

WSRA Children's Literature Committee

The WSRA Children's Literature Committee members read widely and evaluate the newest books published each year in order to recommend the most interesting and valuable books for educators and children to read.

The committee considers titles published during the 15 months prior to the convention calendar year and evaluates titles based on their appeal for students ages 4-14, along with the quality of literature and value for classroom use.

The committee creates two lists to help educators select titles for use in their specific areas. The Just One More Page! list highlights their recommendations for the best of the newest chapter books through grade 8+, while Picture This! highlights their recommendations for the best of the newest picture books. They limit each list to their top 100 titles. Their master recommendation lists are revealed at the annual WSRA convention in February and can also be found after convention on the WSRA website.

We make it easy finding excellent books!

The complete Just One More Page! & Picture This! lists can be found at
<http://www.wsra.org/children-s-literature>

Picture This!

Compiled by WSRA's Children's Literature Committee for the 2016 Convention
from titles published between September 2014-December 2015

28 Days: Moments in Black History That Changed the World by Charles R. Smith, Jr., illustrated by Shane Evans (Roaring Brook Press, 2015).

Each day features a different influential figure in African-American history, from Crispus Attucks, the first man shot in the Boston Massacre, sparking the Revolutionary War, to Madame C. J. Walker, who after years of adversity became the wealthiest black woman in the country, as well as one of the wealthiest black Americans, to Barack Obama, the country's first African-American president.

A Fine Dessert: Four Centuries, Four Families, One Delicious Treat by Emily Jenkins, illustrated by Sophie Blackall (Schwartz & Wade, 2015).

In this fascinating picture book, four families, in four different cities, over four centuries, make the same delicious dessert: blackberry fool. This richly detailed book ingeniously shows how food, technology, and even families have changed throughout American history.

****A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to School*** by Davide Cali, illustrated by Benjamin Chaud (Chronicle Books, 2015).

First, some giant ants steal breakfast. Then there are the evil ninjas, massive ape, mysterious mole people, giant blob, and countless other daunting (and astonishing) detours along the way to school. Are these excuses really why this student is late? Or is there another explanation that is even more outrageous than the rest?

****Ballet Cat: The Totally Secret Secret*** by Bob Shea (Disney-Hyperion, 2015).

Ballet Cat and Sparkles the Pony are trying to decide what to play today. Nothing that Sparkles suggests--making crafts, playing checkers, and selling lemonade--goes well with the leaping, spinning, and twirling that Ballet Cat likes to do. When Sparkles' leaps, spins, and twirls seem halfhearted, Ballet Cat asks him what's wrong. Sparkles doesn't want to say. He has a secret that Ballet Cat won't want to hear. What Sparkles doesn't know is that Ballet Cat has a secret of her own, a totally secret secret. Once their secrets are shared, will their friendship end, or be stronger than ever?

Bernice Gets Carried Away by Hannah E. Harrison (Dial Books, 2015).

Having missed out on the other treats at a friend's birthday party, a grumpy cat grabs all of the balloons and floats into the sky, where she sees that her problems are not so big, after all.

Beyond the Pond by Joseph Kuefler (Balzer+Bray, 2015).

A boy discovers that the pond in his backyard contains a whole world ready to be explored.

Boats for Papa by Jessixa Bagley (Roaring Brook Press, 2015).

Buckley and his mother cope with the loss of their father/husband by sending small wooden boats, built by Buckley, off into the ocean.

By Mouse and Frog by Deborah Freeman (Viking, 2015).

Mouse has one idea about what a book should be and how to tell a story. Frog has another. What happens when these two very different friends try to create a book together?

* indicates committee favorite

^^Annotations taken from publisher info, Library of Congress catalog data, or Follett Titlewave.

Coming Home by Greg Ruth (Feiwel & Friends, 2014).

Follows the emotions of a young boy as he waits at an airport for a family member to return home from serving in the military.

Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music by Margarita Engle, illustrated by Rafael Lopez (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015).

Girls cannot be drummers. Long ago on an island filled with music, no one questioned that rule--until the drum dream girl. In her city of drumbeats, she dreamed of pounding tall congas and tapping small bongós. She had to keep quiet. She had to practice in secret. But when at last her dream-bright music was heard, everyone sang and danced and decided that both girls and boys should be free to drum and dream.

Inspired by the childhood of Millo Castro Zaldarriaga, a Chinese-African-Cuban girl who broke Cuba's traditional taboo against female drummers, *Drum Dream Girl* tells an inspiring true story for dreamers everywhere.

Earmuffs for Everyone! How Chester Greenwood Became Known as the Inventor of the Earmuffs by Meghan McCarthy (Paula Wiseman Books, 2015).

This picture book biography of Chester Greenwood explores the invention of the earmuffs and the patenting process.

Emmanuel's Dream: The True Story of Emmanuel Ofosu Yeboah by Laurie Ann Thompson, illustrated by Sean Qualls (Schwartz & Wade, 2015).

The story of a West African youth who pursued an education, helped support his family and became a record-setting cyclist in spite of a disability traces his ongoing achievements as an activist.

Finding Spring by Carin Berger (Greenwillow Books, 2015).

Instead of hibernating as he should, a little bear cub goes out in search of spring—and he thinks he's found it! Gloriously illustrated with dioramas and cut-paper collages by the award-winning designer and illustrator Carin Berger, this stunning picture book celebrates the changing of the seasons.

****Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear*** by Lindsay Mattick, illustrated by Sophie Blackall (Little Brown, 2015).

A fictionalized account of Captain Harry Coleburn's relationship with a bear cub in 1914, which he rescued while on his way to care for soldiers' horses during World War I and became the inspiration for A.A. Milne's Winnie-the-Pooh.

****Float*** by Daniel Miyares (Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2015).

A boy's small paper boat—and his large imagination—fill the pages of this wordless picture book, a modern-day classic from the creator of *Pardon Me!* that includes endpaper instructions for building a boat of your own.

Friendshape by Amy Krouse Rosenthal, illustrated by Tom Lichtenheld (Scholastic Press, 2015).

Friends shape who we are. They make us laugh. They fill us with fun. They stand by us during life's up and downs. And even when we disagree with our friends, if they're tried-and-true, they don't stay bent out of shape for long. That's the beauty of a good buddy. This joyous book rejoices in the simple beauties of friendship, and reminds readers of all ages that it's good to have a group of pals.

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Gingerbread for Liberty! How a German Baker Helped Win the American Revolution by Mara Rockliff, illustrated by Vincent X. Kirsch (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015).

A picture book biography about a forgotten hero of the American Revolution who rose to the occasion and served his country, not with muskets or canons, but with gingerbread!

Gordon Parks: How The Photographer Captured Black and White America by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Jamey Christoph (Albert Whitman & Company, 2015).

Told through lyrical verse and atmospheric art, this is the story of how, with a single photograph, a self-taught artist got America to take notice.

Growing Up Pedro by Matt Tavares (Candlewick Press, 2015).

Before Pedro Martínez pitched the Red Sox to a World Series championship, before he was named to the All-Star team eight times, before he won the Cy Young three times, he was a kid from a place called Manoguayabo in the Dominican Republic. Pedro loved baseball more than anything, and his older brother Ramon was the best pitcher he'd ever seen. He'd dream of the day he and his brother could play together in the major leagues—and here, Matt Tavares tells the story of how that dream came true.

Here Comes Santa Cat by Deborah Underwood, illustrated by Claudia Rueda (Dial Books for Young Readers, 2014).

Cat wants off Santa's naughty list and makes several valiant attempts, but this 'being nice' business is trickier than he thought.

Hippos Are Huge! by Jonathan London, illustrated by Matthew Trueman (Candlewick Press, 2015).

What's the deadliest animal in Africa? It's not the lion or the crocodile—it's the hippopotamus! Hippos have razor-sharp tusks, weigh as much as fifty men, and can run twenty-five miles per hour! Follow these hefty hulks as they glide underwater, play tug-of-war, swat balls of dung at one another, and nuzzle their young in the mud. Just don't get too close—they could chomp you in two!

Home by Carson Ellis (Candlewick Press, 2015).

Home might be a house in the country, an apartment in the city, or even a shoe. Home may be on the road or the sea, in the realm of myth, or in the artist's own studio. A meditation on the concept of home and a visual treat that invites many return visits, this loving look at the places where people live marks the picture-book debut of Carson Ellis.

Hoot Owl: Master of Disguise by Sean Taylor, illustrated by Jean Jullien (Candlewick Press, 2015).

Hoot Owl, a master of disguise, tries to camouflage himself so he can catch his dinner, but when his prey keeps escaping, he disguises himself as a waiter and catches a pizza instead.

****How to Read a Story*** by Kate Messner, illustrated by Mark Siegel (Chronicle Books, 2015).

Accomplished storytellers Kate Messner and Mark Siegel chronicle the process of becoming a reader: from pulling a book off the shelf and finding someone with whom to share a story, to reading aloud, predicting what will happen, and--finally--coming to The End. This picture book playfully and movingly illustrates the idea that the reader who discovers the love of reading finds, at the end, the beginning.

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How to Swallow a Pig by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015).

How to Swallow a Pig is a clever and whimsical nonfiction book about animal behavior disguised as a How-to/Advice book by the bestselling team of Steve Jenkins and Robin Page

I Don't Like Koala by Sean Ferrell, illustrated by Charles Santoso (Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2015).

Adam does not like his stuffed koala because of its terrible eyes, terrible face, and terrible paws, but each time he tries to get rid of it, Koala comes back until Adam realizes that Koala is on his side.

I Don't Want to Be a Frog by Dev Petty, illustrated by Mike Boldt (Doubleday Books for Young Readers, 2015).

Frog wants to be anything but a slimy, wet frog. A cat, perhaps. Or a rabbit. An owl? But when a hungry wolf arrives--a wolf who HATES eating frogs--our hero decides that maybe being himself isn't so bad after all.

I Thought This Was a Bear Book by Tara Lazar, illustrated by Benji Davies (Aladdin, 2015).

Based on the fairy tale "Goldilocks and the three bears." Prince Zilch from Planet Zero crash lands in the Three Bears story, and it is up to baby bear to figure out a way to get him back to his own book.

I Will Take a Nap! by Mo Willems (Hyperion Books for Children, 2015).

Gerald is tired and cranky. Will Piggie be in his dreams? Or will she keep Gerald from dreaming at all?

****I Wish You More*** by Amy Krouse Rosenthal, illustrated by Tom Lichtenheld (Chronicle Books, 2015).

Some books are about a single wish. Some books are about three wishes. Amy Krouse Rosenthal and Tom Lichtenheld have combined to create this exuberant book of endless good wishes. Wishes for curiosity and wonder, for friendship and strength, laughter and peace. Whether celebrating life's joyous milestones, sharing words of encouragement, or observing the wonder of everyday moments, this sweet and uplifting book is perfect for wishers of every age.

I Yam a Donkey by Cece Bell (Clarion Books, 2015).

Even frustrated grammarians will giggle at the who's-on-first routine that begins with a donkey's excited announcement, "I yam a donkey!" Unfortunately the donkey's audience happens to be a yam, and one who is particular about sloppy pronunciation and poor grammar. An escalating series of misunderstandings leaves the yam furious and the clueless donkey bewildered by the yam's growing (and amusing) frustration.

I, Fly: The Buzz About Flies and How Awesome They Are by Bridget Heos, illustrated by Jennifer Plecas (Henry Holt, 2015).

Fly is fed up with everyone studying butterflies. After all, flies go through metamorphosis too--and they are so much cooler! They flap their wings 200 times a second, compared to a butterfly's measly five to twelve times. Their babies--maggots--are much cuter than caterpillars. And when they eat solid food, they even throw up on it to turn it into a liquid... provides a new perspective on his species.

****I'm Trying to Love Spiders*** by Bethany Barton (Viking, 2015).

I'm Trying to Love Spiders will help you see these amazing arachnids in a whole new light, from their awesomely excessive eight eyes, to the seventy-five pounds of bugs a spider can eat in a single year! And you're sure to feel better knowing you have a better chance of being struck by lightning than being fatally bit by a spider.

Comforting, right? No? Either way, there's heaps more information in here to help you forget your fears . . . or at least laugh a lot!

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If I Were a Book by Jose Jorge Letria, illustrated by Andre Letria (Chronicle Books, 2015).

A child imagines all the good things he could accomplish if he were a book.

If You Plant a Seed by Kadir Nelson (Balzer+Bray, 2015).

While planting seeds in their garden, two animals learn the value of kindness. With spare text and breathtaking oil paintings, *If You Plant a Seed* demonstrates not only the process of planting and growing for young children but also how a seed of kindness can bear sweet fruit.

In Mary's Garden by Tina and Carson Kugler (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015).

While the rest of her classmates were making pastries in cooking classes, Mary Nohl was making art--anything she fancied out of anything she could find. Inspiration struck Mary even when she wasn't looking for it. Mary used common objects to make uncommon art. And one day, her garden was a gallery.

Interstellar Cinderella by Deborah Underwood, illustrated by Meg Hunt (Chronicle Books, 2015).

With a little help from her fairy godrobot, Cinderella is going to the ball. But when the prince's ship has mechanical trouble, someone will have to zoom to the rescue! Readers will thank their lucky stars for this irrepressible fairy tale retelling, its independent heroine, and its stellar happy ending.

Julia's House for Lost Creatures by Ben Hatke (First Second, 2014).

Julie welcomes all lost and homeless creatures into her house, whether they be cats or trolls, ghosts or dragons, but soon realizes that each must have a chore in order for the arrangement to work.

Lady Pancake & Sir French Toast by Josh Funk, illustrated by Brendan Kearney (Sterling Children's Books, 2015).

Lady Pancake and Sir French Toast have a beautiful friendship--until they discover that there's only one drop of maple syrup left. Off they go, racing past the Orange Juice Fountain, skiing through Sauerkraut Peak, and reeling down the linguini. But who will enjoy the sweet taste of victory? And could working together be better than tearing each other apart? The action-packed rhyme makes for an adrenaline-filled breakfast!

****Last Stop on Market Street*** by Matt De La Pena, illustrated by Christian Robinson (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2015).

Every Sunday after church, CJ and his grandma ride the bus across town. But today, CJ wonders why they don't own a car like his friend Colby. Why doesn't he have an iPod like the boys on the bus? How come they always have to get off in the dirty part of town? Each question is met with an encouraging answer from grandma, who helps him see the beauty—and fun—in their routine and the world around them.

Lenny & Lucy by Philip C. Stead, illustrated by Erin E. Stead (Roaring Brook Press, 2015).

Lenny is a good guard but Peter worries that Lenny will get lonely out by the woods all by himself, so he makes Lucy, who is a good friend. Together, Lenny, Lucy, Peter, and Harold discover that this new place isn't so scary after all.

Leo: A Ghost Story by Mac Barnett, illustrated by Christian Robinson (Chronicle Books, 2015).

Leo is a friendly house ghost--but when a family moves into his house, and tries to get rid of him, he leaves and roams the city looking for a friend.

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Little Elliot, Big Family by Mike Curato (Henry Holt, 2015).

When Mouse heads off to a family reunion, Little Elliot decides go for a walk. As he explores each busy street, he sees families in all shapes and sizes. In a city of millions, Little Elliot feels very much alone-until he finds he has a family of his own!

Little Humans by Brandon Stanton (Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2014).

The creator of Humans of New York combines an original narrative with some of his favorite children's photos from the blog, in addition to all-new exclusive portraits.

Little Red Gliding Hood by Tara Lazar, illustrated by Troy Cummings (Random House, 2015).

Little Red is an excellent ice skater, but she will need a good partner for the skating pairs competition and the only one available is a certain Wolf, who needs new skates as badly as Little Red does.

****Little Tree*** by Loren Long (Philomel Books, 2015).

Little Tree is very happy in the forest, where he is surrounded by other little trees and his leaves keep him cool in the heat of summer, but when autumn comes and the other trees drop their leaves, Little Tree cannot be persuaded to let his go, even after they wither and turn brown.

Look! by Jeff Mack (Philomel Books, 2015).

Using only two words--"look" and "out"--relates a story about an attention-loving gorilla, a television-loving boy, and a friendship that develops over books.

Mango, Abuela, and Me by Meg Medina, illustrated by Angela Dominguez (Candlewick Press, 2015).

Mia's Abuela has left her sunny house with parrots and palm trees to live with Mia and her parents in the city. The night she arrives, Mia tries to share her favorite book with Abuela before they go to sleep and discovers that Abuela can't read the words inside.

Maple & Willow Apart by Lori Nichols (Nancy Paulsen Books, 2015).

Maple and Willow have always been inseparable. So what happens when Maple starts big-girl school and Willow stays behind? Well, of course, both girls have marvelous adventures of their own, but the truth is, they miss each other. And when they see that the missing is mutual, they find a unique way to feel connected even when they have to be apart.

Maple & Willow Together by Lori Nichols (Nancy Paulsen Books, 2015).

Maple and Willow do everything together. They love playing outside throughout the whole year, welcoming the sun, rain, leaves, and snow. But it's not always sunshine and rainbows, because sometimes big sisters can be bossy—and sometimes little sisters can be frustrating—and even the best of friends need a break from each other . . . at least until they can no longer bear to be apart.

Marilyn's Monster by Michelle Knudsen (Candlewick Press, 2015).

Some of the kids in Marilyn's class have monsters. Marilyn doesn't have hers yet, but she can't just go out and look for one. Your monster has to find you. That's just the way it works. Marilyn tries to be patient and the kind of girl no monster can resist, but her monster doesn't come. Could she go out and search for him herself? Even if that's not the way it works?

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Marvelous Cornelius by Phil Bildner, illustrated by John Parra (Chronicle Books, 2015).

A man known as the "Trashcan Wizard" sings and dances his way through the French Quarter in New Orleans, keeping his beloved city clean, until Hurricane Katrina's devastation nearly causes him to lose his spirit.

Meet the Dullards by Sara Pennypacker (Balzer+Bray, 2015).

Mr. and Mrs. Dullard move their family to a boring town to avoid any excitement in their lives.

Mesmerized: How Ben Franklin Solved a Mystery That Baffled All of France by Mara Rockliff, illustrated by Iacopo Bruno (Candlewick Press, 2015).

Discover how Benjamin Franklin's scientific method challenged a certain Dr. Mesmer's mysterious powers in a whimsical look at a true moment in history.

****My Pen*** by Christopher Myers (Disney-Hyperion, 2015).

Acclaimed author and illustrator Christopher Myers uses rich black-and-white illustrations to bring a sketchbook to life, showing that with a simple pen, a kid can do anything!

Neighborhood Sharks: Hunting with the Great Whites of California's Farallon Islands by Katherine Roy (Roaring Brook Press, 2014).

An up close look at the ocean's most fearsome and famous predator and the scientists who study them--just twenty-six miles from the Golden Gate Bridge

Nerdy Birdy by Aaron Reynolds, illustrated by Matt Davies (Roaring Brook Press, 2014).

Nerdy Birdy likes reading, video games, and reading about video games, which immediately disqualifies him for membership in the cool crowd. One thing is clear: being a nerdy birdy is a lonely lifestyle. When he's at his lowest point, Nerdy Birdy meets a flock just like him. He has friends and discovers that there are far more nerdy birdies than cool birdies in the sky.

Night Animals by Gianna Marino (Viking, 2015).

Poosum is hiding from the sounds in the night, and his fear sets off a chain reaction in the other night animals.

Ninja Bunny by Jennifer Gray Olson (Alfred A. Knopf, 2015).

A fresh, funny, and hip picture book about a little bunny who wants to be . . . a ninja!

Octopuses! Strange and Wonderful by Laurence Pringle, illustrated by Meryl Henderson (Boyd's Mills Press, 2015).

Did you know that octopuses can eject ink in the shape of a ghostly octopus or detach a wiggling arm while jetting away to safety? Or that their skin can change color for camouflage? Covering the entire lifecycle of these mysterious ocean dwellers and their anatomical details and behavioral quirks, Laurence Pringle's investigation of octopuses is both a comprehensive and accessible introduction and resource.

Once Upon a Cloud by Claire Keane (Dial Books for Young Readers, 2015).

Celeste wants to give her mother something special—but what? Her search takes her up into the skies, where she meets the stars, the moon and the sun, but she still doesn't find the heartfelt present she's been looking for. At the end of her journey, Celeste sees it—the perfect gift! Chosen with care and wrapped with love, it's just what Celeste was hoping to find.

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One Bear Extraordinaire by Rebecca Kai Dotlich, illustrated by Fred Koehler (Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2015).

Every morning Bear wakes up with a song in his head, but one day he realizes the song needs something more and sets out to find what is missing, gathering a band of animal musicians along the way.

One Word From Sophia by Jim Averbeck, illustrated by Yasmeeen Ismail (Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2015).

All Sophie wants for her birthday is a pet giraffe, but as she tries to convince different members of her rather complicated family to support her cause, each tells her she is using too many words until she finally hits on the perfect one.

Orion and the Dark by Emma Yarlett (Templar Books, 2015).

Orion is scared of a lot of things, but most of all he's scared of the dark. So one night the Dark decides to take Orion on an adventure. Emma Yarlett's second picture book combines her incredible storytelling and artwork with die-cut pages that bring the Dark to life.

Raindrops Roll by April Pulley Sayre (Beach Lane Books, 2015).

Raindrops drop. They plop. They patter. They spatter. And in the process, they make the whole world feel fresh and new and clean. In this gorgeously photo-illustrated nonfiction picture book, April Pulley Sayre sheds new light on the wonders of rain, from the beauty of a raindrop balanced on a leaf to the amazing, never-ending water cycle that keeps our planet in perfect ecological balance.

****Red: A Crayon's Story*** by Michael Hall (Greenwillow Books, 2015).

Red's factory-applied label clearly says that he is red, but despite the best efforts of his teacher, fellow crayons and art supplies, and family members, he cannot seem to do anything right until a new friend offers a fresh perspective.

****Robo-Sauce*** by Adam Rubin (Dial Books for Young Readers, 2015).

FACT: Robots are awesome. They have lasers for eyes, rockets for feet, and supercomputers for brains! Plus, robots never have to eat steamed beans or take baths, or go to bed. If only there were some sort of magical "Robo-Sauce" that turned squishy little humans into giant awesome robots... Well, now there is. Giggle at the irreverent humor, gasp at the ingenious fold-out surprise ending, and gather the whole family to enjoy a unique story about the power of imagination. It's picture book technology the likes of which humanity has never seen!

Seeds of Freedom: The Peaceful Integration of Huntsville, Alabama by Hester Bass, illustrated by E.B. Lewis (Candlewick Press, 2015).

Mention the Civil Rights era in Alabama, and most people recall images of terrible violence. But something different was happening in Huntsville. For the citizens of that city, creativity, courage, and cooperation were the keys to working together to integrate their city and schools in peace.

Sidewalk Flowers by JonArno Lawson, illustrated by Sydney Smith (Groundwood Books, 2015).

In this wordless picture book, a little girl collects wildflowers while her distracted father pays her little attention. Each flower becomes a gift, and whether the gift is noticed or ignored, both giver and recipient are transformed by their encounter.

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Special Delivery by Philip C. Stead, illustrated Matthew Cordell (Roaring Brook Press, 2015).

Sadie is on her way to deliver an elephant to her Great-Aunt Josephine, who lives completely alone and can really use the company. She tries everything from mailing the elephant to boarding a plane, a train, and an alligator to get to her aunt's home. Along the way she meets an array of interesting characters, including an odd postal worker and a gang of bandit monkeys, who all help her get where she is going.

****Stick and Stone*** by Beth Ferry, illustrated by Tom Lichtenheld (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015).

When Stick rescues Stone from a prickly situation with a Pinecone, the pair becomes fast friends. But when Stick gets stuck, can Stone return the favor?

Swan: The Life and Dance of Anna Pavlova by Laurel Snyder, illustrated by Julie Morstad (Chronicle Books, 2015).

One night, young Anna's mother takes her to the ballet, and everything is changed. So begins the journey of a girl who will one day grow up to be the most famous prima ballerina of all time, inspiring legions of dancers after her: the brave, the generous, the transcendently gifted Anna Pavlova.

The Bear Ate Your Sandwich by Julia Sarcone-Roach (Alfred A. Knopf, 2015).

When a sandwich goes missing, it seems that a bear is the unlikely culprit.

The Case For Loving: The Fight For Interracial Marriage by Selina Alko, illustrated by Sean Qualls (Arthur A. Levine, 2015).

This is the story of one brave family: Mildred Loving, Richard Perry Loving, and their three children. It is the story of how Mildred and Richard fell in love, and got married in Washington, D.C. But when they moved back to their hometown in Virginia, they were arrested (in dramatic fashion) for violating that state's laws against interracial marriage. The Lovings refused to allow their children to get the message that their parents' love was wrong and so they fought the unfair law, taking their case all the way to the Supreme Court - and won!

The Day the Crayons Came Home by Drew Daywalt (Philomel Books, 2015).

One day, Duncan is happily coloring with his crayons when a stack of postcards arrives in the mail from his former crayons, each of which has run away or been left behind, and all of which want to come home.

The Death of The Hat: A Brief History of Poetry in 50 Objects by Paul Janeczko, illustrated by Chris Raschka (Candlewick Press, 2015).

A celebrated duo reunites for a look at poems through history inspired by objects—earthly and celestial—reflecting the time in which each poet lived.

****The Grasshopper & the Ants*** by Jerry Pinkney (Little Brown Books for Young Readers, 2015).

Based on a fable by Aesop. In this retelling of the classic Aesop fable, hardworking ants stock up for the winter while a fun-loving grasshopper plays all year long, until the cold weather arrives and he realizes his mistake in not planning ahead.

****The Night World*** by Mordicai Gerstein (Little Brown Books for Young Readers, 2015).

Sylvie the cat persuades her boy to go into the darkness very late at night, where they are greeted by the shadows of roses and other flowers, and by nocturnal animals who whisper, "it's almost here."

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The Princess and the Pony by Kate Beaton (Arthur A. Levine, 2015).

Princess Pinecone knows exactly what she wants for her birthday this year. A BIG horse. A STRONG horse. A horse fit for a WARRIOR PRINCESS! But when the day arrives, she doesn't quite get the horse of her dreams...

The Tea Party in the Woods by Akiko Miyakoshi (Kids Can Press, 2015).

Kiko realizes that her father has forgotten the cake her mother bought for her grandmother, so she decides to follow him. It turns out she was following a bear, who leads her to a delightful tea party in the woods. They give her a delightful surprise to bring to Grandma's

This is Sadie by Sarah O'Leary, illustrated by Julie Morstad (Tundra Books, 2015).

Sadie is a little girl with a big imagination. She likes to make things, but more than anything Sadie likes stories, because you can make them from nothing at all. For Sadie, the world is so full of wonderful possibilities ... This is Sadie, and this is her story.

Tiny Creatures: The World of Microbes by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Emily Sutton (Candlewick Press, 2014).

A picture book that explores how the smallest things on the planet do some of the biggest jobs in this intriguing introduction to the world of microbes.

****To the Sea*** by Cale Atkinson (Disney-Hyperion, 2015).

Sometimes Tim feels invisible at school-until one day, when Tim meets Sam. But Sam isn't just any new friend: he's a blue whale, and he can't find his way home! Returning Sam to the sea is hard work, but Tim is determined to help. After all, it's not every day you meet a new friend!

Toys Meet Snow by Emily Jenkins, illustrated by Paul O. Zelinsky (Schwartz & Wade, 2015).

While Little Girl is away on winter vacation, her toys, Lumphy, StingRay, and Plastic, decide to go outside and learn more about snow.

Tree of Wonder by Kate Messner, illustrated by Simona Mulazzani (Chronicle Books, 2015).

Deep in the forest, in the warm-wet green, 1 almendro tree grows, stretching its branches toward the sun. Who makes their homes here? Count each and every one as life multiplies again and again in this lush and fascinating book about the rainforest.

Trombone Shorty by Troy Andrews, illustrated by Bryan Collier (Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2015).

Hailing from the Tremé neighborhood in New Orleans, Troy "Trombone Shorty" Andrews got his nickname by wielding a trombone twice as long as he was high. A prodigy, he was leading his own band by age six, and today this Grammy-nominated artist headlines the legendary New Orleans Jazz Fest. Along with esteemed illustrator Bryan Collier, Andrews has created a lively picture book autobiography about how he followed his dream of becoming a musician, despite the odds, until he reached international stardom. Trombone Shorty is a celebration of the rich cultural history of New Orleans and the power of music.

Up in the Garden and Down in the Dirt by Kate Messner, illustrated by Christopher Silas Neal (Chronicle Books, 2015).

Explore the hidden world and many lives of a garden through the course of a year! Up in the garden, the world is full of green--leaves and sprouts, growing vegetables, ripening fruit. But down in the dirt exists a busy world--earthworms dig, snakes hunt, skunks burrow--populated by all the animals that make a garden their home.

* indicates committee favorite

^^Annotations taken from publisher info, Library of Congress catalog data, or Follett Titlewave.

***Wait** by Antoinette Portis (Roaring Brook Press, 2015).

As a boy and his mother move quickly through the city, they're drawn to different things. The boy sees a dog, a butterfly, and a hungry duck while his mother rushes them toward the departing train. It's push and pull, but in the end, they both find something to stop for.

***Waiting** by Kevin Henkes (Greenwillow Books, 2015).

What are you waiting for? An owl, a puppy, a bear, a rabbit, and a pig—all toys arranged on a child's windowsill—wait for marvelous things to happen.

Waiting is Not Easy by Mo Willems (Disney-Hyperion, 2014).

Piggie has a surprise for Gerald, but he is going to have to wait for it. And Wait. And wait some more...

Water is Water: A Book About the Water Cycle by Miranda Paul, illustrated by Jason Chin (Roaring Brook Press, 2015).

This spare, poetic picture book follows a group of kids as they move through all the different phases of the water cycle. From rain to fog to snow to mist, talented author Miranda Paul and the always remarkable Jason Chin (Redwoods, Coral Reefs, Island, Gravity) combine to create a beautiful and informative journey in this innovative nonfiction picture book that will leave you thirsty for more.

Welcome Home, Bear: A Book of Animal Habitats by Il Sung Na (Alfred A. Knopf, 2015).

Follow Bear as he visits animal habitats around the world--and comes to appreciate his own home.

Who Done It? by Oliver Tallec (Chronicle Books, 2015).

In this charming book, each page asks the reader a question about the lineup of characters featured on the spread. Sharp eyes and keen observation are necessary. There's only one right answer, and it's not always easy! Kids will love learning early concepts like expressions and positions as a natural consequence of their hunt for clues in the details of the lineup.

***Wild About Us!** by Karen Beaumont, illustrated by Janet Stevens (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015).

Warty Warthog may have warts and tusks, but he likes himself that way! Join him as he celebrates all of his animal friends and the attributes that make each one unique. Whether it's Crocodile's toothy grin or Kangaroo's huge feet or Leopard's spottiness, each animal is different. Wouldn't it be dull if all the animals at the zoo--and all the people in the world--looked alike? A joyful picture-book celebration of everything that makes us individuals!

Winnie: The True Story of the Bear Who Inspired Winnie The Pooh by Sally M. Walker, illustrated by Jonathan D. Voss (Henry Holt, 2015).

When Harry Colebourn saw a baby bear at a train station, he knew he could care for it. Harry was a veterinarian. But he was also a soldier in training during World War I. Harry named the bear Winnie, short for Winnipeg, his company's home town, and he brought her along to the military camp in England. Winnie followed Harry everywhere and slept under his cot every night. Before long, she became the regiment's much-loved mascot. But who could care for the bear when Harry went to battle? Harry found just the right place for Winnie--the London Zoo. There a boy named Christopher Robin played with Winnie--he could care for this bear too!

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Winter Bees & Other Poems of the Cold by Joyce Sidman, illustrated by Rick Allen (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014).

In this outstanding picture book collection of poems by Newbery Honor-winning poet, Joyce Sidman, discover how animals stay alive in the wintertime and learn about their secret lives happening under the snow. Paired with stunning linoleum print illustrations by Rick Allen, that celebrate nature's beauty and power.

Wolfie the Bunny by Ame Dyckman, illustrated by Zachariah OHora (Little Brown, 2015).

The Bunny family has adopted a wolf son, and daughter Dot is the only one who realizes Wolfie can--and might--eat them all up! Dot tries to get through to her parents, but they are too smitten to listen. A new brother takes getting used to, and when (in a twist of fate) it's Wolfie who's threatened, can Dot save the day?

Yard Sale by Eve Bunting, illustrated by Lauren Castillo (Candlewick Press, 2015).

When a family has to leave their house and move to a small apartment, it's hard to let go of things—but having one another is what counts.

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