



2005

# Full Issue

Children's Book Review

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Gorbachev, Valeri. *When Someone Is Afraid*. Illustrated by Gorbachev, Kostya. Star Bright Books, Inc., 2005. ISBN 1932065997. \$15.95. 40 p.

Reviewer: Sarah Wanlass

Reading Level: Toddler, Preschool, Primary

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Picture books;

Subject: Fear--Juvenile fiction; Fear of the dark--Juvenile fiction; Dreams--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

What does an ostrich do when it is afraid? What about a frog? In *When Someone Is Afraid*, Gorbachev explores various ways that creatures react to fear. A frog will dive underwater; a turtle will pull its head into its shell; an ostrich will bury its head in the sand. What might a little boy or girl do?

Kostya Gorbachev, Valeri's son, creates colorful and detailed illustrations to accompany the text. The characters are depicted in an expressive manner and each animal's fear is treated distinctly.

Children will enjoy reading this book. They might try to guess how each animal will react to fear and will probably relate to the little boy at the end of the story.

Wise, William. *Zany Zoo*. Illustrated by Lynn Munsinger. Houghton Mifflin, 2006. ISBN 0618188916. \$16.00. 32 p.

Reviewer: AnnMarie Hamar

Reading Level: Preschool, Primary

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Humorous poetry;

Subject: Zoo animals--Juvenile fiction; Animals--Juvenile fiction; Stories in rhyme; Books--Reviews;

This collection of twenty-five animal-themed poems features word play. Daisy the watermelon-loving dog is a “melon collie,” while a gaggle of geese deliver a truly “fowl” performance of William Shakespeare's Hamlet. Most of the rhymes are quite clever and humorous, but an adult may need to explain some of the figures of speech. I thought Wise's reference to Faust and another to a “bon vivant,” to be quite sophisticated for young readers.

Overall, the text is lively and fun to read aloud. Lynn Munsinger's exuberant anthropomorphic illustrations are the highlight. The colorful drawings depict an Indian tiger dressed in a sari, a group of pandas dancing the samba and the proverbial chicken crossing the road being followed by a group of animal journalists. William Wise and Lynn Munsinger previously collaborated on *Dinosaurs Forever*.

Farndon, John and Jon Kirkwood. *Kingfisher First Encyclopedia of Animals*. Kingfisher, 2005. ISBN 0753459221. \$9.95. 144 p.

Reviewer: Charity Reno

Reading Level: Preschool, Primary, Intermediate

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Informational book;

Subject: Animals--Encyclopedias, Juvenile; Books--Reviews;

The *Kingfisher First Encyclopedia of Animals* contains over 500 color illustrations and photographs which cover hundreds of species. It depicts the habitat, behavior, and physical description of a variety of animals throughout the world.

The book is divided into sub-categories, such as mammals, fish, birds, reptiles, and so on. Each page has arrows and fact boxes pointing to particular items or giving more information which makes the encyclopedia straight-forward and easy to use. Many of the illustrations are labeled. There is a Contents page at the beginning, as well as a glossary and index at the end of the book, all of which contribute to easy usage. Overall, this is a great animal encyclopedia for young children.

O'Conner, Jane. *Fancy Nancy*. Illustrated by Robin Preiss Glasser. HarperCollins, 2006. ISBN 0060542101. \$16.89. 32 p.

Reviewer: Gillian Streeeter

Reading Level: Primary, Intermediate

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Picture Books; Contemporary realistic fiction;

Subject: Individuality--Juvenile fiction; Costume and dress--Juvenile fiction; Manners and customs--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Nancy loves to be fancy. Instead of saying her favorite color is purple, Nancy says it is fuchsia. Ice cream has to at least have sprinkles on top. And Nancy can't wait to learn French, because everything sounds fancy in French. But Nancy's family isn't fancy - they don't understand that sandwiches are better with frilly toothpicks in them or that lace-trimmed socks help fancy people play soccer better. So Nancy has an idea: she can teach her family to be fancy!

While the story is funny and sweet, the illustrations are the main draw of the book--they are as exuberant as Nancy herself. There is an excellent contrast between the audaciously dressed and colored Nancy and her neutral-clothed family, and the colors and tone change when Nancy finds herself feeling not at all fancy.

Gibbons, Gail. *Ice Cream: The Full Scoop*. Illustrated by Gail Gibbons. Holiday House, 2006. ISBN 0823420000. \$16.95. 32 p.

Reviewer: Gillian Streeter

Reading Level: Primary, Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Informational books;

Subject: Ice cream, ices, etc.--Juvenile literature; Ice cream, ices, etc.--History--Juvenile literature; Books--Reviews;

Gibbons delivers the detailed, accessible research that readers have come to expect of her in *Ice Cream: The Full Scoop*. Readers follow her as she describes the origins of ice cream, how it has changed over the years, and different ways of making it, as well as how it is made and distributed today. She includes a page of short factoids about ice cream (such as how much ice cream Americans consume annually and the two most popular flavors), topped off with a reminder that while ice cream is a treat, readers should not eat too much of it.

Her signature cartoon-like watercolor illustrations and friendly, simple text make this an ideal book for young readers, but it will appeal to and inform all ages.

Whybrow, Ian. *The Unvisibles*. Holiday House, 2006. ISBN 082341972X. \$16.95. 184 p.

Reviewer: Sarah Wanlass

Reading Level: Primary, Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Humorous fiction; Fantasy fiction;

Subject: Magic--Juvenile fiction; Friendship--Juvenile fiction; England--Juvenile fiction; Books-Reviews;

Oliver Gasper and Nicky Chew are neighbors. They both are in Year 7 at Honnington House Secondary, a school for boys in England. That is where their similarities end. Oliver's family owns an antique shop. His mother and father are struggling to make ends meet and keep their business alive; his older sister is self-absorbed and moody. On the other hand, Nicky lives in an orderly house with his prim and proper mother, Sally.

One evening, Oliver is paging through a magazine article about an ancient Indian invisibility trick. The idea of becoming invisible intrigues him, and he repeats the mysterious incantation given in the article. His invisible escapades begin!

At first he finds being invisible exciting and exhilarating. But when his magazine disappears and he can't remember how to become visible again, he employs the unenthusiastic aid of his neighbor Nicky in his quest to return to normal. The two become fast friends as they help one another in an "invisible" adventure.

The book jacket by Tony Ross is reminiscent of Quentin Blake's illustrations. Similarly, Whybrow's writing screams of Roald Dahl's style. The quick British wit, occasional potty jokes, and unique and memorable characters make this semi-mystical story the *Matilda* for a whole new generation.

Pearson, Ridley and Dave Barry. *Escape from the Carnivale: A Never Land Adventure*.  
Illustrated by Greg Call. Hyperion, 2006. ISBN 0786837896. \$9.99. 144 p.

Reviewer: Janice Card

Reading Level: Intermediate

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Adventure stories; Fantasy fiction

Subject: Pirates--Juvenile fiction; Orphans--Juvenile fiction; Mermaids--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Anyone who liked *Peter and the Starcatchers* will enjoy this little book that tells of adventures had by others who inhabit Mollusk Island. This is probably the start of a series of Never Land adventure stories for age eight and up created by the Pearson and Barry duo.

Little Scallop, the chief's daughter, and her mermaid friends disobey the rules and go out beyond the reefs. They meet with a storm and something far more sinister: Crookshanks! He captures the mermaid, Surf, and plunks her in a tank on board his vile ship. He intends to sell her as a freak and make lots of money. Surf's twin, Aqua, Little Scallop, and Lost Boy, James work with the dolphins and come up with a plan to rescue Surf. Involving and fun!

Schlosser, Eric and Charles Wilson. *Chew on This: Everything You Don't Want to Know About Fast Food*. Houghton Mifflin, 2006. ISBN 0618710310. \$16.00. 304 p.

Reviewer: AnnMarie Hamar

Reading Level: Intermediate

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Informational books;

Subject: Fast food restaurants--Juvenile literature; Food industry and trade--Juvenile literature;

Food habits--Juvenile literature; Junk food--Juvenile literature; Books--Reviews;

*Chew on This* is an eye-opening, often unsettling, expose of the fast food industry and its influence in the lives of American children and teenagers. Written by *Fast Food Nation* author Eric Schlosser, along with Charles Wilson, the text begins with a brief history of fast food before launching into detailed explanations of how the food itself is prepared and the consequences of overindulgence.

Many of the industry's practices described by the authors are disturbing. For example, it is not uncommon for fast food corporations to plan "cradle-to-grave advertising strategies, hoping that childhood fondness for a brand will lead to a lifetime of purchases." The authors also cite how fast food and meat industry workers are among the most poorly treated and lowest paid in the United States, how corporations persuade districts to allow them to sell their products in the schools, and how some of the larger corporations are able to influence Congress in the areas of the minimum wage standard and food handling safety. Additionally, they describe the appalling conditions in the sweat shops that produce toys for Happy Meals. Fortunately, there are also some encouraging stories such as that of Kristina Clark, who successfully lobbied to have the soda pop machines removed from her school.

The text is not as overpowering as *Fast Food Nation*, but it still manages to convey a powerful message about how what you eat affects your health. An extensive section of notes documents the authors' claims. Considering the current concerns about the obesity epidemic in the United States, this is an important read and a valuable addition to any library.

Sandler, Michael. *Rain Forests: Surviving in the Amazon*. Bearport Pub., 2006. ISBN 159716089X. \$23.96. 32 p.

Reviewer: Charity Reno

Reading Level: Intermediate

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Informational book; Adventure;

Subject: Rain forests--Amazon River Region--Juvenile literature; Wilderness survival--Amazon River Region--Juvenile literature; Books--Reviews;

Interesting facts about the Bolivian Amazon rain forest are interspersed with the true survival story of a man named Yossi. Yossi was lost in the rain forest for 3 weeks and encountered many dangers during his time there. *Rain Forests* includes factual information about the animals, climate, vegetation, and people of the Amazon, as well as a discussion about the need to protect the world's rainforests because they are quickly being depleted.

Informative and interesting, though the content is somewhat choppy. The book jumps from Yossi's story to informational facts and back again to Yossi. It includes a glossary, index, table of contents, and bibliography.

*Rain Forests* contains an important environmental message for kids, especially for American citizens who live in a highly consumerist society, which uses a majority of the earth's resources.

Ruby, Laura. *The Wall and the Wing*. Eos, 2006. ISBN 0060752564. \$17.89. 336 p.

Reviewer: Gillian Streeter

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Fantasy fiction;

Subject: Orphans--Juvenile fiction; Flight--Juvenile fiction; Gangsters--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Gurl has always faded into the background. She doesn't like to be noticed, and at Hope House for the Homeless and Hopeless, it would be nearly impossible to be noticed anyway. Unlike most of the other people in the city, the orphans of Hope House can hardly fly at all. Gurl herself is a lead foot, totally incapable of flight. But one night she escapes after lights out into the city. Gurl finds a very rare animal, a cat, and a previously unrecognized ability: Gurl can literally fade. Oddly enough, her invisibility draws the attention of the thieving orphanage director, a famous gangster, a boy named Bug, and many other inhabitants of the city.

Set in New York City's future, readers might expect *The Wall and the Wing* to be more of a science fiction novel. While there are a few advances in technology, the story is obviously a fantasy tale: people can fly, cats are mysteriously rare animals that choose their own humans, and once every hundred years or so a being, usually a girl, is born with the ability to disappear. Ruby creates a varied and unconventional world of danger and wonder all wrapped together. Contrary to what the reader may think, not everything is neatly tied up at the end, as evidenced by the final chapter, "Chapter after the Last." The whimsical characters, unusual settings, and reasonable villains in *The Wall and the Wing* are a pleasure to explore.

Brockmeier, Kevin. *Grooves*. HarperCollins, 2006. ISBN 0060736925. \$15.99. 208 p.

Reviewer: Gillian Streeter

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Detective and mystery stories;

Subject: Jeans (Clothing)--Juvenile fiction; Factories--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

*Grooves* follows the story of Dwayne Ruggles, a student at Howard Thigpen Junior High. His town of North Mellwood is home to entrepreneur Howard Thigpen, who sincerely believes that money can buy anyone and anything. Dwayne's science lesson on record grooves and sound yields strange results when he runs a Victrola needle over the grooves in his Thigpen brand jeans: a message pleading, "Please. You must help us. He's stealing the light from our eyes." Dwayne and his friends Kevin Applebab and Emily Holmes set out to solve the mystery and stop Howard Thigpen.

Brockmeier's story is imaginative and full of small surprises and bizarre twists, like the importance of Dwayne's teacher's 1500 record copies of the Ghostbusters theme song and Howard Thigpen's missing rhinestone jacket. This story is zany, sometimes to the point of being distracting (such as Brockmeier's tendency to refer to his three lead characters by both first and last names throughout the entire book), but its strangeness and unique storyline make it a worthwhile read. The ending provides sufficient closure for the story, but some elements within the story are left open (who recorded the messages Dwayne finds in his fingertips at the last second?)

Gordon, Amy. *Return to Gill Park*. Holiday House, 2006. ISBN 0823419983. \$16.95. 234 p.

Reviewer: Sarah Wanlass

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Contemporary realistic fiction; Detective and mystery stories;

Subject: Parks--Juvenile fiction; Friendship--Juvenile fiction; Schools--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Willy Wilson is a typical teenager--he attends school, enjoys time with friends, and plays the violin. However, he is also the thirteen-year-old owner of Gloria's largest park! In this sequel to *The Gorillas of Gill Park*, Willy finds himself once again in the city of Gloria. He is living with Aunt Bridget, and is now attending Gill Park Gallery School.

This new situation suits Willy quite nicely. He is excited to be back in Gloria, just minutes away from Gill Park, and close to dear friends. Besides, everything always seems to go much better in Gloria than it does at home, and the prospect of supervising Gill Park seems much easier from closer proximity. However, Willy soon finds himself spread quite thin--balancing family, friends, school, and responsibilities.

*Return to Gill Park* is a great pleasure book for late elementary or early middle school readers and could even be used as a read-a-loud chapter book for classroom or school. The twists and turns in this story will keep the reader in suspense. Dialogue keeps the story moving. This fun, first-person narrative will keep the reader turning pages until the book is through.

Stanley, Diane. *Bella at Midnight: The Thimble, the Ring, and the Slippers of Glass*. Illustrated by Bagram Ibatoulline. HarperCollins, 2006. ISBN 0060775734. \$15.99. 288 p.

Reviewer: Kate Reynolds

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Fantasy fiction;

Subject: Princes--Juvenile fiction; Sex role--Juvenile fiction; Knights and knighthood--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Bella has a happy life--she has been raised by a loving, though poor, family and has enjoyed a long friendship with Julian, who happens to be the fourth son of the king. Suddenly though, her world is turned upside down when Julian betrays her in a moment of thoughtless pride, and it is revealed that she is not the daughter of the peasants who raise her, but of a cold knight who summons her to live with him now. She moves in to an unfamiliar life where she must deal with the scorn of her new step-family. She puts up with it and makes the best of her situation by helping the cook and learning to read and write. Then she discovers a plan in progress that endangers the life of her friend, Prince Julian. Disguised, she runs away from her father's house in order to save her friend--and ends up bringing about peace with a neighboring land that they had been at war with for more than a century.

*Bella at Midnight* is a retelling of the Cinderella story, but with a number of original twists that make it an enjoyable, fresh read. Bella and Julian do not have love at first sight, but rather a lifetime friendship that develops into romance. There is no fairy godmother--only a caring aunt who provides her niece with a nice wardrobe for her daring attempt to rescue her prince. The story is written in the first person from different people. The tale told from the perspectives of the stepmother and the two stepsisters fleshes out those characters making them sympathetic in some respects--a widow with two daughters, fallen on hard times, bound in a marriage to a man who is still in love with his dead first wife. Everyone from intermediate to adult readers will enjoy this retelling.

Shulman, Polly. *Enthusiasm*. Putnam Juvenile, 2006. ISBN 0399243895. \$15.99. 198 p.

Reviewer: Sarah Wanlass

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young adult

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Contemporary realistic fiction; Humorous stories;

Subject: Interpersonal relations--Juvenile fiction; Musicals--Juvenile fiction; Schools---Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews

There are those who lead and those who follow. Ashleigh is an enthusiastic leader, ready to include anyone and everyone in her latest and greatest plan; Julie is her loyal friend and follower. Still, at times Julie cannot believe Ashleigh's outrageous obsessions. It is always something new. This time, Ashleigh has fallen in love with Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. She is now fixated with the time period, characters, dress and speech of Austen's novels; she speaks like Elizabeth Bennett, wears gowns like Emma Fairfax, and when she decides that she and Julie must crash a ball to find True Love, there is no stopping her. Julie is quickly drawn into Ashleigh's scheme to attend the ball at Forefield Academy, a nearby boys' prep school. According to plan, Ashleigh and Julie find boys at the ball. But who is in love with whom?

This delightful young adult novel is told from Julie's perspective and follows a series of adventures, escapades, and slightly awkward encounters as she learns how to balance family, friendship, and love, yet still remain true to herself.

Krovatin, Christopher. *Heavy Metal and You*. PUSH/Scholastic, 2005. ISBN 043973648X. \$16.95. 186 p.

Reviewer: Jeanne Gubler

Reading Level: Young Adult

Rating: Significant shortcomings

Genre: Contemporary realistic fiction;

Subject: Heavy metal (Music)--Juvenile fiction; Interpersonal relations--Juvenile fiction; High schools--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

The central themes of *Heavy Metal and You* are life, love, sex, friendship and how heavy metal music impacts a young man's self-perception. When Sam first hears heavy metal music he says, “. . . the sound came rushing out, washing over me with so much atmosphere and power that my preteen mind was blown away. . . I was enraptured by the musical darkness filling me, a noise that at the time seemed like the sounds of a war against all things good, the soundtrack to a temple being burned to the ground.” Heavy metal music became Sam’s life. He was never without it. It was full of rage and appealed to the dark side of him; it was frenzy and encouraged reckless abandon; through his life experiences and especially his anger, he identified with the lyrics, sounds, and emotions of heavy metal music.

As the story unfolds, boy meets girl. Sam finds himself attracted to a “preppy” girl--an oddity for a heavy metal man. Melissa tries to help him understand that he isn't his music. She sees the good side of him and is shocked when they attend a heavy metal concert: the concert smells like cigarettes, booze, sweat, blood, hair, cotton and leather, not to mention, she sees the mean, angry, violent side of Sam. He scares her.

She encourages him to stop drinking, smoking and doing drugs. He stops for her . . . for a while. But their problems are not over: she meets his friends and doesn't like them; he meets her friends, sees them as phonies, and tells them off.

The story continues to explore Sam’s world: the intricacies that attend parties with friends (booze, drugs, and cigarettes), relationships with girls (undressing each other), and family relationships with parents and siblings. The author writes well: he powerfully draws the reader into sexual involvements and simulates the disgusting after effects of alcohol and drugs (vomiting, headaches, and utter abandon).

Sam proves to have some redeeming qualities. When invited to have sex with his girlfriend, he refuses. He likes her more than that. There is a sense that through his relationship with Melissa, he comes to know himself better. He comes to a peace within himself about smoking (he doesn't like it) and his incompatibility with this “preppy” girl. He sees the better side of himself through Melissa’s eyes.

At the end of the book, readers will discover a lonely young man who felt unloved, misunderstood, and judged by those around him. After being beaten up as a youth by other boys, he carried the pain of his helplessness and anger. He hated life, his teachers, felt heartbroken and hurt, was unrequited in love, loathed himself and saw himself as an adolescent misfit. These feelings drew him to heavy metal music. A girl helped him find a way out.

This story offers a window into a counter-culture lifestyle, but contains objectionable elements. The language is typical of counter-culture: the “F-word” is used a lot and God's name holds no value. Because Krovatin possesses a commanding ability to draw in the reader, readers will want to be careful in deciding whether the redeeming value of this book outweighs having to experience the language, sexual excursions and cultural aspects of heavy metal found in this book. These aspects of *Heavy Metal and You* make it a better recommendation for adults than young adults.

Beth Evangelista. *Gifted*. Walker, 2005. ISBN 0802789943. \$16.95. 192 p.

Reviewer: Kate Reynolds

Reading Level: Young Adult

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Contemporary realistic fiction;

Subject: Gifted children--Juvenile fiction; Bullying--Juvenile fiction; Self-perception--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Eighth-grader George Clark is a gifted student, but he is on the bottom rung of the social ladder. Only his father's presence as principal of the middle school keeps the bullies in check.

However, his father is not attending the five-day class field trip, leaving George wide open to the ridicule of the Bruise Brothers--the football team bullies. After he provokes the bullies' wrath, alienates his only friend, and ends up stranded during a hurricane, George must face the mirror and find out who he really is and what kind of person he wants to be.

Evangelista has succeeded in creating believable characters. George, while smart, is still looking at the world from the same perspective and with the same maturity as his peers. In fact, even though the story is told in the first person from his perspective, for most of the book George is unlikable and irksome to the reader. The development of a relationship with the teacher he has previously hated starts George on the path of self-examination. His turnaround, taking place over the course of the book, has setbacks and sometimes it seems George will never make the change, but in a crisis he does; though, the hurricane seems a bit of a stretch (did nobody check the weather before they left?). The plot, however, is predictable--George ends up saving the day and making friends with one of the biggest bullies. Overall, Evangelista's first novel is enjoyable, if a bit canned.

Volponi, Paul. *Black and White*. Viking, 2005. ISBN 0670060062. \$15.99. 185 pp.

Reviewer: Sarah Wanlass

Reading Level: Young adult

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Contemporary realistic fiction; Adventure stories; Sports stories;

Subject: African Americans--Juvenile fiction; Juvenile delinquency--Juvenile fiction; Basketball--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

*Black and White*, through thick and thin--that's how it was supposed to be. Then Black got caught. Marcus and Eddie were buddies. They played basketball together and were a team on and off the court. Both were seniors at Long Island City High School. They had a lot going for them. Had. Times got tough and they didn't have money for senior dues and the class trip. It was Eddie's reckless suggestion to do a few hold-ups with his grandfather's gun to get the needed money. They didn't plan on the gun accidentally firing. Everything changed in an instant. Eddie was the one holding the gun; Marcus was the one who got caught.

*Black and White* is a story about race, family, friendship, honesty, and reality. It might not satisfy the reader's sense of justice, but it makes a meaningful statement about the court system and the need for honesty and integrity. Each chapter is written in first-person and alternates between Marcus's voice and Eddie's. It is a fast read. Volponi's writing is matter-of-fact and provides a smooth narrative, but nothing stunning. Swear words in the text may be offensive, but the overall cursing is kept to a minimum and is used in a way that is realistic for high school students. Though the morals and motives of some characters are disappointing, there is a certain sense of conscience which comes through in the first-person text. Even when the characters make lousy decisions, the reader can infer their sense of right and wrong.

Edelman, Marian Wright. *I Can Make a Difference: A Treasury to Inspire our Children*.  
Illustrated by Barry Moser. HarperCollins, 2005. ISBN 0060280514. \$19.99. 112 pp.

Reviewer: Kate Reynolds

Reading Level: All

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Folklore; Poetry;

Subject: Conduct of Life--Quotations, Maxims, etc.--Juvenile; Inspiration--Juvenile Literature;  
Conduct of Life--Literary Collections--Juvenile Literature; Books--Reviews;

Edleman presents twelve principles, such as compassion, honesty, courage, and determination, to teach children how to make a difference in the world. Each principle is supported by quotations, stories, and poems from many peoples and cultures--from Aesop to Zoroastrianism--that exemplify the idea. The accompanying illustrations by Moser, from full page watercolor paintings to vibrant spot art, will enhance the reader's experience with their beauty and appropriateness.

Although reading this book all at once may seem didactic to adults, it is the perfect book to pick out one story or poem to read out loud to the family or to a child at bedtime. Some selections, especially some quotations, may not be within comprehension for young children, but will reach older audiences. This book teaches moral values without drawing from one particular creed or culture overly much, making it accessible to everyone. Edelman, a well-known, award winning children's activist, has brought together a useful collection of positive principles that promote not only discussion between children and adults but also constructive behavior in society.

Teevin, Toni. *What to Do? What to Do?*. Illustrated by Janet Pedersen. Clarion, 2006.  
ISBN 061844632X. \$16.00. 32 p.

Reviewer: Janice Card

Reading Level: All

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Picture Book;

Subject: Loneliness--Juvenile Fiction; Birds--Juvenile Fiction; Baking--Juvenile Fiction; Books--Reviews;

Old Sophie bakes the most delicious bread, but she is lonely and longs for someone to talk to. She tries talking to her cabbages, flowers, and furniture, but they don't respond. When she wanders outdoors in her orange hat and flowered shawl she notices the birds and talks to them, and they seem to talk back to her. She is delighted and shares her bread with them. The birds bring all their friends and family, and Sophie begins making bread non-stop. Soon though, the birds' squawks and screeches get on her nerves. She asks the birds to be quiet, but they continue to pester her all day long.

What is she to do? The villagers want to buy her bread because it smells so wonderful while she bakes all day, but she can't keep up with the demands of the birds. In fact, the birds follow her wherever she goes. She needs to be rid of them. When Velma, a seer and sage, drives up in her wagon, Sophie thinks she will get help from her.

However, Sophie sees Velma for the fake she is, so in payment for her phony wisdom Sophie gives her the hat and shawl she always wears. Velma is quick to don her new accessories, and as she drives out of town, the birds follow her. So Velma does solve Sophie's problem despite herself.

Bateman, Teresa. *Keeper of Soles*. Illustrated by Yayo. Holiday House, 2006. ISBN 0823417344. \$16.95. 27 p.

Reviewer: Janice Card

Reading Level: All

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Folklore; Fantasy fiction; Humorous stories;

Subject: Shoemakers--Juvenile fiction; Shoes--Juvenile fiction; Death--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

“A well-made shoe does what it's supposed to do,” says Colin the Cobbler. Rich and poor alike depend on him for the finest shoes.

One night there is a knock at Colin's door, and who should be standing there, but Death himself--he wants Colin's soul! Colin sees that Death is barefoot. “What you need is a good pair of shoes.” Colin cuts out a pattern quickly so he can construct a fine pair of sandals for the Grim Reaper. Death is so surprised he agrees to return in four weeks. Clever Colin buys more time whenever Death returns. Many pairs of shoes later, Death returns and demands Colin's soul, and Colin tells him that is what he has been giving him all these years: “I've given you sole after sole.” Surprisingly, Death proves to be a good sport. He also has a sense of humor!

The artwork is funky, but so fun. It sets the story off to perfection.

*The Lord's Prayer*. Illustrated by Thomas Kinkade. HarperCollins, 2006. ISBN 0060787384.  
\$16.99. [32 p.]

Reviewer: Kate Reynolds

Reading Level: All

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Picture Books;

Subject: Lord's Prayer--Illustrations--Juvenile literature; Books--Reviews;

The simple words of the Lord's Prayer, as found in the King James Bible, are coupled with Kinkade's breathtaking canvas paintings. Children and adults of all ages and all Christian denominations can enjoy this work. Kinkade's paintings for this book are of natural beauty and common comforts: a field, the woods, a river, a house, a barn, a church, and animals. These depictions combine to enhance the comfort already inherent in the familiar words.

With paintings that can be viewed again and again and words that are well remembered, this rendition of the Lord's Prayer is a good addition to any collection.

*Mary Engelbreit's Mother Goose; One Hundred Best-Loved Verses*. Illustrated by Engelbreit, Mary. Harper Collins, 2005. ISBN 0060081716. \$19.99. 128pp.

Reviewer: Charity Reno

Reading Level: All;

Rating: Outstanding;

Genre: Poetry;

Subject: Nursery rhymes--Juvenile literature; Children's poetry--Juvenile literature; Books--Reviews;

This work is a delightful compilation of well-known nursery rhymes (“Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”) and not-so-well-known nursery rhymes (“Mary had a Pretty Bird”), illustrated beautifully in bright Engelbreit style. A good choice for introducing nursery rhymes to children, this book would make a great baby gift or addition to a public library. This collection is destined to be a favorite among adults as well, particularly those already familiar with and fond of ME.