

NINE TO TWELVE

FICTION

Adventure and Mystery

Benny on the Case

by Wesley King

(Beach Lane Books/Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing), \$17.99) 978-1-6659-3769-6

Benny, who has mosaic Down syndrome, makes a new friend at school. Together they try to solve the mystery of who is stealing at the retirement home where Benny lives. (10-13)

Earhart:

The Incredible Flight of a Field Mouse Around the World (Mouse Adventures series)

written and illustrated by Torben Kuhlmann, translated from German by David Henry Wilson

(NorthSouth Books, \$21.95) 978-0-7358-4579-4

After seeing a picture of a lion, a field mouse decides to fly to Africa to see if the great felines really exist. Flying adventures ensue. Realistic watercolor illustrations. (9-12)

The Golden Necklace:

A Darjeeling Tea Mystery

by Mitali Perkins, illustrated by Maithili Joshi

(Charlesbridge, \$15.99) 978-1-62354-373-0

In this exploration of cultural and social issues in northern India, Sona must find out who has robbed her older friend's family gold. Grayscale digital illustrations. (9-11)



Mr. Lemoncello's Library Olympics: The Graphic Novel

by Chris Grabenstein, illustrated by Douglas Holgate, colors by Marta Todeschini

(Random House Graphic/Penguin Random House, \$21.99) 978-0-593-70982-5

Mr. Lemoncello invites the national champions to compete in his Library Olympics, and the winners are promised a full college scholarship. Can their brilliance also defend against the threat of censorship? Cartoon-style graphics. (9-12)

Contemporary Issues



Absolutely Everything: A Graphic Novel

written and illustrated by Damian Alexander

(Graphic Universe/Lerner, \$23.99) 979-8-7656-0851-7

Marcella is overwhelmed by sixth grade: friendships, homework, and a move. Finding out that she has ADHD helps her learn what she needs to thrive. Bold, clear artwork conveys her inner world. (10-12)



Adi of Boutanga:

A Story from Cameroon

by Alain Serge Dzotap, illustrated by Marc Daniau,

translated from French by Alain Serge Dzotap

(Eerdmans BFYR/Eerdmans, \$18.99)

978-0-8028-5629-6

Adi is 13, and her uncle, the head of the family, wants to marry her off, but her parents send her to a special school instead. Deeply colored, stylized oil illustrations. Extensive back matter. (8-11)

After:

A Survivor's Story

by Hallee Adelman, illustrated by Patrick Corrigan

(Albert Whitman & Company, \$18.99)

978-0-8075-3095-5

A young survivor of a horrible event finds a safe place to process what happened and companionship with another survivor. Expressive illustrations. (8-11)



*** A Change Is Gonna Come**

by Sam Cooke, illustrated by Nikkolos Smith

(Little Bee Books, \$19.99) 978-1-4998-1615-0

Lines of a renowned Civil Rights anthem are accompanied by moving and powerful illustrations of landmark events in African American history, described in detail in the back matter. (8-11)



Old Blue Is My Home: A Picture Book

written and illustrated by Lita Judge

(Abrams BYR/Abrams, \$18.99) 978-1-4197-7152-1

A young girl accepts that her family lives in a van and enjoys many things about her nomadic life, but she also feels like an outcast at school. Watercolor and pencil illustrations. (8-11)

D **Pilgrim Codex**

by Vivian Mansour, illustrated by Emmanuel Valtierra,
translated from Spanish by Carlos Rodriguez Cortez
(Levine Querido, \$18.99) 978-1-64614-515-7

A current-day story of migration from Mexico to the U.S., told by a boy enduring the difficult trip. Richly colored illustrations in Mesoamerican codex style, based on 10th–16th century manuscripts. Author's note. Glossary. (9-12)

D * **Please Pay Attention**

by Jamie Sumner
(Atheneum BFYR/Simon & Schuster, \$17.99)
978-1-6659-5607-9

Twelve-year-old Bea, a wheelchair user, struggles with her reactions to a devastating shooting at her school as she works to process her grief. Told in lyrical free verse. (9-12)

Family and Community

D **Chickenpox**

written and illustrated by Remy Lai
(Henry Holt BYR/Macmillan, \$14.99)
978-1-250-86330-0

When Abby, 12, and her younger siblings get the chickenpox at the same time, mayhem ensues. Clear, colorful illustrations. Based on the author's childhood experience. (10-13)

D * **Danilo Was Here**

by Tamika Burgess
(Harper/HarperCollins, \$19.99) 978-0-06-315966-2
In Panamá in 1989, against the backdrop of the U.S. invasion, a talented young baseball player's skills give him a chance to visit California and search for his deadbeat father. (9-12)

D **Finding Lost**

by Holly Goldberg Sloan
(Rocky Pond Books/Penguin Random House, \$17.99)
978-0-593-53025-2

When a little lost dog follows middle schooler Cordy home, he proves to be just the catalyst her family needs to move on from the loss of her father. (9-12)

* **Gus and Glory**

by Sarah Guillory
(Roaring Brook Press/Macmillan, \$18.99)
978-1-250-34936-1

A 12-year-old girl spends the summer with grandparents she barely knows. A stray bloodhound becomes the perfect collaborator in her quest to unravel the mystery of her missing mother. (9-12)

D **A Hero's Guide to Summer Vacation**

by Pablo Cartaya
(Kokila/Penguin Random House, \$18.99)
978-0-451-47975-4

Grief-stricken 13-year-old Gonzalo reluctantly joins his estranged abuelo, a famous fantasy-writer, on the final tour to promote his grandfather's best-selling book series. (9-12)

Octopus Moon

by Bobbie Pyron
(Nancy Paulsen Books/Penguin Random House, \$18.99) 978-0-593-61629-1
Pearl's burgeoning sensitivity leads to a diagnosis of depression. At first resistant to her doctor's advice, she starts to try one new thing at a time. Free verse. (8-11)

The Ripple Effect

by Rebecca Caprara
(Charlesbridge, \$18.99) 978-1-6235-4324-2
Marzella's sixth-grade prank bombed, and the class was punished. The principal gives her a chance for a do-over, which morphs into a townwide community service project. (9-12)

D **Safe Harbor**

by Padma Venkatraman
(Nancy Paulsen Books/Penguin Random House, \$17.99) 978-0-593-11250-2
After moving from India to Rhode Island, Geetha joins her new friend Miguel to rescue a harp seal pup and organize a community beach cleanup. Author's note. Resources. (9-11)

* **Shell Song:**

Based on a True Family Story

written and illustrated by Sharon Fujimoto-Johnson
(Beach Lane Books/Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing/S & S, \$19.99) 978-1-6659-3867-9
A Hawaiian Japanese immigrant patriarch's spirit breaks after he is imprisoned following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. His family remembers him through his seashell collection. Vibrant mixed-media illustrations. Back matter. (8-10)

D **Through Sand and Salt:**

A Tale of Discovery Across the Sahara

written and illustrated by Elizabeth Zunon
(Bloomsbury Children's Books/Bloomsbury, \$18.99)
978-1-5476-0705-1

Malik makes his first difficult journey through the desert with his father's camel caravan, trading precious salt for necessary goods. Acrylics, oil paints, and pastels create sweeping landscapes. Author's note. (8-10)

Weird Sad and Silent

by Alison McGhee

(Rocky Pond Books/Penguin Random House, \$17.99)
978-0-583-85967-4

Daisy, 10, “invisibilizes” and counts to 111 whenever she is confronted by the school bullies. Can the new boy help her to be brave? (9-12)

Fantasy



The Boy Who Lost His Spark

by Maggie O’Farrell, illustrated by

Daniela Jaglenka Terrazzini

(Walker Books US/Candlewick Press, \$18.99)

978-1-5362-3393-3

Unhappy after his family moves to the country, Jem refuses to believe that an ancient creature called a nouka exists, despite his sister’s insistence. Soft ink and watercolor illustrations. (8-11)



Cabin Head and Tree Head (Cabin Head and Tree Head series)

written and illustrated by Scott Campbell

(Tundra Books/Penguin Random House Canada,
\$13.99) 978-1-77488-505-5

Follow the adventures of best buds Cabin Head and Tree Head and their community as they support each other’s challenges, disappointments, and some silly ideas. Detailed watercolor illustrations. (9-12)

D Cousins in the Time of Magic

by Emma Otheguy, illustrated by Poly Bernatene

(Atheneum BFYR/Simon & Schuster, \$17.99)

978-1-6659-1518-2

Kids time-travel to 1862, helping Mexico gain victory over the French at the Battle of Puebla, impacting the American Civil War. Black-and-white spot illustrations. Glossary, notes, sources. (9-11)



*** Evie and Rhino**

by Neridah McMullin, illustrated by Astred Hicks

(Walker Books Australia, \$18.99) 978-17616-0030-2

Evie bonds with shipwrecked Rhino, but he belongs to the Royal Melbourne Zoological Society. Can she keep him? Detailed grayscale illustrations. (8-11)



*** The Forest of a Thousand Eyes**

by Frances Hardinge, illustrated by Emily Gravett

(Amulet Books/Abrams, \$19.99) 978-1-4197-7778-3

When a stranger steals the precious spyglass her people rely on for survival, Feather sets out on a dangerous quest to retrieve it. Evocative prose. Atmospheric drawings in green hues. (9-12)

D The Gate, the Girl, and the Dragon

written and illustrated by Grace Lin

(Little, Brown Books for Young Readers/Hachette,
\$18.99) 978-0-316-59468-4

After kicking the Sacred Sphere out of the stone spirit world into the human world, lion cub Jin must find a way back before it is too late. Bright illustrations. (9-12)

*** The Library of Unruly Treasures**

by Jeanne Birdsall, illustrated by Matt Phalen

(Alfred A. Knopf/Random House Children’s Books/
PRH, \$17.99) 978-0-525-57904

A girl from a dysfunctional family visits a loving uncle, fulfilling a prophecy of finding a new home for a clan of small winged creatures—and ultimately herself. Black-and-white watercolor illustrations. (9-12)

Losing the Plot

by Annaleise Byrd

(Walker Books Australia, \$17.99) 978-1-7616-0038-8

While reading Grimm’s *Hansel and Gretel* together, Basil and his student, Terry, are catapulted into the dangerous world of unionized fairy alliances, and enlisted to help rescue Hansel. (8-11)

*** Lost Evangeline (Norendy Tales series)**

by Kate DiCamillo, illustrated by Sophie Blackall

(Candlewick Press, \$17.99) 978-1-5362-2552-5

A shoemaker adopts a tiny girl, but his wife sells her for gold, sending both father and daughter off on a string of adventures. Detailed grayscale illustrations. (9-11)



D * Oasis

written and illustrated by Guojing

(Godwin Books/Henry Holt BYR/Macmillan, \$21.99)

978-1-250-81837-9

Separated from their mother and barely surviving in a barren desert, JieJie and DiDi manage to reactivate an obsolete robot, which evolves into a capable caregiver. Windswept, monochrome illustrations. (9-12)



Stitch Head: The Graphic Novel

by Guy Bass, illustrated by Pete Williamson

(Random House Graphic/Random House Children’s
Books/PRH, \$14.99) 978-8-217-02616-6

Forgotten by his mad scientist creator, a patchwork creature is lured in by the evil ringleader of a traveling carnival. Spooky illustrations. Adapted from the Stitch Head chapter book series. (9-12)

 Tyger

by SF Said, illustrated by Dave McKean
(Penguin Workshop/Penguin Random House, \$18.99)
978-0-593-88724-0

When Adam finds a wounded mythical tyger, he and his friend Zadie must help the animal escape London before it is captured and the city is destroyed. Black-and-white illustrations. (9-12)

 Vanya and the Wild Hunt (Vanya Vallen Adventures series)

by Sangu Mandanna, illustrated by Kristina Kister and Nidhi Naroth
(Roaring Brook Press/Macmillan, \$17.99)
978-1-250-89983-5

An 11-year-old neurodivergent British Indian girl is transported to an enchanted community where she learns about her heritage and how to fight dangerous mythical monsters. Black-and-white illustrations. (10-12)

 The Village Beyond the Mist

by Sachiko Kashiwaba, illustrated by Miho Satake, translated from Japanese by Avery Fischer Udagawa
(Restless Books, \$18.00) 978-1-63206-392-2
Lina is sent to a mysterious hidden village for summer vacation. She is expected to work there, helping out the townspeople and their mythical creatures. Whimsical black-and-white illustrations. (8-11)

A Wolf Called Fire

by Roseanne Parry, illustrated by Mónica Armiño
(Greenwillow Books/HarperCollins, \$18.99)
978-0-0634-1513-3
Warm, the smallest of the wolf pack, is suddenly responsible for its survival against enemy wolves, hunters, and natural disasters. Engaging text. Dramatic black-and-white illustrations. Extensive back matter. (9-12)

Folklore and Fairy Tales

Bunns Rabbit

written and illustrated by Alan Barillaro
(Candlewick Press, \$18.99) 978-1-5362-1467-3
A kit, shunned and maligned for having short ears, wishes to be like all the other rabbits ... with harrowing results. Alternately soaring and intimate digital illustrations. (8-11)

The Edge of the Silver Sea

by Alex Mullarky
(Kelpies/Floris Books, P \$9.99) 978-1-78250-917-2
Blair, desperate to move back from the remote, mystical Scottish island she's just landed on, strikes a bargain with a malevolent ancient Celtic goddess. Map. Black-and-white spot illustrations. (8-11)

Historical Fiction

 CeeCee:

Underground Railroad Cinderella

by Shana Keller, illustrated by Laura Freeman
(Charlesbridge, \$18.99) 978-1-62354-389-1
In the antebellum South, a bullied enslaved Black girl plots her escape, with the help of Harriet Tubman. Intimate digital illustrations. (8-11)

The Enemy's Daughter

by Anne Blankman
(Viking/Penguin Random House, \$18.99)
978-0-593-62304-6
Separated from her father during World War I, Marta hides her German identity while living with an Irish family in England. (10-13)

 Giant

by Judith McQuoid
(Little Island Books, \$17.99) 978-1-915071-63-7
The philosophical and fantastical underpinnings of C. S. Lewis's later writings, especially *The Chronicles of Narnia*, are glimpsed in this warm portrait of his young life. (9-12)

 * **The Nine Moons of Han Yu and Luli**

written and illustrated by Karina Yan Glaser
(Allida/HarperCollins, \$19.99) 978-0-06-328443-2
Parallel stories of a boy from eighth-century China and a girl from 1931 Chinatown who must save their respective families and are united by a unique piece of silk and a Tang dynasty poet. Black-and-white spot illustrations. (10-13)

 * **A Sea of Lemon Trees: The Corrido of Roberto Alvarez**

by María Dolores Águila, illustrated by Rafael López
(Roaring Brook Press/Macmillan, \$17.99)
978-1-250-34261-4
During the Great Depression, Mexican American Roberto, 12, becomes the lead plaintiff in a legal case battling segregation in a Southern California elementary school. Free verse. Grayscale spot illustrations. Back matter. (10-12)

The Secret of Honeycake

by Kimberly Newton Fusco

(Alfred A. Knopf/Random House Children's Books/PRH, \$17.99) 978-0-593-12177-1

Eleven-year-old Hurricane has trouble finding her voice, but she definitely does not want to leave her ocean home to live with her Aunt Claire in the city. Set in the 1930s. (9-12)

Surviving Vesuvius:

A Lucky Escape from the Tragic Fate of Ancient Pompeii

by Christopher Harisson, illustrated by Beth Waters
(Wide Eyed Editions/The Quarto Group, \$24.99)
978-0-71127-925-4

In 79 C.E, a rich, complex society in Southern Italy was leveled by a ferocious volcanic eruption. The events are known in detail thanks to a contemporary account. Painterly illustrations. Time line. (10-13)

We Are American, Too

by Kristen Mei Chase, illustrated by Jieting Chen
(Farrar, Straus & Giroux (BYR)/Macmillan, \$18.99)
978-0-374-39021-1

Mei and her family celebrate her great-great-grandfather who, in 1898, was the second Chinese person born in Washington, D.C. Colorful illustrations. (8-10)

When Sally O'Malley Discovered the Sea

by Karen Cushman
(Alfred A. Knopf/Random House Children's Books/PRH, \$17.99) 978-0-593-65057-8
In the summer of 1894, armed only with her gumption, Sally strikes out west across Oregon for the sea. Adventure? That's easy. Learning to trust others? Not so fast. (9-12)

Will's Race for Home: A Western

by Jewell Parker Rhodes, illustrated by Olga Ivanov and Aleksey Ivanov
(Little, Brown Books for Young Readers/Hachette, \$17.99) 978-0-316-29933-6
In 1889 Will and his father, a Black sharecropper, leave Texas to stake a claim in Oklahoma. But people, animals, and the environment pose deadly threats. Full-page grayscale illustrations. (10-13)

Holidays and Religion

Days of Awe:

Stories for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur

Adapted from traditional sources by Eric A. Kimmel, illustrated by Sarah Green
(Holiday House, \$18.99) 978-0-8234-5655-0
Three traditional folktales represent the important mitzvot of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur—repentance, prayer, and charity. Folk-art-style illustrations. (8-11)

Humor

Future Me Saves the World (and Ruins My Life)

by Leah Cypess, illustrated by Wes Molebash
(Aladdin/Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing/S & S, \$18.99) 978-1-6659-6439-5
Fourth grader Ethan receives a seemingly simple assignment from his 39-year-old self—convincing his substitute teacher to continue teaching so she doesn't become an evil dictator and destroy the planet. Cartoon-style black-and-white spot art. (8-11)

Into the Bewilderness: A Graphic Novel

written and illustrated by Gus Gordon
(HarperAlley/HarperCollins, \$24.99)
978-0-06-324612-6
Luis the bear and Pablo the mole leave their cabin in the woods for an adventure in the Big City. Things don't go exactly as planned. Soft clear artwork. (9-12)

J vs. K

by Kwame Alexander and Jerry Craft, illustrated by Jerry Craft
(Little, Brown Books for Young Readers/Hachette, \$16.99) 978-0-316-58268-1
Former fifth grade rivals (J who draws and K who writes) realize that, by joining forces, they just might win the school's creative writing contest. Humorous black-and-white illustrations. (9-12)

Trial and Error

by Robin Newman, illustrated by Deborah Zemke
(Creston Books, \$18.99) 978-1-954354-36-4
An ant practicing as a lawyer wins case after case in a variety of legal situations. Black-and-white artwork. (9-11)

The Very Fine Clock

by Muriel Spark, illustrated by Edward Gorey
(Transit Children's Editions/Transit Books, \$19.95)
979-8-893380-26-2

Although he has a warm connection with Professor Horace John Morris and his friends, Ticky refuses an honorary professorship out of regard for the other clocks. Black-and-white illustrations. (8-11)

Magical Realism



Natalie Babbitt's Tuck Everlasting: The Graphic Novel

by Natalie Babbitt, adapted and illustrated by K. Woodman-Maynard
(Farrar, Straus & Giroux (BYR)/Macmillan, \$22.99)
978-0-374-39185-0

This sensitive reimagining of the enduring classic incorporates many of the original's memorable lines while imbuing it with fresh images. Back matter includes a dialogue with Babbitt's daughter. Delicate artwork in a subdued palette. (10-13)

*** The Winter of the Dollhouse**

by Laura Amy Schlitz
(Candlewick Press, \$18.99) 978-1-5362-3608-8
Tiph feels such a strong connection with a valuable antique doll that she steals it, setting off a chain of magical events. Ingenious plot twists and insightful character development. (10-13)

School



The Cartoonists Club

written and illustrated by Raina Telgemeier and Scott McCloud
(Graphix/Scholastic, \$25.99) 978-1-338-77722-2
Four middle schoolers and a school librarian create a club to learn the process of building visual storylines. Extensive back matter about comics and creating them. Full-color art. (9-12)



Fresh Start

written and illustrated by Gale Galligan, colors by K Czap
(Graphix/Scholastic, \$24.99) 978-1-33804-584-0
Ollie, a diplomat's child accustomed to a nomadic lifestyle, has to adjust for the long term when the family puts down roots in Virginia. Bright, energetic panels. (9-12)



Mixed-Up

by Kami Garcia, illustrated by Brittney Williams, lettering by Tyler Smith
(First Second/Macmillan, \$22.99) 978-1-250-14233-7
Stella was looking forward to fifth grade but now has trouble reading. Peers and elders support her. Text and cheerful illustrations designed for dyslexic and neurodivergent readers. Back matter. (8-11)



Old School

by Gordon Korman
(Harper/HarperCollins, \$19.99) 978-0-06-323814-5
Dex lives at his grandmother's retirement village, having been homeschooled by residents there all his life. Now he's forced to go to middle school. Can he adjust? (10-12)



The Other Side of Imani

by Lisa Springer
(Harper/HarperCollins, \$18.99) 978-0-06-328876-2
Imani, a Black eighth grader, loves fashion designing and wants to get a scholarship by winning a school contest. Then her classmate steals her design. Author's note. (9-12)



Speechless

written and illustrated by Aron Nels Steinke, colors by K Czap
(Graphix/Scholastic, \$24.99) 978-1-338-84933-2
Mira eagerly goes to middle school, but social anxiety hinders her from speaking outside her home. She takes comfort in making stop-motion films. Brightly colored artwork. Resources. Author's note. (9-12)



The Unlikely Heroes Club

by Kate Foster
(Candlewick Press, \$17.99) 978-1-5362-3904-1
During spring break, Oli must attend daily socialization classes for autistic kids. Rescuing a stray dog provides unexpected opportunities for collaboration and friendship. (9-12)

Science Fiction



What Fell from the Sky

by Adrianna Cuevas
(Farrar, Straus & Giroux (BYR)/Macmillan, \$17.99)
978-0-374-39045-7
Soldiers descend on Pineda's small Texan town, supposedly for war games, but he suspects they're really searching for the alien hiding in his barn. Author's note. (9-11)

Zed Moonstein Makes a Friend

by Lance Rubin

(Clarion/HarperCollins, \$19.99) 978-0-06-339665-4
Sixth grader Zed is terrible at making friends. He surreptitiously downloads an app for the perfect AI buddy. But “Matt” becomes super-possessive and not so perfect after all. (9-12)

Social-Emotional Learning

*** Bad Badger:**

A Love Story

by Maryrose Wood, illustrated by Giulia Ghigini
(Union Square Kids/Union Square/Hachette, \$18.99)
978-1-4549-5345-6

A rare spotted badger, living a solitary but otherwise atypical life by the sea, discovers where he truly belongs through his friendship with a seagull. Full-page grayscale illustrations. (8-9)

📖 CurlFriends:

Back in Business (CurlFriends series)

by Sharee Miller
(LB Ink/Little, Brown Books for Young Readers/Hachette, \$24.99) 978-0-316-59149-2
With the help of her friends, a young Black girl wins the dance competition and helps her mom keep her hair salon. Cartoon-style illustrations. (9-12)

📖 Speak Up, Santiago! (Hillside Valley Graphic Novel series)

by Julio Anta, illustrated by Gabi Mendez, colors by Rodrigo Reyes Rico and Juan Murillo
(Random House Graphic/Random House Children's Books/PRH, \$21.99) 978-0-593-65164-3
New Yorker Santiago's sudden immersion in a rural, multi-ethnic Spanish-speaking town exposes unexpected linguistic and cultural gaps. Back home, white classmates question his attending beginners' Spanish classes. Action-filled panels. (9-12)

*** The Boy Who Lived in a Shell:** **Snippets for Wandering Minds**

written and illustrated by John Himmelman
(Margaret Ferguson Books/Holiday House, \$16.99)
978-0-8234-5845-5

An imaginative free-verse world of impossible creatures and improbable children, by turns whimsical and wistful, touching and humorous. Amusing spot pen and ink illustrations. (8-11)

D Hopeful Heroes: **More Poems About Amazing Latinos**

by Margarita Engle, illustrated by Juliet Menéndez
(Godwin Books/Henry Holt BYR/Macmillan, \$18.99)
978-1-250-3194-2
Lyrical portraits of Central and South American activists and artists from the early 1500s to the present. Colorful hand-painted watercolors. Short biographies in back matter. (9-12)

*** This Is Not a Small Voice:** **Poems by Black Poets**

selected by Traci N. Todd, illustrated by Jade Orlando
(Nosy Crow, \$24.99) 979-8-88777-204-2
Vibrant poems by 100 diverse Black poets paired with energetic bold watercolor illustrations illuminate the varied rich Black experience of culture, community, history, and protest. Extensive back matter. (9-12)

Words with Wings and Magic Things

by Matthew Burgess, illustrated by Doug Salati
(Tundra Books/Penguin Random House Canada, \$19.99) 978-1-77488-028-9
Far-ranging and whimsical rhyming poetry grouped into seven loose themes encourages kids to fly, to dream, and to live fully. Expressive illustrations of real and mythical creatures. (8-11)

INFORMATIONAL BOOKS

POETRY

*** Black Diamond Kings**

by Charles R. Smith Jr., illustrated by Adrian Brandon
(Candlewick Press, \$18.99) 978-1-5362-2535-8
Twelve players from the Negro Leagues sparkle as they catch, run, and slug their way to stardom. Short, energetic poems. Bold, dynamic illustrations that pop. Strong back matter. (8-11)

Activities

D Cooking Up Change

by Michael Platt, illustrated by Alleanna Harris
(Magic Cat Publishing, \$18.99) 978-1-4197-7888-9
Enjoy one celebratory recipe for each month, accompanied by descriptions of milestone events and notable people in Black American history. Warmly hued digital illustrations. Short biographies, glossary, resources. (8-11)

Arts

* **An Abundance of Light:**

A Story of Matisse in Morocco

written and illustrated by Lauren Stringer
(Beach Lane Books/Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing/S & S, \$19.99) 978-1-5344-9362-9
A visit to Tangier lifted the famous artist's dark mood, reminded him of his childhood, and inspired his exuberant, colorful paintings. Mixed-media illustrations evoke his style. Unique, informative endpapers. (8-10)

* **How Sweet the Sound**

by Kwame Alexander, illustrated by Charly Palmer
(Little, Brown Books for Young Readers/Hachette, \$18.99) 978-0-316-44249-7
Discover the history of African Americans through the music they created, from the talking drums of West Africa to spirituals to jazz to rock and more. Boldly colored illustrations. Free verse. Extensive back matter. (8-11)

* **Liftoff!:** **How the Apollo Moon Missions Made Alma Thomas's Art Soar**

written and illustrated by Nina Crews
(Millbrook Press/Lerner, \$19.99) 979-875656-4347-1
A Black abstract painter created works inspired by the space flights of the late 1960s. Bold digital illustrations. Unique intersection of art and technology. Excellent back matter. (9-12)

Biography and Memoir

André: **André Leon Talley—A Fabulously Fashionable Fairy Tale**

by Carole Boston Weatherford and Rob Sanders, illustrated by Lamont O'Neal
(Henry Holt BYR/Macmillan, \$19.99) 978-1-250-88728-3
Despite prejudice and limited resources, Talley rose to prominence in the fashion world, due to education, drive, and his grandmother's love. Abundant quotes. Intensely colored stylized illustrations. Back matter. (8-11)

The Five Sides of Marjorie Rice:

How to Discover a Shape

by Amy Alznauer, illustrated by Anna Bron
(Candlewick Press, \$18.99) 978-1-5362-2947-9
An amateur mathematician's curiosity, creativity, and hard work advanced the knowledge of tiling shapes. Bright, elegant geometric art. Bibliography. Suggested activities. (8-11)

* **Harriet Tubman:**

Force of Nature: A Biography in Poems

written and illustrated by Caroline Brewer
(What On Earth!, \$18.99) 978-1-804-66144-4
The life of a legendary runaway slave, freedom fighter, Union Army spy, and nurse shines through 30 emotive rhythmic poems and mixed-media biographically inspired collages. Back matter. (9-12)

Jella Lepman and Her Library of Dreams: **The Woman Who Rescued a Generation of Children and Founded the World's Largest Children's Library**

by Katherine Paterson, illustrated by Sally Deng
(Handprint Books/Chronicle Books, \$21.99) 978-1-4521-8262-9
After World War II, a German Jewish youth advocate established the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY). Retro-style color illustrations. Archival photographs. (9-12)

Jordan Marie Brings Three White Horses **Whetstone (Beyond the Game: Athletes Change the World series)**

by Andrew Maraniss, illustrated by DeAndra Hodge
(Viking/Penguin Random House, P \$6.99) 978-0-593-53635-5
In 2019 a talented Dakota runner ran the Boston Marathon with the names of missing Indigenous women painted on her body. Black-and-white drawings. (8-11)

Marjory's River of Grass:

Marjory Stoneman Douglas, Fierce Protector of the Everglades

written and illustrated by Josie James
(Christy Ottaviano Books/Little, Brown Books for Young Readers/Hachette, \$18.99) 978-0-316-44691-4
Douglas, a suffragist, wartime Red Cross volunteer, and author, had a lifelong mission to save an irreplaceable and diverse natural habitat. Detailed digital illustrations. Bibliography. List of wildlife protection organizations. (9-12)

D Prince Among Slaves:

The Remarkable True Story of an African Prince Enslaved in Mississippi and His Journey Home

by N. H. Senzai, illustrated by Anna Rich
(Nancy Paulsen Books/Penguin Random House, \$19.99) 978-1-9848-1698-6

The life of Prince Abdulrahman Sori from his beginnings in West Africa to his capture, enslavement in the United States, emancipation, and return to the continent of his birth. Descriptive text and emotive acrylic paintings. Detailed author's note. (8-10)

D Sarah Key Evans:

The Power of Quiet Courage

by Amy Nathan, with Sarah Key Evans, illustrated by Jermaine Powell

(University of North Carolina Press, \$16.00)
978-0-8652-6513-4

In 1952 a Black Women's Army Corps private was arrested for not changing her seat on a bus when it entered the South. She later sued, and won. Full-color illustrations. (9-12)

D Twist, Tumble, Triumph:

The Story of Champion Gymnast Ágnes Keleti

by Deborah Bodin Cohen and Kerry Olitzky, illustrated by Martina Peluso

(Kar-Ben Publishing/Lerner, \$18.99)
978-8-7656-1977-3

A Hungarian Jewish athlete put her dreams on hold throughout the Holocaust. Many years later, she reunited with her partner and eventually achieved her goals. Evocative illustrations. (8-10)

Contemporary Issues

D The Endless Sea

by Chi Thai, illustrated by Linh Dao
(Candlewick Press, \$18.99) 978-1-5362-3960-7

A family's fraught sea escape from Vietnam is captured in muted illustrations, which, once the family is settled safely in their new homeland, then glow with color. (8-11)

D I Was Supposed to Be at School

by the children of Maré, in collaboration with Ananda Luz and Isabel Malzoni, illustrated by the children of Maré, translated from Portuguese by Patrick Anthony Barbosa Brock
(Second Story Press, \$21.95) 978-1-77260-432-0
Words and pictures taken from letters that children from a favela in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, sent to the government about how police raids affected them. (8-10)

Ecology

The Crane and the Keeper:

How an Endangered Crane Chose a Human as Her Mate

by Meeg Pincus, illustrated by Gillian Eilidh O'Mara
(Smithsonian Kids/Candlewick Entertainment/Candlewick Press, \$18.99) 978-1-5362-3236-3

A crane, who had bonded with people and therefore wasn't breeding, encountered a clever, human caretaker who helped its lineage continue. Digital art. Extensive back matter. (8-10)

History

D After the Clotilda:

Africatown's Hidden History

by Anitra Butler-Ngugi
(Capstone Press/Capstone, \$23.49)
978-1-66907-477-9

Survivors from the last slave ship to the United States and their descendants built a thriving community, now threatened by pollution. Archival photographs and images. Back matter. (10-13)

D Dreams to Ashes:

The 1871 Los Angeles Chinatown Massacre

by Livia Blackburne, illustrated by Nicole Xu
(Carolrhoda Books/Lerner, \$19.99) 979-8-7656-2722-8
Mounting xenophobia toward Chinese Americans, fueled by racist newspaper commentary, culminated in a brutal attack and 18 deaths. Powerful earth-toned ink and digital illustrations. (10-12)

Hiding in Plain Sight:

Kate Warne and the Race to Save Abraham Lincoln

by Beth Anderson, illustrated by Sally Wern Comport
(Calkins Creek/Astra BFYR/Astra Publishing House, \$18.99) 978-1-63592-823-5

America's first female detective uncovered a plot to assassinate the president-elect during his inaugural train tour. Suspenseful prose and scrapbook-like collage illustrations. Archival photographs, endpaper map. Extensive back matter. (8-10)

Is It Real?:

The Loch Ness Monster

by Candace Fleming
(Scholastic Focus/Scholastic, \$26.99)
978-1-546-11028-6

Following descriptions of major sightings of Nessie, the reader is invited to investigate theories about its possible existence. Lively, interactive treatment. Black-and-white archival photos. Meticulous back matter. (9-12)

D * Kaho'olawe:

The True Story of an Island and Her People

by Kamalani Hurley, illustrated by Harinani Orme (Millbrook Press/Lerner, \$19.99) 979-8-7656-0501-1
The smallest of the main Hawaiian islands was occupied by the U.S. military in 1941 and used as a test bomb site until 1990. Activists have been working for decades to undo the damage. Powerful, colorful illustrations. Back matter. (8-11)

Secrets of the Dead:

Mummies and Other Human Remains from Around the World

by Matt Ralphs, illustrated by Gordy Wright (Nosy Crow, in collaboration with the British Museum, \$19.99) 979-8-88777-0819
Whether lovingly prepared or preserved accidentally, the remains of the dead provide a tantalizing glimpse into lives lived long ago. Illustrations filled with historical details. Graphs, map. Glossary. (9-12)

The Spy in the Museum:

How Rose Valland Saved Art from the Nazis

written and illustrated by Erin McGuire (Beach Lane Books/Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing/S & S, \$19.99) 978-1-5344-6617-3
By keeping meticulous notes, a shy curator in Paris during World War II tricked soldiers and recorded the destinations intended for stolen treasures. Expressive, realistic illustrations. (8-11)

Tomatoes on Trial:

The Fruit v. Vegetable Showdown

by Lindsay H. Metcalf, illustrated by Edwin Fotheringham (Calkins Creek/Astra BFYR/Astra Publishing House, \$18.99) 978-1-6626-8053-3
In 1892 a produce importer attempted to avoid tariffs on tomatoes, once classified as vegetables, by having them legally declared to be fruit. Cheery illustrations. Glossary, author's note, sources. (8-10)

D The World Entire:

A True Story of an Extraordinary World War II Rescue

by Elizabeth Brown, illustrated by Melissa Castrillón (Chronicle Books, \$19.99) 978-1-4521-7098-5
In 1940 Portuguese diplomat Aristides de Sousa Mendes defied his government for 23 days, issuing visas to thousands of Jews fleeing the Nazis. Digital illustrations. Back matter. (8-10)

Reference

*** Drawing Is ... Your Guide to Scribbled Adventures**

written and illustrated by Elizabeth Haidle (Tundra Books/Penguin Random House Canada, \$19.99) 978-1-77488-503-1
A visuals-forward primer on how to approach drawing, free up one's creativity, and give oneself room to experiment, grow, and make serendipitous mistakes. Illustrated in a wide range of media. (8-11)



We Need to Talk About Divorce (We Need to Talk About series)

by Kate Scharff, illustrated by Annika Le Large (Neon Squid/Macmillan, P \$14.99) 978-1-684-49448-4
Bright, cartoon-style illustrations accompany this therapist's personal and professional advice for kids facing the challenge of family upheaval. Sensitive, reassuring, and practical. (10-13)

Sports

D Game Changers:

Stories of Hijabi Athletes from Around the World

by Charlene Smith, illustrated by Natalya Tariq, foreword by Shireen Ahmed (Orca Book Publishers, \$24.95) 978-1-4598-3804-8
Thirteen Muslim women and girls, often the first in their sport to wear a hijab, share how they excel as runners, basketball players, and more. Colorful illustrations. Back matter. (8-11)

STEM (Science/Technology/Engineering/Mathematics)

Winner of the 2026 Flora Stieglitz Straus Award

D * The Black Mambas:

The World's First All-Woman Anti-Poaching Unit

written and photographed by Kelly Crull (Millbrook Press/Lerner, \$20.99) 978-8-7656-2725-9
Learn about the history and training of this unique South African anti-poaching unit and how they keep a game reserve's animals safe. Told in part by the courageous group's members themselves. Engaging photographs. Extensive back matter. (8-11)



Bridges

by Magda Garguláková, illustrated by Jakub Bachorik
(Post Wave Children's Books/Post Wave Publishing, \$19.99) 979-8-89509-008-4

Discover the history, types, and construction methods of bridges. Graphically detailed woodcut illustrations and vignettes. QR code references. (9-12)

Great Apes:

Protecting Our Animal Cousins (Orca Wild series)

by Christopher Gudgeon

(Orca Book Publishers, \$24.95) 978-1-4598-3810-9

Explore the characteristics, habitats, social structures, and family life of bonobos, chimpanzees, orangutans, and gorillas, and the threats those animals face.

Engaging text. Insightful photographs. (9-12)

*** Hurricane**

written and illustrated by Jason Chin

(Neal Porter Books/Holiday House, \$19.99)

978-0-8234-5849-3

As a community prepares for a hurricane, meteorologists carefully chart its path, while scientists and pilots fly into the storm to see what is happening. Detailed mixed-media illustrations. Back matter. (10-13)

*** An Immense World:**

How Animals Sense Earth's Amazing Secrets

by Ed Yong, adapted by Annmarie Anderson,
illustrated by Rebecca Mills

(Bright Matter Books/Random House Children's Books/PRH, \$24.99) 978-0-593-81088-0

Through the lens of the fascinating sensory worlds of animals, we learn how other species perceive their environment and how to protect them from sensory pollution. Colorful illustrations. Young readers edition of *An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us*. (9-12)

Innovative Octopuses, Half-Brained Birds, and More Animals with Magnificent Minds (Extraordinary Animal series)

by Christina Couch, illustrated by Daniel Duncan
(MIT Kids Press/Candlewick Press, \$17.99)

978-1-53622972-1

Explore the brain functions of six animal species and the brain's role in aging, sleep, memory, emotions, communication, and innovation. Inviting colorful illustrations. Photographs. Activities. Back matter. (10-13)

Insectarium (Welcome to the Museum series)

by Dave Goulson, illustrated by Emily Carter

(Candlewick Press, \$37.99) 978-1-5362-4114-3

About half of Earth's living species are insects. Their evolution, relatives, and specific types are presented in detail, and their environmental importance is brilliantly depicted. Jewel-like colored ink illustrations. Back matter. (9-12)



It's About Time! (Big Ideas That Changed the World series)

written and illustrated by Don Brown

(Abrams Fanfare/Abrams, \$15.99) 978-1-4197-7331-0

Nobel Prize-winning scientist Albert Einstein

leads readers through an exploration of time, from

measuring it to understanding smartphone GPS

satellites. Humorous color cartoon-style illustrations.

Extensive back matter. (10-13)

*** My Presentation Today Is About the Anaconda**

by Bibi Dumon Tak, illustrated by Annemarie van

Haeringen, translated from Dutch by

Nancy Forest-Flier

(Levine Querido, \$19.99) 978-1-64614-510-2

Animals, witty, opinionated, and argumentative,

present reports on other animals. Line drawings and

full-page color illustrations accompany this treasure

trove of unusual facts. (8-10)

Octopus Ocean:

Geniuses of the Deep (Orca Wild series)

by Mark Leiren-Young

(Orca Book Publishers, \$24.95) 978-1-4598-3895-6

In humorous first-person prose, the author takes us on a journey to the world of octopuses, resilient creatures whose large brains are wrapped around their bodies.

Vivid photographs. Index. Back matter. (10-13)

Omnibird:

An Avian Investigator's Handbook

written and illustrated by Giselle Clarkson

(Gecko Press/Lerner, \$24.99) 979-8-7656-7051-4

From the tiny bee hummingbird to the huge ostrich, there is tremendous variety in bird anatomy, behavior, nesting habits, and more. Copious information.

Colorful, detailed illustrations. Index. (8-11)

*** The Secret Life of a Sea Turtle**

by Maddalena Bearzi, illustrated by Alex Boersma

(Roaring Brook Press/Macmillan, \$19.99)

978-1-250-90167-5

Clear prose and magnificent graphite and

Photoshopped illustrations detail the hazardous

journey of a hatchling in a Mexican nature reserve to egg-laying maturity. Suggested conservation actions.

Bibliography. (9-12)

*** Smash, Crash, Topple, Roll!:**

The Inventive Rube Goldberg: A Life in Comics, Contraptions, and Six Simple Machines

by Catherine Thimmesh, illustrated by Shanda McCloskey

(Chronicle Books, \$19.99) 978-1-4521-4422-1

Information about Goldberg's life is interwoven with descriptions of his imaginative mechanisms and the scientific principles behind them. Ingenious design, animated cartoon-style art. Extensive notes and sources. (9-12)



Survival of the Fittest:

Who's Got the Best Medicine?

by Rebecca Donnelly, illustrated by Misa Saburi
(Henry Holt BYR/Macmillan, \$16.99)

978-1-250-80528-7

Clear, accessible text and colorful panels with crisp images depict sea creatures whose characteristics inspire medical innovations. (8-11)

ⓓ To Walk the Sky:

How Iroquois Steelworkers Helped Build Towering Cities

by Patricia Morris Buckley, illustrated by E. B. Lewis
(Heartdrum/HarperCollins, \$19.99)

978-0-06-304697-9

For over a century, many municipal skylines have owed their existence to nimble, courageous Native American workers. Soaring watercolor art. Historical and personal notes. Glossary. (8-10)

*** We Carry the Sun**

by Tae Keller, illustrated by Rachel Wada
(Norton Young Readers/W. W. Norton, \$18.99)

978-1-324-03112-3

Lyrical text and animated bold color illustrations help make solar energy technology and its complex political history accessible and stimulating. Back matter. (8-11)