**Almost Super**

Marion Jensen

Harper, 2013

251 pages

SUMMARY:

Shortly after their twelfth birthdays, everyone in the Bailey family receives their super power to use fighting against their archrivals, the villainous Johnson family. When Rafter and his brother Benny receive their powers, however, they aren’t so powerful…they’re pitiful!

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*Captain Nobody* by Dean Pitchford

*Melvin Beederman* , *Super Hero* series by Greg Trine

*Sidekicked* by John David Anderson

WEBSITES:

Read Write Think Comic Creator, <http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/comic/index.html> Create a comic of your own.

Make Beliefs Comix, <http://www.makebeliefscomix.com/Comix/> Create your own comic super hero!

BOOKTALK:

Have you ever wished you had a super power or were a super hero? Well, Rafter knows he is, or he will be once that magical day comes after his twelfth birthday when he will receive his super power just like all of the Baileys before him. Of course his enemy, Juanita Johnson will receive her powers, too, so he’ll have to watch out! When he gets his power, he’s disappointed to say the least. How will he avoid the Johnsons and help his family in the war against their archenemies, the supervillain Johnsons? Why didn’t he get a super fabulous power like flying or freezing stuff? What is going on in the world of super powers and villains? Read *Almost Super* to find out!

Prepared by:

Melanie Starks, East Aiken School of the Arts, mstarks@acpsd.net

**Anna Was Here**

Jane Kurtz

Greenwillow Books, 2013

279 pages

SUMMARY:

When her dad returns to his roots (Oakwood, Kansas) to pastor a church that is having problems, 4th grader, Anna, is uprooted from her friend Jericho and Colorado and finds herself in prairie land where she is related to “half the population” .

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*The Real Boy* by Anne Ursu

*Flora and Ulysses* by Kate DiCamillo

*The Boy on the Porch* by Sharon Creech

WEBSITES:

Jane Kurtz, <http://www.janekurtz.com> This is website of author, Jane Kurtz. On this site you will find information about her books as well as information about her connection to literacy in Ethiopia.

BOOKTALK:

While living in Colorado, Anna and her friend Jericho created the Safety Club after roaring wild fires from the past summer had everyone unnerved and unsettled. Then, Anna’s father returns to his roots in Oakwood, Kansas, to temporarily pastor a church that was having problems and had a hump to get over. In Oakwood, Anna has cousins by the dozens, all of them with personalities by the mile, including an ex-cop aunt who now farms on a rough hillside…and then there’s Simon, a hump that Anna has to get over of her own. Anna is a list maker….always thinking ahead and trying to prepare for trouble that could be ahead. There are no wildfires in Colorado, but Anna is now in Kansas. And if you’re ever read or seen the movie *The Wizard of Oz*, you know what happened in Kansas that caused Dorothy to lose her way! Like Dorothy, Anna wants nothing more than to return home. Will she…and where is *home* anyway? Is it *here*…… or is it *there*?

Prepared by:

Paige Mitchell, Wren Elementary School, mitchellp@anderson1.k12.sc.us and

Rose Davis, Arden Elementary School, rosdavis@richlandone.org

**The Boy on the Porch**

Sharon Creech

Harper Collins, 2013

160 pages

SUMMARY:

What is a couple to do when they find a young boy asleep on their porch? A note is tucked in his pocket asking the couple to take care of him until the mysterious writer returns. While the couple doesn’t expect the boy to stay, he does. The boy, Jacob, doesn’t speak so John and Marta know nothing of his history. The connection and friendship between the couple and boy grow. They embrace his talent and spirit and turn into an unlikely family. Will the mysterious note writer ever return for the young boy?

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*Escape from Mr. Lemoncello’s Library* by Chris Grabenstein

*Flora and Ulysses* by Kate DiCamillo

*The Great Unexpected* by Sharon Creech

WEBSITES:

Sharon Creech, <http://www.sharoncreech.com> This is website of author Sharon Creech. On this site you will find her books listed with excerpts from the books. You will also find information about Sharon Creech with an address to send her mail (She will write back!). In the “Teach Creech” section of the website, you will find activity guides for her books.

BOOKTALK:

As a fan of Sharon Creech I was eager to pick up this book. This book is a quick read filled with a range of emotion until the very end. The end still leaves a little mystery, which keeps you reading until the last page. This would be an excellent book for a classroom read aloud and great for predictions and questioning.

What is a couple to do when they find a young boy asleep on their porch? A note is tucked in his pocket asking the couple to take care of him until the mysterious writer returns. While the couple doesn’t expect the boy to stay, he does. The boy, Jacob, doesn’t speak so John and Marta know nothing of his history. The connection and friendship between the couple and boy grow. They embrace his talent and spirit and turn into an unlikely family. Will the mysterious note writer ever return for the young boy?

Prepared by:

Paige Mitchell, Wren Elementary School, mitchellp@anderson1.k12.sc.us

**The Case of the Vanishing Honeybees: A Scientific Mystery**

Sandra Markle

Millbrook Press, 2014

48 pages

SUMMARY:

Honeybees are nothing to fear. They are a crucial part of our food chain. They gather nectar from sweet flowers and pollinate other plants as they go. Unfortunately, these bees are disappearing at an alarming rate. Scientists have some ideas about this problem but have they found the definite cause?

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...     
*The Case of the Vanishing Little Brown Bat* by Sandra Markle

*The Buzz on Bees, Why are they Disappearing?* by Shelley Rottner

*What If There Were No Bees? A Book about the Grassland Ecosystem* by Suzanne Slade

*The Hive Detectives: Chronicle of a Honey Bee Catastrophe* by Loree Griffin Burns

WEBSITES:  
*Time* Magazine, <http://science.time.com/2013/08/09/the-trouble-with-beekeeping-in-the-anthropocene/> Read an article about beekeeping.

*New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/27/business/27bees.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0article> This article give you information about honey bees.

Time for Kids, <http://www.timeforkids.com/news/case-missing-bees/11806> , This article has a lower reading level and can be read by students.

BOOKTALK:

Are you afraid of bees? Do you think they will sting you? Has anyone ever told you that bees won’t bother you if you don’t bother them? Bees do much more good than harm, and you might even say bees are our friends. Just like us, bees love sugary sweet things. They get nectar from flowers and spread pollen to other plants. Without this, we would only have oats, rice and corn to eat, and wouldn’t that be boring? Unfortunately, honeybees are disappearing at an alarming rate. Read this book to see why this is happening and if there is anything you can do to help. So instead of running from bees and even trying to kill them, next time you see one, say thank you!

Prepared by:

Amanda Youmans, Pleasant Hill Elementary School, ayoumans2@lexington1.net

**Charlie Bumpers vs. the Teacher of the Year**

Bill Harley

Peachtree Publishers, 2013

160 pages

SUMMARY:

Charlie Bumpers feels doomed. He’s a well-meaning, rising 4th-grader with a big heart. The problem is that his best friend won’t be in his class next year for the first time since he started going to school. Another problem is that his new teacher is the super-strict Teacher of the Year, and the teacher whom he accidentally hit in the head with his shoe last year. This book follows Charlie as he navigates his way in his new classroom, trying to do his best, sometimes with unintended consequences.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK TRY…

*The Candy Smash* by Jacqueline Davies

*About Average* by Andrew Clements

*Pickle: The (Formerly) Anonymous Prank Club of Fountain Point Middle* by Kim Baker

WEBSITES:

Bill Harley, [www.billharley.com/charliebumpers1.htm](http://www.billharley.com/charliebumpers1.htm) Check out the author’s official website for more information.

Charlie Bumpers, [www.charliebumpers.wordpress.com](http://www.charliebumpers.wordpress.com) Read what Charlie really thinks at his blog.

BOOKTALK:

Have you ever made a big mistake? Charlie Bumpers has. Last year he accidentally hit a teacher in the head with his shoe! This same teacher was voted Teacher of the Year, and she will be Charlie’s teacher next year! Will Charlie survive 4th grade? Find out by reading *Charlie Bumpers vs. The Teacher of the Year*.

Prepared by:

Ann Hoch, ann\_millerhoch@yahoo.com

**Duke**

Kirby Larson

Scholastic Press, 2013

225 pages

SUMMARY:

During World War II, everyone is trying to help with the War Effort. Hobie Hanson’s family and class at school are all taking part. This is really important to Hobie because his father serves as a pilot in the war. When Hobie hears that people are donating their pets to help in the war, Hobie decides to donate his beloved dog Duke.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*Nubs*, Kirby Larson

*Dash,* Kirby Larson

*Dogs on Duty,* Dorothy Hinshaw Patent

*Stubby the War Dog,* Ann Bausum

*Dogs of War,* Shelia Keenan

WEBSITES:

Kirby Larson’s homepage, <http://www.kirbylarson.com/> Book list, author bio, appearance information and more can all be found on author Kirby Larson’s webpage.

Scholastic Trade Video Player, <http://bcove.me/xtcsvoof> Kirby Larson talks about her book *Duke*.

Scholastic, <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/book/duke#cart/cleanup> This page contains a summary of the story and level information. It also contains a teacher guide and discussion questions.

BOOKTALK:

What would you do if you were an eleven year old trying to help with the war effort? Hobie Hanson and his family are doing everything they can to help out. In school, Hobie is even buying war stamps, but he just doesn’t feel like he is doing enough. Then Hobie learns about the Dogs for Defense and how the organization encourages people to loan their dogs to the military. Hobie decides that this is a way that he can really make a difference and decides to donate Duke to the organization. When Duke is teamed up with Marine, Pfc. Marvin Corff and a War Dog Platoon, Hobie decides he has made a mistake. He tries everything he can think of in order to get Duke back, but it doesn’t work. Soon he learns that the enemy has captured his father and that Duke and Pfc. Marv were injured in battle. Will Hobie ever see his father again? Will Duke make it back from the war? Read *Duke* by Kirby Larson, in order to find out the fate of Hobie’s family.

Prepared by:

Traci Nelson, Aiken Elementary School, tnelson@acpsd.net

**Gaby Lost and Found**

Angela Cervantes

Scholastic, 2013

224 pages

SUMMARY:

After her mother is deported back to Honduras, eleven-year-old Gaby’s heart feels dark and abandoned. Then, her class begins a volunteer service project at an animal shelter, and Gaby’s life begins to brighten.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*The Boy on the Porch* by Sharon Creech

*Buddy* by M.H. Herlong

*Dillon, Dillon* by Kate Banks

*Runt* by Marion Dane Bauer

*Sable* by Karen Hesse

WEBSITES:

Angela Cervantes, <http://angelacervantes.com/books/> Check out the author’s website.

CIA, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ho.html> Learn facts about Honduras.

Center for Immigration Statistics <http://cis.org/ICE-Illegal-Immigrant-Deportations> Find out information about deportation statistics.

Pets, Inc., <http://petsinc.org/> Learn about animal adoption.

BOOKTALK:

Can you imagine having your mother deported out of the country due to the immigration laws of the country where you and your father are legal American citizens? That means you and dad get to stay, but your mother has to leave. This is what happens to eleven-year-old Gaby. She and her father remain in the U.S.; her mother is deported to Honduras. How would you feel? Gaby feels sad. She’s never even been to Honduras! And her schoolmates…. do you think *all* of them are kind and sympathetic to her situation? Gaby feels lost, too. But life is a combination of “sun” and “rain”. Gaby’s class begins a long-term service project at an animal shelter, and this is where things begin to change for her. Will there be less “rain” and more “sun” for Gaby now? Will she ever be reunited with her mother? Can Gaby endure it all, regardless of what life brings her way?

Prepared by:

Rose Davis, Arden Elementary School, rosdavis@richlandone.org

**Gingersnap**

By Patricia Reilly Giff

Wendy Lamb Books, 2013

149 pages

SUMMARY:

Set during World War II, Jayna lives with her brother Rob in upstate New York and is devastated when he ships out with the navy. She is left to stay with their landlady, and when Rob is declared MIA, a distraught Jayna goes in search of her extended family.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*Lily’s Crossing* by Patricia Reilly Giff

*The Fences Between Us: The Diary of Piper Davis* by Kirby Larson

*The Romeo and Juliet Code* by Phoebe Stone

*Shadows on the Sea* by Joan Hiatt Harlow

WEBSITES:

Scholastic’s Patricia Reilly Giff page, <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/contributor/patricia-reilly-giff-0> Find author information at Scholastic’s website.

Fact Monster, <http://www.factmonster.com/ipka/A0769987.html> Learn facts about World War II.

BOOKTALK:

Imagine having lost your parents and being raised by the big brother you adore. Jayna loves her brother Rob and is adjusting to rationing and the other ways World War II is affecting their lives. When Rob ships out with the Navy to serve as a cook, Jayna is left to stay with their grumpy landlady Celine. She’s not happy about the situation and is really worried something will happen to her brother. He’s all she has left! Read *Gingersnap* to find out the rest of the story!

Prepared by:

Melanie Starks, East Aiken School of the Arts, mstarks@acpsd.net

**The Girl from Felony Bay**

J.E. Thompson

Walden Pond Press, 2013

375 pages

SUMMARY:

Abbey Force has grown up in Felony Bay, South Carolina.  It’s been a rough year with her father in a coma and accused of a horrible crime, living with her awful aunt and uncle, and losing her beloved home.  When a new family moves into her former home, Abbey finds a friend in Bee.  Can the girls join together to solve the mystery of the goings-on around the plantation and clear her father’s good name, too?

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*The Nancy Drew* series by Carolyn Keene

*The Hardy Boys* series by Frank Dixon

*Theodore Boone, Kid Lawyer* series by John Grisham

*The Boxcar Children* series by Gertrude Chandler Warner

WEBSITES:

Study SC, [www.studysc.org](http://www.studysc.org/) Learn about all things SC, including animals, symbols, history, etc.

Walden, <http://www.walden.com/blog/meet-the-girl-from-felony-bay-author-j-e-thompson/> Learn more about author J.E. Thompson with this author interview.

Charleston Pirates, <http://www.charlestonpirates.com/> Learn about pirates!

Charleston Visitors’ Bureau, <http://www.charlestoncvb.com/visitors/video/> Watch videos about Charleston.

BOOKTALK:

Do you love a good mystery?  Well, this book has mystery, drama, thrilling action, and more!  Plus, it’s set in South Carolina’s Low Country, and it’s chock full of SC places, history, and animals.

Y’all, it’s been a tough year in Felony Bay, SC!  Daddy is in the hospital; I lost my home; and I’m living with my mean ole aunt and uncle.  Just when things can’t get any worse, a new friend Bee moved in to my old home. (You know, the one I lost when Daddy got sick and was accused of being a thief…)  Strange things are going on around the plantation.  What’s a good Southern girl to do?  Read *The Girl from Felony Bay* to find out what happens when a smart, brave girl and her equally courageous new best friend take on thieves and scallywags in South Carolina’s Low Country.

Prepared by:

Cindy Symonds, Round Top Elementary, csymonds@richland2.org

**Half a Chance**

Cynthia Lord

Scholastic Press, 2014

218 pages

SUMMARY:

Lucy’s father is a famous photographer, and Lucy feels her efforts at the art pale in his shadow. When her family moves to an old New Hampshire lake house, Lucy attempts to learn the nuances of her new home and her new friend Nate through her camera’s eye. When she discovers that her father is judging a photography contest, she decides to enter anonymously to see if her talent is really a gift or just a skill. As she learns of Nate’s family’s story and how his life is changing, she comes to see that art can make any challenge beautiful.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK TRY…

*The True Blue Scouts of Sugar Man Swamp* by Kathi Appelt

*A Snicker of Magic* by Natalie Lloyd

*Rules* by Cynthia Lord

WEBSITES:

Cynthia Lord, [www.cynthialord.com](http://www.cynthialord.com) Learn information about the author, books she has written, and ways to contact her.

BOOK TALK:

Introduce *Half a Chance* by showing some powerful photographs (the sailor kissing the nurse in Times Square, the Marines raising the flag on Iwo Jima, or Dorothea Lange’s migrant mother in the Dust Bowl, for example). Ask students what the story behind the photograph might be. How does the image make them feel?

*Half a Chance* is about a young girl learning to take pictures that create an emotion or tell a story like the ones you just shared. As a beginning photographer, Lucy is very unsure of her talent and quality of her pictures. She has just moved to a house on a lake and meets Nate, who becomes a friend. Through Lucy’s developing skill at photography, and her developing friendship with Nate, she becomes surer of herself and her talent and helps Nate face some family issues that he is dealing with. She even finds the courage to anonymously enter a photography contest that her father is judging. If you like art or photography or just learning about and helping others, you might like *Half a Chance* by Cynthia Lord.

Prepared by:

Susannah Hogan, Wellford Academy of Science and Technology, susannah.hogan@spart5.net

Michelle Woodyard, Rosewood Elementary, mwoodyard@richlandone.org

**Hey Charleston! The True Story of the Jenkins Orphanage Band**

Ann F. Rockwell

Carolrhoda Books, 2013

32 pages

SUMMARY:

This is the true story of how the Reverend Daniel Joseph Jenkins created a band with children from his orphanage in Charleston, South Carolina, in the early 1900’s. Using old instruments, some from the Civil War, the Jenkins Orphanage Band created a new style of music called “rag”, which, in turn, inspired the music known today as jazz.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*Before John Was a Jazz Giant*: *A Song of John Coltrane* by Carole Boston Weatherford

*Duke Ellington* by Andrea Davis Pinkney

*Sugar Hill: Harlem’s Historic Neighborhood* by Carole Boston Weatherford

*Skit-Scat Raggedy Cat: Ella Fitzgerald* by Roxane Orgill

*Tito Puente, Mambo King/Tito Puente, Rey del Mambo* byMonica Brown

*When the Beat Was Born: DJ Kool Herc and the Creation of Hip Hop* byLaban Carrick Hill

WEBSITES:

Colin Bootman’s website, <http://www.colinbootman.net/> Check out the illustrator’s website.

USC’s website, <http://www.sc.edu/orphanfilm/orphanage/symposia/scholarship/hubbert/jenkins-orphanage.html> Watch a film clip, view pictures, and learn more information about the band.

Lerner Books, <https://www.lernerbooks.com/digitalassets/Assets/Title%20Assets/11209/9780761355656/Classroom%20Activity.pdf> Check out these classroom activities and links to film and audio clips.

BOOKTALK:

If some old, beat-up instruments were given to a group of orphans, what would you expect to hear? Beautiful music? Crazy, loud sounds? In the early 1900’s, the Reverend Daniel Jenkins did just this in Charleston, South Carolina! Wanting to find a way to help his group of orphans, Reverend Jenkins organized the children into a band with old Citadel uniforms and beat-up instruments, some from the Civil War. A new, fast-paced sound and unique dance movements resulted. The band was soon playing throughout the United States and Europe. In fact, during the 1920’s the Jenkins Orphanage was *the* place for Charleston musicians to meet and play together! Learn more about the fascinating history of this amazing group of musicians when you read *Hey Charleston!: The True Story of the Jenkins Orphanage Band*by Ann Rockwell!

Prepared by:

Karen Zimmerman, St. John Neumann Catholic School, kzimmerman@sjncatholic.com

**Ick! Yuck! Eew!: Our Gross American History**

Lois Miner Huey

Millbrook Press, 2014

48 pages

SUMMARY:

In *Ick! Yuck! Eew!*, Lois Huey takes us on a smelly, slimy, disgusting journey into the past. Four chapters cover the various odors, insects, bacteria, and restrictive clothing our ancestors had to endure, from horse and other animal manure to lice, bedbugs, and scabies; from smallpox and dental problems to corsets and powdered wigs. Children will find this information at once fascinating and revolting, and it will pique their interest for more -- ahem -- refined bits of information about our history,

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY . . .

*Places in Time: A New Atlas of American History* by Elspeth Leacock

*Weird U.S.: A Freaky Field Trip through the 50 States* by Matthew Lake

*Stinky Sanitation Inventions (Awesome Inventions You Use Every Day)* by Katie Marsico

*The Dreadful, Smelly Colonies : The Disgusting Details about Life during Colonial America* by

Elizabeth Raum,and others in the Disgusting History series (Capstone)

*Bugged : How Insects Changed History* bySarah Albee

*Poop happened! : a history of the world from the bottom up* by Sarah Albee

*I Feel Better with a Frog in My Throat: History’s Strangest Cures* byCarlyn Beccia

*What’s Eating You? Parasites – The Inside Story* byNicola Davies

*That’s Gross! Icky Facts That Will Test Your Gross-out Factor* byCrispin Boyer

WEBSITES:

Lois M. Huey (author’s website), <http://www.loismhuey.com/> This site gives a brief autobiography of Huey and a list and descriptions of her other books.

10 of the Most Disgusting Jobs in History, http://blogs.ancestry.com/cm/2014/09/09/10-of-the-most-disgusting-jobs-in-history/ This site gives a list of ten stomach-churning careers from the past. Includes links to other sites on ancestry.com such as “History’s 8 Worst Jobs for Kids” and “Eww -- They Ate That? 8 Gross Things Our Ancestors Ate.”

Colonial House, [www.pbs.org/wnet/colonialhouse/history/index.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/colonialhouse/history/index.html) This interactive site shows what life in the American colonies during the 1600s would have been like.

Colonial Williamsburg, <http://www.history.org/kids/index.cfm> This site from Colonial Williamsburg invites students to learn about colonial life through interactive games, activities, and a virtual tour of Williamsburg.

BOOKTALK:

What would you think if you were walking down the street and a bucket of poop was poured over your head? What would you do if you had to kill the bugs in your oatmeal before you ate it? How would you feel if you had bloodsucking worms put on your body to get rid of a fever? Well, people in the past had to endure all of these things -- and more! Do you think you could have lived that way? In *Ick! Yuck! Eew!: Our Gross American History* by Lois Huey, you’ll learn what it was like to live in the not-so-distant past -- and it will maybe make you very grateful for the modern ways we have of doing things.

Prepared by:

Susannah Hogan, Wellford Academy of Science and Technology, susannah.hogan@spart5.net

**The Junction of Sunshine and Lucky**

Holly Schindler

Dial Books for Young Readers, 2014

230 pages

SUMMARY:

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Isn’t that what they all say? For fifth grader Auggie Jones, making the exterior of her home beautiful becomes her passion as she struggles to understand why the city’s newly organized House Beautification Committee has targeted Auggie, her Grandpa Gus who she lives with, and all her neighbors in their working class, lower income neighborhood. Auggie and her grandfather battle the problem by creating “yard art” from discarded materials and items from salvage yards. After all, one man’s trash is another man’s treasures. Auggie is quite surprised when she learns that their beautiful scrap metal sculptures do not meet city approval. Determined to not give up and prove that she’s not as run down on the inside as her house might suggest, Auggie becomes a girl with much courage and helps redefine a whole community’s perception of beauty.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*Magic Trash* by J.H. Shapiro (about the work of Tyree Guyton, a Detroit urban environmental artist.

*The House on Dirty Third Street* by Jo S. Kittinger

*Summer of Hammer and Angels* by Shannon Wiersbitzky

WEBSITES:

Holly Schindler, <http://hollyschindlermiddles.weebly.com> This author-created website is designed for young readers.

Jen Rothschild, <http://www.jenrothschild.com/> Take a tour on the author’s blog.

American Folk Art Museum, <http://www.folkartmuseum.org/> Check out the American Folk Art Museum for more examples of folk art.

Orange Show, <http://orangeshow.org/> See examples of folk art environments like Auggie’s house.

BOOKTALK:

So what do you do when someone calls your house ugly? What do you do when they make you feel like you’re not worth much? You fight back, of course! You create beauty where there is none. With many trips to the junkyard and loads of determination, Auggie and her grandfather work hard turning trash into treasures. But do others see their work as beauty? Will their house be torn down? Find out when you read *The Junction of Sunshine and Lucky*.

Prepared by:

Cheryl Curtis, Chukker Creek Elementary, ccurtis@acpsd.net

**Mountain Dog**

Margarita Engle

Henry Holt & Company, 2013

215 pages

SUMMARY:

When his mother is sent to jail, eleven-year-old Tony goes to live in the mountains with his forest ranger great-uncle and dog Gabe, who are wilderness search-and-rescue volunteers. Lonely, sad, and afraid, Tony worries about being returned to his old life in Los Angeles. With the help of his uncle and Gabe, whose doggy voice is heard in alternating chapters, Tony learns about the wilderness, trust, and unconditional love.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*The Leanin’ Dog* by K. A. Nuzum

*White Fur Flying* by Patricia McLachlan

*Wilderness Search Dogs* by Sara Green

WEBSITES:

Hunter, the Search and Rescue Dog, <http://www.jcsda.com/kids/index.html> Learn all about search and rescue dogs, including training, searches, photographs, games, and activities.

BOOKTALK:

Eleven-year-old Tony feels lonely, sad, and afraid. He has had a hard life in Los Angeles, and now his mother has been sent to jail, leaving him alone. Tony goes to live with Tío Leonilo, a great-uncle he has never met. Tío, a forest ranger, welcomes Tony to the Sierra Nevada mountain cabin where he lives with his chocolate Lab, Gabe, a trained Search and Rescue dog. Tony forms a special bond with Gabe, who tells his own story in alternating chapters. Tony learns from Tío about the mountains, wildlife, tracking, and trail angels, the Search and Rescue volunteers. He attends the Mountain School and even helps train the Search and Rescue dogs. As weeks pass, Tony starts to feel at home in his new surroundings, but he worries about being forced to return to his old life when his mother is released from jail. If you like dogs, adventure, and the outdoors, you will enjoy reading *Mountain Dog.*

Prepared by:

Debbie Henson, Mount Pleasant Academy, deborah\_henson@charleston.k12.sc.us

**Rules for Ghosting**

A.J. Paquette

Walker Childrens, 2013

272 pages

SUMMARY:

All twelve year-old Dahlia wants to do is to make friends with the new family that has moved in. The only problem is that she’s a ghost, and it’s against the rules for ghosts to interact with the living. However, since the house that she inhabits is going up for auction and the man that is selling it wants it rid of all ghosts, she may just have to break the rules to save herself and others!

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*The Ghost of Crutchfield Hall* by Mary Downing Hahn

*The Ghosts of Tupelo Landing* (sequel to *Three Times Lucky*) by Sheila Turnage

WEBSITES:

A.J. Paquette, [www.ajpaquette.com](http://www.ajpaquette.com) Learn information about the author, other books she has written, and how to contact her.

BOOKTALK:

Who knew that when you died there would be so many rules that you would still have to follow? Or that there was a Ghouncil that watched your every move? Dahlia had no idea because fifty years ago, when she died, a piece of lost paperwork prevented her from crossing over, and she has been haunting her abandoned childhood home ever since. Now Mrs. Tibbs, a Liberator from the other side, shows up to teach Dahlia all things “ghostly” and help her find her way. Meanwhile, a family has moved into the home to get it ready to be sold at auction, and the town councilman has hired a ghost hunter, disguised as a handyman, to capture and dispose of all the ghosts there. Can Dahlia solve the mystery of her death and what has kept her anchored to this place? Will she break the rules and ask for help from the family that has moved into the house? Read this funny and touching, story by A.J. Paquette to find out!

Prepared by:

Michelle Woodyard, Rosewood Elementary, mwoodyard@richlandone.org

**Rump: The True Story of Rumplestiltskin**

Liesl Shurtiliff

Alfred A. Knopf

264 pages

SUMMARY:

Twelve-year-old Rump has been teased about his unusual name since his name was announced to the world on the day he was born. His mother died shortly after his birth and before she could tell anyone the rest of his name. What is in a name? For Rump, finding out his true name means everything to him. After living for years with being continually teased about his name, Rump decides to take matters into his own hands and goes on a quest to discover both his real name and the reasons why he can suddenly spin straw into gold. To do that, he must overcome annoying pixies, outwit the miller and his daughter, embrace his relationship to his crazy aunts, the wool witches, and learn to control his magical powers. *Rump* gives its readers a humorous, new twist to an old favorite fairy tale.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*Ella Enchanted* by Gail Carson Levine

*A Tale Dark and Grimm* by Adam Gidwitz

Coming soon from Liesl Shurtliff , author of *Rump*, *RED: The True Story of Little Red Riding Hood* and *JACK: The True Story of Jack and the Beanstalk*

WEBSITES:

Fractured Fairy Tales, <http://questgarden.com/68/59/8/080720214913/process.htm> Make your own fractured fairy tales!

BOOKTALK:

What is in a name? For Rump, finding out his true name means everything to him. After living for years with being continually teased about his name, Rump decides to take matters into his own hands and goes on a quest to discover both his real name and the reasons why he can suddenly spin straw into gold. To do that, he must overcome annoying pixies, outwit the miller and his daughter, embrace his relationship to his crazy aunts, the wool witches, and learn to control his magical powers. *Rump* gives its readers a humorous, new twist to an old favorite fairy tale.

Prepared by:

Amy Blakely, E.B. Morse Elementary School, ablakely@laurens55.org

**Sky Jumpers**

Peggy Eddleman

Random House, 2013

275 pages

SUMMARY:

In the post-World War III town of White Rock, Hope and her peers are expected to be inventors as their whole society struggles to regain all the technology destroyed by the green bombs during the war. While Hope struggles as an inventor, she is a brave explorer who is willing to test herself when her town comes under attack.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…   
*Sky Jumpers, Book 2 : The Forbidden Flats* by Peggy Eddleman

Shadow Children series by Margaret Peterson Haddix

*The Edge of When* by Carol Matas

*Tesla’s Attic* by Neal Schusterman

*Mark of the Dragonfly* by Jaleigh Johnson

*All Good Children* by CatherineAusten

*A Wrinkle in Time* by MadelineL’Engle

*The Giver* byLois Lowry

WEBSITES:

Peggy Eddleman, <http://peggyeddleman.com> Check out the author’s website.

Peggy Eddleman Will Work for Cookies, <http://peggyeddleman.blogspot.com/> Eddleman’s blog provides more information about the author and her writing.

BOOKTALK:

Can you imagine not having a cell phone or a computer? Could you imagine being excited about a potato peeler? Hope lives in the future after World War III has destroyed most of the technologies we take for granted every day. She and her friends and neighbors are expected to help invent items to help make their lives better. Hope isn’t a very good inventor, though. She is a brave, adventurous girl who will even jump through Bomb’s Breath, the dangerous air near their town created by the bombs of World War III. When bandits threaten her town, Hope has a chance to show that she can be good at something.

Prepared by:

Amanda Youmans, Pleasant Hill Elementary School, [ayoumans2@lexington1.net](mailto:ayoumans2@lexington1.net) and

Ann Hoch, ann\_millerhoch@yahoo.com

**A Snicker of Magic**

Natalie Lloyd

Scholastic Press, 2014

325 Pages

SUMMARY:

Felicity Pickle is tired of continually moving from place to place according to her mother’s whims. When they move to Midnight Gulch, Tennessee, to live with her Aunt Cleo, Felicity quickly decides that she has found a home that she never wants to leave. It seems that Midnight Gulch is a town full of legends, and it has a magical history that Felicity feels that she is connected to in some way. She will have to come up with a plan that is guaranteed to convince her mom that they need to stay.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*Savvy* by Ingrid Law

*A Tangle of Knots* by Lisa Graff

*Three times Lucky* by Sheila Turnage

*Flora and Ulysses* by Kate DiCamillo

WEBSITES:

Natalie Lloyd’s website, <http://natalielloyd.blogspot.com>Read about the author.

Scholastic Teacher’s Guide, <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/book/snicker-magic#cart/cleanup> Learn more about the book.

Lesson Plan Ideas, <http://classroombookshelf.blogspot.com/2014/10/a-snicker-of-magic.html> Find lesson ideas.

BOOKTALK:

Felicity Pickle, Word Collector and Poet Extraordinaire, has always longed to settle in one place, but her mother is cursed with the need to roam. Felicity has never been able to stay in one place long enough to make good friends. Then her family moves to Midnight Gulch, Tennessee, and everything changes. She meets a boy named Jonah who spends his time secretly doing good deeds for others and recruits Felicity to help him. He also introduces her to many memorable citizens of Midnight Gulch, both past and present, and to the town’s rich magical history. Can Jonah help her hatch a plan that will allow her to stay, and can they find a way to return magic to the town of Midnight Gulch? You will have to read the book to find out!

Prepared by:

Amy Blakely, E.B. Morse Elementary, ablakely@laurens55.org

**The True Blue Scouts of Sugar Man Swamp**

Kathi Appelt

Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2013

326 pages

SUMMARY:

Raccoon brothers, Bingo and J’miah, are the newest scouts for the Sugar Man, a Yeti-like creature

who lives in the swamp. The Sugar Man has been asleep for sixty years, and his scouts should wake him with sugarcane only if there is an emergency in the swamp. Chap Brayburn, a twelve-year-old boy, is concerned about the threat of development in the swamp. He feels responsible to his grandfather, who recently passed away, to keep the swamp in its natural state. Development is certainly a threat to the swamp, but the True Blue Scouts for the Sugar Man are worried about a group of feral hogs who will eat all of the sugarcane. Waking the Sugar Man may be the only answer.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*The Girl from Felony Bay* by J.E. Thompson

*Chomp* byCarl Hiaasen

*Hoot* by Carl Hiaasen

*The One and Only Ivan* by Katherine Applegate

*Scat* byCarl Hiaasen

*The Underneath* byKathi Appelt

WEBSITES:

Kathi Appelt, <http://www.kathiappelt.com/book/true-blue-scouts-of-sugar-man-swamp/> The author’s website has an activity guide and book trailer.

Simon and Schuster, <http://www.teachingbooks.net/media/pdf/SimonSchuster/TrueBlueScouts_CG.pdf> Curriculum guide and classroom activities are available.

National Book Foundation, <http://www.nationalbook.org/nba2013_ypl_appelt.html#.VICJDyhgI20> Listen to Kathi Appelt read from the book.

BOOKTALK:

What do a 1949 DeSoto and a Yeti-like creature have in common? They are both hidden in Sugar Man Swamp. *The True Blue Scouts of the Sugar Man Swamp* is a heartfelt story of raccoon scouts and a twelve-year-old boy trying to protect their beloved swamp. Will the scouts call on the Sugar Man to handle the threats of feral hogs and developers? Read this tall tale with an ecological twist about a Texas swamp and be prepared to enjoy the adventure and mystery.

Prepared by:

Karen Zimmerman, St. John Neumann Catholic School, kzimmerman@sjncatholic.com and

Laura Jeffers, Bethel Hanberry Elementary School, ljeffers@richland2.org

**Zane and the Hurricane**

Rodman Philbrick

Blue Sky Press, 2014

192 Pages

SUMMARY

*Zane and the Hurricane* is about the horrors and chaos surrounding Hurricane Katrina, but it is so much more than that. It is a story of family, of discovering who you are. It is a story of New Orleans, including jazz funerals, biracialism, and a harrowing encounter with angry snakes. Twelve-year-old Zane Dupree hungers to connect with his family so he goes to New Orleans to meet his great grandmother. He is just beginning to learn things about his father, however, when his visit is disrupted by the winds and floods of the killer storm. When Zane and his dog Bandit are separated from his grandmother during their evacuation, he finds himself struggling for survival in Miss Trissy’s attic. After the levee breaks, they are rescued by Mr. Tru and young Malvina who also has a story to discover. They travel through the city by canoe, which is eventually stolen, so they head to the chaos of the Superdome and eventually to a bridge that not only carries them to physical safety but also to family.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY:

*Upside Down in the Middle of Nowhere* by Julie T. Lamana

*Buddy* by M.H. Herlong

*Ninth Ward* by Jewel Parker Rhodes

*Hurricane!* by Johnathan London

*Inside Hurricanes* by Mary Kay Carson

*Hurricanes* by Gail Gibbons

*Yesterday We Had a Hurricane* by Dierdre McLaughlin Mercier

WEBSITES:

Rodman Philbrick’s Website, <http://www.rodmanphilbrick.com/index.html> Learn about the author.

Book trailer, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2g-0FI5tgEw> Watch a book trailer.

History.com/Hurricane Katrina Videos, <http://www.history.com/topics/hurricane-katrina/videos> Find out how a hurricane forms and what makes it so dangerous and then watch aerial videos of the devastation.

PBS.org <http://video.pbs.org/video/1218652893/> Watch a video “52 Minute Storm” about Hurricane Katrina.

Zane and the Hurricane Discussion Guide by Scholastic, <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/sites/default/files/asset/file/zanehurricanedg.pdf> Find discussion guide questions.

BOOKTALK:

Do you enjoy books that keep you on the edge of your seat and leave you with thoughts and images that stay with you? Do you like adventure books about kids struggling for survival in dangerous circumstances? If you answered yes to these questions, then the book *Zane and the Hurricane* by Rodman Philbrick is a book you must pick up. Zane and Bandit find themselves alone in New Orleans fighting for survival through Hurricane Katrina. They are rescued by a man and a girl in a canoe but the rescue, in this instance, does not mean safety. They will face horrifying angry snakes, chaos, and some evil people before their journey is over. How does everything work out? Read it and find out.

Prepared by:

Leslie Cooper, Stiles Point Elementary, leslie\_cooper@charleston.k12.sc.us

**Words with Wings**

Nikki Grimes

WordSong , 2013

84 pages

SUMMARY:

This novel in verse tells the story of Gabby, who’s having a difficult time concentrating and daydreams a lot. Her parents are divorcing, and she’s struggling to adjust to all the changes that are happening in her life. When she starts a new school, her teacher incorporates a “daydreaming” time for writing, and Gabby begins to get her “dreams” on paper.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*42 Miles* by Tracie Vaughn Zimmer

*Heartbeat* by Sharon Creech

*Inside Out and Back Again* by Thanhha Lai

*Love That Dog* or *Hate That Cat* by Sharon Creech

*Mountain Dog* by Margarita Engle

*Where I Live* by Eileen Spinelli

WEBSITES:

Nikki Grimes, <http://www.nikkigrimes.com/books/bkwordswithwings.html> Author’s website

Read Works, <http://www.readworks.org/sites/default/files/bundles/lessons-grade5-words-wings-treasury-african-american-poetry-and-art_files.pdf> Classroom activities

Kristen Remenar, <http://kristenremenar.com/words-with-wings/> Find suggested activities to use with the book.

Poetry 4 Kids, <http://www.poetry4kids.com/blog/news/words-with-wings-by-nikki-grimes/> Read an interview with Nikki Grimes.

Reading Rockets, <http://www.readingrockets.org/books/interviews/grimes> Watch a video interview with Nikki Grimes.

BOOKTALK:

Do you ever get lost in thought? Gabby surely does. She tends to get in trouble with her teacher and her mom for constantly daydreaming. With her parents divorcing, she has a lot on her mind, and it’s awfully hard to concentrate. When her new teacher actually encourages her to daydream, Gabby is amazed, and the dreams pour out onto the pages of her journal. Read *Words with Wings* to learn how Gabby’s words take her places.

Prepared by:

Melanie Starks, East Aiken School of the Arts, mstarks@acpsd.net

Cindy Symonds, Round Top Elementary, csymonds@richland2.org

Karen Zimmerman, St. John Neumann Catholic School, kzimmerman@sjncatholic.com

**Sidekicked**

John David Anderson

Walden Pond Press, 2014

373 pages

**SUMMARY:**

A city of supervillains needs a corps of superheroes to keep the citizens safe, and the city of Justicia has both. The only problem is that a mysterious supervillain has captured many of the heroes, and it is up to a thirteen-year-old sidekick with some less-than-spectacular superpowers to thwart the evil plot and save the city. How does an extremely strong sense of smell or hearing possibly have a chance against a supervillain? This book neatly takes superhero problems and wraps them up into a normal, insecure middle school boy with the social ups and downs and funny observations combined with some exciting action.

**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY**…

*Powerless* by Matthew Cody

*Almost Super* by Marion Jensen

*The Candy Shop War* by Brandon Mull

*Michael Vey, Prisoner of Cell 25* by Richard Paul Evans

*Diary of a Sixth Grade Ninja* by Marcus Emerson

**WEBSITES:**

John David Anderson, <http://www.johndavidanderson.org/sidekicked.html> Find information about the author as well as an activity and discussion guide for the book.

Marvel, <http://marvel.com/games/play/31/create_your_own_superhero> Create your own superhero with Marvel’s Superhero Avatar Creator.

Capstone Kids Superheroes, <http://capstonekids.com/characters/dc-super-heroes/index.html> Learn more about the DC Superheroes.

**BOOKTALK:**

How would you like to be a sidekick to a superhero? Sounds like a pretty sweet right? Maybe not, at least not if the hero you are supposed to be a sidekick to has checked out of the superhero business and is definitely not in peak superhero condition. The problem is that Drew and the city’s other super hero personnel are being captured by a mysterious supervillain and he is constantly being rescued by another sidekick’s superhero. If middle school wasn’t bad enough! Not only does he have to deal with horrible lunches, homework, and girl problems like other middle school students, he also has to worry about trying to survive danger with not-so-super superpowers. Find out how a 13-year-old, superish sidekick is supposed to save his city and manage middle school. Read Sidekicked by John David Anderson.

Prepared by:

Leslie Cooper, Stiles Point Elementary, leslie\_cooper@charleston.k12.sc.us

**Treasure Hunters**

James Patterson

Little, Brown and Company, 2013

451 pages

SUMMARY:

Twelve-year-old Beck and Bick Kidd are in for the adventure of their lives. Along with their two siblings, these twins are in pursuit of sunken treasure, which happens to be the family business. Perhaps more important is the quest to find out what has happened to their parents. During a violent storm at sea, Dad disappears. Mom cannot help because she is not around. (She went missing several months prior.) The kids suspect that she was kidnapped! In this humorous, unpredictable, illustrated adventure, the Kidd kids find themselves alone on their damaged ship and don’t know who they can trust. Certainly not the pirates! In this exciting adventure, they must defeat rival treasure hunters, follow the clues, discover sunken treasures, and solve the mystery of their missing parents.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*The Case of the Case of Mistaken Identity* by Mac Barnett

*Mission Unstoppable* (Genius Files series) by Dan Gutman

*Nick and Tesla’s High-Voltage Danger Lab* by Bob Pflugfelder

WEBSITES:

KidsReads, <http://www.kidsreads.com/authors/james-patterson/news/interview-091313>, See an interview with the author.

Treasure Hunters, <http://www.treasurehuntersbooks.com/book-1.html>, Find activities and information about the series.

BOOKTALK:

What would you do if you lost your dad in a terrible storm at sea? Look for him, of course! The Kidd siblings (Beck, Bick, Tommy, and Storm) find themselves in a terrible predicament when their father goes missing during a storm in the Caribbean while aboard their ship, appropriately named “Lost”. Can their mom help? Not exactly…she went missing several months prior and they suspect that she was kidnapped. What to do? What to do? Life for these four includes treasure hunting, and they decide to continue this family business despite many run-ins with some pretty shady pirates. Perhaps the most valuable treasure of all will be finding out what happened to their parents. Will they solve the mystery? Are their parents still alive? Find out when you read *Treasure Hunters.*

Prepared by:

Cheryl Curtis, Chukker Creek Elementary School, ccurtis@acpsd.net and

Debbie Henson, Mount Pleasant Academy, deborah\_henson@charleston.k12.sc.us

**The Truth of Me**

Patricia MacLachlan

Katherine Tegen Books, 2013

114 pages

SUMMARY:

*The Truth of Me* is a novel about family relationships and what each person has to give. Robert must spend the summer with his grandmother, Maddy, while his parents are on a summer tour with their quartet. Robert has a strained relationship with his parents. and his grandmother understands him best. Through his interactions with his grandmother, animals in nature, and his dog Ellie, Robbie learns that he is confident, brave, and strong. These truths allow him to work on his relationship with his parents.

IF YOU LIKE THIS BOOK, TRY…

*White Fur Flying* by Patricia MacLachlan

*Ivy Takes Care* by Rosemary Wells

WEBSITES:

Harper Collins, <http://www.harpercollins.com/cr100342/patriciamaclachlan> Learn about the author.

BOOKTALK:

Have you ever tried to train a dog? Robbie’s dog, Ellie loves to chase squirrels and he doesn’t know how to make her stop. Robert’s grandmother Maddy has a special way with animals, and she teaches Robbie how to show his confidence with Ellie in order to lead. This comes in handy when there is an emergency situation, and Ellie is able to respond. This is a heartwarming story about relationships and finding your strengths. Robert uses this confidence to get closer to his parents.

Prepared by:

Laura Jeffers, Bethel Hanberry Elementary School, ljeffers@richland2.org

**The Fellowship for Alien Detection**

Kevin Emerson

Walden Pond Press, 2013

430 pages

SUMMARY:

Haley is preparing for summer vacation and a trip with her family. She has been awarded a fellowship to research alien events across the country, and her family is just excited that the fellowship is paying for their family trip. Once the trip begins, Haley realizes that this trip may be more than she bargained for. Haley connects with Dodger, another student who also won a fellowship, and the two kids try to solve the mystery of the aliens and the mysterious town of Juliette.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…

*Sky Jumpers* by Peggy Eddleman

*Almost Super* byMarion Jensen

*The True Meaning of Smekday* byAdam Rex

*The Search for WondLa* byTony DiTerlizzi

WEBSITES:

Walden Media, <http://www.walden.com/book/the-fellowship-for-alien-detection/> This site has a book summary and author biography.

KidsReads, <http://www.kidsreads.com/reviews/the-fellowship-for-alien-detection>, Kids Reads has another book review and author biography .

BOOKTALK:

Wouldn’t it be awesome to be in charge of your own fully-funded summer adventure? Well, as much in charge as an average eighth grader can be... That’s what Hailey Richards thinks to herself as she helps her parents pack for their summer trip across the country. Hailey and Dodger have been awarded a grant from the Fellowship of Alien Detection. Their job is to travel across the country and prove that aliens exist. It sounds like a great trip, right? The only thing is that Hailey hasn’t told her parents that she is really investigating missing children, and Dodger can’t figure out what is going on with his father. Not to mention, someone is trying to stop their investigation. Will Hailey and Dodger be able to get to the bottom of the mystery behind all of the disappearing children? And what does the town of Juliette, Arizona, have to do with it everything? Read *The Fellowship of Alien Detection* in order to find out if they succeed with their mission.

Prepared by:

Traci Nelson, Aiken Elementary School, tnelson@acpsd.net