

* = Outstanding Merit



Read-Aloud



Graphic Format

(5-7) Suggested age range

Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Adventure and Mystery



Along a Long Road

written and illustrated by Frank Viva
(Little, Brown/Hachette, \$16.99) 978-0-316-12925-1
Take the bicycle ride of your life—zoom, soar, learn, and grow! Graphic illustrations are breathtaking. (5-8)

Calendar Mysteries: June Jam

by Ron Roy, illustrated by John Steven Gurney
(Random House, P\$4.99) 978-0-375-86112-3
The young sleuth heroes plan to make their dad's favorite jam for Fathers' Day, but first they must discover who is raiding the strawberry patch. Animated black-and-white illustrations. (6-8)

- **Agent Amelia (series)**

Ghost Diamond!

Zombie Cows!

written and illustrated by Michael Broad
(Darby Creek/Lerner, P\$5.95) 978-0761380603;
978-0761380665
Disguises, gadgets, and secret-agent smarts help Amelia Kidd take down criminal masterminds. Three exciting adventures in each volume. (7-10)

Animals

Aggie Gets Lost

by Lori Ries, illustrated by Frank W. Dormer
(Charlesbridge, \$12.95) 978-1-57091-633-5
Adventures continue for a feisty dog and her master in this hopeful story. Pen and ink and watercolor illustrations. (5-7)

Ferret Fun

by Karen Rostoker-Gruber, illustrated by Paul Rätz de Tagyos
(Marshall Cavendish, \$17.99) 978-0-7614-5817-3
Clever ferrets Fudge and Einstein find a way to convince hungry cat Marvel that they are not food. Hilarious magic marker illustrations. (5-8)

Friends: True Stories of Extraordinary Animal Friendships

by Catherine Thimmesh
(Houghton Mifflin/HMH, \$16.99) 978-0-547-39010-9
What could a delicate cat have in common with an orangutan? Surprising animal friendships show that differences don't matter. Touching photographs from around the world. (6-9)

Goyangi Means Cat

by Christine McDonnell, illustrated by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher
(Viking/Penguin, \$16.99) 978-0-670-01179-7
Soo Min travels from Korea to her new family in the United States where her cat connects her past and her future. (4-8)

Hooper Finds a Family: A Hurricane Katrina Dog's Survival Tale

by Jane Paley
(Harper/HarperCollins, \$15.99) 978-0-06-201103-9
When Hurricane Katrina drives his family away, Hooper, a lab puppy, must fend for himself. Based on an actual rescue. (7-9)

A House in the Woods

written and illustrated by Inga Moore
(Candlewick, \$16.99) 978-0-7636-5277-7
Two pigs, a moose, and a bear, all looking for a new home, get help from some industrious beavers. Light-infused pastel illustrations. (5-7)

Monkey See, Monkey Draw

written and illustrated by Alex Beard
(Abrams, \$16.95) 978-0-8109-8970-2
Animals playing ball with a baobab nut lose it inside a fearful cave, which turns out to be full of inspiring art. Comical pen and ink and watercolor illustrations. (5-8)



One Moon, Two Cats

by Laura Godwin, illustrated by Yoko Tanaka
(S&S, \$16.99) 978-1-4424-1202-6
Under the same nighttime moon, a city cat and a country cat sleep, creep, frolic, and play. Distinctive, atmospheric illustrations. (2-6)

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Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Animals (Fiction), continued

Over and under the Snow

by Kate Messner, illustrated by Christopher Silas Neal (Chronicle, \$16.99) 978-0-8118-6784-9

These poetic observations of animals hidden beneath the snow are accompanied by textural and graphic images in a muted palette. Includes information and suggestions for further reading. (4-7)

Spunky Tells All

by Ann Cameron, illustrated by Lauren Castillo (FSG/Macmillan, \$15.99) 978-0-374-38000-7

Julian and Huey's pet dog talks about his life with his family before and after they adopt an accident-prone cat. Expressive black-and-white drawings. (6-9)

The Velveteen Rabbit or How Toys Became Real

by Margery Williams, illustrated by Gennady Spirin (Marshall Cavendish, \$17.99) 978-0-7614-5848-7

Glorious ink and watercolor illustrations illuminate the classic story of a boy and the stuffed rabbit his love makes "real." (6-8)

***Young Fredle**

by Cynthia Voigt, illustrated by Louise Yates (Knopf/Random House, \$16.99) 978-0-375-86457-5

When Fredle, a young pantry mouse, is pushed out of his home, he finds the outside full of surprises, good and bad. Soft gray and white illustrations. (7-9)

Beginning Readers

Annie and Snowball and the Book Bugs Club

by Cynthia Rylant, illustrated by Suçie Stevenson (Simon Spotlight/S&S, \$15.99) 978-1-4169-7199-3

Annie and Henry join a summer book club and prove that reading doesn't have to be an inside activity. Pen, ink, and watercolor illustrations. (5-8)

Black Beauty and the Thunderstorm

Black Beauty Stolen!

by Susan Hill, illustrated by Bill Farnsworth (Square Fish/Macmillan, \$15.99/P\$3.99) **Thunderstorm** 978-0-312-64705-6/978-0312647216; **Stolen** 978-0-312-64722-3/978-0312647230

During a storm, Black Beauty must choose whether to save a child or gain his freedom. After he's stolen, he must find his way home. Inspired by Anna Sewell's classic. Glowing oil paintings. (7-9)

Carl and the Baby Duck

Carl and the Puppies

written and illustrated by Alexandra Day (Square Fish/Macmillan, \$15.99/P\$3.99) **Duck** 978-0-312-62484-2/978-0312624859; **Puppies** 978-0-312-62483-5/978-0312624835

Carl helps out his animal friends in these sweet, simple stories. Colorful, engaging illustrations. (4-6)

Harry Cat and Tucker Mouse: Harry to the Rescue

Harry Cat and Tucker Mouse: Tucker's Beetle Band

by Thea Feldman, illustrated by Olga and Aleksey Ivanov (Square Fish/Macmillan, \$15.99/P\$3.99) **Rescue** 978-0-312-62507-8/978-0312625092; **Band** 978-0-312-62575-7/978-0312625764

Tucker Mouse and other favorite characters from George Selden's *The Cricket in Times Square* star in new adventures. Pen and ink and watercolor illustrations with an urban pulse. (6-8)



Hippo and Rabbit in Three Short Tales

written and illustrated by Jeff Mack (Cartwheel/Scholastic, P\$3.99) 978-0-545-27445-6
A trio of humorous stories about two friends unfolds in simple text with bright and cheerful graphic illustrations. (6-8)

Joe and Sparky, Superstars!

by Jamie Michalak, illustrated by Frank Remkiewicz (Candlewick, \$15.99) 978-0-7636-4578-6
Finding one's special talent can be challenging, as Joe Giraffe learns when he wants to enter a show with Sparky Turtle. Rollicking pen and watercolor illustrations. (6-8)

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Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Beginning Readers, continued

Little Lucy

by Ilene Cooper, illustrated by John Kanzler
(Random House, P\$3.99) 978-0-375-86760-6
Lucy the pup likes to bark, explore, and run, but she definitely does *not* like to get wet. Colorful, cheerful illustrations. (5-7)

Coming of Age



The Art Collector

by Jan Wahl, illustrated by Rosalinde Bonnet
(Charlesbridge, \$15.95) 978-1-58089-270-4
Oscar buys his first etching as a young boy and continues to collect art throughout his life. Cartoon-like, color-separated illustrations. (6-8)



Calvin Coconut: Kung Fooey

by Graham Salisbury, illustrated by Jacqueline Rogers
(Wendy Lamb/Random House, \$12.99)
978-0-385-73963-4
Calvin and his Hawaiian friends become involved with an "outsider" in an experience Calvin will always remember. Black-and-white illustrations. (6-10)

Clara Lee and the Apple Pie Dream

by Jenny Han, illustrated by Julia Kuo
(Little, Brown/Hachette, \$14.99) 978-0-316-07038-6
Clara Lee is too shy to try out for Little Miss Apple Pie, but a lucky dream and a loving grandfather turn things around. Black-and-white drawings. (7-9)

Grin and Bear It

written and illustrated by Leo Landry
(Charlesbridge, \$12.95) 978-1-57091-745-5
Bear is great at making up jokes but nervous about performing. See how he finally solves his problem. Pencil and watercolor illustrations. (6-8)

Princess Kim and Too Much Truth

written and illustrated by Maryann Cocca-Leffler
(Albert Whitman, \$16.99) 978-0-8075-6618-3
When she begins to say everything she thinks, Kim learns that honesty is not always the best policy. Expressive illustrations. (5-8)

Sammy in the Sky

by Barbara Walsh, illustrated by Jamie Wyeth
(Candlewick, \$16.99) 978-0-7636-4927-2
In this poignant tale of love and loss, a family helps their mourning daughter keep the spirit of her dog alive. Soft-edged watercolor paintings. (6-8)

Fantasy

The Astonishing Secret of Awesome Man

by Michael Chabon, illustrated by Jake Parker
(Balzer & Bray/HarperCollins, \$17.99)
978-0-06-191462-1
This action-packed tale captures young children's love of superhero adventures—as long as they're accompanied by the security of home. Bold, energetic illustrations. (5-8)

Bone Dog

written and illustrated by Eric Rohmann
(Roaring Brook/Macmillan, \$16.99)
978-1-59643-150-8
Gus feels lost when his beloved dog, Ella, dies, but he soon learns that she is never far away. Sensitive illustrations enhance the suspense and humor. (5-7)

The Great Bear

by Libby Gleeson, illustrated by Armin Greder
(Candlewick, \$16.99) 978-0-7636-5136-7
A circus bear, forced to perform under abusive conditions, finds a magical route to freedom. Powerful illustrations, in graphite and muted earth tones, grow in intensity as the tale reaches a wordless conclusion. (7-10)

*The Land of Lost Things: El País de las Cosas Perdidas

written and illustrated by Dina Bursztyn
(Piñata/Arte Público, \$16.95) 978-1-55885-690-5
When he looks for his missing blue pencil, a boy enters a new world with some very familiar objects in it. Humorous, colorful gouache, collage, and pen and ink illustrations. (6-8)

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Read-Aloud



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Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Fantasy, continued

*The Secret River

by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon

(Atheneum/S&S, \$19.99) 978-1-4169-1179-1

In this slightly shorter version of a Newbery Honor book, the story of Calpurnia's magical fishing adventure comes alive with glowing and often mysterious acrylic paintings. (6-10)

Stuck

written and illustrated by Oliver Jeffers

(Philomel/Penguin, \$16.99) 978-0-399-25737-7

Floyd tries to dislodge his kite which is caught in a tree by throwing object after object to get it down. Zany, whimsical text and color design. (4-7)



Toys Come Home: Being the Early Experiences of an Intelligent StingRay, a Brave Buffalo, and a Brand-New Someone Called Plastic

by Emily Jenkins, illustrated by Paul O. Zelinsky

(S&W/Random House, \$16.99) 978-0-375-86200-7

With breadth of feeling and expression, the toys StingRay, Lumphy, and Bouncy experience the world and the real meaning of friendship. Delicately detailed black-and-white illustrations. (6-10)

*Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

written and illustrated by Jerry Pinkney

(Little, Brown/Hachette, \$16.99) 978-0-316-05696-0

An inquisitive, creative chipmunk imagines many scenarios and adventures in the starry night. Elaborate watercolors and pencil drawings. (5-8)



Tyrannosaurus Dad

by Liz Rosenberg, illustrated by Matthew Myers

(Roaring Brook/Macmillan, \$16.99)

978-1-59643-531-5

A very busy dad, who just happens to be a dinosaur, finally makes some time to attend Field Day. Humorous detail and bold brushwork dominate the paintings. (5-7)

Folklore and Fairy Tales



The Boy from the Dragon Palace

retold by Margaret Read MacDonald, illustrated by Sachiko Yoshikawa

(Albert Whitman, \$16.99) 978-0-8075-7513-0

A "snot-nosed boy" grants a flower seller's every wish until the lucky man's greed and laziness cost him everything. Digitally enhanced watercolor collages. (5-8)

A Donkey Reads

adapted by Muriel Mandell, illustrated by André Letria (Star Bright, \$16.95/P\$6.95) 978-1-59572-255-3/978-1-59572-256-0

Will the village wise man in ancient Turkey avoid a beating from the evil tyrant by teaching a donkey to read? Bright, comical illustrations. (7-9)

The Flying Canoe: A Christmas Story

retold by Eric A. Kimmel, illustrated by Daniel and Justin San Souci

(Holiday House, \$16.95) 978-0-8234-1730-8

A flying canoe will take six trappers home for Christmas—as long as they don't talk! Atmospheric mixed-media illustrations of this French-Canadian folktale. (6-9)

*I Am Tama, Lucky Cat: A Japanese Legend

by Wendy Henrichs, illustrated by Yoshiko Jaeggi

(Peachtree, \$16.95) 978-1-56145-589-8

After he takes in a hungry cat, a poor monk finds that good fortune and friendship come his way. Expressive watercolor illustrations. (6-8)

The Magic Brush: A Story of Love, Family, and Chinese Characters

by Kat Yeh, illustrated by Huy Voun Lee

(Walker/Bloomsbury, \$16.99) 978-0-8027-2178-5

Jasmine's grandfather teaches her Chinese calligraphy by drawing and making up stories. Bright, dramatic, cut-paper collages. (6-9)

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Read-Aloud



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Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Folklore and Fairy Tales, continued

Monkey: A Trickster Tale from India

retold and illustrated by Gerald McDermott
(Harcourt/HMH, \$16.99) 978-0-15-216596-3
Vibrant mixed-media illustrations enhance this ancient folk tale in which a crocodile and monkey try to outsmart one another. (5-7)

Mouse & Lion

retold by Rand Burkert, illustrated by Nancy Ekholm Burkert
(Michael di Capua/Scholastic, \$17.95)
978-0-545-10147-9
Illustrated in beautiful, muted tones, Aesop's classic fable of the tiny mouse who saves a lion is retold in lyrical language. (6-9)

The Orphan: A Cinderella Story from Greece

by Anthony L. Manna and Soula Mitakidou, illustrated by Giselle Potter
(Schwartz & Wade/Random House, \$16.99)
978-0-375-86691-3
Based in part on Greek folktale sources, this new version of a familiar story offers a lively, active heroine. Quirky watercolor illustrations. (6-8)

The Pied Piper of Hamelin

retold by Michael Morpurgo, illustrated by Emma Chichester Clark
(Candlewick, \$16.99) 978-0-7636-4824-4
A piper helps rid a village of rats in this cautionary tale about the price of greed and selfishness. Expressive illustrations. (6-10)

The Princess and the Pig

by Jonathan Emmett, illustrated by Poly Bernatene
(Walker/Bloomsbury, \$16.99) 978-0-8027-2334-5
In this delightful spoof of a well-known fairy tale, a pig and princess change places and live happily ever after. Colorful, amusing illustrations. (5-8)



Rapunzel

retold and illustrated by Sarah Gibb, based on the original story by the brothers Grimm
(Albert Whitman, \$16.99) 978-0-8075-6804-0
Dramatic black silhouettes and intricate colored paintings alternate in this traditional retelling of the golden-haired girl locked in a tower. (6-9)

Historical Fiction

A Book for Black-Eyed Susan

by Judy Young, illustrated by Doris Ettlinger
(Sleeping Bear, \$16.95) 978-1-58536-463-3
After her mother dies in childbirth along the Oregon trail, Cora names the baby for her mother's favorite flower and makes a cloth scrap remembrance book for her new sister. Tender illustrations. (6-8)

***The Bravest Woman in America**

by Marissa Moss, illustrated by Andrea U'Ren
(Tricycle/Random House, \$16.99) 978-1-58246-369-8
In the 19th century, Ida Lewis follows her father's career as a lighthouse keeper and courageous life saver. Watercolors and acrylic illustrations evoke the period. (8-10)

The Great Moon Hoax

by Stephen Krensky, illustrated by Josée Bisailon
(Carolrhoda/Lerner, \$16.95) 978-0-7613-5110-8
The moral of this unusual story, based on an actual incident, is "don't believe everything you read." Colorful collages. (6-9)

Miss Dorothy and Her Bookmobile

by Gloria Houston, illustrated by Susan Condie Lamb
(HarperCollins, \$16.99) 978-0-06-029155-6
Dorothy Thomas inspired a generation of North Carolina residents by distributing books from her makeshift mobile library. Lyrical illustrations evocative of rural life. (6-9)

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Read-Aloud



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Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Historical Fiction, continued

The Money We'll Save

written and illustrated by Brock Cole
(FSG/Macmillan, \$16.99) 978-0-374-35011-6
Hilarity ensues when Pa, to save money before Christmas, brings a young turkey into his family's tiny 19th-century New York tenement. Entertaining watercolor illustrations. (6-9)

Passing the Music Down

by Sarah Sullivan, illustrated by Barry Root
(Candlewick, \$16.99) 978-0-7636-3753-8
On a trip to Appalachia, a boy hears music that he, too, will play and then pass on some day. Watercolor and gouache illustrations. (7-9)

These Hands

by Margaret H. Mason, illustrated by Floyd Cooper
(Houghton Mifflin/HMH, \$16.99) 978-0-547-21566-2
The story of the strike to end racial discrimination at Wonder Bread factories is told in simple text. Soft oil wash illustrations. (6-10)



Underground

written and illustrated by Shane W. Evans
(Neal Porter/Roaring Brook/Macmillan, \$16.99)
978-1-59643-538-4
Dramatic images, dark as the nights when people traveled to freedom, are accompanied by just a few words telling the story of the Underground Railroad. Author's note. (8-10)

Wagons Ho!

by George Hallowell and Joan Holub, illustrated by Lynne Avril
(Albert Whitman, \$16.99) 978-0-8075-8612-9
Two families make the trip West—one in 1846 and the other in the present. Humorous cartoons illustrate the journeys. Maps included. (7-9)

***Walking Home to Rosie Lee**

by A. LaFaye, illustrated by Keith D. Shepherd
(Cinco Puntos, \$16.95) 978-1-933693-97-2
With the Civil War over, Gabe uses his newly won freedom to search for his Mama, who had been traded from the plantation before the war's end. Evocative paintings. (7-10)

Humor

A Bad Kitty Christmas

written and illustrated by Nick Bruel
(Neal Porter/Roaring Book/Macmillan, \$15.99)
978-1-59643-668-8
After destroying presents and decorations, from A to Z, and then running away, Bad Kitty makes a new friend who teaches her what Christmas is really about. Bright, entertaining illustrations. (6-9)

Bailey

written and illustrated by Harry Bliss
(Scholastic, \$16.99) 978-0-545-23344-6
This cheerful look at the ups and downs of a dog's day at school is portrayed in expressive ink and watercolor illustrations. (5-8)



Bake Sale

written and illustrated by Sara Varon
(First Second/Roaring Brook/Macmillan, \$16.99)
978-1-59643-419-6
Cupcake bakes his award-winning desserts and plays in a band, but his life turns upside down when he plans a trip to Turkey with his best friend. Humorous illustrations. (6-8)

Betty Bunny Loves Chocolate Cake

by Michael B. Kaplan, illustrated by Stéphane Jorisch
(Dial/Penguin, \$16.99) 978-0-8037-3407-4
Betty is a "handful"—which she takes as a compliment! She falls in love with chocolate cake and has to learn patience. Delicious illustrations! (5-9)

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Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

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Humor, continued



Binky under Pressure

written and illustrated by Ashley Spires
(Kids Can, \$16.95) 978-1-55453-504-0
In his latest graphic adventure, Binky needs all his space-cat skills when a new kitty arrives in his space station. Ink and watercolor illustrations. (7-11)

A Cat Like That

written and illustrated by Wendy Wahman
(Henry Holt/Macmillan, \$16.99) 978-0-8050-8942-4
A cat's-eye view of the perfect friend is presented in simple text. Humorous striking digital illustrations. (4-6)



The Cazuela That the Farm Maiden Stirred

by Samantha B. Vamos, illustrated by Rafael López
(Charlesbridge, \$17.95) 978-1-58089-242-1
In this tale using the same structure as *The House That Jack Built*, the Farm Maiden, *la campesina*, makes a big pot of *arroz con leche* with the help of her animals. Vibrant acrylic paintings. (5-8)

***Clink**

by Kelly DiPucchio, illustrated by Matthew Myers
(Balzar + Bray/HarperCollins, \$16.99)
978-0-06-192928-1
Nobody wants Clink, a dusty robot, until he meets a boy who is great at fixing things. Colorful paintings provide delightful details. (4-8)

Dear Tabby

by Carolyn Crimi, illustrated by David Roberts
(HarperCollins, \$16.99) 978-0-06-114245-1
Advice columnist Tabby D. Cat uses common sense and humor to solve the problems of Critterville animals. Bright, humorous illustrations. (6-9)



***Dodsworth in Rome**

written and illustrated by Tim Egan
(Houghton Mifflin/HMH, \$14.99) 978-0-547-39006-2
Dodsworth is in Rome with his companion the duck, who keeps getting in and out of hilarious trouble. Ink and watercolor illustrations. (6-9)

Frog and Friends

by Eve Bunting, illustrated by Josée Masse
(Sleeping Bear, P\$3.99) 978-1-58536-689-7
Frog and his friends—Rabbit, Possum, Raccoon, and Squirrel—appear in a trio of amusing stories. Colorful illustrations. (6-8)

Happy Endings: A Story about Suffixes

by Robin Pulver, illustrated by Lynn Rowe Reed
(Holiday House, \$16.95) 978-0-8234-2296-8
Suffixes prove their importance when the class resists learning about them. Colorful, bold illustrations with highlighted word endings. (7-9)



Hide and Sheep

by Andrea Beaty, illustrated by Bill Mayer
(McElderry/S&S, \$15.99) 978-1-4169-2544-6
In a rollicking rhyme, all of Farmer McFitt's sheep leave for parts unknown—the beach, the museum, the zoo, and even the library. Amusing pen and watercolor illustrations. (4-6)



Hocus Pocus

by Sylvie Desrosiers, illustrated by Rémy Simard
(Kids Can, \$16.95) 978-1-55453-577-4
A determined rabbit attracted by a juicy carrot attempts to bypass an alert watch dog to gain the prize. Humorous digital illustrations. (4-7)

Hot, Hot Roti for Dada-ji

by F. Zia, illustrated by Ken Min
(Lee & Low, \$17.95) 978-1-60060-443-0
In this humorous fantasy about an Indian family in the United States, Aneel's grandfather tells stories about how eating roti (flatbread) gave him superpowers. Will it still work? Expressive acrylic and colored pencil illustrations. (6-9)

***I Want My Hat Back**

written and illustrated by Jon Klassen
(Candlewick, \$15.99) 978-0-7636-5598-3
A bear realizes that he knows exactly where to find his missing hat in this droll, deceptively simple story. Sepia-toned, digitally enhanced Chinese ink illustrations. (6-8)

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Humor, continued



I'm Sure I Saw a Dinosaur

by Jeanne Willis, illustrated by Adrian Reynolds
(Andersen Press/Lerner Books, \$16.95)
978-0-7613-8093-1

All the inhabitants of a seaside town run out to see a dinosaur—but does the dinosaur really exist? Intensely colored paintings with funny details. (5-7)

King Hugo's Huge Ego

written and illustrated by Chris Van Dusen
(Candlewick, \$16.99) 978-0-7636-5004-9

A shamelessly boastful king gets his comeuppance when he treats one of his subjects unkindly. Rhymed text and bold animated illustrations. (6-12)

Little Croc's Purse

written and illustrated by Lizzie Finlay
(Eerdmans, \$15.00) 978-0-8028-5392-9

Little Croc finds a purse but is challenged at every step as he attempts to return it in this humorous tale with lively illustrations. (4-8)

Me and My Dragon

written and illustrated by David Biedrzycki
(Charlesbridge, \$16.95) 978-1-58089-278-0

Dogs? Cats? Goldfish? Bor-ing! Dragons make much cooler pets! Colorful computer graphic illustrations. (5-7)

My Cat Isis

by Catherine Austen, illustrated by Virginie Egger
(Kids Can, \$16.95) 978-1-55453-413-5

A boy makes humorous comparisons between his cat and the Egyptian goddess after which it is named. Clever, dramatic collage illustrations. (6-9)

My Rhinoceros

written and illustrated by Jon Agee
(Michael di Capua/Scholastic, \$16.95)
978-0-545-29441-6

A boy begins to doubt the wisdom of his choice of pet until its unusual attributes prove valuable and fun. Colorful, amusing filled-in line drawings. (5-8)



***Nursery Rhyme Comics**

commentary by Leonard S. Marcus, edited by Chris Duffy
(First Second/Macmillan, \$18.99) 978-1-59643-600-8
Hear and see treasured favorites in many new ways through the art of 50 cartoonists. (5-8)

Say Something, Perico

by Trudy Harris, illustrated by Cecilia Rébora
(Millbrook/Lerner, \$16.95) 978-0-7613-5231-0
A misunderstood parrot finds the perfect bilingual home. Gentle illustrations in muted colors. (6-8)



***Tales for Very Picky Eaters**

written and illustrated by Josh Schneider
(Clarion/HMH, \$14.99) 978-0-547-14956-1
James is a very picky eater, but when his father suggests eating dirt or pre-chewed gum instead, broccoli suddenly sounds delicious! Whimsical watercolors add to the laughter. (6-9)

Teach Your Buffalo to Play Drums

by Audrey Vernick, illustrated by Daniel Jennewein
(Balzar + Bray/HarperCollins, \$16.99)
978-0-06-176253-6

A tongue-in-cheek narrator encourages a girl to cheer on her pet buffalo's inclination to drum. Deadpan illustrations complete the comical package. (4-8)

Ten Rules You Absolutely Must Not Break If You Want to Survive the School Bus

by John Grandits, illustrated by Michael Allen Austin
(Clarion/HMH, \$16.99) 978-0-618-78822-4
Fearful of his first day on the school bus, Kyle tries hard to follow his brother's ten important rules. Exaggerated, humorous acrylic illustrations. (5-7)

Those Darn Squirrels and the Cat Next Door

by Adam Rubin, illustrated by Daniel Salmieri
(Clarion/HMH, \$16.99) 978-0-547-42922-9
Chess-playing, crossword-solving, mischievous squirrels fail to amuse a grumpy old man, but they find a way to warm his heart. Stylized, amusing watercolors with gouache. (5-8)

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Humor, continued



The Three Bully Goats

by Leslie Kimmelman, illustrated by Will Terry (Albert Whitman, \$16.99) 978-0-8075-7900-8
A friendly, kindly little ogre outwits three nasty bully goats in this turnaround spoof of a well-known tale. Ferocious, colorful illustrations. (5-7)

***Three Hens and a Peacock**

by Lester L. Laminack, illustrated by Henry Cole (Peachtree, \$15.95) 978-1-56145-564-5
The old hound negotiates a budding dispute between three hens and a peacock so they all feel valued. Humorous illustrations. (6-9)

Warduff and the Corncob Caper

written and illustrated by Mat Head (Andersen Press/Lerner, \$16.95) 978-0-7613-8095-5
A clever cat devises a plan to save the farmyard animals from a fox. Bold, colorful illustrations explain the trick. (5-7)

***What Animals Really Like**

written and illustrated by Fiona Robinson (Abrams, \$15.95) 978-0-8109-8976-4
How will the performance turn out when the singers just *won't* listen to the conductor? Colorful cartoon-like illustrations add to the fun. (5-7)

***Why Do I Have to Make My Bed?: Or, A History of Messy Rooms**

by Wade Bradford, illustrated by Johanna van der Sterre (Tricycle/Random House, \$16.99) 978-1-58246-327-8
This age-old question is finally answered. Detailed watercolor illustrations reveal the history. (7-10)

Science Fiction

A Boy and His Bot

by Daniel H. Wilson (Bloomsbury, \$16.99) 978-1-59990-280-7
A class trip to an earthen pyramid in eastern Oklahoma leads Code Lightfall into a parallel universe of powerful robots. (7-10)

Sports (Fiction)

The Day Roy Riegers Ran the Wrong Way

by Dan Gutman, illustrated by Kerry Talbott (Bloomsbury, \$16.99) 978-1-59990-494-8
How do you handle an embarrassing mistake? A grandfather explains one way to do it by telling the story of the 1929 Rose Bowl game. (6-8)

Today



Anna Hibiscus' Song

by Atinuke, illustrated by Lauren Tobia (Kane/Miller/EDC, \$15.99) 978-1-61067-040-1
Anna Hibiscus is so happy, she just has to share it. Bright cheerful illustrations of her family in "Amazing Africa." (5-7)

Ants in Your Pants, Worms in Your Plants! (Gilbert Goes Green)

written and illustrated by Diane deGroat (HarperCollins, \$16.99) 978-0-06-176511-7
What should Gilbert do for his Earth Day project? The answer is right in front of him! Vivid, appealing illustrations. (4-6)

Check It Out!: Reading, Finding, Helping

by Patricia Hubbell, illustrated by Nancy Speir (Marshall Cavendish, \$16.99) 978-0-7614-5803-6
This rhyming ode to a librarian lists all the things she does. Bright, acrylic illustrations. (4-6)

***Chirchir Is Singing**

by Kelly Cunnane, illustrated by Jude Daly (Schwartz & Wade/Random House, \$17.99) 978-0-375-86198-7
Chirchir, a Kenyan girl, tries to help her family with their chores. Detailed folk-style illustrations. Helpful author's note and glossary. (5-8)

***Crouching Tiger**

by Ying Chang Compestine, illustrated by Yan Nascimbene (Candlewick, \$16.99) 978-0-7636-4642-4
When his grandfather visits from China, young Vinson learns tai chi and what it means to be part Chinese. Delicate, vibrant ink and watercolor illustrations. (6-9)

* = Outstanding Merit



Read-Aloud



Graphic Format

(5-7) Suggested age range

Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Today, continued

• Anna Hibiscus (Series)



Good Luck Anna Hibiscus!



Have Fun Anna Hibiscus!

by Atinuke, illustrated by Lauren Tobia
(Kane/Miller, P\$5.99) 978-1-61067-007-4,
978-1-61067-008-1

Anna, part of a large family in "Amazing Africa," prepares to visit her other grandmother in cold, cozy, cool Canada. (7-9)

Grandpa's Tractor

written and illustrated by Michael Garland
(Boyd's Mills, \$16.95) 978-1-59078-762-5
Grandpa Joe takes Jimmy up the hill to see the old family farm, now a neighborhood for many. His recollections follow the seasons. Soft, colorful digital illustrations. (5-8)

I Had a Favorite Dress

by Boni Ashburn, illustrated by Julia Denos
(Abrams, \$16.95) 978-1-4197-0016-3
What to do when you grow out of a favorite piece of clothing? Get creative! Whimsical mixed-media illustrations. (5-7)

I See the Sun in Afghanistan

by Dedie King, illustrated by Judith Inglese
(Satya House Publications, P\$12.95)
978-098187208-7
In both English and Dari, the language spoken in her home, Habiba narrates her family's daily activities. Attractive collages that incorporate photographs. (5-8)

Jam & Honey

by Melita Morales, illustrated by Laura J. Bryant
(Tricycle/Random House, \$15.99)
978-1-58246-299-8
Energetic, vibrant art enhances this rhymed story told from both a girl's and a bee's point of view. (5-7)

Jumping Jenny

by Ellen Bari, illustrated by Raquel García Maciá
(Kar-Ben/Lerner, P\$7.95) 978-07613-5143-6
Jenny's jumping keeps getting her into trouble... until she finds a way to do it that makes everyone jump for joy. Energetic illustrations. (5-7)

Just Grace and the Double Surprise

written and illustrated by Charise Mericle Harper
(Houghton Mifflin/HMH, \$14.99/P\$5.99)
978-0547-37026-2/978-0547-94219-3
This heartwarming story about friendship, school, and adoption is accompanied by graphics and cartoons. (6-8)

Lola's Fandango

by Anna Witte, illustrated by Micha Archer
(Barefoot Books, \$16.99/P\$9.99)
978-1-84686-174-1/978-1-84686-681-4
Lola is jealous of her older sister, but with secret help from her father, she finds something special she can do. Glorious, eye-popping collage illustrations portray a loving family. (6-9)



Lost!: A Dog Called Bear

by Wendy Orr, illustrated by Susan Boase
(Henry Holt/Macmillan, \$15.99/P\$5.99)
978-0-8050-8931-8/978-0-8050-9381-0
After Logan loses his dog during a difficult move to the city, he makes a happy discovery at the Rainbow Street Shelter. Gentle black-and-white illustrations. (6-8)

Mason Dixon: Pet Disasters

by Claudia Mills, illustrated by Guy Francis
(Knopf/Random House, \$12.99/P\$6.99)
978-0-375-86873-3/978-0-375-87274-7
Nine-year-old Mason's parents really think he needs a pet, but things don't go well until Mason and his friend Brody find a dog. Crisp black-and-white illustrations. (7-9)

* = Outstanding Merit



Read-Aloud



Graphic Format

(5-7) Suggested age range

Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Today, continued

Megan's Year: An Irish Traveler's Story

by Gloria Whelan, illustrated by Beth Peck
(Sleeping Bear, \$16.95) 978-1-58536-449-7

Megan spends her winters in school in Dublin, but in summer she joins her family and other Travelers looking for work around Ireland. Rich oil paintings accompany the text. (6-9)

Melvin and the Boy

written and illustrated by Lauren Castillo
(Henry Holt/Macmillan, \$16.99) 978-0-8050-8929-5
A little boy who desperately wants a pet finds one in the park but realizes it is happier there than at his house. Warm, mixed-media illustrations. (5-7)

Music by Morgan

by Ted Staunton, illustrated by Bill Slavin
(Formac, P\$5.95) 978-0-88780-926-2
When their parents sign them up for classes they hate, Morgan and Alden cook up a plan to trade places. Humorous black-and-white illustrations. (7-9)

***The No 1 Car Spotter: Best in the Village—Maybe in the World!**

by Atinuke, illustrated by Warwick Johnson Cadwell
(Kane/Miller/EDC, P\$5.99) 978-1-61067-051-7
Number 1 "spots cars" and solves a huge problem for his small African village. Quirky black-and-white illustrations. (7-11)

Oh, Harry!

by Maxine Kumin, illustrated by Barry Moser
(Neal Porter/Roaring Brook/Macmillan, \$16.99)
978-1-59643-439-4
Harry has a calming influence on his fellow horses—and on unruly little boys. Spectacularly rich illustrations. (5-8)

The One and Only Stuey Lewis: Stories from the Second Grade

by Jane Schoenberg, illustrated by Cambria Evans
(FSG/Macmillan, \$15.99) 978-0-374-37292-7
Four stories chronicle Stuey's year in second grade, with all its ups and downs. Cartoon-like black-and-white illustrations. (6-9)

Perfect Snow

written and illustrated by Barbara Reid
(Albert Whitman, \$16.99) 978-0-8075-6492-9
Scott, Jim, and their friends build an awesome snow surprise. Imaginative ink, watercolor, and Plasticine art illustrations bring the swirling snow alive. (5-8)



***Polka Dot Penguin Pottery**

by Lenore Look, illustrated by Yumi Heo
(Schwartz & Wade/Random House, \$16.99)
978-0-375-86332-5
Kim Chee Lee discovers that she can be an artist and a writer in Aspen, Colorado. Amusing oil, pencil, and collage illustrations. (5-8)

Polka-Dot Fixes Kindergarten

by Catherine Urdahl, illustrated by Mai S. Kemble
(Charlesbridge, \$16.95) 978-1-57091-737-0
Even with her fix-it kit, Polka-dot can't seem to remedy her kindergarten catastrophes—or can she? Watercolor, colored pencil, and graphite illustrations. (5-7)

Pond Walk

written and illustrated by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace
(Marshall Cavendish, \$17.99) 978-0-7614-5816-6
Buddy and his mother investigate the creatures that live in the pond; she supplies the facts, and he makes drawings and takes notes about what he sees. Cut-paper and colored pencil illustrations. (4-7)

Ruby Lu: Star of the Show

by Lenore Look, illustrated by Stef Choi
(Atheneum/S&S, \$15.99) 978-1-4169-1775-5
When Ruby's father loses his job, things get hard for her family, but neighbors and a new teacher help them out. Cheerful black-and-white illustrations. (6-8)

Same, Same but Different

written and illustrated by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw
(Henry Holt/Macmillan, \$16.99) 978--080508946-2
Through exchanging letters, Elliott in America and Kailash in India discover how their worlds compare and build a solid friendship. Colorful mixed-media illustrations. (5-7)

* = Outstanding Merit



Read-Aloud



Graphic Format

(5-7) Suggested age range

Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Today, continued

The Seven Seas

by Ellen Jackson, illustrated by Bill Slavin and Esperança Melo

(Eerdmans, \$15.99) 978-0-8028-5341-7

Colorful, attention-grabbing illustrations and rhyming verse follow a young rabbit's playful journey from the classroom through the seven seas. Fun facts and resources. (6-8)

Sheila Says We're Weird

by Ruth Ann Smalley, illustrated by Jennifer Emery (Tilbury House, \$16.95) 978-0-88448-326-7

Sheila is always asking her neighbors questions about their environmentally conscious habits, and later joins in the fun and the fruits of their tasks. (6-8)

Sophie's Lovely Locks

written and illustrated by Erica Pelton Villnave (Marshall Cavendish, \$16.99) 978-0-7614-5820-3

Colorful, animated watercolors show how wonderful—and annoying—it is to have long hair. Sophie's solution to the dilemma helps two people. (5-8)

***A Storm Called Katrina**

by Myron Uhlberg, illustrated by Colin Bootman (Peachtree, \$17.95) 978-1-56145-591-1

A powerful story, sensitively related and illustrated, describes a young boy's harsh experiences during Hurricane Katrina's devastation. Poignant, dark-hued illustrations. (6-10)



Subway Story

written and illustrated by Julia Sarcone-Roach (Knopf/Random House, \$16.99) 978-0-375-85859-8
Follow a subway car from its creation to its life in New York City and then to its next adventure. Informational author's note. Subtly colored soft acrylic illustrations. (5-8)

Tashi and the Tibetan Flower Cure

written and illustrated by Naomi C. Rose (Lee & Low, \$18.95) 978-1-60060-425-6
When Popola falls ill, his community attempts to heal him. Strong acrylic paintings. (6-9)

Tía Isa Wants a Car

by Meg Medina, illustrated by Claudio Muñoz (Candlewick, \$15.99) 978-0-7636-4156-6

A girl and her tía manage to save enough to buy a car while also sending money to support their family in their home country. Vivid watercolor and pencil illustrations. (5-8)



Tim and the Iceberg

by Paul Coates, illustrated by Ian P. Benfold Haywood (Star Bright, \$16.95/P\$6.95) 978-1-59572-205-8/978-1595722065

One hot beach day, Tim decides that an iceberg is needed, so he sails off to get one and does—or does he? Whimsical illustrations. (5-7)

Willow and the Snow Day Dance

by Denise Brennan-Nelson, illustrated by Cyd Moore (Sleeping Bear, \$16.95) 978-1-58536-522-7

Willow makes connections with her new neighbors—even lonely Mr. Larch. Soft but expressive illustrations. (5-8)

Poetry

Around the World on Eighty Legs: Animal Poems

by Amy Gibson, illustrated by Daniel Salmieri (Scholastic, \$18.99) 978-0-439-58755-6

Captivating verses introduce a variety of creatures. Amusing, colorful illustrations. Includes additional information about each animal (7-11)

Birds of a Feather

by Jane Yolen, illustrated by Jason Stemple (Wordsong/Boyd's Mills, \$17.95) 978-1-59078-830-1

The unique qualities of each species shine through in exquisite close-up photographs and lyrical poems. (7-10)

Book Speak!: Poems about Books

by Laura Purdie Salas, illustrated by Josée Bisailon (Clarion/HMH, \$16.99) 978-0-547-22300-1

Verses about different aspects of books are accompanied by mixed-media illustrations. (5-7)

* = Outstanding Merit



Read-Aloud



Graphic Format

(5-7) Suggested age range

Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Poetry, continued

A Dazzling Display of Dogs

by Betsy Franco, illustrated by Michael Wertz
(Tricycle/Random House, \$16.99) 978-1-58246-343-8
All things canine come to life in humorous rhymes embedded in vibrant computer-manipulated monoprint and pencil illustrations. (7-9)

***Emma Dilemma: Big Sister Poems**

by Kristine O'Connell George, illustrated by Nancy Carpenter
(Clarion/HMH, \$16.99) 978-0-618-42842-7
Perceptive poems show the responsibilities and pleasures of being an older sister. Funny pen, ink, and digital media illustrations. (5-8)

A Full Moon Is Rising

by Marilyn Singer, illustrated by Julia Cairns
(Lee & Low, \$19.95) 978-1-60060-364-8
Short poems set in different countries reveal diverse customs and dreams about the full moon. Detailed watercolors. Background information about each poem and sources included. (6-9)

The Hound Dog's Haiku: and Other Poems for Dog Lovers

by Michael J. Rosen, illustrated by Mary Azarian
(Candlewick, \$17.99) 978-0-7636-4499-4
Beagles, poodles, pugs, and more are portrayed in the spare language of haiku. Lively bold woodcuts. (7-10)

Hurry Down to Derry Fair

by Dori Chaconas, illustrated by Gillian Tyler
(Candlewick, \$16.99) 978-0-7636-3208-3
Farm chores threaten to keep a boy from attending the fair, but Grandma saves the day. Detailed watercolors. (5-7)



***I Am the Book**

edited by Lee Bennett Hopkins, illustrated by Yayo
(Holiday House, \$16.95) 978-0-8234-2119-0
Whimsical acrylic paintings encourage voyages of the imagination, as do poems that speak of the pleasures of reading. (5-10)

Lemonade and Other Poems Squeezed from a Single Word

by Bob Raczka, illustrated by Nancy Doniger
(Roaring Brook/Macmillan, \$16.99) 978-1-59643-541-4
Using only the anagrams contained in a word, the poet creates designs and verses. Gentle illustrations. (7-10)

Peaceful Pieces: Poems and Quilts about Peace

written and illustrated by Anna Grossnickle Hines
(Henry Holt/Macmillan, \$16.99) 978-0-8050-8996-7
Exquisite, detailed quilts provide the background for a variety of original poems exploring the central theme in unusual ways. (7-10)

Spinster Goose: Twisted Rhymes for Naughty Children

by Lisa Wheeler, illustrated by Sophie Blackall
(Atheneum/S&S, \$16.99) 978-1-4169-2541-5
These tartly satiric poems will appeal to children who have outgrown traditional nursery rhymes. Sophisticated ink and watercolor illustrations. (7-11)

***Won Ton: A Cat Tale Told in Haiku**

by Lee Wardlaw, illustrated by Eugene Yelchin
(Henry Holt/Macmillan, \$16.99) 978-0-8050-8995-0
In this sensitive tale, a stray cat in a shelter finds a new home. Brilliant illustrations on watercolor paper in gouache and graphite. (4-6)

INFORMATION BOOKS

Activities

Six Sheep Sip Thick Shakes and Other Tricky Tongue Twisters

by Brian P. Cleary, illustrated by Steve Mack
(Millbrook/Lerner, \$16.95) 978-1-58013-585-6
Deceptively simple challenging phrases and an explanation of how to create others are illustrated in comic book style. (7-10)

* = Outstanding Merit



Read-Aloud



Graphic Format

(5-7) Suggested age range

Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Arts



***The Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse**

written and illustrated by Eric Carle
(Philomel/Penguin, \$17.99) 978-0-399-25713-1
A blue horse, a pink crocodile, a yellow cow—these creative collage illustrations are meant to inspire children to use their own imaginations, just as Carle was inspired by the painter Franz Marc. (3-6)

***Dot**

written and illustrated by Patricia Intriago
(FSG/Macmillan, \$14.99) 978-0-374-31835-2
With humor and wit, a predominantly black-and-white rendering of dots in various positions teaches concepts. (6-8)

Magic Trash: A Story of Tyree Guyton and His Art

by J. H. Shapiro, illustrated by Vanessa Brantley-Newton
(Charlesbridge, \$15.95) 978-1-58089-385-5
Tyree uses his artistic creativity to unite his Detroit community. Mixed-media illustrations create the eclectic feeling of his installations. (6-9)

Perfect Square

written and illustrated by Michael Hall
(Greenwillow/HarperCollins, \$16.99)
978-0-06-191513-0
A perfect square is torn into pieces and altered in other ways, and each transformation creates something new and delightful. Colorful acrylic illustrations. (6-8)

Biography

The Adventures of Mark Twain by Huckleberry Finn

by Robert Burleigh, illustrated by Barry Blitt
(Atheneum/S&S, \$17.99) 978-0-689-83041-9
In a highly humorous style, one of Twain's most famous characters tells about the writer's life. Illustrated with equally funny, exaggerated pen, ink, and watercolor paintings. (7-11)

Ben Franklin: His Wit and Wisdom from A-Z

by Alan Schroeder, illustrated by John O'Brien
(Holiday House, \$16.95) 978-0-8234-1950-0
This lively primer of Colonial America explains how Ben Franklin rose from humble beginnings to international renown. Cartoon-like illustrations. (6-8)

Fabulous!: A Portrait of Andy Warhol

by Bonnie Christensen
(Henry Holt/Macmillan, \$16.99) 978-0-8050-8753-6
After growing up as a sickly child in a Czech neighborhood in Pittsburgh, Warhol used his commercial art skills to create a new fine-art style with mass appeal. (6-8)

Jim Henson: The Guy Who Played with Puppets

by Kathleen Krull, illustrated by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher
(Random House, \$16.99) 978-0-375-85721-8
The master puppeteer's originality and humor are revealed from his childhood years to his early death. Colorful full-page paintings. (6-9)

Joan of Arc

written and illustrated by Demi
(Marshall Cavendish, \$19.99) 978-0-7614-5953-8
In the 15th century, a young French girl believed that God told her to lead her country's army to victory against invaders. Exquisitely detailed illustrations inspired by medieval art. (7-10)

***Me... Jane**

written and illustrated by Patrick McDonnell
(Little, Brown/Hachette, \$15.99) 978-0-316-04546-9
Jane Goodall always dreamed of working with animals when she grew up. And sometimes dreams come true. Gentle ink and watercolor illustrations and archival material. (6-9)

My Hands Sing the Blues: Romare Bearden's Childhood Journey

by Jeanne Walker Harvey, illustrated by Elizabeth Zunon
(Marshall Cavendish, \$17.99) 978-0-7614-5810-4
Expressive mixed-media collages follow the 20th-century artist's rise to celebrity in Harlem. (6-9)

* = Outstanding Merit



Read-Aloud



Graphic Format

(5-7) Suggested age range

Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Biography, continued

A Nation's Hope: The Story of Boxing Legend Joe Louis

by Matt de la Peña, illustrated by Kadir Nelson
(Dial/Penguin, \$17.99) 978-0-8037-3167-7

The great boxer's story—one of hope, determination, and pride—also provides perspective on World War II. Strong oil on wood illustrations. (7-10)

Pablo Neruda: Poet of the People

by Monica Brown, illustrated by Julie Paschke
(Henry Holt/Macmillan, \$16.99) 978-0-8050-9198-4

A simple text about the poet's life and poetry is accompanied by vibrant paintings. (7-11)

***Queen of the Falls**

written and illustrated by Chris Van Allsburg
(Houghton Mifflin/HMH, \$18.99) 978-0-547-31581-2

In 1901 Annie Edson Taylor became the first person to succeed in going over Niagara Falls in a barrel. Intriguing sepia pencil illustrations. (6-8)

Tillie the Terrible Swede: How One Woman, a Sewing Needle, and a Bicycle Changed History

by Sue Stauffacher, illustrated by Sarah McMenemy
(Knopf/Random House, \$17.99) 978-0-375-84442-3

In 1896, after training intensely and creating a scandalous cycling suit, Swedish American Tillie Anderson began winning bicycle races. Gouache, collage, and ink illustrations evoke the era. (6-9)

The Watcher: Jane Goodall's Life with the Chimps

written and illustrated by Jeanette Winter
(Schwartz & Wade/Random House, \$17.99)
978-0-375-86774-3

This account of Goodall's work in Gombe, Africa, shows how careful observation and persistence led to great research. Colorful pen and acrylic paint illustrations. (5-8)

When Bob Met Woody: The Story of the Young Bob Dylan

by Gary Golio, illustrated by Marc Burkhardt
(Little, Brown/Hachette, \$17.99) 978-0-316-11299-4

As Dylan grew up, his music grew with him, but meeting the great songwriter Woody Guthrie solidified his direction and career. Acrylic and oil paintings. (7-10)

Ecology

Even an Octopus Needs a Home

written and illustrated by Irene Kelly
(Holiday House, \$16.95) 978-0-8234-2235-7

Vividly detailed illustrations highlight how various animals make and find safe places to rest and to rear their young. (5-9)

Meadowlands: A Wetlands Survival Story

written and illustrated by Thomas F. Yezerski
(FSG/Macmillan, \$17.99) 978-0-374-34913-4

Nearly destroyed by development and pollution, the New Jersey Meadowlands have survived, and wildlife is now flourishing there. Detailed watercolors emphasize positive and negative human impact. (6-9)

Oil Spills

by Christine A. Caputo
(Capstone, P\$6.95) 978-1-4296-6658-9

What is an oil spill, and how does it affect people, animals, and communities? Photos, glossary, and resources. (7-9)

Planting the Wild Garden

by Kathryn O. Galbraith, illustrated by Wendy Anderson Halperin

(Peachtree, \$15.95) 978-1-56145-563-8

Soft, richly detailed watercolors and gentle prose explore the many ways that wild seeds spread. (5-8)

Watch Me Grow!: A Down-to-Earth Look at Growing Food in the City

by Deborah Hodge, photos by Brian Harris
(Kids Can, \$16.95) 978-1-55453-618-4

Not all fruits and vegetables come from country farms. From windowsills to vacant city lots, opportunities abound for growing food to enjoy and share. Colorful photographs. (5-7)

* = Outstanding Merit



Read-Aloud



Graphic Format

(5-7) Suggested age range

Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Holidays

***Balloons over Broadway: The True Story of the Puppeteer of Macy's Parade**

written and illustrated by Melissa Sweet
(Houghton Mifflin/HMH, \$16.99) 978-0-547-19945-0
A German immigrant with a love of puppetry helped Macy's create a Thanksgiving parade which is a beloved tradition to this day. Inventive collage, gouache, and mixed-media illustrations. (5-8)

***A Christmas Tree for Pyn**

written and illustrated by Olivier Dunrea
(Philomel/Penguin, \$16.99) 978-0-399-24506-0
On a remote mountain, a gruff father shows his love by giving in to his small daughter's request. Endearing pencil and gouache illustrations. (4-7)

Lighthouse Christmas

by Toni Buzzeo, illustrated by Nancy Carpenter
(Dial/Penguin, \$16.99) 978-0-8037-3053-3
How will Santa find Frances and her little brother now that they have moved into an isolated lighthouse off the coast of Maine? Tender illustrations. (7-10)

Memoir

***All the Way to America: The Story of a Big Italian Family and a Little Shovel**

written and illustrated by Dan Yaccarino
(Knopf/Random House, \$16.99) 978-0-375-86642-5
In simple language and with gentle, colorful illustrations, the author tells the story of his family's immigration from Italy to the United States. (6-9)

Parenting

The Crown on Your Head

written and illustrated by Nancy Tillman
(Feiwel and Friends/Macmillan, \$16.99)
978-0-312-64521
Magical, nature-centered illustrations bring to life an uplifting message about children's uniqueness and potential for greatness. (5-7)

The Scar

by Charlotte Moundlic, illustrated by Olivier Tallec
(Candlewick, \$14.99) 978-0-7636-5341-5
A boy and his father learn to deal with their grief after Mom's death. Spare acrylic and pencil illustrations. (5-8)

Religion

Brother Sun, Sister Moon: Saint Francis of Assisi's Canticle of the Creatures

by Katherine Paterson, illustrated by Pamela Dalton
(Chronicle, \$17.99) 978-0-8118-7734-3
Stunning papercuts and watercolors illustrate this poetic prayer, based on the saint's famous hymn. (6-9)

The Littlest Mountain

by Barb Rosenstock, illustrated by Melanie Hall
(Kar-Ben/Lerner, P\$7.95) 978-0-7613-4497-1
God plans to speak from a mountaintop to give people laws about how to treat one another. Which mountain will He chose? Gently colored watercolors. (6-8)

Third Gift

By Linda Sue Park, illustrated by Bagram Ibatoulline
(Clarion/HMH, \$16.99) 978-0-547-20195-5
In a desert-like terrain, a boy and his father collect tree tears (resin), which will yield myrrh—soon to be a special newborn's gift. Acrylic-gouache illustrations. (7-9)

Science

11 Experiments That Failed

by Jenny Offill, illustrated by Nancy Carpenter
(Schwartz & Wade/Random House, \$16.99)
978-0-375-84762-2
Question, hypothesis, method, result—how can a budding scientist go wrong? Mixed-media illustrations. (5-7)

About Hummingbirds: A Guide for Children

by Cathryn Sill, illustrated by John Sill
(Peachtree, \$16.95) 978-1-56145-588-1
Detailed watercolor illustrations support and extend the gentle text, which highlights key information about the only birds that can fly both forward and backward! (5-8)

* = Outstanding Merit



Read-Aloud



Graphic Format

(5-7) Suggested age range

Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Science, continued

Ankylosaur Attack

by Daniel Loxton, illustrated by Daniel Loxton with Jim W. W. Smith

(Kids Can, \$16.95) 978-1-55453-631-3

A young ankylosaur saves an elderly one from being eaten by a hungry tyrannosaur. Bold illustrations create the world of dinosaurs. (5-8)

Around One Log: Chipmunks, Spiders, and Creepy Insiders

by Anthony D. Fredericks, illustrated by Jennifer DiRubbio

(Dawn Publications, P\$8.95) 978-1-58469-138-9

A giant oak is felled by lightning and gradually becomes home to a variety of woodland creatures. Vivid, close-up illustrations. (5-7)

Bring on the Birds

written and illustrated by Susan Stockdale

(Peachtree, \$15.95) 978-1-56145-560-7

This delightful introduction to both exotic and familiar birds is described in simple rhyming text with fiesta-bright illustrations. (5-7)

A Butterfly Is Patient

by Dianna Hutts Aston, illustrated by Sylvia Long

(Chronicle, \$16.99) 978-0-8118-6479-4

Beautiful watercolors and astounding facts illustrate the magical world of butterflies. (7-10)

***Butterfly Tree**

by Sandra Markle, illustrated by Leslie Wu

(Peachtree, \$16.95) 978-1-56145-539-3

A daughter and her mother follow an orange cloud from the beach into the woods and discover it is a mass of migrating monarch butterflies. Soft pastel illustrations. (6-9)

Charlie and Kiwi: An Evolutionary Adventure

by Eileen Campbell and Judy Rand, illustrated by Peter H. Reynolds and FableVision

(Atheneum/S&S, \$16.99) 978-1-4424-2112-7

Charlie goes back in time, meets his ancestor Charles (Darwin), and learns how birds evolved from dinosaurs. Cartoon-like illustrations. (6-8)

Disgusting Food Invaders

by Ruth Owen

(Bearport, \$22.61) 978-1-61772-126-7

Hard-to-digest facts about various creatures that can live on our food are illustrated with electron microscope photographs. (7-10)

Donkeys

by Darice Bailer

(Marshall Cavendish, \$29.93) 978-0-7614-4875-4

Learn about these beasts of burden who mourn their losses and who come from the same family as zebras. Photos, glossary, and resources. (7-9)

Family Pack

by Sandra Markle, illustrated by Alan Marks

(Charlesbridge, \$15.95) 978-1-58089-217-9

Transferred from Canada to Yellowstone as part of a reproduction project, a lone female wolf finds a new family. Delicate pencil, pen, and watercolor illustrations. (6-9)

Grasslands

by Cathryn Sill, illustrated by John Sill

(Peachtree, \$16.95) 978-1-56145-559-1

Learn what grasslands are and how wildlife survives in diverse environments. Realistic illustrations. Includes map, glossary, and bibliography. (5-8)

Gross Body Invaders

by Ruth Owen

(Bearport, \$22.61) 978-1-61772-127-4

Various parasites live right under our noses—literally! Includes stunning electron microscope photographs. (7-10)

***The Honeybee Man**

by Lela Nargi, illustrated by Kyrsten Brooker

(Schwartz & Wade/Random House, \$17.99)

978-0-375-84980-0

On a rooftop in Brooklyn, Fred cares for three hives of active bees. Informative text and collage and oil paint illustrations. (4-7)

* = Outstanding Merit



Read-Aloud



Graphic Format

(5-7) Suggested age range

Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Science, continued

How the Weather Works: A Hands-On Guide to Our Changing Climate

by Christiane Dorion, illustrated by Beverley Young
(Templar Books, \$17.99) 978-0-7636-5262-3
Interactive, paper-engineered format helps readers explore and understand the many complex aspects of the earth's weather. Colorful illustrations and pop-ups. (6-9)

Into the Outdoors

written and illustrated by Susan Gal
(Knopf/Random House, \$16.99) 978-0-375-86958-7
The story of a family camping trip serves as a playful introduction to prepositions. Charcoal and digital collage illustrations. (5-8)

It's Snowing!

written and illustrated by Gail Gibbons
(Holiday House, \$17.95) 978-0-8234-2237-1
Engaging watercolors highlight information about snowflakes' formation, different types of snowstorms, and many ways to play in the snow. (5-10)

Just A Second: A Different Way to Look at Time

written and illustrated by Steve Jenkins
(Houghton Mifflin/HMH, \$16.99) 978-0-618-70896-3
How far does a stone fall in a second? How frequently does a bumblebee beat its wings? Clear text and realistic collages provide an intriguing perspective on time. (6-8)

***Let's Look at Dinosaurs: A Flip-the-Flap Book**

written and illustrated by Frances Barry
(Candlewick, \$12.99) 978-0-7636-5354-5
Simple interactive collages present dinosaurs, with one question and answer about each. Additional information on the endpapers. (4-7)

Lightning, Hurricanes, and Blizzards: The Science of Storms

by Paul Fleisher
(Lerner, \$29.27) 978-0-8225-7536-8
Can violent weather be helpful? What about sandstorms and dust devils? Photographs, fascinating facts, experiments, glossary, and resources. (7-10)

***Nic Bishop Butterflies**

written and illustrated by Nic Bishop
(Scholastic, P\$3.99) 978-0-545-28434-9
The life cycle and distinctive colorings and habitats of butterflies are clearly explained and photographed stage by stage. (5-8)

North: The Amazing Story of Arctic Migration

by Nick Dowson, illustrated by Patrick Benson
(Candlewick, \$16.99) 978-0-7636-5271-5
Follow the stunning detailed illustrations and join millions of animals on their spring journey to the Arctic. (6-9)

Polar Bears

written and illustrated by Mark Newman
(Henry Holt/Macmillan, \$16.99) 978-0-8050-8999-8
Surprising facts about this Arctic animal are described in clear text accompanied by the author's glorious color photographs. (5-9)

Prairie Dogs

by Darice Bailer
(Benchmark Books, \$29.93) 978-0-7614-4876-1
The habits, habitats, lifestyle, predators, and protective barking of prairie dogs are explained with excellent photographs. Bibliography, glossary, index, and websites. (7-10)

***Reptiles**

by Mark Hutchinson
(Simon & Schuster, \$16.99) 978-1-4424-3276-5
Crocodiles, lizards, snakes, and tortoises are explored in clear text with exciting images. Glossary. (7-14)

Sea Horses

by Nicole Corse
(Scholastic, P\$3.99) 978-0-545-27333-6
A fish with no scales? A father that carries his babies' eggs? Learn about these unusual creatures in descriptive text and close-up photographs. (5-7)

* = Outstanding Merit



Read-Aloud



Graphic Format

(5-7) Suggested age range

Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

Science, continued

Skunk Kits

Tiger Cubs

by Ruth Owen

(Bearport, \$19.96) 978-1-61772-161-8,
978-1-61772-158-8

Discover how baby skunks learn to hunt and what tiger cubs eat. Simple text and vivid photographs and graphics. Bibliography, index. (6-9)

Time to Sleep

Time for a Bath

written and illustrated by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page
(Houghton Mifflin/HMH, \$12.99) 978-0-547-25040-3,
978-0-547-25037-3

Clear and simple text describes the different ways a variety of animals get their rest and bathe. Detailed back matter. Torn paper collages. (5-8)

What to Expect When You're Expecting Larvae: A Guide for Insect Parents (and Curious Kids)

by Bridget Heos, illustrated by Stéphane Jorisch
(Millbrook/Lerner, \$25.26) 978-0-7613-5858-9

Through a question-and-answer format, facts about the offspring of insects are presented with zest and humor. Whimsical multimedia illustrations. Well referenced. (7-12)

Who Has These Feet?

by Laura Hulbert, illustrated by Erik Brooks

(Henry Holt/Macmillan, \$16.99) 978-0-8050-8907-3

To which animals do these eight pairs of feet belong and why do they look the way they do? Simple text and bold watercolors provide the answers. (5-7)

A Zeal of Zebras: An Alphabet of Collective Nouns

by Woop Studios

(Chronicle, \$17.99) 978-1-4521-0492-8

Collective nouns—some familiar, some surprising and whimsical—provide the framework for this imaginative book about animals. Bold digitally rendered illustrations. (5-7)

Sports



Basketball Belles: How Two Teams and One Scrappy Player Put Women's Hoops on the Map

by Sue Macy, illustrated by Matt Collins

(Holiday House, \$16.95) 978-0-8234-2163-3

In a first-person narrative, Agnes Morley tells the exciting story of the first intercollegiate women's basketball game, held in 1896. Computer-generated illustrations. (7-10)

The Unforgettable Season: The Story of Joe DiMaggio, Ted Williams, and the Record-Setting Summer of '41

by Phil Bildner, illustrated by S.D. Schindler

(Putnam/Penguin, \$16.99) 978-0-399-25501-4

Evocative ink and gouache illustrations complement this gripping account of DiMaggio's epic hitting streak and Williams' quest to bat .400 for a season. (7-10)

World

***All the Water in the World**

by George Ella Lyon, illustrated by Katherine Tillotson

(Atheneum/S&S, \$15.99) 978-1-4169-7130-6

Powerful eye-catching illustrations accompany this poetic, informative text, which explains the origins and uses of one of our most important resources. (4-7)

Come and Eat!

written and illustrated by George Ancona

(Charlesbridge, \$16.95) 978-1-58089-366-4

Enticing, delicious photographs present regular meals and celebrations from around the world. (5-8)

An Edible Alphabet: 26 Reasons to Love the Farm

by Carol Watterson, illustrated by Michela Sorrentino

(Tricycle/Random House, \$16.99) 978-1-58246-421-3

Dramatic art and text on multiple levels provide a wide range of information about farm animals and plants. (5-9)

* = Outstanding Merit



Read-Aloud



Graphic Format

(5-7) Suggested age range

Best Children's Books of the Year

FIVE TO NINE

2012 Edition

World, continued

Giant Steps to Change the World

by Spike Lee and Tonya Lewis Lee, illustrated by Sean Qualls

(S&S, \$16.99) 978-0-689-86815-3

Mother Theresa, Langston Hughes, Neil Armstrong, and others helped make the world a better place—and you can, too. Dramatic mixed-media illustrations. (6-9)

***I'm Adopted!**

by Shelley Rotner and Sheila M. Kelly, illustrated by Sheila M. Kelly

(Holiday House, P\$6.95) 978-0-8234-2294-4

A spare yet warm story celebrates adoption and helps answer questions that many adoptees have. Photos of diverse families enhance the simple text. (5-8)

Orani: My Father's Village

written and illustrated by Claire A. Nivola

(FSG/Macmillan, \$16.99) 978-0-374-35657-6

Detailed watercolors and simple text bring to life the town in Sardinia, Italy, where the author's father grew up and which she visited as a child. (6-9)