

Capitol Choices

Noteworthy Books for Children and Teens

1996 Books for Ages Up to Seven

Please click on a cover to see a larger image

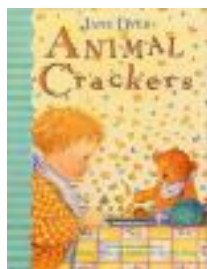
A PIECE OF HOME

by Sonia Levitin

illustrated by Juan Wijngaard

Dial; ISBN: 0803716257; \$14.99;

From Russia to America, each family member may take only one favorite possession; Gregor chooses the blanket Great-Grandmother made.

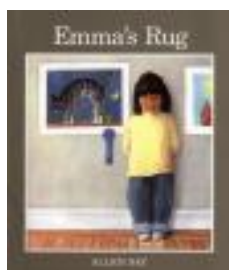


ANIMAL CRACKERS: A DELECTABLE COLLECTION OF PICTURES, POEMS, SONGS, AND LULLABIES FOR THE VERY YOUNG

illustrated by Jane Dyer

Little, Brown; ISBN: 0316197661; \$18;

Winsome watercolors charm the eye in this delightful mix of old and sure-to-become favorites for family sharing.



EMMA'S RUG

by Allen Say

Houghton Mifflin; ISBN: 0395742943; \$16.95;

A small rug seems to be the source of Emma's inspiration until it is ruined in the wash.



GOING HOME

by Eve Bunting

illustrated by David Diaz

HarperCollins; ISBN: 0060262966; \$16;

Authentic Mexican illustrations mesh perfectly with story. Carlos, his sister, and parents, who are Mexican laborers in the United States, return to Mexico to celebrate Christmas. The children begin to realize that home is where the heart is.

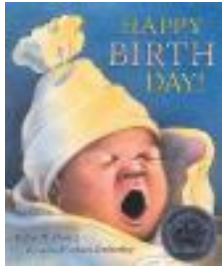


GOOSE

by Molly Bang

Scholastic; ISBN: 0590890050; \$11;

In a new twist on the ugly duckling story, a goose egg hatches in a woodchuck's den, and the gosling is brought up by a loving family. An economically told story about belonging, illustrated with carefully framed paintings.



HAPPY BIRTH DAY!

by Robie Harris

illustrated by Michael Emberley

Candlewick; ISBN: 1564024245; \$16.99;

Soft pastel illustrations and touching text document a baby's very first day of life in a picture book that is perfect for new parents and older siblings.



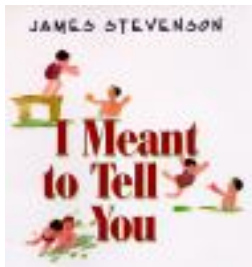
HUSH! A THAI LULLABY

by Minfong Ho

illustrated by Holly Meade

Orchard; ISBN: 0531095002; \$15.95;

Her baby is sleeping, so Mother quiets all the nearby animals, from tiny mosquito to huge elephant. Cut-paper and ink illustrations evoke the beautiful and varied art of Thailand.



I MEANT TO TELL YOU

by James Stevenson

Greenwillow; ISBN: 0688141773; \$15;

Deceptively simple watercolor paintings draw the reader into a father's loving remembrance of ordinary events made special through sharing with his small daughter.



LILLY'S PURPLE PLASTIC PURSE

by Kevin Henkes

Greenwillow; ISBN: 0688128971; \$15;

Henkes's famous mouse-girl heads off to school, where she discovers the delight of having the perfect teacher until she is asked to put away her incredible new purse. Humor and understanding adult characters help Lilly to regain her composure and her joie de vivre.

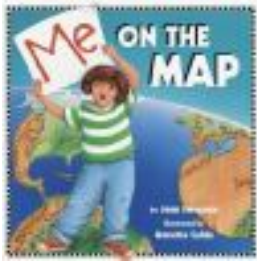


MARTHA BLAH BLAH

by Susan Meddaugh

Houghton Mifflin; ISBN: 0395797551; \$15;

Martha the dog's famous ability to speak suffers when the owner of Granny's Alphabet Soup downsizes and leaves some of the letters out.



ME ON THE MAP

by Joan Sweeney

illustrated by Annette Cable

Crown; ISBN: 0517700956; \$13;

The everyday places in a young girl's life--her room, her house, her town--become part of a perfect explanation of how to read a map.



MINERVA LOUISE AT SCHOOL

by Janet Morgan Stoeke

Dutton Children's Books; ISBN: 0525454942; \$14;

In the latest adventure from this simple-minded hen, Minerva Louise mistakes the elementary school she visits for a barn, complete with nesting boxes (cubbies) and an egg (baseball). Sure to tickle the funnybones of preschoolers.



MY VERY FIRST MOTHER GOOSE

illustrated by Rosemary Wells

edited by Iona Opie

Candlewick; ISBN: 1564026205; \$20;

Opie's scholarly knowledge of the folkloric body of work attributed to Mother Goose leavened by Wells's illustrations--joyous, whimsical, sly, and slap-up silly--combine with lavish layouts and a lush palette to make this a handsome introduction to every child's literary heritage.



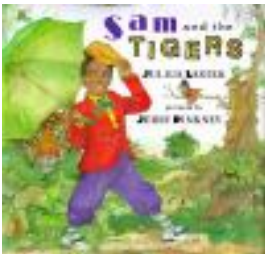
NURSERY TALES AROUND THE WORLD

by Judy Sierra

illustrated by Stefano Vitale

Houghton Mifflin; ISBN: 0395678943; \$19.95;

Rich oil paintings on wood provide a stunning setting for eighteen age-old tales from the oral traditions of many cultures.



SAM AND THE TIGERS

by Julius Lester

illustrated by Jerry Pinkney

Dial; ISBN: 0803720289; \$15.99;

Julius Lester and Jerry Pinkney recast Helen Bannerman's tale of "Little Black Sambo" in a colorful world where animals and people live harmoniously together--although the tigers are still after Sam's clothes.



SAVING SWEETNESS

by Diane Stanley

illustrated by G. Brian Karas

Putnam; ISBN: 0399226451; \$16;

Tired of cleaning mean old Mrs. Stump's orphanage with a toothbrush, Sweetness runs off into the desert. As the text tells of the sheriff's brave efforts to save Sweetness, Karas's humorous illustrations tell how Sweetness repeatedly saves the sheriff.



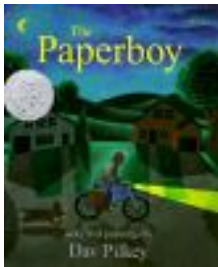
THE GHOST OF NICHOLAS GREEBE

by Tony Johnston

illustrated by S.D. Schindler

Dial; ISBN: 0803716486; \$15;

The ghost can't rest until his leg bone dug up by a little dog and subsequently carried around the world in one adventure after another is restored to his grave. Deliciously spooky and silly, with finely drawn pen-and-ink illustrations that heighten the mood.



THE PAPERBOY

by Dav Pilkey

Orchard; ISBN: 0531095061; \$14.95;

A young boy and his dog wake up early in the dark, cold morning to deliver newspapers. The simple text is matched by the illustrations, strong blocks of color in a palette that ranges through darker and lighter shades as the morning sun comes up.



THE STORY OF LITTLE BABAJI

by Helen Bannerman

illustrated by Fred Marcellino

HarperCollins; ISBN: 0062050648; \$14.95;

A clever boy confronts a parade of greedy tigers in this newly illustrated retelling of the "Little Black Sambo" story set in India.



THIS AND THAT

by Julie Sykes

illustrated by Tanya Linch

Farrar, Straus & Giroux; ISBN: 0374374929; \$14;

What does Cat want with feathers from Hen, straw from Pig, wool from Sheep, hair from Cow? Cheerful torn-paper illustrations enliven this delightful cumulative tale with a not-so-surprising ending.

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Noteworthy Books for Children and Teens

1996 Books for Ages Seven to Ten

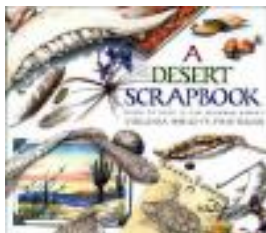
Please click on a cover to see a larger image

A CHILD'S BOOK OF PLAY IN ART: GREAT PICTURES, GREAT FUN

by Lucy Micklethwait

Dorling-Kindersley; ISBN: 0789410036; \$16.95;

This playful approach to art invites adults and children to delight in sharing some of the world's paintings and art objects.

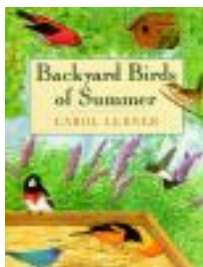


A DESERT SCRAPBOOK: DAWN TO DUSK IN THE SONORAN DESERT

by Virginia Wright-Frierson

Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers; ISBN: 0689806787; \$16;

Wright-Frierson's meticulous watercolors from her artist's sketchbook fill in accurate details of plants and animals of the desert.

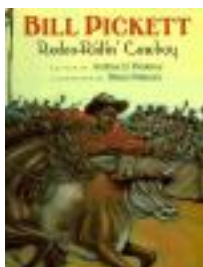


BACKYARD BIRDS OF SUMMER

by Carol Lerner

Morrow; ISBN: 0688136001; \$16;

How to attract and recognize thirty songbirds that are summer visitors to the United States from tropical regions.



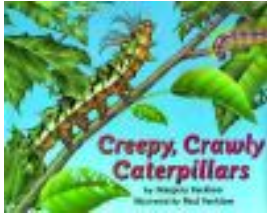
BILL PICKETT, RODEO RIDIN' COWBOY

by Andrea Davis Pinkney

illustrated by Brian Pinkney

Harcourt Brace; ISBN: 015200100X; \$16;

The story of one of the most daring African-American cowboys who developed the rodeo act of bulldogging, his unique form of steer wrestling, in the late 1800s.



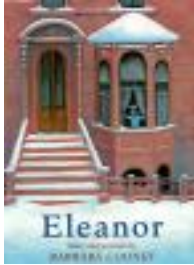
CREEPY, CRAWLY CATERPILLARS

by Margery Facklam

illustrated by Paul Facklam

Little, Brown; ISBN: 0316273910; \$15.95;

Want to know which caterpillars hibernate, how many muscles a caterpillar has, what moth has no mouth and never eats, or which caterpillar is a carnivore? Bigger-than-life-size pictures make these creatures unforgettable.



ELEANOR

by Barbara Cooney

Viking; ISBN: 0670861596; \$16;

The privileged yet lonely childhood of Eleanor Roosevelt is meticulously portrayed with old-fashioned illustrations. Orphaned at eight years old, Eleanor never forgot her father's encouragement to "be truthful, loyal, brave, and well-educated." Her indomitable spirit shines throughout.



FRINDLE

by Andrew Clements

ISBN: 0689806698; \$15;

Nick didn't set out to become famous, but when he replaces the word "pen" with "frindle," it's not long before kids all across the country are doing it too.

HOCKEY FOR KIDS: HEROES, TIPS, AND FACTS

by Brian McFarlane

Morrow; ISBN: 0688150268; \$12.95;

The history, the rules, and the how-to-play-it of ice hockey presented with photographs and humorous illustrations in an engaging and easy-to-understand format.



IN THE HEART OF THE VILLAGE: THE WORLD OF THE BANYAN TREE

by Barbara Bash

Sierra Club; ISBN: 0871565757; \$16.95;

Children and elders, owls, monkeys, bats, egrets, and flying foxes all thrive in the shelter of the sacred banyan tree.



LEONARDO DA VINCI

by Diane Stanley

Morrow; ISBN: 0688104371; \$16;

Of illegitimate birth, Leonardo rose to become one of the geniuses of the Renaissance. A beautifully illustrated biography of the consummate artist and inventor.



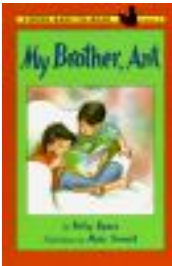
MONDAY'S TROLL

by Jack Prelutsky

illustrated by Peter Sis

Greenwillow; ISBN: 0688096441; \$16;

A magical, mysterious--and cranky--collection of wizards, ogres, trolls, and other enchanted creatures abound in these lighthearted, slightly spooky poems for ages 5-10. Peter Sis' detailed illustrations bring the fantastic beings to life.



MY BROTHER, ANT

by Betsy Byars

Viking; ISBN: 0670866644; \$11.95;

Four short and easy-to-read stories told by a patient big brother about his funny and determined little brother, Anthony--or Ant, for short.



ON THE BUS WITH JOANNA COLE: A CREATIVE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

by Joanna Cole and Wendy Saul

Heinemann; ISBN: 0435081314; \$16.95;

Children who love the "Magic School Bus" will be intrigued with the author's story of how her books come to be, with an emphasis on the group process, the need for revision, and the joy of discovery in research. In Flight With David McPhail is another in the "Creative Autobiography" series.



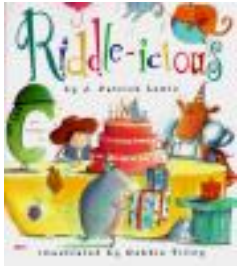
OWEN FOOTE, SECOND GRADE STRONGMAN

by Stephanie Greene

illustrated by Dee DeRosa

Houghton Mifflin; ISBN: 0395720982; \$14.95;

Short, slim Owen and his plump buddy Joseph both dread the school nurse's booming voice when measurements are taken in front of the entire class.



RIDDLE-ICIOUS

by J. Patrick Lewis

illustrated by Debbie Tilley

Alfred A. Knopf; ISBN: 0679840117; \$15;

"As I was driving to Van Nuys / I met a hangman who had three eyes." Amusing illustrations provide broad hints to these delightful riddles from a proven poet.



SWIFT AS THE WIND: THE CHEETAH

by Barbara Juster Esbensen

illustrated by Jean Cassels

Orchard; ISBN: 0531094979; \$16.99;

Unique among big cats, the cheetah can go from a dead stop to fifty miles per hour and sustain a speed of nearly seventy miles per hour for short bursts. This fact-filled text is complemented by gold-hued gouache paintings of cheetahs on the move and at rest.

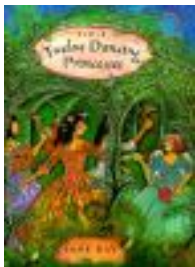
THE PUZZLE OF THE DINOSAUR-BIRD: THE STORY OF ARCHAEOPTERYX

by Miriam Schlein

illustrated by Mark Hallett

Dial; ISBN: 0803712820; \$15.99;

Thinking like a scientist about the true nature of the animal. Was it a bird or a dinosaur?



THE TWELVE DANCING PRINCESSES

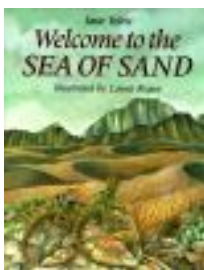
by Jacob Grimm

illustrated by Jane Ray

retold by Jane Ray

Dutton; ISBN: 0525455957; \$15.99;

Where do the king's twelve daughters go every night that leaves their slippers worn clear through? A favorite Brothers Grimm tale is illustrated with wit and precision by Jane Ray, whose princesses reflect many ways of being beautiful.



WELCOME TO THE SEA OF SAND

by Jane Yolen

illustrated by Laura Regan

Putnam; ISBN: 0399227652; \$15.95;

Yolen's poetic word impressions and Regan's double-page gouache paintings of the Sonoran Desert introduce a place that is dry but "not deserted."



WHEN BIRDS COULD TALK AND BATS COULD SING

by Virginia Hamilton

illustrated by Barry Moser

Scholastic; ISBN: 0590473727; \$17.95;

Stories about birds and bats from the Southern tradition in colloquial speech that begs to be spoken aloud.



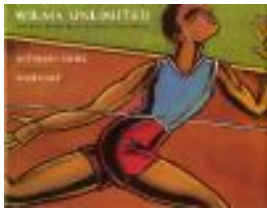
WHITE WAVE: A CHINESE TALE

illustrated by Ed Young

retold by Diane Wolkstein

Harcourt Brace; ISBN: 0152002936; \$16;

The Moon Goddess lives within the shining shell found by a poor farmer. She brings him good fortune and friendship until he overreaches and "... all that remains is the story." Illustrated with elegant pencil drawings by Ed Young, this reissue is as beautiful as the moon shell itself.



WILMA UNLIMITED: HOW WILMA RUDOLPH BECAME THE WORLD'S FASTEST WOMAN

by Kathleen Krull

illustrated by David Diaz

Harcourt Brace; ISBN: 0152012672; \$16;

Relates the early life of Wilma Rudolph--her bouts with scarlet fever and polio, the loneliness she felt as a disabled child, and her determination to some day walk and run again--culminating with her three-gold-medal performance at the 1960 Rome Olympics.

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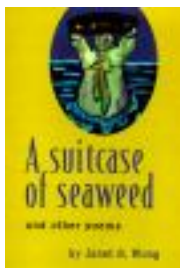


A GIRL NAMED DISASTER

by Nancy Farmer

Orchard; ISBN: 0531095398; \$19.95;

Nhamo's journey of survival is aided by the stories told to her by her grandmother and her own resilient, self-reliant nature.

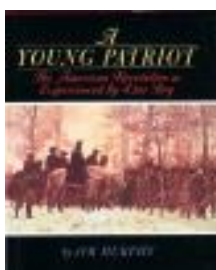


A SUITCASE FULL OF SEAWEED AND OTHER POEMS

by Janet S. Wong

Simon & Schuster; ISBN: 0689807880; \$15;

Short, vivid, easy-to-read and understand poems about family and food, personal feelings and cultural distinctions reflect the author's heritage--Chinese, Korean, and American.



A YOUNG PATRIOT: THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION AS EXPERIENCED BY ONE BOY

by Jim Murphy

Clarion; ISBN: 0395605237; \$15.95;

Using the memoir of Joseph Plumb Martin, who enlisted in the Revolutionary War when he was fifteen, Murphy adds historical detail to create a vivid account of that war.



AN ARTIST IN OVERALLS: THE LIFE OF GRANT WOOD

by John Duggleby

Chronicle; ISBN: 0811812421; \$15.95;

Now famed as the painter of American Gothic, Grant Wood as a young man was rejected by the art establishment in the United States and Europe, finding success only when he returned home to Iowa to paint his family and countryside. Striking color reproductions contribute to this well-designed book.



BELLE PRATER'S BOY

by Ruth White

ISBN: 0374306680; \$16;

Set in the coal fields of southwest Virginia, told in rich, evocative language, this is the story of Woodrow, whose mother just disappears one day, and his new life with his cousin Gypsy, who has a secret of her own and doesn't even know it.



BEYOND THE WESTERN SEA, BOOK ONE: THE ESCAPE FROM HOME

by Avi

Orchard; ISBN: 0531095134; \$18.95;

From the desperately poor Irish villages of the 19th century potato famine to the streets of London and Liverpool, from the misery of crossing the Atlantic in steerage to the mills of Lowell, Massachusetts, the lives of several young people and various villains intersect fatefully in this page-turning, cinematic drama.



BEYOND THE WESTERN SEA; BOOK TWO: LORD KIRKLE'S MONEY

by Avi

Orchard; ISBN: 0531088707; \$18.95;

From the desperately poor Irish villages of the 19th century potato famine to the streets of London and Liverpool, from the misery of crossing the Atlantic in steerage to the mills of Lowell, Massachusetts, the lives of several young people and various villains intersect fatefully in this page-turning, cinematic drama.



BLACK HORSES FOR THE KING

by Anne McCaffrey

Harcourt Brace; ISBN: 0152273220; \$17;

Young Galwyn, a runaway, helps Lord Artos select and transport large war-horses to England, then learns to be a farrier so he can travel with his lord into battle. This historical novel is based on the King Arthur story.



CRASH

by Jerry Spinelli

ISBN: 0679879579; \$16;

"Crash" Coogan is big and fast, a seventh-grader who bullies dweeby little Penn Webb, his vegetarian, peace-loving neighbor. Spinelli's fast-moving story will appeal to readers who like action and, like his award-winning Maniac Magee, will leave them with something to think about.



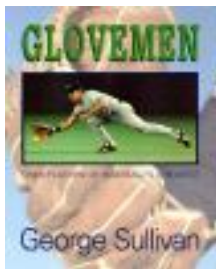
ECHOES FOR THE EYE: POEMS TO CELEBRATE PATTERNS IN NATURE

by Barbara Juster Esbensen

illustrated by Helen K. Davie

HarperCollins; ISBN: 0060243988; \$14.95;

Through poems and paintings, the author and illustrator uncover a kind of natural geometry in the shapes and patterns of the world in which we live. A remarkable blend of words and artistic expression.



GLOVEMEN: TWENTY-SEVEN OF BASEBALL'S GREATEST

by George Sullivan

Atheneum; ISBN: 0689319916; \$18;

Their physical skill, quick minds, and ability to anticipate the ball put Ozzie Smith, Willie Mays, and Honus Wagner on the author's list of best baseball fielders of all time.



HURRICANES: EARTH'S MIGHTIEST STORMS

by Patricia Lauber

Scholastic; ISBN: 0590474065; \$16.95;

Information that immediately grabs the reader's attention and spectacular photographs make this science book a must-have for report writers and browsers alike.

Jip: His Story

JIP: HIS STORY

by Katherine Paterson

Dutton; ISBN: 0525675434; \$15.99;

Having come as a foundling to a Vermont poor farm in 1847, Jip knows nothing of his background. When a stranger in town reveals the chilling truth about his parentage, Jip finds himself in great danger.

Mysterious Tales of Japan

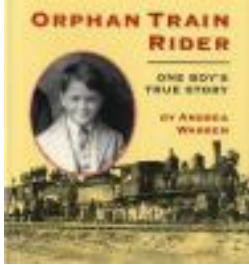
MYSTERIOUS TALES OF JAPAN

illustrated by Tatsuhiro Kiuchi

edited by Rafe Martin

Putnam; ISBN: 039922677x; \$19.99;

Masterful storyteller Rafe Martin provides a glimpse into Japanese culture with these ten haunting, beautiful and eerie tales. Kiuchi's illustrations are a striking complement to the well-crafted text.

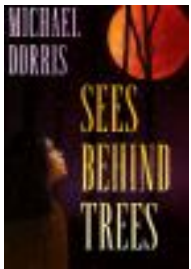


ORPHAN TRAIN RIDER: ONE BOY'S TRUE STORY

by Andrea Warren

Houghton Mifflin; ISBN: 0395698227; \$15.95;

Chapters alternate personal narrative with factual information to create a seamless view of the orphan train movement, which ended in 1930 after transporting over 200,000 children to new homes in the Midwest. In prose that is at once illuminating and touching, a difficult chapter in American history is acknowledged.

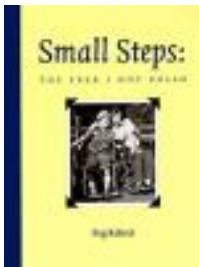


SEES BEHIND TREES

by Michael Dorris

Hyperion; ISBN: 0786802243; \$14.95;

Hampered by nearsightedness, Sees Behind Trees sharpens his other senses. On a startling adventure with the elderly artist Gray Fire, the young man uses all of his "second vision" to gain an honored position in the tribe.



SMALL STEPS: THE YEAR I GOT POLIO

by Peggy Kehret

Albert Whitman; ISBN: 0807574570; \$14.95;

Transformed almost overnight from an average seventh-grader into a terrified girl, paralyzed from the neck down, Peg Kehret spent seven months relearning how to move and walk after being diagnosed with polio in 1949. The contrast to her previously uneventful, middle class life in small town Minnesota makes her story even more compelling.



THE BONE DETECTIVES: HOW FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGISTS SOLVE CRIMES AND UNCOVER MYSTERIES OF THE DEAD

by Donna Jackson

photographed by Charlie Fellenbaum

Little, Brown; ISBN: 0316829358; \$16.95;

This scientific investigation combines information with a true story; the bones of a missing woman hold the clues to her death.



THE CUCKOO'S CHILD

by Suzanne Freeman

Greenwillow; ISBN: 0688142907; \$15;

After the death of her parents, Mia is sent with her sisters to her aunt's home in the town where her mother grew up. Here, while living in a foreign country and trying to come to grips with her loss, she searches for the normalcy she thought she had wanted.

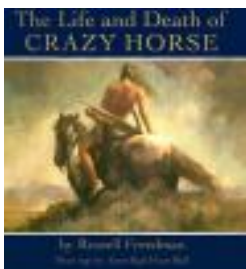


THE FIRE PONY

by W. Rodman Philbrick

Scholastic; ISBN: 0590552511; \$14.95;

Eleven-year-old Roy's desire to trust the folks at the Bar None Ranch, and to have a place he can really call home, conflicts with his love for his only family--the mercurial, hot-tempered older brother he admires.



THE LIFE AND DEATH OF CRAZY HORSE

by Russell Freedman

Holiday House; ISBN: 0823412199; \$18.95;

A master biographer provides a fascinating and well-balanced view of the renowned Lakota chief and his world.



THE MOORCHILD

by Eloise McGraw

Simon & Schuster; ISBN: 068980654X; \$16;

When the faerie child Moql becomes the human changeling child Saaski, she learns the pain and joy of being loved.



THE PERIOD BOOK: EVERYTHING YOU DON'T WANT TO ASK (BUT NEED TO KNOW)

by Karen Gravelle

Walker; ISBN: 0802774784; \$8.95;

This practical and friendly guide tells "what a period is, why it happens, what it feels like, and what to do when you get it." Helpful line drawings.

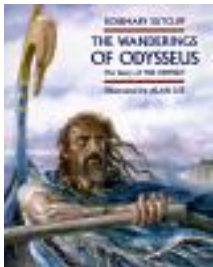


THE THIEF

by Megan Whalen Turner

Greenwillow; ISBN: 0688146279; \$15;

For Gen--a master thief with a big secret--there is only one way out of the king's prison, and that is to accompany the king's scholar, the magus, on a daring quest of thievery. An absorbing adventure/fantasy/mystery.



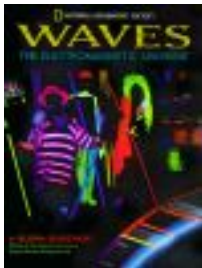
THE WANDERINGS OF ODYSSEUS: THE STORY OF THE ODYSSEY

by Rosemary Sutcliff

illustrated by Alan Lee

Delacorte; ISBN: 0385322054; \$22.5;

A companion to her earlier retelling of the siege of Troy, this new volume by the master storyteller chronicles Odysseus' adventures with Circe, Cyclops, and more. Haunting watercolors perfectly match the tone of the story.



WAVES: THE ELECTROMAGNETIC UNIVERSE

by Gloria Skurzynski

National Geographic Society; ISBN: 0792235207; \$16.95;

In exceptionally clear and understandable terms, the author describes radio waves, microwaves, visible light, X rays, gamma rays, and more, along with some of the ways that scientists observe them.



WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE: ORIGINAL STORIES ABOUT GROWING UP

edited by Amy Ehrlich

Candlewick; ISBN: 0763604070; \$16.99;

Ten original short stories by well-known writers of children's books (including Avi, James Howe, and Katherine Paterson) were triggered by funny, poignant, or sad aspects of their childhoods. Each writer appends a note about the story, and short biographies are included in an appendix.

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Noteworthy Books for Children and Teens

1996 Books for Ages Fourteen and Up

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CONFESS-O-RAMA

by Ron Koertge

Orchard; ISBN: 0531088650; \$20;

Fifteen-year-old Tony Candelaria, the new kid at West Paradise High, just wants to fit in and doesn't want any attachments. Then he meets Jordan, whose clothing is an artistic statement. A hilarious look at "blending in."



I FEEL A LITTLE JUMPY AROUND YOU

edited by Naomi Shihab Nye and Paul B. Janeczko

Simon & Schuster; ISBN: 0689805187; \$17;

An unusual collection of paired poems by male and female poets reflects the similar and different ways women and men view their lives.



PARROT IN THE OVEN: MI VIDA

by Victor Martinez

HarperCollins; ISBN: 0060267046; \$14.95;

Seasoned poet but first-time novelist delights the eye, mind, and heart with his story of chicano Manuel Hernandez and his family. His alcoholic father can't hold on to a job and spends too much time at the pool hall; his mother is constantly cleaning. Wonderfully lyrical, graphic, and powerful.



RATS SAW GOD

by Rob Thomas

Simon & Schuster; ISBN: 0689802072; \$17;

Steve York, son of a famous astronaut, has to explain to his guidance counselor how he went from being a 4.0 student to a troubled teen who doesn't care. Comic situations, snappy dialogue, and kids that are real make this one of the year's best.



SHIMMY SHIMMY SHIMMY LIKE MY SISTER KATE: LOOKING AT THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE THROUGH POEMS

edited by Nikki Giovanni

Henry Holt; ISBN: 0805034943; \$16.95;

The outpouring of creativity and pride that marked the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and beyond is presented in an anthology that includes some of the best poetry of the era (Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, and Gwendolyn Brooks, among others), as well as commentary by the editor, an accomplished African American poet herself.



THE GOLDEN COMPASS

by Philip Pullman

ISBN: 0345413350; \$20;

Orphaned Lyra is seeking a missing friend when she discovers a plot to steal children; she journeys to the top of the world seeking answers, only to find armored polar bears and a deeper, darker mystery. First of a projected trilogy, this fantasy will appeal even to those who don't read fantasy.

THE MAESTRO

by Tim Wynne-Jones

Orchard; ISBN: 0531095444; \$16.95;

The image of a piano being transported by helicopter into the wilds of Canada encapsulates young Burl's search for a place in the community. An engrossing novel of a young man's coming of age in a harsh and unsympathetic environment.

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