

2011 Notable Books by American Library Association

Younger Readers

April and Esme, Tooth Fairies. By Bob Graham. Illus. by the author. Candlewick. On their first assignment, two young tooth fairy sisters journey by night into the huge world of humans to collect a young boy's tooth and fly it safely home.

Back of the Bus. By Aaron Reynolds. Illus. by Floyd Cooper. Philomel. A young boy and his mother take a familiar ride on a city bus unaware of the historic event they are about to witness: passenger Rosa Parks refuses to move from her seat.

Big Red Lollipop. By Rukhsana Khan. Illus. by Sophie Blackall. Viking. Rubina's excitement over an invitation to a birthday party is dimmed by her mother's insistence that she take her younger sister Sana with her.

Bink and Gollie. By Kate DiCamillo and Alison McGhee. Illus. by Tony Fucile. Candlewick. Dissimilar, yet steadfast friends, celebrate the ups and downs of their daily escapades in three lively chapters that explore compromise, asserting independence, and jealousy. *Geisel Award Book*

Chalk. By Bill Thomson. Illus. by the author. Marshall Cavendish. In this wordless picture book, three young children arrive at the park to find a bag of colored chalk that turns their imaginary drawings into something very real.

City Dog, Country Frog. By Mo Willems. Illus. by Jon J. Muth. Hyperion. Unleashed on his visit to the country, a dog meets a new friend in frog and together they experience the seasons and the cycle of life.

Dear Primo: A Letter to My Cousin. By Duncan Tonatiuh. Illus. by the author. Abrams. The universality of childhood experiences is shown through the lives of two cousins, one in the United States and one in Mexico. *Belpré Illustrator Honor Book*

Fiesta Babies. By Carmen Tafolla. Illus. by Amy Córdova. Tricycle Press. The simple rhyme scheme is embellished by colorful illustrations of multicultural babies and toddlers celebrating at a local fiesta. *Belpré Illustrator Honor Book*

Grandma's Gift. By Eric Velasquez. Illus. by the author. Walker. This personal tale is based on the author's special relationship with his grandmother, who influenced his dream of becoming an artist.
Belpré Illustrator Award

Hip-Pocket Papa. By Sandra Markle. Illus. by Alan Marks. Charlesbridge. The papa hip-pocket frog from Australia, who carries his babies in his hip pocket, is introduced with attractive watercolor illustrations.

Interrupting Chicken. By David Ezra Stein. Illus. by the author. Candlewick. This hilarious story presents Little Chicken and her long-suffering papa, who just wants to get through a bedtime story without his daughter's metafictional disruptions. *Caldecott Honor Book*

In the Wild. By David Elliott. Illus. by Holly Meade. Candlewick. A joyful collection of brief poems paired with dynamic woodblock prints celebrates favorite animals from every continent.

Ling & Ting: Not Exactly the Same! By Grace Lin. Illus. by the author. Little, Brown. Six vignettes chronicle the daily adventures of identical twins as they get haircuts, make dumplings, perform magic and take a trip to the library. *Geisel Honor Book*

LMNO Peas. By Keith Baker. Illus. by the author. Beach Lane. Tiny green peas take readers on a fun, whimsical tour of the alphabet.

Pecan Pie Baby. By Jacqueline Woodson. Illustrated by Sophie Blackall. Putnam. Unlike her friends and relatives, Gia is not looking forward to the birth of her first sibling, "that ding-dang baby".

Pocketful of Posies: A Treasury of Nursery Rhymes. By Salley Mavor. Illus. by the author. Houghton Mifflin Books for Children/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Familiar and lesser known nursery rhymes, illustrated with superb needlework and appliqué, create a charming dollhouse of a book.

The Quiet Book. By Deborah Underwood. Illus. by Renata Liwska. Houghton Mifflin Books for Children/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Quiet comes in many varieties, from "Sleeping sister quiet" to "First snowfall quiet" to "Right before you yell 'SURPRISE' quiet".

Rubia and the Three Osos. By Susan Middleton Elya. Illus. by Melissa Sweet. Hyperion. A bouncy, rhyming story about a little golden-haired niña who helps herself to everything in the house of the three bears.

A Sick Day for Amos McGee. By Philip C. Stead. Illus. by Erin E. Stead. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter. Zookeeper Amos McGee gets the sniffles and receives a surprise visit from his caring animal friends. *Caldecott Medal*

Tuck Me In! By Dean Hacoen. Illus. by Sherry Scharschmidt. Candlewick. Readers interact with this deceptively simple good-night book, tucking sweet animals into bed.

We Are in a Book! By Mo Willems. Illus. by the author. Disney/Hyperion. Elephant and Piggie discover that someone, the reader, is looking at them in this hilarious, interactive story about the joys of reading and being read. *Geisel Honor Book*

Yucky Worms. By Vivian French. Illus. by Jessica Ahlberg. Candlewick. While digging with Grandma in the garden, a child learns why earthworms are so important in helping plants grow.

Middle Readers

Ballet for Martha: Making Appalachian Spring. By Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan. Illus. by Brian Floca. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter. Spare, dramatic text and uncluttered watercolors relay the story of the collaborative creation of a classic American ballet. *Sibert Honor Book*

The Bat Scientists. By Mary Kay Carson. Illus. by Tom Uhlman. Houghton Mifflin Books for Children/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Exceptional photography and clear text capture the lives of bats and explore the myths and threats to these amazing mammals.

Dave the Potter: Artist, Poet, Slave. By Laban Carrick Hill. Illus. by Bryan Collier. Little/Brown. Poetic text and lush illustrations tell the true story of an extraordinary artist living in 19th-century South Carolina. *Caldecott Honor Book & ALA Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award*

The Fantastic Secret of Owen Jester. By Barbara O'Connor. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. In this summer adventure, Owen is enthralled by his conviction that something amazing has fallen from a train.

Growing Patterns: Fibonacci Numbers in Nature. By Sarah C. Campbell. Illus. by Sarah and Richard P. Campbell. Boyds Mills. Crisp design and clear photography introduce and depict Fibonacci patterns in nature.

Guyku: A Year of Haiku for Boys. By Bob Raczka. Illus. by Peter H. Reynolds. Houghton Mifflin Books for Children/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Six haiku for each season of the year, celebrating the interaction of boys and nature, combine with loose, expressive cartoons to make a winning combination.

The Hive Detectives: Chronicle of a Honey Bee Catastrophe. By Loree Griffin Burns. Illus. by Ellen Harasimowicz. Houghton Mifflin Books for Children/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. After beekeepers discover the strange abandonment of hundreds of hives, scientists seek to understand this catastrophic phenomenon.

How to Clean a Hippopotamus: A Look at Unusual Animal Partnerships. By Steve Jenkins and Robin Page. Illus. by Steve Jenkins. Houghton Mifflin Books for Children/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Animal partnerships often defy explanation; Jenkins and Page explore and clarify these relationships in concise text and glorious torn-paper collage.

Kakapo Rescue: Saving the World's Strangest Parrot. By Sy Montgomery. Illus. by Nic Bishop. Houghton Mifflin Books for Children/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. This book documents the successes and failures of a rescue effort in New Zealand dedicated to saving a species of flightless parrots numbering fewer than 100. *Sibert Medal*

Me, Frida. By Amy Novesky. Illus. by David Diaz. Abrams. This story of newlywed artists Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera in 1930 San Francisco is accompanied by paintings resembling Kahlo's folkloric style. *Belpré Illustrator Honor Book*

Nic Bishop Lizards. By Nic Bishop. Illus. by the author. Scholastic. Using photographs so vivid and sharply focused that one can see a bit of dry scale on a glass lizard's skin, Bishop treats readers to new appreciations of the diversity within the lizard world.

The Night Fairy. By Laura Amy Schlitz. Illus. by Angela Barrett. Candlewick. Flory loses her wings after a bat attack and struggles to adapt to life as a day fairy.

Ninth Ward. By Jewell Parker Rhodes. Little, Brown. In this story of survival, twelve-year-old Lanesha and her adopted grandmother have little choice but to stay in New Orleans and weather Hurricane Katrina. *ALA Coretta Scott King Author Honor Book*

¡Ole! Flamenco. By George Ancona. Illus. by the author. Lee & Low. In this nonfiction introduction to Spanish flamenco, the art form is described in easy, understandable language. *Belpré Author Honor Book*

One Crazy Summer. By Rita Williams-Garcia. Harper/Amistad. Three sisters find adventure when they are sent to Oakland in 1968 to meet their estranged poet-mother, who prints flyers for the Black Panthers. *Newbery Honor Book*

Ruth and the Green Book. By Calvin Alexander Ramsey and Gwen Strauss. Illus. by Floyd Cooper. Carolrhoda. Using the Green Book, a guide to find welcoming places for African-Americans, Ruth's family travels through the segregated South of the 1950s.

Saltpie: A Choctaw Journey from Darkness into Light. By Tim Tingle. Illus. by Karen Clarkson. Cinco Puntos. This picture book autobiographical vignette shows a modern Choctaw family enduring and supporting each other with love, courage, and fortitude.

Shake, Rattle & Turn That Noise Down! How Elvis Shook Up Music, Me and Mom. By Mark Alan Stamaty. Knopf. An autobiography in graphic novel format shows how Stamaty's love of Elvis and rock and roll, at first drove his mother crazy but ultimately made her proud.

Smile. By Raina Telgemeier. Illus. by Raina Telgemeier and Stephanie Yue. Scholastic/Graphix. Through artwork showing the details, the reader shares Raina's pain as the angst of middle school is exacerbated by her disfiguring dental mishap.

The Strange Case of Origami Yoda. By Tom Angleberger. Amulet Books. In this hilarious tale, Tommy and his sixth grade friends must decide if the advice of an origami finger puppet can be trusted.

A Tale Dark and Grimm. By Adam Gidwitz. Dutton. As dark and bloody as the title suggests, these six retellings tweak the classic fairy tale as Hansel and Gretel embark on an epic journey of self-discovery.

Trickster: Native American Tales: A Graphic Collection. Edited by Matt Dembicki. Illus. Fulcrum Books. This collaborative effort by more than 40 writers and artists presents 21 Native American trickster tales in graphic novel format.

Turtle in Paradise. By Jennifer L. Holm. Random. Sassy eleven-year-old Turtle finds her life turned on end when she is sent to live with her aunt in Depression-era Key West. *Newbery Honor Book*

Older Readers

90 Miles to Havana. By Enrique Flores-Galbis. Roaring Brook. The author's experience, as one of 14,000 children moved from Cuba to a refugee camp in Miami in 1961, is told through engaging, fast-paced writing and well-developed characters. *Belpré Author Honor Book*

Black Elk's Vision: A Lakota Story. By S.D. Nelson. Abrams. This handsome, large-format volume combines archival photographs, original acrylic paintings and powerful first-person narrative to present the devastating story of the painful changes in life forced upon the Lakota people.

Countdown. By Deborah Wiles. Scholastic. A "documentary novel" set in the 1960's Cold War era, this title captures a girl's fears about the world around her.

Departure Time. By Truus Matti. Tr. by Nancy Forest-Flier. Namelos. An eleven-year-old mourns the death of her father in chapters that alternate between the real world and a dreamlike hotel staffed by odd creatures. *Batchelder Honor Book*

The Dreamer. By Pam Muñoz Ryan. Illus. by Peter Sís. Scholastic. In language inspired by the Nobel Prize-winner's own poetry, Muñoz Ryan tells the stunning tale of young Pablo Neruda's self-discovery and the development of his ideologies and artistic voice. *Belpré Author Award*

Fever Crumb. By Philip Reeve. Scholastic. A lone girl sets out on a mission to retrieve lost technology in a bleak and irrational London of the future.

The Firefly Letters: A Suffragette's Journey to Cuba. By Margarita Engle. Holt. A plantation owner's daughter conspires with Swedish feminist Fredrika Bremer to secure the freedom of an African-born slave. *Belpré Author Honor Book*

Heart of a Samurai. By Margi Preus. Abrams/Amulet. This swashbuckling adventure is based on the true story of Manjiro, the young fisherman believed to be the first Japanese person to visit America, who against all odds, became a samurai. *Newbery Honor Book*

Lafayette and the American Revolution. By Russell Freedman. Illus. Holiday. This compelling biography of Lafayette looks at the whole of his life and illuminates the role he played in the American Revolution. *Sibert Honor Book*

Mockingbird. By Kathryn Erskine. Philomel. Ten-year-old Caitlin who struggles with Asperger's Syndrome seeks closure following the murder of her brother.

Moon Over Manifest. By Clare Vanderpool. Random/Delacorte. Alternating between World War I and the Great Depression, this tale of the eclectic people and mysteries of Manifest, Kansas is told through a mix of letters, newspaper articles, and a fortune teller's tales. *Newbery Medal*

Nothing. By Janne Teller. Tr. by Martin Aitken. Atheneum. As classmates struggle to convince a friend that life has meaning, they force each other to prove and provide meaning, with consequences that are deep, dark, and disastrous. *Batchelder Honor Book & YALSA Printz Honor Book*

Ship Breaker. By Paolo Bacigalupi. Little, Brown. Nailer, a teenage scavenger, works to take apart ancient oil tankers in a future world where he must choose between harvesting riches or saving a girl. *YALSA Printz Medal*

They Called Themselves the K.K.K.: The Birth of an American Terrorist Group. By Susan Campbell Bartoletti. Illus. Houghton Mifflin Books for Children/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. The Ku Klux Klan's rise from a club of restless young men into the largest domestic terrorist organization in American history is documented with archival photographs and other primary source material. *YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults*

A Time of Miracles. By Anne-Laure Bondoux. Tr. by Y. Maudet. Random/Delacorte. A young refugee searches for identity, safe haven and truth in a journey from war-torn Caucasus to the freedom of France. *Batchelder Award*

Ubiquitous: Celebrating Nature's Survivors. By Joyce Sidman. Illus. by Beckie Prange. Houghton Mifflin Books for Children/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Three books in one! This amazing book of poetry is also a beautiful picture book and a nonfiction tribute to the adaptability of life on earth.

We Shall Overcome: A Song that Changed the World. By Stuart Stotts. Illus. by Terrance Cummings. Clarion Books/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. This iconic song, handsomely illustrated here, serves as the framework for new understandings of the Civil Rights Movement.

Yummy: The Last Days of a Southside Shorty. By G. Neri. Illus. by Randy DuBurke. Lee and Low. Based on true events, this graphic novel, told through the eyes of a younger boy, tells the story of Robert (Yummy) as he tries to navigate the dangerous world of a Chicago neighborhood. *ALA Coretta Scott King Author Honor Book*

All Ages

Bones: Skeletons and How They Work. By Steve Jenkins. Illus. by the author. Collage illustrations support exploration and comparison of various human and animal skeletons, from fingers to skulls.

Dark Emperor and Other Poems of the Night. By Joyce Sidman. Illus. by Rick Allen. Houghton Mifflin Books for Children/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Twelve elegantly crafted poems celebrating the night are accompanied by prose pieces about nocturnal flora and fauna. *Newbery Honor Book*

Farm. By Elisha Cooper. Illus. by the author. Scholastic/Orchard. Experience life on a very real farm with very real farmers through the muddy month of March until the next winter.

Meanwhile. By Jason Shiga. Abrams/Amulet. Jimmy explores the lab of a mad scientist in this “Choose Your Own Adventure” style graphic novel.

Mirror, Mirror: A Book of Reversible Verse. By Marilyn Singer. Illus. by Josée Masse. Dutton. What fun! Read the poem in one direction and it tells the folktale from one point of view. Read it in the opposite direction and the point of view is reversed.

Shadow. By Suzy Lee. Illus. by the author. Chronicle. A young girl's imagination morphs dark attic shadows into a fantastic jungle scene in this wordless book.

Young Adult

Ship Breaker. Bacigalupi, Paolo. Little, Brown, & Co. Nailer is a light crew scavenger tearing up old hulks of ships, living day to day, until a rich girl and her gleaming ship run ashore in a storm on the beach and his life gets more dangerous.

Revolution. Donnelly, Jennifer. Random House Children's Books/Delacorte. Haunted by the death of her brother, Andi is taken to Paris by her estranged father where an encounter with a mysterious diary may bring her back from the edge.

Finnikin of the Rock. Marchetta, Melina. Candlewick, Finnikin and his fellow exiles from Lumatere wish to return to their cursed homeland. Finnikin must go on an epic journey with a mute novice named Evanjalín to return home.

Amy & Roger's Epic Detour. Matson, Morgan. Amy and Roger must both learn to deal with loss while on a road trip across the country which doesn't go as expected.

Hold Me Closer, Necromancer. McBride, Lish. Macmillan Children's Book Group/Henry Holt, When Sam discovers he is a necromancer he must learn to control his power in order to defeat a powerful and corrupt rival and save his friends.

Trash .Mulligan, Andy. David Fickling Books. Three garbage-picker boys find an item of great value to a corrupt politician on their rounds, setting off a tense hunt to see who will triumph.

Bamboo People. Perkins, Mitali. Charlesbridge. Chiko, a Burmese soldier and Tu Reh, a Kerenni refugee meet on opposite sides of war and each must learn what it means to be a man of his people.

The Things a Brother Knows. Reinhardt, Dana. Random House Children's Books/Wendy Lamb, Boaz is back and hailed as the hometown hero, but he is not at all the same. Can his younger brother Levi help him truly make his way home?

Last Night I Sang to the Monster. Saenz, Benjamin. Cinco Puntos Press. Weeks in therapy go by and 18-year-old Zach is still unable to remember the monstrous events that left him alone and haunted by nightmares.

Revolver. Roaring Brook Press, Sedgwick, Marcus. Sig is alone with his father's body when the lawless man his father had managed to escape appears out of the icy wilderness.