, the ending is unexpectedly satisfying. A suggested book for reluctant readers for its quick pacing and short length.

PAM WEBB

ON VINEY’S MOUNTAIN / JOAN DONALDSON. NEW YORK: HOLIDAY HOUSE. 2009. LCCN 2009001062.

HBB: 9780823421299, $16.95
Fic vii, 231 p.; ill.; 22 cm.
MS (HS) Rating: 4

Based on the Rugby Settlement in the Cumberland Mountains in 1880, Viney’s Mountain is a fine example of historical fiction from the viewpoint of a spunky feminine protagonist. Founded by Thomas Hughes of England, the intent of the settlement was to provide a Utopian farming community in
which second and subsequent sons had the opportunity to own land. Sixteen-year-old Viney, a gifted weaver, is vehemently opposed to the settlement—as it clear-cuts mountain land and infringes on the local culture. She attempts a number of pranks on the settlers and, to circumvent local talk about her lack of interest in marriage, feigns affection for one of the two young settlers helping on her family farm. As the two communities unite through facing the same typhoid epidemic and other struggles, Viney comes of age, faces her mistakes, and grows in her relationships. A glossary and author’s note complete the book.

Grounding the book in historical detail, Donaldson begins each chapter with an appropriate quote from the time and region. The narrative employs rich, beautiful language which brings the reader immediately into the time and place of 19th century Appalachia. The melding of the English and American cultures, especially the classism of the English, is particularly poignant. Readers will enjoy the reluctant love story, cheer on Viney’s spunk, and cry with each character’s struggles. Viney’s dedication to her craft, her independent spirit, and reconciliation with her own failings and the shortcomings of others are all admirable qualities. Although the pace is sometimes slow, the short chapters make this book a good choice for girls reading to fulfill a genre assignment or for those who simply enjoy taking a walk back in time with a strong character.

Kristine Wildner

**Warriors in the crossfire / Nancy Bo Flood. Honesdale, Pa.: Front Street. 2010. LCCN 2010007095.**

HBB: 9781590786611, $17.95
Fic 142 p.; 22 cm.
MS (HS) Rating: 4

Taking the unique perspective of the indigenous people of Saipan at the end of World War II, *Warriors in the Crossfire* is the story of Joseph and his half-Japanese cousin Kento as their home island is controlled by the Japanese military police, and the Americans are about to attack. Knowing that they must provide for and protect their families, Joseph secretly teaches Kento the skills of an island warrior, while Kento teaches Joseph how to write in Japanese. The clergy and many indigenous people have already been arrested or forced into labor by the Japanese; the impending invasion results in tremendous stress, as the Japanese samurai code of honor requires “defeat, dishonor, death.” When the rest of the island inhabitants march to their death on the cliffs, Joseph and Kento save their families by hiding in a cave.

Beginning each chapter with Japanese characters and a short poem, Nancy Bo Flood’s brief historical novel exposes one of the most horrific Japanese war atrocities in history through the point of view of the innocent bystander. In a situation where no one can be trusted, Joseph’s family clings to their Catholic faith, and respect for life, despite a ruling culture which denies both. At the same time, Joseph gains confidence from his father’s teaching of traditional goal setting and rituals, envisioning himself accomplishing each objective, despite overwhelming danger. Anti-American propaganda spread by the Japanese
creates an aura of fear, which is contradicted by the kind American soldiers rescuing the survivors at the end. Concluding with a historical note and resources for further research, this exceptional story strongly impacts the reader with a profound story which cannot soon be forgotten.

Kristine Wildner


HBB: 9780823421527, $16.95
Fic 177 p.: map ; 22 cm.
MS Rating: 4

An exciting historical tale that’s grounded in facts, The Crimson Cap is the story of Pierre Talon, an eleven-year-old boy who settled in Texas and traveled with French explorer LaSalle to find the Mississippi River. Beginning with a character list, pronunciation guide, and map, Howard divides Pierre’s story into three sections—time spent with the French, Hasinai Indians, and Spaniards. The only child in the rescue party, Pierre faces violence at every turn; conflict ensues when LaSalle and others are murdered and the group fragments. Pierre eventually settles with the Hasinai, assimilating into their culture. When Pierre learns the settlement has been destroyed and four children have been taken by the Clamcoehs, Pierre decides he must seek his siblings’ rescue despite his reluctance to cooperate with the Spaniards who are evangelizing the Indians and imprisoning the French. An author’s note relates historical facts about Talon and the LaSalle expedition.

Overall, this novel is rich in descriptive text, fast-paced, and historically relevant. Despite the lists of characters, the abundance of different names in various languages makes the initial chapters somewhat tedious. In addition, Pierre’s story is quite violent; Indian rituals and suffering are an integral part of this story. Nonetheless, the fact that Pierre’s story is, in essence, historically accurate necessitates some initial complexity and bloodshed. It is this authenticity which brings the story to life. Christian priests and missionaries are all represented as essentially good people, but are minor characters. Recommended as an excellent supplement to the study of American exploration or for readers with a keen interest in historical fiction.

Kristine Wildner


HBB: 9780061452413, $15.99
LIB: 9780061452420, $16.89
Fic 233 p.: ill. ; 22 cm.
MS (INT) Rating: 4

Eleven-year-old Charlotte Hayes is the first to admit that she is absolutely not a dog person. But someone has to be sure Killer, the family’s rapidly growing St. Bernard, has water on a hot day and shelter from the rain. Charlotte does the doggy chores—feeding, watering, belly rubs, bathing, and cleaning up—but only because the other family members are either too distracted or too busy to remember the gentle giant chained up in the backyard.

In The Dog Days of Charlotte Hayes, author Marlane Kennedy presents Charlotte’s narration in an engaging first-person and present tense style that quickly draws the reader into this delightful and fun
story.

When Charlotte’s initial plan to sell Beauregard (her special name for Killer) to a rich family doesn’t work out, Charlotte takes Beauregard to a newly-opened animal shelter and turns him in as a stray. She feels guilty about lying, but doesn’t confess.

After her dad brings Killer home again and tries to sell him through a newspaper ad, Charlotte makes a deal with her dad to buy the dog. Her secret plan is to buy Beauregard from her dad and then turn the dog over to a St. Bernard rescue group. Finding a job isn’t easy, but Charlotte isn’t one to give up.

Mr. Hayes, a bargain-hunter, is a good-natured dad, but acts irresponsibly toward the dog. Mrs. Hayes suffers from post-partum depression early in the story, but this minor plotline takes care of itself as the story unfolds and baby Justin Lee begins sleeping through the night. Charlotte uses a popular euphemism for describing Beauregard’s waste that she has to clean up.

Charlotte is a bit of a schemer, but her heart is in the right place. She truly wants what’s best for Beauregard and sacrifices her time (and her sleep) to take care of the humongous drooler.

Even Charlotte begins to wonder if she might be a dog-person after all.

Johnnie Alexander Donley


HBB: 9780547238692, $16.00
Fic 186 p. : ill. ; 21 cm.

MS Rating: 5

The birthday ball/ by Lois Lowry; illustrations by Jules Feiffer

The Birthday Ball is a lighthearted fairy tale, designed for pure entertainment. About to turn sixteen, Princess Patricia Priscilla must select a husband from the most dreadful assembly of suitors. The princess disguises herself as a peasant girl named “Pat” (because all peasants must have short names) and attends several days of school in the village. With her goes her cat named Delicious, who is always vicious, malicious, avaricious, suspicious, or at the very least in need of something nutritious. The princess’s options expand when she persuades her royal parents to invite all of the villagers to her birthday ball.

Lowry fills each page with funny plays on words, puns, and alliteration. One suitor, Duke Desmond of Dyspepsia, has a warthog-like countenance that only an orphan could love. Black of heart and attire, Prince Percival of Pustula believes he and Princess Patricia Priscilla would make a perfect pair, but each time the prince pronounces the letter p, a glob of saliva accompanies the sound. The third suitor is a pair of Siamese twins, the coarse and crude Counts Colin and Cuthbert of Coagulatia.

Jules Feiffer’s whimsical pen and ink illustrations perfectly suit the story. Although the amusing farce bears no resemblance to Lowry’s Newbery-Award-winning books The Giver and Number the Stars, her dedication to diversion is consistently clever and often hilarious. Lowry also spins in several genuine teenage issues for her regal protagonist to address. The bored princess seeks adventure and gains an entirely new perspective on
herself and the people in her Domain when she temporarily trades her silk gown for a plain brown dress. Those who are simply not in the mood for fun would do well to pass on this charming novel. Everyone else, enjoy!

Laurie A. Gray

HBB: 9780152061708, $17.00
PAP: 9780547258744, $7.99
Fic 248 p.; 22 cm.
MS Rating: 3

The Civil War has torn apart the gracious Southern life that Juliet Bradshaw has always enjoyed. Her brother Seth rides with William Quantrill’s renegade Confederate Army, which includes Jesse James. Juliet fears for her brother’s life but ironically, she is the one in danger.

The Yankees arrest Juliet, accuse her of being a spy, and imprison her along with other family members of Quantrill’s men. Juliet’s life seems to have come to an all-time low, then the building they are living in collapses and most of the women are killed.

After the dust settles, Juliet attempts to return to her former life but the War has changed everything. Can Juliet accept her new life in a country led by what she considers the enemy?

This reviewer does not consider this book to be Rinaldi’s best. The story is convoluted and tiresome to read. The story itself may hold the interest of the reader but the telling of it is tedious.

Ceil Carey

HBB: 9780152066246, $16.00
Fic 154 p.; 22 cm.
MS (HS) Rating: 4

For 47 days during the Civil War, the Union Army laid siege to Vicksburg, Mississippi, forcing the citizens to flee their homes and live in nearby caves. This was the fate of Claire Louise Corbet and her family. Their cave was huge, prepared in advance by Claire Louise’s father as a refuge in times such as these. One day her brother, Landon, a doctor, arrives with a fellow soldier named Robert. Landon is serving with the Union Army, and Robert is responsible for allowing an order from Robert E. Lee to fall into Union hands, causing the South to lose the battle of Antietam. Landon is honor-bound to turn Robert in but that will surely be a death sentence for his friend. Claire Louise, a girl who never has had trouble making up her mind, is now faced with a decision to choose between family and friend, knowing she will have to live forever with that choice.

Rinaldi explains in an author note that she discovered “the town where people were trapped and lived in caves” and was sure that her readers would find this little known tidbit of history interesting. Historical fiction fans will love this story of a confident girl during the Civil War, well documented and researched as are all of Rinaldi’s works.

Ceil Carey

PAP: 9780802422521, $8.99
Fic 173 p.; 19 cm.

PAP: 9780802422552, $8.99
Fic 149 p. ;19 cm.

In A Promise and a Rainbow, Rachel is upset when she learns her parents are sending her to Chicago for the summer to stay with relatives. She discovers that first impressions of people are not always correct.

Mabel Elizabeth Singletary does a good job of showing how young girls can deal with disappointments in life both by relying on God and by learning the importance of true teamwork.

The books are written in third-person multiple point-of-view. When the author changes viewpoint within a chapter, sometimes it is unclear to the reader as to which character's eyes the story is being seen through. In some of the scenes, the author tells how the characters feel instead of showing their emotions through action, dialogue, and sensory images.

Pre-teen girls whose favorite pastime is jumping rope, who constantly moving and the impact it has on friendships. She joins the Double Dutch Club, and the team practices every day in hopes of winning first place at a world championship Double Dutch competition.


PAP: 9780802422514, $6.99
Fic 148 p. ;19 cm.

In Just Jump, Nancy has moved to America from Africa and is lonely. She becomes friends with a group of girls who teach her how to jump rope Double Dutch-style. The girls form a team, the Double Dutch Club, and take part in a citywide Double Dutch competition.

In Something to Jump About, Brittany is tired of her family struggle with making new friends, or who face challenging situations in their home life will like the books. The short chapters and informal dialogue make the series pleasant reading for girls in grades five through seven.

Dianne Woodman

HBB: 9780316045520, $16.99
PAP: 9780316045506, $6.99
Fic 391 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.
MS (INT) Rating: 5

The Mysterious Benedict Society series are charming adventure stories about friendship, family, and facing ones fears. It begins when four uniquely talented children respond to a peculiar newspaper ad asking for gifted children looking for special opportunities. Reynie, an orphan, can solve any puzzle or problem he’s presented with. Kate, a circus performer, can do any physical feat possible. Sticky, a runaway, never forgets anything he reads or hears. And Constance, a tiny girl without a past, well, lets just say her gift is being incredibly stubborn and difficult. After successfully completing the mysterious and hard tests, they are all inducted into the society. Their first mission is to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, in order to take down the powerful and diabolical Mr. Curtain who is planning to control the city. The task tries them in ways beyond their imagination, and they must depend on one another’s gifts to survive.

The subsequent books in the series, The Mysterious Benedict Society and the Perilous Journey, and The Mysterious Benedict Society and the Prisoner’s Dilemma, are just as exciting and fun to read as the first. Page-turning plot, mind-bending puzzles, and interesting characters continue to charm from beginning to end.

Stewart’s intelligent books challenge readers to figure out clues for themselves. Faced with physical, mental, and ethical problems, the children discover who they are and who they want to become. The stories not only keep readers on the edge of their seat, but they also deal with deep themes that will resonate within. This series is perfect for grades 5-9, but would also be a great read-aloud book for the entire family.

Ellie Soderstrom
200s—Religion


PAP: 9780310716150, $9.99
242/.62 185 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.
MS (INT) Rating: 4

Online with God is a ninety day devotional written to mimic entries in a middle school girl’s blog to her “BFF” God. Although actually written by an adult, it uses a chatty style to present various scenarios that show girls how they can stay safe online and deal with more ordinary problems like getting along with family and friends, overcoming jealousy, managing money, and honoring God.

Despite the book’s claim that it’s “not candy coated,” it tackles no truly heavy issues, only the simple life issues a typical middle class suburban girl might encounter, and the sections about online perils are often weak or lack specific advice. All the heroine has to do is tell a friend to stop sending flirty emails to older guys for her to immediately agree. The entries on internet temptations deal with horoscopes, not porn. Entries on classmates posting embarrassing photos or gossiping simply tell readers to talk to an adult or refuse to participate. The entry on cyber bullying is more apt, telling girls to print out and give the hurtful emails to an adult and to get a new email address.

The entries aren’t really written “to” God but are the thoughts of a girl who has God at the center of her life. Scripture verses begin each entry; the entries close with a short prayer and a tip on putting into action the value just discussed. Perhaps some readers will be disappointed to learn the author is not a middle school girl, but Laurie Lazzaro Knowlton never talks down to her audience. While girls older than twelve or readers who’ve begun to deal with serious issues will be too mature for Knowlton’s light, sweet, common sense tips, this is a wonderful “first book” of advice for girls just starting to grow up.

Rosemarie DiCristo

800s—Literature


HBB: 9780763632540, $21.99
813/.54099282 214 p. : ill. ; 25 cm.
MS (HS) Rating: 4

Funny Business: Conversations with Writers of Comedy, compiled and edited by Leonard S. Marcus, surveys a dozen beloved authors of young adult literature, focusing on humor as a common theme: Judy Blume (Are You There God? It’s Me, Margaret), Beverly Cleary (Beezus and Ramona), Sharon Creech (Walk Two Moons), Christopher Paul Curtis (Bud, Not Buddy), Anne Fine (Alias Madame Doubtfire), Daniel Handler (Lemony Snicket), Carl Hiaasen (Hoot), Norton Juster (The Phantom Tollbooth), Dick King-Smith (Babe), Hilary McKay (Casson Family and Conroy Sisters books), Louis Sachar (Holes), and Jon Scieszka (The Stinky Cheese Man). Marcus’s own skill and wit as an interviewer and author shine through from his dedication (to Thing One and Thing Two) to an amusing e-mail from Daniel Pinkwater declining to be
interviewed. Each author comes alive through personal history and insights in his or her own voice. Photographs, manuscript pages, correspondence, and short passages from well-known books interspersed throughout the interviews add visual appeal and interest to the text. There are a handful of mildly profane responses—one from Hiaasen, one from Juster, and several from Scieszka. Overall, the content is appropriate for middle grade readers and will also appeal to anyone interested in writing, publishing, or simply understanding what it is that makes people laugh.

Marcus explores the subtleties of humor with each author, discovering many underlying truths. Anne Fine tells Marcus, “The pain of being aware of what is going on around you is often what galvanizes a person to wit and humor.” She also notes “in Shakespeare the jester is always the one who's given license to say whatever he wishes.” All who love any one of these authors and everyone who appreciates quality young adult literature are sure to enjoy this thought-provoking compilation.

Laurie A. Gray

900s—History, Geography, & Travel


HBB: 9781590787090, $17.95
910.92 or B 208 p. : ill., map, 25 cm.
MS (HS) Rating: 4

A comprehensive, photographic biography, Captain Mac relates the inspiring life story of one of the key 20th century Arctic explorers, Donald Baxter MacMillan. Setting the geographic stage for the book, Cowan begins the book with a map of the Arctic relative to MacMillan’s home state of Maine, highlighting key locations. To grab the reader’s attention, the narrative begins at the North Pole, as MacMillan was one of the key support personnel on Peary’s legendary expedition. The account then reverts back to his childhood and follows a chronological format covering his education, early explorations, and numerous scientific voyages. Although lesser known than the original Arctic explorers, MacMillan’s extended scientific career formed the base for a lot of what we now know about the Arctic in terms of the indigenous people and language, plant and animal life, geology, geography, and oceanography. The book concludes with a timeline, author’s note, notes, related resources, and index.

With nearly every page including at least one historical photograph, Cowan immerses the reader into MacMillan’s life and work. Inspired by early explorers and seamen, MacMillan was an avid reader and lecturer, speaking about Arctic exploration throughout the country and raising funds for research. We come to understand his ambition, his true attention to detail and the preparation required for his work, his love of teaching, ensuring the accuracy and integrity of his voyages and scientific observations, and his generous support of the people of the Arctic. His work not only provided critical information for the U.S. in World War II, it also fostered the development of long-
distance communication and enabled crews to work for longer stretches of time. Incorporating primary source documents and apt quotations, MacMillan’s life story fits into the study of modern history, geography, and world exploration as well as attracting readers who enjoy real-life survival stories and adventures.

Kristine Wildner


HBB: 9781580893367, $18.95
PAP: 9781580893374, $9.95
943/.1550874 or B ix, 110 p.: ill., map; 24 cm.

MS (INT) Rating: 5

During the Berlin Airlift after World War II, one pilot developed a heart for the children who had such a strong desire for freedom. What started as a gift of two sticks of gum for 30 children eventually became regular candy drops over neighborhoods within the flight path. What started as one man’s mission, turned into a mission for many civilians and airmen alike. Gail Halvorsen had no idea what he was starting that day in 1948. Fellow airmen got involved in the project, which started without Air Force permission. Eventually it became an Air Force sanctioned project and generated individual and corporate support in the United States.

Tunnell has written an engaging, easy to read, and hard-to-put-down non-fiction book of the man who came to be known as Uncle Wiggle Wings and his mission to the children of Berlin. The book would be a great addition to the study of World War II or as part of a discussion about humanitarian aid. It is illustrated with black-and-white photos of Halverson, the candy drops, the children, and other items of importance to the story, as well as copies of letters related to the candy drops. Tunnell has successfully put a human (child’s) face on the Berlin Airlift. The book includes a reference list and the book closes with an index.

Jane Mouttet
PAP: 9780888998934, $8.95
Fic 139 p.; 20 cm.
HS (MS) Rating: 4

In the historical novel Broken Memory by Elisabeth Combres, young Emma hides behind the sofa as men break in, then beat and murder her mother. Emma is a member of the Tutsi minority at the time of the Rwandan genocide of 1994. After the men leave her house she flees and is taken in by an old Hutu woman. As a young teen, Emma still lives with the old woman, whom she calls Mukecuru—Grandmother—but nightmares continue to plague her. In the midst of her nightmares, Emma forms a friendship with a boy who survived the genocide and talks with a psychiatrist, also a survivor. But for her path of healing to be complete, Emma knows she must piece together her broken memories of her mother.

This novel brings an important historical event to the level of middle-school readers. It explains the genocide and its evils without going into extremely gory details and scenes. Broken Memory would make a good companion to a unit on recent African history because it examines what the conflict was like, how it affected people's lives, and why it happened.

The main problem that prevents this novel from being more powerful is the confusing shifts in viewpoint. Multiple scenes are told entirely from Emma's point of view but then, without warning, jump into another character's head. Since readers can see Emma would have no way of knowing those tidbits, they are constantly reminded, rather obnoxiously, that this is not so much Emma's story as the author's invention. However, if you are willing to overlook this weakness, you will find some piercing moments that open the path into a world most Americans have never seen.

Rachelle Dawson


HBB: 9780670011940, $19.99
PAP: 9780142415566, $8.99
Fic 383 p.; 22 cm.
HS Rating: 5

In Along for the Ride, academically-gifted insomniac Auden spends the summer before college visiting her father, stepmother, and newborn half-sister. Auden's father is distant as he immerses himself in writing a book, and her stepmother is busy with caring for the baby, so Auden isolates herself, sleeping during the day and reading her textbooks late into the night, but she gradually grows closer to her father's new family. She takes a job doing office work at her stepmother's store and makes friends with the local girls who work there, and, through them makes friends with enigmatic bicyclist, Eli. Auden's new friends encourage her to try new things. As she spends more time with friends, Auden examines her family relationships and the root causes of her insomnia and academic drive, ultimately realizing that it is possible both to enjoy her new hobbies and to continue her academic excellence.

Dessen's writing is beautiful, vividly capturing both setting...
and characters, and the plot moves along quickly and easily. The distance between Auden and her father and mother, both respected academics, is palpable. Readers will relate to Auden’s struggle to balance her desire to be academically perfect, which she feels is the only way to get attention from her parents, and her need to have a normal teenage life. Auden’s “quest” to do things that she feels she missed out on develops at a realistic pace and includes things like learning to ride a bike. In the end, the reader is left with the impression that Auden’s quality of life is improved and her grades have not suffered. Although the book contains implied fornication and a few brief scenes of underage drinking, neither is graphically described and the main characters mostly make responsible choices. An excellent choice for high school girls.

Elizabeth Norton

A Troubled Peace continues the story that L.M. Elliott began in her debut novel, Under a War-Torn Sky. Four months after returning home from a harrowing trek across occupied France during World War II, nineteen-year-old Henry Forester finds it difficult to return to civilian life in Virginia. He struggles with vivid nightmares, flashbacks, and other symptoms of “battle fatigue,” a condition now known as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. When his childhood sweetheart rejects his proposal of marriage, Henry’s symptoms worsen until his mother suggests that he might heal faster by helping others. With this in mind, Henry returns to France in search of Pierre, a nine-year-old boy with whom he bonded during his escape. In his search for Pierre, Henry is reunited with many of the Resistance fighters who helped him escape. As he experiences the aftermath of the war firsthand, Henry vows to live a life worthy of their sacrifices. This book is a welcome continuation of Henry’s story; however, most readers will need to have read Under a War-Torn Sky to understand this sequel. Readers will relate to Henry, though he seems slightly too good to be true. Henry’s battle fatigue symptoms, confusion about his relationship with his childhood sweetheart, and struggles to fit back into his civilian life are described vividly. Descriptions of life in postwar France, particularly of survivors returning from concentration camps, are especially heart wrenching, though not graphic. The overall plot moves along at a good pace and wraps up neatly. The book contains some profanity. An extensive author’s note separates fact from fiction, explaining the concept of battle fatigue and giving an overview of world politics from the end of World War II to the beginning of the Vietnam War. It is clear that this novel was thoroughly researched.

Elizabeth Norton


HBB: 9780060744274, $16.99
PAP: 9780060744298, $8.99
Fic 289 p.; 22 cm.
HS Rating: 4

HBB: 9781590786239, $18.95
Set in England, 1536 C.E., *City of Cannibals* by Ricki Thompson introduces readers to Henry VIII and the fate of his wives, Catherine and Anne Boleyn, through the lavender eyes of an orphaned puppeteer who falls in love with a would-be monk named Ronaldo. Both risk charges of treason because neither has signed the Oath of Allegiance accepting the King as the self-proclaimed head of the Catholic Church. The story begins with Dell living in a cave outside London with her adopted father and brother and only dim recollections of her deceased mother. Dell's quest for love and self-discovery leads her into the city where she discovers the depths of human cruelty and the strength of simple kindness.

Thompson deftly weaves a powerful coming-of-age tale from the timeless cords of family, friendship, religion, and politics that are as relevant to teenagers today as they were centuries ago. There are a number of mature themes, some sexual in nature. The violence and crude language are true to medieval times, with several vulgar words for bodily functions. Traitors are beheaded, hanged, or drawn and quartered, depending upon the King's outrage and morbid pleasure. Thompson depicts such carnage very matter-of-factly, but without unnecessarily gruesome or inappropriate detail. There is no literal cannibalism. The title itself is a metaphor, used within the context of the story to elicit fear in young children and keep them in their place.

The author clearly hits her mark in creating quality young-adult literature that is as educational as it is engaging. Her fictional characters are richly drawn, at once unique and universal. Her well-crafted language is both evocative and accessible. The book is historical fiction at its best, extolling freedom and the inalienable human right to simply be oneself.

*Laurie A. Gray*


PAP: 9780982104958, $14.99

Fic 490 p. : map ; 22 cm.

HS (MS) Rating: 5


PAP: 9780982598702, $17.99

Fic 680 p. : map ; 22 cm.

HS (MS) Rating: 5

*By Darkness Hid* tells the story of an orphaned servant, Achan, who is given the chance to train as a squire. Achan hears strange voices in his head and fears them. Forced to serve for a prince he despises, Achan discovers a secret about his birth that will change many lives. A second story is woven throughout: a girl runs from an arranged marriage. The girl, Vrell, also has the gift of bloodvoicing (hearing voices of others in her head), a gift passed down through royal bloodlines. While pretending to be a boy, she helps Achan escape imprisonment and flee for his life.

*To Darkness Fled* continues the story of Vrell and Achan. Both accept that Achan has been chosen by Arman, the one true God, to be king. Chased by an evil prince, Vrell and Achan flee into Darkness, seeking to free an imprisoned army that will help them. Achan suspects Vrell is lying,
not realizing that she is hiding a secret about her gender. By the end of the book, Vrell leaves Achan and returns to her identity as Lady Avrella. Achan still does not know Vrell and Lady Avrella are the same, only that his loyal friend Vrell left his service.

The books are imaginative, well-written, and contain all the familiar epic elements with a fresh rendering. They are both character and plot-driven. Although they are long, one really enters into the engaging, action-packed books.

Those who delight in swords, sorcery, good vs. evil, and political and spiritual intrigue will be thrilled with this new addition to Christian fantasy. Readers of science fiction, romance, and Christian fiction will also enjoy this epic series.

Jill Williamson’s first novel, By Darkness Hid, won the 2010 Christy Award (Visionary) and is nominated for the 2010 Clive Staples Award (Speculative Fiction).

Recommended for middle and high school libraries, as well as young adult fiction collections in public libraries.

*Carol R. Gehringer*
500s—Science


PAP: 9781578592210, $21.95
551.6 x, 325 p.: ill. (some col.) ; 25 cm.
HS (MS) Rating: 3

A fun reference book to look through, garner interesting information, and get an overview of a multitude of facts about weather, *The Handy Weather Answer Book* is most appropriate for high school and middle school students. Assuming some basic knowledge of meteorology, the questions are written in a straightforward manner with key words in bold using common question formatting “what is..., who invented..., how often...” etc. The vast majority of answers are narrative, including only a few equations or diagrams. Hile organizes the chapters by general topics covering weather fundamentals, the atmosphere, heat and cold, clouds and precipitation, stormy weather, atmospheric phenomena, geography, oceanography and weather, weather in space, humanity and weather, climate change, and modern meteorology. Crisp color and historical photographs accentuate interesting facts, while colored text boxes highlight some of the more human-interest topics. An index completes the book and makes it easy to find information quickly.

Overall, the book includes many fascinating facts about the weather in a rather entertaining format. Good for quick answers, readers can grab bits of information to satisfy their curiosity or spark interest for further research. Similar to a book of records or almanac, some facts lend themselves to comparisons over time and between different geographic areas. Several questions could be more thoroughly explained with the addition of a mathematical formula or diagram. If the book included a chart with the basic Greek and Latin roots and prefixes, students could better understand the scientific terminology. Moreover, there are a few instances where editing errors are difficult to miss (e.g. chapter heading “Weather in Space”) and the index is not complete. With an attractive cover, engaging layout and format, this book will be one that students with an interest in the subject will pick up and enjoy. Serious research will be better supported by a more thorough reference book such as a weather encyclopedia or meteorology text book.

Kristine Wildner


PAP: 9781578592159, $21.95
910 viii, 408 p.: ill., maps ; 24 cm.
HS (MS) Rating: 3

An interesting, quick reference book, *The Handy Geography Answer Book* is a friendly way to make geography fun. Its question/answer format pulls out key information which can spark further research and investigation. The book is divided into several sections beginning with definitions and then delving into factors which impact geography (water, disasters, politics, etc.). Next, it explores specific geographic areas, more or less by continent. Finally, Tucci and Rosenberg summarize key statistical information from
the CIA World Fact Book on all 195 countries of the world. The format is straightforward (what were..., how does...., etc.) with key words printed in bold and answers provided in one paragraph. Most the questions have been chosen to highlight important information about each geographic area. An index and map section completes the book; there is no bibliography or source notes.

An enjoyable overview of our entire world geography, the book can easily be used by teachers to tie directly into their curriculum providing a quick “fact of the day.” Furthermore, the question/answer layout invites both the casual reader and the truly engaged geography student to benefit from learning new facts. However, the reader must realize the purpose of the book is to provide a high level overview of world geography. It is not comprehensive, lacks some key information, repeats some questions, includes some maps which are almost impossible to read, and includes some editing errors (e.g. volcano spelled volcanoe). Specifically, the book mentions tornados, but not cyclones; the tallest skyscraper (Burj Dubai) is pictured but its location is not identified and the fact is not indexed; the Southern Ocean is not mentioned in the text, but is included (albeit very faintly) on the world map. Taken as a whole, this reference book fills a high-interest niche, but is not a comprehensive resource.

Kristine Wildner

900s—History, Geography, & Travel

Mr. Lincoln’s high-tech war: how the North used the telegraph, railroads, surveillance balloons, iron-clads, high-powered weapons, and more to win the Civil War / Thomas B. Allen & Roger MacBride Allen. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic. 2009. LCCN 2008024546.

HBB: 9781426303791, $18.95 973.7/301 144 p. : ill., maps ; 21 x 25 cm.

HS (MS)  Rating: 4

In today’s high-tech society it is hard to remember that things like the telegraph, railroads, and manned balloons were once cutting-edge technologies. During the Civil War, President Lincoln had a difficult time convincing the leaders in the war to use some of the newer inventions. In Mr. Lincoln’s High-Tech War, Allen and Allen explain many of these technologies, how they were beneficial to the war, and the effort President Lincoln exerted to get the generals to use them.

The text contains many details which will be of interest to readers with a curiosity for the Civil War period. The book contains many black and white photos and drawings from the era which add to the validity of the text. Sidebars are effectively used to highlight specific topics mentioned more briefly in the text. The book ends with a bibliography and resource list as well as an index, which all add to the book’s usefulness as a reference book. In addition to middle and high school students doing research, adult Civil War buffs will also enjoy this book.

Jane Mouttet

HBB: 9780785231035, $18.99
Fic v., 248 p. : ill. ; 22 cm.
Adult Rating: 5

Almost five years ago, author Andy Andrews published Island of Saints. It received little notice until recently when it was re-released under the title, The Heart Mender. The book is in parts biographical, historical fiction, inspirational, motivational, self-help, and romance.

Helen is a young, attractive World War II widow living a bitter, lonely existence on the Gulf of Mexico’s northern shore. One night while walking on the beach, she comes across an almost lifeless German U-boat officer washed ashore. Helen is prepared to leave Josef to die when he utters an unforgettable phrase changing her decision. Over the coming months, they share their personal heartbreaks (Josef’s wife and daughter were killed by RAF bombers, and Helen’s husband was killed training RAF pilots). They learn to reconcile their past and forgive in order to move into their future.

Andy Andrews mixes historical accuracy and fiction to show us the power of forgiveness in their loss and reconciliation. Andrews is an entertaining storyteller—this book has an engaging plot, characters, and storyline. Although published by Zondervan, it is not fundamentally a Christian book. However, it is inspiring to read. One is caught up in the storyline and reminded that forgiveness is a powerful gift that frees us. In fact, the subtitle of the original book is: A Story of One Principle That Frees the Human Spirit.

Readers will find discussion questions, as well as a Where Are They Now? section fascinating as they sort out the fact and fiction in this well-written story.

Recommended for high school and public libraries.

Carol R. Gehringer


PAP: 9780310272151, $14.99
Fic 349 p. : maps ; 22 cm.
Adult (HS) Rating: 3

Zack Brewer and Diane Colcernian, Navy JAGS, meet up again in The Malacca Conspiracy, a timely thriller about terrorists. Moving from Indonesia to the United States, a conspiracy unveils itself at a swift and deadly pace once oil tankers are rammed in the sea traffic lanes. However, this is only the beginning as bombings, political assassinations, espionage, and murders coincide as a group of zealots emerges from an unexpected coup. Zack and Diane are trying to reconcile their relationship begun in the Navy Justice Series—yet staying alive overrules any romance they hope to find.

Previous to penning novels, Don Brown served in the Judge Advocate General Corps of the Navy, and brings his experience and knowledge into his novel. The writing rings with authenticity, with its references to technical and insider information. On the other hand, the complicated plot and the continual breakaway style begin to wear thin and the promising storyline dwindles to that of a movie script style read. The resolution is predictable, if not over-dramatic. For those
who are looking for Tom Clancy style storylines and don't mind multiple sub-plots, this is a book for them to read. Although a standalone novel, it might be helpful to read *Navy Justice Series* to fully comprehend the dynamics between Zack and Diane.

*Pam Webb*

**Centurion's wife / Davis Bunn & Janette Oke. (Acts of faith ; 1) Minneapolis: Bethany House. 2009. LCCN 2008041670.**

HBB: 9780764206542, $19.99  
PAP: 9780764205149, $13.99  
Fic 378 p. : map ; 22 cm.

**The hidden flame / Davis Bunn and Janette Oke. (Acts of faith ; 2) Minneapolis: Bethany House. 2010. LCCN 2009035938.**

HBB: 9780764205576, $19.99  
PAP: 9780764207426, $14.99  
Fic 394 p. : ill., map ; 24 cm.  
Adult (HS) Rating: 4

Janette Oke and T. Davis Bunn collaborate on this biblical fiction series, featuring stories from the time of the early Christians.

*The Centurion's Wife* focuses on the centurion, Alban, whose servant was healed by Jesus. Though he is a Gaul, not a Roman, Alban wants to advance in the Roman government. He meets Leah, Pilate's niece, whose family's disgrace forces her into a life as a servant to Pilate's wife. Part of Alban's plan includes an arranged marriage to Leah, who is of Jewish and Roman heritage. Both are seeking after something, and ultimately find it in when they choose to believe in Jesus and obey his teachings.

*Hidden Flame* picks up after the wedding of Alban and Leah, with Abigail, who is a new believer and has been injured in an accident. She serves widows and orphans, as well as assists Martha in serving the disciples. Abigail finds herself with two suitors, neither of whom pleases Peter, the leader of the believers, because neither of these men are believers. Both are witnesses to miracles and experience God's calling, but respond differently and chose different paths. With Peter's encouragement, Abigail marries Stephen, a believer she admires for his faith, a man who will be the first Christian martyr.

These books are more character- than plot-driven. Sometimes the narrative is slow, but the concept is appealing, namely the back story of minor characters at the time of Jesus: the centurion, Pilate, his wife, Stephen, and more. Jesus is not "seen," but the characters who are believers represent his teachings well. Not everyone in these stories chooses to become a believer.

Recommended for high school libraries and inspirational collections in public libraries. Readers who enjoy biblical fiction classics like *Ben Hur*, *The Robe*, and *Quo Vadis* will enjoy this series.

*Carol R. Gehringer*

**Blood ransom / Lisa Harris. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan. 2010. LCCN 2009037495.**

PAP: 9780310319054, $14.99  
Fic 317 p. ; 22 cm.  
Adult (HS) Rating: 5

Corrupt men kill and enslave the innocent citizens of the Republic of Dhambizao (RD), Africa, in the romantic suspense novel *Blood Ransom*. When Natalie Sinclair, a nurse volunteering with the ministry of health in RD, learns that 15 year-old Joseph has pictures to prove that an entire city has been emptied by ghost
soldiers, she knows she must help him. First, she takes him to a health clinic where wounds Joseph sustained from the soldiers can be treated. At the clinic they meet Dr. Chad Talcott, another American volunteer. Chad decides to help Joseph and Natalie. As the three come closer to discovering the source of the ghost soldiers, they nearly get swept up by the vortex of political intrigue and danger.

Lisa Harris vivid descriptions make this fictionalized African country come to life. Using a mixture of short chapters, varied sentence structure, and intriguing dialogue, Harris increases the momentum of the fast-moving plot. The budding relationship between Chad and Natalie provides a break in tension as they try to help Joseph. Allusions to real places like the Congo River and events like the modern day slave trade lend an element of reality to the story. As the three deal with the evil that makes up the slave trade and threatens to overtake the country, they find themselves wondering why a good God allows such atrocities. As sacrifices must be made to save the country, the three appreciate even more the sacrifice that Jesus made for sin.

Kristi Wolcott


PAP: 9781578569816, $14.99
Fic 383 p.: ill.; maps
Adult Rating: 4

An Absence So Great, sequel to A Flickering Light, continues the story of Jessie Gaebel and Fred Bauer. In an effort to distance herself from Fred, an unhappily married photographer who trained her and with whom she fell in love, Jessie moves away from Winona, Minnesota. She advances her dream of becoming a professional photographer as she works in Milwaukee and then Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Unfortunately, ties to Fred seem to follow Jessie, even when she is unaware of them. When she feels enough time has passed, Jessie accepts a position at the Polonia Studio, Fred’s competition, in Winona. Though she and Fred both strive to maintain a professional friendship, the threat of more remains.

Based on the life of Jane Kirkpatrick’s grandmother, real-life issues fill the pages of this historical novel. The characters endure the difficulties of mental illness, the toll that loss and disease create on a marriage, and the consequences of an emotional affair. Even though Jessie, Fred, and Mrs. Bauer try to seek the Lord, or at least spiritual counsel, decisions they make have unalterable consequences—one of them being divorce, and these decisions drive the book. The dialogue completes the characterization by showing additional, unspoken details about personalities. Period details round out the setting, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Dakota between 1910 and 1915. While shopping unaccompanied for a motorcycle, Jessie invites unwanted attention due to the irregularity of such an event in 1910. Reference to North Dakota’s loose divorce/marriage laws provides added realism to the story. As imperfect characters do their best to work their way through difficult situations, they experience grace.

Kristi Wolcott
   PAP: 9780781448468, $14.99
   Fic 336 p.; 21 cm.

   PAP: 9780781448901, $14.99
   Fic 367 p.; 21 cm.

   PAP: 9780781449701, $14.99
   Fic 358 p.; 21 cm.

   HBB: 9780345505330, $25.00
   PAP: 9780345505347, $15.00
   Fic 290 p.; ill. ; 25 cm.

* Jamie Ford’s novel, *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*, is a *New York Times* bestseller novel—one that is definitely worthy of the label. Beautifully written, with finely drawn characters, Ford’s novel alternates between 1986, and the world of 1942, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. It tells the story of young Henry Lee, born in America to strict Chinese parents. Henry finds himself an outcast at the all-white school he has received a scholarship to. And then one day he meets someone considered even worse: “the enemy,” Keiko Okabe, a Japanese girl his age.

Henry and Keiko slowly develop an unlikely friendship that remains strong even after Keiko and her family are sent to a Japanese internment camp. Henry, with the help of a brusque white cook and a black saxophone player, finds ways to meet with Keiko. Their bond grows with the sweet innocence of first love, transcending even Henry’s total rejection by his militantly anti-Japanese father.

Now, forty years later, the old, boarded-up Panam Hotel is being opened and restored. The owner discovers belongings stored there by Japanese relocated during the war, and Henry finds Keiko’s sketchbooks among them. Their discovery enables Henry to renew communication with his own son about Henry’s childhood experiences, and as their relationship develops new levels of understanding, Henry’s son helps Henry to bring sweet closure to this long-ago part of his life.

*Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet* is filled with fascinating history about Seattle’s Chinatown and Japantown during World War II. The novel deals with the internment camp issue non-politically, and simply presents things the way they were, focusing more on the characters and their various perspectives based on their upbringing and experiences. As the novel’s title indicates, the story is full of bitterness mingled with the sweet. It begins simply and develops in complexity, unfolding layer after layer like the
foundations of three contractors. Each of the three contractors accepts renovation jobs that end up changing their lives. As Ethan Willis renovates the Carter Mansion, he finds that his own life needs renovation. Cameron Dane accepts a job hosting Three Rivers Restorations on television and ends up filming not only Ethan’s renovation, but also Jack Kenyon’s work in The Renewal, and Oliver Barnett’s transformation of a church into a club in The Transformation.

In The Renovation, Ethan Willis wishes to be more than the general contractor of Cecily Moretti’s mansion; he wishes to be the general contractor of his life. At the same time Cameron Dane wishes she could undo a wrong from her past, and the guilt Chase Willis carries blinds him from knowing how much his dad loves him. All three learn that only God can renovate the heart.

After her emotionally abusive husband left her for another woman, Leslie Ruskin and her daughter, Ava, start over again in Butler, Pennsylvania. The Renewal introduces Jack from The Renovation as the contractor who renews Leslie’s building. Both Jack and Leslie learn that inner renewal is a prerequisite for taking the next step in life.

When Oliver Barrett chooses to renovate a historic church into a restaurant/club, he knows his mother will protest. In The Transformation, Oliver must learn how to let the Lord transform his life as he determines whom he should marry—Paula, his mother’s choice, or his Jewish boss, Samantha Cohen. As Oliver learns to listen to the Lord, Paula and Samantha learn things about themselves that change the course of their lives.

Terri Kraus handles tough topics as she explores the characters in the Project Restoration series. Guilt, anxiety, alcoholism, divorce, dating non-believers, and sex outside marriage are just a few topics Kraus tackles with honesty and transparency. In each book, at least one of the main characters seeks to find peace through some level of relationship with God—either by conversion or renewed attention to faith. The pacing of the series tends to be slow as the characters unfold, but love triangles, amazing renovation projects, and a few surprises along the way keep things moving. The mostly realistic dialogue and attention to detail give a wider view of the characters and the scenes, adding a cinematic element to the novels. The renovation projects provide a handy symbolism for the theme: we all need to be renovated, renewed, or transformed by God’s grace.

Kristi Wolcott


PAP: 9781414332123, $12.99

Fic viii, 381 p. : ill. ; 21 cm.

Adult Rating: 5

In Beaded Hope, four struggling American women join together to offer hope to a South African community. Heidi, a widowed mother, struggles to understand her teen daughter Katie. Katie’s life changes drastically following a car wreck with her boyfriend. Gabby desperately wants a child and struggles to maintain sanity in the wake of another miscarriage. Cassandra, an aging journalist, learns of the mission trip and
initially views it as a way to save her career. After their arrival in Africa, they meet a woman named Jaleela, whose dream to sell beaded jewelry has extended to the community of women who need a way to support their families. As the team seeks to help the South African community, God works in the lives of the team members too.

As Cathy Liggett introduces the drama-filled lives of the characters, they virtually walk off the pages of this character-driven book. The lives of the women come full circle as their trip changes how they relate to the Lord and to others. A teen pregnancy is addressed in the book as a mistake, but the baby is happily anticipated. The plot moves quickly as the ladies seek to implement Jaleela's dream, and as women die from AIDS. In spite of the potential for despair in the disease-ridden country of South Africa, hope shines through the lives of the women who learn to praise God in spite of challenging circumstances. Based around a real-life mission trip, this book raises awareness of a desperate situation and a way to help. To learn more visit www.beadedhope.com.

**Kristi Wolcott**

**Cool beans : a Maya Davis novel / Erynn Mangum.** *(Maya Davis series ; 1)*

*NavPress. 2010. LCCN 2009037827.*

**PAP:** 9781600067112, $14.99

**Fic**  299 p.; 21 cm.

**Adult (HS) Rating: 4**

*Cool beans* is fun, quirky, entertaining, and for the younger adult reader. Definitely written for the late high school through early twenties woman, this is the story of Maya Davis, coffee barrista. She loves coffee, almost any kind, her beagle, Calvin, and has a great relationship with her parents, spending most Sunday nights with them—eating popcorn, watching movies or playing games. When her best friend Jen brings home a new beau, he turns out to be Maya's first love, a guy she dated for quite a long time and even considered marrying. But Travis doesn't recognize her and she is reluctant to spill the beans to Jen, so the subterfuge begins. Jen and Travis are becoming serious and Maya is more and more unhappy that she is concealing something from her roommate and not following what she knows the Lord wants her to do.

Thrown into the mix is her co-worker Jack, who is a guy best friend (do you see the romance coming?) and the sibling rivalry she feels for her doctor brother who has just moved back to town. You can feel the confusion that is revolving inside Maya, but the book is filled with hope as Maya wrestles with her spiritual life and following God's leading. Lots of Bible verses and great counsel from her Christian friends and Bible study leader, but not in a heavy-handed manner.

**Ceil Carey**

**Hearts awakening / Delia Parr.** *Minneapolis: Bethany House. 2010. LCCN 2009040893.*

**PAP:** 9780764206702, $14.99

**Fic**  352 p.; 22 cm.

**Adult (HS) Rating: 3**

Although beautiful in character, Ellie's external appearance is plain—as has been painfully pointed out to her throughout her life. Now, after being disowned by her cousins, her only remaining family members, Ellie has the opportunity to marry a man...
whose previous marriage ended in a scandal with the death of his wife. He needs someone to care for his children, and she needs a way to provide for herself and her future security.

Ellie believes that her chance to marry Jackson, though unusual, will give her everything she has dreamed of—a handsome husband, a home of her own—plus two children to care for, with the possibility of more of her own. When Ellie agrees to marry Jackson she knows it is going to be difficult—especially since the requirement is that she marry him in name only. Ellie faces more challenges than she dreamed of when she comes to truly love Jackson. But she encounters his suspicion and temper at every turn, as a result of emotional wounds he received from his first wife.

Hearts Awaken, by Delia Parr, is a somewhat predictable novel; its very

---

PAP: 9781433509254, $15.99
Fic 412 p. : map ; 23 cm.
Adult (HS) Rating: *5

*The Sword*: a novel written by Bryan M. Litfin, is a futuristic medieval fantasy, with a technological twist. A devastating plague followed by a world war nearly eradicates the entire human race. Those left band together in pockets across the globe. On a game hunt in the wild Beyond, Captain Teofil (Teo) of the Royal Chiveisian Guard is nearly mauled to death by an angry bear. He is rescued by the beautiful and resourceful Anastasia (Ana) of Edgeton, a local farming community. When Ana is kidnapped, Teo uses his strength and military cunning to rescue her from a band of barbarians. Lost in the Beyond, Teo and Ana discover an ancient book about the god of the cross, a forbidden subject in Chiveis. Upon their return, they secretly share their find with a small group of friends, also disillusioned by the local religion.

Ana quickly embraces the god of the cross with open arms; while Teo is uncertain that any god is worthy of his devotion. When a wicked High Priestess, a spurned old girlfriend, and division among the believers threaten to destroy Teo’s world, he must decide if the god of the cross is worthy of his trust.

*The Sword* is book 1 of the Chiveis Trilogy. Plot is given time to simmer and develop, with periodic struggles bubbling over, adding texture that holds reader interest. Story-based facts about culture, place, and time are consistent throughout, enhancing believability. Writing style is intellectually stimulating, yet approachable. Humorous interchanges lighten the mood and contribute to characters’ three-dimensional personalities. Protagonists are fully formed with both external and internal challenges. Moral dilemmas include black magic, witchcraft, vulgarities, and implied sexual content; however, these dilemmas add a realistic quality to the struggles faced by the protagonists and enrich the inspirational outcome.

*Kimberley Harris*
nature demands that Ellie and Jackson eventually fall in love with each other. However, the development of the characters, and the unfolding of the fears and hurts that keep them from each other is enough to maintain reader interest, as is the growth of Ellie’s spiritual character. Her perseverance in getting to know Jackson’s boys, and her genuine love for them despite their reluctance to accept her is finally rewarded in a touching scene. And just as Jackson learns to trust a woman again, so Ellie learns to trust God fully, even in her pain and disappointment. She moves beyond the fact that the world does not consider her a “pretty” woman.

Sherri Beeler

No distance too far / Lauraine Snelling. (Home to Blessing ; 2) Minneapolis: Bethany House. 2010. LCCN 2009050211.

PAP: 9780764206108, $14.99
Fic 351 p. : geneal. table ; 22 cm.
Adult (HS) Rating: 4

No Distance Too Far describes Astrid Bjorklund’s struggle to determine God’s will for her life. In this sequel to A Measure of Mercy, she’s completed surgical training in Chicago and desires to return to her hometown of Blessing, North Dakota. Her long-term plan is to help her sister-in-law establish a hospital, but now she feels pulled to serve as a doctor in Africa. To explore missionary service, she travels to Georgia to attend candidate school and interview with the mission’s board of directors. Her youth and gender raise questions, as does her uncertainty about God’s calling in her life, but she requests a short term of two years. While awaiting the board’s decision, Astrid settles in to a round of Bible and missions courses, praying for wisdom and memorizing Scripture. She also continues correspondence with Joshua Landsverk, a young man in Blessing who wants to begin a courtship. Meanwhile, Dr. Elizabeth is experiencing a difficult pregnancy in Blessing.

Although the internal conflict in this volume is slow paced, Lauraine Snelling creates characters that step off the page. The central theme of determining God’s will for an individual’s life applies to every Christian, and is dealt with realistically as both Astrid and her mother struggle with the possibility of her serving on the Dark Continent. The subplots involving Dr. Elizabeth and Joshua are strong. Although the question of Astrid’s foreign missionary service is settled in this volume, Ms. Snelling leaves other questions unanswered, perhaps for a sequel about this first-generation Norwegian American.

Rebecca Valez
200s—Religion


PAP: 9780890515839, $12.99
220.1/3 239 p. : charts ; 22 cm.
Adult Rating: 4

Those familiar with the well-known creation ministry Answers in Genesis and Ken Ham may recognize the name of Ken's brother and author of this book, Steve Ham. The broad thrust of Steve Ham's message throughout In God We Trust is that the Scriptures must have a real and practical place as the authoritative word of God in the lives of Christians.

This book makes the controversial claim that Christians who do not hold to a literal six-day creation have compromised on inerrancy by assenting to human philosophical positions (p. 55). Unfortunately, this position is not stated clearly until the fourth chapter. Despite this claim, the book lays a solid foundation for a full-orbed understanding of the relationship between authority and Scripture. Ham interacts with writers such as Richard Dawkins, Tim Keller, Cornelius Van Til, and John MacArthur Jr. He also interacts with documents such as the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy. The author seeks to challenge faith that is blind (p. 16). There is a strong and clear presentation of the depravity of human beings and the greatness of the grace of salvation offered in Christ.

Ham's methodology could have been softened a bit more by including some biblical references to the need to love those whom we seek to debate or persuade (p. 18). Furthermore, Ham departs from the traditional Reformed position regarding the way that a person may know that the Bible is the word of God through the empowering experience of the Holy Spirit. By eliminating all experience from the issue of biblical authority Ham makes the authority of Scripture entirely intellectual. Ham seems to have unwittingly thrown the baby out with the bathwater by attacking experience. Despite a whole chapter devoted to the Holy Spirit, Ham does not integrate the experience of the Holy Spirit's power into his apologetic logic.

David H. Wenkel


PAP: 9781418541712, $19.99
220.9 viii, 470 p. : ill., maps (chiefly col) ; 24 cm.
Adult (HS) Rating: 5

Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts, a visual overview of the geography, politics, and thematic issues of Scripture, goes though the books of the Bible and conveys the meaning or history behind particular passages.

The commentary to each book addresses scholars' disagreements or divergent views, e.g., the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, length & character of the creation “days,” or unity of the epistle Romans and its dating. There is a balance between historicity and orthodoxy and one grows a deepening grasp of God's Word. The book recognizes the fundamental or liberal interpretation of some issues and there is a clear effort to steer a middle course.
Pastor Craig Groeschel introduces himself as a recovering Christian atheist in The Christian Atheist: Believing in God But Living as if He Doesn’t Exist. Like the typical American, he was born into a “Christian” family that paid lip service to church attendance and faith in God without developing a spiritual relationship with the Almighty. During childhood he entered a phase of fear-driven ritualistic prayers to escape the fires of Hell, and as a teen, he attempted to find a workable salvation through human effort.

The Christian Atheist relates Pastor Groeschel’s personal journey from knowing about God to a genuine relationship with the true, loving God. He tells his story with a simple transparency and doesn’t try to hide his slips from the pastoral pedestal. He reveals his struggles with being a workaholic and his own battle to live up to a righteous standard. Whether the anecdotes are about himself or someone else, they are told without judgment and framed in the light of a Scriptural viewpoint.

The book offers twelve “When You Believe in God but...” chapters. Topics deal with knowing God, prayer, fairness, forgiveness, happiness, money, and more. Each chapter is divided into subheadings to thoroughly cover the material. Colorful, humorous illustrations are presented with clarification in the light of the Word of God, without extensive quotes from the Bible.

Craig Groeschel writes a compelling narrative that identifies with all of us who wrestle with issues of believing an ideal and living it without hypocrisy. He doesn’t offer facile answers, but the understanding that as a pastor, he combats his own contradictions. Those who aren’t prepared to be challenged may find the book disturbing and unsettling. Those ready for self-examination will find this book valuable, as the author allows the reader to travel the path of enlightenment with him.

Deborah H. Rabern

Christianity beyond belief: following Jesus for the sake of others / Todd
Weeks is now using the phrase “loving relationship” to share practical ways that Christians can and should reach out to others. In these chapters, Hunter addresses the roles of individual Christians, the organized church, and the Holy Spirit in his explanation of how Christ seeks to work with his children during their time on earth before He meets them in heaven.

Each chapter concludes with several questions to help the reader apply these ideas to their daily activities. Certainly, Hunter includes plenty of theology in his writing but balances it with practical ideas and suggestions for applying the theory in everyday situations. This book is geared for a seasoned Christian as opposed to someone new to the faith. It lends itself equally well to individual reading or group discussion. Scripture passages in the book are taken from The Message, making them easily readable and interpreted throughout.

Rachel Langston

**Woman to Woman:** Sharing Jesus with a Muslim Friend by Joy Loewen is a timely and loving account of one woman’s ministry to Muslim women. The youngest daughter of Christian missionaries to Somalia, she describes a childhood fraught with fear. For years, she buried her fear of Muslims. Then her husband’s job takes them to a hospital in Pakistan where Joy begins to minister to sick Muslims with respect, love, and compassion. Soon she begins to understand and feel at home with Muslims.

Like other women who do not know Jesus, Joy’s Muslim friends are in need of forgiveness, the assurance of eternal life, and the unconditional love of God, which is only attainable through a savior, Jesus Christ. In spite of these needs, Muslim women struggle with intellectual and cultural barriers that keep them from reaching out to a loving God. Many struggle with doctrines such as the trinity, others with superstitions, and still others with the bonds of family and...
culture. While accepting Jesus can be liberating in many ways, it can mean being cast out by loved ones and the community.

Though this book is primarily about sharing Jesus with Muslim women, the underlying truth is that love, respect, and empathy are desirable and vital in witnessing to others, regardless of ethnicity and gender. Accepting the gift of salvation can be a lengthy process for Muslims. However, there are women and men who have accepted Christ and are reaching out to others. This is a reason to hope. In conclusion, the author says:

“If we rise up above our fear of Muslims and believe we can feel at home with them in the Kingdom, then we will see amazing things happening.”

*Carmen Redding*


PAP: 9781433513411, $17.99

269/2/092 or B 219 p.; 21 cm.

Arnold Dallimore of the 20th century was the unknown pastor of a tiny Baptist church in Canada; George Whitefield of the 18th century was the internationally famous evangelist who—along with his friends John and Charles Wesley—was one of God’s major means of bringing spiritual revival to Britain and America. But in many ways it is the unknown man who has given us the famous one. Dallimore made it his lifelong avocation to study and write about Whitefield, eventually producing an acclaimed two-volume biography which has become beloved by many Christians since its release in 1970 (vol. 1) and 1980 (vol. 2).

True to form, Dallimore’s next installment was released ten years after that, in 1990, only in this case he produced an abridgment (which is now being reissued by Crossway). This much shorter, one-volume, work makes the great evangelist Whitefield more accessible to the Christian public. Dallimore chose the more "memorable and exciting" events in Whitefield’s life for this book, he says. He also wrote in a style appropriate for a somewhat broader audience than that of his massive original work.

Dallimore still manages to cover Whitefield’s whole life: his conversion, his ministry in England, his trips to America, his marriage, his doctrinal positions (and controversies), and his funeral. Dallimore is not wholly uncritical of Whitefield but obviously and rightfully admires the famous man. Most people will not wade through Dallimore's massive work, but if they pick up this abridgment they will likely be happy they read it.

*Mark L. Ward, Jr.*

*300s—Social Sciences*


HBB: 9780824947774, $19.99

363.28/9092 or B 265 p.; 22 cm.

Adult Rating: 3

At age 46, Val Agosta was diagnosed with breast cancer and made a startling decision—to become a private investigator. This is her story of solving cases in unique and often entertaining ways. Val had various business partners who helped her on stakeouts,
Homeschooling for the Rest of Us is a practical and supportive resource for the typical homeschooling family. Sonya Haskins provides ideas and encouragement from a conservative Christian viewpoint to help navigate a homeschooling landscape fraught with the pressures of romanticized, unattainable perfection and societal opinions concerning the characteristics and outcomes of homeschooling. Along the way, she fills a void in homeschooling literature by focusing on positive relationships within the family before academics.

Individual chapters reinforce the theme that home education can be an integral part of a healthy family life. Moral character and love of learning are as important as an academic plan. The boundaries of homeschooling are blurred so that even household activities become learning experiences that develop responsibility and strengthen family ties. Additional chapters address time management, extracurricular activities, support groups, academic interest and excellence, budget constraints, and children with special needs.

This book is written by a homeschooling mother and experienced author and consultant. Frequent and relevant anecdotes and insights from homeschooling parents grace the margins and complement the text—anticipating thoughts familiar to many readers. Other helpful elements include ample lists of ideas, sample schedules, occasional biblical citations, and a questionnaire to help identify the best educational environment for each child.

In the author’s own words, “this book is about creating a path of your own amid the maze of home education options and the challenges you’ll encounter over the years.” The empathy, respect, encouragement, and guidance offered in this book will be appreciated by a wide variety of homeschooling parents and other relatives. Young adults from homeschooling families may also find this book helpful to gain insight into the dynamics of establishing home education in context as well as their role in the adventure.

Bradley A. Poteat

Homeschooling for the rest of us: how your one-of-a-kind family can make homeschooling and real life work / Sonya Haskins. Minneapolis: Bethany House. 2010. LCCN 2009040691.

PAP: 9780764207396, $13.99
371.04/2 172 p.: ill.; 22 cm.

Adult Rating: 4
000s—Information and General Works


PAP: 9781555706562, $59.95
025.1/9780973 xii, 172 p.
: ill.; 28 cm.

PROF Rating: 5
Administrator, promoter, teacher, technician—today's school librarian has many roles to fill, which is why the term of library media specialist is more commonly used. School library personnel must be specialists in their field in order to have a solidly functioning program. Barbara Stein Martin and Marco Zannier recognize this and provide an excellent reference manual to help school library media specialists run their media centers efficiently and effectively. Fundamentals of School Library Media Management covers both the basics and the specifics of running the media center. There are examples, templates, and a variety of resources to utilize, making this a premium reference source.

Today's school library is a hub of activity. Students have gone beyond books as a prime learning resource; in fact, most students check out the Internet before they check out a book when it comes to research. To meet the ever-increasing needs of today's student and the continually changing technology scene, the school's library media specialist must be able to keep up with these demands. Martin and Zannier's resource book provides the means for understanding the different roles required to run an efficient media center. Slim, yet very complete in presentation, their reference book is full of source material. The multitude of samples and template along with the additional references make this a go-to source of great value.

Pam Webb


HBB: 9780060777562, $24.99
PAP: 9780060777579, $14.99
028.1/62 229 p.; 23 cm.

PROF Rating: 5
Every year publishers produce thousands of books for children. But what separates a good book from a bad one? From Cover to Cover by Kathleen T. Horning discusses how to evaluate these books and critically evaluate them for merit.

Horning presents a handbook for the children's book reviewer, as well as the layperson interested in children's literature. Cover offers an insider look at how children's books are published, the physical structures and components of these books, and an examination of the various genres in children's publishing, from nonfiction to picture books. Each chapter highlights outstanding authors and works of literature as examples.

The book would have benefited from headers so that readers might more conveniently reference needed chapters. It also would have been valuable if the book included a highlighted section of questions to ask when reviewing, rather than burying them in the text. However, these are of minor importance. The content itself is excellent and the extensive
bibliography and source notes make it easy to pursue areas of interest. Horning also includes an index.

As useful a primer for writers as it is for reviewers, *From Cover to Cover* demonstrates what great literature looks like and how to think about it for oneself. A valuable tool for the book reviewer.

*Jaclyn S. Miller*
## INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An absence so great : a novel</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts of faith ; 1-2</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adler, David A.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adler, Michael S.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agosta, Val</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen, Roger MacBride.</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen, Thomas B.</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alley, R.W.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Along for the ride : a novel</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andreasen, Dan</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrews, Andy</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avi</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Axelrod, Dee.</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baynes, Pauline</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaded hope</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birds</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The birthday ball</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop, Nic</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood of kings ; 1-2</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood ransom</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloom, Suzanne</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boontown</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken memory : a novel of Rwanda</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown, Don</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunn, Davis</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By darkness hid</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calien, Liz</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbell, Richard P.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbell, Sarah C.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candy bomber : the story of the Berliln Airlift's &quot;Chocolate Pilot&quot;</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain Mac : the life of Donald Baxter MacMillan, Arctic explorer</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centurion's wife</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapman, Kelly</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chives trilogy ; 1</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Christian atheist : believing in God but living as if he doesn't exist</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity beyond belief : following Jesus for the sake of others</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Chronicles of Narnia ; 2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church summer cramp</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The circulatory story</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of cannibals</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combres, Elisabeth</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cool beans : a Maya Davis novel</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooney, Caroline B.</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corcoran, Mary K.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowan, Mary Morton</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crawley, Dave</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Creepy Caves mystery</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The crimson cap</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crow call</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czekaj, Jef</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallimore, Arnold A.</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dessen, Sarah</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dial easy-to-read. Level 2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dog days of Charlotte Hayes</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donaldson, Joan</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Dutch Club series ; 2-4</td>
<td>27-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dream Stealer</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dronzek, Laura</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebberl, Jeff</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elliott, L. M.</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellis, Carson</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma's poem : the voice of the Statue of Liberty</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faithgirlz</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feiffer, Jules</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleischman, Sid</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flood, Bo</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ford, Jamie</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From cover to cover : evaluating and reviewing children's books</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundamentals of school library media management : a how-to-do-it manual</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funny business : conversations with writers of comedy</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Whitefield : God's anointed servant in the great revival of the nineteenth century</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glaser, Linda</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gooney Bird is so absurd</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray, Rita</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groeschel, Craig</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing patterns : Fibonacci numbers in nature</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ham, Steve</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The handy geography answer book</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The handy weather answer book</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris, Lisa</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haskins, Sonya A.</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The heart mender : a story of second chances</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearts awakening</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henkes, Kevin</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here comes the garbage barge!</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The hidden flame</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hile, Kevin</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himler, Ronald</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeschooling for the rest of us : how your one-of-a-kind family can make homeschooling and real life work</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopkins, Lee Bennett</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hornning, Kathleen T.</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel on the corner of Bitter and Sweet : a novel</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard, Ellen</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How-to-do-it manuals ; no. 171</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter, Todd D.</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibatoulline, Bagram</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In God we trust : why biblical authority matters for every believer</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incredible inventions : poems</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jago</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jesus storybook Bible : every story whispers his name</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson, Meredith</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juliet's moon</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just jump!</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennedy, Marlane</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingsbury, Karen</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirkpatrick, Jane</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowlton, Laurie Lazzaro</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kraus, Terri</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee, Jared</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let's have a Daddy Day</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis, C. S.</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author/Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liggett, Cathy</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln and his boys</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lion, the witch and the wardrobe</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litfin, Bryan M.</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lloyd-Jones, Sally</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loewen, Joy</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking Glass Library ; 3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowry, Lois</td>
<td>15, 16, 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynch, P.J.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyon, Tammie</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Malacca conspiracy</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mangum, Erynn</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcus, Leonard S.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin, Barbara Stein</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maya Davis series ; 1</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMullan, Kate</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission trip impossible</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Lincoln's high-tech war : how the North used the telegraph, railroads, surveillance balloons, iron-clads, high-powered weapons, and more to win the Civil War</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder at midnight</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Vicksburg</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mysterious Benedict Society</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mysterious Benedict Society ; 1-3</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mysterious Benedict Society and the perilous journey</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mysterious Benedict Society and the prisoner's dilemma</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mystery of Magillicuddy's gold</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelson's complete book of Bible maps and charts</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nic Bishop butterflies and moths</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nivola, Claire A.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No distance too far</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oke, Janette</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Viney's mountain</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One big rain : poems for rainy days</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online with God</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'Rourke, Ryan</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parr, Delia</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Particular, Nowen N.</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearl and Wagner : one funny day</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A picture book of Dolley and James Madison</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portraits of the heart ; 2</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preacher creature strikes on Sunday</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princess with a purpose</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Project Restoration novel ; 1-3</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A promise and a rainbow</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pyle, Howard</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading, rhyming, and 'rithmetic : poems</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Nose Studio</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The renewal</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The renovation</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rinaldi, Ann</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritz, Karen</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenberg, Matthew T.</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarcone-Roach, Julia</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singletary, Mabel Elizabeth</td>
<td>27-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sis, Peter</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snelling, Lauraine</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something to jump about</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spy mom</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stead, Rebecca</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart, Trenton Lee</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudyka, Diana</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The sword : a novel</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thaler, Mike</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They never came back</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas, Middy Chilman</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thompson, Ricki</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To darkness fled</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The transformation</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A troubled peace</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tucci, Paul A.</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunnell, Michael O.</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twilight land</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking the plank to the baptism tank</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walsh, Sheila</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A warrior prince for God</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warriors in the crossfire</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wells, Rosemary</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What about bear?</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When you reach me</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will : God's mighty warrior</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will, God's mighty warrior ; 1-3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williamson, Jill</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, Nathan D.</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows with birds</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter, Jonah</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman to woman : sharing Jesus with a Muslim friend</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zannier, Marco</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>