

**Activity Guide
Children's Book Award Nominees**

2013-2014



This guide was prepared by members of the
Children's Book Award Committee:

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The Adventures of Beanboy

Lisa Harkrader

Houghton Mifflin Books for Children, 2012

234 pages

SUMMARY:

Thirteen-year old Tucker MacBean thinks he can help his family if he wins a college scholarship for his overworked mother by creating a winning superhero sidekick in a comic book contest.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Captain Nobody, Dean Pitchford.

The *Diary of Wimpy Kid* series, Jeff Kinney.

Doodlebug: A Novel in Doodles, Karen Romano Young.

How to Steal a Dog, Barbara O'Connor.

Jake, Audrey Couloubis.

Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life, James Patterson.

WEBSITES:

Book Bites for Kids: <http://www.flumecast.com/watch/lisa-harkrader-is-this-week-s-guest-author--feb-24-2012-21827.html>, Lisa Harkrader talks about *The Adventures of Beanboy*.

Comic Creator—ReadWriteThink: <http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/games-tools/comic-creator-a-30237.html>, the Comic Creator invites children and teens to design their own comic strips. Their creations can be just for fun or as part of more structural learning activities: planning writing activities, before- and after-reading activities, and responding to books.

L.D. Harkrader: <http://www.ldharkrader.com/Home.html>, L.D. Harkrader's website with a listing of books, biography, link to her blog, and contact information.

Make Beliefs Comix: <http://www.makebeliefscomix.com/>, a free online comic generator with numerous suggestions for student comic strip creation activities to engage students in the art of writing.

BOOKTALK:

Do you like comics? Thirteen-year old Tucker MacBean sure does! Tucker, or Beanboy as he is called by his arch nemesis, Sam Zawicki, dreams of the day that he will be the most famous comic book artist ever. His dream might just come true if he can create a sidekick for his favorite superhero and win the Dark Overlord comic book contest. And the prize, a full college scholarship, could put his family back together. His dad has moved to another state and his mom works full-time during the day and goes to school at night, leaving Tucker to take care of Beecher, his little brother. Can Tucker reach down within himself; find the true heart of a hero, and turn Beanboy into a sidekick who can rank among the greatest sidekicks in comic book history? You'll find out if the power of the bean can be the answer to Tucker's troubles when you read *The Adventures of Beanboy* by Lisa Harkrader!

Prepared by:

Kate Byrd, Belton Elementary School, kbyrd@anderson2.k12.sc.us

The Aviary
Kathleen O'Dell
Random House, 2011
341 pages

SUMMARY:

Clara has spent most of her life living in an old mansion helping her mother take care of Mrs. Glendoveer, the widow of a once famous magician. Clara is never allowed to leave, go to school, or have friends of her own, and her life has been pretty boring until one of the old birds in the aviary begins to speak to her. This starts her on the path to solving the decades old mystery that haunts the Glendoveer family.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

The Ghost of Crutchfield Hall, Mary Downing Hahn
Splendors and Gloom, Laura Amy Schlitz
When You Reach Me, Rebecca Stead
The Westing Game, Ellen Raskin

WEBSITES:

Kathleen O'Dell's Homepage: <http://www.kathleenodell.com/>

BOOKTALK:

Clara is not what you'd call a brave girl. She's shy and quiet – but then again, she's never been allowed to go to school or make friends, so can you blame her? Her mother says it's because of her heart condition, but Clara doesn't remember being sick. She only remembers living her life inside the Glendoveer mansion, helping her mother take care of Mrs. Glendoveer, a kind old widow who was once married to a famous magician. Then after a terrible storm, she has to go out to check on Mrs. Glendoveer's birds. Clara's always been terrified of the aviary and the birds, but to make Mrs. Glendoveer happy, she agrees to check on them. As soon as she enters the aviary, the birds go wild. All except for one, the mynah bird, who clearly says "Elliot" to her. When she shares this with Mrs. Glendoveer she discovers that the birds haven't ever spoken before, and that Elliot was the name of Mrs. Glendoveer's youngest son. This discovery leads Clara to a mystery that haunts the Glendoveer family. Something terrible happened to the Glendoveer children. Clara wants to do whatever she can to discover the truth, but someone from the past will do anything to keep the secrets hidden.

Prepared by:

Amanda LeBlanc, AJ Whittenberg Elementary School, aleblanc@greenville.k12.sc.us

Citizen Scientists: Be a Part of Scientific Discovery from Your Own Backyard

Loree Griffin Burns

Henry Holt and Company, 2012

80 pages

SUMMARY:

This beautiful non-fiction book shows how ordinary citizens, both young and old, can participate in scientific discovery. Many volunteers from all over the United States are helping scientist understand monarch butterfly migration. Other volunteers participate in counting bird populations, identifying frogs by the individual calls they make and identifying types of ladybugs. The book highlights four different projects, one for each season, in which any nature lover can participate. Projects can be done by individuals, families, or by classrooms. Projects range from rural to suburbia and even big cities. This is a wonderful book for curious children and teachers. The book is an ideal introduction to science activities that will get kids outside and on the path to discovery.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK TRY...

The Beetle Book, Steve Jenkins

Rachel Carson and Her Book That Changed the World, Laurie Lawlor

The Tarantula Scientist, Sy Montgomery

The Kid's Guide to Nature Adventures: 80 Great Activities for Exploring the Outdoors, Joe Rhatigan

For the Birds: The Life of Roger Tory Peterson, Peggy Thomas

The Frog Scientist, Pamela Turner

A Kid's First Book of Birdwatching, Scott Weidensaul

WEBSITES:

<http://www.loreeburns.com> (Author's Website has hands-on-science ideas)

<http://scienceforcitizens.net> (Find age-appropriate science projects for individuals or classrooms)

www.birds.cornell.edu/citscitoolkit/projects (Citizen Science Central goal is to foster real-world research)

BOOKTALK:

Attention all nature lovers! *Citizen Scientists: Be a Part of Scientific Discovery from Your Own Backyard* is the kind of book that inspires you to get outside and discover new things. The author of this book teases the reader with the thrill of discovering a butterfly chrysalis, the excitement of seeing a red-bellied woodpecker, and the adventure of finding a nine-spotted ladybug to photograph. The book highlights four different projects--one nature project for each season. The book explains how **YOU** and other ordinary people who love nature can participate in community projects to preserve nature. You don't need a college degree to be a citizen scientist. You just need a lot of curiosity, a field guide, adults to help you get outdoors and some of the information from this book. The resource pages of this book will hook you up with websites about tagging monarchs, participating in the Christmas Bird Count event, the FrogWatch team, or the Lost ladybug project.

Prepared by:

Patty Taylor, Lexington County Public Library, ptaylor@lex.lb.sc.us

City of Orphans

Avi

Atheneum Book for Young Readers, 2011

350 pages

SUMMARY:

New York City is a tough place for families to live in 1893. People take on many different kinds of jobs in order to make a living. Mak is a “newsie”, standing on a corner every day trying to sell papers, and his sister Emma works at Waldorf Hotel. Everyone contributes in the effort to take home money for the family. Mak becomes a target of the local gang the Plug Uglies. They try to rob Mak and Willa, a homeless girl, saves him from the gang. Mak convinces Willa to come home with him, and they slowly make her part of the family. When Emma is accused of stealing at her job, Mak and Willa set out to prove that she is innocent. They convince a private detective to help them and find out that a mobster is behind the theft. The mobster happens to be Willa’s father, and Mak and Willa must stick together to persevere.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Stories of Immigrant Life, Linda Granfield

The Inquisitor’s Apprentice, Chris Moriarty

The Traitor’s Gate, Avi

WEBSITES:

Author, Avi’s official website: <http://www.avi-writer.com/>

Reading Rocket’s video interview with Avi:

<http://www.readingrockets.org/books/interviews/avi/>

BOOKTALK:

Imagine you live in New York City. But wait, it’s not present day NYC, it is New York City in 1893. The streets are overcrowded, the buildings are overcrowded, and even the kids must pitch in to help the family survive. Thirteen-year-old Mak spends his days on the street corner peddling newspapers for 8 cents a piece, and trying to avoid the local gang the Plug Uglies. Unfortunately he becomes a target of the gang one day and must make a run for it. Will he make it? He probably wouldn’t have if Willa, a homeless girl, hadn’t jumped in to save Mak from the gang. The Plug Uglies are only one of Mak’s problems. His sister, Emma has been accused of stealing a watch from the fancy hotel she works at. Mak must prove that she is innocent in four days so she can get out of the prison that she has been placed in. Willa and Mak work together with an old detective in order to track down clues and prove that Emma is innocent. Will they make the deadline? And are they prepared for what they will find out about themselves, and their families? How will they stay away from the Plug Uglies? Stop in and checkout *City of Orphans* by Avi in order to find out the answers to these and many other questions.

Prepared by:

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Close to Famous

Joan Bauer
Viking, 2011
250 pages

SUMMARY:

Foster and her mother leave Memphis in the middle of the night to get away from her mother's ex-boyfriend. They stop in tiny town in West Virginia that promises a bit of safety and rest. Foster's mother is a singer who needs confidence, and Foster is a devoted baker, dreaming of being the next celebrity chef. They settle in to the new town - her mother finding work, and Foster selling her cupcakes at a local restaurant. Some problems won't leave them alone though, and Foster must find a way to deal with hers if she's going to have a chance at her dreams.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Pie, Sarah Weeks

Hope Was Here, Joan Bauer

Bliss, Kathryn Littlewood

WEBSITES:

Joan Bauer's Homepage: <http://www.joanbauer.com/>

Book Guide from Penguin Books: <http://www.us.penguin.com/static/images/yr/pdf/tl-guide-close-to-famous.pdf>

BOOKTALK:

Foster is going to be a big star on TV someday. Her specialty is baking and she's been watching cooking shows on television for tricks and tips. Her hero is TV chef Sonny Kroll, but not even his sayings are helping her with some of life's biggest challenges – like not being able to read, worrying that Mama's ex-boyfriend is going to find them, or losing her pillowcase stuffed with her memories of her Daddy, who died serving in the army. She's not giving up though, with some great new friends and one fabulous cupcake at a time she's conquering her troubles and finding out what it really takes to be famous.

Prepared by:

Amanda LeBlanc, AJ Whittenberg Elementary School, aleblanc@greenville.k12.sc.us

Double Dog Dare

Lisa Graff

Philomel Books, 2012

290 pages

SUMMARY:

Fourth grader Francine Halata has *always* wanted the job of news anchor for the school Media Club. New kid Kansas Bloom joined the Media Club just to have something to do. The rest of the Media Club has the perfect solution to the anchor dilemma – a dare contest and the winner gets the job. Francine and Kansas become arch enemies as the dares escalate and become ever more humiliating. But, when the two discover something they have in common everything changes.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

The Best Schoolyear Ever, Barbara Robinson

Bigger than a Bread Box, Laurel Snyder

Fame and Glory in Freedom, Georgia, Barbara O'Connor

Stucksville, Sheila Greenwald

WEBSITES:

Lisa Graff's website – find out more about this books and others from the author

<http://www.lisagraff.com/double-dog-dare.html>

Community reviews and book recommendations at goodreads.com

<http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/12303608-double-dog-dare>

Reviews and information about other books by the author

<http://www.bookish.com/books/double-dog-dare/fdc9aae8-25a9-43a3-9fcc-32ce45a30f96>

BOOKTALK:

What would you do on a dare? Would you string your own underwear up the school flag pole? How about lick a lizard? Would you dye your hair green? In this hilarious book Francine and her arch enemy, Kansas, are in a battle of dares to see who will be the next news show anchor for the school media club. Francine wants the job more than anything; Kansas just loves a good dare – his friends even call him “King of the Dares.” So, who will win? And WHAT will they do to win it all?

Prepared by:

Dianne Spearman, Oak Grove Elementary School, dspearman@lexington1.net

EllRay Jakes is Not a Chicken

Sally Warner

Scholastic Inc., 2011

108 pages

SUMMARY:

Lancelot Raymond (EllRay) Jakes, the smallest boy in his 3rd grade class, is in the middle of a war with Stanley and Jared and has absolutely no idea why. Every day during class they all act as if nothing is wrong. But the war takes place before school, during nutrition break, lunch and afternoon recess. Stanley and Jared are always picking on EllRay but he never tells anyone what is happening to him. It all began right after Christmas vacation and according to EllRay, the war began for no reason and will probably end for no reason. Finally, Ms. Sanchez, their teacher, calls Mr. Jakes and says that EllRay's classroom behavior needs improvement. In order to help EllRay to get a good progress report, Mr. Jakes bribes EllRay with a trip to Disneyland if he can go a whole week without getting into trouble. The only thing EllRay needs to do is stay away from Stanley and Jared for one week and the trip is his! Everything seems to go fine until Thursday, when Jared trips EllRay in class. Then on Friday, Jared confesses to EllRay that the war began right before Christmas vacation when EllRay hurt his feelings in front of Heather Patton and he is ready to fight! So EllRay decides that he is actually going to fight back and hopefully end the trouble between the two of them once and for all. During the fight, Heather Patton calls EllRay a bully and "poof" the war is over; just like that! In the end, EllRay gets his Disneyland vacation, only to find out that his parents invited a friend along as a surprise for EllRay...and to his surprise, it is Jared.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Like Pickle Juice on a Cookie, Julie Sternberg

Marty McGuire, Kate Messner

Zita the Space Girl, Ben Hatke

WEBSITES:

Sally Warner: <http://www.sallywarner.com/>, this website gives information about Sally Warner, other books she has written and school visits.

California Readers: http://californiareaders.org/interviews/warner_sally.php, is an interview with Sally Warner about books she has written, awards she has received and how she begins writing a new book.

Princess Reviews: <http://5678princessreviews.blogspot.com/2010/07/sally-warner-interview.html> is an interview with Sally Warner and discusses what it is like to be an author and other interesting facts.

BOOK TALK

Sally Warner's book, *EllRay Jakes is NOT a chicken!* is about a 3rd grade boy who is being bullied by several of his classmates. Lancelot Raymond, or EllRay, doesn't want anyone, especially his parents or teacher, to know what goes on before and after school. But trying to keep it a secret is hard! One day, EllRay's teacher calls his father at home and says that EllRay's classroom behavior needs improvement. EllRay's father makes a deal with him that if he can stay out of trouble for one week, he will get a trip to Disneyland! EllRay knows that he must stay

away from the bullies in order to get the trip. To find out if EllRay can stay out of trouble and get to go to Disneyland read Sally Warner's book, *EllRay Jakes is NOT a Chicken*.

Prepared by:

Louan Bujtor , Lyman Elementary School, IntoCorvairs@aol.com

Franklin and Winston: A Christmas That Changed the World

Douglas Wood

Candlewick Press, 2011

38 pages

SUMMARY:

Christmas 1944. Japanese attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor earlier that month. London was being bombed by the German in an attempt to invade. During this holiday season when many people were afraid of the future, two leaders: President Franklin D. Roosevelt of the United States and Prime Minister Winston Churchill of Great Britain, met together at the White House in Washington, DC. They made many important decisions together which would see the two countries through World War II. Illustrations by Barry Moser complement the text masterfully.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

A Boy Named FDR: How FDR Grew Up to Change America, Kathleen Krull

Romeo and Juliet Code, Phoebe Stone

My Secret War: the World War II Diary of Madeline Beck, Mary Pope Osborne

I Will Come Back for You: A Family in Hiding During WWII, Marisabin Russo

Always Remember Me: How One Family Survived WWII, Marisabin Russo

Meet Mr. Tom, Michelle Magorian

American Girl Books—the Molly Series by Valerie Tripp

Books by Louise Borden

WEBSITES:

For teaching—Mrs. Roosevelt isn't told who the special White House Guests are to be until the last minute. She is not happy with Mr. Roosevelt.

<http://www.post-gazette.com/stories/local/region/christmas-1941-with-world-at-war-churchill-joins-fdr-for-washington-yule-225752/>

Hear the speeches given by both men at the tree lighting ceremonies:

<http://www.winstonchurchill.org/learn/in-the-media/churchill-in-the-news/1340-franklin-d-roosevelt-and-winston-churchill-speak-at-the-white-house-tree-lighting-1941-listen>

BOOKTALK:

Have you ever had company and your mother complained you stayed up too late? Has your guest stood on a chair and waved their arms just to get and keep everyone's attention during dinner? Does he like to take two long baths a day? Does she stay up late, sleep in, and do homework in bed during the morning? Has your guest asked you not to talk or whistle in the hallway outside their bedroom? When Winston Churchill came from England to visit with President Franklin Roosevelt, these are just a few of Winston Churchill's antics while staying at the White House. They worked hard, too. These powerful leaders during one of the worst times in history were responsible for the world's future. Germany was bombing London day and night. Enemy submarines were patrolling the Atlantic Ocean, making Churchill's trip extremely dangerous. Japan had just attacked Pearl Harbor. America was now in World War II. These men liked and admired each other. This Christmas visit was just the opportunity for them to get to

know one another better, have some fun, eat good food, and figure out how they were going to free more than thirty countries with millions of citizens and win World War II. If you like to know the stories behind history, this book with its amazing illustrations is one for you.

Prepared by:

Robin Chandler, *The Cleveland Academy of Leadership*, rrchandler@spart7.org

Freaky Fast Frankie Joe

Lutricia Clifton

Holiday House, 2012

248 pages

SUMMARY:

Frankie Joe is happy living in the Lone Star Trailer Park in Laredo, Texas with a mom who is so cool she doesn't make him go to school if he doesn't want. All that changes when his mom is sent to jail and Frankie Joe is forced to move in with a dad he hasn't seen in years and a stepmom and four step brothers he didn't even know existed. This new "family" has rules and Frankie doesn't think he fits in at all. Frankie Joe hatches a plan to earn enough money to make his way back to Texas. When he starts making deliveries on his bike for Frankie Joe's Freaky Fast Delivery Service, Frankie Joe's life gets interesting.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

A Smidgen of Sky, Dianna Dorisi Winget

Tank Talbott's Guide to Girls, Dori Hillestad Butler

The Road to Paris, Nikki Grimes

Extra Credit, Andrew Clements

Two Under Par, Kevin Henkes

WEBSITES:

Holiday House: http://www.holidayhouse.com/docs/Freaky_Fast_Frankie_Joe.pdf, Educator's Guide with discussion questions and interdisciplinary connections

School Library Journal Blog: <http://blogs.slj.com/afuse8production/2012/08/07/review-of-the-day-freaky-fast-frankie-joe-by-lutricia-clifton/>, book review

BOOKTALK:

Frankie Joe is fast – freaky fast! And he is going to have to pedal his heart out on his bicycle if he wants to get away from his dad, his new stepmom, and his bothersome half-brothers. Can Frankie Joe make enough deliveries on his bike to get the money it will take to make it the 1,400 miles from Plainview, Illinois back home to Laredo, Texas? Will his mom even be there if he makes it back?

Prepared by:

Dianne Spearman, Oak Grove Elementary School, dspearman@lexington1.net

The Humming Room

Ellen Potter

Feiwell and Friends, 2012

184 pages

SUMMARY:

The main character, Roo, goes to live with her uncle in a mansion that had once been a tuberculosis sanatorium for rich children. While there, Roo hears a strange humming and goes in search of the origin of the sound. She finds herself sliding down the “body chute” that had been used to move dead bodies to the basement when the house was a sanatorium. While in the basement, Roo follows a squirrel up some stairs to a trap door that leads to a dead garden. Finding the garden just increases the mysteries of the house and leads Roo to more unusual and interesting discoveries, characters, and adventures.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

The Secret Garden, Frances Hodgson Burnett

Peter and the Starcatchers, Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson

Fairytale Detectives, Michael Buckley

The Magician’s Elephant, Kate DiCamillo

WEBSITES:

Author Ellen Potter: www.ellenpotter.com

For more information about Ellen Potter, *The Humming Room* and Ms. Potter’s other works, visit Ms. Potter’s Website.

BOOKTALK:

Have you ever heard a sound you couldn’t explain, but no one else seemed to care? Have you ever stumbled upon something that was so out of this world you questioned whether it was really there? That is how Roo feels when she hears a strange humming and finds a dead garden. *The Humming Room* by Ellen Potter is filled with mystery and suspense, from the eerie setting of an old mansion on Cough Rock Island to a dead garden, and a wild river boy to an unusual cousin who reconstructs animal skeletons. Read *The Humming Room* by Ellen Potter to unlock the mystery of these characters, the strange humming sound and the dead garden.

Prepared by:

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The Mighty Miss Malone

Christopher Paul Curtis
Wendy Lamb Books, 2012
307 pages

SUMMARY:

Deza Malone, the smartest girl in her class in Gary, Indiana, accompanies her mother and older brother on a trip to find her father, an African American man who left to find work after the Great Depression hit. They end up in a shantytown outside of Flint, Michigan, and her brother attempts to be a performer while Deza and her mother search for a home. With love and determination, Deza, her older brother Jimmie, and their parents endure tough times.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Mare's War, Tanita S. Davis

Between Shades of Gray, Ruta Sepetys

Copper Sun, Sharon Draper

Children of the Great Depression, Russell Freedman

The Luck of the Buttons, Anne Ylvisaker

Migrant Mother: How a Photograph Defined the Great Depression, Don Nardo

WEBSITES:

The History Channel: <http://www.history.com/topics/great-depression>, covers information about the Great Depression with videos, speeches, photo galleries, interactives, with additional resources for research on this time in America.

Christopher Paul Curtis Book Trailer: <http://youtu.be/5HqiCcUexGE>, the author discusses his writing this book and its purpose.

Joe Louis Max Schmeling video: http://youtu.be/lihT_ewxVko, students can watch the actual boxing match that everyone only listened to on the radio.

BOOKTALK:

Deza Malone lives in Gary, Indiana, loves school and is a top student who is quite good at writing. Her dictionary and thesaurus are used so much the teacher gets her to put them away. Deza's world is about the take on drastic changes, as the Great Depression hits America. The Malone family motto: "We are a family on a journey to a place called wonderful.", has to be enough to help them endure what lies ahead. Poverty, separation of family as dad leaves to find work, brother Jimmy leaves to find singing possibilities, moving to a shantytown outside Flint, Michigan, a new school and rotting teeth for Deza. They each have their world turned upside down. This historical fiction is one that comes along once in a great while. You will be glad to go along with the Malone family on their journey of the depression, music and money, reading and race, sports and race, and children in poverty.

Prepared by:

Kelly M Brown, CrossRoads Middle, kbrown@lexrich5.org

Never Forgotten
Patricia C. McKissack
Schwartz & Wade Books, 2011
47 pages

SUMMARY:

When an African blacksmith's only child disappears, he enlists the help of Earth, Fire, Water, and Air, the Elements who helped raise the child, to find his son and bring him home.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Catching the Fire: Philip Simmons, Blacksmith, Mary E. Lyons

Keeper of the Gate: Designs in Wrought Iron, Philip Simmons, Master Blacksmith

The People Could Fly, Virginia Hamilton

Elijah of Buxton, Christopher Paul Curtis

WEBSITES:

Random House Kids Never Forgotten: <http://www.randomhousekids.com/books/detail/112093-never-forgotten#.UQr2FmfheSo> Publisher's website with teacher's guide.

Study SC: <http://studysc.org/elementary/slavery> Information about slavery in South Carolina.

Works Progress Administration Slave Narratives:

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/slavery/resources/wpa.html> Links to oral histories collected during the Depression from slaves.

The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African:

http://history.hanover.edu/texts/equiano/equiano_contents.html Full-text of book published in 1789 in London relating the experiences of a young man who was kidnapped and sold into slavery.

Philip Simmons Foundation: <http://www.philipsimmons.us/aboutsimmons.html>

Information about Philip Simmons, Charleston, South Carolina, blacksmith and grandson of slaves.

Lyons Den Books: <http://www.lyonsdenbooks.com/html/fire.htm>

Author Mary Lyons' website featuring the children's biography of Philip Simmons, Charleston blacksmith and great-grandson of slaves.

BOOKTALK:

What would your parents do if you were kidnapped? Call the police? Offer a reward for any information about you? What if you had disappeared three hundred years ago in West Africa? When his young son Musafa goes missing, master blacksmith Dinga must call upon the Mother Elements of Earth, Fire, Water, and Air to help find his missing child. The Elements have helped Dinga raise Musafa after his mother died so they gladly go one by one to track him. Will they find the boy? Can they bring him back home to his grieving father?

Prepared by:

Serena DuBose, Fairfax Elementary School, dubosea@acs.k12.sc.us

Pie
Sarah Weeks
Scholastic, 2011
183 pages

SUMMARY:

Pie is a humorous story about a ten-year-old girl and a favorite aunt who is famous, at least in Ipswitch, Pennsylvania, for her pies. Set in a small town full of quirky characters, Aunt Polly knows everyone's birthday and has their favorite recipes on hand. When Aunt Polly dies, Alice is especially sad because she was very close to her aunt. The whole town feels the loss too. To everyone's surprise, Aunt Polly bequeaths her grouchy cat, Lardo to Alice and her secret recipe to Lardo. A mystery develops around Aunt Polly's secret pie crust recipe and Lardo the cat.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK TRY...

Prairie Evers, Ellen Airgood
Close to Famous, Joan Bauer
It's Raining Cupcake, Lisa Schroder
A Crooked Kind of Perfect, Linda Urban

WEBSITES:

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/book/pie> (Scholastic Teacher's Resources)
<http://sarahweeks.com/blog/2011/12/not-so-secret-pie-crust-recipes/> (Pie Crust Recipes)
<http://www.scholastic.com/MotherDaughterBookClub> (Info about Mother/Daughter Book Clubs)

BOOKTALK:

Do you know someone in your family that likes to bake? Aunt Polly loves to bake pies and ten-year-old Alice loves her Aunt Polly. She loves working with her aunt in the Pie Shop. Aunt Polly's award winning pies have made her a small town celebrity. Her pies have amped up the small town's economy as pie enthusiast from all over come to Ipswitch, Pennsylvania to buy Aunt Polly's pies.

When Aunt Polly dies suddenly, Alice is especially sad because she was close to her aunt. Alice is also confused because Aunt Polly left her pie crust recipe to her grouchy cat named Lardo, and left Alice the responsibility of caring for him. Alice's mom is mad, however. She's furious that Polly took her secret recipe with her to the grave instead of publishing it and leaving the family a fortune instead of a cat. Dad is just upset because he is allergic to cats.

A mystery develops around the Aunt Polly's secret pie crust recipe and Lardo the cat. How do you leave a recipe with a cat? That's what the whole town wants to know. Aunt Polly's pie crust is the most coveted recipe in the pie-making world. Now a professional thief has come to steal Lardo and find the secret recipe.

What do you get when you take some scrumptious pie recipes, stir in a mystery, an overweight cat, and a legacy? Read *Pie* by Sarah Weeks. You will enjoy every slice of this yummy book. The book includes 14 pie recipes perfect for any budding pie maker.

Prepared by:

Patty Taylor, Lexington County Public Library, ptaylor@lex.lb.sc.us

Plunked
Michael Northrop
Scholastic Press, 2012
247 pages

SUMMARY:

This is the story about a sixth grade boy named Jack Mogens. He is in the minor leagues baseball and has his swing down, moves down, and everything he needs. The one thing he is missing is the spot of Left field. Soon all of his dreams go crashing down when he is hit by a pitch. Jack soon starts to lose hope and almost altogether gives up the sport that he loves the most! But he has to dig deep inside to realize that he can go back to the plate and try again at what he really loves. This story is about trust, belief in yourself, and the love of baseball.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

The Lucky Baseball Bat, Matt Christopher

Batting Ninth, Kris Rutherford

Rainmaker, Kevin Markey

WEBSITES:

Author's website: http://michaelnorthrop.net/?page_id=2616

Reviews and discussions from goodreads.com:

<http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/12326211-plunked>

Scholastic teacher pages: <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/book/plunked>

BOOKTALK:

This book is about Jack Mogens, a boy who is in love with baseball and his team. But one day when Jack gets hit by a pitch he is thinking about giving up the sport he truly loves. Jack really has to look hard for a reason to not give it up. Read this book about a Sixth Grade boy and the love of baseball.

Prepared by:

Katie Pittman, Lonnie B. Nelson student

The President's Stuck in the Bathtub: Poems about the Presidents

Susan Katz
Clarion Books, 2012
64 pages

SUMMARY:

This collection of poems shares interesting facts about various presidents. Some facts are well known (such as the story of President Taft getting stuck in the bathtub) while others will be new to readers. Poems demonstrate a variety of poetic forms as they introduce readers to the presidents' quirks. The "Notes and Quotes" section at the end of the book provides a famous quote, nickname, and fun fact for each president.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

So You Want to Be President, Judith St. George
Yes I Can for Kids, Mr. B

WEBSITES:

White House: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/presidents> Explore information about the Presidents and the First Ladies at the White House's website..
Internet Public Library POTUS: <http://www.ipl.org/div/potus/> Learn facts about each of the Presidents.

BOOKTALK:

Have you ever heard of a president who got stuck in the bathtub? Did you know that President Lincoln actually carried papers in his hat? Who was the first left-handed president? Find out about the presidents' weird pets, funny White House experiences, and fears when you read *The President's Stuck in the Bathtub: Poems about the Presidents*.

Prepared by:

Melanie Starks, East Aiken School of the Arts, mstarks@aiken.k12.sc.us

Three Times Lucky

Sheila Turnage

Dial, 2012

312 pages

SUMMARY:

Lexile : 800

Moses LoBeau, Mo for short, and her best buddy, Dale Earnhardt Johnson III are quite a pair. They even start a detective agency to solve a local mystery that hit home closer than is comfortable. Mo showed up in an unusual way when a hurricane hit the town of Tupelo Landing, NC. She floated into the lives of the Colonel and Miss Lana. While Mo continues to look for her real “upstream mother”, write her autobiography, and solve a murder mystery she still maintains a feisty attitude that will carry her and her “family” through to the end.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Remarkable, Elizabeth Foley

Tracing Stars, Erin Moulton

Wonder, R.J. Palacio

The Humming Room, Ellen Potter

WEBSITES:

Sheila Turnage Website: <http://www.sheilaturnage.com/SheilaTurnage/3XLucky.html>

Sheila Turnage Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/SheilaTurnage.Author>

Scholastic's Teacher Page: <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/book/three-times-lucky>

Book Excerpt Webcast: <http://soundcloud.com/penguin-usa/three-times-lucky-sheila>

BOOKTALK:

If you want a book about murder mysteries, unusual families, friendship, and two interesting characters named Miss Moses LoBeau and Dale Earnhardt Johnson III, then I have just the book for you!! Ever since Mo floated into the Colonel and Miss Lana’s life after a hurricane life has never been dull. So come along and find out if Mo and Dale are able to solve the mystery and uncover secrets that people around them are hiding.

Prepared by:

Angie Enlow, Meadow Glen Elementary School, aenlow@lexington1.net

Waiting for the Magic

Patricia MacLachlan

Atheneum Book for Young Readers, 2011

143 pages

SUMMARY:

William watches his father walk out the door and out of his life again. His mother grabs his sister, Elenor and takes them off to the animal shelter in search of a dog. Once they get to the animal shelter the family can't decide which dog they want, so they take all four that are there. Then Elenor reminds her mother that she also wants a cat. So William's family leaves the shelter with four dogs and a cat. Slowly the dogs and cat help fill some of the void of their missing father. Soon Elenor, and then William realize that they can hear the animals as they spread their magical advice. William's father returns when he finds out that William's mom is expecting another baby. Then the animals work their "magic", and eventually the entire family can not only hear the animals talk, but they have mended their family unit as well.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

What the Dog Said, Randi Reisfeld

Smart Dog, Vivian Van Velde

A Dog's Life: The Autobiography of a Stray, Ann M. Martin

WEBSITES:

Scholastic: <http://www.scholastic.com/browse/contributor.jsp?id=1621> Read a brief biography of Patricia MacLachlan at Scholastic's website.

BOOKTALK:

Do you ever think that you hear your animals talk? Well Elenor and William know that they can hear their dogs and cat talking. It all starts after William's father leaves his family. It is not the first time he has left, but this time William's Mom decides that she is ready for a change and they are going to get a dog. Since they can't decide on just one, they end up leaving the shelter with four dogs and a cat. Elenor, William's little sister, is the first to hear the animals talk, and Gram can also hear the animals. The dogs and cat all begin to look after the family members while adding their "thoughts" to the daily events. William finally hears the animals and realizes that the magic is real. Read this book in order to find out how the animals "work their magic" with the rest of the family.

Prepared by:

Traci Nelson, Aiken Elementary, tnelson@aiken.k12.sc.us

With a Name like Love
Tess Hilmo
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011
256 pages

SUMMARY:

Thirteen-year-old Olivene Love gets tangled up in a murder mystery when her itinerant preaching family arrives in the small town of Binder, Arkansas in 1957.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Way Down Deep, Ruth White.

On Christmas Eve, Ann M. Martin.

Moon Over Manifest, Clare Vanderpool.

So B. It by Sarah Weeks

WEBSITES:

Tess Hilmo: <http://tesshilmo.com/> , Tess Hilmo's website.

Frogs: Frog Facts, Myths & More | Exploratorium: <http://www.exploratorium.edu/frogs/>, frog articles, interactive exhibits, and hands-on activities.

Book Discussion Guide:

<http://media.us.macmillan.com/discussionguides/9780374384654DG.pdf>.

BOOKTALK:

It is 1957 and thirteen-year old Ollie is getting tired of traveling from town to town with her family in a travel trailer. Her father is a traveling preacher, intent on spreading the word of God, and when they roll into the town of Binder for a three-day revival she thinks it is going to be like every other small town that they have been to. How wrong she is! When she meets Jimmy Koppel, whose mother is in jail for murdering his father, she finds herself right in the middle of a mystery. Jimmy insists that his mother is innocent, but his mother has already confessed! Ollie feels that Jimmy is right but how can she convince her father to stay in town long enough for her to find out the truth? You'll find out if she does when you read *With a Name like Love* by Tess Hilmo.

Prepared by:

Kate Byrd, Belton Elementary School, kbyrd@anderson2.k12.sc.us

Wonder
R.J. Palacio
Alfred A. Knopf, 2012
315 pages

SUMMARY:

This story is about 10 year old Auggie who was born with some serious facial disorders. He had been homeschooled with some friends up to fourth grade but then his parents decided that it was time that he attended school. When Auggie went to school on his first day he met many kids who all teased and stared. Two people stood out for Auggie because of their kindness. One was a boy named Jack who was asked by the principal to be Auggie's friend and then a girl named Summer who just wanted to be the new kid's friend. This book goes to show that in middle school whether you look the same or not and not to judge a book by its cover.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Middle School: Get Me Out of Here!, James Patterson

Loser, Jerry Spinelli

The Adventures of Beanboy, Lisa Harkrader

Framed, Gordon Korman

WEBSITES:

Author's website: <http://rjpalacio.com/>

Join the national movement to Choose Kind, inspired by R.J. Palacio's debut novel, *Wonder*
<http://choosekind.tumblr.com/>

Interview with the author: <http://www.reading.org/general/Publications/blog/engage/engage-single-post/engage/2012/10/19/5-questions-with-rj-palacio>

BOOKTALK:

This is a touching story about 10 year old Auggie, who was born with facial disorders and is going to school in the 5th grade for the first time in his life. Auggie must learn to face bullying, taunting, and teasing without giving up his new school and friends. A great story about friendship and not to judge a book by its cover.

Prepared by:

Katie Pittman, Lonnie B. Nelson student

Wonderstruck
Brian Selznick
Scholastic, Inc., 2011
608 pages

SUMMARY:

Wonderstruck is two stories that take place fifty years apart...one in words and one in pictures. Ben's story, told in words, takes place in 1977. Ben, 12 years old, is living in Flint, Michigan. His mother has recently died and he has never met his father. One day he stumbles upon a clue to his father's identity in his mother's room. Even though he is deaf, he makes the daring decision to follow this clue to New York and ultimately to the American Museum of Natural History. Rose's story is told in pictures. Rose, also deaf, is a 12 year old girl living in New Jersey in 1927. Her mother has remarried and left her to live with her domineering father. Rose has no contact with the outside world except for the visits from her tutor. She longs for more out of life, so she runs away to New York City and also winds up at the American Museum of Natural History. Ben and Rose are both struggling to find what's missing from their lives. Their two journeys will eventually merge to form one amazing story!

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Misty Gordon and the Mystery of the Ghost Pirates, Kim Kennedy

Here Lies Linc, Delia Ray

Liesl and Po, Lauren Oliver

From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler, E.L. Konigsburg

The Invention of Hugo Cabret, Brian Selznick

WEBSITES:

Wonderstruck: <http://www.wonderstruckthebook.com/home.htm>, is Scholastic's website for the book.

Teaching with Brian Selznick: <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/collection/virtual-field-trip-teaching-resources>, is where you can take *your students on a virtual tour of the American Museum of Natural History. Then consider these follow-up classroom activities for each of the field trip stops: the wolf diorama, the giant mosquito model, and the Ahnighito Meteorite.*

BOOKTALK:

Two stories set 50 years apart woven together in one book? Ben's mother is dead. He's never met his father. He feels lost and alone. Fifty years prior, Rose longs for a different life. She longs for the mother who abandoned her. New York City holds the key to unlock secrets for Ben and Rose. Will either of them find what they're searching for? If you want the answer to this question and many others, read *Wonderstruck* by Brian Selznick.

Prepared by:

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