



ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

Contemporary Fiction

Alice, I Think, by Susan Juby

Recommended reading from Jill Bailey, Buyer, BookPeople

"I grew up in one of those loving families that fails to prepare a person for real life..." Alice has been home schooled since the first grade, when the school bully, Linda, threw a rock at her head. Alice is now about to enter public high school and give it another go, and so is Linda, who is meaner than ever. This is her story, written in journal form. You may feel both amused and aghast as you read about Alice, and her fight to both fit in and stand out. This adventure is witty, wise, and original.

The Beast, by Walter Dean Myers

A visit to his Harlem neighborhood and the discovery that the girl he loves is using drugs give seventeen-year-old Anthony Witherspoon a new perspective on his home and his life at a Connecticut prep school.

Behind the Mountains, by Edwidge Danticat

"*Ti liv mwen*, my sweet little book...my pen is your tongue and I am your voice so you will never betray my secrets." Acclaimed author Danticat brings us the story of thirteen-year-old Celiane, a Haitian girl whose voice comes to life through the pages of her journal. When violence escalates in Haiti, Celiane, her mother and brother immigrate to Brooklyn to join her father. It is not the blissful reunion that Celiane had hoped for, and the family struggles to adjust to their new world, and to being together after their long separation. Clear, poetic writing adds grace to this story.

The Boy Who Saved Baseball, by John H. Ritter

The future of a small, rural California town hangs in the balance when apple farmer Doc Alternheimer announces that his decision to sell his land to developers will ride on the outcome of a local baseball game. Tom Gallagher hopes to lead his ragtag team to victory in spite of the odds. Colorful characters, great descriptive passages, and an exciting plot make this a great sports tale. In a starred review, *Booklist* comments, "Ritter delivers a baseball tale of legendary dimension...(and) dishes up another stellar read."

The Canning Season, by Polly Horvath

2003 National Book Award Winner, Young People's Literature

Polly Horvath's trademark eccentric characters enliven this offbeat tale of thirteen-year-old Widget and her great-aunts, Tilly and Penpen. When Widget

goes to stay with them she spends the summer hearing stories from their past, avoiding bears, learning to swim and to drive, gardening, and getting to know Harper, another stranded teenage girl who shows up on her aunts' doorstep. Darkly humorous, with a bit of salty language. Horvath's other books, *Trolls* and *Everything on a Waffle*, are also recommended.

Colibrí, by Ann Cameron

In Guatemala, an unscrupulous man has kidnapped Colibrí, a toddler. He forces her to lie and beg to get money while she yearns to return to the parents she can hardly remember. This is an exciting story where the author blends Mayan and Latino cultural and religious practices. You will be compelled to keep reading to find out if Colibrí will finally get away and be reunited with her true family.

Cuba 15, by Nancy Oso

2004 Pura Belpré Honor Book

Violet Paz, 15 years old, is a typical American teenager. She is also Cuban on her father's side and Polish on her mother's side. Both sides of her family are enthusiastically involved in the planning of her quinceañero, the traditional Cuban celebration that marks a girl's entrance into womanhood, even though Violet is reluctant. (She hates dresses, for one thing.) The plans spark an interest in her Cuban roots, but when she begins to ask her father questions, he answers her with anger.

The Earth, My Butt, and Other Big Round Things, by Carolyn Mackler

2004 Printz Honor Book for Excellence in Young Adult Literature

Feeling like she does not fit in with the other members of her family, who are all thin, brilliant, and good-looking, fifteen-year-old Virginia tries to deal with her self-image, her first boyfriend, and her disillusionment with some of the people closest to her.

Fat Kid Rules the World, by K.L. Going

2004 Printz Honor Book for Excellence in Young Adult Literature

Seventeen-year-old Troy, depressed, suicidal, and weighing nearly 300 pounds, gets a new perspective on life when a homeless teenager who is a guitar genius wants Troy to be the drummer in his rock band.

The First Part Last, by Angela Johnson

2004 Coretta Scott King Award; a 2004 American Library Association Top Ten Book for Young Adults

Recommended reading suggestion from Vicki Woodruff

What does it mean to be a man? Sixteen-year-old Bobby thinks he has all the answers. When he finds out he's going to be a teen father, though, his life changes starkly—and then changes some more. This is a terrific short novel with beautiful writing and unforgettable portraits of strong and supportive African American families facing the unexpected events of life together. Mature themes—but highly recommended for the sensitive treatment of them.

Friction, by E. R. Frank

Alex, 12 years old, is happy with her school, her soccer team, her favorite teacher, and her best friend. When a new student named Stacy begins to spread rumors laced with innuendo, Alex's assurances are undermined. Even if Alex doesn't believe what Stacy says, other students do, and as Stacy's stories build upon each other Stacy wonders what is true. Themes of peer pressure, manipulation, and the power of words drive this dramatic story.

Girl in Hyacinth Blue, by Susan Vreeland

Recommended reading suggestion from Vicki Woodruff

Those who enjoyed *Girl With a Pearl Earring* by Tracy Chevalier will enjoy this compatible but distinctive treatment of the impact of Vermeer's work on a series of generations, each owning a masterwork by the great artist. The writing is fresh, the characters are finely drawn, and each story from the past has its own twist.

Granny Torelli Makes Soup, by Sharon Creech

In some homes the kitchen is not only a place to cook, but also a place to gather and talk. This story is about next-door neighbors Rosie and Bailey. They have been friends since they were little, and Rosie helps Bailey, who is blind. They have had a falling out and Rosie talks it out in the kitchen with her Granny Torelli while they cook. As the book progresses they cook more, and Granny Torelli tells her stories from the old country. Simply written, with finely crafted characters, this book is a pleasure to read.

Heartbeat, by Sharon Creech

This novel is told in clear, simple verse. It tells of Annie, twelve years old, who loves to run for the pure pleasure of it. In her life many changes are occurring. Her mother is pregnant; her grandfather is growing older and beginning to decline. This book is about the rhythms, or heartbeats, of life.

Holes, by Louis Sachar

National Book Award Winner, 1998; Newbery Award Winner, 1999

Recommended reading suggestion by Vicki Woodruff

Stanley Yelnats (name is a palindrome) is sent to Camp Green Lake, a juvenile detention center, for a crime he did not commit. It is neither green, nor a lake, nor a camp, but a wasteland of dried-up lakebed. The boys are made to dig holes all day long, over and over again. Is this to build their character, as the warden says, or could there be something else going on? Humor, suspense, mystery, and freaky characters make this a great read. Ms. Woodruff says it is "the single book I'd like every fifth grader to have enjoyed for the sheer pleasure of reading."

Keeper of the Night, by Kimberly Willis Holt

This novel is told in journal form as 13-year-old Isabel tries to come to terms with her mother's death. Isabel lives on the island of Guam with her younger brother and sister, her father, who is mostly absent, and her Aunt Bernadette, the only one who will talk about her mother. School Library Journal found it "...a beautifully written description of sorrow and recovery."

Keesha's House, by Helen Frost

2004 Printz Honor Book for Excellence in Young Adult Literature

Keesha's house is a house where any kid who needs a safe home may go. This tale is written in verse, alternating dramatic monologues that are the voices of the kids and the adults involved. These include Stephie, who is pregnant, Harris, who is gay, and Carmen, who is fighting addiction. The characters are well drawn, their voices are vivid, and the story of how they reach out to each other and try to make a home is touching.

Leap Day, by Wendy Mass

Josie Taylor, born on leap day, is celebrating her fourth birthday. Since her birthday only comes every four years, she has a lot of birthday activities planned. This is the story of twelve hours in Josie's life as she enjoys her birthday. What make it especially interesting are the other characters and how their points of view are portrayed. In keeping with the theme of "leaping," the story leaps around, going from one character to another and exploring what they do and how they think, and sometimes telling what their futures will bring. These characters often are much different than they appear on the surface, with surprising secrets and problems.

Locomotion, by Jacqueline Woodson

2004 Coretta Scott King Honor Book

In a series of poems, eleven-year-old Lonnie writes about his life after the death of his parents, his separation from his younger sister, life in a foster home, and finding his poetic voice at school. A captivating, sensitive story.

Losing Forever, by Gayle Friesen

Ninth-grader Jessica feels that normal life is slipping away. Her mother is carried away with planning her second marriage, and Jessica's unlikable but beautiful soon-to-be stepsister has begun to share her room. A half-crazed mother, a lovesick friend, a perfectly evil stepsister—could things get any worse for Jes? A moving story about teens coping with divorce.

Love That Dog, by Sharon Creech

Recommended reading from Jennifer G., BookPeople Manager

This is a great book for animal lovers! You'll meet Jack, his teacher Miss Stretchberry, a famous poet named Mr. Walter Dean Myers, and Jack's dog Sky. You will "love that dog," and you may even learn to love poetry, too!

Olive's Ocean, by Kevin Henkes

2004 Newbery Honor Book

Twelve-year-old Martha Boyle is surprised when Olive's mother comes to her house the day before Martha leaves for the beach with her family. Olive, a shy, unpopular classmate, was hit by a car and killed, and her mother brings to Martha a page from Olive's journal. The words written there haunt Martha during her beach stay, especially since so many other changes are in motion. Beautifully written, and full of life.

The Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place, by E. L. Konigsburg

Kate is delighted when her two uncles rescue her from an excruciating summer camp experience and take her to spend the summer with them. She looks forward to helping them with their favorite project: three giant towers built from scrap metal, porcelain and glass in their backyard—an effort that has been ongoing for 45 years. When she arrives, however, she is outraged to learn that the city council has ordered the structures destroyed. Good characters, humor, and thought-provoking issues make this a satisfying pick.

Rain Is Not My Indian Name, by Cynthia Leitich Smith

The author begins each chapter of this complex novel with a piece from Rain's journal, something many readers will appreciate. Rain, a fourteen-year-old Native American, is tired of staying in seclusion since the death of her best friend, and she takes on a photographic assignment with her local newspaper to cover events at the local Native American summer youth camp. Trouble comes as the funding for the camp is threatened. With insight and humor, Cynthia Leitich Smith tells of heartbreak, recovery, and reclaiming one's place in the world.

The Singing Mountain, by Sonia Levitin

Mitch is a teenager from Southern California. During a summer trip to Israel, he is so moved and changed by his experience that he decides not to return, choosing instead to live and study at a yeshiva. His mother and his orphaned cousin, Carlie, travel to Israel to persuade him to come home. Both Carlie and Mitch mature as a result of their visit. Religion, politics, family dynamics, and self-determination are among the many issues that come into play in this novel.

Stowaway, by Karen Hesse

Recommended reading from Jennifer G., Manager, BookPeople

What a page-turner! This novel is written as the diary of an 11-year-old named Nicholas Young. Nicholas sneaks aboard the H.M.S. Endeavor and is eventually accepted as a member of the crew. He goes through some amazing adventures during his 3-year journey. This is based on true accounts of Captain Cook's voyage.

True Confessions of a Heartless Girl, by Martha Brooks

A 2004 American Library Association Top Ten Best Book for Young Adults
At 17, Noreen has a talent for trouble. After leaving her latest boyfriend, she finds herself in a run-down café in Manitoba. There her interactions with the local people have a surprising way of beginning to heal her problems and those of the ones she meets. Some mature subject matter.

The True Meaning of Cleavage, by Mariah Fredericks

It turns out that the true meaning of cleavage, according to Jess, is separation. Which is what happens between Jess and her best friend Sari as they enter their freshman year of high school. Sari sets her sights on a popular senior boy and begins to sneak around with him behind his girlfriend's back. Jess, sworn to secrecy, struggles with her own complicated feelings about Sari's questionable choices and their changing friendship.

Vote for Larry, by Janet Tashjian

Recommended reading from Merrilee, BookPeople Bookseller

This is the follow-up book to *The Gospel According to Larry*. Larry is back from the (pseudo) dead and more outspoken than ever. Not yet old enough to vote, Larry runs for president with a platform of youth oriented issues. Maybe Larry's initiative will inspire you to get involved in politics, even if, like Larry, you are not yet old enough to cast your ballot!

Historical Fiction

Before We Were Free, by Julia Alvarez

2004 Pura Belpré Medal

An engrossing account of 12-year-old Anita's life amidst the fear that consumes her family under the dictatorship of General Trujillo in the Dominican Republic during the 1960s.

Breath, by Donna Jo Napoli

This is a retelling of the German legend the *Pied Piper of Hamelin*. Twelve-year-old Salz narrates the story of a medieval town that is being plagued by pestilence and a mysterious disease. The town reacts with fear and superstition, and although Salz is afflicted with his own maladies, people suspect him of witchcraft when he is the only one to avoid the strange illness. A grim, un-romanticized vision of the Middle Ages.

Daughter of the Wind, by Michael Cadnum

As various groups of medieval Vikings fight for supremacy of the northern lands and waters, Hallgerd, Gauk, and Hego are three young people from the quiet coastal village of Spjothof who come together. A series of events takes them into danger far from home. This is a welcome addition to the growing list of historical fiction titles about the early Vikings. The gripping story is full of graphic scenes of violence typical of those times, which may be unpleasant reading for some.

The Executioner's Daughter, by Laura E. Williams

As the thirteen-year-old daughter of the town's executioner living in fifteenth-century Europe, Lily must decide whether to fight her destiny or rise above her fate by seeking a new way of life for herself. This is a well-researched novel that shows the harsh realities of life in medieval times.

Kira-Kira, by Cynthia Kadohata

Katie's sister makes everything seem *kira-kira*, or glittering. This moving story follows the close relationship between two Japanese-American sisters who struggle with life in rural Georgia in the late 1950s. Their parents are seldom home, working long hours at grueling jobs in chicken-processing plants. When Lynn falls deathly ill, Katie is left to care for her. It is up to Katie to somehow find a way to remind her family that there is always something glittering, *kira-kira*, in the future.

The Land, by Mildred Taylor

2002 Coretta Scott King Award Winner

Drawing on her own family history, Mildred Taylor crafts this excellent novel, a prequel to her Newbery Award Winner, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. The book opens as Paul Edward, the narrator, is nine years old, in post-Civil War Georgia. He is the son of a white plantation owner and an African American-Indian slave mother. Although his father acknowledges him as his son, teaches him to read and write, and allows him to sit at the family dinner table (sometimes), Paul Edward is caught between two cultures. He nevertheless embarks on a quest to "have something of my own," following a dream to own his own land.

Mable Riley: A Reliable Record of Humdrum, Peril, and Romance, by Marthe Jocelyn

Recommended reading from Jill Bailey, Buyer, BookPeople

This historical novel is set in Ontario during the early struggles of women's independence. Mable Riley dreams of becoming a writer. She travels far from home to assist her sister, a schoolmistress, in the hopes that her new world will be full of peril and romance and the stuff of good writing material. It seems, though, that her new home is humdrum, until she encounters the eccentric Mrs. Rattle, who just happens to be a real writer. Mable soon has more peril and romance than she bargained for. Funny and inspiring.

Mary, Bloody Mary, by Carolyn Meyer

Recommended reading suggestion from Victoria Woodruff

This is an enticing look into the mind of the young girl—daughter of and then-heir to Henry VIII—who would later be known to history as "Bloody Mary." The book is a terrific historical novel and offers insight into Mary's devotion to her mother, Catherine of Aragon, and the cruelties inflicted upon her by her stepmother, Anne Boleyn, her father's second wife. Carolyn Meyer sets a brisk pace, covers the intricacies of life in the Tudor court with clarity, and turns Mary into a sympathetic main character, one whose later repressive actions can be seen in a different light because of the sorrowful events of her youth. Highly recommended!

Out of the Dust, by Karen Hesse

Recommended reading from Jennifer G., Manager, BookPeople

In this mesmerizing book, Billie Jo shares episodes from her life in the dust bowl of Oklahoma during the Depression. Hesse's vivid historical detail will grab you and her heroine's courage will inspire you.

Over the River, by Sharelle Byars Moranville

In 1947, after the war, Willa Mae's father returns to the Illinois town where she has lived with her maternal grandparents for the last five of her eleven years. Willa Mae finds herself struggling to understand old family tensions and secrets. An engaging tale with excellent descriptions of postwar rural America.

Raven of the Waves, by Michael Cadnum

This swashbuckling, often violent adventure tells the tale of seventeen-year-old Lidsmod, who sails on his first Viking raid as they destroy and plunder villages in medieval England. When a young Anglo-Saxon boy is captured, the differences between the two enemies are apparent. Compassion by one enemy leads to

another compassionate but costly deed by the other. This is an exciting, historically authentic novel about the Vikings and their brutal lifestyles.

The Ring of the Slave Prince, by Bjarne Reuter

Here is an adventure story of pirates and the high seas translated from Danish. It is set in 1639 amidst Caribbean plantations, the horrific seventeenth-century slave trade and the ruthless world of pirates. Fourteen-year-old Tom is determined to make his fortune so he can improve his family's life. One night he comes upon two castaways—a Spaniard named Ramon the Pious and a young black slave, Boto, purported to be a prince. Tom decides to return the boy to his homeland to collect the ransom, but Boto disappears, and Tom goes in pursuit. The racial prejudices of the day are clearly articulated, as are the brutalities of slavery and piracy, but this thrilling epic addresses the moral issues at stake.

The River Between Us, by Richard Peck

At the beginning of the Civil War in 1861 in southern Illinois, 15-year-old Tilly Pruitt's mother takes in two mysterious women who arrive by boat. What secrets do they have? When Tilly's twin brother runs away to join the war, Tilly takes Delphine, one of the women, to find him. As Delphine's past is revealed, the horror of the Civil War is also shown. In addition to the interesting plot (it is a story within a story) and excellent writing, the book is also well researched (In 1916 did people really crack eggs into their Model T Ford Touring Car radiators to seal the leaks?) and laced with humor.

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry, by Mildred Taylor

1977 Newbery Award winner

A black family living in Mississippi during the Depression of the 1930s is faced with prejudice and discrimination. With spunk and courage, Cassie Logan and her three brothers learn why their family must fight through the evils of racism to keep the land that belongs to them. This beautiful novel remains as poignant and meaningful as when it was first published in 1976.

Run, Boy, Run, by Uri Orlev; translated from the Hebrew by Hillel Halkin

Based on the true story of a nine-year-old boy who escapes the Warsaw Ghetto and must survive throughout the war in the Nazi-occupied Polish countryside.

The Secret Life of Bees, by Sue Monk Kidd

This is an adult book suitable for young adult reading.

Fourteen-year-old Lily and her caretaker Rosaleen hit the road in South Carolina in 1964. Lily flees her abusive father and searches for the truth about her deceased mother, and Rosaleen is trying to escape the men who beat her when she attempted to register to vote. They find refuge and solace at the home of three sisters, August, May, and June, who keep bees and produce Black Madonna Honey. Great characters, humor, and Lily's vivid narrative voice bring real spark to the tale, and in spite of sadness and some violence, it is full of joy.

The Snow Goose, by Paul Gallico; illustrated by Beth Peck

Against the backdrop of World War II, friendship develops between a lonely crippled painter and a village girl, when together they minister to an injured snow

goose. The painter's daring rescue of Allied soldiers stranded on the beaches of Dunkirk is brought to life in the beautifully illustrated fiftieth-anniversary edition.

Fantasy/Science Fiction

Abarat, by Clive Barker

Recommended reading from Sarah M., Bookseller, BookPeople

Candy Quackenbush of Chickentown one day finds herself on the edge of a foreign world that is populated by strange creatures. In the Abarat, Candy experiences perils and triumphs, and her world is changed forever. Fascinating, quirky, full-color illustrations complement the text.

The Bartimaeus Trilogy, Book One: The Amulet of Samarkand, by Jonathan Stroud

Recommended reading from Stina, Bookseller, BookPeople

Nathaniel is the unappreciated apprentice of magician Arthur Underwood. On his 11th birthday the magician Simon Lovelace humiliates him and he vows revenge. In secret he hones his skills and summons the 5000-year-old djinni, Bartimaeus, to carry out revenge. This story is very funny and action packed.

Beauty: A Retelling of the Story of Beauty & the Beast, by Robin McKinley

This version of the classic French fairy tale is full of magic. Economic circumstances force Beauty and her family to move to a remote cottage next to an enchanted wood. One day her father returns from a routine journey with a frightening tale, that of a beast who wants Beauty to leave her home and go to his castle to live with him.

Cat in Glass and Other Tales of the Unnatural, by Nancy Etchemendy

Two-time Bram Stoker Award winner Nancy Etchemendy weaves a gripping tale—whether in the backwoods of the South or the far side of the galaxy. From science fiction to fantasy, from the eerie to the unexplained, these stories will leave readers breathless and eager to turn the page for more. Ages 14 and up.

City of Ember and The People of Sparks, by Jeanne DuPrau

The People of Sparks is the sequel of *City of Ember*. At the end of that story we were left hanging, with Lina and Doon looking down a hole in the ground knowing that somewhere below lies their old city and all the people they know and love. They can only hope that their message of escape reaches the right people and somehow they will be led out of the city to the world above. *The People of Sparks* is a brilliant sequel, just as mysterious and engaging as *City of Ember*.

The Conch Bearer, by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

In India, a healer invites young Anand to join him on a quest to return a magical conch to its rightful home high in the Himalayan Mountains. The reader follows Anand from the teeming streets of Kolkata, where he encounters powerful spirits of good and evil, across plains and rivers to a beautiful secret valley.

East, by Edith Pattou

A 2004 American Library Association Best Book for Young Adults

This is a retelling of the Nordic tale *East of the Sun, West of the Moon*. Rose, the youngest of seven children, is being watched by an enormous white bear. When her family falls on hard times, the bear asks that Rose come away with him. In exchange, he says, the family's difficulties will end. Rose agrees, and goes to live in a mysterious castle. This is only the beginning of her journey, for she is destined to make a fantastic quest into the strange, frozen land.

Ender's Game, by Orson Scott Card

After aliens attack the earth twice, the world government begins breeding military geniuses, one of whom is Ender Wiggin. Is Ender the genius needed to save the earth? This sci-fi thriller is a classic!

Eragon, by Christopher Paolini

Move over, Harry Potter! In Aagaesia, a 15-year-old boy of unknown lineage finds a mysterious stone that weaves his life into an intricate tapestry of destiny, magic, and power. Dragons, elves, and monsters abound. Our copy in the library is always checked out! Christopher Paolini wrote this as a home-schooled teenager living in Montana.

Flame, by Hilari Bell

A 2004 American Library Association Top 10 Fantasy Book for Youth

This tale is heavily influenced by Persian mythology. The land of Farsala is peaceful and prosperous and has been so for thousands of years. But the Hrum, an enemy that has already conquered other lands, approaches and threatens Farsala. There is great confidence in Farsala that they will beat this challenger, except among three young people who have their doubts. They are Soraya, the daughter of the army's high commander; Jiann, the high commander's illegitimate son; and Kavi, an itinerant peddler and con artist. This is the first volume in a new series called *The Book of Sorahb*.

The Frog Princess, by E. D. Baker

Life as a princess is not always easy, and Princess Emeralda has a hard time of it. She is clumsy, she has a loud obnoxious laugh, and her mother is determined to marry her off to Prince Jorge. She flees a meeting with the prince and encounters a frog in a swamp who, when he deduces that she is a princess, tries to wheedle a kiss from her. She says no at first, but then relents, but she doesn't get near the result she hoped for, falling under an enchantment herself. She and the frog go through many adventures in an attempt to free themselves of their spells. Lots of humor!

The Goose Girl, by Shannon Hale

This is an exciting retelling of the classic Brothers Grimm fairy tale. Anidori-Kiladra Talianna Isilee is Crown Princess of Kildenree. Her fate seems sure, even though speaking with animals comes more naturally to her than her duties as Crown Princess. She is stunned when one day her mother informs her that she has arranged for her to be married to the prince of another country, a match intended to ensure peace and security for her homeland. Once on her journey

her path unexpectedly twists, and she ends up a different person, in a different place, than she ever expected.

Hawksong, by Amelia Atwater-Rhodes

Danica, an avian shapeshifter princess, and Zane Cobriana, a serpente prince, agree to marry in an attempt to end years of bloodshed and hatred between their kingdoms. Tension, treachery, love, and loyalty are all found in this outstanding adventure book.

Heir Apparent, by Vivian Vande Velde

Inside the virtual reality game *Heir Apparent*, 14-year-old Giannine is an exiled princess who must stay alive until she can claim her throne. She must outwit the hostile queen and her sons, and overcome dragons, peasant uprisings, and various other challenges. When a group of censorship advocates break into the arcade they damage the computer system while she is playing, and Giannine must race the clock to finish the game or her real life will be in jeopardy. This story is both suspenseful and funny!

A House Called Awful End, by Philip Ardagh

Eddie Dickens's parents are ill, and so he goes to stay with his Mad Uncle Jack and Mad Aunt Maud. Once there, various silly and absurd adventures occur. Lemony Snicket fans will appreciate this one!

Inkheart, by Cornelia Funke

For years, twelve-year-old Maggie has had her father to herself after her mother mysteriously disappeared. Where is Maggie's mother? And why will her father not read to her anymore? When secrets about Maggie's father are suddenly revealed, their lives are turned upside down, and a chain of terrible events is set in motion. Maggie and her father must scramble to save themselves. This is an imaginative tale of adventure and magic, sure to be enjoyed by loyal fans of *The Thief Lord* (also recommended).

The Keys to the Kingdom: Grim Tuesday, by Garth Nix

A sequel to *Mister Monday*, which featured young Arthur Penhaligon, an asthmatic boy who suddenly found himself a Rightful Heir to the Will, putting him in pursuit of the seven Keys to the Kingdom. Grim Tuesday is next in line now that Mister Monday has been vanquished. So, in the black depths of the Pit, Grim Tuesday plots his strategy, boards his spike-covered locomotive, and sets forth for the Secondary Realms and the world of Arthur Penhaligon.

The Kindling, Book 1 and The Keepers of the Flame, Book 2, by Jennifer Armstrong and Nancy Butcher

A 2004 American Library Association Best Book for Young Adults

This book is a thriller! A small group of children find that they are not the only survivors of a devastating virus when they find the remnants of a religious group that now live communally in a mall. Quickly they realize that this is not a safe place for their family. In a starred review Booklist says, "This second book in the trilogy maintains and even intensifies the unrelenting momentum of the first one."

Read *The Kindling, Book 1* before attempting Book 2 to fully understand the storyline.

Kingdom of the Golden Dragon, by Isabel Allende

Recommended reading from Jill Bailey, Buyer, BookPeople

In the Himalayas a Buddhist monk and his disciple are on a dangerous journey to collect healing herbs. Fate puts them face to face with a tribe of Yeti.

Meanwhile, Alex, his grandmother Kate, and Nadia are heading out on an expedition for International Geographic to the Kingdom of the Golden Dragon.

The two stories collide in an adventure that easily rivals Indiana Jones. Isabel Allende has written a follow up to *City of the Beasts* that is just as hard to put down and will leave you breathless.

A Matter of Profit, by Hilari Bell

A 2002 American Library Association Best Book for Young Adults

This story takes place in an imaginative world. Ahvren, a young fighter, is sick of the horrors of conquering other planets. He will be able to end his service as a soldier and save his sister from an unhappy marriage if he can discover who is behind a rumored plot to assassinate the emperor. A well-written, thought-provoking work of science fiction.

Messenger, by Lois Lowry

In this novel that unites characters from *The Giver* and *Gathering Blue*, Matty, a young member of the utopian community that values honesty, conceals an emerging healing power that he cannot explain or understand. He must decide how and when to use his powers in his village where things have gone wrong.

Midnight Magic, by Avi

In Italy in 1491, Magnus the Magician and his apprentice Fabrizio are summoned to the castle of King Claudio to determine if a ghost is indeed haunting his daughter.

Molly Moon Stops the World, by Georgia Byng

Recommended reading from Merrilee, Bookseller, BookPeople

This is the sequel to *Molly Moon's Incredible Book of Hypnotism*. Now that Molly has arranged her life the way she wants it and given up hypnotism, everything is perfect, right? Except that Lucy Logan is missing, Molly has to stop an evil supervillain whose powers are even greater (maybe!) than hers, and she learns something unsettling about her parents. Read to find out how she hypnotizes her way to Hollywood and the Oscars....

Moominvalley in November, by Tove Jansson

Recommended reading by Summer, Bookseller, BookPeople

This Finnish author created an entire world of characters and stories that is unlike anything else. Tiny creatures of all sorts meet up together at the Moominhouse and have a go at being friends. If you like this, check out the other books in this series.

The Prophecy of the Stones, by Flavia Bujor

Recommended by Jill Bailey, Buyer, BookPeople

This is the story of three stones and three girls who start off on a long journey as strangers. Jade, Opal, and Amber must learn to trust each other with their lives as they set out on the adventure of a lifetime. They will face terrifying beasts and unknown enemies to save the enchanted land called Fairytale. Meanwhile, a girl named Joa lies comatose in a hospital bed in Paris fighting for her life; her fate may lie in the success of the girls' quest.

Shadowmancer, by G. P. Taylor

Recommended by Jill Bailey, Buyer, BookPeople

This gothic adventure is a parable of good and evil set in the 18th century. Vicar Obadiah Demurral, a sorcerer, will stop at nothing to control the highest power in the universe, and only three people stand in his way: young Kate and Thomas and the mysterious Raphah. The author himself is a vicar who sold his motorcycle to get this published; now it is outselling Harry Potter in Great Britain.

Sign of the Qin (Outlaws of Moonshadow Marsh, 1), by L. G. Bass

Recommended reading from Alex, Bookseller, BookPeople

The new emperor is born with the mark of an outlaw band upon him, a clue to his destiny as the Starlord. He has been sent to earth by the Master Hand to end 10,000 years of suffering and drive Yamu, Lord of the Dead, and his horde of demons back into the earth. He'll have the help of Monkey, the Tattooed Monk, his mother Silver Lotus, the outlaw band whose mark he bears, and the animal style kung-fu he must learn to survive.

The Singer of All Songs, by Kate Constable

A 2004 American Library Association Top 10 Fantasy Book for Youth

Calwynis is a priestess in the land of Antaris, which lies cloistered behind a giant wall of ice in the land of Tremaris. Each of the 8 lands of Tremaris has been granted its own chantment, or magic worked through a song. Calwyn and the other priestesses in Antaris practice ice-call, the ability to control all things that are cold. When news comes that a sorcerer intends to rule all of Tremaris by becoming the Singer of All Songs, Calwyn must decide whether to join the effort to thwart him.

Singing the Dogstar Blues, by Alison Goodman

In a future Australia, the smart-mouthed eighteen-year-old daughter of a famous newscaster and a sperm donor teams up with a hermaphrodite from the planet Choria. They embark on a time-traveling adventure that may significantly change both of their lives. As author Tamora Pierce says, "For anyone who loves scrappy heroines, science fiction, and people with nothing in common trying to find a meeting ground, this book rocks!" For mature readers.

Stravaganza: City of Stars, by Mary Hoffman

A 2004 American Library Association Top 10 Fantasy Book for Youth

This is the second and newest volume of a trilogy, continuing the story begun in *City of Masks*. Stravaganti are time travelers between London and Talia (Italy). When 15-year-old Georgia buys a small statue of a winged horse, she goes to

sleep and wakes to find herself in 16th century Remora, in a barn belonging to the di Chimici family, where a winged horse has just been born. Georgia quickly becomes caught up in the family's rivalries, plans, and problems, as she travels back and forth between her time and theirs. The first installment, *City of Masks*, is also recommended.

Sword of the Rightful King: A Novel of King Arthur, by Jane Yolen

A 2004 American Library Association Top 10 Fantasy Book for Youth

Jane Yolen breathes new life into King Arthur's tale. In this telling, the sword in the stone is a show staged by Merlinnus and King Arthur to sway the people of the kingdom to loyalty for Arthur. But in spite of their plans, another person is destined to pull the sword. Full of elements that make for a good story—magic, evil, traitorous plots by assassins, knights, secrets, plot twists, and a surprise ending.

The Tale of Despereaux, by Kate DiCamillo

2004 Newbery Award Winner

"The world is dark, and light is precious. Come closer, dear reader. You must trust me. I am telling you a story." This tale charms and uplifts as it tells of a very small mouse named Despereaux Tilling, a rat named Roscuro, a serving girl named Miggery Sow, and Princess Pea, and how all their lives and dreams intertwine. Mystery and humor are just some of the elements that make this book delightful to read.

Trickster's Choice, by Tamora Pierce

This first volume of a new saga by Tamora Pierce features Alianne, daughter of the warrior queen Alanna the Lioness, of the beloved *Song of the Lioness* series. Alianne must call forth her mother's courage and her father's wit in order to survive on the Copper Isles. There the royal court is rife with political intrigue and murderous conspiracy. All Tamora Pierce books are highly recommended for fantasy fans.

Wee Free Men, by Terry Pratchett

Recommended reading from Ben Gibbs, Corporate Sales Buyer, BookPeople

The story of a girl growing up on a sheep farm doesn't sound exciting. And it isn't, until you add witches, tiny Scots, and a plot by the queen of the fairies to take over the world! Also recommended: *A Hat Full of Sky*, second in the series.

A Wrinkle in Time, by Madeleine L'Engle

1963 Newbery Award

Recommended reading from Jennifer G., Manager, BookPeople

An exciting science fiction adventure, a wonderful character study, and a life lesson in the power of love. One stormy night Charles Wallace, his sister Meg, and his mother are having a midnight snack when a stranger arrives at their door. She tells them, "By the way, there is such a thing as a tesseract." This statement startles the whole family, for their father was working on tesseracts when he disappeared over a year ago. This one is also available on audiocassette read by the author—good for rainy summer days, or long car rides.

Mysteries and Thrillers

The Body of Christopher Creed, by Carol Plum-Ucci

Torey Adams is a high school junior with a seemingly perfect life. When the class outcast mysteriously disappears, Torey has questions. Blame easily falls on Boon, himself a tough outcast from the edge of town. Torey's childhood friend Ali believes in Boon, and the three of them try to solve the mystery using Chris's diary. They only succeed in implicating themselves as the rumors grow. Is the disappearance a runaway, a suicide, or a murder victim?

The Boy in the Burning House, by Tim Wynne-Jones

This thrilling page-turner has fourteen-year-old Jim Hawkins trying to solve the mystery of his father's disappearance from their rural Canadian community. Help comes from the disturbed Ruth Rose, who suspects that her stepfather, a local pastor, is the one behind the misdeed. Readers will be compelled to keep reading to the suspenseful, terrifying conclusion.

Death and the Arrow, by Chris Priestley

2004 Mystery Writers of America Edgar Allan Poe Award Nominee

In 1715 London, 15-year-old Tom Marlowe loses his best friend to a murderer. The murderer leaves behind a calling card that pictures the figure of Death holding an arrow in its hands. This is the latest in a string of similar murders, and Tom is now involved, determined to find the killer. The historical setting and gloomy atmosphere enhance this suspenseful and intriguing mystery.

Deep, by Susanna Vance

This is a suspense tale told in alternating viewpoints. Birdie Sidwell is a 13-year-old aspiring writer who lives in rainy Riverton, Oregon. She longs for adventure and drama, elements missing in her placid life, to inspire her writing. Birdie could not be more different from Morgan, a 17-year-old Norwegian girl whose parents raised her to a nomadic life at sea on board their boat. Morgan has known much pain and sadness. Their paths will cross in the Caribbean under extreme circumstances, when a modern day pirate kidnaps Birdie.

Dust, by Arthur Slade

2004 Mystery Writers of America Edgar Allan Poe Award Nominee

In a small town devastated by the dust bowl a stranger appears and says he will make a rain machine. Oddly, about the same time he appears, children begin to disappear, and even stranger, their parents seem soon to forget them. Robert's brother Matt is one of the missing children, and Robert sets out to find him, while all around the town mysterious, supernatural events occur. Spooky.

Following Fake Man, by Barbara Ware Holmes

During his summer in Maine, twelve-year-old Homer, together with his new friend Roger, is determined to find the truth about himself, his long-dead father, his

mother's silence, and a mysterious "Fake Man." Homer finds the courage for this search to solve the mystery of his own life.

Full-Tilt, by Neal Shusterman

Blake is invited to a strange carnival that sets up in a remote corner of his town. Before he can go, he finds his brother Quinn in a coma with the invitation by his side. Blake goes to the carnival to investigate, and he must endure seven different carnival rides before dawn, each one a reflection of his fears. Suspenseful and scary!

The Last Dog on Earth, by Daniel Ehrenhaft

Logan, an immature fourteen-year-old, surprises everyone as he trains and cares for Jack, a wild and mangy mutt. About this time a deadly virus emerges that infects canines and causes them to become vicious and die. Logan runs off with Jack before the dog is taken away, and the discovery he makes while on the run is quite exciting. This is a fast-paced novel with a twist in the middle.

The Last Treasure, by Janet S. Anderson

2004 Mystery Writers of America Edgar Allan Poe Award Finalist

Thirteen-year-old Ellsworth leaves his father to visit the relatives he has never met and eventually joins forces with Jess, his distant cousin. Together they try to uncover family secrets and search for their ancestor's hidden treasure. Included in the story is a spirit who attempts to direct the boys. This is a fascinating read that touches on the importance of intergenerational relationships. Puzzle-lovers will especially enjoy this plot.

Lily's Ghosts, by Laura Ruby

2004 Mystery Writers of America Edgar Allan Poe Award Finalist

Lily and her mother have moved to their Uncle Wes's summerhouse in Cape May, New Jersey. The house, an old Victorian mansion, has been in the family forever. Both she and her mother have a creepy sense of foreboding that they try to dismiss, but it soon becomes apparent that there are ghosts. Indeed, the entire town is full of ghosts, and the story shifts back and forth between reality and the parallel world of the spirits. This mystery is both suspenseful and humorous.

Sammy Keyes and the Art of Deception, by Wendelin Van Draanen

2004 Mystery Writers of America Edgar Allan Poe Award Finalist

Wendelin Van Draanen continues to write quality mysteries for young adults enjoyed by critics and readers alike. In this most recent one, Sammy Keyes attends a fancy reception at an art gallery as part of an art class assignment. Once there she ends up tackling a thief who has a gun in one hand and is pulling paintings off the wall with the other. She prevents one crime, but the real crime is yet to be discovered. Sammy learns that the world of art can be dangerous.

Shakespeare's Spy, by Gary Blackwood

This third book in the acclaimed *The Shakespeare Stealer* series takes readers into Shakespeare's world, filled with spying, suspects, and trickery. Widge, now an established apprentice, must clear his name and prove his innocence when

things begin missing backstage. Meanwhile, he starts writing his own script because he desperately needs the money he might earn from selling his work. Readers will be caught up in the drama and intrigue that swirl around Widge, both onstage and off.

Story Time, by Edward Bloor

Kate and her cousin George have both been admitted to a magnet school housed in a library that is rumored to be haunted. They hate the drudgery of the school—endless standardized testing administered by amoral adults. When a series of grisly murders occurs, Kate and George set out to solve the old mysteries that haunt the place. *Booklist* finds it “part spine tinger, part breezy gothic, and part sly satire...”

Uncovering Sadie’s Secrets, by Libby Sternberg

2004 Mystery Writers of America Edgar Allan Poe Award Finalist

In Bianca’s school there is a new girl, Sadie, who keeps to herself and seems a little odd. Odd enough that Bianca decides to find out more about her. She begins her own investigation, and it soon becomes apparent that Sadie may be in some serious trouble. This is an intriguing story, and a fun read!

History

Ambassador to the Penguins, by Eleanor Mathews

Eleanor Mathews, granddaughter of the naturalist Robert Cushman Murphy, has rewritten his logbook adding more details and photographs that were not included in the 1947 edition. His descriptions of the birds and sea life he encountered, along with the details of life aboard a whaler with bad food, few medical supplies, a rowdy crew, and a cranky captain, make for entertaining reading. This is a fitting tribute to a distinguished naturalist.

An American Plague, by Jim Murphy

2004 Robert F. Siebert Informational Book Medal, Newbery Honor Book, National Book Award Finalist

This one really brings history to life! In 1793, Philadelphia was the center of a yellow fever epidemic. This acclaimed book brings together history, science, politics, and public health with personal anecdotes. The story is supported with many archival prints, photos, and excerpts from newspapers. (If you like this topic, check out Laurie Halse Anderson’s historical fiction, *Fever*.)

Archers, Alchemists, and 98 Other Medieval Jobs You Might Have Loved or Loathed, by Priscilla Galloway

Sixth graders will find this is a good book to browse in preparation for studying the Middle Ages in class and to get ready for the Medieval Feast. It is loaded with information on various aspects of medieval life and social structure. Job categories include Bread and Butter Jobs (peasant, beggar, fishmonger), Castle Jobs (knight, princess, jester, falconer), and Traveling Jobs (minstrel, town crier, pilgrim). Plentiful illustrations add interest and humor.

Days of Jubilee—The End of Slavery in the United States, by Patricia C. and Fredrick L. McKissack

2004 Coretta Scott King Honor Book

Slave narratives, letters, diaries, military orders, and other documents are used here to chronicle the various stages leading to the emancipation of slaves in the United States. Richly illustrated and engagingly written.

The Discovery of the Germ: Twenty Years That Transformed the Way We Think About Disease, by John Waller

Those of you with a keen interest in medical science (and a dictionary) will enjoy this small volume that tells how medicine came to scientific enlightenment after a long history of vague ideas about how diseases developed in a person. Every doctor had a favorite theory. Scientists such as Robert Koch and Louis Pasteur promoted the concept of germs, and so revolutionized the way doctors treated their patients. In a starred review, *Booklist* magazine comments, “Waller makes sighting the common germ seem as dramatic as man landing on the moon....”

Getting Away with Murder: The True Story of the Emmett Till Case, by Chris Crowe

Here is the wrenching account of the brutal killing of a 14-year-old black Chicagoan in Mississippi in 1955, his murderers’ acquittal, and their subsequent confession. This book shows how this terrible act became important in the groundbreaking Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. Many African Americans, feeling fear and outrage, were inspired to mobilize against racism in America.

Left for Dead: A Young Man’s Search for Justice for the USS Indianapolis, by Peter Nelson

This inspiring book began with a student’s history project. As eleven-year-old Hunter Scott learned about the WWII sinking of the USS Indianapolis, he discovered a heartbreaking tale of heroism and patriotism. The ship was torpedoed by the Japanese and went down quickly. Many drowned, but others survived days in the open sea, with sharks taking lives each hour. The U.S. Navy unfairly court-martialed the captain. Taking young Hunter’s research, author Pete Nelson presents the story through the eyes of the survivors.

The Longitude Prize, by Joan Dash; pictures by Dusan Petricic

2001 Robert F. Sibert Honor Book (Most distinguished informational book for children)

John Harrison, inventor of watches and clocks, spent forty years working on a device that could be used to accurately determine longitude at sea. His quest is chronicled in this book with excerpts from his diary and his letters. As much time as he spent on Harrison’s Number One-H-1, he spent even more time trying to collect the prize money, the equivalent of about \$12 million, from the British government, which did not want to give the prize to someone of Harrison’s uneducated background. For fans of science, history, and inventions.

The Man Who Went to the Far Side of the Moon: The Story of Apollo 11 Astronaut Michael Collins, by Bea Uusma Schyffert

This is a must-read for space fans, young and old alike. The story of Michael Collins is perhaps not as well known as the feats of other astronauts. His job was to maneuver the capsule and wait for the other two astronauts who landed on the moon's surface. He orbited the moon 14 times, surrounded by 701 power switches and numerous checklists. Included are fascinating facts, original drawings and journal entries, photos, and more.

Meltdown: A Race Against Nuclear Disaster at Three Mile Island: A Reporter's Story, by Wilborn Hampton

The author, an award-winning reporter, gives his account of the Three Mile Island Nuclear Power Plant disaster in 1979. He tells of the near meltdown, discusses various issues and ethics related to the Atomic Age, Hiroshima, and the future of atomic power. *School Library Journal* comments that the author has a "gift for capturing dramatic situations in personal stories."

Mosque, by David Macaulay

Following the example of his other prize-winning books, David Macaulay takes a historic look at the design and construction of a typical Ottoman mosque of the late sixteenth century. The author, who is also the artist, reveals that a mosque was just one part of a much larger complex of buildings. These buildings served the community's spiritual needs, provided housing and food for students, served as a refuge for travelers or the needy, and housed the public baths.

Poetry

Blues Journey, by Walter Dean Myers; illustrated by Christopher Myers

The blues inspired this poetry, and together with the haunting artwork, this book provokes thought about the culture that gave birth to the American blues, and the human voices behind these laments. This is a good book to inspire discussion. Includes a time line of significant events in blues music, and a blues glossary.

God Went to Beauty School, Cynthia Rylant

This book celebrates the simple things in life while taking a long, hard look at what it means to be human. The author imagines a God who is curious about the world. How would God experience the everyday things we all encounter? Would God get a dog, write fan letters, get cable, climb a mountain, or make spaghetti? Rylant's reflective and humorous verses blend the familiar with the profoundly spiritual.

Hoofprints: Horse Poems, by Jessie Haas

This collection celebrates horses, throughout history and onward through time. Some poems are told from the horse's viewpoint and some are more abstract, researched pieces. Each poem is followed by a dateline, with a glossary and author's note to contribute context. *Booklist* comments, "Whether or not readers understand the meaning in every line, they will find the stories and facts fascinating, particularly the intricate links between human and equine history."

Is This Forever, or What? Poems & Paintings from Texas, selected by Naomi Shihab Nye

Reading poetry about things that are familiar is a great way to begin to appreciate this genre! This beautiful book is a celebration of the diverse and colorful state that is Texas. Gorgeous, full color artwork from Texas artists accompanies poetry written by Texas writers. A sample of poem titles: Avocado Avenue Galveston Island, Shelling Pecans, Woman Waiting for Heat-Relief Assistance Overcome by Record-Breaking Heat, The Trees Greet the Rain. This is a great book to read aloud with your family, and a perfect book to give as a gift.

Learning to Live in the World: Earth Poems by William Stafford

This is a collection of poetry about nature, and other, related aspects of life. These simply worded compositions may inspire you this summer as you are out in the world. A sample, from the poem *Listening Around*: “Any Breeze to Willow: ‘You like to dance?’ Willow to Any Breeze: ‘Yes, oh yes.’”

The Mermaid’s Purse, by Ted Hughes

This small book of whimsical verse and illustrations will enhance your beach time, or make you feel like you’re at the beach even if you’re not. Poems include, Seal, Pebbles, Hermit Crab, Mermaid, Bladder Wrack, Flounder, and Jellyfish.

Night is Gone, Day is Still Coming: Stories and Poems by American Indian Teens and Young Adults, edited by Annette Pina Ochoa

Young people, ages eleven to twenty-two, from various Native American Indian nations, are the authors of this anthology of contemporary poetry, prose, and memoir. The writers discuss all aspects of life, and offer the reader an opportunity to hear authentic voices tell about the modern day experience of being a Native American. *Booklist* comments, “the teens’ stories and poems convey a wide range of emotion and experience with an honesty that is as refreshing as it is sometimes breathtaking.”

Revenge & Forgiveness: An Anthology of Poems, edited by Patrice Vecchione

The events of September 11, 2001, inspired the editor of this volume to put together this anthology. Poets from Shakespeare to Sandra Cisneros are gathered within, sharing their thoughts on anger, war, grief, struggle, and peace. This collection has both drama and humor to offer readers; it lends itself well to thought and discussion.

Roots & Flowers: Poets and Poems on Family, edited by Liz Rosenberg
Recommended by Naomi Shihab Nye

Editor Liz Rosenberg writes, “...all true poets, of every age, write about what is closest to their hearts. Naturally enough, this for many poets means family....” This collection includes family photographs and statements from renowned poets with selections from their work that explore family relationships. These relationships include both traditional families and those outside of the traditional borders.

Fine Arts

Annotated Art, by Robert Cumming

“Seeing involves only the effort it takes to open your eyes; looking means opening your mind and taxing your intellect.” This annotated guide from publisher Dorling Kindersley is a beautiful introduction to art and art history. It is full of color reproductions of great works of art that are dissected and explained in detail, using accessible language. Basic concepts are explained (subject, technique, symbolism, space & light, historical style, personal interpretation), as are ideas about “what makes a masterpiece?” and there is a glossary of basic art terminology. Fun to read, and a great book to own as a reference.

Drawn to Yellowstone—Artists in America’s First National Park, by Peter H. Hassrick

Yellowstone, the first national park in the world, has been known since the 1890s as “the Nation’s Art Gallery.” This richly illustrated volume traces the artistic history of the park from the earliest explorers to the present day.

Making Movies Work: Thinking Like a Filmmaker, by Jon Boorstin

Readers who are serious about filmmaking will enjoy this one. Writer and filmmaker Jon Boorstin describes various aspects of filmmaking in words that are easy to understand. Sections include: *Creating a World: Light, Space, and Sound*; *Invisible Music*; and *Suspense*. The text is brought to life with many examples and anecdotes, and accompanying sketches and photos help illustrate key points.

Margaret Bourke-White, by Susan Goldman Rubin

Margaret Bourke-White was a pioneer female photojournalist from the 1920s to the 1950s. This book chronicles both her life and her art as she made her way to success in a male-dominated field. She was the first female photographer for *Life* magazine, the first woman accredited as a war photographer, and the first woman to fly on a bombing mission.

New Artist’s Handbook, by Ray Smith

This excellent resource will serve young artists well! In it you will find an abundance of detailed information on art materials and various disciplines. There are extensive chapters on drawing, painting, printmaking, photography, conservation, and framing. Each page is loaded with illustrations and photos that act as teaching aids, and there are multiple appendices, a glossary, and index. Although this book is an investment (price is \$30) as an overview and a reference it can’t be beat.

The Old Man Mad About Drawing: A Tale of Hokusai, by Francois Place

Every page of this lovely book is illustrated with beautiful ink and watercolor illustrations, and some reproductions of Hokusai’s art. In nineteenth century Edo, Japan, a nine-year-old boy named Tojiro sells rice cakes. One day he sells a rice cake to an eccentric old man, and it is the beginning of their friendship. The old man is Hokusai, one of Japan’s most famous artists. Through their story the

reader will learn of Hokusai and his art, woodblock printing, and get a glimpse of Japan during this era. A glossary is included to help explain some terms that readers might be unfamiliar with. *Booklist* gave this a starred review, commenting, "...This will enchant and inspire aspiring artists and transport even casual browsers to nineteenth-century Japan."

Songcatchers: In Search of the World's Music, by Mickey Hart

A songcatcher is a collector of traditional music from indigenous cultures around the world. Mickey Hart (drummer in the band Grateful Dead) is a dedicated songcatcher and has recorded music from all over the globe. This book is a history of songcatchers (also called ethnomusicologists) and their quest to bring the music of different cultures to the world for appreciation and study. Full of historical photographs, this history of music is truly fascinating!

Tales From Shakespeare, by Tina Packer

Tina Packer is the president and artistic director of Shakespeare & Company Theatre. She brings ten of Shakespeare's most popular plays to this volume, along with some beautiful illustrations. The plays have been retold to be accessible to those of us who are new to Shakespeare. Included are some of the most famous lines in re-worded text, and the introduction to the book gives great background information and some basic concepts that help in approaching the plays. A variety of award-winning artists contributed the gorgeous illustrations.

Sports

Beyond the Deep: The Deadly Descent into the World's Most Treacherous Cave, by Monte Paulsen, William Stone, & Barbara am Ende

Extreme sports fans and armchair athletes alike will find this account of a 1994 caving expedition fascinating. Led by the author, a team of expert explorers set out to investigate a cave system called Sistema Huautla in southern Mexico, possibly the deepest caving system in the world, a kilometer and half underneath the surface and many kilometers long. Bill Stone developed an original breathing apparatus so the group would have a way to swim through the underwater passages. Their quest was dangerous, and not without tragedy.

Shakespeare Bats Clean Up, by Ron Koertge

Fourteen-year-old Kevin Boland is a first baseman who puts the game above everything else in his life. When he is stricken with mono, he is forced to stay at home for months to recover. During that time he borrows his father's poetry book and begins to write his own poetry. Eventually he finds writing a habit and includes such topics as baseball, junior high life, romance, and the recent death of his mother. This is a book about much more than just the sport of baseball.

A Strong Right Arm: The Story of Mamie "Peanut" Johnson, by Michelle Y. Green

Here is a part of baseball history that may surprise readers. Mamie Johnson played professional baseball for three years for the Indianapolis Clowns in the

Negro League. She fought prejudice related to her skin color and also for being a woman. This biography uses “Peanut’s” colorful language and allows the reader to share her love of life and the game.

Woodsong, by Gary Paulsen

This collection of thoughtful stories tells of Paulsen’s love of outdoor adventure, including dogsledding. The first part includes hilarious and tragic anecdotes about his winter adventures with his beloved sled dogs. The second part tells about his first Iditarod, a sled race across the Alaskan wilderness from downtown Anchorage to downtown Nome. It is hard to stop reading this fast paced book.

Escape from Lucania: An Epic Story of Survival, by David Roberts

In 1937, two talented young members of the Harvard Mountaineering Club set off to climb the Walsh Glacier at the foot of Lucania in Alaska. Freakish weather conditions caused the ice to turn to slush, and they knew their pilot would be unable to return to pick them up under these conditions. Marooned on the glacier, more than a hundred miles from help, they decided to finish their expedition. Their supplies would run dangerously low by the end, melting snow would cause the rivers to rise and flood, and return would be perilous. This is a story of their extraordinary spirit, companionship, and courage.

Other Books We Like

Fearless Girls, Wise Women & Beloved Sisters: Heroines in Folktales From Around the World, edited by Kathleen Ragan

Women’s empowerment is not just a modern day issue. It is timeless and universal. See for yourself (and be entertained, too) in this collection. Here you will find one hundred folktales and fairy tales from different cultures around the world. Each tale features a woman in a positive role, behaving in a way that benefits her family or community, and playing an active role in her own fate. The tales come from Europe, Asia, North & South America, the Pacific, Africa, and the Middle East. Short paragraphs from the editor follow each story, analyzing it and pointing out relevant details.

Generation Fix: Young Ideas for a Better World, by Elizabeth Rusch

This book recognizes and celebrates that kids’ ideas are powerful enough to change the world in profound ways. It contains 15 true tales of students who volunteered and made a difference. It ends with an extensive listing of volunteer organizations and award programs.

Herd on the Street: Animal Stories from the Wall Street Journal, edited by Ken Wells

Attention animal lovers: apparently, the Wall Street Journal loves critter stories. (Who knew?) Here is a collection of well-written pieces that are “the cream of its coverage of man’s relationship with the animal world over the past four decades.” Read about Sparky (not her real name) the dog on Prozac, or America’s long

history of frog shortages, or the plight of chimpanzees retired from the Air Force space program. Perhaps these stories will remind you of people you know!

Horse Hooves and Chicken Feet: Mexican Folktales, by Neil Philip

This unique collection of fifteen folktales draws on the rich storytelling tradition of Mexico's people and culture. Classic themes and fairytale elements are blended with magic and transformation and infused with Roman Catholic imagery to create a distinctly Mexican flavor and flair.

Isaac Asimov's Guide to Earth and Space, by Isaac Asimov

Asimov brings his considerable knowledge and communication skills to this exploration of some basic questions, attempting to "explain these answers in terms that anyone can follow, making the complexities of the universe absolutely clear." Structured in a question and answer format, he ponders and explains, for instance, "What makes the wind blow?" and "Is the earth a perfect sphere?" and "What happens to comets?"

The Magnificent Book of Kites, by Maxwell Eden

"A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing and the lawn mower is broken." (James Dent) It is in the spirit of this quote that we recommend this book to you. Kite flying is a simple pleasure, and here is everything you might like to learn about kites. The information runs the gamut from kite flying basics to how to make a Tetrahedron Kite or a Triple Yakko Stakk Kite. An appendix tells about kite clubs, festivals, and resources.

Memories of Sun: Stories of Africa and America, edited by Jane Kurtz
Editor Jane Kurtz, who spent much of her childhood in East Africa with her missionary parents, assembled this collection to explore "what happens in those interesting places where cultures meet." These twelve stories and three poems about Africa and Americans focus on instances where young people of the two cultures come together. Some authors are from Africa, some from the United States, and some are "third culture kids."

My Fine Feathered Friend, by William Grimes

We have probably all had our turn adopting stray pets, but did you ever adopt a stray chicken? William Grimes, restaurant critic for the New York Times, looked out his window one winter day and saw a large, luxurious-looking black chicken. He thought it would go on its way quickly, but it stayed, settling in among the resident cats. This is the amusing story of the author's relationship with the chicken and his thoughts on having it as a pet. Drawings accompany and enhance the story.

The Nobel Book of Answers, edited by Bettina Stiegel

"However troublesome, it's important to think thoroughly about important problems," says Kensaburo Oe, Japanese Nobel Prize Winner for Literature, in this book. And that's exactly what he does in his chapter, titled "Why Do We Have to Go to School?" Other chapters present other big questions, each answered by one of the great minds of our time, all of them Nobel Prize winners.

Other subjects include: *What is Politics*, by Shimon Peres, *What is Love?* by the Dalai Lama, and *What is Air*, by Paul Crutzen. This is an excellent book for discussion.

The Parrot Who Owns Me, by Joanna Burger

Author Joanna Burger is an ornithologist and biology professor at Rutgers University. In this book she tells the story of her relationship with Tiko, a 35-year-old Red-lored Amazon parrot. Like all good pet stories, the reader will learn the fascinating details of everyday life with a parrot (their morning ritual includes shrieking, preening, and breakfast together). In addition, Burger shares her expertise about Tiko's behavior, based on her extensive studies of bird behavior in the wild. The writing is very accessible, and Burger knows how to tell a story well. *Library Journal* comments, "Written with reverence for life and tenderness toward companion animals, this is a book to be cherished."

Schott's Original Miscellany, by Ben Schott

This is the book that will make you a fascinating conversationalist at dinner...or maybe not. Even so, it is a really fun collection of facts, trivia, and minutia. Dazzle your friends and family with holalphabetic sentences (sentences containing every letter of the alphabet), American diner slang (gravel train=sugar bowl), the Victorian timetable of mourning, or the list of boxing weight limits.

Stormy Night, by Michele Lemieux

As a loud storm rages outside, a girl sits awake in bed, her mind racing in many different directions with fears and questions. This highly visual book has black and white minimalist line drawings with captions that are universal, provocative questions posed by the narrator. A sample: "Who decided what the first human would look like? What if life were just a dream...and dreams at night were really real? What exactly is fate? I'm scared of war." This is an excellent book for discussion, especially in these tumultuous times when the evening news or the front page of the newspaper can bring up so many potent fears.

Tales From the Times: Real-Life Stories to Make you Think, Wonder, and Smile, From the Pages of the New York Times, edited by Lisa Belkin

This collection of human-interest stories is fascinating. You can read about the 5-year-old boy who set out in his parent's car to drive his sister to the beach, or the 200-year-old squirrel problem at the White House, or twin girls separated at birth who accidentally find each other in college, or the thief who steals thousands of euros from a fountain.

A Time to Love—Stories from the Old Testament, by Walter Dean Myers; artwork by Christopher Myers

A retelling of six stories from the Old Testament, which explore the complexities of love from the perspectives of Delilah, Ruth, Reuben, Isaac, Zillah, and Aser. Beautifully illustrated.

Wide Awake: A Buddhist Guide for Teens, by Diana Winston

Using stories from her own journey into Buddhism, Ms. Winston shows teens how they can apply the Buddha's teachings to their own lives. In very clear

language she explains concepts such as meditation, enlightenment, karma, the four noble truths and more. Teens and adults will benefit from this book.

Wonders and Miracles, A Passover Companion, by Eric A. Kimmel

This beautiful book presents the steps performed in a traditional Passover Seder, plus stories, songs, poetry, prayers, and archival pictures that celebrate the historical significance of this holiday to Jews all over the world.